

“to take positive and effective action”:

Rupert Costo and the California based American Indian Historical Society

by

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## ABSTRACT

Twentieth century California Indians have received muted attention from scholars. The sheer size and diversity of California Indians can be overwhelming. Geographically, California is the third largest state and home to one hundred and ten federally recognized tribes. California Indians created alliances across the state among diverse tribal groups. Indian advocacy and activism of the twentieth century has been a limited discussion focused on four major events: Alcatraz occupation of 1969; Trail of Broken Treaties and subsequent occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs building of 1972; Wounded Knee of 1973; and the “Longest Walk” in 1978. These four major developments should not be ignored. However, the discussion should be broader and include diverse forms of advocacy and activism.

In 1964 Rupert Costo, Cahuilla, his wife Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee, and thirteen Indians from diverse tribes, largely from California, founded the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS). Costo served as president of the organization until its dissolution in 1986. The San Francisco based group sought to improve education, communication, and cultural development among Indians.

Members of this activist organization challenged textbooks, testified at congressional hearings, created an Indian controlled publishing house, coordinated community meetings, and lobbied for protection of burial grounds. It also circulated, *Wassaja*, one of the first national Indian newspapers with original content. Through its publications, the AIHS sought to inform and promote mutual understanding between Indians and non-Indians.

The AIHS' philosophy centered on the belief that Indians could, through their own initiative and innovation, lead the fight in Indian affairs. Through the years, the AIHS supported Indian issues and efforts of individual tribes to preserve their rights. Thus, the AIHS defended tribal self-determination and rejected pan-indianism.

The federal government policy of relocation encouraged non-California Indians to move into California. Relocation caused friction as the focus by many in the mainstream media turned its attention to relocated Indians which increasingly rendered California Indians invisible. However, with conscientious effort the AIHS worked towards informing and educating Indians and non-Indians.



## DEDICATION

Dedicated to the memory of my grandfather, William “Willie” Soza, and to California Indians, past, present, and future.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: “WE ALL ARE ACTIVISTS BUT WE DON’T CARRY BANNERS”: CALIFORNIA HISTORY

The reasons for the selection of my dissertation topic are personal and varied. My mother’s people are Mountain Maidu from northeastern California in the Susanville area located in the Sierra Nevada mountains and my father’s people are Cahuilla and Luiseño from the Soboba reservation located in the foothills of the San Jacinto mountains of southern California. My grandfather, William “Willie” Soza, former tribal spokesperson of Soboba Band of Mission Indians (later renamed Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians), testified at the 1968 Senate Special Subcommittee hearings on Indian education in San Francisco as did Rupert Costo, Cahuilla, founder and president of American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or “The Society”).<sup>1</sup> Additionally, my father displayed his artwork at the first AIHS organized Convocation of American Indian scholars in 1970. These personal touchstones offer a familial connection to the AIHS organization. I consider my mother my first, and best, history teacher. She raised me surrounded by books and stories. As a result, I grew up with a love of books but with the insightful understanding that simply because something appeared in print did not inherently make it the “truth.” I received teachings on my people from my mother, extended family and community. I heard stories that did not appear in my textbooks or lesson plans at public school.

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<sup>1</sup> Costo referred to the American Indian Historical Society as “The Society.” However, I will use The Society and the acronym AIHS. To view a news report on the Subcommittee hearings with portions of Costo and Soza testifying see: KRON-TV, January 4, 1968, Courtesy of The Bay Area Television Archive, Archives and Special Collections of J. Paul Leonard Library, San Francisco State University.

The dual experiences of my education, at home and at school, imparted lessons on what formal western educational systems validated and valued as “knowledge” and “truth.” Education at home emphasized the interconnectedness of all living beings and centered on experiences and observation of customs, practices, and rituals. Comparatively, formal western education stressed “industry” with a goal of transferring a skill set to students in preparation of their participation in the existing economic and political infrastructure of the United States of America.<sup>2</sup> Further, the construction of history upholds a “master narrative” of equality, democracy, and freedom for all peoples. The experiences of Indians appeared either along identical trajectories of progress towards equality, democracy, and freedom or more likely, as simply nonexistent.

Formal western education tends to define the world and Indigenous people through formal knowledge that appears in textbooks and lesson plans to benefit and serve the mainstream society and state. Educator Paulo Freire argues the purpose of formal education is to promote authentic thinking which includes critical consciousness to engage in “problem posing” education and praxis; or it is to indoctrinate people to passively adopt the world of oppression.<sup>3</sup> Rupert Costo and his wife Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee, assert in their book *Natives of the Golden State*, history holds the potential to serve as a powerful ideological tool.<sup>4</sup> Further, the Costos note the field of

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<sup>2</sup> Gregory Cajete, *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education* (Skyland, NC: Kivaki Press, 1994); Vine Deloria Jr. and Daniel R. Wildcat, *Power and Place: Indian Education in America* (Golden: Fulcrum Resources, 2001); Teresa L. McCarty and Tsianina K. Lomawaima, *To Remain an Indian: Lessons in Democracy From a Century of Native American Education* (Columbia: Teachers College Press, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970; reprint, New York: Continuum, 2003), 71-86.

<sup>4</sup> Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry-Costo, *Natives of the Golden State: The California Indians* (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press and the University of California at Riverside, 1995), xvii. Mrs. Jeannette



history is not benign but rather a site of power and politics. The power they discuss is the ability of history and historians to erase and rationalize past actions of peoples or the state. Sociologist Janet Abu-Lughod describes this power as intellectual hegemony because, “If history is written by the victors, then it must, almost by definition, ‘deform’ the history of the others.”<sup>5</sup> Distorted stories thus created by mainstream society have become accepted as universal truths while reducing Indian history to a caricature or invisibility.

The representation in formal education is of particular significance since it implies a “truth” inherent in the expertise of teachers, textbooks, and lesson plans.<sup>6</sup> Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith describes the lasting impact of early educational systems: “Through the curriculum and its underlying theory of knowledge, early schools defined the world and where indigenous peoples were positioned within the world.”<sup>7</sup> Approved curriculum and textbooks represented the internalization of a perceived racial hierarchy and assumed superiority of the dominant society. My dissertation will not focus on the construction of race and racial hierarchies. However the perceived position of Indian peoples as culturally, morally, physically, socially, and mentally inferior relates

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Dulce Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee, published under her maiden name “Henry” or “Henry Costo” but in the hopes of avoiding confusion I will refer to her prior to marriage as “Henry” and after marriage as “Henry-Costo” and to both her and Rupert Costo as the “Costos.”

<sup>5</sup> Janet Abu-Lughod, “On the Remaking of History: How to Reinvent the Past” in *Remaking History: Discussions in Contemporary Culture no. 4*, eds. Barbara Kruger and Phil Mariani (Seattle: Bay Press, 1989), 118.

<sup>6</sup> For discussions on the construction of “knowledge” and “truth” in history see Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989); Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978); Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993); Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999; reprint, London: ZED Books, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 33.

to formal western education curriculum and its conception of “knowledge” and defining Indigenous peoples as “other” “savage” and “uncivilized.”<sup>8</sup>

An example of the imperial discursive field of “knowledge” may be observed with the chronological timeline used in teaching history of the western hemisphere. The majority of texts and lesson plans start with the so-called “discovery” of the “new world” in 1492. Inherent within this chronology is a dismissal of Indigenous peoples who resided on the land prior to contact with Europeans as a people without history as illustrated with the commonly used term “pre-history” to describe Indigenous peoples, experiences, and cultures prior to contact. The terminology reveals an assumption that Indigenous peoples are without a history until Europeans reached their lands. The difference places a value on the experiences as either a people remembered or those dismissed as irrelevant to the human story.

The construction of the “new world” created an oppositional “old world.” The oppositional nature of the “knowledge” established a colonial Eurocentric discourse which supported and justified colonization. Edward Said asserts at its core imperialism is a “struggle over geography.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the consolidation of power within the dominant society occurs largely to the detriment of Indigenous peoples’ lands, resources, cultures, and self-determination. Métis scholar Howard Adams observes, colonization is the process of total domination through exploitation, racism, and national oppression. Adams contends Eurocentric history is a major contribution to the devastation of Indian peoples

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<sup>8</sup> Waziyatawin Angela Cavender Wilson, “Reclaiming Our Humanity: Decolonization and the Recovery of Indigenous Knowledge” in *Indigenizing The Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities*, eds. Devon Abbott Mihesuah, and Waziyatawin Angela Cavender Wilson (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 69-87.

<sup>9</sup> Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 7.

because if continued unchallenged it spreads into media communications, popular opinion, and internalized by all citizens.<sup>10</sup>

History holds the unique position of being inherently political because it is constructed and contested by writers and readers of history. The political nature of history is revealed in what is and what is not published or taught in the classroom. Waziyatawin Angela Cavender Wilson (Waziyatawin), Dakota, addresses the double standard used in western history in which the academy accepts works where a scholar does not consult Indian sources or speak with any Indians.<sup>11</sup> Wilson points out if Indians are not consulted, the end product is inherently incomplete.

Directly tied to history is the concept of humanity because history is the story of humans and terms such as “pre-history” divorce Indian peoples from humanity. Tuhiwai Smith, argues the people who “made” history have a perceived humanity because historians considered members of the dominant society as naturally being “fully rational, self-actualizing human beings capable, therefore, of creating social change.”<sup>12</sup> The separation between Indian peoples and history perpetuates the othering of Indigenous peoples to the point of near erasure. According to Tuhiwai Smith, the negation of Indigenous views of history served as a critical part in the creation of a colonial ideology

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<sup>10</sup> Howard Adams, *Tortured People: The Politics of Colonization* (1995; revised, Penticton, British Columbia: Theytus Books Ltd., 1999), 21.

<sup>11</sup> Angela Cavender Wilson, “American Indian History or Non-Indian Perceptions of American Indian History?” in *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing About American Indians*, ed. Devon A. Mihesuah (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 23-26.

<sup>12</sup> Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 32.

because Indigenous views would be automatically dismissed as “primitive” and thus disregarded as inherently and immediately wrong.<sup>13</sup>

Stories on twentieth century California Indians have received muted attention from scholars. The sheer size and diversity of California Indians can overwhelm scholars. Within the boundaries of what is now called California over one hundred tribal nations spoke over three hundred distinct dialects. The Indigenous diversity both culturally and linguistically distinguishes the area from any other region in the United States of America. Geographically, California is the third largest state and is home to one hundred and ten federally recognized tribes. Additionally, the highest number of “terminated” tribes during the 1950s federal government policy resided in California. As a result there are a significant number of federally unrecognized tribes fighting for years to regain federal recognition.<sup>14</sup>

According to the 2010 federal census, California has the largest number of American Indians and Alaskan Natives compared to any other state. Of course, many of these individuals are not native to California. Inter-marriage across tribal communities has increased multi-tribal people too. Moreover, interracial relationships and marriages led to multi-racial people. For example, anti-miscegenation laws and low numbers of Filipino women led to relationships between Filipino men and Indian women largely in the California central coast and the Pacific Northwest. The term “Indipino” was coined to describe their biracial children. Many California Indian organizations, as a result, were

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<sup>13</sup> Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 29.

<sup>14</sup> Heather Ponchetti Daly, “Fractured Relations at Home: The 1953 Termination Act’s Effect on Tribal Relations throughout Southern California Indian Country,” *American Indian Quarterly* 33 (Fall 2009):427-439; Roberta Ulrich, *American Indian Nations from Termination to Restoration, 1953-2006* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 111-129.

diverse and inherently intertribal or multitribal because of the participation from Indians from throughout the state.

The roots of California Indian activism relate to treaty rights and self-determination. Many intertribal or multitribal organizations emerged after the public disclosure in 1905 of the United States Senate's refusal to ratify eighteen treaties negotiated 1851-1852 with California tribes. Many of these early California Indian organizations sought restitution. In 1928 the United States Congress passed the California Indian Jurisdictional Act, known as the Lea Act, which provided California Indians had a right to sue the federal government for land claims compensation. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) completed its first major judgment enrollment list (commonly referred to as The Roll) with a special 1928 California Indian census to document California Indians with family living when the eighteen unratified treaties were negotiated. Unlike earlier BIA census rolls, the 1928 roll included California Indians living off reservation lands and counted a total population slightly over 21,000.<sup>15</sup>

Compared to other underrepresented communities, Indian peoples hold a unique relationship with the federal government based on treaties, presidential executive orders, congressional acts, and court decisions. As a result, federal, state, and local governments interact with federally recognized Indian tribes differently than with any population. Federal recognition means the federal government recognizes a government-to-government relationship with a tribe, maintains a trust responsibility, and tribal members are eligible to access rights and services including healthcare and education funds.

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<sup>15</sup> Sherburne F. Cook, "Historical Demography," in Robert F. Heizer, ed., *California: Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 8 (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 91-98.

California Indians, like all Indians, maintain American citizenship. In *Anderson v. Matthews*, the California Supreme Court ruled in 1917 that Ethan Anderson, Pomo, was a United States citizen and eligible to register to vote.<sup>16</sup> In part, the justices came to this decision because California had no treaty relationship with the Pomo tribe. In addition, Anderson resided off reservation lands and participated in the local economy as a wage worker receiving his earnings outside the reservation. However, the decision did not speak to the citizenship of Indians residing on reservations or *rancherias* and not until the United States Congress issued the 1924 Citizenship Act were all Indians considered American citizens.

California is home to reservations and *rancherias*, a term unique to the state. After learning of the unratified treaties, reformers sympathetic to the economic distress of California Indians urged for the passage of a series of appropriation bills. The bills provided funds to purchase small areas of land, largely in central and northern California, for “landless” and “homeless” Indians which became known as *rancherias*. Many *rancherias* and reservations in California are multitribal, with different tribal nations sharing a land base.<sup>17</sup>

The United States Congress targeted forty one *rancherias* for termination with the California *Rancheria* Act of 1953. The BIA targeted the smallest and most isolated

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<sup>16</sup> *Anderson v. Matthews*, (174. Cal., 537; 163 Pac., 902, Cal. 1917).

<sup>17</sup> For example, Round Valley has enrolled citizens from twelve tribal communities. For information on the Round Valley reservation see William J. Bauer, Jr., *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here: Work, Community, and Memory on California's Round Valley Reservation, 1850-1941* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Frank H. Baumgardner III, *Killing for Land in Early California: Indian Blood at Round Valley, 1856-1863* (New York City: Algora Publishing, 2006). For information on Pomos purchasing land see: Khal Schneider, “Making Indian Land in the Allotment Era: Northern California's Indian Rancherias,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 41 (Winter 2010): 429-450.

*rancherias* and persuaded them to accept termination. In exchange the federal government promised to provide improved water, roads, and sewage infrastructure. Tillie Hardwick, Pomo from the Pinoleville *rancheria*, served as the lead plaintiff with thirty four others who challenged their termination status and sued the federal government in 1979. In 1983, the landmark *Tillie Hardwick et al. v. United States* decision reversed termination status for seventeen *rancherias*. A California district court ruled the federal government failed to deliver promised services.<sup>18</sup> These seventeen *rancherias* regained federal recognition but tribal lands were not reinstated, resulting in landless tribes. The complex history of the state under three different flags of Spain, Mexico, and the United States, along with complicated federal government policies towards California Indians, and the majority population of out of state Indians makes the story of California Indians dynamic and different from any other area of the country. It is the reason, perhaps, scholars hesitate in approaching California Indian history.

Due to my encounters in public school I became interested in history. My teachers offered the occupation of Alcatraz Island in 1969 as the only Indian activism that occurred in California during the twentieth century. The narrative presented in my schools promoted California Indian peoples as docile groups who passively accepted colonization and the inevitable nature of conquest. Such a narrative ignored and disregarded the overt and covert forms of resistance practiced by many California Indian peoples.<sup>19</sup> For example, the clay tile roofs commonly associated with California mission

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<sup>18</sup> *Tillie Hardwick et al. v. United States*, Civil No. C-79-1910-SW (N.D. Cal. 1983).

<sup>19</sup> George Harwood Phillips, *Chiefs and Challengers: Indian Resistance and Cooperation in Southern California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); Joel R. Hyer, “*We Are Not Savages*”: *Native Americans in Southern California and the Pala Reservation, 1840-1920* (East Lansing: Michigan State

architecture became popular only after the burning of Mission San Luis Obispo in 1776 when Indians attacked it and shot flaming arrows onto the dry tule thatch roof.

The inclusion of the Society in the historiography on Indian activism and urbanization illustrates that activism is not inherently physical or violent. Instead, activism may be powerfully quiet and promote what Taiaiake Alfred, Mohawk, calls “creative contention,” the strategies and tactics on the middle path between armed rebellion and conventional protest.<sup>20</sup> Challenging textbooks, testifying at congressional hearings, creating an Indian controlled publishing house, coordinating community meetings, and lobbying for protection of burial grounds are all examples of activism with inherent political purpose though they may be perceived by some as less dramatic or mundane. As Henry-Costo commented, “We all are activists but we don’t carry banners. If we could get 5,000 Indians into a demonstration it might help us. But five Indians with picket signs does nothing.”<sup>21</sup> The comment illustrates her belief every AIHS member worked as an activist in his or her own way. Her observation reveals a common sentiment among Indians in which they assume a responsibility to be activists and support future generations of Indians.

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University Press, 2001). There were numerous attempted revolts led by medicine woman Toypurina to destroy Mission San Gabriel. An eight village alliance of Kumeyaayas (Ipai-Tipai) burned down San Diego Mission in 1775 and killed three Spaniards including Father Luis Jayme. In 1824 Chumash peoples seized control of the Missions Santa Inés and La Purísima, partially burned them down, and held them for over a month. The news spread to Mission Santa Barbara where the Chumash also burned the mission and fled. Covert forms of resistance included hundreds running away, destroying mission property, refusal to work, poisoning Franciscan priests, and women refusing to bear children while residing in the missions. Additionally in defiance of decrees California Indians retained their languages, ceremonies, songs, and stories.

<sup>20</sup> Taiaiake Alfred, *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2005) 228.

<sup>21</sup> Wallace Turner, “Paper for Indians Issued on Coast,” *The New York Times*, February 15, 1977, 11.



The purpose of my work is not to critique the variety of actions taken by a broad spectrum of organizations during this period such as the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI); American Indian Movement (AIM); National Indian Youth Council (NIYC); Indians of All Tribes Inc. or United Native Americans (UNA) among others. Indeed, Lehman Brightman, Sioux/Creek, was a member of the AIHS before he departed and co-founded the San Francisco-based UNA in 1968 with LaNada Boyer, Shoshone/Bannock, also an early member of the AIHS.<sup>22</sup> Rather, my dissertation seeks to add the Society to the discussion of Indian activism and urbanization. Hopefully it will open the door for more studies on twentieth century California Indian history. Furthermore, my goal is to contextualize and frame the Society's activism as a continuing movement in California among California Indians with the addition of educational components. Some organizations may have promoted pan-indianism, a collapse of sociocultural tribal identity to assume a general Indian identity. In contrast, the AIHS committed to fostering unity among Indian peoples not cultural uniformity.

Although the Society noted in its formal organization objectives it would serve as a "nonpolitical," inherent within the creation of the organization is activism. I use the broad definition of the term "activism" to mean any actions leading to any cultural, social, political change. By extension, the term "activist" refers to a person actively working towards bringing cultural, social, political change. The cultural maintenance by Indian peoples and the continued identity as a member of a tribal community is in itself a political act. Therefore, the continued cultural existence of Indian peoples in the twentieth century who established an organization for Indians is a political declaration

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<sup>22</sup> "Lehman Brightman," *The WarPath*, Spring 1970, 3.

since former formal governmental policies sought to eliminate and destroy Indian peoples' cultures. Some scholars may disagree with my broad definition. Yet members of the Society interjected themselves and agitated for change and that is activist work. The Costos served not necessarily as leaders determining the activist agenda for California Indians; rather they served as participants and facilitators of activism.

The AIHS carefully noted the organization would not formally engage in “political actions” of attempting to influence legislators or legislation or promote any political parties, groups, or societies. According to its formal articles of incorporation, the Society specifically reserved exceptions to engage in politics if the organization deemed it necessary to “protect and promote the general welfare of Indian peoples,” “defend the policies and objects,” or to “protect the assets and purposes” of the organization. The political rhetoric utilized by the AIHS focused primarily on examining education targeting Indians and non-Indians.

Within the context of rising social movements in the 1960s, it seemed almost certain Indians would enter into the realm of public protest movements. Further, the country appeared prepared to listen to Indian protests. In 1961 anthropologist Sol Tax organized the American Indian Chicago Conference (AICC), the first national meeting of Indians from across the country.<sup>23</sup> The Chicago conference culminated with the issuance of the “Declaration of Indian Purpose” which Tax explained allowed Indians to voice

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<sup>23</sup> For information on the Chicago American Indian Conference see Joan Ablon, “The American Indian Chicago Conference,” *Current Anthropology* 2 (1961): 478-500; Nancy Lurie, “American Indian Chicago Conference,” *Journal of American Indian Education* 1, no. 2 (January 1962): 17-23; Thomas A. Niermann, *The American Indian Chicago Conference, 1961: A Native Response to Government Policy and the Birth of Indian Self-determination*. Diss. University of Kansas, 2006.

their opinions and desires.<sup>24</sup> In addition to the estimated 460 Indian participants from roughly ninety tribes, the conference attracted about 145 non-Indian people largely scholars, religious, and government employees. Marie Potts, Maidu and member of the Federated Indians of California (FIC) and editor of its newsletter *Smoke Signals*, served as the only California Indian participant on the coordinating committee. The closest regional meeting to California, occurred in Reno, Nevada, a short distance to those residing in the northern interior of California but hundreds of miles away for others.

The “Declaration of Indian Purpose” received varied responses. Executive secretary of the Southwestern Association on Indian Affairs Charles Minton responded to Tax’s assertion that for the first time Indians were expressing themselves. Minton commented, “If he [Tax] knew anything about Indians, he would have known that they have been expressing themselves for a very long time, in meetings under their own auspices and under those of this Association.”<sup>25</sup> Anthropologist Nancy Lurie, co-coordinator of the Chicago conference noted, “I feel that the feelings and strivings of Indian people created the American Indian Chicago Conference, rather than the other way around....The Indian views were there before the conference.”<sup>26</sup> Many college students in attendance believed it did not encompass their goals and subsequently organized the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC). Although an important meeting,

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<sup>24</sup> *The Voice of the American Indian: Declaration of Indian Purpose* (Chicago: University of Illinois, Chicago), 1961.

<sup>25</sup> Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America: The Struggle for Sovereignty* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 55.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

the Chicago gathering proved less important to California Indians. Only nine California Indians participated, many from the Agua Caliente reservation of southern California.

The creation and actions of the Society hold significance for a more full understanding of Indian activism and organizational advocacy in an urban setting. My work builds on the work of Reyna Ramirez who argues cities serve as “native hubs” for Indian peoples. These “native hubs” serve as gathering centers for the exchange and sharing of ideas, information, culture, and community which is then shared with home reservations.<sup>27</sup> Urbanization is not about living in closely built houses rather it is about substantial interaction between and among peoples.

Through familial, social, and cultural connections, Indian residents of cities maintain connections and ties to their traditional homelands. For example, historian Myla Vicenti Carpio, Jicarilla Apache/Laguna/Isleta, asserts the Albuquerque Laguna Colony built bridges to the city which assisted in maintaining a strong tribal cultural identity, language, and cultural obligations. The colony also organized events and programs for families and friends to socialize in an urban setting.<sup>28</sup> Thus, residing in an urban setting does not necessarily cause one to lose one’s tribal identity in lieu of a broad pan-Indian identity. In many instances urban Indians advocate to non-Indians on political issues and communicate a need for positive change across Indian country. Many times the recipients of these efforts and support garnered of non-Indian allies are Indian peoples living on and off reservations.

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<sup>27</sup> Reyna K. Ramirez, *Native Hubs: Culture, Community, and Belonging in Silicon Valley and Beyond* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 2.

<sup>28</sup> Myla Vicenti Carpio, *Indigenous Albuquerque* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2011).

Indians have long resided in urban enclaves. However, the growth of urban Indian populations occurred largely because of the federal government Relocation policy beginning in the 1950s.<sup>29</sup> California stood at the center of the new federal policy. By 1958, four out of the eight relocation cities were in California: Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose. Many works have examined the experiences in cities such as Boston, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Phoenix.<sup>30</sup>

The rise in non-California Indians relocating to California caused some friction. Many in the mainstream media turned their attention to relocated Indians. California Indians appeared increasingly invisible. Sylvia Ross, Chuckchansi, addresses this sentiment in her poem “Tribal Identity Grade Three,” in which she writes “Sister talked about the Plains Indians/We saw a film on the Navajos/We colored a ditto of a pueblo” but when she shares her tribal identity while on the playground, the children turn away in laughter after informing her, “That’s not a tribe.”<sup>31</sup> The silent implication for a young Ross is her tribe is not recognized as “legitimate.” Many out of state Indians gained leadership positions in Indian affairs limiting the access to any positions by California Indians. In addition, some mistakenly identify California Indians as Mexican Americans because many have Spanish surnames, the legacy of missionization or names received

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<sup>29</sup> Donald L. Fixico, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945-1960* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990); Kenneth R. Philp, *Termination Revisited: American Indians on the Trail to Self-Determination, 1933-1953* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

<sup>30</sup> Edmund J. Danziger, *Survival and Regeneration: Detroit’s American Indian Community* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1991); Jeanne Guillemin, *Urban Renegades: The Cultural Strategy of American Indians* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975); James B. LaGrand, *Indian Metropolis: Native Americans in Chicago, 1945-75* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002); Joan Weibel-Orlando, *Indian Country, L.A.: Maintaining Ethnic Community in Complex Society* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991).

<sup>31</sup> Sylvia Ross, “Tribal Identity Grade Three,” in *The Dirt is Red Here: Art and Poetry from Native California*, ed. Margaret Dubin (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2002), 46.

while held as slaves. Thomas Largo, Cahuilla, explained his family acquired its surname because missionaries named his grandfather “Largo,” which means “tall” in Spanish because he stood over six feet tall.<sup>32</sup>

Prior to the federal policy of Relocation Indian peoples lived in towns and cities. For example, some Indian peoples moved into cities for work in the war industry during World War II. Indeed some families and individuals moved to towns and cities prior to World War II in search of jobs. In 1900 *The San Francisco Call* published a story about the life of Elijah Brown, an Indian who arrived to San Francisco from Indian Normal School (later renamed Haskell Indian Nations University) and worked as a newsboy.<sup>33</sup> Rupert Costo’s family held land on the Cahuilla reservation but lived in the nearby town of Hemet, California because there were no jobs on the reservation.<sup>34</sup> During the 1940s Rupert Costo farmed about 700 acres and ran about 120 head of cattle on the Cahuilla reservation.<sup>35</sup> In some instances towns and cities sprouted up around reservations or *rancherias* effectively surrounding them.

Future national Indian leaders raised in California included Russell Means, Lakota, and Wilma Mankiller, Cherokee. Their families moved to California searching for better economic opportunities. Former Cherokee Principal Chief Mankiller described

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<sup>32</sup> “Fascinating Ancestry of Hearing Participants Told,” *The Oakland Tribune*, June 29, 1954, 10.

<sup>33</sup> “An Indian Talks of Civilization as it Appears to Him,” *The San Francisco Call*, March 25, 1900, 8.

<sup>34</sup> Martina Costo in an interview recorded by Georgina Brown, May 31, 1971, 11652 East Everson Norwall, CA home of Costo, O.H. #558, Indian Urbanization, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton.

<sup>35</sup> Cahuilla Tribal Business Committee Biographical Sketch of Members 1962, Cahuilla Elections 1947-1962, Tribal Elections 1947-1972 from Augustine to Mesa Grande, Southern California Agency, Record Group (RG) 75; National Archives and Records Administration-Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel (NARA, Laguna Niguel).

living in the Hunter's Point neighborhood of San Francisco and recalls the impact and influence of Black culture.<sup>36</sup> Mankiller refers to what cultural anthropologist Susan Lobo describes as the "invisible population" of urban Indians. Urban Indian communities generally hold no land base but rather hold space in the form of buildings or neighborhoods. For example, Mankiller describes the American Indian Center in San Francisco as an important location because that is where Indian peoples met, "to discuss the issues and formulate our plans." The Center, Mankiller concludes, "helped to give us direction and boost our pride."<sup>37</sup> Karuk writer and poet, Julian Lang, visits places in San Francisco where Indians congregate because he is "checking in *and* checking it out." He observes embedded social networks located in urban areas noting, "Wherever we go, we are known by someone there. Wherever we go, we discover that we know someone there."<sup>38</sup> A common cultural practice when meeting someone is to introduce yourself by name, tribe, and tribal reservation, then for many California Indians, to determine if you are related, or if you know people in common to establish cultural ties.

Many scholars have concluded that Indian urbanization involves a loss of tribal identity replaced by a general pan-Indian identity. Through analysis of the AIHS, I reveal a cultural whole of Indian peoples by removing false dichotomies of reservation v. urban or tribal v. Indian. Through the story of the AIHS, I also expand the conversation on Indian education. My work examines the role of public schools, rather than reservation or

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<sup>36</sup> Wilma Mankiller and Michael Wallis, *Mankiller: A Chief and her People* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 108.

<sup>37</sup> Mankiller, *Mankiller*, 162.

<sup>38</sup> Julian Lang, "The Cid" in *Urban Voices: The Bay Area American Indian Community*, ed. Susan Lobo (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2002), 113.

boarding schools.<sup>39</sup> My work builds on the overview of Indian education policy by David Wallace Adams who while discussing boarding schools noted that, “The next Indian war would be ideological and psychological, and it would be waged against children.”<sup>40</sup> Additionally, I utilize the history of Indian education by Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder to inform my work.<sup>41</sup>

Scholarly works on Indian activism during the twentieth century generally focuses on Red Power with a particular emphasis on the role of the American Indian Movement (AIM) founded in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1968. “Red Power,” emerged as a term first used regularly by members of the NIYC in its calls for self-determination, tribal pride. This was quickly adopted as a slogan by many young Indian activists, who clearly borrowed the language from “Black Power” employed by African American activists. Prominent scholar, Vine Deloria Jr., Standing Rock Sioux, in his 1969 seminal publication, *Custer Died for your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* described the NIYC as “the SNCC of Indian Affairs,” the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee became an important a civil rights organization. It spearheaded the sit-in protests across the South. The term came to be associated with Indian activism of the late 1960s and 1970s, and

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<sup>39</sup> For more discussion on Indians in public schools see *Stephen Kent Amerman, Urban Indians in Phoenix Schools, 1940-2000* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010); Steve Amerman, “I Should Not Be Wearing a Pilgrim Hat”: Making an Indian Place in Urban Schools, 1945-75,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 31, no.1 (2007): 39-62.

<sup>40</sup> David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 27.

<sup>41</sup> Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004).



reported by mainstream media outlets including television, newspapers, and newsmagazines.<sup>42</sup>

Indian activism of the twentieth century has largely been limited to a discussion focused on four major post World War II events: Alcatraz occupation of 1969; Trail of Broken Treaties and subsequent occupation of Bureau of Indian Affairs building of 1972; Wounded Knee of 1973; and the “Longest Walk” in 1978. These four events should not be ignored. However the discussion should broaden to include diverse forms of advocacy and activism. In the historiography these four events far eclipse other events and forms of activism. Furthermore, the strict adherence to chronology implies earlier and additional forms of activism served only as a prelude to the perceived real Indian activism of the late 1960s and 1970s.

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<sup>42</sup> Sociologist Joane Nagel argues the rise of Indian self-identification during the 1970s correlates to rising ethnic awareness and pride due to the media attention Red Power received. Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 121-178.



Figure 1 Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay. Image courtesy of author.

The emphasis on these four primary events, advertently or inadvertently, overlooks the intellectual background of broader and continuing activism and struggle by Indian peoples.<sup>43</sup> Recent work by scholars reconsiders the place of these four events. Historian Daniel Cobb, for example, has brought attention to activism post- World War II to the late 1960s with special attention to the War on Poverty's Community Action

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<sup>43</sup> For more information see Daniel M. Cobb and Loretta Fowler, eds. *Beyond Red Power: American Indian Politics and Activism Since 1900* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research, 2007); Richard Alan Hanks, "This war is for a whole life": *The Culture of Resistance Among Southern California Indians, 1850--1966*. Diss. University of California, Riverside, 2006; Heather Valdez Singleton, "Surviving Urbanization: The Gabrieleno, 1850-1928," *Wicazo Sa Review* 19, no. 2 (Autumn, 2004): 49-59.

Programs. These provided Indians with political experience, skills and opportunities.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, historian Paul C. Rosier has argued the Cold War and decolonization movements in Africa and Asia assisted in developing an international perspective among Indian peoples influencing their perspective towards domestic concerns over treaty rights.<sup>45</sup> Scholar Julie Davis has examined AIM survival schools in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. Her research has furnished a nuanced examination of AIM cultural and educational activities.<sup>46</sup> Bradley Shreve has traced the roots of Red Power to the establishment of the NIYC in 1961 and highlighted an important point. Unlike other college based social movements, the NIYC looked to Indian elders for guidance and knowledge.<sup>47</sup>

Too narrow a focus on Alcatraz and AIM has encouraged many scholars to suggest Indian activism occurred with bodily force absent of cognizant thought, reasoning, or reflection. This perspective implies Indian peoples lacked an inability to reason intellectually. Such approaches perpetuate the dehumanization process that Indian peoples could not and did not use their intellects.<sup>48</sup> Through this process, activism becomes a story of bodies as objects without any intelligence and thus implies a reactive,

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<sup>44</sup> Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America: The Struggle for Sovereignty* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008).

<sup>45</sup> Paul C. Rosier, "They are Ancestral Homelands": Race, Place, and Politics in Cold War Native America, 1945-1961," *The Journal of American History* 92 (March 2006): 1300–1326.

<sup>46</sup> Julie L. Davis, *Survival Schools: The American Indian Movement and Community Education in the Twin Cities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

<sup>47</sup> Bradley G. Shreve, *Red Power Rising: The National Indian Youth Council and the Origins of Native Activism* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011).

<sup>48</sup> Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 25.

disorderly, unfocused, and chaotic movement of activism. By extension, Indian peoples do not have historical or political reasons for their grievances.

During the era of Red Power of the late 1960s and 1970s, Indian advocacy and activism included more than physical occupations and the formation of AIM. It also encompassed intellectual and educational endeavors which challenged the historical record. I am not suggesting that the AIHS began these critical intellectual and educational movements. These discussions occurred and continue to occur within Indian families and communities across Indian country. At the 1968 Special Senate Subcommittee Hearings on Indian Education at the San Francisco Indian Center, my grandfather William Soza commented, “We must bring out the true history of the country as it relates to Indians. For example, the Indian student today is asking: Why do we celebrate Columbus Day? Did he really discover America?”<sup>49</sup> These are issues and questions still being discussed and debated today. The yearly arrests and confrontations at the Columbus Day parade in Denver, Colorado demonstrate the salience surrounding contemporary Columbus Day celebrations and protests.<sup>50</sup>

Some scholars argue Red Power, with its call for self-determination, is directly linked to urbanization and an emerging pan-Indian identity. The historiography of activism during Red Power may generally be divided into three themes. The first of these

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<sup>49</sup> U.S. Congress, Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Hearings on Indian Education: The Study of the Education of Indian Children Part 1*, 90 Cong., 1 and 2 sess. (1968), 251.

<sup>50</sup> Conor Dougherty and Sudeep Reddy, “Is Columbus Day Sailing off the Calendar?” *The Wall Street Journal*, October 10, 2009, A1; James Riding In, “The Politics of the Columbus Celebration: A Perspective of Myth and Reality in United States Society,” *American Indian Research and Culture Journal* 17, no. 3 (1993): 1-9; Azusa Ono, *Crossroads of Indian Country: Native American Community in Denver, 1950--2005*. Diss. Arizona State University, 2008.

overlapping subjects is Alcatraz.<sup>51</sup> The second is AIM.<sup>52</sup> The third is first hand accounts.<sup>53</sup> Red Power as defined by historian Troy Johnson began with the successful 1969 occupation of Alcatraz island in the San Francisco Bay Area. He argues it sparked all subsequent national activism.<sup>54</sup> Johnson contends Alcatraz served as powerful political symbol but Alcatraz participants did not have one demand fulfilled. However, he overlooks the Indians of all Tribes, Inc. of Alcatraz called for the establishment of an Indian University. Therefore he minimizes the establishment in 1971 of DQ University, California's only tribal college located about six miles west of Davis, California.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Sandra Baringer, "Indian Activism and the American Indian Movement: A Bibliographical Essay," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 21, no. 4 (1997): 217-250; Troy R. Johnson ed., *Alcatraz: Indian Land Forever* (Los Angeles: University of California American Indian Studies Center, 1994); Troy R. Johnson, ed., *You are on Indian Land!: Alcatraz Island, 1969-1971* (Los Angeles: University of California American Indian Studies Center, 1995); Devon Mihesuah, "Activism and Expression as Empowerment," *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003); Jeff Sklansky, "Rock Reservation and Prison: The Native American Occupation of Alcatraz Island," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 13, no. 2 (1989): 29-68.

<sup>52</sup> Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: The New Press, 1996); Kenneth S. Stern, *Loudhawk: The United States Versus the American Indian Movement* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994).

<sup>53</sup> Dennis Banks and Richard Erdoes, *Ojibwa Warrior: Dennis Banks and the Rise of the American Indian Movement* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2004); Peter Blue Cloud, ed., *Alcatraz is not an Island*. (Berkeley: Wingbow Press, 1972); Mary Crow Dog and Richard Erdoes, *Lakota Woman* (New York: Harper Perennial edition, 1991); Adam Fortunate Eagle (Nordwall), with Tim Findley, *Heart of the Rock: The Indian Invasion of Alcatraz* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002); Adam Fortunate Eagle (Nordwall), *Alcatraz! Alcatraz!: The Occupation of 1969-1971* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1992); Russell Means and Marvin J. Wolf, *Where White Men Fear to Tread* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); Leonard Peltier and Harvey Arden, *Prison Writings: My Writing is my Sun Dance* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

<sup>54</sup> Troy R. Johnson, "The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism," *Wicazo Sa Review* 10, no. 2 (Autumn, 1994): 63-79; Troy R. Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Indian Self-Determination and the Rise of Indian Activism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996); Troy R. Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne, eds., *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

<sup>55</sup> In 2005 DQ University lost its accreditation and has been inoperative. Conflict has plagued attempts to reopen it with two competing Board of Directors. Since 2009 a number of California Indian tribes have supported a California Tribal College initiative to establish a new tribal college. At the 2013 California Indian Conference, Marshall McKay, tribal chairperson of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, announced plans, working with dozens of California Indian tribes, to open a nonprofit tribal college in 2014 in the

In a co-edited collection *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to Longest Walk* Johnson along with Joane Nagel and Duane Champagne, Turtle Mountain Chippewa, use the term “Alcatraz-Red Power Movement” to illustrate the occupation of Alcatraz galvanized Red Power and overlooks previous actions of earlier Indian organizations and communities.<sup>56</sup> With such an emphasis on Alcatraz many historians avoid illuminating the continuation and extension of activism within California and Indian country. For example, many early California based organizations focused on self-determination and the eighteen unratified treaties. Thus, their demands for treaty rights and calls for restitution from organizations established in the 1920s and 1930s reverberated during the late 1960s and 1970s.

Johnson further exaggerates the occupation of Alcatraz. He asserts it “marked the first time different Indian groups had banded together to form a multitribal organization.”<sup>57</sup> Of course multitribal organizations existed prior to the occupation of Alcatraz though some Indian organizations are almost invisible in the historical record.<sup>58</sup>

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Sacramento area. For more information on DQ University see Steven J. Crum, “Indian Activism, the Great Society, Indian Self-Determination, and the Drive for an Indian College or University, 1964-1971,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 31, no. 1 (2007): 1-20; Jack Forbes, Kenneth Martin, David Risling, *The Establishment of D-Q University: An Example of Successful Indian-Chicano Community Development* (Davis: DQ University Press, 1972); Hartmut Lutz, *D-Q University: Native American Self-Determination in Higher Education* (Davis: Native American Studies/Applied Behavioral Sciences, Tecumseh Center, University of California, Davis, 1980); Steven V. Roberts, “University for Indians and Chicanos Faces Problems,” *The New York Times*, May 9, 1971, 45; To view a news report on the occupation which leads to the establishment of DQ University see: KPIX-TV, November 3, 1970, Courtesy of The Bay Area Television Archive, Archives and Special Collections of J. Paul Leonard Library, San Francisco State University.

<sup>56</sup> Johnson, et al., eds., *American Indian Activism*, 1.

<sup>57</sup> Troy R. Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Indian Self-Determination and the Rise of Indian Activism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 219.

<sup>58</sup> Steven J. Crum, “Almost Invisible: The Brotherhood of North American Indians (1911) and the League of North American Indians (1935),” *Wicazo Sa Review* 21, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 43-59; For example, the AIHS does not appear in a listing of Indian organizations despite the editor’s criteria to include historical

Some organizations prove difficult to trace through published records, others are well known. Some organizations had national prominence while others had regional influence.

A few of the Indian organizations of the twentieth century include: the Society of American Indians (SAI, founded in 1911), American Indian Progressive Association (AIPA, founded in 1914); Mission Indian Federation (MIF, founded in 1919), California Indian Brotherhood (CIB, founded in 1926); American Indian Federation (AIF, founded in 1934), California Indian Rights Association (CIRA, founded in 1935), National Congress of American Indians (NCAI, founded in 1944), Federated Indians of California (FIC, founded in 1947), National Indian Youth Council (NIYC, founded in 1961), California Indian Education Association (CIEA, founded in 1967) and the AIHS founded in 1964, to name a few. These organizations reveal Indians practiced organizing in multitribal or intertribal groups prior to the occupation of Alcatraz and Indians of All Tribes Inc. in November 1969. Since the early twentieth century, California Indians have organized in multitribal or intertribal groups as the devastating population decline during the nineteenth century necessitated building alliances across tribal lines.

Many early studies on contemporary urban Indian experiences and Red Power came from fields outside of history during the 1960s and 1970s. Journalist Stan Steiner provided one of the earliest works with his 1968 publication *The New Indians*. He used the term “new Indians” to describe a new generation of college educated Indians who advocated for tribal nationalism and gave voice to tribal philosophies through the

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societies with libraries or museum facilities, see Armand La Potin, ed., *Native American Voluntary Organizations* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987).

NIYC.<sup>59</sup> Steiner argued “new Indians” sought to live as contemporary Indians and adapt tribal ways so that Indian peoples could survive and be revitalized. Steiner’s terminology influenced future scholars in how they contextualized Indian activism. As a result, many scholars adopted the terminology and accepted the activism of Indian peoples during the late 1960s and 1970s qualified as “new” as it correlated with the social and political movements of other ethnic groups of the times.

Steiner’s terminology and concept of a “new” Indian would be embraced or disputed by subsequent authors. Historian Alvin Josephy Jr. opposed the term “new Indians” because, “In substance their message is no different from what it has been for decades.”<sup>60</sup> Josephy recognized the practice of articulating for self-determination was not a particularly particularly new process. Thus, visible activism represented a continuance of activism rather than an exceptional new development of the late 1960s and 1970s.

My dissertation re-envision the definition of advocacy and activism to include an educational and intellectual component during Red Power. The questions guiding my work are: What intellectual, educational, political and social responsibility did the AIHS feel toward the Indian community both locally and nationally? What were the goals of the AIHS? Did it accomplish any goals? To what extent did the time period engender the possibility of the AIHS? What varying responses did the AIHS receive? And finally, what is the legacy of the AIHS?

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<sup>59</sup> Stan Steiner, *The New Indians* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1968), x.

<sup>60</sup> Alvin M. Josephy Jr., *Red Power: The American Indians’ Fight for Freedom* (New York: American Heritage Press, 1971), 17.



The story of the Society demonstrates it contained and practiced elements of decolonization. The AIHS concerned itself with restoring the humanity of Indian people through advocating for historic accuracy. Decolonization is a process that starts with one reflecting and questioning colonization and the perceived superiority of the dominant society.<sup>61</sup> Poka Laenui, Hawaiian, identifies a five-stage process of decolonization: rediscovery and recovery; mourning; dreaming; commitment; and action.<sup>62</sup> She details all stages are necessary for healing. Decolonization includes the reevaluation of political, social, economic and judicial structures. According to Laenui, action is “not reactive but a proactive step.” However, the spectrum is not necessarily linear. There may be false starts, pauses, and setbacks. Within this five-stage process, the Society’s work represented every level from rediscovery and recovery to action. Those who embrace decolonization acknowledge theory without practical use and accessibility has little or no relevance to communities. As bell hooks asserts, “Theory is not inherently healing, liberatory or revolutionary. It fulfills this function only when we ask that it do so and direct our theorizing towards this end.”<sup>63</sup>

As a result, decolonization theory is strongly related to truth-telling through the inclusion of accurate information. For example, the Costos used the term genocide to describe the mass slaughter of California Indians. However, journalist Carey McWilliams

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<sup>61</sup> For more information on decolonization see Winona Lu-Ann Stevenson, *Decolonizing Tribal Histories*. Diss. University of California, Berkeley, 2000; Waziyatawin Wilson, & Michael Yellowbird, eds. *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook* (Santa Fe: School of American Research, 2005).

<sup>62</sup> Poka Laenui, “Processes of Decolonization” in *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, ed. Marie Battiste (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), 150-159.

<sup>63</sup> bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge Press, 1994), 61.

was the first to publicly compare missions to concentration camps in 1946. In his book *Southern California Country: An Island on the Land*, he observed, “contact with the Missions meant death” and Franciscans “eliminated Indians with the effectiveness of Nazis operating concentration camps.”<sup>64</sup> Waziyatawin details the need for truth-telling, part of which is using accurate words to describe events and policies, because, “if the settler society denies the injustices of the past and present, then the impetus to maintain the status quo is strong; there is no recognized need for change.”<sup>65</sup> The AIHS sought to educate and inform the population, both Indians and non-Indians, and worked collaboratively and collectively toward critical consciousness and mutual understanding. Freire argues the reasoning for working with all members of society because, “Dehumanization which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also (though in a different way) those who have stolen it, is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human.”<sup>66</sup>

My research methodology is rooted in decolonization theory. A majority of my primary sources are from the Society. The Costos donated their personal papers and private collection to the University of California, Riverside (UCR) establishing the Rupert Costo Library of the American Indian at the Tomás Rivera Library. In part, the Costos selected UCR because its campus is within a fifty mile radius of twenty six reservations in southern California. In addition to the Costo library, the Costos endowed

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<sup>64</sup> Carey McWilliams, *Southern California Country: An Island on the Land* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce Publishing, 1946), 29.

<sup>65</sup> Waziyatawin, *What Does Justice Look Like? The Struggle for Liberation in Dakota Homeland*. (St. Paul: Living Justice Press, 2008), 83.

<sup>66</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 44.

an academic chair in American Indian affairs at UCR in 1986 largely with the profit from the sale of Chautauqua House, the AIHS formal headquarters in San Francisco.<sup>67</sup>

The Costo Library consists of approximately 117 linear feet of over 9,000 documents, books, pamphlets, photographs, tape recordings, slides, and artwork. For years, the collection was inaccessible because it initially went uncataloged. However, the initial finding aid for the Rupert and Jeannette Costo papers was designed and implemented by Sidney E. Berger, former head of Special Collections & Archives at UC Riverside, with the assistance of interns from UCLA and California State University, Fullerton. Former Costo Chair Cheryl Metoyer-Duran supervised Dawn Marsh who placed the raw data into an electronic database. In 2001 portions of the Costo collection were microfilmed by Primary Source Media. They consist of over 60 microfilm reels providing greater access to those outside of the Riverside area. Archivist Eric Milenkiewicz made additional revisions to the finding guide in 2009. The finding guide may be found at the “Online Archive of California” webpage.

The finding guide greatly assists with accessibility to the Costo collection; but portions of the collection remain unprocessed and selected material not microfilmed. For my dissertation, I utilized both the microfilm and uncataloged sources within the Costo collection. As a result, some of my citations list reel numbers while other citations indicate the finding guide listing.

As a formal organization, the AIHS left a substantial record of primary sources including meeting minutes, correspondences, and numerous publications such as a series

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<sup>67</sup> The professors appointed to the Rupert Costo Chair in American Indian Affairs have been: Florence C. Shipek 1987-1988; George Harwood Phillips 1988-1989; Donald A. Grinde 1989-1991; Richard Glazer-Danay 1991-1993; Cheryl A. Metoyer-Duran 1993-1997; Jack Norton 1997-1999; Joel Martin 1999-2000; and Clifford Trafzer, 2001 to the present.

of books, newspapers, and journals. Additionally, some of the activities of the AIHS made national news. It appeared in mainstream newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, Riverside's *The Press-Enterprise* and numerous San Francisco Bay Area periodicals. The California room in the California State Library, Sacramento, California holds various California periodicals that assisted in revealing the public response to the Society.

Rupert Costo testified before several congressional hearings and there is documented interaction between Costo and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). I visited the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) of the United States depositories at San Bruno and Laguna Niguel, California for records on Rupert Costo and the AIHS. The Laguna Niguel archives relocated to Perris, California in 2010. Thus, my citations list Laguna Niguel but the records now reside in Perris. Costo's student records from Haskell Indian Institute, later renamed Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, Kansas may be found at the NARA Central Plains Region, Kansas City. As a largely urban organization NARA held limited information on Costo and the AIHS. Unfortunately the Haskell Archives and Cultural Center had no permanent, professional staff and therefore is closed to archival research at this time.

I use oral interviews conducted by the Center for Oral and Public History at California State University, Fullerton during 1970 and 1971 on Indian urbanization. The section on public schools benefited from the California State Curriculum Commission records housed at California State University, Dominguez Hills. The Jack D. Forbes Special Collections located at the University of California, Davis holds a physical copy of the early mimeographed editions of *The Indian Historian* 1964-1967. A master's thesis

on national Indian newspapers completed by Janice-Faye Leach in 1974 from California State University, Fullerton includes an interview with Rupert Costo speaking about *Wassaja*. In 1983, the Costos attended a conference “Indian Self-Rule: Fifty Years Under the Indian Reorganization Act” sponsored by the Institute of the American West at Sun Valley, Idaho. The original recordings of this conference may be found at the American West Center Ethnic Archives at the University of Utah. The Presidential libraries of President Nixon and President Ford also contain letters from the AIHS. Finally, the University of California, Riverside conducted a series of oral interviews with people including Jeannette Henry-Costo and Costo family friend John Gabbert. Transcripts of the interviews may be found online at:

<http://www.ucrhistory.ucr.edu/index.html>.

Chapter two presents the backgrounds of Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry-Costo. An activist early in his life, Rupert Costo firmly rooted his activism to his Cahuilla tribal identity. Costo participated in the California Indian Rights Association (CIRA) and served as its spokesperson in Washington D.C. He also openly opposed the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). In Riverside County, located in southern California, all the tribes voted against the legislation. However, due to the BIA’s redefinition of majority, most had the IRA applied to their reservations. Not as much is known about Jeannette Henry-Costo’s early life, but upon her marriage to Rupert Costo she pursued causes important to California Indians and utilized her journalism skills to help form the

Society. Indeed, her strong commitment to California Indians led some to mistakenly identify her as California Indian from southern California.<sup>68</sup>

Chapter three details the founding of the American Indian Historical Society as a formal incorporated organization. The organization would eventually claim hundreds of members but only a core group, representing the diversity of the Indian community in California and across Indian country, regularly worked on issues. Many core members had previously participated in earlier organizations such as the Federated Indians of California (FIC). Rupert Costo, the only President of the AIHS, had an influential role in determining the actions of the group. For example, the Society took no action on the occupation of Alcatraz and instead many members viewed it critically because they were displeased with out-of-state Indians claiming historic homelands of the Ohlone. The Ohlone, the indigenous group of the San Francisco Bay Area is a federally unrecognized tribe. Their story is unique because of anthropological complexity in which early anthropologists labeled them “extinct,” and based on this judgment, Indians and non-Indians have dismissed them as non-Indian. The Society worked to support the Ohlone culture and its political position against Alcatraz.

Chapter four tackles Indian education in California. As a result of the 1924 *Piper v. Big Pine* decision, Indian students received guaranteed access to education in California public schools. The decision led to the majority of Indian students attending public schools. In 1965, the Society began its fight for the removal of negative stereotypes in history textbooks and worked to uncover hidden or commonly unknown

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<sup>68</sup> Carol Bower in an interview recorded by Kathy Biel, December 9, 1970, Home Gardens elementary school Corona, CA, O.H. # 495, Indian Urbanization, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton.

facts. Rupert Costo commented that every society “has educated its young according to the best interests of its dominant class. Perhaps this can change, and humanity be made to see itself face to face without fear and in spite of the pangs of conscience.”<sup>69</sup> The gathering of shared materials served as a significant goal for the AIHS. It promoted a shared, mutual informed understanding between Indians and non-Indians. The Society remained committed to informing and educating Indians and non-Indians in order to overcome misperceptions as a prologue to serious policy discussions. The Society continued to be dedicated to developing a dialogue between and among Indians and non-Indians.

Chapter five continues the discussion of public school education as the Society used direct action and held a series of workshops for teachers across the state in 1966. For some teachers, this was their first exposure to Indians. Approached by teachers attending the workshop in Berkeley, the Society was asked to examine the book *Land of the Oaks* used in the Oakland school district. The AIHS worked alongside with Indians residing in Oakland to have this offensive book removed. Ultimately, the workshops would be attended by over 1,652 educators. They returned to their classrooms with materials, teaching guides, and direct positive interaction with Indians.

Chapter six examines the Society’s endeavors in publishing. The AIHS established the first Indian-owned publishing press, Indian Historian Press (IHP) in 1969. Through the IHP, the Society published dozens of books that served as parallel publications to mainstream publications. The books selected for publication represented a myriad of tribal, geographical, and cultural areas. The AIHS also published *The Indian*

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<sup>69</sup> Rupert Costo, *The American Indian Reader: History*, ed. Jeannette Henry-Costo (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press, 1974), ix.

*Historian*, a scholarly journal which began circulation in 1964 dedicated to Indian history and culture. It attracted attention and article submissions from Indians and non-Indians. Looking to create something for younger readers, the Society also created *The Weewish Tree*. All of the publications shaped a sense of community between and among reservation and urban as it developed a cultural belonging through common readership.

Chapter seven reveals an additional AIHS publication, its national newspaper *Wassaja*, one of the first national Indian newspapers with original content. It began circulation in 1973. As a parallel news source, the newspaper offered alternatives to mainstream media stories which tended to trivialize Indian issues. According to Rupert Costo, Indian self-determination served as its guiding philosophy. For Costo and the Society, sharing accurate news information was a supporting tenet for self-determination. Through his editorial column, "Speaking Freely," Costo had a platform to share his opinions.

Chapter eight examines the Society's First Convocation of American Indian Scholars held March 1970 at Princeton University. With the aid of a Ford Foundation grant, the Society brought together Indian scholars, artists, traditional historians. They chose to limit the number of non-Indian participants to ten. Unlike the 1961 Chicago Conference, organized largely by anthropologist Sol Tax, the AIHS maintained Indian leadership. Thus Indians served as the creators, directors, and coordinators of the event. The AIHS provided a national platform that gave voice to the unique positions and concerns of Indian peoples.

In regard to my terminology used in reference to Indigenous peoples, whenever possible my personal preference is to identify a person or groups of individuals by their



self-identified Nation/Tribe. For many tribes there are many spelling variations of tribal names. For example, Miwok, Mewuk, and Miwuk have been employed. Many California Indians tribal name translate into meaning “the people” or received their tribal name from a neighboring tribe indicating a geographical location. For example, Ohlone is a Miwok word roughly meaning “people from the west” a description of the location in relation to the Miwok. In addition, some of the commonly accepted tribal names in use today derived from anthropologists or associations to missions. The Luiseño gained their name because of their proximity to the San Luis Rey mission. Although variations exist, I will use the tribal name that an individual self-identifies with and uses.

I will use the term “California Indian” to refer to individuals indigenous to traditional and historic homelands and territories within the relatively new state borders. Prior to contact and statehood, a broad California Indian identity did not exist. However, in the contemporary environment a California Indian identity exists and is directly tied to land and cultural markers of the land. In *The Dirt is Red Here: Art and Poetry from Native California* editor Margaret Dubin comments, “within these [California] landscapes, certain abiding materials-abalone, clamshell, beargrass, acorn, black walnut, elderberry-have transcended their roles in the natural environment to become signs of ethnic distinction and community membership.” Dubin shares the story of Linda Aguilar, Chumash, who “signs her baskets made of horsehair and pine needles-materials not traditional to most California tribes with small shards of abalone or clamshell, [by this] she is proclaiming membership not just in her tribe, but in the California Indian

community.”<sup>70</sup> Bradley Marshall, Hupa, described how he gifted a miniature purse made from an elk antler to a friend. The friend prominently displayed it from his truck’s rearview mirror, where it identified him as Indian among non-Indians, northern California Indian among California tribes, and Hupa among local Klamath River tribes.<sup>71</sup>

A California Indian identity emerged out of shared history, common cultural markers, collective experiences of government policies and to distinguish between those indigenous to the lands of what is now California and Indians who are not indigenous to the lands but reside in the state. While someone can identify as California Indian this does not dissuade them from joining tribal organizations. For example, Cahuilla tribal members from several reservations joined the Cahuilla Birdsingers group. Historic and contemporary intermarriage among California Indian peoples, largely due to the relatively small population and cultural taboo of marrying someone too closely related to your clan or family, contributes to a shared California Indian identity resulting in multitribal people with extended family of different tribal identities.

Of course, one must be careful not to generalize too much about a California Indian identity. Although a shared identity has emerged, cultural differences still exist and tribal groups tend to have more cultural similarities with regional neighbors. For example, the state-wide California Indian Basketweavers Association (CIBA) has regional groups for northern California and southern California. The subgrouping within the organization illustrates a tribal basketweaver from the northern California Pit River tribe would have more cultural similarities including materials and possibly designs used

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<sup>70</sup> Margaret Dubin, ed., *The Dirt is Red Here: Art and Poetry from Native California* (Berkeley: Heyday Press, 2002), x-xi.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

in basketweaving to someone from the Maidu tribe than the southern California Chumash tribe.

Governmental policies encouraged a collapse of tribal identity. For example, Indians from southern California were commonly referred to as “Mission Indian,” a generic term indicating the influence of the Catholic religion, on most federal government documents for several years.<sup>72</sup> In spite of this erroneous label, California Indians from southern California maintained their tribal identities. In discussing Cahuilla tribal identity, Anthony Andreas of the Palm Springs reservation remarked on conversations with his grandmother, “I know [I am Cahuilla] because I was told by my grandmother.” He continued, “They call us Mission Indians, but she said, ‘We are not Mission Indians, we are Cahuilla.’”<sup>73</sup> In this manner, regardless of what federal documents listed, family members insisted on maintaining their tribal identities.

Many organizations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century existed with multitribal members. Thus, I will be employing the terms Indigenous or Indian interchangeably to describe groups of people who share common historical experiences vis-à-vis to non-Indigenous peoples.<sup>74</sup> The term Indigenous embraces the beliefs held by many peoples that their ancestors’

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<sup>72</sup> The mainstream press also used the term “Mission Indian,” see William H. Weiland, “Mission Indians of California: Present Condition of a Race that is Rapidly Growing Extinct,” *The Los Angeles Times*, April 16, 1899, 8.

<sup>73</sup> Deborah Dozier, *The Heart is Fire: The World of Cahuilla Indians of Southern California* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1998) 23.

<sup>74</sup> For more discussion on Indian identity see Eva Marie Garrouette, *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Sandy Grande, *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004); Kimberly Tallbear, “DNA, Blood, and Racializing the Tribe,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 18, no. 1(Spring, 2003): 81-107; Michael Yellow Bird, “Decolonizing Tribal Enrollment” in *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook*, eds. Waziyatawin Angela Wilson and Michael Yellow Bird (Santa Fe: School of American Research, 2005); Michael Yellow Bird, “What we Want to be Called: Indigenous Peoples’ Perspectives on Racial and Ethnic Identity Labels,” *American Indian Quarterly* 23 (Spring, 1999): 1-21.

origins are from this hemisphere and lands. Thus, the term Indigenous acknowledges the historic and cultural ties to the lands and recognizes that those who resided on the lands had a lengthy history prior to contact with Europeans. While the term Indian has fallen out of use and Native American or Native is used by some, my preference is to identify the tribal group and broadly use Indian or Indigenous.

## CHAPTER 2

### “WE’VE NEVER FAILED AT ANYTHING”: RUPERT COSTO, JEANNETTE

#### HENRY-COSTO, LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVISM

Driving toward the University of California in Riverside on highway 60, motorists can see orange groves in the distance, a reminder of the once thriving citrus industry in the region. In the spring and if a slight breeze is in the air, one can catch the scent of eucalyptus trees and blooming flowers. Nearing campus and exiting University Avenue, drivers are greeted by an unexpectedly colorful mural painted on the underpass. Known as the Gluck Gateway Mural, the mural includes a depiction of Rupert Costo, Cahuilla, and Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee, a prominent Indian couple who helped found the campus in 1954 and donated their personal papers and private collection to the campus. In the mural, they stand under a painted arch, with children sitting at their feet examining Indian basketry. The special collection, known as the Rupert Costo Library of the American Indian, is located on the fourth floor of the Tomás Rivera Library. Within the Library is the Costo Room, which houses books, photographs, art, and baskets previously owned by the Costos. Tucked away in the corner is a small, worn, roller shutter wood desk with several cubbyholes that the Costos used during their tireless activist work. It now stands empty in a corner; yet when used by the Costos, it overflowed with pending legislation, newspapers, early drafts of books and articles, letters, and perhaps even a photograph of the couple.

To understand the reasons the Costos sought fundamental change of the treatment of Indians in California, one must reflect on the unique history of the state and how Indians were viewed as inherently inferior. Anthropologists completed the first published

works in English on California Indians and their original findings cast a shadow on subsequent studies on California Indians. The motivation for the early collection of sketches or photographs; languages; music; religions; rituals; regalia; customs; artifacts; in part resulted from the idea of Indians as a disappearing race. Eventually, the process of collecting these various items became known as “salvage anthropology.” Franz Boas, a major founder of American anthropology, trained Alfred Kroeber, who played a significant role in creating the foundational texts on California Indians.

A student of Franz Boas, Kroeber embraced the Boasian school of cultural relativism and sought examples of pure cultures. Kroeber had little interest in what he termed “bastard” cultures resulting from acculturation.<sup>75</sup> He arrived to California in 1901, in part, out of an interest to record “native primitive culture before it went all to pieces.”<sup>76</sup> He excluded any discussion on colonization or the remarkable struggle of California Indians to survive. Instead, he wanted to document undisturbed cultural traits. As a result, Kroeber constructed an incomplete picture of California Indians without contextualizing the reasons for cultural loss and population decline. Kroeber’s decision to pursue studies on pure cultures left an ugly legacy in which subsequent scholars chose to view California tribal groups as extinct or not legitimate Indians.

One of Kroeber’s lasting legacies is his relationship with Ishi, called “the last Yahi Indian” by Kroeber and the last “wild” Indian by the mainstream press. A headline

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<sup>75</sup> A.L. Kroeber, *Anthropology: Race, Language, Culture, Psychology, Prehistory* (1942; reprint, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1948), 427.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

from *The San Francisco Call* read “Ishi: The Last Aboriginal Savage in America.”<sup>77</sup>

Found and captured in 1911 near Oroville, a small town about seventy miles north of Sacramento, he lived the last remaining five years of his life at the University of California, Berkeley. The fascination and near romanticism of Ishi as the last “wild” Indian resulted in numerous books, movies, plays, poetry and art. Collectively, California Indians worked towards the repatriation of Ishi’s brain, removed without his prior permission and sent to the Smithsonian Museum after autopsy.<sup>78</sup> Ishi’s brain and remains recieved a ceremony in 2000.

In the 1960s, Robert Heizer represented a shift in California Indian studies and subsequent anthropologists began to move away from “salvage anhrpology.” He published strong condemnations of the historic treatment of California Indians.<sup>79</sup> However, some of Heizer’s works contain justifications for rape and violence against California Indians.<sup>80</sup> The early anthropological and archeological studies on California Indians created a foundation with a skewed framework and knowledge base. It is this environment that galvanized the Society to approach a re-writing of California Indian

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<sup>77</sup> For examples of discriminatory and condescending terminology see “Ishi: The Last Aboriginal Savage in America,” *The San Francisco Call*, October 8, 1911, 4; “No Pow wow for Lone Yana Indian,” *The San Francisco Call*, September 14, 1911, 3; “Ishi Loses Heart to ‘Blond Squaw,’” *The San Francisco Call*, October 16, 1911, 1; “The Only Man in America who Knows no Christmas-Ishi,” *The San Francisco Call*, December 17, 1911, 33.

<sup>78</sup> Leanne Hinton, “Ishi’s Brain,” *News from Native California* 13, no. 1 (Fall 1999): 4-9; Orin Starr, *Ishi’s Brain: In Search of America’s Last “Wild” Indian* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004).

<sup>79</sup> Robert F. Heizer, ed., *The Destruction of California Indians: A Collection of Documents from the Period 1847 to 1865 in Which are Described Some of the Things That Happened to Some of the Indians of California* (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith Inc., 1974); Robert F. Heizer, ed., *They Were Only Diggers: a Collection of Articles from California Newspapers, 1851-1866, on Indian and White Relations* (Ramona: Ballena Press, 1974); Robert F. Heizer, ed., *Federal Concern about Conditions of California Indians 1853-1913: Eight Documents* (Socorro: NM: Ballena Press, 1979).

<sup>80</sup> Robert F. Heizer, “Impact of Colonization on the Native California Societies,” *Journal of San Diego History* 24 (Winter 1978): 7.

history. Its efforts to inform the public became a foundational tenant as the organization worked to bring about change.

The “master narrative” of American history is the story of continual progress towards increasing greatness. New terminology emerged to describe the actions of the United States of America as divinely approved. Newspaper editor John O’Sullivan coined the term “manifest destiny” in 1841 to describe the inevitable victory in the war between Mexico and the United States of America. Although the term initially applied solely to the Texas conflict, its usage expanded to include any westward movement as divinely designed destiny.<sup>81</sup>

During much of the nineteenth century, most Californians adopted the concept of “manifest destiny.” Historian James Rawls observes many Californians embraced the metaphor of an advancing white “sun” advancing upon the “dissipating,” “melting,” “fading,” of California Indians.<sup>82</sup> In part, the word selection utilizes the imagery of a natural process of divine light overpowering darkness. Further, the benign language assuages any potential shadows of moral responsibility felt by Californians. Many California citizens internalized the metaphor and fundamentally believed Indians were vanishing and rarely questioned the violence perpetuated against California Indians.

To reaffirm the story of exception and destiny, until relatively recently American historians focused on the experiences of wealthy, landowning white males and excluded the diverse stories of additional populations in the United States. The national history that

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<sup>81</sup> Ronald Takaki, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1993), 176.

<sup>82</sup> James J. Rawls, *Indians of California: The Changing Image* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1984), 172-175.



emerged celebrated the expansion of political liberty while treating slavery, genocide, and oppression as simple aberrations in the larger story. Rupert Costo commented on the problems with previous historical methodology observing, “The dominant society has tilted and twisted history in such a way as to serve its own best interests,” and he concluded, “A massive re-write of American history is long overdue.”<sup>83</sup>

Cultural differences between Indians and non-Indians reached a level where Indigenous peoples were determined to be naturally inferior in opposition to the perceived superiority of the dominant society. By the time white Americans arrived to what became known as California, many of them carried racist attitudes developed by their ancestors, or in the case of southerners practiced by them which categorized non-whites as less than human. Usurpers to California used similar tactics of extermination developed in other states but within a dramatically shorter time frame with devastating results.

California Indians maintained the majority population until the discovery of gold. Formal colonization began in 1769 with the establishment of the San Diego mission, the first in a series of Spanish Franciscan missions and *presidios* along the coast of Alta California eventually totaling twenty-one with the last mission built in 1823. California Indians labored in the agricultural fields, built the missions buildings, and could not leave the missions. The exponential non-Indian population boom of “forty-niners” seeking gold radically accelerated approval of statehood as non-Indian residents sought statehood in 1849. In 1848 about 13,000 whites and *Californios* resided in California. Within one

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<sup>83</sup> Rupert Costo, *The American Indian Reader: History*, ed. Jeannette Henry-Costo (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1974), viii.

year, more than 65,000 immigrants arrived and by 1854 the non-Indian state population stood at an estimated 300,000.<sup>84</sup>

In contrast, the California Indian population decreased by, at a minimum, an estimated eighty percent to about 30,000 during the gold rush.<sup>85</sup> The discovery of gold hastened statehood and within a year of its discovery, California became the 31<sup>st</sup> state to join the union in 1850 as a “free state.” Gold prospects and calls for adequate cattle grazing land led the California government and private citizens to lobby Congress to not ratify eighteen treaties of “peace and friendship” negotiated 1851-1852 with California Indian peoples.

Three Indian commissioners traveled throughout the state and successfully negotiated treaties which set aside about eight million acres for reservation lands. In exchange for conceding any claims to their homelands, California Indians received promises of reservation lands but ultimately received neither. Commonly referred to as the “eighteen unratified treaties,” Congress’ decision to not publicly debate the California treaties meant they did not appear in the regular congressional record and instead were sent to the Department of Interior and filed with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. There they remained a secret because Congress ordered an injunction of secrecy per its rules on

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<sup>84</sup> Michael Kowalewskin ed., *Gold Rush: A Literary Exploration* (Berkeley: Heyday Books & California Council for Humanities, 1997), xv-xix.

<sup>85</sup> Population figures vary depending on the source. There is no manner to determine the California Indian population prior to contact. Some scholars accept anthropologist Alfred Kroeber’s estimate of 300,000. However, anthropologist Florence Shippek, Hupa scholar Jack Norton, and Rupert Costo argue the population was as high as one million. For more information see Albert L. Hurtado, *Indian Survival on the California Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); Lenore A. Stiffarm, and Phil Lane, Jr., “The Demography of Native North America: A Question of American Indian Survival” in *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance*, ed. Jamies, M. Annette (Boston: South End Press, 1992) 23-53.

treaty-making.<sup>86</sup> The injunction of secrecy was lifted in 1905. Treaties negotiated with California Indians occurred when the federal government sought a different policy of dealing with Indians and it formally ceased negotiating treaties with Indians in 1871.

When the United States assumed ownership of what became known as California, it encountered an economic system put in place initially by Spain and continued under Mexican rule since its 1821 independence from Spain. Indian peoples served as the primary labor force working in agriculture and ranching.<sup>87</sup> Through Catholic conversion Spaniards believed they could transform Indians into *gente de razón* (people of reason).<sup>88</sup>

In 1833 Mexico passed a series of laws secularizing California's missions. Secularization turned over the missions to clergy who divided former mission lands among Indian converts. The desire for privatizing land derived from Mexico's need for tax-paying citizens. Additionally, Mexico had growing concerns surrounding the increasing Russian and American presence encroaching into Mexico's territory. According to Mexican law, Indian converts were to receive half of all tools, seed, and

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<sup>86</sup> George Harwood Phillips, *Indians and Indian Agents: The Origins of the Reservation System in California, 1849-185* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997). For a differing opinion on the eighteen unratified treaties see: Harry Kelsey, "The California Indian Treaty Myth," *Southern California Quarterly* 55 (Fall 1973):225-238.

<sup>87</sup> David J. Weber, ed., *Foreigners in Their Native Land: Historical Roots of the Mexican Americans* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973).

<sup>88</sup> Douglas Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers: The Making of Mexican Culture in Frontier California*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 22-28. Monroy defines *gente de razón* or people of reason as: Catholic, Castilian-speaking, settling in tax-paying towns, working in agriculture, and loyal to the king of Spain. Intrinsic to the concept is California Indian peoples could become reasonable, thinking people. Nearly 54,000 baptisms were recorded during the mission period. For more information see Sherburne F. Cook, *The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization: The Indian Versus the Spanish Mission* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).

livestock belonging to the missions.<sup>89</sup> However, *Californios* defied the law and confiscated huge tracts of land for themselves and established private *ranchos*.<sup>90</sup>

While the landowners may have changed from the Church to private *Californio* families, the majority of forced Indian labor remained intact.<sup>91</sup> In the abstract some *Californios* may have entertained the idea that Indians could transform into *gente de razón* but their economic success depended on the continued exploitation of Indian labor. As a result many *Californios* viewed California Indians as little more than tools to be used in furthering their consolidation of wealth and economic prosperity.

In the aftermath of the war between Mexico and the United States, America obtained much of its western territory, including California, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and parts of Wyoming and Colorado, with the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The American economic system had no place for Indian peoples, particularly after the discovery of gold. As a result, many white American migrants perceived California Indians as a threat to their access to lands and gold prospects.

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<sup>89</sup> George Harwood Phillips, "Indians and the Breakdown of the Spanish Mission System in California," *Ethnohistory* 2 (Fall 1974): 299.

<sup>90</sup> *Californios* is a descriptive term for California born Mexicans. A familiar name for many is Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo who was one of eight *Californios* who served on California's 1849 constitutional convention and elected to the first state senate. It is important to note that the state constitution appeared in English and Spanish though an 1855 constitutional law negated the requirement that laws appear in English and Spanish. Although the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo formally protected previous land titles issued under Mexican rule, Vallejo had costly challenges to his land title under the 1851 Land Act. Ultimately he died in poverty having lost the vast majority of his huge land holdings. The Bay Area city of Vallejo carries his name in the area of his former land holdings. *Californios*, automatically became American citizens under the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, but faced discrimination such as the 1850 Foreign Miner's Tax requiring a twenty dollar monthly fee to mine and the 1855 Anti-Vagrancy Act known informally as the "Greaser Act" which targeted those of "Spanish and Indian blood."

<sup>91</sup> Robert H. Jackson and Edward Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995).

When Californians developed its state constitution, residents moved quickly to unilaterally restrict any rights of California Indians. As non-citizens, California Indians had no legal rights in a court of law and could not testify against whites.<sup>92</sup> Further, as non-citizens, California Indians had no property rights to their lands. Many Americans viewed California Indians as impediments to the development and prosperity of the state particularly as gold decreased and the state economy shifted to agriculture and cattle.<sup>93</sup> However, with the shifting state economy, California turned to exploiting Indians for labor and some emigrants hailed from southern states and accepted servitude.

Thus, the economic prosperity of the state of California was based on two formal policies of extermination and Indian slavery. These state sponsored policies appear to have faded from the public memory. The first Governor of California, Peter H. Burnett, addressed California Indian extermination in his 1851 annual state address in which he asserted, “That a war of extermination will continue to be waged between the races, until the Indian race becomes extinct, must be expected.” He continued, “While we cannot anticipate this result but with painful regret, the inevitable destiny of the race is beyond the power or wisdom of man to avert.”<sup>94</sup> To encourage extermination, various towns and

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<sup>92</sup> Vanessa Ann Gunther, *Ambiguous Justice: Native Americans and the Law in Southern California, 1848-1890* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2006).

<sup>93</sup> Edward D. Castillo, “The Impact of Euro-American Exploration and Settlement,” *California: Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 8, ed. Robert F. Heizer (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 99-127.

<sup>94</sup> Peter H. Burnett, “Governor’s Annual Message to the Legislature, January 7, 1851,” *Journals of the Senate and Assembly of the State of California, at the Second Session of the Legislature, 1851-1852*, (San Francisco: G.K. Fitch & Co., and V.E. Geiger & Co., State Printers, 1852), 13.

counties paid bounties that ranged from twenty five cents to five dollars for scalps, severed heads, or other items of satisfactory evidence.<sup>95</sup>

In its first session, the California legislature passed “An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians” in 1850, months before gaining official statehood as a free state. Despite its innocuous name, it legalized slavery of California Indians and established an “apprentice” program for children with the promise, but no enforcement, to feed, clothe, and treat the children humanely. According to the law, Indians could be arrested based on the “complaint of any resident” for “loitering” or “strolling about.” Further, if authorities determined an arrested Indian to be a “vagrant” they could be auctioned within twenty-four hours to the highest bidder for a length not to exceed four months. An 1860 amendment extended the length of servitude and further expanded the opportunity for whites to gain children apprentices by appearing before a county or district judge to prove the children had been obtained through consent of parents or “persons having the care or charge of any such child or children.” The purposefully ambiguous language expanded the number of people who could claim rights to Indian children and their labor.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Brendan C. Lindsay *Murder State: California's Native American Genocide, 1846-1973* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012); William B. Secrest, *When the Great Spirit Died: The Destruction of the California Indians 1850-1860* (Sanger: Word Dancer Press, 2003); Clifford E. Trafzer and Joel R. Hyer eds., *Exterminate Them! Written Accounts of the Murder, Rape, and Enslavement of Native Americans during the California Gold Rush* (East Lansing: Michigan State University: 1999).

<sup>96</sup> Kimberly Johnston-Dodds, *Early California Laws and Policies Related to California Indian: Prepared at the Request of Senator John L. Burton, President pro Tempore* (Sacramento: California Research Bureau, California State Library, September 2002); Kimberly Johnston-Dodds, “Bearing Archival Witness to Euro-American Violence Against California Indians, 1847-1866: Decolonizing Northern California Historiography,” MA thesis, California State University, Sacramento, 2009.

Violent crimes such as rape, murders, and kidnappings of California Indians increased dramatically. An 1862 *Daily Alta California* article observed, men “have for years made it their profession to capture and sell Indians, the price ranging from \$30 to \$150, according to quality.” The article continued to describe the rise in murders by men who do not hesitate, “to murder in cold blood all the old ones, in order that they may safely possess themselves of all the offspring.”<sup>97</sup>

Repealed in 1863, shortly after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, the policy supported through state legislation ensured slavery existed in California for thirteen years despite its entrance into the United States as a free state.<sup>98</sup> The law had devastating consequences for California Indians. This California legislation directly challenges the perception of California as a free state, uniquely filled with economic prosperity and opportunities from its founding. A law central to the economic growth of the state appeared to disappear from the non-Indian public memory and replaced with glorious stories of hard-working and virtuous families which single-handedly transformed the wild frontier.<sup>99</sup> The silence about California Indian slavery and extermination, policies central to the establishment of the state, illustrates the process of history and formal education erasing the historical experiences of California Indian peoples. Additionally, the erasure maintains a state narrative that creates an indisputable “truth” which excludes histories and perpetuates ignorance of its citizens.

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<sup>97</sup> “Indian Slavery,” *Daily Alta California*, April 14, 1862, 1.

<sup>98</sup> Stacy L. Smith, *Freedom’s Frontier: California and the Struggle Over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

<sup>99</sup> Michael F. Magliari, “Free State Slavery: Bound Indian Labor and Slave Trafficking in California’s Sacramento Valley, 1850-1864,” *Pacific Historical Review* 81 (May 2012): 155-192.

The dehumanization of Indians largely rationalized violence and state sponsored genocide. As a result, any form of resistance by California Indians against non-Indians was portrayed as “hostile” or “savage.” Examples of this portrayal appear in newspaper accounts which blamed California Indians for murders, stealing, and other crimes in the state while positioning whites as innocents forced to retaliate.

California’s leading newspaper *Daily Alta California* provides a window into the portrayal. In an article, an unnamed author describes a violent encounter quite benignly, “A difficulty took place between Indians and miners in the vicinity of Tehama, growing out of sundry thefts and depredations, peculiar to the savage race.” It continues, “The Americans goaded beyond endurance, rose in a body and slaughtered fifteen or twenty belonging to one tribe.”<sup>100</sup> By characterizing Indians as a “savage race,” the article constructed the violence against Indians as necessary and justified. Further, it supports the miners’ violent action as it described them as being “goaded” by the “savage race.”

Overwhelmingly, California newspapers regularly described the “savage” nature of Indians, however some articles demonstrated unease over the violence practiced towards Indians. For example, *Daily Alta California* published an editorial in which the unnamed author commented, “we hope that the miners and people generally will pause and let reason and justice guide their conduct toward the ignorant starving savages.” The editorial called for legislators and those in public office to “use their influence to prevent the effusion of blood. There is a question of justice, of humanity, of right, or religion”<sup>101</sup> In an obtuse manner, the author supported the humanity of Indians though they continued

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<sup>100</sup> “Fortnight’s News Items,” *Daily Alta California*, March 16, 1853, 1.

<sup>101</sup> “Our Indian Difficulties,” *Daily Alta California*, January 15, 1851, 2.



to characterize Indians as “ignorant starving savages” and called on non-Indians sense of religion to reject violence. The early process of internalizing the perceived “savage” nature of California Indians, from the state’s founding, and the normalizing of violent treatment they received led to California Indians histories being inherently manipulated or erased. Thus, the Costos and the Society sought to reveal the historic truth to Indians and non-Indians.

Over the course of his lifetime, Rupert Isadore Costo directly engaged in politics and spoke out in support of Indian peoples. Born in 1906 when letters served as the primary form of personal communication, as an adult Costo regularly signed off his correspondences as “a Cahuilla man.”<sup>102</sup> By signing his letters in such a manner, he spoke volumes symbolically. The communications Costo wrote served as a declaration that a proud Cahuilla continued to live, despite government policies created to disparage and destroy tribal Indian culture and identity. In October 1989, Costo passed away at the age of eighty three. During his life he witnessed dramatic changes in federal government Indian policy.

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<sup>102</sup> The records list different years for Costo’s birth: 1904, 1906, and 1908. Rupert’s father Isadore Costo’ Department of Interior marriage card lists 1904 as Rupert’s birth year. Rupert’s Department of Interior individual history card lists his birth year as 1904. A letter from the Department of Interior included a certification of eligibility for allotment and lists his birth year as 1906. His application for Haskell Institute lists his birth year as 1908. However, Costo himself identified 1906 as his birth year and in the 1910 U.S. Census he is listed as 4 years old and in the 1930 U.S. Census he is listed as 24 years old. In some records he is referred to as Ruford Costo. See:

Marriage Card and Individual History Card; Costo, Rupert, Victor, Isadore; Individual Indian files, 1933-1947; Mission Indian Agency; Record Group (RG) 75; National Archives and Records Administration-Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel (NARA, Laguna Niguel).

Personal correspondence, Robert Seitz, Department of Interior, Area Real Property Officer to Rupert Costo, August 21, 1964, Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry Costo papers, reel 16, *The Rupert Costo Archive of the American Indian filmed from the holdings of the Rupert Costo Library of the American Indian in the Department of Special Collections at the University of California at Riverside*. Native America: a primary record series, 1. Woodbridge, Conn: Primary Source Microfilm, 2001 (Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001).

Application for enrollment in a nonreservation school; Rupert Costo student case file; Student Case Files 1884-1980; Haskell Indian Nations University; RG 75; National Archives and Records Administration-Central Plains Region, Kansas City (NARA, Kansas City).



Figure 2 Gluck Gateway Mural. Photograph courtesy of author.

Born prior to the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act in 1924, Costo grew up in an era when Indian peoples were not viewed as citizens of the United States. At the time of his passing, former Chancellor Rosemary S. J. Schraer of the University of California, Riverside (UCR) remembered him as a, “man of great strength,” whose myriad of works and accomplishments, “truly have made and will make a difference in the lives of thousands of people over many generations.” Good friend and former state appeals Judge John Gabbert noted that “His [Costo’s] writing was motivated out of deep love of the truth.” Eugene Madrigal, a former spokesperson and fellow tribal member from the Cahuilla reservation located near the town of Anza in southern California, described Costo as an outspoken individual, who had a great effect on any audience. Madrigal commented, “There are so few California Indian individuals who have spoken out like that.”<sup>103</sup>

An epitaph by the editors of *News from Native California* detailed Costo. It described him as “a man of heroic proportions, an intellectual giant, a person of immense courage and deep passion. When he spoke, the room fell silent and everyone listened.”<sup>104</sup> Costo, with his deep, gravely voice, had a strong personality and could be dogmatic, but he also enjoyed the quiet. Joseph Senungetuk, Alaskan Native, recalled how Costo enjoyed tending his twenty-one rose bushes in the front courtyard of the Chautauqua

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<sup>103</sup> David Bloom, “Rupert Costo, American Indian Activist, Dies at 83,” *The Press-Enterprise*, October 21, 1989, B2.

<sup>104</sup> “With Respect,” *News from Native California* 4, no. 1 (Fall 1989): 1.

House, the official headquarters of the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or The Society) in San Francisco, and a good cup of freshly ground French roast coffee.<sup>105</sup>

Affectionately known as “Rupe” by family and close friends, Rupert Costo came from a family that actively participated in government and politics on the Cahuilla reservation. The Costo family represented an intergenerational tradition of leadership and activism, rooted in Cahuilla tribalism. His paternal Uncle Juan Costo served as a committee member, the guiding governing body prior to the formation of tribal councils. Another paternal Uncle Gabriel “Gabe” Costo served as spokesperson. Additionally, Costo’s younger brother, Gilbert Sloan “Skip,” Costo and first cousin Sylvester Costo, son of Juan Costo, served as tribal council members and spokesperson.<sup>106</sup> A large stature man who stood about six feet, Costo along with several of his brothers and cousins played football during their youth. Costo’s immediate family resided in local communities off the reservation including Hemet and San Diego; however, the family maintained cattle on the reservation and his extended family lived on the Cahuilla reservation. Costo and his siblings attended public schools and colleges. For example, his brother Skip earned a college degree in agriculture from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. However, Skip Costo considered himself a professional musician, as he was a prodigy playing the piano by age three.

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<sup>105</sup> Joseph Senungetuk, “Change is in the Words,” *Anchorage Daily News*, November 12, 1989, E3.

<sup>106</sup> Philip French, “Cahuilla Spokesman Costo Dies,” *The Press-Enterprise*, September 20, 2001, B1.

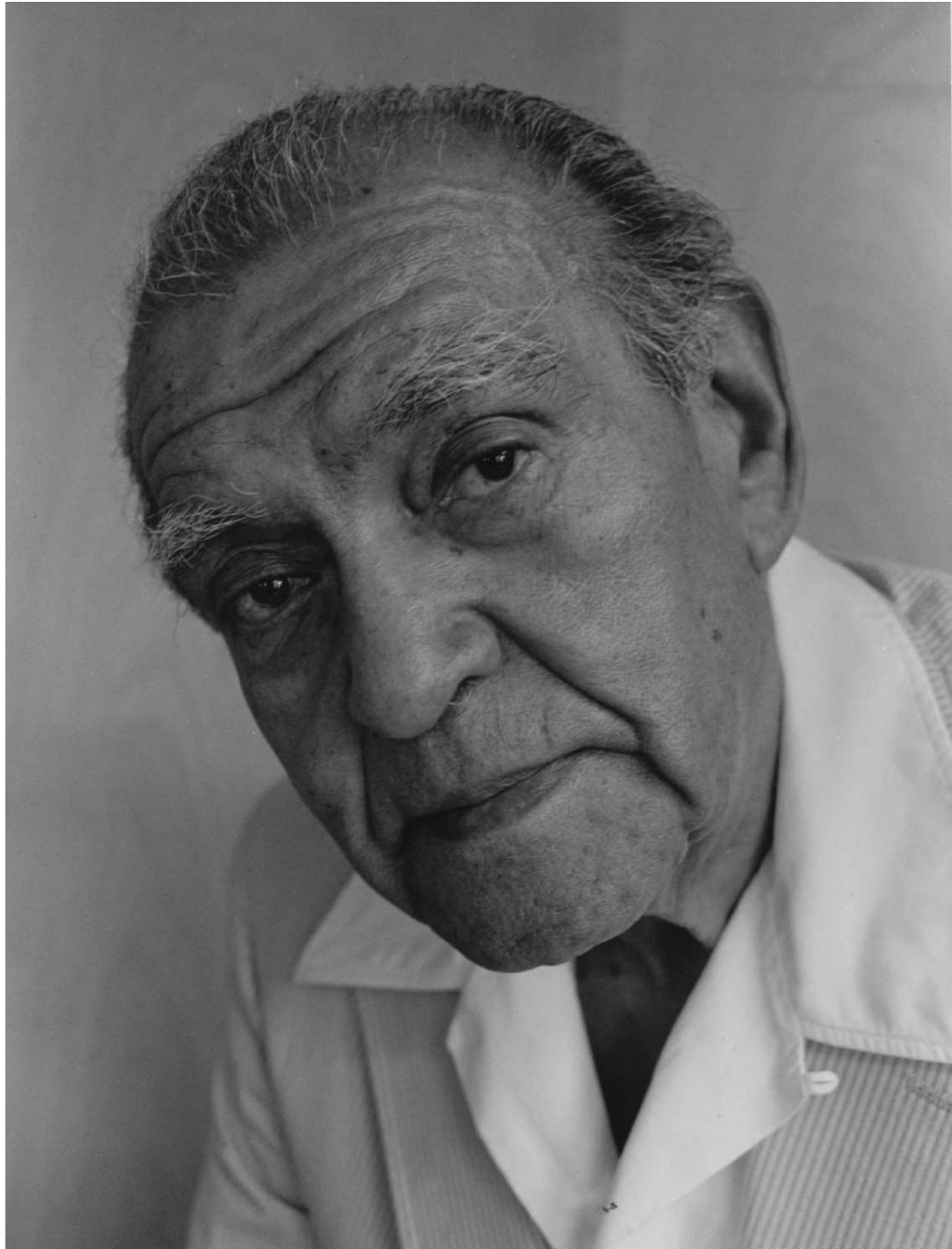


Figure 3 Rupert Costo. Used by permission of Special Collections & Archives, UCR Libraries, University of California, Riverside.

Costo's immediate family also received recognition for their participation in local economies and events. His mother, Mariana (née Cabrillas), Luiseño from the Rincon reservation, regularly appeared in the Ramona Pageant held in Hemet for decades, reprising the role of Mara based on Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 fictional book *Ramona*.<sup>107</sup> Indeed, Costo's youngest brother, Felipe, was named after the character Felipe Moreno from Jackson's book.<sup>108</sup> His father, Isadore, participated in the burgeoning citrus industry and is generally credited with planting one of the first naval orange trees in the area and worked as one of the earliest citrus nurserymen.<sup>109</sup> Costo's sister, Martina Costo recalled their father spoke four languages fluently: English, Spanish, Cahuilla and Soboba dialects. According to the 1940 federal census, Costo's parents completed school through ninth grade, revealing a strong family belief valuing formal education.

During the 1950s, Costo and his brother Skip worked along with local community members, including Bill Bradford, to establish an electric cooperative known as Anza Electric Co-op that provided electricity to local rural areas and the Cahuilla reservation. Bradford recalls he and Costo traveled to Sacramento to speak with state legislators, including State Senator Nelson Dilworth, about establishing the electric cooperative. Costo suggested they both wear Levi jeans to impress the legislators and emphasize their agricultural and ranching roots. Upon arrival at the Sacramento Hotel, Costo leaned over

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<sup>107</sup> "Ramona Player has had Role for 22 Seasons," *The Los Angeles Times*, April 16, 1949, 6; *The Indian Historian* 2, no. 4 (April/May 1965).

<sup>108</sup> "Indian Boy has Played Ramona Parts Since Baby," *The Los Angeles Times*, April 8, 1937, A9.

<sup>109</sup> Martina Costo in an interview recorded by Georgina Brown, May 31, 1971, 11652 East Everson Norwall, CA home of Costo, O.H. #558, Indian Urbanization, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton; Lester Reed, *Old Timers of Southeastern California* (Redlands: Citrograph Printing Co., 1967), 14.

the counter and his worn jeans tore, leaving a gaping hole. He wanted to change clothes but Bradford reminded him it was his idea to wear jeans. Costo responded, “Ok, damn you,” and proceeded to wear his torn jeans to the meetings.<sup>110</sup>

Costo served as elected tribal spokesperson of the Cahuilla reservation during much of the 1960s while residing in San Francisco.<sup>111</sup> An internal BIA biographical sketch of 1962 described Costo as “very loud and forceful” and further noted he “does not have any respect for the Bureau or its employees.” The sketch concluded, “We do not see how he can carry out the duties of Spokesman very effectively since he lives so far from the reservation.”<sup>112</sup> Nevertheless, he was elected again as spokesperson in 1965. The BIA biographical sketch noted he lived in San Francisco for about ten years but removed personal opinion and described him as a “forceful speaker” who “expresses himself very well.”<sup>113</sup> Costo’s election as the Cahuilla reservation spokesperson while

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<sup>110</sup> “Anza Valley Seeks Electric Power,” *The Los Angeles Times*, April 2, 1951, A8; “Power, Smiles Flowing,” *The Press-Enterprise*, May 21, 2001, B1. See: <http://www.anzaelectric.org/>

<sup>111</sup> Elected for a one year term in 1962, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, see: Arthur N. Arntson to Rupert Costo, Spokesman Cahuilla Band of Mission Indians 3 June 1965, Cahuilla Elections 1963-1972, Tribal Elections 1947-1972 from Augustine to Mesa Grande, Southern California Agency, RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

Arthur N. Arntson, Riverside Area Field Office to Rupert Costo, Spokesman Cahuilla Band of Mission Indians 11 June 1967, Cahuilla Elections 1963-1972, Tribal Elections 1947-1972 from Augustine to Mesa Grande, Southern California Agency, RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

Jess T. Town, Area Field Representative to Rupert Costo, Spokesman Cahuilla Band of Mission Indians 16 January 1969, Cahuilla Elections 1963-1972, Tribal Elections 1947-1972 from Augustine to Mesa Grande, Southern California Agency, RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

Frank L. Haggerty Jr., Acting Agent Field Representative to Rupert Costo, Spokesman Cahuilla Band of Luiseno Indians, 25 July 1969, Cahuilla Elections 1963-1972, Tribal Elections 1947-1972 from Augustine to Mesa Grande, Southern California Agency, RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>112</sup> Cahuilla Tribal Business Committee Biographical Sketch of Members 1962, Cahuilla Elections 1947-1962, Tribal Elections 1947-1972 from Augustine to Mesa Grande, Southern California Agency, RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>113</sup> Cahuilla Tribal Business Committee Biographical Sketch of Members 1965, Cahuilla Elections 1963-1972, Tribal Elections 1947-1972 from Augustine to Mesa Grande, Southern California Agency, RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

living in San Francisco counters the reservation vs. urban dichotomy. He faced opposition from other candidates yet Cahuilla tribal members continued to vote for him even with electoral alternatives who lived on the Cahuilla reservation. Costo served as tribal spokesperson when the Cahuilla reservation voted on adopting a constitution and by-laws.<sup>114</sup>

Rupert Costo had the support and intellectual partnership of his wife Jeannette Dulce Fargo Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee of North Carolina and enrolled Muskogee (Creek), born in 1909 and who passed away in 2001 at the age of ninety two.<sup>115</sup> Sheryl Davis, then acting head of the UCR library Special Collections recalled, “She was a little, tiny thing, but every inch of her was alive.”<sup>116</sup> An illustration of her personality may be gleaned from a 1995 book reception at UCR for *Natives of the Golden State* which she co-wrote with Rupert Costo. Eighty six years old and confined to a wheelchair with debilitating arthritis, she declared, “This is it. If you buy the book, thank you. If you don’t read it, the hell with you.” She closed her presentation with a final request, “The main thing I want is for you to read the damn thing. Read it!”<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> “Cahuilla Band to Vote on Constitution,” *The Los Angeles Times*, September 5, 1962, 28.

<sup>115</sup> Throughout various interviews and publications, Henry-Costo self-identified as Eastern Cherokee or Cherokee and Rupert Costo repeatedly noted she was “part Cherokee.” In one instance at a meeting with Commissioner of Indian Affairs Robert Bennett, an AIHS report lists her as “Cherokee enrolled at Muskogee through father.” Since she was orphaned at a young age it is difficult to determine her enrollment status in a federally recognized tribe or her family genealogy. The 1924 Baker roll of Eastern Cherokees of North Carolina does not include any listing for the surname Fargo or Henry. See “Report of a meeting held with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Hon. Robert Bennett & Members of the Board of Directors of the American Indian Historical Society,” July 23, 1968, pg. 1, reel 15, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>116</sup> Tanya Sierra, “Cherokee Activist Costo Memorialized at UCR,” *The Press-Enterprise*, February 17, 2001, B4.

<sup>117</sup> Mark Petix, “Author Wields Sharp Words for Indians,” *The Press-Enterprise*, May 18, 1995, B-1 and B-4.



Similar to her husband, Henry-Costo had a strong personality and could be temperamental and abrasive by some accounts. Although a petite woman, Henry-Costo refused to be overlooked or ignored. Some people recall telephoning with trepidation and hoping that Costo would answer the phone instead of Henry-Costo. She refused to grant actor Kevin Costner permission to use a book excerpt because she disliked his portrayal of Indians in the 1990 film “Dances with Wolves.” When asked about it, she responded, “He thought he could just come to me and I would bow before him.” She smiled and continued, “He was wrong.”<sup>118</sup> In 1994, when UCR renamed a student services building “Costo Hall,” Henry-Costo, reportedly warned the administration at the dedication to “watch it” on how it treated the students. Her commitment to tirelessly working as an editor for Society publications is commendable, particularly since a detached retina in 1969 left her blind in her left eye.

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid.



Figure 4 Jeannette Henry-Costo speaking before Costo Hall. Used by permission of Special Collections & Archives, UCR Libraries, University of California, Riverside.

Henry met Costo while she worked as a general news reporter at a local newspaper in Southern California *The Hemet News*. She attended Columbia University, to which she had gained acceptance “by lying like hell.”<sup>119</sup> Henry majored in English but did not graduate and instead became a self-taught reporter and editor. An orphan placed in different homes during her youth, she ran away at the age of seventeen years and by the 1930s she worked at the *Detroit Free Press* as a police beat reporter. Henry-Costo rarely spoke of her early life or family declaring, “I lost contact with everybody.

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<sup>119</sup> Jeannette Henry-Costo, in an interview by Jan Erickson, July 27, 1998, transcript of oral interview 37<sup>th</sup> in a series, UC Riverside, <http://www.ucrhistory.ucr.edu/costo.htm>, 3.

Deliberately. I didn't want anything to do with anybody. I was on my own, and that's it."<sup>120</sup> Aside from her work experience, little is known about her early life.

Her experience in print media greatly benefited the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS) yet she acknowledged that she continued learning on the job. She recalled first meeting Costo, "He was drinking and I didn't like it, so I told him. From then on, we were friends."<sup>121</sup> A brief courtship followed and they married August 2, 1952.<sup>122</sup> They moved to San Francisco after Henry-Costo left the Hemet newspaper for a new job and Costo joined her, prior to their marriage, because of poor employment opportunities. Costo was one of the petition drive organizers that led to the establishment of the new University of California campus in Riverside in 1954. Henry-Costo humbly recalled when Costo regularly traveled to Sacramento and Father Phillips, another person lobbying for the campus, knew of their economic hardships and left a five dollar bill in their letterbox.<sup>123</sup>

Similar to Henry-Costo, Costo had a piecemeal formal education. As a youth, he attended Hemet public schools and eventually graduated from San Diego High School in 1926. Sports and athleticism played a significant role in his educational experience. He matriculated to Riverside City College, later renamed Riverside Junior College, 1926-1928 where he served as football captain in 1927. He received average grades and earned

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<sup>120</sup> Henry-Costo, in an interview by Erickson, 6.

<sup>121</sup> Henry-Costo, in an interview by Erickson, 2.

<sup>122</sup> Wedding announcement, August 2, 1952, box 11, folder 25, Rupert and Jeannette Costo papers, Collection 170. University of California, Riverside Libraries, Special Collections & Archives, University of California, Riverside (Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR).

<sup>123</sup> Henry-Costo, in an interview by Erickson, 20.

a “C” and two “D” grades in history class.<sup>124</sup> A fellow classmate from a prominent Riverside family, former judge John Gabbert, recalled becoming acquainted with Costo at the local YMCA because he worked there and Costo lived there while attending school. Gabbert remarked on Costo’s athleticism, noting he served as captain of the football team, baseball team, played basketball and ran track. From Riverside, Costo attended Haskell Indian Institute, later renamed Haskell Indian Nations University, from 1928-1931 where he continued to play school football.<sup>125</sup> He played the tackle position on the team along with his older brother (Manuel) Victor who graduated from Hemet High School.<sup>126</sup> Jim Estrada, from the Mesa Grande reservation, located in southern California, remembered his brother played football with the Costo brothers. He recalled their size challenged the commonly held belief Indians could not play football because of their assumed small stature. The Costo boys all stood at least six feet tall. Estrada commented, “They were heavy. They weighed 250-260 pounds. So, all right, most of it hung over their belts, but they were still heavy.”<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Riverside Junior College transcript, Rupert Costo student case file; Student Case Files 1884-1980; Department of Interior, BIA. Haskell Indian Nations University; RG 75; NARA, Kansas City.

<sup>125</sup> Costo’s status at Haskell changed abruptly in 1931 as he admitted to “making and drinking of home brew” in violation of school rules. As a result, he was dropped from all academic work and placed in vocation.

Personal correspondence, Mr. LaPine to Mr. Cannady, April 28, 1931; Rupert Costo student case file; Student Case Files 1884-1980; Department of Interior, BIA. Haskell Indian Nations University; RG 75; NARA, Kansas City.

Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to To Whom it May Concern, May 5, 1931, Rupert Costo student case file; Student Case Files 1884-1980; Department of Interior, BIA. Haskell Indian Nations University; RG 75; NARA, Kansas City.

<sup>126</sup> “To Answer Grid Call Next Month: Haskell Coaches Must Build New Line for Coming Campaign,” *The Lawrence Daily Journal-World*, August 19, 1931, 8.

<sup>127</sup> Regis McAuley, “Citizen Sports Columnist,” *Tucson Daily Citizen Sports*, May 16, 1972, 30.



Figure 5 Rupert Costo at football practice. Note the citrus trees in the background. Used by permission of Special Collections & Archives, UCR Libraries, University of California, Riverside.

Costo continued playing football when he attended University of Nevada and California's Whittier College as an all conference fullback on football scholarships.<sup>128</sup> Gabbert described Costo as a "tramp athlete" who played for a number of schools and eventually played for a semi-professional basketball team similar to the Harlem Globetrotters for the House of David in Benton Harbor, Michigan.<sup>129</sup> Unable to grow the required beard to play for House of David, Costo wore a fake beard. A recipient of the Riverside City College Alumnus of the Year Award in 1972, Costo supported the collegial experience and he visited the campus prior to receiving his award specifically to

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<sup>128</sup> Bloom, "Rupert Costo, American Indian Activist, Dies at 83," B2.

<sup>129</sup> John G. Gabbert, in an interview by Jan Erickson, March 6, 1998, transcript of oral interview in a series, UC Riverside, <http://www.ucrhistory.ucr.edu/gabbert.htm>, 14.

speak with Indian students.<sup>130</sup> He held a series of jobs and eventually gained employment as Assistant Engineer of State Division of Highways in San Francisco's Rights of Way Division. According to Henry-Costo, he "worked and learned engineering by himself."<sup>131</sup> In the early years of establishing the American Indian Historical Society, the Costos supported it financially as well.

Married for nearly forty years, the Costos worked in tandem as partners in bringing attention to Indian concerns. Offering each other constant cyclical support, together they worked to agitate Indians and non-Indians. Although over the course of their lifetimes, improvements and victories in Indian country occurred, they continued rallying for greater improvements.

Together, the Costos worked in support of Indian peoples with an emphasis on education and equality. The San Francisco-based American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or "The Society") formally incorporated in 1964. Henry-Costo commented on their successful working relationship, "We've never failed at anything."<sup>132</sup> At the time of Costo's passing, former UCR Vice Chancellor James Erickson noted the couple's greatest legacy included "the standard they have set for all of us to remove the barriers of prejudice and bigotry and to promote the understanding and sensitivity to people of different ethnicity, races and from different walks of life."<sup>133</sup> Marrying later in life, in

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<sup>130</sup> Personal correspondence, Modene M. Voeltz, Indian Education of Riverside City College, to Rupert Costo, May 31, 1972, Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry Costo papers, reel 15, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>131</sup> Henry Costo, in an interview by Erickson, 18.

<sup>132</sup> Louis Saugun, "Indians Pull Up Scholarly Chair at UC Riverside," *The Los Angeles Times*, May 2, 1986, A3.

<sup>133</sup> Bloom, "Rupert Costo, American Indian Activist, Dies at 83," B2.

their forties, Costo had complete partnership with his wife during the second half of his life, which aided maneuvering his political activity, but he also drew upon his earlier life experiences in which he challenged the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

A variety of organizations emerged throughout California that worked in opposition to the BIA and in support of California Indian rights. Many of the early organizations had only White membership or White leadership, but eventually multi-tribal Indian led organization began to coalesce. The California Indian Brotherhood (CIB), California Indian Rights Association (CIRA), and Mission Indian Federation (MIF) operated as some of the earliest California Indian associations that stressed Indian leadership in Indian affairs. The American Indian Federation (AIF) also operated in California though its headquarters located in Oklahoma tempered its activity. Importantly, many of these California Indian organizations promoted acknowledging California's eighteen unratified treaties and sought restitution. The AIF, CIB, CIRA, and the MIF eventually decreased in strength and eventually ceased operating as organizations.

Costo gained critical experience in organizing, networking, lobbying, and publicly asserting his opinion as through the CIRA organization, or along with members of other organizations, as with MIF. The depth of Costo's participation, or lack of thereof, within the AIF or MIF is difficult to determine through records. However, influential connections and association occurred as illustrated through his 1934 public criticisms against the proposed IRA legislation at a Riverside meeting and his testimony along with MIF president Adam Castillo at a 1935 House of Representatives hearing on Indian affairs and conditions. Organizational members regularly participated in several groups,

or fluidly moved from one to another. For example, several participants from CIRA joined the Federated Indians of California (FIC) during the 1940s, a group dedicated to receiving a fair and equitable settlement from the Indian Land Claims, once CIRA ceased operating.

Costo served as Sagamore, or Vice President, of the Yanga Council of the California Indian Rights Association, Inc. (CIRA). Formed in 1935 by Pasadena resident Thomas Largo, Cahuilla, CIRA, a progressive multitribal organization, promoted itself as an organization run by and for California Indians. It emerged largely in opposition to Methodist minister Frederick G. Collett's Indian Board of Cooperation, a white led organization scandalized by rumors and outright accusation that he offered misleading statements and misappropriated monies from dues solicited from California Indians.<sup>134</sup> CIRA tackled legislation on California Indian Claims case and advocated California Indians handle and direct California Indian affairs. In describing the purpose of CIRA, Julia Gardner, Paiute, noted, "Like the rest of the American people, we, too, must analyze our own problems; we, too, must organize and formulate a plan through which we can weld our minds and our energies into one effective weapon."<sup>135</sup> In support of this goal, CIRA selected Costo to serve as its delegate and spokesperson in Washington D.C.<sup>136</sup>

For several months in 1935, Costo lived in Washington D.C. and regularly mailed letters to CIRA detailing his congressional testimony, lobbying and policy research. His

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<sup>134</sup> See testimonies of Julia D. Gardner, Thomas Largo, and Stella Von Bulow, U.S. Congress, House Committee on Indian Affairs, Hearings on H.R. 3765: California Indian Jurisdictional Act, 76 Cong., 1 sess. (1935), 205-223; U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Hearings on S. 1651 and S. 1779: California Indian Jurisdictional Act, 75 Cong., 1 sess. (1937), 46-59.

<sup>135</sup> Julia D. Gardner, "The Purpose of Our Organization," *California Indian News*, April 1935, 4.

<sup>136</sup> "Along El Camino Real with Ed Ainsworth," *The Los Angeles Times*, April 19, 1936, F14.



letters appeared in CIRA's monthly newsletter *California Indian News*, one of the first California Indian directed publications that appeared 1935-1942. In announcing Costo's selection as spokesperson, the organization referred to him as a "football star" and declared, "We chose Mr. Costo because he is an Indian who has shown his ability and his desire to help his people. Mr. Costo believes and advocates our point of view—that the Indian must work out his own salvation through an organized effort."<sup>137</sup>

Costo publicly shared his opinions about other California Indian organizations. While in Washington D.C. lobbying for the right of California Indians to select their own attorneys for the California Indian Claims case, he declared, "I am sure we will have opposition from [Frederick] Collett and Adam [Castillo]," referring to the leadership of The Indian Board of Cooperation and the MIF.<sup>138</sup> CIRA opposed Collett because he supported legislation that provided for payment of attorney fees and other expenses to non-attorneys, such as himself, from any settlement issued to California Indians.<sup>139</sup> The period of Costo's participation in CIRA is difficult to determine through records, but by the April 1939 edition of *California Indian News* Robert St. Marie, Cahuilla, held the title Sagamore. Through CIRA, Costo learned about the political process, alliances, networking, and the importance of Indians assuming leadership roles in Indian affairs. The organization also utilized its publication as a tool to inform and educate, particularly on California Indian land claims.

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<sup>137</sup> "Our Spokesman in Washington," *California Indian News*, April 1935, 1.

<sup>138</sup> Rupert Costo, "News from Our Delegate in Washington," *California Indian News*, April 1935, 3.

<sup>139</sup> Rupert Costo, "A Letter from Rupert Costo," *California Indian News*, July 1936, 6-8.

Costo was strongly committed to securing land rights. His great-grandfather, Chief Juan Antonio, signed one of the eighteen unratified California treaties in 1852 at Temecula village.<sup>140</sup> The failure of the United States Congress to ratify California's eighteen treaties served as an early lesson to Costo. Stories passed along in many signatories families recalled the treaties but the government did not acknowledge them until it publicly disclosed the treaties in 1905. Costo maintained a strong belief in private land ownership and an end to government paternalism, asserting, "Most of the Indians want to own the land and be treated just as any other landowners. We're ready to assume the responsibilities of ownership of lands that belong to us."<sup>141</sup> For Costo, ownership and access to homelands and just compensation for land stolen through the eighteen unratified treaties served as a lifelong issue for which he would advocate.

Costo gained significant political experience early in his life, particularly with his public opposition to the Indian Reorganization Act ("Indian New Deal," IRA or Wheeler-Howard Act) of 1934. Written largely by the newly appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier and his staff, the IRA provided conservation and development of Indian lands and resources; the right to form constitution based governments with Secretary of Interior approval; and funding for vocational education.<sup>142</sup> A former social worker, Collier was initially a vocal critic in how the federal government administered its

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<sup>140</sup> George Harwood Philips, *Chiefs and Challengers: Indian Resistance and Cooperation in Southern California* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975).

<sup>141</sup> "From Tule Hut to Tractor: Tribal Customs Blend with Modern Living," *The Los Angeles Times*, February 6, 1950, A6.

<sup>142</sup> Vine Deloria Jr., ed., *The Indian Reorganization Act: Congresses and Bills* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002); Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle, *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998); Kenneth R. Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform, 1920-1954* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977).

trust relationship with Indians.<sup>143</sup> He had never been a public servant and perhaps believed his ascension to leadership in the BIA indicated he understood Indian affairs more deeply than any person. However, he had limited experience dealing directly with Indian communities and the manner in which he developed the IRA demonstrated this limitation. Collier appeared relatively supportive of Indian cultures in contrast to earlier Commissioners, whose policies supported assimilation. The policies Collier introduced perpetuated cultural condescension, as he imposed his personal ideas for reform. The IRA provided for limited self-rule for Indian peoples, the BIA predetermined the form of tribal government and required approval by the Secretary of Interior.

The AIF, established in 1934, ardently opposed Collier and the IRA legislation. It had three main goals: remove John Collier from his role as Commissioner of Indian Affairs; overturn the IRA; and abolish the BIA. Members from the MIF also called for the abolition of the BIA and BIA police, and some of its members peripherally participated in the AIF. Some AIF members used extreme and inflammatory rhetoric, such as accusing the Interior Department of being communist and anti-American. Commissioner Collier responded by sending BIA officials to spy on the AIF and tying the organization to right-wing hate groups. The AIF did not succeed in accomplishing its three core goals. The organization fractured in 1939 due to some members supporting the so-called "Settlement Bill." The bill, introduced by Congressman Usher L. Burdick of North Dakota and Senator J.W. Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma, would have paid three

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<sup>143</sup> Peter Iverson, *When Indians Became Cowboys: Native Peoples and Cattle Ranching in the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 116-150.

thousand dollars to enrolled Indians as “complete settlement of any and all prior or future claims against the Government of the United States.”<sup>144</sup>

Established in 1919, the MIF differed from the AIF because it had a regional emphasis, selected “Captains” or leaders on various reservations, and established its own police force. The MIF advocated for “Human Rights and Home Rule” a slogan that appeared on badges distributed to its members.<sup>145</sup> The purpose of the MIF broadly included, “The securing to the Indian tribes of lands and water for the pursuit of agriculture, lands and water in his own name and the right to full and free citizenship.”<sup>146</sup> The MIF constitution listed its objectives as first “to secure by legislation or otherwise all the rights and benefits belonging to each Indian, both singly, and collectively,” secondly “to protect [sic] then against unjust laws, rules, and regulations,” and finally “to guard the interests of each member against unjust and illegal treatment.”<sup>147</sup> The stated objective of the organization of securing rights and benefits through “legislature” or “otherwise,” while not defined could translate into violent actions.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Laurence M. Hauptman, “The American Indian Federation and the Indian New Deal: A Reinterpretation,” *The Pacific Historical Review* 52 (November 1983): 398-399.

<sup>145</sup> “Great Meeting of Indians is Announced,” *The Riverside Enterprise*, April 15, 1921, Mission Indian Federation no. 5, Correspondence and Other Records Relating to the MIF (1919), Mission Indian Agency, RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>146</sup> “The History of the Mission Indian Federation,” *The Indian*, April 1921, 10, Tibet’s Case from the file of Mr. E. B. Linnen, Chief Inspector, Correspondence and Other Records Relating to the MIF (1919), Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>147</sup> Constitution, San Diego A-2-M Exhibits 46-72, Southern Division 1929-1938, General Records of the District Court of the United States for the Southern Division of California, RG 21; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>148</sup> Tanis C. Thorne, “On the Fault Line: Political Violence at the Campo Fiesta and National Reform in Indian Policy,” *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* 21 (1999): 182-212.

A primary concern for the MIF centered on American citizenship. The MIF newsletter *The Indian* contained an article that argued as “first Americans,” Indians should receive citizenship and be allowed to manage their own affairs. The article described the readiness of Indians for private land ownership: “The Indian Bureau system is based upon the assumption the Indians are incapable of managing their own affairs and must be guided and guarded like children.”<sup>149</sup> In response to MIF actions, the BIA prosecuted MIF members and regularly had them in court. Adam Castillo, Cahuilla from Soboba reservation and President of the MIF, testified that Superintendent John Dady used “trumped up” charges against several MIF members and their legal counselor Purl Willis accusing them of stealing money from Indians after they returned from a trip to Washington DC.<sup>150</sup> Ultimately, Castillo testified that Commissioner John Collier flew out to California, had them released and those arrested never faced trial.<sup>151</sup>

Some BIA employees believed the MIF simply followed the whims of its white founder Jonathon Tibbet, Grand Chief Counselor who styled himself “Chief Buffalo Heart.” Tibbet held biannual MIF meetings at his home in Riverside until his death in 1930. He had training in law and had previously participated in the American Service League and Indian Betterment Association, in which he held the title Chief of Grievance.

Despite Tibbet’s influence, Indians closed the meeting of over two hundred California Indians, largely from southern California, to the public when they wrote the

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<sup>149</sup> “Citizenship for the First Americans,” *Wassaja* vol. 5 no. 12, March 1921, 7, Mission Indian Federation no. 5, Mission Indian Agency, Correspondence and Other Records Relating to the MIF (1919), RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>150</sup> U.S. Congress, Senate Subcommittee of the Committee on Indian Affairs, Hearings on S. Res. 79: Survey of Conditions of the Indians in the United States, 76 Cong., 1 sess. (1940), 21437.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*

MIF constitution. Without Tibbet's consultation, the original constitution reportedly admitted whites as members. Upon reviewing it Tibbet exclaimed "Why, this excludes you!" to Joseph DePorte a stenographer in attendance. He responded, "Certainly and you."<sup>152</sup> Therefore, one may derive from his comment perhaps the original constitution, written by Indians in attendance, initially excluded all white membership. The final draft of the MIF constitution membership extended exclusively to Indians with the sole exception of Tibbet. However, not all Indians in attendance embraced the organization or Tibbet's role and some walked out of the founders meeting.<sup>153</sup> Membership to the MIF extended to both reservation and non-reservation Indians with the sole constitutional criteria, "All persons of Indian blood who bear a good reputation, for sobriety, honesty, integrity, and industry."<sup>154</sup>

The MIF established its own police in response to complaints of mistreatment from tribal police who received their paychecks from the BIA. The MIF police functioned "to assist all federal and civil officers." In part, the MIF police swore to uphold the "suppression of the liquor traffic," and stipulations insured they would serve without pay or carry firearms.<sup>155</sup> In a notice circulated, the responsibilities of the MIF police outlined included to "preserve order on their respective reservations, to guard, and

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<sup>152</sup> Narrative stenographic Documentary, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph DePorte to Commissioner of Indian Affairs through Superintendent F. M. Conser., February 1920, pg. 11, Mission Indian Federation no. 3, Mission Indian Agency, Correspondence and Other Records Relating to the MIF (1919), RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>153</sup> "Indians Withdraw From Federation," *The Los Angeles Times*, February 3, 1920, I16.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Adam Castillo, Grand President, to All Captains, Riverside, October 30, 1925, San Diego A-2-M Exhibits 46-72, Southern Division 1929-1938, General Records of the District Court of the United States for the Southern Division of California, RG 21; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

to protect the interest of the people.”<sup>156</sup> The creation of the police force undermined BIA police and provided tribal members with agency.

Whether Rupert Costo participated in the MIF remains unclear. His paternal Uncle Ignacio Costo appeared on the United States government’s list of Indians in a 1921 case, against Tibbet, charging him with “attempting to alienate the confidence of Indians from the Government of the United States.” The inclusion of Costo’s uncle on the list indicates some Costo family members participated in the MIF.<sup>157</sup> In addition to Tibbet over fifty Indians faced conspiracy indictments for their participation in the MIF, however with passage of the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act the federal government dropped all charges.<sup>158</sup> While the AIF and MIF had its differences, some Indians participated in both organizations and a natural rapport existed between the AIF and MIF.

Dr. Carlos Montezuma, Fort McDowell Yavapai, a founding member of the Society of American Indians (SAI) and a well known member of the AIF, greatly influenced Costo. Montezuma attended a MIF meeting and noted that to witness such an organization in action “gives one hope, and zeal to go on.” He also spoke appreciatively

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<sup>156</sup> Police, San Diego A-2-M Exhibits 46-72 (Equity Case Files), Southern Division 1929-1938, General Records of the District Court of the United States for the Southern Division of California, RG 21; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>157</sup> District Court of the United States for the Southern District of California Southern Division, April 22, 1921, pg. 2, Supt. Hoffman RE: Tibbets (1921), Mission Indian Agency, Correspondence and Other Records Relating to the MIF (1919), RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>158</sup> “Indictment of Tibett [sic] is Protested,” *The Riverside Enterprise*, October 16, 1921, Mission Indian Federation no. 1, Mission Indian Agency, Correspondence and Other Records Relating to the MIF (1919), RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

of Tibet noting, “by his words and deeds he shows that he is truly a friend of the Indians in need.”<sup>159</sup>

When the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS) decided to publish a national Indian newspaper in the 1970s, the Costos selected *Wassaja* as its name and model for their Indian advocacy newspaper. By doing so, they honored former AIF member Montezuma, whose newspaper *Wassaja* appeared April 1916 through November 1922 with the masthead “Freedom’s Signal for the Indian.”<sup>160</sup> Montezuma passed away in 1923 but his ideas strongly influenced Costo and the AIHS newspaper. Indeed, Costo described his family as “Montezumas,” revealing their ideals echoed Carlos Montezuma.<sup>161</sup>

Costo publicly opposed the IRA when he attended a BIA sponsored Conference for the Indians of Southern California held at Sherman Indian Institute in Riverside, California on March 17 and 18, 1934. At the time, his paternal Uncle Gabriel “Gabe” Costo served as spokesperson for the Cahuilla reservation and received an official invitation to the conference. In a March 7 invitational letter addressed to Gabriel Costo, Superintendent John Dady of the Mission Indian Agency noted per diem would cover expenses for official delegates but he had an expense limit for only ten to fifteen

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<sup>159</sup> “Conference of the Indians of California,” *Wassaja*, March 1921, 4, Mission Indian Federation no. 5, Mission Indian Agency, Correspondence and Other Records Relating to the MIF (1919), RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>160</sup> Peter Iverson, *Carlos Montezuma and the Changing World of American Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982).

<sup>161</sup> Rupert Costo, “Fighter for Indian Rights: Carlos Montezuma (Wassaja),” *Wassaja*, June 1973, 10.



delegates from the Mission Indian reservations. He also mentioned additional visitors could attend the conference at their own expense.<sup>162</sup>

The BIA sponsored the event largely as a public relations event to answer questions and garner support for the proposed IRA legislation. Commissioner John Collier and other BIA officials had not asked for Indian opinions before crafting the proposed IRA legislation. Collier had coordinated ten regional meetings where tribal members could offer their comments and discuss the proposed legislation with him and his staff. A.C. Monahan, Assistant to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, opened the event by reading a telegram greeting from John Collier, who was absent from the Riverside meeting. Monahan reiterated the meeting had one purpose: to discuss the proposed IRA legislation.

He emphasized the purpose in order to avoid discussion on the California Indian Land Claims. In 1928 Congress passed the California Indian Jurisdictional Act, known as the Lea Act, which provided California Indians the right to sue the federal government for land claims compensation. However, he hoped to avoid the topic. Despite his call to focus the meeting on the proposed IRA legislation, several Indians brought up the issue and expressed that no additional legislation should be examined until the successful just settlement of California Indian Claims. Vivian Banks from the Pala reservation asserted, “No other bill should be brought before them [Pala Indians] until the Court of Claims bill

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<sup>162</sup> Personal correspondence, John W. Dady, Superintendent to Gabriel Costo, Spokesman of Cahuilla reservation, March 7, 1934, Conference at Sherman Institute, March 17-18, 1934, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Elections 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency , RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

is settled if it takes 100 years to settle it.”<sup>163</sup> Pauma spokesperson Leon Palawash noted that they would not endorse the IRA and cordially invited the government officials to “return to Washington and expedite the just settlement to the Indians of the State of California of claims in Washington.”<sup>164</sup> The commentary indicates a preference of the Indians in attendance to discuss land claim settlements; Monahan remained determined to evade any discussion about it.

The process of settling the California Indian Land Claims took less than one hundred years. The settlement distribution occurred in 1972. However, the Costos and others viewed the amount of forty seven cents per acre as unjust.<sup>165</sup> As a Cahuilla tribal member, Costo publicly asserted he did not favor the settlement and believed a figure of at minimum one dollar twenty-five cents an acre would be more equitable.<sup>166</sup> Costo never cashed his settlement check as a political protest against settling because he wanted restoration of lands. Despite Monahan’s attempts to maintain control and dictate the discussion at the meeting, a number of California Indians continued to raise land claims issues.

An intense exchange occurred between Robert Miguel from the Yuma reservation and BIA representative Walter Woehlke. Miguel brought up land claims to which

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<sup>163</sup> Proceedings of the Conference for the Indians of Southern California, held at Riverside, CA, March 17 and 18, 1934, to discuss the Wheeler-Howard Indian Bill, pg. 58, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Elections 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid, 57.

<sup>165</sup> For information on the legal process of determining the price per acre see Florence C. Shipek, “Mission Indians and Indians of California Land Claims,” *American Indian Quarterly* 13 (Autumn 1989): 409-420.

<sup>166</sup> Minutes of Nomination Meeting Cahuilla Band of Indians May 10, 1964, pg. 2, Cahuilla Board Minutes 1962-1963, Tribal Government Files 1935-1986 Cabazon-Campo, Southern CA Agency Bureau of Tribal Operations, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

Woehlke tersely responded, “You should be ashamed of your selfishness. We have told you again and again that we want to settle your claims, but give us a chance to help those who need help right now through this bill.”<sup>167</sup> Woehlke’s brusque response demonstrated the attitude of a BIA focused more on the passage of its legislation with little willingness for open discussion on additional topics the Indians in attendance wanted to discuss.

Monahan continued his welcoming with insisting upon a distinction between official delegates and visitors. He commented, “Now those of you in these front seats are official delegates of this meeting, therefore it is for you to discuss the bill.” He continued, “There are many others who are not official delegates who will be helpful to us in clearing up matters. Questions they wish to ask should be written and handed to one of the stenographers at the table, and they will be answered.”<sup>168</sup> The process of formally writing questions could be limiting, as some Indians present could be illiterate or perhaps even intimidated by submitting questions to stenographers. However, Monahan seemed willing initially to hearing from non-delegates.

Attendees to the conference came from Mission Indian Agency, Nevada District, Yuma Agency, and the southern section of Sacramento Valley.<sup>169</sup> The delegates came from diverse areas of California, Nevada, and a portion of Arizona. As per diem limited the number of official delegates to ten to fifteen from the Mission Indian Agency the majority of attendees came in a non-delegate capacity. From the Mission Indian Agency

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<sup>167</sup> Proceedings of the Conference for the Indians of Southern California, held at Riverside, Cal., March 17 and 18, 1934, to discuss the Wheeler-Howard Indian Bill, pg. 37, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Elections 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid, 1.

alone delegates came from twenty-two reservations.<sup>170</sup> The Mission Indian Agency consisted of reservations from Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, and San Diego counties.<sup>171</sup>

Costo attended the meeting as a non-delegate and publicly declared his opinion about the proposed IRA legislation. On the first day, a Saturday afternoon, Costo echoed the criticisms by the AIF in criticizing the proposed IRA legislation as being “communistic” in relation to individual land ownership. He asserted, that the legislation would translate into “going right back to that, taking away all rights belonging to everyone. Can’t own anything for ourselves. Isn’t that right?” Government official Melvin H. Seigel answered simply “no” without any further comment or discussion. Later, at the same afternoon session, Costo astutely noted that, “After delving into it [proposed IRA legislation] I find we will always be under the department of the Interior and the Commissioner.” Costo reflected that “self-government” was not an accurate description, as Indian peoples would “always be under the Commissioner and Department of Interior.”<sup>172</sup> Toward the end of the session, Monahan responded directly to a question from an unnamed official delegate who inquired about their concern about

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<sup>170</sup> Reservation Delegates who attended conference, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Elections 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel. Delegates came from: Cahuilla; Campo; Capitan Grande-Barona; Capitan Grande-Los Conejos; Inaja; Laguna; Los Coyotes; Manzanita; Mesa Grande; Mission Creek; Morongo; Pala; Palm Springs; Pauma; Pechanga; Rincon; San Manuel; Santa Rosa; Santa Ysabel; Soboba; Sycuan; Torres-Martinez reservations.

<sup>171</sup> The Mission Indian Agency consisted of twenty nine reservations at the time of the IRA vote: Augustine; Cabazon; Barona; Cahuilla; Campo; Captain Grande; Cuyapaipe; Inaja; Laguna; La Jolla; La Posta; Los Coyotes; Manzanita; Mesa Grande; Mission Creek; Morongo; Pala; Palm Springs; Pauma; Pechanga; Rincon; San Manuel; San Pasqual; Santa Rosa; Santa Ysabel; Santa Ynez; Soboba; Sycuan; Torres-Martinez reservations.

<sup>172</sup> Proceedings of the Conference for the Indians of Southern California, held at Riverside, Cal., March 17 and 18, 1934, to discuss the Wheeler-Howard Indian Bill, pgs. 35, 37, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Elections 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

communism and socialism. In response, Monahan provided the example of Klamath Indians who hold equal share in the timber and asserted “we can’t say they are reds because they do that.” He closed with the brief comment, “There’s no communism in this as some of you seem to think. Just read the bill-read it carefully and study it-find out for yourselves. I think you will be satisfied that it is not communistic or socialistic.”<sup>173</sup> Even though Monahan recommended Indians read the bill, the government provided an inadequate number of copies and virtually guaranteed people could not read it.

On the second day of the conference, at Sunday morning’s session, Monahan dramatically switched his position on welcoming questions and comments from all people in attendance. He proclaimed “I will not recognize anyone but delegates.” In response to that statement, Costo asked, “Is this an open meeting?” Monahan sharply retorted, “You took up far too much time yesterday. If you are an official delegate, sit with your delegation-if you have anything to say special, talk it over together with your delegates, but do not interfere with this meeting.” He continued, “If you are not a delegate, sit down. This is not an open meeting-it is a meeting of official delegates, and I have recognized Mr. [Jack] Meyers [of the Santa Rosa reservation] to speak for the Mission Indians.”<sup>174</sup>

Time constraints may have led to the exclusion of non-delegates. Perhaps Monahan intentionally silenced critics of the proposed IRA legislation such as Costo. Winslow Curo of the Santa Ysabel reservation sought further clarification “I understand you to say that you will not let any other Indian speak besides the delegates?” to which

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, 54.

Monahan responded, "...others in the hall took the entire day and the official delegates had no chance to talk. Today's meeting is for official delegates."<sup>175</sup> The intentions of the BIA proved difficult to determine; however, it should be noted the Cahuilla reservation spokesperson, Gabe Costo, received a single copy of the proposed IRA bill from Superintendent Dady with the request "to read and discuss with your committee and individual Indians on your reservation," enclosed in a letter dated March 5, a mere twelve days prior to the conference.<sup>176</sup> Therefore, one may reasonably question whether BIA representatives wanted a genuine discussion or if they simply wanted to silence critics, such as Rupert Costo, who openly challenged and questioned the proposed IRA legislation.

When the Mission Indian Agency held the IRA special election on December 18, 1934, of the twenty-nine tribes under its jurisdiction, all but the Cuyapaibe reservation actively participated in the vote. Superintendent Dady attempted to slant a favorable outcome by coordinating the election with the annual election of spokespersons and committee members. In a correspondence to Roy Nash, Field Representative of the Sacramento Indian Agency, Dady noted that the Mission reservations would not be prepared for a vote on October 27 and instead he favored a date in December. He declared, "This will help us a lot and give us time to get a few more reservations in favor

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid, 55.

<sup>176</sup> Personal correspondence, John W. Dady, Superintendent to Gabriel Costo, Spokesman of Cahuilla reservation, March 5, 1934, Conference at Sherman Institute, March 17-18, 1934, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Elections 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency , RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

of the bill....missionary work which is being done constantly [sic] ought to have considerable favorable results by December.”<sup>177</sup>

Voter turn out in the Mission Indian Agency, excluding two reservations, hovered at a minimum thirty percent, and in many instances exceeded over sixty percent and even eighty to ninety percent.<sup>178</sup> Members of the MIF actively organized in opposition to the IRA legislation. Ramon Pinto, a resident of Campo reservation and supporter of the IRA, complained that voters “did not use their own judgment” but rather sought advice from Captain Jose Largo, an MIF member. Further, he noted that Largo’s “misleading and [sic] destructive” advice led to the defeat of the IRA at Campo.<sup>179</sup> Many of the reservations experienced high voter turn out, but ten out of the twenty-nine reservations had 50 percent or less of the eligible population vote. Some Indians protested the election, assuming that non-participation would be tallied as rejecting the IRA legislation. However, that was not how the BIA recorded it. Additionally, once a tribal community had voted, no reconsiderations were possible. As a result, some Indians viewed the vote as Commissioner Collier trying to force his reforms.

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<sup>177</sup> Personal correspondence, John W. Dady, Superintendent to Roy Nash, Field Representative, September 22, 1934, IRA-Wheeler-Howard no. 1, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Elections 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>178</sup> Indian Reorganization Act Dec 18, 1934, May 10 1935, I.R.A.-Correspondence regarding election results, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Election 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>179</sup> Personal correspondence, Ramon Pinto to Superintendent John Dady, December 18, 1934, I.R.A.-Correspondence regarding election results, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Election 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

Despite the high voter turn out, confusion surrounded the definition of “majority” on whether the reservation would fall under the auspices of the IRA. Indians voting on the application of the IRA and BIA employees equally appeared unclear on the definition. According to section eighteen of the IRA, Indians on the reservation would be excluded from the Act if “a majority of the adult Indians” on the reservation voted against the application of the Act.

On November 28, less than one month before the special election, Superintendent Dady, wrote to Field Representative Nash and asked for clarification and definition of “majority” because Dady interpreted it to refer “only to the actual votes cast,” he concluded, “does ‘majority’ refer to the majority of the actual votes cast or does it refer to the majority of the eligible voters of the reservation?”<sup>180</sup> Nash had his own questions and sent a letter to Commissioner John Collier in October requesting an interpretation of majority. Collier responded in early November and informed Nash “The Solicitor holds that the act is already in effect and that under Section 18 the Indians by a majority of those entitled to vote must decide to reject this legislation. In other words, no affirmative vote is necessary.”<sup>181</sup> Thus, under the terms as defined by the BIA, failure to participate in the vote would automatically translate as a “yes” vote. Additionally, a provision provided that thirty percent of the adult Indian population had to participate in the vote in order for a majority of no votes to reject the Act. Thus, if the total number of votes failed

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<sup>180</sup> Personal correspondence, John W. Dady, Superintendent to Roy Nash, Field Representative, November 28, 1934, IRA-Wheeler-Howard no. 1, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Elections 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>181</sup> Personal correspondence, John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs to Roy Nash, Sacramento Field Representative November 7, 1934; Regulations and Letters of Instruction; Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Elections 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.



to reach a thirty percent minimum, then even a majority of no votes would not translate into a rejection of the Act.

In an attempt to resolve the confusion surrounding the definition of ‘majority,’ Superintendent Dady sent out a notice December 5, 1934 to be posted at the election site that identified the site and provided voting information such as the date and time. The vote on the Cahuilla reservation occurred at the Old Day School December 18<sup>th</sup> between the hours of 8am-5pm. The written notice appeared in English and quoted Commissioner Collier that, “exclusion can be brought about only if a majority of all the adult Indians on the reservation cast their ballots against the application of the Act. If less than a majority vote against the Act, even if the negative votes should outnumber the affirmative ones, the Act still applies.”<sup>182</sup> Possible illiteracy, confusing language and definitions, lack of bilingualism and possible non-participation protest made the notice inaccessible to a portion of the population. Additionally, one can not assume someone posted the notice in a timely manner or at all.

The interpretation of “majority” certainly helped the IRA gain approval on some reservations where it otherwise would have failed. Superintendent Dady wrote to Commissioner Collier that in the Mission Indian Agency, “under ‘Total Vote’ that all of the reservations expressed themselves as being unwilling to come under the provisions of the Act, and that 18 accepted the Act, that is, when the majority rule as per the opinion of

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<sup>182</sup> Notice from John W. Dady December 5, 1934, IRA-Wheeler –Howard no. 2, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Elections 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

the Solicitor of the Department of the Interior is used.”<sup>183</sup> Further, the Mission Indian Agency considered counting the votes of Mesa Grande and Santa Ysabel reservations together because their land based appeared under one land patent. Additionally, the Mission Indian Agency questioned if it could combine the votes of Barona and Capitan Grande since they did not have separate land bases.<sup>184</sup> Ultimately, the Mission Indian Agency received instruction to combine the votes of Barona and Capitan Grande. Capitan Grande rejected the IRA legislation while Barona wholeheartedly approved it, and counting a combined vote ensured both would fall under the IRA auspices.<sup>185</sup>

The interpretation of votes cast ensured seventeen reservations of the Mission Indian Agency accepted the IRA legislation.<sup>186</sup> On the Cahuilla reservation sixty-nine people had been eligible to vote under the criteria of being twenty-one years of age or older.<sup>187</sup> Specifically, reservation residents voted twenty five against the IRA and zero in support of it. Of the fourteen absentee ballots three voted in support, eight voted against

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<sup>183</sup> Personal correspondence, Superintendent John W. Dady to Commissioner John Collier, December 31, 1934, I.R.A.-Correspondence regarding election results, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Election 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Personal correspondence, Superintendent John W. Dady to Mr. H.W. Coonradt, June 4, 1935, I.R.A.-Correspondence regarding election results, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Election 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>186</sup> Personal correspondence, Superintendent John W. Dady to Commissioner John Collier, January 28, 1935, I.R.A.-Correspondence regarding election results, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Election 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.  
The reservations the IRA applied to: Augustine; Cabazon; Cahuilla; Campo; Cuyapaipe; Laguna; La Jolla; La Posta; Manzanita; Mission Creek; Morongo; Pechanga; San Manuel; San Pasqual; Santa Rosa; Santa Ysabel; and Santa Ynez reservations.

<sup>187</sup> Cahuilla, November 24, 1934, Official Roll of Adult Indians, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Election 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

it, and the recount board determined three ballots as spoiled.<sup>188</sup> Thus Cahuilla voters overwhelmingly opposed the IRA legislation thirty-three v. three, but as a result of the Commissioner's interpretation of majority, the IRA passed. The BIA based its interpretation by adding the thirty-three non-votes with the three votes of approval for a victorious passage of the legislation, thirty-six v. thirty-three.

In a letter to the Cahuilla reservation, Commissioner Collier recognized the redefinition of majority. He noted, "While the results show that more votes were cast against its acceptance than for it, nevertheless, under the wording...we have no choice except to declare that by the vote cast you are subject to all of the applicable provisions of this legislation."<sup>189</sup> By examining the referendum vote with the commonly accepted definition of majority used in elections throughout the state, it appears the MIF had an impact on the vote outcome. All reservations in Riverside County, the central location of the MIF, rejected the IRA legislation. In addition to the Mission Indian Agency, reservations and *rancherias* from Hoopa Valley Agency; Walker River Agency; and Sacramento Agency rejected the IRA legislation in California.<sup>190</sup>

Despite the application of the IRA legislation to Cahuilla reservation, Costo continued to be an open critic of it as illustrated through his testimony before the House

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<sup>188</sup> Cahuilla vote outcome approved by Superintendent John W. Dady, December 19, 1934, I.R.A.-Correspondence regarding election results, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Election 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>189</sup> Personal correspondence, Commissioner John Collier to the Indians of the Cahuilla reservation, January 22, 1935, Cahuilla election results, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Election 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

<sup>190</sup> Final Tabulation Results of Referenda on Indian Reorganization Act, All California Jurisdiction, June 27, 1935, I.R.A.-Correspondence regarding election results, Records Pertaining to the IRA and Tribal Election 1934-1947, Mission Indian Agency, RG 75, NARA, Laguna Niguel.

of Representative's hearings on Indian Conditions and Affairs in 1935. Costo testified at the hearing along with MIF President Adam Castillo. Costo began his testimony with reference to California Indian history asserting, "I do not believe some here understand how we lived."<sup>191</sup> He continued with a brief historical overview of California Indian history. Costo spoke in favor of abolishing the BIA and its paternalistic relationship to Indians. He noted, "The Indians in California are, as I have said, as intellectually capable as any other citizens living in the same environment and having the same strata of life."<sup>192</sup> Costo openly criticized the IRA voting process and subsequent application on Cahuilla reservation. He informed the Representatives that "the three won" Cahuilla voter approval of the IRA despite a numeric majority voting in opposition to it.

Speaking in particular about Cahuilla reservation, Costo noted residents openly opposed it for a couple of reasons. They were concerned the Secretary of Interior and Commissioner of Indian Affairs held too much power. In addition, Costo observed, "we thought that all Indian legislation, and especially mass legislation, has the tendency to treat all Indians alike."<sup>193</sup> The concept of legislation not providing for the diversity in Indian communities further bothered Costo as he maintained the BIA may prove useful in other states, he believed California and California Indians had no need for it.

As he testified before House members, he also raised the subject of California Indian Land Claims, a topic of significant interest to many California Indians. Not waiting for any questions on the justice of the Indian Land Claims, he preemptively

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<sup>191</sup> U.S. Congress, House Subcommittee of the Committee on Indian Affairs, Hearings on H.R. 7781: Indian Conditions and Affairs, 74 Cong., 1 sess. (1935), 429.

<sup>192</sup> U.S. House, Hearings on H.R. 7781, 430.

<sup>193</sup> U.S. House, Hearings on H.R. 7781, 432.

asserted, “we are not asking for charity or anything like that.” Instead he argued any restitution represented, “an honest debt that the Government owes us. We are not asking for any special privileges. We believe we should have equal rights and opportunities the same as any other citizens of the United States.”<sup>194</sup> Costo raised this same issue during the 1934 IRA meeting at Riverside. The issues raised by Costo carried forward in his life as he maintained similar opinions and expressed them with regularity in AIHS publications.

Although Costo’s opposition to the IRA failed to produce any policy change, he gained valuable experience and insight into education as a vehicle for fundamental change. Costo attended a retrospective conference on the IRA in 1983, “Indian Self-Rule: Fifty Years Under the Indian Reorganization Act” sponsored by the Institute of the American West at Sun Valley Idaho. In his paper, read by Henry-Costo due to Rupert Costo’s health problems, he asserted many historians incorrectly believe many Indians opposed the IRA legislation solely for economic reasons. “This is a simplistic response, and one that displays a serious lack of understanding of Indian Affairs and history,” Costo commented.

Instead, he detailed the concern about total assimilation. He commented on his fear it translated into “meaning fading into the general society with a complete loss of our identity and our culture.”<sup>195</sup> By serving as a particularly vocal critic of IRA and registering his disapproval of the process and application, Costo learned some important

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<sup>194</sup> U.S. House, Hearings on H.R. 7781, 434.

<sup>195</sup> Session 102: “Indian New Deal 1928-1945,” Panel, Alvin Josephy moderator, Indian Self-Rule (ISR), American West Center Ethnic Archives (misc), Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah.

lessons which followed him in future actions and influenced his political leaning. His opposition to Commissioner Collier's "Indian New Deal" under Democratic President Franklin Roosevelt, inspired Costo along with many Indians of a certain generation to register lifelong in the Republican political party.

At the same time, Costo recognized the uniquely influential role of the President of the United States in Indian Affairs. Costo believed "every presidential candidate ought to be queried as to how and what he intends to do to change the basic failure" of government policies.<sup>196</sup> His suggestion never came to fruition and though a registered Republican, Costo publicly criticized Presidents from both major political parties because of their Indian Affairs policies. He called President Reagan, the former Governor of California a "drugstore cowboy."<sup>197</sup> Near the end of President Reagan's first term, Costo declared, "Never before in history has there been an administration so thoroughly treacherous in Indian affairs, as the present Reagan Administration."<sup>198</sup> He openly expressed his disdain for President Carter proclaiming "anyone but Carter" and noting "Carter is no friend of the Indian people."<sup>199</sup> Although a searing critic of political leadership, he offered his opinion, never personal judgment, of political representatives.

Through the establishment of the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS), Costo gained a pulpit to espouse his opinions and gained a national audience including government officials. He also took from the political lessons he learned earlier in his life. Fundamentally, he believed informing and educating both Indians and non-Indians

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<sup>196</sup> Rupert Costo, "Presidents of the United States," *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 4 (Spring 1968): 13.

<sup>197</sup> Rupert Costo, "Speaking Freely: Cowboys and Indians," *Wassaja*, November/December 1982, 2.

<sup>198</sup> Rupert Costo, "Speaking Freely: A Treacherous Administration," *Wassaja*, July/August 1983, 2.

<sup>199</sup> Rupert Costo, "Speaking Freely: Anyone but Carter," *Wassaja/The Indian Historian*, June 1980, 4.

remained central to the success of understanding and contextualizing history, laws, and policies which held the potential leading to fundamental change and improving Indian country.

## CHAPTER 3

### “WITH THE EYES OF THE INDIAN”: THE AMERICAN INDIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Some ambiguity surrounds the origins of the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or “The Society”). However, founders Rupert Costo, Cahuilla, and Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee, a couple dedicated to activism, privately worked on historical research prior to its formal incorporation in 1964. According to Costo, it began as, “mostly a family research endeavor at first, building up a library, writing articles, doing research.”<sup>200</sup> The Costos fully dedicated themselves to the AIHS and loved their work. Henry-Costo proudly proclaimed, “It’s a dream come true. We’re having the time of our lives.”<sup>201</sup> The Costos publicly credited the suggestion to their personal friend Dr. George Hammond, at the time the Director of the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, whom they met while researching.<sup>202</sup> The AIHS recognized his contribution by unanimously selecting him as one of the first consulting members to the organization.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Charles Hillinger, “Indian Couple Spread the Native American Word,” *The Los Angeles Times*, November 14, 1977, A3.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry-Costo, *Natives of the Golden State: The California Indians* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press and The University of California at Riverside, 1995), xi. However, in AIHS meeting minutes July 25, 1964 Costo asserted the idea for the organization originated from his private organization The Indian Archives. In a 1966 reprinted speech before the California League for American Indians, Costo asserted the formal AIHS organization emerged as an outgrowth of the Indian Library and Archives founded by a small group of Cahuillas about 25 years ago to help them with their litigation against the federal government. See Rupert Costo, “The Right to Leadership,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 3 (March 1966): 14.

<sup>203</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, October 3, 1964, box 12, folder 9, Rupert and Jeannette Costo papers, Collection 170. University of California, Riverside Libraries, Special Collections & Archives, University of California, Riverside (Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR).



The formal institution of the AIHS may have come at the suggestion of Dr. George Hammond, but the Costos determined the core of the organization would include only Indian voting members. The idea of an exclusively Indian voting membership continued the voting ideals practiced by one of the earliest Indian organizations the Society of American Indians (SAI) and earlier California Indian organizations, among them the California Indian Rights Association (CIRA) and the Mission Indian Federation (MIF). Costo noted the importance of his new group because it would examine Indian history, “with the eyes of the Indian.”<sup>204</sup> Fundamentally, the AIHS stood as an honor society with an educational and cultural emphasis. As a result, the Costos sought voting members who had experience as artists, professionals, scholars, or writers. The organization constitution established four classes of membership: Corporate Members, Associate Members, Honorary Indian Historians, and Consultant Members. Any non-Indian wanting to participate could join as an associate member, but such an individual could not vote.

The AIHS also formally recognized what it termed honorary Indian historians. These historians were not selected based on any degrees received or formal education from mainstream educational institutions. Rather, their selection was based on their contribution to collecting and recording the facts of Indian history.<sup>205</sup> Therefore, the

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<sup>204</sup> “This Society no tell’um Tall Tales,” *The Oakland Tribune*, October 1, 1964, 18.

<sup>205</sup> “The election of Honorary Indian Historians shall not depend upon formal education or intellectual skills, but upon living contact with the past and present of the American Indians, and faithfulness to their role as native historians of the American Indian people.” American Indian Historical Society Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, pg. 6, reel 15, *The Rupert Costo Archive of the American Indian filmed from the holdings of the Rupert Costo Library of the American Indian in the Department of Special Collections at the University of California at Riverside*. Native America: a primary record series, 1. Woodbridge, Conn: Primary Source Microfilm, 2001 (Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001).

AIHS recognized and honored Indian peoples who had tribal cultural knowledge perhaps not respected by mainstream academic institutions, which may have viewed these Indian historians as uninformed and untrained. At a Board of Directors Meeting in 1965, the AIHS elected four Honorary Indian Historians “with pride and love.” Those selected include: Jane Penn, Cahuilla; Nellie Shaw Harner, Paiute; John Porter, Miwuk; and John Stands in Timber, Northern Cheyenne.<sup>206</sup> Through the creation of an Honorary Indian Historian membership from the founding of the organization, the Society integrated the understanding that informed, knowledgeable people did not necessarily receive training in formal institutions. Rather they had traditional knowledge of language, arts, and knew histories that did not appear in textbooks. The AIHS embraced a full spectrum of education and expertise in which it valued and validated traditional and historic knowledge.

Only Corporate members, reserved for Indians, had voting privileges and were eligible to hold office. Thus this group had a voice in determining the actions and activities of the organization. Additionally, a person gained Corporate membership by receiving a sponsor from a current Corporate member. AIHS by-laws reserved Corporate Membership for “American Indians, descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of this continent. For purposes of this corporation, an American Indian is one whose Indian ancestry is recognized by his Tribe, his Band, or his bona fide Indian organization, and by

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<sup>206</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, November 6, 1965, pg. 4, box 12, folder 10, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR

Additional honored Indian historians and the year selected: Rupert Costo, Cahuilla, 1966; Jeannette Henry-Costo, Cherokee, 1966; Bertha Stewart, Tolowa, 1966; Henry Azbill, Maidu, 1967; Edmund Jackson, Quechan, 1967; Lottie Beck, Karok, 1968; Nellie Shaw Harnar, Paiute, 1968; Edward Dozier, Pueblo, 1969; William Morgan, Navajo, 1970; Elizabeth White, Hopi, 1970; Marie Potts, Maidu, 1971.

the Board of Directors of this corporation.”<sup>207</sup> In later years, the AIHS amended the by-laws to include a guideline reserving Corporate membership for those who had at minimum ¼ Indian blood and “know themselves and be known as members of a Tribe.”<sup>208</sup> Eventually, the AIHS revised the qualifications for the President position of the organization to include a preference for a “full blood Indian,” but provided for a person of a minimum of no less than ½ Indian blood.<sup>209</sup>

As an organization, the AIHS recognized the growing trend of Indian culture beginning in the 1960s with the increase of Indian self-identification. The AIHS expressed concern and worried about the upsurge of whites who suddenly self-identified as Indians.<sup>210</sup> However, in an attempt to clarify Corporate membership, the AIHS internalized the practice of utilizing a legal and biological definition of Indian. By doing so, the AIHS followed the blood quantum standard used by the federal government which entails a federal intention of the eventual demise of the Indian population since through intermarriage Indians would eventually cease to exist.<sup>211</sup> However, the AIHS also carefully provided some flexibility for Corporate membership to include self-identified

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<sup>207</sup> American Indian Historical Society Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, pg. 5, reel 15, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>208</sup> Guidelines in Election or Selection of Members of AIHS, March 1, 1969, box 12, folder 14, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR

<sup>209</sup> Statement of Policy AIHS, April 28, 1968, box 12, folder 13, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR

<sup>210</sup> “This development is the sudden upsurge of white people who “want to be Indian.” There is a whole parade of such people attempting to trace their “genealogy” in order to prove Indian descent...We really don’t know what is wrong with “being white, or black, or anything.” Why is this happening? What is its meaning? What will this do to Indian life, tradition, religion, culture-whatever there is that is left of all these things? Think about it. We will have to TALK about it and soon.”  
1968 Report on Activities and Status of AIHS, box 12, folder 13, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR

<sup>211</sup> Eva Marie Garroutte, *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 38-60.

Indians known as tribal members by others. Inclusion of a segment known by the community as Indians undoubtedly related to the high number of terminated California Indian tribes who lost federal recognition during the 1950s, and perhaps relates to the influence of Henry-Costo, who self-identified as Eastern Cherokee.

In part, the AIHS reevaluated the membership qualifications because of the increasing popularity of self-identified Indians. For example, in an editorial the AIHS publicly decried the “synthetic nonIndian” described as parading around with “head dress, beads, and feathers.” The editors concluded, “It is a travesty on our heritage, our history and our people. PLEASE don’t do it.”<sup>212</sup> Further, Costo criticized “hippies” for adopting their perception of Indian culture. He sternly pointed out “the way of the Hippies is completely at variance with that of the Indian. It is the way of the bum.” He continued by commenting on the “highly ordered” Indian way of life and noted, “Everyone worked. No Indian would ever take peyote for kicks. And, by God, no Indian went unbathed.”<sup>213</sup> Aside from the concern about membership criteria, from its foundation the AIHS had a dedicated purpose focusing on education, history, and the general improved welfare of Indians.

At an AIHS Board of Directors meeting on July 14, 1964 the organization formulated its purpose.

1: To study, interpret and disclose the facts concerning the history of the American Indians, to preserve and protect the remaining evidence of Indian customs, arts, and cultures, and to correct the historical record as to the true story of the Indians and their contributions to civilization. 2: To

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<sup>212</sup> “The New Phoenix: Voices of Dissent,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 4 (April/May 1965): 17.

<sup>213</sup> James O. Clifford, “It’s Indians vs. Hippies in 1967 Wild Western,” *Pasadena Independent Star News*, August 13, 1967, 8.

inform and educate the public at large concerning the history of the American Indians. 3: To work for the education, the good and welfare, and the cultural development of the American Indians. 4: Agreed that the organization must be non-profit absolutely, and that the organization be nonpolitical absolutely.<sup>214</sup>

The objectives of the organization served as a path toward cultivating mutual understanding between Indian peoples and non-Indian populations. Through education and the creation of a shared knowledge base, the Society believed it would be able to defend and advocate for the self-determination rights of Indian peoples including, but not limited to, protecting lands, religions, languages, and arts. In August 1964 the AIHS filed an Articles of Incorporation with California and in June 1965 filed for tax-exempt status as a non-profit organization. A public notification of the AIHS tax-exempt status appeared in *The Oakland Tribune*.<sup>215</sup>

The Costos, along with tribal members from Choctaw and several California Indian tribes including Karok, Me-wuk, Tolowa, and Quechan established the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS) and formally incorporated it in 1964.<sup>216</sup> The initial fifteen-member Board of Directors included four tribal chairpersons: Rupert Costo of the

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<sup>214</sup> Preliminary Organization Meeting for the Founding of American Indian Historical Society, July 14, 1964, box 12, folder 9, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR

<sup>215</sup> *The Oakland Tribune*, August 15, 1969, 47.

<sup>216</sup> Articles of Incorporation of American Indian Historical Society, August 6, 1964, pg. 4, reel 14, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

The listed Board of Directors on the 1964 Articles of Incorporation in the order listed are: Rupert Costo, Cahuilla; Bertha Stewart, Tolowa; Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee; John Porter; Me-wuk; Richard Fuller, Me-wuk; Viola Fuller Wessell, Me-wuk; Alton Wilder, Klamath; Sylvia S. Green, Tolowa; and Robert Kaniatobe; Choctaw.

Minutes of American Indian Historical Society meeting, August 21, 1964, pg. 1, box 12, folder 9, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR

The 15 member Board of Directors in the order listed: Rupert Costo, Cahuilla ; Bertha Stewart, Tolowa; Sylvia S. Green, Tolowa; Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee; Robert Kaniatobe, Choctaw; Viola Fuller Wessell, Me-wuk; George Wessell, Me-wuk; Richard Fuller, Me-wuk; John Porter, Me-wuk; Alton Wilder, Klamath; Lee Emerson, Quechan; Edmond Jackson, Quechan; Jane Penn, Cahuilla; Emmett St. Marie, Cahuilla; Nancy Landuk, Karok.

Cahuilla reservation; Edmond Jackson, Yuma of the Fort Yuma reservation; Emmett St. Marie, Cahuilla of the Morongo reservation; and George Wessell, Me-wuk of the Tuolumne Band of Me-wuk Indians *rancheria*. Additionally, six women served on the original Board of Directors: Viola Fuller Wessell, Me-wuk; Sylvia Green, Tolowa; Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee; Nancy Landuck, Karok; Jane Penn, Cahuilla; and Bertha Stewart, Tolowa. Indeed, Stewart served as Vice President for the first few years.

The Board of Directors represented the broad diversity of Indians living in California. Board members ages ranged from their mid-forties to mid-sixties while the youngest member Robert “Bob” Kaniatobe, Choctaw, in his late twenties, was a college student at San Francisco State College (later renamed San Francisco State University). Kaniatobe participated in the first Native American Studies class taught on campus during the fall of 1969 along with future Alcatraz spokesperson Richard Oakes.<sup>217</sup> Some founding members attended boarding schools during their youth including Lee Emerson, Quechan, at Sherman Indian Institute in Riverside, California, Bob Kaniatobe, Choctaw, at Chilocco Indian School, in Oklahoma, and Alton Wilder, Klamath of Greenville *Rancheria*, at Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon. In addition to their diverse personal backgrounds, many of the founders had extensive organizational experience.

Several of the AIHS founding members or their families previously participated in other Indian organizations in California. Many had been involved with the Federated Indians of California (FIC), an organization formed in 1946 dedicated to distributing

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<sup>217</sup> Luis S. Kemnitzer, “Personal Memories of Alcatraz, 1969” in *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk*, eds., Troy R. Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne ( Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 118.

payment from the first California Indian land claim and pursuing a second land claim lawsuit against the federal government before the Indian Claims Commission for lands lost and not covered under California's eighteen unratified treaties. Undoubtedly, these members brought significant organizational and political experience. Bertha Stewart, Tolowa, served as secretary for the FIC for several years. She also had been active in CIRA and wrote for its publication *California Indian News*.<sup>218</sup> Additional AIHS founding members John Porter, Me-wuk, along with George Wessell previously participated in the FIC.<sup>219</sup> Richard Fuller, Me-Wuk, followed his father, William Fuller, a former member of CIRA, and both served as president of the FIC. Emmett St. Marie's father, Robert St. Marie, also participated in CIRA and held the title of Sagamore or Vice President, a position previously held by Rupert Costo. Undoubtedly, Fuller and St. Marie's fathers either personally knew or knew of Costo when he served as CIRA spokesperson while in his twenties.

Many founding members continued their activist work in other spheres throughout California. Emmett St. Marie and George Wessell served as founders members of the California Rural Indian Health Board Inc. established in 1969. Cahuilla, Jane Penn along with Katherine Siva Saubel founded and directed Malki Museum, California's first tribally controlled museum on the Morongo reservation, located in southern California, in 1965. Membership on the Board of Directors occasionally

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<sup>218</sup> *California Indian News*, July 1940, 3; "Caution on Indians Asked: U.S. Should Give Up Authority Gradually, Officials Urge," *The New York Times*, August 15, 1953, 16.

<sup>219</sup> Terri Castañeda, "Making News: Marie Potts and the *Smoke Signal* of the Federated Indians of California" in *Women in Print: Essays on Print Culture of American Women from the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, eds., James P. Danky & Wayne A. Wiegand (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 82; "Elections" *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. (January 1, 1965): 18.

changed and individuals from Blackfoot, Maidu, Navajo, Ohlone, Paiute, Pueblo, Tlingit, Yakima and Yurok tribes also contributed during the formative early years of the organization.<sup>220</sup> Speaking about the Board of Directors, Costo remarked, “All of our directors are active in their tribes and work like hell.”<sup>221</sup>

Although the Board of Directors selected issues for the AIHS to examine and served as heads of working sub-committees, such as the Publications Committee, the Costos served as the primary organizers and directed AIHS efforts. Costo served as the only President of the AIHS from its founding until its formal dissolution in 1986. Henry-Costo indicated that many founding Board members decided the organization seemed “too much like work-so they left.”<sup>222</sup> In a personal letter, Costo lamented the replacing of

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<sup>220</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, September 3, 1965, box 12, folder 10, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

Motion to elect Michael Galvan, Ohlone; Philip Galvan, Ohlone; Alfred Hicks, Navajo to Board of Directors replacing Viola Fuller Wessell, Richard Fuller, and Robert Kaniatobe.

Board of Director Meeting, November 6, 1965, pg. 4, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

Two vacancies on the Board of Directors resulted in the election of Louise Aguilar, Cahuilla; Martina Costo; Cahuilla and alternate Ralph Moranda, Wiyot.

Executive Council Meeting Minutes, August 27, 1966, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

Motion to elect Francis White, Yurok; Lottie Beck, Karok to Board of Directors replacing Edmond Jackson and Louise Aguilar.

Nominating Committee [Don Rouse, Bertha Stewart, Jeannette Henry-Costo] to all members of American Indian Historical Society on Board of Directors for term 1967-1970, July 10, 1967, box 12, folder 12, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

The Board of Directors in the order listed: Rupert Costo, Cahuilla; Philip Galvan, Ohlone; Don Rouse, Yakima; Bertha Stewart, Tolowa; Nancy Landuk, Karuk; Carolyn Saindon, Karok; Francis White, Yurok; Sylvia White [née Green], Tolowa; Lawrence Martin, Pueblo; Leatrice Mikkelsen, Navajo; Patrick Swazo Hinds, Pueblo; Earl Livermore, Blackfoot; Ray Thacker, Paiute; Lottie Beck, Karuk; Jeannette Henry-Costo, Cherokee. Alternates: Martina Costo, Cahuilla; John Porter, Miwuk; Nellie Shaw Harner, Paiute; Rosalie Nichols, Miwuk; Della Rouse, Yurok; Richard Brown, Tlingit; Irene Thacker, Paiute; Sara Galvan, Pueblo; Susan Hannan, Yurok; P. Michael Galvan, Ohlone; Henry Azbill, Maidu.

<sup>221</sup> Wallace Turner, “Paper for Indians Issued on Coast,” *The New York Times*, February 15, 1973, 11.

<sup>222</sup> Jeannette Henry-Costo, in an interview by Jan Erickson, July 27, 1998, transcript of oral interview 37<sup>th</sup> in a series, UC Riverside, <http://www.ucrhistory.ucr.edu/costo.htm>, 9.



members on the Board of Directors. He noted the challenge that “everybody wants to criticize, but nobody wants to do the real hard work, and take responsibility.”<sup>223</sup>

The Costos also expected a level of perfectionism in the tasks that needed to be completed. At one time the AIHS had a small staff, but Henry-Costo described the need to terminate them because, “Nobody else understood.”<sup>224</sup> As a result of such sentiments, the Costos assumed much of the responsibility of the organization and by the later years of operation, the number of members on the Board of Directors decreased to less than half a dozen.

Strong limitations placed on AIHS members may have played a role in some Board members’ early departure. A resolution passed in 1966 specified members were not allowed to speak in the name of the AIHS without consultation or written permission.<sup>225</sup> An additional resolution passed in 1968 reiterated the policy toward public statements. In regard to AIHS “independence of thought and action,” the resolution emphasized the organization hold no alliances with other groups and members of the Board maintain a policy of personal non-involvement and not act as leaders of any other Indian group or organizations.<sup>226</sup> For example, the AIHS removed Maidu Henry Azbill from the Board of Directors because he also worked as a director for the California League for American Indians and could not provide his “full attention” or “full support”

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<sup>223</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Ray Thacker, July 4, 1969, Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry Costo papers, reel 15, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>224</sup> Henry-Costo, in an interview by Erickson, 12.

<sup>225</sup> Executive Council Meeting on Organization Procedures, May 24, 1966, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>226</sup> Resolution Membership Meeting, March 9, 1968, box 12, folder 13, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

because of his dual responsibilities.<sup>227</sup> Despite removal from the Board of Directors, Azbill remained a member of the AIHS and wrote several articles on Maidu culture for AIHS publications. While AIHS members supported the non-involvement policy, its lack of participation in other organizations and events caused some discord.

In 1967, the San Francisco based Rosenberg Foundation, a group dedicated to the welfare of California's children, awarded grant money to the Mono tribe to hold a conference on Indian education at North Fork, located about 50 miles north of Fresno. Organized by Indians who felt overlooked by the formal educational system and were concerned about the experiences of Indian students in public schools, it served as the first state-wide meeting to identify problems and discuss solutions. The statewide Ad Hoc Committee on Indian education chairperson David Risling Jr., Hupa, invited Costo to speak at conference, referred to as the North Fork meeting, from which emerged a new organization, the California Indian Education Association (CIEA).<sup>228</sup> At the time an instructor at Modesto Junior College, Risling served as an instrumental person in forming the CIEA. He would go on to teach at the University of California, Davis where he co-founded, with founding faculty including Howard Adams, Jack D. Forbes, Sarah Hutchinson, and Carl Gorman, a Native American Studies program in 1970 and DQ University, a tribal college, located about six miles west of Davis in 1971.

Costo declined the invitation to speak at the North Fork conference. In an exchange with Risling's associate, anthropologist Jack D. Forbes, Powhatan/Lenape,

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<sup>227</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, February 18, 1966, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>228</sup> Personal correspondence, David Risling Jr., Chairman of Ad Hoc Committee on Indian Education, to Rupert Costo, August 17, 1967, Forbes, Jack D. (1934-2011) Collection, D-046, Special Collections, University of California Library, Davis (UCD).

Costo asserted, “It is our policy not to take part in conferences, conventions or other activities unless we can be involved in the planning of such activities.” Costo also took offense at Forbes expressing disappointment that Costo acted as if he spoke for all Indians. He explained, “It is the primary position of my participation in any Indian affairs that no one has the right to speak for any tribe or group without the authorization of that group-GRANTED THROUGH VOTE of its membership.”<sup>229</sup> Costo’s reasoning for not speaking at the North Fork conference related to the AIHS policy of independence prescribed to all its members and Costo, as the President, appeared determined to abide by it.

Undeterred, Risling continued to invite Costo to speak before the Ad Hoc Committee on Indian Education. Ohlone Felipe “Philip” Galvan, AIHS Secretary-Treasurer, responded to an invitation and commented, “Without a full knowledge of your goals and your SPECIFIC long range proposals, we could not permit Mr. Costo, nor any member of our Board of Directors, to take part in the meeting you were so kind as to invite him to address.” He continued with an observation on the lack of clarity about the intention or purpose of the Ad Hoc Committee. However, he noted, “We will continue to support any Indian effort, with goals openly stated, and with the Indian people themselves knowing exactly what to expect and supporting that effort, through open discussion and acceptance by the reservation and the community involved.”<sup>230</sup> Although

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<sup>229</sup> Personal correspondence, Jack D. Forbes to Rupert Costo, December 26, 1967, Forbes, Special Collections, UCD Library.; Personal letter to Jack Forbes from Rupert Costo, December 27, 1967, Forbes Special Collections, UCD Library.

<sup>230</sup> Personal correspondence, Philip Galvan, AIHS Secretary-Treasurer, to David Risling Jr, Chairperson Ad Hoc Committee on Indian Education, April 16, 1968, Forbes Special Collections, UCD Library.

the lack of AIHS interaction with additional organizations upset some other Indian organizations, the AIHS remained committed to its policy of independence.

Some of the issues and activities the AIHS chose to pursue related to the tribal membership of its Board members. Me-wuk tribal chairperson and Board member, George Wessell, served as a key organizer in the AIHS coordinating and sponsoring the Acorn Harvest Festival at the Tuolumne *Rancheria* held October 17 and 18, 1964.<sup>231</sup> The Tuolumne *Rancheria*, located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in Tuolumne County, is about one hundred and twenty miles southeast of Sacramento. The festival included primarily acorn food preparation demonstrations but also ceremonial prayer, singing, dancing, and handgames. He and his wife Viola Fuller Wessell, Me-wuk and AIHS member, offered their home for the successful public event and an estimated one thousand people participated in the two day festival.<sup>232</sup> Wessell noted the day represented “solemnity and happiness” and likened it to an Indian Thanksgiving Day.<sup>233</sup> The AIHS assisted in funding a Me-wuk Roundhouse and ultimately turned over all monies to Me-wuk tribal members.<sup>234</sup> A roundhouse, an intricately built dance house used for ceremonial and religious dances, generally includes a subterranean excavated floor; wood posts and radiating beams form the ceiling, with a roof covered in tule mat,

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<sup>231</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, August 22, 1964 pg. 2, box 12, folder 9, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>232</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, October 19, 1964, box 12, folder 9, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>233</sup> “Acorn Day Festival Scheduled,” *The Daily Union Democrat*, October 14, 1964, 1.

<sup>234</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, September 3, 1965, box 12, folder 10, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

brush, bark, or grass, and then a layer of packed earth from the excavation. Initially, the AIHS expressed interest in sponsoring the event on an annual basis but disagreement led to an early end of AIHS involvement.<sup>235</sup> While the AIHS ceased its involvement, the Me-wuk tribe continues to hold the annual event every September. One of the earliest community outreach events coordinated by the AIHS, it demonstrated the opportunity for cultural education and the possibility of collaborative work.

In part, Costo held a wholehearted belief in collaborative works between Indians and non-Indians because of the Costo family experience. His paternal Uncle Martin Costo worked with David Prescott Barrows on his dissertation resulting in his 1900 monograph *The Ethno-botany of the Coahuilla Indians of Southern California* which the Malki Museum Press reprinted in 1967 as part of its Classics in Anthropology Series. Barrows acknowledged Martin Costo as a “friend” and noted in the foreword he “nearly read the entire manuscript and made numerous corrections.”<sup>236</sup> Additionally, Barrows lived with Costo family members during his field work and in turn Martin Costo lived with Barrows for more than a year as a research aide.<sup>237</sup> Rupert Costo respected Barrows’ collaborative work because Cahuillas participated directly in it. Eventually, he published portions of Barrows findings in *The Indian Historian*.<sup>238</sup> Costo described Barrows as,

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<sup>235</sup> Specifically, the AIHS determined the Tuolumne group violated two agreements by permitting whites to help build the roundhouse and permitting alcohol. Additionally, it had an organizational concern about liability and decided to end the sponsorship. Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Clarence and Birdie, July 27, 1965, reel 15, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>236</sup> David Prescott Barrows, *The Ethno-botany of the Coahuilla Indians of Southern California* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1900).

<sup>237</sup> Rupert Costo, “Errors Multiply in Smithsonian Handbook on California,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 12, no. 3 (1979): 5.

<sup>238</sup> *The Indian Historian*, vol. 2, no. 4 (April/May 1965): 11-13.

“closer to our hearts than any white man before or since.”<sup>239</sup> In a personal letter, Costo recalled how the Costo family called Barrows “The General” because of his military experience. Costo admired Barrows because he viewed Cahuillas “in three dimensions, not as a flat object to be placed under a microscope as a curiosity of human life.”<sup>240</sup> Further, Costo remembered the Barrows family with great affection as the AIHS announced when Barrows’ grandson, David Barrows Stewart, became an admissions officer at UCB.<sup>241</sup> The AIHS had Indian voting members but welcomed non-Indians as Associate members. The organization remained committed to mutual understanding and collaborative work.

A lead statement policy in the 1964 inaugural edition of the journal *The Indian Historian* noted:

“In the past, Indians have had good reason to distrust and even scorn the professional researcher. Too often have they misinterpreted the Indian’s history, misrepresented their way of life. It becomes necessary now to correct the record, to write the history as it should be written....Friends of the Indian may join in our great work, helping but not leading, aiding but not pushing, taking part but not taking over.”<sup>242</sup>

As an organization, the AIHS desired national consequence and relevance. However, the California Indian background of Costo along with additional AIHS members ensured that while the organization strived for national importance, it simultaneously had localized significance throughout California. Thus the AIHS had a

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<sup>239</sup> Barrows, *The Ethno-botany of the Coahuilla Indians of Southern California*, x.

<sup>240</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Harry Lawton, n.d., reel 16, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>241</sup> “Barrows: Friend Remembered,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3, no. 6 (June 1966): 3.

<sup>242</sup> “A Statement of Policy,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1, no. 1 (October 1964): 1.

purposeful role not limited to San Francisco. The AIHS embraced this notion as illustrated through a motto that appeared on early mimeograph publications such as the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws: “National in Scope. Tribal in Application.”

Located initially at the private home of the Costos, the organization sought a site for a national headquarters with space for meetings, and a library and art museum.<sup>243</sup> Eventually, Henry-Costo along with Bertha Stewart found an ideal place in a two-story with an attic, nine room, Victorian house built in 1900 at 1451 Masonic Avenue located in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco. Located between the Golden Gate Park and the Buena Vista Park, it is less than half a mile south of the iconic Haight and Ashbury intersection, known for its hippie subculture during the 1960s heyday.

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<sup>243</sup> The address of the former headquarters of the AIHS was the Costos’ private house located at 206 Miguel Street in San Francisco but since 1966 the national headquarters was located at 1451 Masonic Avenue in San Francisco. According to the minutes of a special executive council meeting of the AIHS July 21, 1966, The AIHS looked at three houses, one in the Filmore District and another on Buena Vista West. However, Bertha Stewart and Jeannette Henry-Costo reported the house on Masonic Avenue would be the best fit for their needs but would require a conditional use permit from the city. At a special meeting on August 3, 1966 the AIHS decided to purchase the house at 1451 Masonic Avenue for \$57,000. In October 1966, in a report to the Board of Directors it was reported that the Costos would reside in the attic for custodianship and pay \$100 per month in rent. The AIHS reported receiving a use permit for the Chautauqua House at an executive council meeting April 1, 1967.



Figure 6 Chatauqua House, formal headquarters of the AIHS in the San Francisco Haight-Ashbury District, 1451 Masonic Avenue. Image courtesy of author.

The location required approval from the San Francisco City Planning Commission, which voted unanimously to let the AIHS establish its headquarters there against the advice from Acting Zoning Administrator Robert Passmore. Arguments opposing the location included concern about nighttime meetings, parking, and fears that its establishment would encourage commercial development. However, Commissioner James Kearney noted, “I think they [the AIHS] will improve and stabilize the neighborhood.” He continued, “I think this is one of the nicest things that could happen there.”<sup>244</sup> Additionally, James Brown, President of the Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood

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<sup>244</sup> “Indians Among the Hippies,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, March 3, 1967, 4.



Council endorsed the AIHS location and declared “We welcome diversity. It adds a yeast to our neighborhood that we encourage.”<sup>245</sup>

The AIHS purchased the house in 1966 for \$57,000 and a \$100 down payment. The newly purchased headquarters needed a name and the AIHS decided on Chautauqua House.<sup>246</sup> The AIHS selected Chautauqua, a Seneca word roughly meaning “to take fish from the waters” as an homage to the Chautauqua series where lecturers and artists traveled across the country in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Additionally, it selected the term to symbolize Indian peoples embracing Indian history, culture, and education.<sup>247</sup> AIHS members and their families worked on the process of updating and cleaning the house. Those highlighted for their work included: Don and Dallas Hammond; Philip, Sara, Michael, Eleanor, and Andy Galvan; Dolores and Mannie LaMeira; and Darrell and Becky Hylton.<sup>248</sup>

The Chautauqua House officially opened its doors on May 6, 1967 and it would remain its formal headquarters for the duration of the organization.<sup>249</sup> A formal announcement for the opening of the AIHS headquarters appeared in *The San Francisco Chronicle* and listed the inaugural museum exhibition of paintings by father and son Carl and Rudolph Gorman, Navajo.<sup>250</sup> Carl Gorman would later serve as a founding faculty

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, August 27, 1966, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>247</sup> “New Indian Cultural Center: Chautauqua House,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3, no. 7 (August/September 1966): 3.

<sup>248</sup> “The Chautauqua Spokesman,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 4, no. 1 (January/February 1967): 2.

<sup>249</sup> Executive Council Meeting, April 1, 1967, box 12, folder 12, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>250</sup> “Indian Society,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, June 21, 1967, 48.

member of the Native American Studies (NAS) program at University of California, Davis. In 1973, the NAS program established a museum that bears his name.

The Museum of Indian Art within Chautauqua House embraced Indian arts and regularly held exhibitions showcasing Indian artists. In fall of 1967, it displayed the first solo exhibition by self-taught painter Frank Day, Maidu. A reviewer from *The San Francisco Chronicle* described his exhibition as “conventional primitive style.”<sup>251</sup> Accompanying his art exhibition, the AIHS published a booklet *The Paintings of Frank Day: Maidu Indian Artist*.<sup>252</sup> The booklet supplemented the visitor’s knowledge by providing background on Maidu culture and history for all thirty five paintings displayed. By providing a thorough explanation, the AIHS museum enhanced visitor’s experience and understanding of Day’s art. The AIHS committed to Indian art and Indian artists. In addition to providing a physical space for Indian artists, the AIHS celebrated Indian artists such as Frank Day who was one of the first California Indian artists to paint depictions of California Indian traditions.<sup>253</sup> Day passed away in 1976, but his influence of symbolic paintings and integrating oral traditions continues with contemporary Maidu artists Dalbert Castro, Harry Fonseca, and Judith Lowry.

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The Society flourished during the 1960s with an environment favorable to critical consciousness and questioning of the “master narrative” of American history. According

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<sup>251</sup> Thomas Albright, “Indian Society’s New Museum,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, October 2, 1967, 45.

<sup>252</sup> *The Paintings of Frank Day, Maidu Indian Artist: Maidu Tales in Oil* (San Francisco: American Indian Historical Society, 1967).

<sup>253</sup> Frank LaPena, “Contemporary Northern California Native American Art,” *California History* 71 (Fall 1992): 386-401.

to American historian Terry Anderson, “Nothing was sacred, everything was challenged, and the result was an era we simply call ‘The Sixties.’”<sup>254</sup> Similarly, sociologist Todd Gitlin notes, “It was partly a product of social structure....but more, the upsurge was *made* from the living elements of a unique, unrepeatable history, under the spreading wings of the zeitgeist.”<sup>255</sup> The United States went through several mass social movements during the 1960s. The Bay Area of California served as a primary site for organizations, protests, and institutional changes which gradually extended across the country.

The San Francisco Bay Area served as a selected urban area by the BIA for its Relocation program for Indians beginning in the 1950s. Commissioner Dillon Myer, known largely as the person who administered Japanese-American internment camps during World War II, championed the national program of Relocation. In part the policy sought to depopulate reservations and “push” Indian peoples to move into cities such as Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose for jobs training and placement. Coupled with the termination policy, the federal government sought complete assimilation of Indian peoples and hoped to sever ties to their homelands and culture.

Largely because of the relocation policy, Indians became California’s fastest growing minority group but trailed behind other racial groups particularly in education as an estimated 43% had not received education beyond 8<sup>th</sup> grade. By 1960 nearly 39,000 Indians lived in California, a 98% population growth from 1950 with about 25% living in Los Angeles and 10% in the Bay Area.<sup>256</sup> Pueblo relocatee to San Francisco, Louis

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<sup>254</sup> Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and The Sixties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 1.

<sup>255</sup> Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987), 4.

<sup>256</sup> “State Indians—Births and Depression,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, December 18, 1965, 4.

Loretto, commented that he liked it in the city but, “It is the hardest thing in the world to leave your own home on your own land....but there was not enough to make a living.”<sup>257</sup>

In addition to many relocated out-of-state Indians, many California Indians moved to cities for economic reasons. Emmett St. Marie, Cahuilla, noted, “You almost have to move if you want to survive. You have to work, to live. Eat. So if you live on a reservation you don’t have...any work and your allotments are too small to be a farmer,” he concluded, “It is almost a must,” to live and work in cities.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> William Steif, “Meet the Big City Indians: 6,000 Due in Bay Area by ’57 Under U.S. Plans,” *The San Francisco News*, July 24, 1956, 11.

<sup>258</sup> Emmett St. Marie in an interview recorded by Kathy Biel, December 15, 1970, St. Marie’s home on the Morongo reservation, O.H. # 486, Indian Urbanization, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton.

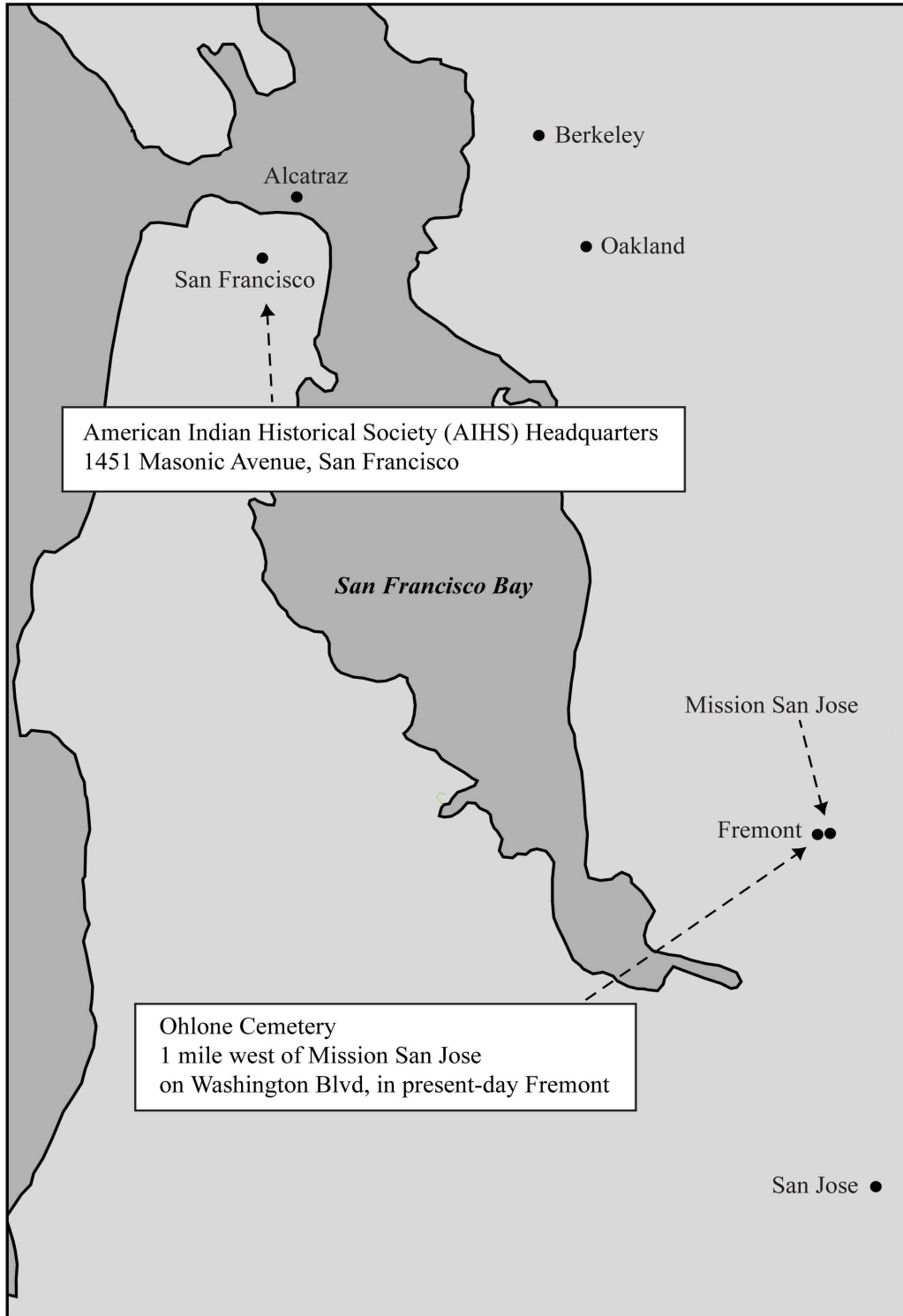


Figure 7 Bay Area map. Note the Relocation cities: Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose.

In 1958 tribal leaders from the Southwest visited San Francisco to evaluate the relocation process as an estimated 20,000 Indians had relocated to various cities in California. Based on their observations, Paul Jones, Navajo, and Martin Vigil and Joe Herrera, Pueblo, rejected the idea of relocatee Indians starving in hovels. Jones expressed appreciation for non-Indians participation in clothing drives for the Navajo Nation but stressed the need for thoughtful consideration in relation to donations. He wryly noted, “Most of the stuff is fit only for scarecrows. A lot of it is high-heeled shoes—high-heeled shoes for work on a reservation.”<sup>259</sup> Various media outlets promoted stories on the dichotomy of urban v. reservation Indians.

Rupert Costo explained the false nature of such a dichotomy. Many Indians resided in cities, but Costo noted they maintain “the closest possible contact with the reservation or community. These Indian people consider themselves to be residents of both the city and the reservation.”<sup>260</sup> For Costo and many California Indians, no divide existed between on and off reservation. Costo epitomized an Indian who lived off the reservation but worked for his Cahuilla tribal community as the elected spokesperson for several years while living in San Francisco.

Indians lived in urban areas where they absorbed the surrounding culture. American Indian legal scholar, Charles Wilkinson, remarked, “Indian people fed off the Bay Area’s electric atmosphere, where civil rights sentiments ran strong,” he continued,

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<sup>259</sup> Arthur Hoppe, “Navajo Leader Visiting Here: Indians Look Hard at Plans to Help,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, May 23, 1958, 10.

<sup>260</sup> Rupert Costo, “The American Indian Today,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 5 (Winter 1968): 4.

“And San Francisco in the 1960s was...well, San Francisco in the 1960s.”<sup>261</sup> The Bay Area became a site of activism which featured the emergence of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense in Oakland (1966), Free Speech Movement (1964-1965) and the Third World Strike which sought the establishment of ethnic studies at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB) and San Francisco State College in 1969. The feminist movement and the Third World Movement which sought a relevant education that integrated social justice and equality, also gained traction in the Bay Area.<sup>262</sup>

Indian peoples and Indian organizations observed other ethnic and racial communities resulting in a cross-fertilization of tactics, language, and style. Vine Deloria Jr., Standing Rock Sioux, argued, “Indians were forced to adopt the vocabulary and techniques of the blacks in order to get their grievances serious consideration by the media.”<sup>263</sup> For example, the occupations of buildings provided political theater, which garnered mainstream media attention.

Indian activists mimicked tactics to receive media attention. However, Indian activism differed from other ethnic communities because of the unique federal-tribal relationship between the United States and Indians. Some Indian activists observed and

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<sup>261</sup> Charles Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 133.

<sup>262</sup> See the bibliography on Native American women compiled by Annette L. Reed in *Unequal Sister: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women's History*, eds. Vicki L. Ruiz and Ellen Carol Dubois (New York: Routledge, 2000). For more information on women of color and feminism see Paula Gunn Allen, *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986); Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage, eds., *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997); Donna Hightower Langston, “American Indian Women's Activism in the 1960s and 1970s,” in *Hypatia* 18, no. 2 (Spring, 2003): 114-132; Devon Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism* (Lincoln: Bison Books, 2003).

<sup>263</sup> Vine Deloria Jr., *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence* (1974; revised, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 25.

borrowed the techniques of other ethnic and racial groups and indigenized them to fit their needs; the fish-ins of the Pacific Northwest borrowed tactics from the successful sit-ins of the South.

Many understood Indians needed to accomplish more than imitation in order to develop distinct forms of activism and achieve victories in protests. Costo recognized the need and believed that “unique and special forms of struggle and pressure” needed to be developed.<sup>264</sup> Speaking about activism surrounding Red Power, Henry-Costo, noted, “the most important step that must be taken is to bring the whole of Indian society together including the adults and youth at some point in which they can work together and then develop a specific Indian form of struggle.” She continued, “You cannot utilize the Black form or the Chicano form or the White form. A specific Indian form of struggle must be developed.”<sup>265</sup> The San Francisco Bay Area served as a fertile environment, Indian activism occurring during the 1960s and 1970s represented a continuation of activism and resistance.

The United States may have regarded issues raised by Indian peoples as part of a larger movement of domestic minority discontent, but many Indians viewed the issues raised as part human rights under treaty agreements not civil rights. Thus, Indian peoples called for more than equal rights, but for guaranteed rights inherent within the tribal-federal relationship created by virtue of land taken either by treaty, forced agreement, or removal. Indian peoples worked to create their own forms of activism. In contrast to

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<sup>264</sup> Rupert Costo, “The American Indian Today,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 5 (Winter 1968): 8.

<sup>265</sup> Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry-Costo, eds., *Indian Voices: The First Convocation of American Indian Scholars* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press Inc., 1970), 315.



additional ethnic communities, Indian peoples maintain a policy relationship with the United States. As a result, regardless if a politician has little knowledge of Indian peoples and history, the policy relationship is maintained. The activities of the AIHS served as a “preface to change.”<sup>266</sup>

For Indian peoples, the issues and struggles are connected to the cornerstone of land, treaty rights, cultural preservation, and self-determination. The concept of homeland for Indigenous peoples differs dramatically from many non-Indigenous people who view land through the lens of property rather than the origination of people.<sup>267</sup> The role of land extends beyond simply providing resources. Anthropologist Keith Basso notes, “constructions of place [for Indian communities] reach deeply into other cultural spheres, including conceptions of wisdom, notions of morality, politeness and tact in forms of spoken discourse, and certain conventional ways of imagining and interpreting” the past.<sup>268</sup> The land anchors one’s identity and even if one lives in the city, they can always go “home.”

For many Indian people, homelands are intrinsically linked to identity and culture. When speaking on the differences between Indians and other ethnic groups, Cahuilla Madeline Ball of the Morongo reservation remarked, “We have a land base, you know

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<sup>266</sup> Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry-Costo, eds., *The Native American Today: A Report of the Second Convocation of Indian Scholars* (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1974), v.

<sup>267</sup> Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe’s Conquest of the New World 1492-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Acjachemem poet Rhonda Robles, speaks to this relationship with the land in her poem “Ancestral Memory,” in which she writes, “They call it Cultural Persistence/I call it Ancestral Memory/The connection to our homeland defies explanation/Yet it is felt deeply, to the core/Every cell of my body holds the memory/Fiercely.” “Poems in Protest and Prayer,” *News From Native California* 18, no. 1 (Fall 2004): 11.”

<sup>268</sup> Keith H. Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: New Mexico Press, 1996), xv.

and like I have always said, we have roots.” She continued, “Our problem is not the same at all because we’ve been out at the reservation...we have a place to go, always.”<sup>269</sup> Katherine Siva Saubel, Cahuilla commented on a difference she saw between Indian and African American activism. Siva Saubel concluded, “The black man wants to merge and live with everybody, wants to go into the white communities and live, doesn’t want to be segregated anymore. But the Indian is different....I want to go home and be with my own people.” She continued that she had anxiety about living permanently in a city because, “I would be lost. This is where my heart is.”<sup>270</sup> These observations demonstrate how homelands culturally distinguish Indians from other ethnic communities. Indian peoples’ struggles encompassed survival and maintaining the right to remain sovereign and culturally distinct tribal peoples rather than acculturation or assimilation.

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The most visible political activity that occurred near the AIHS headquarters in San Francisco took place in November 1969 with the third attempt to occupy Alcatraz Island in the San Francisco Bay. The nearly nineteen month occupation followed two previous attempts. Occupying the island had its roots with street theater and five Lakotas who attempted to “hold the rock” in 1964. Adam Fortunate Eagle (Nordwall), Chippewa, acknowledged, “Of course it was a stunt.”<sup>271</sup> The 1964 landing party consisted of about

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<sup>269</sup> Madeline Ball in an interview recorded by Kathy Biel, January 13, 1971, Ball’s Morongo Opportunity Center office on Morongo reservation, O.H. # 482, Indian Urbanization, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton.

<sup>270</sup> Katherine Siva Saubel in an interview recorded by Kathy Biel, December 15, 1970, Siva Saubel’s home on Morongo reservation, O.H. # 485, Indian Urbanization, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton.

<sup>271</sup> Adam Fortunate Eagle (Nordwall), *Alcatraz! Alcatraz!: The Indian Occupation of 1969-1971* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1992), 15. The five Lakotas who staked homestead claims included: Garfield Spotted Elk,

forty Indians, but five Lakotas claimed the excess federal land under the 1868 Ft. Laramie Treaty. They claimed the land by “right of discovery” a pointed reference to the “doctrine of discovery” used in courts to justify land theft and offered to pay forty-seven cents per acre as a way to draw attention to the California Indian Land Claims. Ultimately, Alcatraz stood as a place for Indians to gather, a symbol for many Indian peoples for Indian activism, and led to much needed media attention on Indian issues.<sup>272</sup> The occupation promoted state and national conversations about various Indian issues.

As residents of the San Francisco Bay Area, the Costos were aware of the Alcatraz occupation and did not participate in it. As an organization the AIHS had no official involvement. The organization discussed Alcatraz with “no action taken.”<sup>273</sup> Costo acknowledged the occupation demonstrated the support of the general public and this support could translate to additional issues raised by Indian peoples. However, he had concerns surrounding the cultural sensitivity of out-of-state Indians claiming traditional Ohlone homelands of the Bay Area in the name of all Indians. As the Ohlones never surrendered their lands, many Ohlones considered the land as undeniably Ohlone and not intended for out-of-state Indians. Costo commented, “This talk about its being owned by all Indians is nonsense.”<sup>274</sup> Further, Henry-Costo noted “We knew it had no chance of success. But we had no right to oppose it.” She continued “In what we do, we

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Walter Means, Richard McKenzie, Mark Martinez, and Allen Cottier. Cottier served as President of the Bay Area Council of American Indians.

<sup>272</sup> Peter Blue Cloud, ed., *Alcatraz is not an Island* (Berkeley: Wingbow Press, 1972).

<sup>273</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, January 3, 1969, box 12, folder 14, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>274</sup> Wallace Turner, “Paper for Indians Issued on Coast,” *The New York Times*, February 15, 1973, 11.

have unanimity. If we can't come to an agreement, we don't do anything."<sup>275</sup> Henry-Costo's comments reveal that the Society did not have a consensus on Alcatraz and therefore as an organization had no formal involvement. In December, the AIHS sent a letter to President Richard Nixon recommending that if Alcatraz Island was to be given to any "original Americans," the Ohlone descendants residing in the Bay Area should be given priority.<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> American Indian Historical Society to President Richard Nixon. December 25, 1969. White House Central Files, Subject File IN (Oct. 1-Dec. 31, 1969), Box 4.

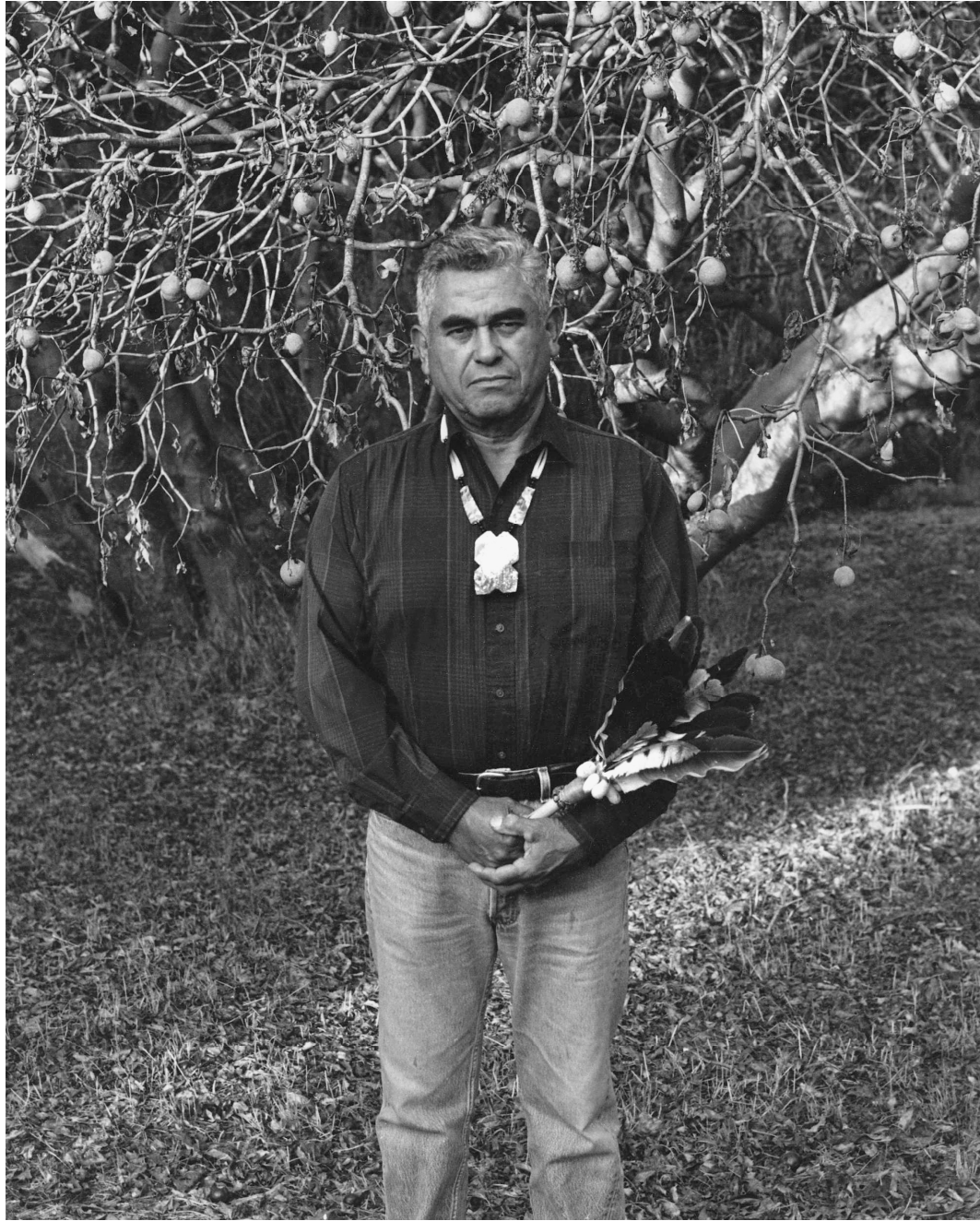


Figure 8 Felipe "Philip" Galvan, Ohlone. Photograph courtesy of Galvan family.

The Galvan family, Ohlone, had several family members active in the AIHS. They disagreed with the occupation. Upset about the Alcatraz occupation, the Ohlones expressed their opposition by submitting a petition to President Richard Nixon. The petition letter, dated January 22, 1970, explained that although Indians on Alcatraz claimed to speak for all Indians, “they do not,” and had no authority to speak on behalf of the Ohlones. The letter called the occupation “wrong” and suggested Alcatraz activists “are mainly from other states, other tribes and reservations.” By pointing out many of the Alcatraz activists were from outside of California, and describing the historic homelands of the Ohlones “from Pleasanton in the East Bay to the Coast, and southerly to Monterey, including the islands along the coast,” the Ohlones supported their claim that if any Indians had a right to claim Alcatraz, they did.<sup>277</sup>

The occupation of Alcatraz attracted media attention and many supported this action, including some California Indians. The occupation also revealed conflict between Indigenous California Indians and out-of-state Indians, many who arrived largely through the federal government relocation program. Costo took great care to explain the at times tense relationship between California Indians and out-of-state Indians. For example, many Indians participating in the occupation viewed the island as a potential location for an Indian cultural center. However, Costo highlighted some California Indians, including the Ohlone view of the island as cursed. As a result, he supported the Ohlone belief that choosing “the rock” as a location for occupation “showed a lack of knowledge of and

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<sup>277</sup> Ohlone Indians of California. Petition to President Richard Nixon, January 22, 1970. White House Central Files, Subject File IN (Jan 1-March 31, 1970) Box 5, File 1 of 2.

respect for Native culture and history.”<sup>278</sup> Additionally, Costo declared “descendents of identifiable California tribes” stood as appropriate claimants to the island and any other California lands.<sup>279</sup>

Some of the tension derived from the limited knowledge of out-of-state Indians about California Indian history. Costo considered the lack of knowledge not unusual because many Indians, “live in what was once the aboriginal land of other Natives, and with the disruption of Native cultures, they do not know the land of the people, nor the history either.”<sup>280</sup> In part, limited knowledge about different tribal histories led the AIHS to stress education of Indian people in the hopes to increase solidarity. Costo questioned the efficiency of the occupation and the significant number of college aged participants. By leaving school to occupy Alcatraz, the students jeopardized newly established Native American Studies programs.<sup>281</sup> Many of the spokespeople who received media coverage during the occupation were from tribes outside of California. These individuals included Richard Oakes, Mohawk; Adam Fortunate Eagle (Nordwall), Red Lake Chippewa, LaNada Means, Banncock; and John Trudell, Lakota.<sup>282</sup> While Costo recognized the mixed response from California Indian peoples, he also continued an exacting critique of the lack of respect and knowledge of some out-of-state Indians.

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<sup>278</sup> Rupert Costo, “Alcatraz,” *The Indian Historian*. vol. 3, no. 1, (Winter 1970): 7.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>282</sup> However, Richard Oakes, Mohawk, married into the Kashaya Pomo tribe with Anna “Annie” Oakes.

A few years after the occupation of Alcatraz, Costo presented a paper at the National Indian Education Association in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He noted the mistaken belief by some out-of-state Indians that California Indians gave up their land. Costo observed “I have heard some say that the California Indians are not Indians at all. They look down upon the natives of this area. That is the most unforgivable ignorance.”<sup>283</sup> He expressed the need for the AIHS to include “an all-out drive to inform and educate our own people about their own history. There is nothing to be ashamed of.” He concluded, “Only ignorance deserves shame.”<sup>284</sup> Some California Indian peoples stood apart from Alcatraz, while others fully participated and engaged in the occupation. Costo was not alone in expressing concern about the lack of consultation and respect for California Indians and the Ohlone.

Edward Castillo, Cahuilla, worked as an instructor at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). After a classroom visit from Richard Oakes, Castillo and about half of the Indian students from UCLA decided to participate in the Alcatraz occupation. Castillo stayed for nearly three months before returning to his teaching position at UCLA. He taught about sixty Indian students at UCLA and the first day class introductions revealed, “many of the students from tribes outside of California were amazed that any California Indians still survived.”<sup>285</sup> Many of his out-of-state Indian students arrived through the Relocation Program. Castillo evaluated participating in Alcatraz and

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<sup>283</sup> Rupert Costo, “Fact from Fiction,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 10, no. 1 (Winter 1977): 35.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Edward D. Castillo, “A Reminiscence of the Alcatraz Occupation,” in *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk*, Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne, eds., (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 120.



reflected on the intention since, “these leaders would be claiming California Indian land based on a treaty the government made with the Lakota Indians!”<sup>286</sup> Castillo’s reflection demonstrates tensions between California Indians and out-of-state Indians regarding homelands.

Darryl Wilson, Pit River, articulated the tension and raised the issue of the lack of representation of Ohlones in the occupation. He noted the Pit River referred to Alcatraz as Diamond Island but recognized the island was in traditional Ohlone territory. He expressed his unease and asserted, “By the occupation and the attitude of the leadership, a person could very easily be convinced that California was a land that was claimed by the relocated elements among the original natives, and it should not be recognized as an element of the Ohlone history and the Ohlone future, or related to the California natives.” He continued, “But this is the land of the Ohlones,” and determined the occupation served as “a movement separate from the Ohlones and the other California natives.”<sup>287</sup> Mi-wuk George Wessell firmly believed California Indians ought to have priority for any lands within the state. He commented, “after the out-of-state Indians have laid the groundwork, the California Indians will move in and take over.”<sup>288</sup>

Both Castillo and Wilson indicated their ambivalent feelings about the occupation of Alcatraz. However, Castillo concluded programs such as Relocation demonstrated, “how the BIA pitted one group of Indians against another by offering tempting rewards for cooperation” which played a role in his understanding government policy that

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<sup>286</sup> Castillo, “A Reminiscence of the Alcatraz Occupation,” 122.

<sup>287</sup> Troy R. Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Indian Self-Determination and the Rise of Indian Activism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 148.

<sup>288</sup> “Mi-wuks Cool: Heap Wampum for Rock,” *The Daily Union Democrat* December 3, 1969, 1.

promoted division among Indian peoples.<sup>289</sup> The occupation served as a model utilized by Pit River tribal peoples who occupied lands and buildings in protest but it also demonstrated a tension surrounding the concept of pan-Indianism.<sup>290</sup>

Katherine Siva Saubel, Cahuilla, observed the sometimes tense relationship between California Indians and out-of-state Indians. In speaking about Alcatraz and claims to land, she asserted, “We’re trying to fight for our own lost lands here, our water rights, or different things in California. There’s other Indians that come in from different states and they’re making our fight much harder because they’re doing something else the opposite of what we want to try and do. Like take for instance Alcatraz. That’s not the way to do nothing.” She continued, “They should fight for their own lands that they’ve lost in their own states. I’m sure they had Indian lands in their states. They should fight for that and try to get it back. And not come up here and make so much, I think, making more confusion for the California Indian.”<sup>291</sup> Siva Saubel’s assertions illustrate perhaps unintentional discord because out-of-state Indians actions could, at times, conflict with the goals of many California Indians. An unspoken thread throughout her comments is an outright rejection of pan-Indiansim and an embrace of indigenous homelands and the inherent land and water rights.

While she understood the reason for growing Indian militancy, Madeline Ball, Cahuilla, disapproved of it. She declared, “Indian kids just aren’t built that way” and

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<sup>289</sup> Castillo, “A Reminiscence of the Alcatraz Occupation,” 121-122.

<sup>290</sup> John Hurst, “Indians Defeated, but Won’t Yield in Land Struggle; Pit River Tribe Maintains Its Claim to Vast Tract in California,” *The Los Angeles Times* September 28, 1988, A3.

<sup>291</sup> Katherine Siva Saubel in an interview recorded by Kathy Biel, December 15, 1970, Siva Saubel’s home on Morongo reservation, O.H. # 485, Indian Urbanization, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton.

continued to describe how Indians mimicked militancy because “that is the ‘in’ thing” and called Indian militancy “more role-playing” than sincere activity. The concept of homelands factored into her strong belief of cultural freedom. Ball asserted, “Our kids can go hunting, they can walk around. They’re free.” She also rejected the characterization of her reservation as “ghetto” by some and instead proclaimed “that’s home.”<sup>292</sup> Similar to Siva Saubel, Ball rejected adopting cultural practices of other ethnic groups, rejected pan-Indianism, and identified homelands as central to cultural freedom.

Instead of searching for pan-Indianism, the Society wanted respect, solidarity, and mutual understanding of tribal nations. As a result, the AIHS stressed tribal issues, rejected a broad pan-Indian identity and insisted on preserving distinct tribal identities. Indeed, Costo described the attempts at pan-Indianism a “historic extermination.” Attempts of pan-Indian identity must be rejected because of the danger they posed to tribal culture. He said, “I am afraid this kind of unity which is based on smoothing out cultural differences will destroy us quicker than the efforts at assimilation have done so far.”<sup>293</sup>

The concern illustrated the apprehensive feelings surrounding the prospect of abandoning tribal cultures and their inherent diversities in order to adopt a faux identity of homogeneity. Instead, the AIHS embraced cohesion, solidarity, and unity based on common objectives. Costo noted rejecting pan-Indianism may prove difficult for the

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<sup>292</sup> Madeline Ball in an interview recorded by Kathy Biel, January 13, 1971, Ball’s Morongo Opportunity Center office on Morongo reservation, O.H. # 482, Indian Urbanization, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton.

<sup>293</sup> Rupert Costo, “Fact from Fiction,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 10, no. 1 (Winter 1977): 33.

uninformed non-Indian and uninformed Indian but decided, “it is too damn bad. A little bit of time and trouble will straighten them out.” He continued, “we will not give up our tribal customs, or attire, or traditions, or ceremonial dress, just to make the Indian more appetizing to the so-called Pan Indian movement.”<sup>294</sup> Mohawk activist and scholar Taiaiake Alfred, describes cohesion as a community of members from the same group that coheres around the same beliefs and institutions while solidarity is a community formed of different groups who join around the common struggle for self-determination.<sup>295</sup>

By stressing the shared values among Indian peoples, the Society utilized them as a unifying function to address concerns through a solidarity approach. The Society utilized activity at both the local and state level in helping create a framework that assisted in developing an informed public and furthering understanding. For example, while some Indians living in the Bay Area focused on attempting to “hold the rock,” the AIHS proceeded to protest attempts to build part of Paseo Padre Parkway over an Ohlone burial ground in the East Bay city of Fremont.

In part, the AIHS formed not only to educate both Indians and non-Indians but also to respond to the historic record. As indicated in the AIHS objectives, the organization desired to correct the historic truth with the sincere hope that this would assist in further understanding, and perhaps historic justice. The Society worked toward correcting historical depictions of Indian peoples because it viewed them as indicative of a deeper extension of misunderstanding and embedded stereotypes.

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid, 34.

<sup>295</sup> Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: an Indigenous Manifesto* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 87.

The terminology used in Indian history constructed a falsehood of Indian life and indeed subconsciously and covertly denied the culture and by extension the humanity of Indian peoples. The descriptive language stripped Indians of their dignity when for example, seasonal travel within traditional and historic homelands came to be described as “roaming” or “nomadic” and the strategic harvesting and care for plant foods and medicines was described as “gathering.” The descriptive language implied a simple or primitive nature of Indian culture not worthy of serious study. The hurtful inaccurate and stereotypical language led Costo to comment, “Stereotyping itself [cannot] be excused by claiming ignorance. It is patronizing, thoughtless, and a result of racial self-importance.”<sup>296</sup> In part, this led to the AIHS to prioritize the review of textbooks used in K-12 education in California to challenge books that used stereotypes, promoted prejudicial attitudes or simply ignored Indian history. The AIHS directly engaged those in political roles, including the California Board of Education, which had the power to order revisions or reject textbooks for the entire state.

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<sup>296</sup> Costo, “Fact from Fiction,” 32-33.

## CHAPTER 4

### “SOMETHING LESS THAN A HUMAN BEING”: CALIFORNIA EDUCATION, CURRICULUM, AND TEXTBOOKS

At nine in the morning on January 4, 1968, a packed audience of Indian community members squeezed into the San Francisco American Indian Center for the opportunity to hear testimony before a Special Senate Subcommittee Hearings on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.<sup>297</sup> Some may have attended for the chance to see the popular New York Senator Robert F. Kennedy, Democrat, who chaired the Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education. The other Senator in attendance, Republican Paul Fannin of Arizona, had pushed to conduct the hearings and selected California as a site because of its sizable Indian population. The hearings sought the guidance and experiences of Indian peoples to identify and address various challenges in Indian education.

The second person to testify at the hearing, Rupert Costo, Cahuilla and President of the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or “The Society”), expressed his concern about California education, particularly the textbooks used in classrooms. He commented, “There is not one Indian in the whole of this country who does not cringe in anguish and frustration because of these textbooks.” He continued, “There is not one Indian child who has not come home in shame and tears after one of those sessions in which he is taught that his people were dirty, animal-like, something less than a human

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<sup>297</sup> It should be noted that a fire destroyed the San Francisco Indian Center in October 1969. Some point to its destruction as a precipitate to the Alcatraz island occupation the following month as one of the demands included a community center.

being.”<sup>298</sup> Costo spoke knowledgably and confidently about the topic because by the time of the hearing in 1968, the AIHS had been actively working on textbooks for years in California.

From its formal incorporation in 1964 the AIHS placed a priority on correcting misinformation and stereotypes in history textbooks used in California’s public schools. The desire to inform and educate both Indian and non-Indian peoples encapsulated the formal purpose of the organization. Accordingly, one of the earliest AIHS activities included examining and evaluating textbooks used in California public schools at elementary and middle schools. As Costo argued, “in the elementary levels, is where the mind of the citizen is formed. Here too is where prejudice begins.”<sup>299</sup> The AIHS had specific interest in public schools because the overwhelming majority of Indian students in California attended public schools. In an attempt to accelerate California Indian assimilation through attendance to public schools, the Sherman Indian Institute (later renamed Sherman Indian High School), located in Riverside, California excluded California Indian student attendance 1948-1968.<sup>300</sup>

The AIHS furnished some of the earliest evaluations of California Indian depictions in textbooks used in public schools. In an editorial, Rupert Costo and his wife Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee, termed the laborious textbook review process

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<sup>298</sup> U.S. Congress, Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Hearings on Indian Education: The Study of the Education of Indian Children Part 1*, 90 Cong., 1 and 2 sess. (1968), 243.

<sup>299</sup> Rupert Costo, “Indians and Books,” *The Indian Historian*. vol. 2 no. 8 (October 1965): 3.

<sup>300</sup> Daryl E. Lembke, “Indian Bureau Reverses Policy on State Tribes,” *The Los Angeles Times*, June 30, 1968, B1.

“the last frontier.”<sup>301</sup> For the Costos and the AIHS, American history textbooks rendered Indian peoples less than human and by doing so, fostered and ensured every Californian educated in public schools would assume the worst about California Indians. Thus the AIHS sought historical inclusion and accuracy in the textbooks used in California public schools. If left unchallenged and unquestioned the textbooks denied the humanity and cultural diversity of Indians.

The AIHS considered the form and content of history education as significant for several reasons. For serious discussions on policy to occur, misconceptions about Indian cultures, traditions, and historical experiences had to be deconstructed and addressed. Public opinion informed political policy and if Indian peoples appeared as caricatures, any possible shift in policy would be even more difficult to achieve. Some textbooks failed to mention Indians. The absence of Indians in textbooks silently equated Indians as a culture either historically insignificant or perhaps a group destroyed in the past and therefore not necessary of mention. In addition, by confronting history textbook content and imagery the AIHS shifted negative self-perception of Indian students exposed to Indian caricatures in textbooks. For example, a teacher reported a young girl scraped her knee at school and while helping clean up the young girl, she blurted, “I hope it was my Indian blood that fell out,” because she did not want to be Indian.<sup>302</sup> Her comment revealed a level of negative self-perception that could be connected to her educational environment.

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<sup>301</sup> “Back of the Book,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 8 (October 1965): 35.

<sup>302</sup> Anne LaRiviere, “Schools Offer Link to Heritage: A Cultural Education for Indians,” *The Los Angeles Times*, June 14, 1979, C1.



Oversimplifications about Indian cultures and history were detrimental to impressionable youth. Broad generalizations left unchallenged failed to describe or understand the cultural diversity within Indian communities. Indians were not “mere collections of random, roaming people, instead of nations.”<sup>303</sup> As Costo revealed in his testimony before the Senate Subcommittee in San Francisco, “an Indian child is turned off-first by his history, next by his economic conditions, and then by what is being taught in the schools-what else can you expect but that he will drop out if he finds the situation intolerable?”<sup>304</sup> Costo hoped the Senators would reflect on a scenario in which dropping out of school seemed a reasonable response to a harmful school environment.

The California state advisory commission completed a study on the dropout rate of California Indians living in rural and reservation areas in 1966. According to *Progress Report to the Governor and the Legislature* written by the State Advisory Commission on Indian Affairs, Indian students residing on reservations completed a median of 10.3 grades of formal education or tenth grade.<sup>305</sup> In examining California Indians in public schools, the Commission cited an unpublished 1963 master’s thesis by Betty Faye Lund. She analyzed California Indian students attending public schools in Auburn, a small town

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<sup>303</sup>Rupert Costo, “Fact from Fiction,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 10, no. 1(Winter 1977): 33.

<sup>304</sup> Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, 244.

<sup>305</sup> State Advisory Commission on Indian Affairs (Senate Bill No. 1007), *Progress Report to the Governor and the Legislature on Indians in Rural and Reservation Areas*, (np: February 1966), 33 & 65. The Commission derived its statistics from a formal survey of ten terminated and nonterminated reservations/rancherias: Auberry; Big Valley; Hopland; Robinson; Barona; Pala; Rincon; Santa Ysabel; Stewart’s Point; and Tule River.

in the foothills about forty miles northeast of Sacramento, with a drop out rate of fifty percent from high school through community college aged students.<sup>306</sup>

The increased drop out rate could have been related to the negative opinions of administrators and faculty. Francis R. Page served as Superintendent and Principal of Surprise Valley Union high school in Cedarville, in northeast California close to the Ft. Bidwell reservation. In his response to the Commission's education survey he commented, "I don't know how to overcome the complacent attitude of the Indian toward school and life in general; however, since it's only about 100 years since they were savages living in a semistone age culture, I assume that the process must be evolutionary in character."<sup>307</sup> Page's comment mirrored a broader sentiment shared by some in education. These educators portrayed Indian students as somehow inherently evolutionarily stunted and inferior. Nevertheless, in Page's closing comments he stated, "Give them the chance to be our equal and I'm sure they will be."

Several past principals and superintendents surveyed from Lassen, Mendocino, Mono, Sonoma, and Yuba counties located in northern and central California, believed educational disparities between Indians and non-Indians derived from a lack of parental education and support. Robert Irwin, Guidance Director from Lassen High School, remarked, "A general opinion on the school staff is that these particular students are less motivated," he observed, "It seems in our area that there is a prevalence of outdoor and low-skill vocations which attract some students away from school."<sup>308</sup> As a guidance

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<sup>306</sup> State Advisory Commission on Indian Affairs, 34.

<sup>307</sup> State Advisory Commission on Indian Affairs, 38.

<sup>308</sup> State Advisory Commission on Indian Affairs, 37.

counselor, Irwin did not question the reasons for Indian students dropping out. Instead, the majority of school staff believed Indian students held an intrinsic attraction to outdoor and low-skill vocations.

In contrast, District Superintendent of Modoc County, Clarence B. Larison, offered thoughtful analysis. “There is a definite and distressing lack of cultural communication between the Indians of Modoc and the whites,” he concluded, “Both sides have allowed their thinking to degenerate to clichés and most of the teachers know almost nothing of either the Pits [Pit River] or the Paiutes,” he observed.<sup>309</sup> This lack of cultural knowledge, communication, and understanding demonstrated a shortcoming in formal education settings in which cross cultural interaction largely did not occur at public schools.

The historical responsibility of educating California Indian children occurred sporadically under the auspices of the federal government through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Similar to other states, California education policies banned Asians, Blacks, and Indians from attending “white” public schools. A brief tenure of state laws permitted integration of Indian students during the 1860s and later in the 1880s.<sup>310</sup> However, in practical terms *de facto* segregation continued to exist and California Indian children infrequently attended public schools at significant rates until about 1916.

Federal education in California of Indians may be loosely divided into three periods that parallel the national policies of Indian education. From 1849 through 1870 a

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<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

<sup>310</sup> Robert F. Heizer and Alan J. Almquist, *The Other Californians: Prejudice and Discrimination Under Spain, Mexico, and the United States to 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).

functioning California Indian education policy did not exist. Between 1870 and 1916 California Indian education existed primarily through federal boarding schools, day schools, and some contracts with religious, largely Catholic, schools. Finally, a successful lawsuit in 1924 resulted in the majority of California Indian students attending public schools.<sup>311</sup> On the same day the California Supreme Court issued its decision in *Piper v. Big Pine School District of Inyo County*, the United States Congress issued the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act, settling whether Indians were considered American citizens and therefore ensured access and protection of a public education.

Some exceptions could be noted to such generalizations. For example, school age children residing along the Klamath River in northern California attended public schools in 1902 largely, “to avoid having them enroll at Hupa [Valley Training School].” According to Superintendent and Special Distribution Indian Agent Frank Kyselka, “there is a prejudice on part of some of the parents on account of deaths resulting from diseases following an epidemic of measles at the school about three years ago.”<sup>312</sup> Agent Kyselka dismissively referred to prejudicial parents. The concern for the health and well-being of Indian children made parents apprehensive about sending their children to federal schools.

Early schools established on Indian reservations experienced arson. An unidentified person burned down the Day school established at the Tule River reservation

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<sup>311</sup> *Piper v. Big Pine School District of Inyo County*, 226 Pac. 926 (Cal., 1924).

<sup>312</sup> United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior For the Year 1902*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902. 172.

in 1889.<sup>313</sup> Several years earlier in 1883 Indian Agent H.B. Sheldon held five students at the Round Valley reservation in custody for setting the boarding school aflame effectively destroying all buildings.<sup>314</sup> The Indian agents failed to offer a reason or reasons for arson. Perhaps formal schools represented disease and death to local Indian communities.

The first federal Superintendent of Indian Affairs for California, Edward F. Beale, received permission to establish four small reservations: Hoopa Valley, Round Valley, Smith River, and Tule River. The first schools were located at Hoopa Valley and Tule River. In the 1880s Congress appropriated money to establish additional reservations. With the expansion of the reservation system, the number of Indian schools increased. Early curriculum developed in Washington D.C. focused on industrial skills and encouraged assimilation to mainstream white society.

Round Valley Indian Agent H.B. Sheldon supported boarding schools with complete removal from home reservations. He reported in 1884 that “little progress can be made in their education while they are allowed to run in the camp, subject to the taunts and jeers of the old and the contaminations of the younger and middle aged.”<sup>315</sup> His term selection ‘contaminations’ reflected his perception of both literal and symbolic corruptive value of unassimilated Indians. A couple of years later, Indian Agent John S. Ward assigned to the Mission Agency of southern California asserted in an 1886 report,

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<sup>313</sup> United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior For the Year 1890*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1890. 15.

<sup>314</sup> United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior For the Year 1883*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883. 18.

<sup>315</sup> United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior For the Year 1884*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1884. 16.

“While the Indian’s head needs training, his hand needs it, the more.”<sup>316</sup> Agent Ward correctly noted the employment limitations on California Indians because of racism and prejudice. Yet his opinion borders on assuming Indians’ intellectual limitations and a preconception that Indians hold a predisposition for labor intensive work. Ward’s opinion regarding the education of California Indians echoed the opinions of teachers and counselors surveyed in 1966 by the State Advisory Commission on Indian Affairs.

The BIA initially favored boarding schools, but began to shift its policy after determining them too costly and inefficient in achieving consistent assimilation results. As a result, the BIA began to turn to public schools. In 1910, Robert Valentine, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs suggested an, “association of Indian children with white children in the public schools, where practicable, will be a definite means of assimilation of the Indian into American life.”<sup>317</sup> The BIA began to contract the education of Indian students residing on reservations and *rancherias* to public schools and pay the state tuition equal to amount appropriated by the state or county.

California Indian students’ attendance in public school began to increase dramatically. In 1915 three hundred and sixteen California Indian students attended public schools.<sup>318</sup> By 1916 a total of 1,469 Indian students attended public schools.<sup>319</sup> The

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<sup>316</sup> United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior For the Year 1886*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1886. 43.

<sup>317</sup> United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior For the Year 1910*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910. 15.

<sup>318</sup> United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior For the Year 1915*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1915. 149.

<sup>319</sup> United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior For the Year 1916*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916. 141.

following year the figure had risen to 1,541.<sup>320</sup> By 1918, for the first time the majority of California Indian students attended public schools with 1,820 pupils compared to 1,745 attending government institutions.<sup>321</sup> In 1914 an address written by California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Edward Hyatt, he asserted, “the best solution of the problem is for the Indian children to be squarely taken into our own ordinary district schools and taught by the same teachers, in the same way as the other children.” However, he tempered his assertion by noting positive results could occur, “whenever the Indian children are few as compared with the whites.”<sup>322</sup> Thus, the policy changed to incorporate Indian students into public schools, but only if Indian students held a minority population status compared to the whole student population.

The cooperation between federal and state officials increased the number of California Indians in public schools. It is difficult to determine if students received an equal education comparable to their non-Indian counterparts. A report completed by the Commonwealth Club of California in 1926 detailed responses to Indian children enrolling at public schools ranged from “cruel exploitation” to “friendliness and honesty.” The report shared the story of Middle Creek located in Lake County, northwest of Sacramento. Due to the closure of a day school, the public school accepted fourteen Indian students, but partitioned off a special room, fenced in a section of the playground,

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<sup>320</sup> United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior For the Year 1917*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1917. 145.

<sup>321</sup> United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior For the Year 1918*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1918. 165.

<sup>322</sup> The speech was read by his wife before a white Christian betterment group, the Northern California Indian Association. See “The Indian and Our Public Schools,” *Out West: A Magazine of the Old Pacific and the New* new series vol. 7 February 1914, 110.

and hired a separate teacher for them.<sup>323</sup> Katherine Siva Saubel, Cahuilla, the first Indian girl to graduate from Palm Springs High School, a public school in southern California, described her educational experience as “hit and miss” because many ill-equipped teachers assigned her to sit in the back of classrooms.<sup>324</sup> Untrained to teach an English as a second language student, many of her teachers did not take the time to help her. Household economics also played a role in educational achievements, as Siva Saubel noted two of her brothers dropped out of school because they had to help support the family financially.

California Indian student enrollment gradually increased at public schools and the pivotal *Piper v. Big Pine School District of Inyo County* decision in 1924 ensured the legal right of California Indian students to attend public schools. Fifteen year old Alice Piper resided in Big Pine, east of Fresno, and wanted to attend the local public school. The school district denied her access based on section 1662 of California’s Political Code. In part, the code empowered local school districts to exclude children with “filthy or vicious habits” or “suffering from contagious or infectious diseases.”<sup>325</sup> Further it codified the establishment of separate schools for non-white students. Her parents challenged an amendment banning Indians from attending public schools in their local

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<sup>323</sup> William J. Drew, “Educational Provisions for California Indians,” *Transactions of the Commonwealth Club of California* 21, no. 3, June 8, 1926, 115.

<sup>324</sup> Katherine Siva Saubel in an interview recorded by Kathy Biel, December 15, 1970, Siva Saubel’s home on Morongo reservation, O.H. # 485, Indian Urbanization, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton.

<sup>325</sup> Nicole Blalock-Moore, “Piper v. Big Pine School District of Inyo County: Indigenous Schooling and Resistance in Early Twentieth Century,” *Southern California Quarterly* 94 (Fall 2012): 361.



school district and required students to attend federally run government school if located less than three miles away from the Indian students' residence.<sup>326</sup>

In a unanimous decision written by Justice Emmet Sewell, a former member of the Native Sons of the Golden West, the California State Supreme Court overturned this amendment of section 1662 and ordered the school district to accept Alice Piper as a student.<sup>327</sup> In part, the decision of the Court determined, "An Indian child who is a citizen of this state and a resident of a school district forming a part of the common or public school system of this state cannot be excluded from attendance upon a public school within said school district upon the ground that she is a person of Indian blood."

<sup>328</sup> California public schools later received federal funds by negotiating the first contract under the 1934 Johnson-O'Malley Act. The Act provided for reimbursement to states for education of Indian students living on or near federal property.<sup>329</sup>

California Indian students' attendance in public schools did not necessarily grant a quality education and equal treatment. Payment of funds to either public schools or boarding schools did not insure sufficient proper education and care. Additional testimonies before the 1968 Senate Subcommittee revealed racism and prejudice in public schools. Dennison Knight, Pomo, of Ukiah shared the story of a teacher acting as

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<sup>326</sup> Charles M. Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed: Segregation and Exclusion in California Schools 1855-1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).

<sup>327</sup> Vine Deloria Jr., and Clifford M. Lytle, *American Indians, American Justice* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 242-243; Richard S. Kimball and Barney Noel, *Native Sons of the Golden West* (Charleston, SC, Chicago, IL, Portsmouth, NH, San Francisco, CA: Arcadia Publishing, 2005).

<sup>328</sup> See *Alice Piper et. al., Petitioners, v. Big Pine School District of Inyo County et. al. Respondents*, (1924) 193 Cal. 664.

<sup>329</sup> Margaret Connell-Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: Road to Self-Determination Since 1928* (1974; revised, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 89-105.

a hall monitor who grabbed four young Indian women, marched them to the dean's office with the loud pronouncement, "Here are your four black rats."<sup>330</sup> He testified, "The causes of discrimination appear to stem from longtime, deep-rooted prejudices of this area.... the young [white] descendants hear the old stories, and some think the Indian is not very much or probably not even human."<sup>331</sup> The legacy of prejudice and racism against Indians by some whites continued.

The specter of interracial relationships inspired the ill treatment received by some Indian students. A memorandum by Justice Robert Winslow of Mendocino County, located on the north coast of California, pointed out the local community held a "common feeling that Indians are inferior to non-Indians" and by middle school many students self-segregated, probably because of "parents fearing that their daughter will date an Indian boy, and conveying this fear either expressly or subtly to the child."<sup>332</sup> His assertions echoed those of Superintendent Hyatt in 1914 in which he described some non-Indian parents concerned about their children being "overwhelmed" by Indian students and "alarmed over the possibility of their sons marrying Indian girls."<sup>333</sup> Some Indian students had poor experiences in public schools, but not all Indian students encountered prejudice.

In contrast, Rupert Costo and his siblings attended local public schools in Hemet, San Diego, and San Bernadino. When asked about racism, his sister, Martina Costo,

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<sup>330</sup> Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, 249.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*, 248.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*, 491.

<sup>333</sup> Hyatt, "The Indian and Our Public Schools," 111.

Cahuilla, a graduate of San Bernadino High School, concluded none of the Costo siblings encountered prejudice. Similarly, Carol Bowen, Wintu, observed that her children attended public schools in Ft. Bragg, a coastal community near Mendocino, and never reported any problems. However, she acknowledged many of the Indian boys played football and suggested their success in athletics led to acceptance from non-Indians “in every way.”<sup>334</sup> As a young girl, Bowen lived at an orphanage and described extreme feelings of self-consciousness because of her “awful” clothing. As a result, she “hated to go to school.”<sup>335</sup> While the majority of California Indian children attended public schools the environment of the schools could be near intolerable for some students. As adults, some California Indians may have suppressed any mistreatment they received from teachers or students.

The American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or “the Society”) engaged and challenged textbooks used in public schools to inform and promote transformative change among Indians and non-Indians. By targeting textbooks the AIHS hoped to change stereotypes and popular myths of Indians by examining a central teaching tool. The Costos criticized the superficial treatment Indians received in textbooks and noted the harm of miseducation, “A textbook is an instrument of learning, which may be compared to an automobile as an instrument of transportation,” they continued, “But a textbook which defective, inaccurate, and unreliable, is not retired despite the possibility

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<sup>334</sup> Carol Bowen in an interview recorded by Kathy Biel, December 9, 1970, Home Gardens elementary school Corona, CA, O.H. # 495, Indian Urbanization, Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid.

that minds may be endangered.”<sup>336</sup> Textbooks held the potential to inform popular images and form stereotypes. In the 1970s, Albuquerque, New Mexico based Indian rock band XIT addressed the longevity of stereotypes in its song *Reservation of Education*. “I said I’m sure when you were young, you played a game called Cowboys and Indians/but we’re all grewed up now, but some people are still playing a game/but only now it’s got a new name/ and it’s called Washington and Indians, Bureaucrats and Indians.”<sup>337</sup> Their lyrics supported Costo’s assertion that at elementary school level children form concepts of citizenship and prejudice. Additionally, XIT’s lyrics revealed the potential damage of unchallenged stereotypes since school children grow up to be the ones who shape and direct government policy.

California played a significant role in the textbook market because of its sizable population. The state’s textbook selection and standards tended to influence textbooks used across the country, termed the “California effect.” California adopted textbooks with an informal “uniform use” rule, meaning statewide adoption of the same textbooks for public schools at the elementary and middle school level because the state provided the books without cost for the school districts through the State Printing Press. California school districts had to use the books adopted by the state. The adoption of textbooks occurred for a specified period of time, usually three or five years. The appointed Board of Education directed educational policy along with the elected non-partisan position of Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Curriculum Commission, with members

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<sup>336</sup> Rupert Costo, and Jeannette Henry-Costo, eds. *Textbooks and the American Indian*. (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1970), 11.

<sup>337</sup> XIT, “Reservation of Education,” *Silent Warrior*, Motown Records, 1973.

selected by the Board of Education, chaired by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, determined textbook selection.

During the 1960s, the conflict over textbooks began percolating. In 1961 the California Board of Education ordered 184,000 unused but obsolete textbooks burned, with a remaining 974,000 textbooks slated to burn.<sup>338</sup> Textbooks considered obsolete by California were sent to unnamed Indian schools.<sup>339</sup> The public appeared complacent about obsolete books being sent to Indian schools, but outraged about unused books being burned. The burning controversy revealed school districts' uneasiness surrounding the state's informal "uniform use" rule and a desire for direct purchase from private publishers rather than using the California Printing Press which leased textbook plates and printed textbooks for cost efficiency.<sup>340</sup> The controversy promoted an increase in public scrutiny towards textbooks reaching an apex in 1966 with the state's biggest single purchase order, to date, in the nation of \$14.5 million for basic and supplemental books including the controversial selection of *Land of the Free* eighth grade history textbook.<sup>341</sup> The first textbook of the Civil Rights era to depict people of color and Civil Rights, *Land of the Free*, received criticism by some for being "slanted."<sup>342</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> "Legislature in Furor over Book Burning," *The Los Angeles Times*, February 22, 1961, 2.

<sup>339</sup> Bert Mann, "Textbooks Buried in March of Knowledge," *The Los Angeles Times*, July 1, 1965, SG6.

<sup>340</sup> Robert Blanchard, "Textbook row Raises a Number of Issues," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 13, 1961, B4.

<sup>341</sup> Dick Turpin, "State Textbook Order sets All-Time Record," *The Los Angeles Times*, May 14, 1966, 2.

<sup>342</sup> Dick Turpin, "Panel to Check Controversial State Textbook," *The Los Angeles Times*, September 11, 1966, B.

Protests and calls for revisions of textbooks occurred prior to the 1960s.<sup>343</sup> Unlike earlier protests, the 1960s and 1970s witnessed a shift in the quantity and scope of revisions. In particular, pressures came from various ethnic organizations, Civil Rights groups, and organizations of both the political Left and Right lobbying for balance and accuracy. For the first time, depictions of people of color began to appear in mainstream textbooks. However, as Frances FitzGerald carefully pointed out in her critique of American education, including token people of color occurred because, “An alteration in the symbols could be made without any change in the reality.”<sup>344</sup> During a turbulent time of public protests, the insistence for quality representation within history textbooks appeared relatively harmless. More positive representations of Indian peoples in textbooks could shift the conventional descriptions of them.

The AIHS sought to restore the humanity of Indian peoples in textbooks and gained a surprising ally with newly elected Republican California State School Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Maxwell L. Rafferty. Brash and outspoken, Rafferty based his 1962 campaign on an educational return to fundamentals and a rejection of John Dewey’s progressive education.<sup>345</sup> Rafferty frequently and voraciously spoke out against progressive education, a euphemism he used for liberal education and

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<sup>343</sup> Joseph Moreau, *Schoolbook Nation: Conflicts Over American History Textbooks from the Civil War to the Present* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003).

<sup>344</sup> Frances FitzGerald, *America Revised: History Schoolbooks in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 40.

<sup>345</sup> For more analysis on Rafferty see William O’Neill, *Readin, Ritin, and Rafferty: A Study of Educational Fundamentalism* (Berkeley: The Glendessary Press, 1969).

adopted Cold War rhetoric to attack his opponents.<sup>346</sup> He condemned his critics as communist sympathizers.

The election in 1962 marked the first time the Superintendent position appeared on the California ballot. Previously, it had appeared as a non-partisan confirmation vote for the political appointment made by the Governor. The prior Superintendent, Dr. Roy Simpson, had been appointed in 1947 by Governor Earl Warren.<sup>347</sup> Rafferty held office for two terms until his defeat in his 1970 bid for re-election to his former deputy Dr. Wilson Riles, the first African American to hold state-wide public office.

Rafferty's ascension to Superintendent benefited from the wide circulation of his speech in 1961, entitled "The Passing of the Patriot." He presented this lecture before the school board of La Cañada, a prosperous northeast Los Angeles suburb. Later the speech was adapted into an essay and reprinted in *Reader's Digest* and *The New York Times*. Rafferty complained schools stopped teaching patriotism with the result of, "youngsters growing up to become booted, sideburned, ducktailed, unwashed, leather-jacketed slobs" a commentary on the rising student activism at college campus' throughout California.<sup>348</sup>

In part, Rafferty's political rhetoric helped steer the non-partisan confirmation vote in 1962 into a campaign steeped in partisan politics. His Democratic opponent, Dr. Ralph Richardson, accused Rafferty of receiving endorsement from the politically conservative John Birch Society. The Birch Society publicly disavowed the accusation but member Paul Talbert noted, "pinning the conservative label on political rivals

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<sup>346</sup> Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), 74.

<sup>347</sup> Gladwin Hill, "School Theories Face Coast Test," *The New York Times*, June 9, 1962, 23.

<sup>348</sup> "The Passing of the Patriot," *The New York Times*, September 1, 1968, SM30.

actually serves to assist the very people they [Democrats] are attempting, in their smugness, to damage or destroy.”<sup>349</sup> In the end, the election for Superintendent proved to be as close an election as for Governor in which incumbent Democrat Edmund “Pat” Brown defeated Republican challenger and former Vice President Richard Nixon with the slim margin of a little over fifty one percent of the vote. Republican Rafferty won the 1962 election with a slightly larger margin of fifty two percent.<sup>350</sup>

In Rafferty’s contest for re-election in 1966, he won the majority vote during the primary and therefore did not have to run in the general election. His high victory margin benefited from votes by both political parties and while impressive, spoke to the total population of voters. Rafferty endorsed candidate Ronald Reagan for governor in 1966, and in turn, Reagan offered his support of Rafferty as Superintendent. Governor Reagan also supported Rafferty as a senatorial candidate in his failed 1968 campaign. The political alliance between Rafferty and Reagan led Democratic State Chairman Charles Warren to describe them as “politically intertwined as Siamese twins.”<sup>351</sup> Rafferty and Reagan served in public office during a dynamic time of public protests in California in which they both openly chastised their opponents.

Prior to 1964, many Californians perceived public protests as something that occurred back East and in the South. Any social unrest appeared to be outside of California. However, protests arrived. The Free Speech Movement began at UC Berkeley in 1964. In August 1965 the Los Angeles riots exploded in the Watts

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<sup>349</sup> “Birch Society Political Endorsement Denied,” *The Los Angeles Times*, September 27, 1962, 23.

<sup>350</sup> Bill Becker, “School Post Goes to Conservative,” *The New York Times*, November 8, 1962, 15.

<sup>351</sup> “Warren Raps Pair as Political Twins,” *The Los Angeles Times*, September 23, 1966, 30.



neighborhood. As an *ex officio* member on the UC Board of Regents, Rafferty regularly attacked college professors and called for an investigation for possible “imbalance to the left.”<sup>352</sup> He also dismissed protesting college students as “a minority of misfits” and concluded, “the university exists to cure your ignorance. If you will shut up long enough to let it, you may grow up to be truly free.”<sup>353</sup> Rafferty’s stance towards college students garnered him support across the state, particularly since his campaign promised a decidedly conservative attitude towards education. The Superintendent served as an administrator while the appointed Board of Education held policy-making power. Rafferty served as Chair for the Curriculum Commission and exploited his role by frequently going directly to the public to lobby for his political positions.

Rafferty openly supported and endorsed conservative principles for education, yet he seemed critical of history textbooks. He appeared indecisive with the process of integrating history textbooks, wavering between wanting fact based history and a desire for a mythical history promoting absolute patriotism.<sup>354</sup> As one reporter noted, Rafferty and his supporters sought “a simpler and more manageable world.”<sup>355</sup> By ignoring or dismissing contemporary social movements, Rafferty offered an appealing alternative that provided Californians an ability to disconnect contemporary social events observed on television news from historical context.

Rafferty publicly criticized textbooks and at a meeting with fifty textbook publishers in 1963, charged textbooks with racial stereotypes and a variety of additional

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<sup>352</sup> Jerry Gillam, “Rafferty Hit for Urging Leftist Quiz,” *The Los Angeles Times*, March 14, 1963, 2.

<sup>353</sup> Max Rafferty, “UC Agitators and Tom Jefferson,” *The Los Angeles Times*, May 3, 1965, A5.

<sup>354</sup> Max Rafferty, “Patriotism Should Come Naturally,” *The Los Angeles Times*, July 13, 1964, A5.

<sup>355</sup> Kenneth Lamott, “Max Rafferty is not a Mad Messiah of the Right,” *The New York Times*, September 1, 1968, 35.

shortcomings. In response, the publishers' spokesperson, Dr. Austin McCaffrey, replied "There is not a publisher in this country who is not giving immediate serious thought to how to deal with minority groups in forthcoming textbooks. Books are now in preparation that will be better in this respect."<sup>356</sup> Rafferty continued the call for challenging racial stereotypes in textbooks the following year in his *Los Angeles Times* column. He described illustrations of African Americans and Mexican Americans as depicting "barefooted, bandana wearing plantation hands or as Olympic athletes" and wearing "sandals and serapes." He concluded, "These racial oversimplifications do considerable harm."<sup>357</sup> Rafferty publicly highlighted the harm of stereotypes but overlooked American Indians in his public assessments. The absence of any assessment of Indian images demonstrated the need for an interjection by Indians. The AIHS proactively entered into the conversation surrounding depictions of Indians in history textbooks.

In part, the Society inherited the outcome of earlier activism. State policies on the depiction of communities of color shifted to an inclusive nature and eventually became state law. Through the Berkeley chapter of Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), a civil rights organization, the African American community challenged textbook depictions and lobbied for accuracy beginning in 1963. CORE sponsored a study of history textbooks by six professors at the local University of California, Berkeley. The panel of professors included: Chairperson Kenneth M. Stamp; and Professors Winthrop D. Jordan; Lawrence W. Levine; Robert L. Middlekauff; George G. Sellers; and George W.

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<sup>356</sup> Jerry Gilliam, "Rafferty Lists 'Weak Points' in Textbooks," *The Los Angeles Times*, September 18, 1963, 9.

<sup>357</sup> Max Rafferty, "Better Textbooks are on the Way," *The Los Angeles Times*, May 11, 1964, A5.

Stocking Jr. They generated a report entitled *The Negro in American History Textbooks*. The report offered a critique of textbooks and concluded, “Always and everywhere our children should be told the truth, and the whole truth, as near as the best current scholarship can bring us to this elusive quality.” The report continued, “This means among other things not obscuring the harsher aspects of the truth.”<sup>358</sup> Impressed by the panel’s report, the Board of Education voted to send the report to the Curriculum Commission and private publishers seeking book adoptions by the state.<sup>359</sup>

In addition to the African American community, the Mexican American community began to critically examine California public schools. For many Mexican Americans, their concerns regarding public school education related to access to bilingual education and protests against unequal conditions of public schools.<sup>360</sup> In East Los Angeles, parents formed the Mexican American Education Committee in 1963. This group called for many reforms, including the inclusion of history and literature of Mexico. Recognizing a need for educational reforms, the Mexican American Education Research Project held conferences held in 1966 and 1967 to explore strategies to aid Mexican American children. In 1968, massive student walk-outs, known as “blowouts,” occurred in East Los Angeles to protest the unequal conditions in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Beginning in 1971, Mexican Americans started challenging

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<sup>358</sup> California State Department of Education, *The Negro in American History Textbooks* (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1964), 2.

<sup>359</sup> Jerry Gillam, “Truer Picture of Negro in History Asked,” *The Los Angeles Times*, March 13, 1964, 4.

<sup>360</sup> Ruben Donato, *The Other Struggle for Equal Schools: Mexican Americans During the Civil Rights Era* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).

negative portrayals in textbooks before the state Board of Education and sought representation on an ethnic task force.<sup>361</sup>

The actions of the Board of Education also were reflected in the state legislature. In March 1962, the California state Congress passed Senate Concurrent Resolution no. 29 which requested the State Department of Education take steps to ensure state textbooks “give due regard to sound intergroup relations.” The resolution also directed the Curriculum Commission to develop official guidelines on the treatment of ethnic and cultural minorities in textbooks. In November 1964, the Curriculum Commission sub-committee known informally as the “guidelines committee” chaired by LaVon H. Whitehouse, assistant to the director of curriculum of the Los Angeles City School District, presented the proposed guidelines. A portion of the guidelines stated, “The material must be free of bias and prejudice and must accurately portray the participation of minority groups in American life.”<sup>362</sup> The guidelines also sought to actively shape students’ values and attitudes towards those of a different background. The guidelines outlined the objective of textbooks: “The content of books should help pupils to resist all attempt at stereotyping, and thus enable students to avoid forming unfounded, unfavorable impressions of any group of individual.”<sup>363</sup> The Curriculum Commission

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<sup>361</sup> Jack McCurdy, “Race Charges Raised Again,” *The Los Angeles Times*, March 9, 1972, E2.

<sup>362</sup> Jerry Gillam, “Inaccuracy on Negroes in Textbooks Charged,” *The Los Angeles Times*, October 22, 1964, 5.

<sup>363</sup> *Guidelines for Reference to Ethnic and Cultural Minorities in Textbooks*, November 17, 1964, pg. 2, California State Curriculum Commission Papers (CSCC Papers), Courtesy of the Department of Archives and Special Collections (DASC). University Library. California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH).

formally adopted “Guidelines for Reference to Ethnic and Cultural minorities in Textbooks” at its November 1964 meeting.<sup>364</sup>

In part, the guidelines outlined the purpose of formal education. They explained the significance of truth declaring, “Only when they [students] are in possession of historical truth can citizens now and in the future offer the kind of enlightened criticism that is necessary for our democracy to endure.”<sup>365</sup> By 1965 the Curriculum Commission’s guideline requiring textbooks to correctly portray the role of ethnic and cultural minorities became state law through legislation proposed by Democrat Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally of Los Angeles, and signed by Governor Edmund G. “Pat” Brown.<sup>366</sup>

Beginning in 1965, the AIHS engaged the Board of Education, Curriculum Commission, and Superintendent Rafferty to promote a more accurate depiction of Indians. The AIHS refused to wait to be asked and instead forthrightly approached Rafferty. During the spring of 1965, Rafferty responded affirmatively to a proposal submitted by the AIHS to form an Indian history study committee. The AIHS approached Rafferty after it concluded a preliminary survey of textbooks and determined that many textbooks required improvement. Martina Costo, Rupert Costo’s sister and elementary school teacher, explained, “Most teachers seem to be unprepared for the teaching of history as it concerns the role and cultural heritage of the American

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<sup>364</sup> “Truth about Races Urged in Textbooks,” *The Los Angeles Times*, November 18, 1964, 26.

<sup>365</sup> *Guidelines for Reference to Ethnic and Cultural Minorities in Textbooks*, November 17, 1964, pg. 1, CSCC Papers, DASC, CSUDH.

<sup>366</sup> AP wire story “Governor Signs Bill on Textbooks,” *The Los Angeles Times*, July 8, 1965, 28.

Indian.”<sup>367</sup> Two preliminary meetings occurred between Rafferty and the Committee with a formal meeting between the respective groups in July 1965.<sup>368</sup>

Chaired by Rupert Costo, members of the Indian History Study Committee simultaneously participated in the AIHS. Those named to initially serve on the Committee included: Henry Azbill, Maidu; Edna Calac, Pit River; Martina Costo, Cahuilla; Jeannette Henry-Costo, Cherokee; Laura Dusney, Karuk; Erin Forrest, Pit River; Richard Fuller; Me-wuk; Al Hicks, Navajo; Edmond Jackson, Quechan; Wallace Newman, Luiseño; Marie Potts, Maidu; Bertha Stewart, Tolowa; Viola Fuller Wessell, Me-wuk; and Thelma Wilson, Maidu.<sup>369</sup> The Committee greatly benefited from the participation of two teachers: Martina Costo and Al Hicks, who provided practical insight. Later, Hicks served on the first board for the newly established DQ University.<sup>370</sup> Newman also worked in an educational setting as a football coach for Whittier College.

The AIHS devised an evaluation process for textbooks and it reported the activities and progress of the Indian History Study Committee in its publication *The Indian Historian*. The depiction of Indians in textbooks became a theme that appeared regularly in AIHS publications. Eventually the topic would serve as the topic of the first book published by the Indian Historian Press, *Textbooks and the American Indian*. In an

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<sup>367</sup> “California to Examine Schoolbooks on Indian History Interpretation,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 5 (May/June 1965): 3.

<sup>368</sup> “A Review of State Texts on Indians,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, July 14, 1965, 14.

<sup>369</sup> “Education Study Begins,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 6 (June/July 1965): 10.

<sup>370</sup> “Chicanos and Native Americans Say: The Land is Ours,” *Deganawidah Quetzalcoatl University Historic Edition* April 2, 1971, 1.

interview with *The Indian Historian* Rafferty described his feelings about working with the Indian community, “I was happy to accept their proposal, and to work with them and through them for a better understanding of our Indian people, and a better appreciation of their history.”<sup>371</sup> The comment demonstrated Rafferty’s cooperation and even perhaps excitement at working with the AIHS. His statement also revealed some condescension. He referred to “our” Indian people and “their” history which could leave the reader with the impression of placing Indians in an “other” category.

The Indian History Study Committee focused on several areas in addition to reviewing textbooks currently in use at public schools. It worked on developing criteria for the Curriculum Commission to consult and identified points that must be contained or avoided in textbooks selected for use in public schools. The Committee also generated a listing of additional materials for classroom use. Each of these endeavors represented important tasks.

Yet even more significantly, positive and constructive interactions took place between Indians and non-Indian education policymakers. According to the AIHS, the Committee attempted to “provide a live and stimulating contact between Indian people and the teaching profession. Information and material for classroom work will come directly to teachers and students from the Indian reservations, tribes, and communities, according to present plans.”<sup>372</sup> As a result, those responsible for the process of California textbook selection became better informed on the depiction and representation of Indians.

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<sup>371</sup> “Indians to Lead in Study,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 5 (May/June 1965): 2.

<sup>372</sup> “California to Examine Schoolbooks on Indian History Interpretation,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 5 (May/June 1965): 3.

Al Hicks, Navajo, had insight as a schoolteacher in the Bay Area city of Richmond. He noted, “There are many areas in the primary levels in which the history of the American Indian is not dealt with at all, and when it is dealt with, the treatment is so superficial and so lacking in understanding and information, that they may as well not mention it at all.”<sup>373</sup> Rafferty publicly endorsed the Indian History Study Committee and anticipated its report. When speaking about Indian history, he concluded, “The handling of Indian history in our textbooks is at best superficial. Nothing is said about Indian’s contributions to the economy, to the state, nor about their condition before the Spanish occupation and after.”<sup>374</sup>

At the meeting in August 1965 of the State Curriculum Commission, chaired by Rafferty, the AIHS presented its report by the Indian History Study Committee. The State Curriculum Commission accepted the report, which included eleven curriculum criteria, and pledged its contents would be circulated to textbook publishers. According to a Board of Education spokesperson, the commission endorsed the report as “responsible” and noted that publishers would be expected to heed its contents and suggestions.<sup>375</sup> At the meeting Rafferty remarked Indian history was one of “the most neglected areas in California textbooks.”<sup>376</sup> The comment represented one of his first public critiques about the representation of Indians in textbooks and occurred nearly a

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<sup>373</sup> “Education Study Begins,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 6 (June/July 1965): 10.

<sup>374</sup> “Indians Start Study on Role in Textbooks,” *The Oakland Tribune*, July 16, 1965, 9.

<sup>375</sup> “Report on 49ers and Missionaries,” *The Los Angeles Times*, August 20, 1965, 3.

<sup>376</sup> *Ibid.*



year after his comments about harmful textbook stereotypes of African Americans and Mexican Americans.

In general, the criteria created by the Indian History Study Committee sought greater clarity and specificity in textbooks in how it addressed Indian history instead of relying on overgeneralizations or stereotypes. The Committee experienced a positive response from the State Curriculum Commission, which forwarded the criteria to the Statewide Social Sciences Study Committee.

To share the curriculum criteria, the AIHS published a special issue of *The Indian Historian* in August-September 1965 which it reprinted the criteria the Indian history study committee developed. This special issue sparked considerable interest. More than two thousand copies circulated. The special issue experienced high demand and the Los Angeles School District requested twenty additional copies.<sup>377</sup> The AIHS dedicated the issue to, “the teachers of America, who constitute the great force shaping the minds of people of all races in this our beloved land.” Through the dedication, the AIHS recognized the textbook as a basic teaching tool but it also acknowledged that teachers served a pivotal role in communicating information and understanding. The issue began the criteria report with the assertion by the AIHS, “The textbooks are superficial in their treatment of the American Indian in the history of the Nation, and in the history of our state, often oversimplifying the history and generalizing the explanation of Indian culture,

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<sup>377</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, October 1, 1965, pg. 2, box 12, folder 10, Rupert and Jeannette Costo papers, Collection 170. University of California, Riverside Libraries, Special Collections & Archives, University of California, Riverside (Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR).

to the point where the physical outlines of the Indian as a human being are lost.”<sup>378</sup> The AIHS argued the humanity of Indian peoples failed to appear in textbooks. In some instances, the AIHS noted a complete absence of Indian peoples.

The AIHS recognized the criteria might be criticized because some could view them as asking for materials too advanced for both students and teachers. However, the AIHS concluded, “The child should be encouraged to STRETCH, if understanding does not come without effort.”<sup>379</sup> The Society dismissed the argument that materials the AIHS desired in public schools were too advanced or challenging. It concluded the proposed criteria promoted eliminating the “listless, unappetizing material now in textbooks” and replacing it with “absorbing and intellectually exciting, provocative, stimulating materials of Indian history alive and breathing.”<sup>380</sup> By calling Indian history “alive and breathing” the AIHS reinforced the fact that Indian people and culture continued to exist. Indian peoples and cultures survived beyond a static state of being and could change and adapt over time.

The Indian History Study Committee committed to teaching accurate Indian history and promoting contemporary Indian experiences. Two of the criteria promoted a more informed and complete understanding about the contemporary experiences of Indian peoples. The ninth criteria noted that, “textbooks should reflect a knowledge of the current relationship between the Indian people and the federal government as it exists in the courts and governmental agencies.” The eleventh criteria stated in part, “textbooks

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<sup>378</sup> “The American Indian in State and National History,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 7 (August/September 1965): 2.

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>380</sup> *Ibid.*

should contain a complete and richly descriptive account of the Indian as he is today, his condition and his problems as well as his current tribal organization.”<sup>381</sup> Through discussing contemporary Indian peoples and cultures, the AIHS sought to foster an understanding by students about Indian claims of injustice that appeared in local news and subsequent government responses.

The second portion of the report submitted by the Indian History Study Committee included critical reviews and recommendations for several textbooks used in public schools as either basic or supplementary texts. By offering critical assessment of textbooks to the State Curriculum Commission, it provided specific examples that it viewed as in violation of the criteria it developed.

One of the textbooks included in the list, was a basic fourth grade textbook adopted for use in 1965, *California: A History* by Mabel Young Williams. The criticisms it received ranged from generalizations to errors with the recommendation that the section of Indians be rewritten. When describing the mission era, Williams asserted, “Under Spanish rule the people had been busy. They had been busy building missions and settlements. The people had worked together. They had been busy but they had been happy. They had peace.”<sup>382</sup> To depict California Indians in missions as “happy” was, at best an inaccurate description. The AIHS noted that in many instances California Indians stayed at missions against their will and described the working conditions more akin to

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<sup>381</sup> Ibid.

<sup>382</sup> Mabel Young Williams, *California, A History* (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1965), 266.

“slave laborers and serfs.”<sup>383</sup> The AIHS also dismissed the assertion in Williams’ textbook “The first thing most Indian children learned was swimming.”<sup>384</sup> The AIHS pointed out the inaccurate and stereotypical nature of such a broad statement. While the Society determined *California: A History* “an improvement” over most books, it identified errors and misinformation and thus concluded “the entire section on Indians should be re-written.”<sup>385</sup>

Another fourth grade textbook also received criticism. The AIHS concluded Helen Bauer’s *California Gold Days* should be replaced. The Indian history study committee criticized the overall depiction of gold miners and the general absence of Indians. The report noted, “The romantic aura now adhering to the gold miner should be closely examined by scholars and teachers. Above all, this romance attaching to the goldminers ought to be shredded away by the truth.”<sup>386</sup> The general treatment of gold miners in the textbook earned the chagrin of the AIHS. The Society carefully made a larger argument that a historically accurate picture of the gold rush period must include an honest discussion about the interaction between gold miners and California Indians.

Bauer’s textbook used terms such as “exciting” and “adventure” to describe the gold rush era. It infrequently mentioned Indians and insinuated Indians were dangerous. For example, when Bauer wrote of John Sutter sailing the Sacramento River she posed

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<sup>383</sup>“The American Indian in State and National History,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 7 (August/September 1965): 10.

<sup>384</sup> Williams, *California*, 40.

<sup>385</sup> “The American Indian in State and National History,” 10.

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid*, 13.

this alarming question, “Were those Indians hiding behind those thick bushes?”<sup>387</sup> Bauer described conflict between the flood of gold miners and Indians in two sentences, “The Indians did not bother the first parties. Those who came in 1850 had more trouble with them.”<sup>388</sup> Bauer’s readers would conclude California Indians instigated any and all conflict. Bauer concluded gold miners represented “a true democracy” because, “Whoever they were, every man had an equal chance. All had to play fair and follow the rules.”<sup>389</sup>

Another book written by Helen Bauer concerned the AIHS. *California Indian Days* served as a standard text for fourth grade students. As a result of the issues raised by the Indian history study committee, in 1966 the state chose not to adopt the book statewide, though some districts used it and the publisher promised book revisions. Within the revised edition published in 1968, Bauer mentioned the AIHS in her acknowledgements. She offered her sincere thanks “to the staff of the American [Indian] Historical Society, San Francisco, for their helpful suggestions.”<sup>390</sup> Bauer’s comment implied the AIHS played a role in helping with the revised edition but in fact the organization had no direct role. Indeed, the AIHS found the edition printed in 1968 practically identical to the earlier edition.

In an effort to promote critical discussion about the book, the AIHS published a comprehensive evaluation and critique by Lowell Bean, professor of anthropology at

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<sup>387</sup> Helen Bauer, *California Gold Days* (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1957), 19.

<sup>388</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>389</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>390</sup> Helen Bauer, *California Indian Days* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc. Press, 1968 revised edition), 8.

California State College, Hayward, in the *Indian Historian*. In his article entitled, “The Language of Stereotype, Distortion, Inaccuracy,” Bean reiterated textbooks hold a significant role in misinforming students and he determined Bauer’s book contained patronizing and stereotypical language.<sup>391</sup>

His article generated discussion on the issue of educational content within textbooks. In addition, the article provoked a response from the publishing press Doubleday. Doubleday Press responded with its Vice President writing a letter to the members of the California Curriculum Commission in which he called the criticisms “trivial, frivolous, and petty.”<sup>392</sup> He dismissed the concerns raised by AIHS by asserting, “Are we not dealing with a matter of ethnic sensitivity and social protest here rather than accuracy per se?”<sup>393</sup> In part, Doubleday Press wrote the letter to the Curriculum Commission in an attempt to minimize any possible impact of Bean’s article on the state’s decision to adopt the revised 1968 edition. The AIHS prevented the book’s statewide adoption at the Curriculum Commission’s meeting.

The AIHS also found an offensive dedication in a fourth grade supplemental textbook adopted by the state in 1964, *Stories California Indians Told*. Anne B. Fisher dedicated her book, published by Parnassus Press, “For all boys and girls who like Indians and Animals.” The AIHS believed “such a statement well meant though it may be, is one degrading to the Indian people, and ought not to have been made.”<sup>394</sup> Rupert

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<sup>391</sup> Lowell John Bean, “The Language of Stereotype, Distortion, Inaccuracy,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 3 (Fall 1969): 6-11.

<sup>392</sup> Costo and Henry-Costo, *Textbooks and the American Indian*, 227.

<sup>393</sup> Ibid.

<sup>394</sup> “Indians and Animals?” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 8 (October 1965): 32.

Costo wrote a letter to Rafferty protesting the dedication as a shocking insult. Costo called the placement of Indians in the same category as animals degrading, noting, “Despite the fact that we [Indians] get top billing in this dedication, we wish to state our strong objection.”<sup>395</sup> Costo pointed out the dedication denied Indians humanity as it perpetuated a historical practice of equating Indians and animals since only a short time ago signs appeared in storefronts that read “No dogs or Indians allowed.” Costo and the AIHS argued further printings of the book should be postponed until a correction of the dedication occurred. Costo stressed that the AIHS concern had no “accusation pointing to personal prejudice,” but rather “There is the matter solely of derogation, gratuitous insult, defamation, and degradation placed upon the image of Indian people.”<sup>396</sup>

In response to Costo’s letter, J. Graham Sullivan, Associate Superintendent of California Department of Education, contacted Parnassus Press. He forwarded Costo’s letter along with a request that the press consider ceasing further publications of Fisher’s textbook until deleting the dedicatory preface.<sup>397</sup> Herman Schein, President of Parnassus Press responded to the inquiry.

Schein shared information of the friendship between anthropologist Dr. C. Hart Merriam and Fisher and her husband, trained zoologist, Dr. Walter K. Fisher. Through the friendship, Fisher heard California Indian stories from Merriam. Schein proclaimed the dedication “understandable” because the book, written for children, dealt with stories

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<sup>395</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Dr. Max Rafferty, chairman State Curriculum Commission, January 23, 1966, CSCC Papers, DASC, CSUDH.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

<sup>397</sup> Personal correspondence, J. Graham Sullivan, Associate Superintendent, State Department of Education to Parnassus Press, March 1, 1966, CSCC Papers, DASC, CSUDH.

about Indians and animals and the “combination of thoughts no doubt led to the language” used. He described the dedication as an “honest, innocent, personal expression” and doubted that anyone would criticize the dedication because they viewed it as offensive. Schein noted, “To read something degrading or sinister into these words at this date does not change the meaning of what Anne Fisher originally intended to say and plainly said.”<sup>398</sup> Despite Schein’s assurances that Fisher meant no offense, he overlooked the reality that racist language carries intention and effect. As a result, Fisher’s intention may not have been racist but the effect of her language held racist connotations. California continued to distribute copies of the book to all elementary schools. Costo ultimately characterized the state’s action as, “Derogation, gratuitous insult, defamation, and degradation placed upon the image of the Indians.”<sup>399</sup>

One month following the initial presentation of the curriculum criteria by the AIHS to the Curriculum Commission in September 1965, the AIHS received notice the Board of Education received a number of inquires about the criteria and critical reviews. Many of the inquiries came from individuals who held different opinions from those of the AIHS surrounding the gold rush and mission eras. Clergy from the Catholic Church and the Conference of California Historical Societies had concerns about the fifth criteria which specifically centered on the relationships between Spaniards, Mexicans, and Americans to California Indians. In part, the fifth criteria outlined, “The true relationship between the Spanish-Mexican-American colonists who came to this area, and the Indian

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<sup>398</sup> Personal correspondence, Herman Schein, President Parnassus Press to Samuel McCulloch, Dean and member of California State Curriculum Commission, February 18, 1996, CSCC Papers, DASC, CSUDH.

<sup>399</sup> “Indian Anger Over Textbook,” *The San Francisco Examiner*, January 28, 1966, 44.



people who occupied it, should be accurately described. Their own needs for advancement and expansion brought them here. But their failure to understand the true position of the Indian and to recognize Indian rights brought serious injustices to the Indian people.”

The AIHS published both the criticism, the curriculum criteria received, and the organization’s response. At the meeting in November 1965 of the Curriculum Commission, a letter from Walter C. Frame, President of the Conference of California Historical Societies, was read aloud. Frame’s letter objected to “the distorting of our history in favor of any group, or race, or culture, or religion.”<sup>400</sup> Frame rejected the criteria developed by the AIHS. He determined the criteria would misrepresent California history. Frame appeared unable to recognize the mischaracterization of Indians in history textbooks as equally harmful to Indians and non-Indians. In response, the AIHS declared more than twenty affiliated society chapters had no knowledge of the statement nor had any of them been consulted about Frame’s letter.<sup>401</sup>

Another vocal critic of the criteria came from a member of the Catholic Church. Fr. Noel Francis Moholy, O.F.M., Vice Postulator for the cause of Beatification and Canonization of Fray Junípero Serra, read a statement at the November 1965 meeting of the State Curriculum Commission. In part Fr. Moholy recognized history’s evolving nature due to historical revisions. However, he argued, “We must endeavor to be fair to each individual and every minority, while preserving the proper emphasis for the

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<sup>400</sup> “Group Head Opposes Textbook Correction,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 1 (January 1966): 12.

<sup>401</sup> “Statement on Criteria Unknown to Most Affiliates,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 1 (January 1966): 20.

prevailing majority in each given era,” he continued, “To favor one class or to emphasize one group is to disfavor and discriminate against the others.”<sup>402</sup> Fr. Moholy never defined “proper emphasis” and conveniently ignored that California Indians were the majority population throughout the mission era. Fr. Moholy declared the “correct presentation” of the mission period in classrooms motivated his appearance before the Commission.<sup>403</sup>

The depiction of the Catholic Church and its construction as a benevolent organization primarily concerned Fr. Moholy. He stated, “From my own reading and my personal study and research...I fail to note that the original inhabitants of these environs have been treated unfairly in a general sense.” He added, “In a single-confessedly the most prosperous year-20,000 Indians were fed and clothed and housed. Can such be styled the portrait of savages in bondage? Suffering under duress? Captives against their wills?”<sup>404</sup> Thus, Fr. Moholy viewed the mission period as an overall successful and prosperous period.

Fr. Moholy recognized the revisionist nature of history, yet simultaneously held firm to a belief in historical objectivity. He asserted the field of history contains only two norms “fact and truth, evaluated correctly and interpreted legitimately.”<sup>405</sup> He neglected to recognize the diametrically opposed situating by him of relating fact and truth to a perceived correct evaluation and legitimate interpretation of the mission period. After Fr.

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<sup>402</sup> “Fr. Moholy Opposes Indian Position,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 1(January 1966): 14-15.

<sup>403</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

<sup>404</sup> “Fr. Moholy Opposes Indian Position,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 1(January 1966): 16.

<sup>405</sup> *Ibid*, 17.

Moholy's forty five minute statement, Rupert Costo stood and quietly cited the sources of the evaluators' information: mission records.<sup>406</sup> He then seated himself.

Rupert Costo responded to Fr. Moholy's presentation in a three page letter the AIHS published in *The Indian Historian*. Costo argued "fact and truth" could not be served by being "interpreted legitimately." Costo asked, "Legitimately for whom?" and "By what standards?"<sup>407</sup> As Costo carefully pointed out, the criteria developed by the Indian history study committee did not offer historical interpretation but rather "merely stated fact...merely named truths."<sup>408</sup> Costo described feelings "akin to horror" in Fr. Moholy's view that the missions fed 20,000 Indians in one year and therefore Indians could not have existed in intolerable conditions. Costo countered with the suggestion that Fr. Moholy investigate the Church records for Indian rates of death caused through murder, brutality, and diseases.

The AIHS also published commentary by Alvin Josephy Jr., who supported the curriculum criteria developed by the Indian History Study Committee. He noted the strong need for the criteria because the implementation would greatly assist in educating the public. Josephy asserted the failures of current historical works "prevent the formation of a knowledgeable public opinion that can intelligently, through all media of public expression, participate in solutions to what some call "the Indian problem."<sup>409</sup> He

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<sup>406</sup> Lynn Thomas, "Periphery: Setting the Record Straight," *San Francisco*, May 1969, 7.

<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>409</sup> Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., "Criteria Correct, Historian Says," *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 1 (January 1966): 29.

further noted that “each of the eleven criteria has merit and meaning for all Americans.”<sup>410</sup>

The AIHS continued its call for revision of history textbooks, but it also took additional actions. During a meeting on September 3, 1965, the AIHS concluded that it had no desire to “count the blows and leg irons in the missions,” but remained dedicated that “no rosy and untruthful picture be given” of California Indians in the missions. Therefore, the AIHS noted the controversy and pledged “to continue the textbook study full force.”<sup>411</sup>

The American Indian Historical Society did obtain some positive responses from publishing companies. It reported a textbook on American colonial history would remove a photograph of two Narragansett Indians scalping a swooning white woman and replace it with a different image. Additionally, the AIHS provided details that two publishers, Harper and Singer, agreed to review and revise current books.<sup>412</sup> The AIHS received a letter from a Mrs. Leswing [first name not provided] of the Century Schoolbook Press, in which she thanked the organization for its “frank, objective evaluation” of a proposed manuscript that the AIHS rejected and included a donation of \$50 as an expression of gratitude.<sup>413</sup> Mrs. Leswing noted the press’ goal of “publication of an authentic, informative” book free of bias and thus “we are so grateful for what you

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<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

<sup>411</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes September 3, 1965, pg. 2, box 12, folder 10, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>412</sup> “Textbook Correction Makes Gains in Current Books,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 8 (October 1966): 3.

<sup>413</sup> Executive Council Minutes, May 3, 1968 pg. 3, box 12, folder 13, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

have done” and appreciated the AIHS’ offer of future cooperation.<sup>414</sup> The response from Leswing expressed her appreciation for the opinion of the AIHS and decidedly supportive view towards the AIHS.

The AIHS revisited the textbook issue with the Board of Education and Curriculum Commission. In 1966, the Society registered its complaints about the eighth grade textbook *Land of the Free*. Written by historians John W. Caughey, John Hope Franklin and Ernest May, it reached California schools in fall of 1967. The textbook served as the first to depict people of color and the Civil Rights Movement. Several groups protested the book and thirteen California school districts failed to order it, while three school districts refused to order it. This represented the first time California school districts rejected a state-wide adopted book.<sup>415</sup> Parents also refused to permit their children to read it. This refusal eventually led to student suspensions.<sup>416</sup> Some teachers, parents, and school districts, decided the book threatened patriotism and exaggerated the roles of minorities. The AIHS limited its protest to the depiction of Indians in the book. The California State Department of Education collected public concerns in the document, “Criticisms of the Land of the Free.” The Society concerns included word choice and style. For example, it recommended a revision to the line, “For an even longer time, Indians were treated as though they were children and were not allowed to vote,” to “For

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<sup>414</sup> “Viewpoints,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 3 (Summer 1968): 33.

<sup>415</sup> Jack McCurdy, “State Prepares to Act: School Districts Revolt on Textbook Jolts Board,” *The Los Angeles Times*, December 13, 1967, B6.

<sup>416</sup> “Land of Free Controversy: Boy Suspended in Dispute Over Textbook,” *The Los Angeles Times*, November 28, 1967, 3.

an even longer time, Indians were unjustly treated as ‘incompetents.’ They were not allowed to vote.”<sup>417</sup>

Members of the AIHS attended the July 1970 Board of Education hearing on proposed new textbooks. Rupert Costo spoke out against the state adopting well-known western historian David S. Lavender’s fourth grade textbook *The Story of California*. In part, Costo described some of the pictures found in the book as “inaccurate” and “degrading.” Additionally, he called the book’s portrayal of Indians “biased and prejudiced.”<sup>418</sup> Rafferty agreed with Costo’s concerns and after his presentation announced, “I’m going to send that book back to the publisher.”<sup>419</sup>

Nevertheless, the Commission “tentatively” adopted the book and agreed on voice vote to evaluate the book again in the fall. According to Rafferty, *The Story of California* would, “be accepted only with extensive revisions and corrections, after the board majority reads it and approves it.” At the meeting, a representative for the publisher, American Heritage Publishing, asserted, “Such reasonable revisions (as Rafferty asked) can be made.”<sup>420</sup> The stakes were high since the book’s adoption meant orders for about 300,000 copies.

The AIHS earned a small victory with ensuring additional review and some revisions. However, Henry-Costo wanted more than revisions. She wanted the book removed and replaced. Henry-Costo argued, “The book should have been rejected out of

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<sup>417</sup> “Criticisms of the Land of the Free,” July 25, 1966, np., CSCC Papers, DASC, CSUDH.

<sup>418</sup> Robert B. Young, “Rafferty Agrees with Indians on Textbook Revision,” *The Los Angeles Times*, July 10, 1970, 3.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid.

<sup>420</sup> Ibid, 28.

hand.”<sup>421</sup> Lavender, the author of *The Story of California* was away and could not comment. His wife expressed dismay, declaring “there was no intent of either oversight or misrepresentation” by her husband in the book.<sup>422</sup> Henry-Costo lamented the Curriculum Commission “didn’t consult with Indians and doesn’t have one Indian evaluator” when it approved the book and recommended it for the Board of Education to vote for its inclusion.<sup>423</sup> At the end of the meeting, *The Story of California* tenuously held its position for state-wide adoption dependent upon revisions.

As Henry-Costo vocalized her continued commitment to confront Lavender’s book, Costo expressed a growing weariness from repeatedly confronting textbooks. At an AIHS meeting in August 1970, Costo reported on the Board of Education meeting and declared, “These meetings with the State Board of Education take up too much of our time.” He continued, “We should let them [Board of Education] take over and ease out of it quietly.”<sup>424</sup>

At the next Board of Education meeting, held in October 1970, a 7-2 vote led to the official adoption of *The Story of California*, although it did make a few changes. An example of a removed line described a California tribe’s eating habits, noting, “They did not mind eating lizards and roasted grasshoppers.”<sup>425</sup> While the author and publisher

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<sup>421</sup> Ibid.

<sup>422</sup> Ibid.

<sup>423</sup> Bev Mitchell, “Indians Threaten to sue Over Text,” *The Oakland Tribune*, July 9, 1970, 9.

<sup>424</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, August 1, 1970, pg. 3, box 12, folder 21, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>425</sup> Robert B. Young, “State Board Approves School Book Changes,” *The Los Angeles Times*, October 9, 1970, B4.

removed some problematic language, the book contained some broad language. For example, Lavender asserted, “Many Indian customs were alike from one part of North America to another.”<sup>426</sup> The inclusion of such broad generalizations kept in the textbook assuredly frustrated members of the AIHS. Increasing feelings of frustration led the AIHS to engage teachers directly across the state with teacher workshops. Through direct contact with teachers, the Society provided positive interactions with those who had the most direct, daily contact with students, Indians and non-Indians. For some teachers, the workshops may have represented the first time they had met an Indian, a potentially powerful opportunity for the Society to have an enduring legacy in the classroom.

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<sup>426</sup> David Lavender, *The Story of California* (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1971), 38.



## CHAPTER 5

### “ADOPT A POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND CONDUCT ACTIVE WORK AMONG TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS”: WORKSHOPS FOR TEACHERS

On April 3, 1968 Rupert Costo, Cahuilla, and President of the American Indian Historical Society, opened the In-service Institute for Teachers at Greenville, a small town in northeastern California, and part of the historic homelands of the Maidu tribe. He reminded his audience, “When you teach our youth that Columbus discovered America in 1492, you are teaching the history of a European development which took place in this land. You are not teaching the history of America.”<sup>427</sup> Working collaboratively with the Greenville school district, the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or “The Society”) co-sponsored the program. The event sought to develop a better understanding between Indians and educators and to find a practical manner for local schools to incorporate Maidu heritage in its curriculum. In addition to Costo, the presenters at the session included: William Peter, Maidu, who presented the keynote address; Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee; anthropology professor John Lowell Bean; and Frank LaPena, Wintun. Attended by local teachers and the Superintendent of Plumas county school district Robert Schoensee, the program represented a practical and proactive response by the AIHS with members who traveled across the state to speak directly with teachers on methods to include Indian cultures and histories in classroom curriculum.

Working with California state officials in the Board of Education, Curriculum Commission, and Superintendent Dr. Max Rafferty, the AIHS addressed harmful stereotypes in textbooks, initiated the Indian History Study Committee in 1965 which

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<sup>427</sup> Cory Arnet, “Education for Educators,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 3 (June 1968): 4.

created a series of curriculum criteria. The AIHS reevaluated its effectiveness in creating positive environments for Indian school children. As an organization, the AIHS decided on a proactive response. It decided as an organization, it must “adopt a positive attitude and conduct active work among teachers and educators, as well as in the classrooms.”<sup>428</sup> As a result, the AIHS chose direct outreach as a new method of approach choosing to work on improving historic knowledge among the Indian community.

To accomplish this goal the AIHS visited the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) to gather information and to present on the services offered by its Indian Archives and Library located at the AIHS headquarters.<sup>429</sup> Additionally, the AIHS published a number of excerpts from history textbooks used in California classrooms in *The Indian Historian*.<sup>430</sup> In part, the Society illustrated the need for revision by publishing mainstream textbook excerpts in order to compel parents to become aware of what appeared in their children’s textbooks. The journal, read by non-Indians as well, exposed the readers to the specific language many Indians found offensive. By focusing attention on small portions the AIHS permitted non-Indian readers to recognize the insulting language and implied stereotypes.

By publishing excerpts of textbooks, the AIHS pushed parents to pay greater attention to their children’s textbooks and increased the likelihood of family discussions about this concern. For example, an Indian mother of a third grader wrote a letter, published by *The Indian Historian*, in which she described her child’s book on Plains

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<sup>428</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes November 6, 1965, pg. 3, box 12, folder 10, Rupert and Jeannette Costo papers, Collection 170. University of California, Riverside Libraries, Special Collections & Archives, University of California, Riverside (Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR).

<sup>429</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>430</sup> “A Textbook About Indians Today,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 10 (December 1965): 5-7.

Indians. She observed “I found it to be objectionable because of the violence and deceit presented, which presented the Indian in extremely ferocious character.” She continued, “Indian mothers and fathers should look at the books their children are reading in school. They might be surprised and appalled at what they find is being taught.”<sup>431</sup> The decision to publish the letter also drew attention to the issue and perhaps led some parents to contact the teacher, school, or local school board about textbooks assigned to their children.

In spring of 1967, the AIHS conducted a series of tuition free classes for Indians to attend and learn about general American Indian history. Too many Indians knew little about their tribal histories. A “public school education, the disruption of tribal life because of white invasion, and the feeling on the part of some parents that their children would have a better chance if they knew less about their Indian heritage” the AIHS believed.<sup>432</sup> By offering classes on Indian history to Indian peoples, the AIHS fostered greater cultural awareness. By reaching Indian parents, the AIHS indirectly facilitated providing parents with the information to challenge their children’s textbooks.

During the 1960s, many Indian parents were raised by parents who had attended boarding schools, which generally promoted complete assimilation. As a result, some Indian parents of the 1960s had limited tribal language skills and cultural knowledge. Offering the classes geared towards the Indian community created a comfortable environment for those unfamiliar with Indian history to learn more. The series of classes

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<sup>431</sup> “Viewpoints,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 5 (Winter 1968): 31.

<sup>432</sup> Personal correspondence, Jeannette Henry-Costo to all Indians, December 28 1966, box 12, folder, 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

represented the Society identifying a need of the Indian community and responding to the best of its ability.

Highlighting the shortcomings of public school education also reenforced the AIHS call for changes in textbooks and promoted positive interaction with teachers. The classes informed Indian parents who could assist in supporting public school textbook challenges. The theme for the fourth class in the series posed the question: “How can we preserve Indian culture, crafts, and languages?”<sup>433</sup> Asking such a fundamental question about culture preservation could promote an important dialogue.

The AIHS would continue its discussion on textbooks. At the same time, it realized the need to challenge the narrative of history textbooks through direct outreach to public schools and teachers. Therefore it applied for a grant from the Rosenberg Foundation, a group established in 1935 and dedicated to the welfare of California children. According to the annual Rosenberg report in 1965, the AIHS became the first all-Indian organization to approach the Foundation.<sup>434</sup> The AIHS employed a grant of \$9, 987 received from the Rosenberg Foundation to create and sponsor a program to make more accurate information on Indians available in public schools.<sup>435</sup>

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<sup>433</sup> Ibid.

<sup>434</sup> It is important to note the AIHS was the first Indian organization to receive grant money from the Rosenberg Foundation. Though unclear if other Indian groups had prior knowledge of the grant, perhaps learning of the AIHS success led them to apply. Further, it is possible the exposure to the AIHS and its application led the Rosenberg Foundation to take a serious look at additional Indian organizations. Some of the subsequent grant funds were awarded in 1967 to the Mono Tribe and the Ad Hoc Committee on Indian Education led by David Risling Jr., Hupa; 1976 to Tri-Country Indian Development Council, Inc.; 1977 and 1978 to Urban Indian Child Resource Center; 1979 to American Indian Lawyer Training Program; 1979 and 1980 Oakland Intertribal Friendship House; 1980 Inter-Tribal Council of California Indians; 1980 California Tribal Chairman’s Association; 1981, 1982, 1983 to California Indian Health Council Inc.; 1982 and 1983 Native American Rights Fund.

<sup>435</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, December 10, 1965, pg. 1, box 12, folder 10, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

The grant funds supported AIHS members to travel and interact directly with teachers and administrators at public schools. This program served as a, “practical and basic method by which to correct the errors about our people in textbooks, and educate the child and his teacher to as to the true history and culture of the Indians.”<sup>436</sup> Through the teacher workshops, the AIHS had the opportunity to affect education in public schools. In addition, the AIHS received accreditation by the California State Board of Education. The accreditation furnished official status to the organization and permitted school districts to pay for teachers to attend meetings, seminars, conferences or utilize AIHS facilities including the Indian library and archive housed at Chautauqua House, the formal headquarters.<sup>437</sup>

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<sup>436</sup> “Schools to Get 1966 Indian Aid,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 9 (November/December 1965): 3.

<sup>437</sup> Rupert Costo, Organization Report [1967?] undated, box 12, folder 12, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.



<b>California Map Key</b>	
★	Sacramento, State Capitol
●	1966 AIHS Teacher Workshops: Berkeley, Beaumont, Fresno, Hoopa, and San Francisco
▲	San Francisco - Formal AIHS Headquarters
<i>Note: UC Riverside is located in Riverside</i>	

Figure 9 California map.

The workshops held by the AIHS in 1966 took place at five locations across the state. The Society called these workshops the “Program of Indian Aid to Education.” The locations included Berkeley, Beaumont, Fresno, Hoopa, and San Francisco. Speaking about the Berkeley workshop, Henry-Costo asserted, “This will not be the usual ‘We was robbed’ type of propaganda meeting.” She continued, “We want to change the public’s image of the Indian as a quaint, out-of-the world character and show him as he is-a live wire in today’s world.”<sup>438</sup> The presentations varied based upon location but Indian teachers did participate.

Three AIHS members and teachers Al Hicks, Navajo, an elementary school teacher in Richmond; Martina Costo, Cahuilla, elementary school teacher in Norwalk school district; and Barbara Moranda, Weott, high school teacher in the Los Angeles district assumed leadership roles.<sup>439</sup> At the Berkeley workshop some of the participants included Emmett St. Marie, tribal chairperson of Morongo reservation; Jane Penn, Wanikik Cahuilla, founder of Malki Museum; Leo Calac, tribal council member of Rincon reservation, and Dr. William Shipley, Professor of Linguistics, University of California, Berkeley.<sup>440</sup> Additional presenters on tribal history, language and arts included: Rosalie Bethel, Mono; Essie Parrish, Pomo; Marie Potts, Maidu; and Margaret Brookins and Nancy Landuk, Karuk.<sup>441</sup> The Berkeley workshop also included a display

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<sup>438</sup> “Workshop on Indian at Berkeley,” *The Oakland Tribune*. November 8, 1966, 18.

<sup>439</sup> “Indian Teachers to take Lead in all Workshop Events,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3, no. 5 (May 1966): 1.

<sup>440</sup> “Berkeley Session Registration Starts,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 1 (January 1966): 2.

<sup>441</sup> “Berkeley Workshop Brings Noted Educator to Platform,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3, no. 9 (November 1966): 4.

of indigenous plants and their use in basketry and food by Dick Angel and Ohlone tribal members.<sup>442</sup>

The Berkeley workshop incorporated the expertise of Dr. John Barr Tomkins, Head of Public Services at the Bancroft Library. He prefaced his presentation on Bancroft library resources by noting, “American Indians remain probably the least understood and most misunderstood Americans of us all.”<sup>443</sup> The Fresno workshop attracted 210 teachers with 32 Indians participating with presentations, demonstrations, the distributions of materials, and personal conversations.<sup>444</sup>

Some of the workshops offered the opportunity for tribes to formally support the AIHS’ work on textbooks. While in Hoopa, located in northwest California, members of the AIHS met with the Hupa tribal council and received a resolution supporting the textbook correction program.<sup>445</sup> In his capacity of tribal spokesperson of Cahuilla, Costo supported a 1966 motion by his brother Gilbert “Skip” Costo for the tribe to send a petition to the State Board of Education asking it to regulate all textbooks used in public schools in the hope of eliminating derogatory statements.<sup>446</sup> The AIHS openly asked for California Indian tribal councils to send their resolutions of support directly to

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<sup>442</sup> “Special Exhibits at Berkeley,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 8 (October 1966): 7.

<sup>443</sup> John Barr Tomkins, “Sources for Indian Studies at the Bancroft Library,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 2 (May 1967): 7.

<sup>444</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, October 28, 1966, pg. 1, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>445</sup> Personal correspondence, Michael Galvan to Board of Directors, April 30, 1966, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>446</sup> Minutes of the Tribal Meeting Cahuilla Band of Indians, April 3, 1966, pg. 2, Cahuilla Band Minutes 1962-1963, Bureau of Tribal Operations, Tribal Government Files 1935-1986 from Cabazon to Campo, Southern California Agency, RG 75; NARA, Laguna Niguel.



Rafferty.<sup>447</sup> Costo spoke at all the workshops. At the workshop in Beaumont, geographically the closest workshop to the Cahuilla reservation, Costo asserted, “Teach the children a deeper appreciation of the fact that as mankind grows he makes mistakes and tries for a better understanding.”<sup>448</sup>

Although generally well received, the workshops encountered some minor challenges. For example, Jeannette Henry-Costo faced some criticism due to her lack of patience with some teachers who displayed prejudicial attitudes.<sup>449</sup> However, the primary hurdle remained convincing school districts that the AIHS offered practical assistance. Rupert Costo noted, “When we explain what we want to do, they are very cooperative. But they do not wish to expose their own lack of preparation, their own lack of knowledge.”<sup>450</sup> For the Beaumont workshop, Costo developed a mimeographed bibliography on Southern California Indians. In the preface, Costo explained the AIHS adopted a “center of reference” with Indian history and culture in which “investigation must begin and be dominated by the special and specific Indian tribe being studied.” He acknowledged the difficulty of Southern California Indian maintenance of tribal history and culture due to “Spanish occupation” and “hostile” experiences under Mexican and American governments.<sup>451</sup> Therefore, he agreed that not all Indian history or culture

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<sup>447</sup> “Tribal Support for Textbook Changes,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 4 (April 1966): 14.

<sup>448</sup> “Indians Tell of Civilization Before Spanish,” *The Los Angeles Times*, October 16, 1966, H12.

<sup>449</sup> Personal correspondence, Michael Galvan to Board of Directors, pg. 1, October 1966, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>450</sup> Rupert Costo, “Report on Education Program,” January 15, 1966 pg. 4, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>451</sup> Rupert Costo and American Indian Historical Society, *Bibliography, Indians of Southern California*, (San Francisco: American Indian Historical Society, n.d.), 1.

could be recovered. However, he maintained “But, WHATEVER can be rescued must be rescued.”<sup>452</sup>

Rupert Costo’s sister, Martina Costo, contributed her skills and experience as a grade school teacher towards the development and implementation of the teacher program. She designed an outline guide for teachers in conjunction with the curriculum criteria which the AIHS shared during its presentations at public schools. The guide listed basic understandings to inform teachers of methods to promote ending stereotypes. For example, her first assertion noted, “The Indians of early California had the same basic needs of human beings everywhere, throughout the history of man. Food, fire, water, shelter, clothing.”<sup>453</sup> The comment may have seemed obvious to some teachers. However, it reinforced the need to avoid the misunderstanding that California Indians stood separate or outside from the human experience.

Her outline also informed teachers that California Indians lived in many different tribes and spoke numerous distinct languages and dialects. By overtly stating the obvious, Costo informed teachers and pushed them to expand their teachings beyond broad generalizations. She also prepared a teacher’s lesson plan for fourth grade which listed activities for students to learn about California Indians. In one example, students learned about basketweaving and she outlined students read about the raw materials, draw a basket design, and gather materials.<sup>454</sup> As a practical approach, the workshops

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<sup>452</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>453</sup> Martina Costo, “An Outline Guide for the Teacher,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 7 (August/September 1965): 18.

<sup>454</sup> Martina Costo, “An Example of Teacher aid,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 7 (August/September 1965): 20.

successfully placed teachers in direct contact with Indians. Teacher's personal interaction with the Indian presenters could have challenged and countered any of their misconceptions.

The AIHS also compiled supplemental materials to be distributed at the workshops. These materials combated stereotypes and misconceptions. "Common Misconceptions about American Indians" identified misconceptions and debunked them through "authoritative citations, factual materials, eyewitness reports, and a face to face encounter with the truth."<sup>455</sup> Henry-Costo recognized some "authorities" opinioned in error but hoped the supplemental would lead to the reader to, "pursue this fascinating subject, with personal observation, research, and the reading of source materials recommended."<sup>456</sup> She hoped teachers would leave the workshops a bit more informed and most importantly, curious to learn more. The AIHS identified twenty six misconceptions that ranged from Indians were "warlike" to Indian scholars "develop attitudes too subjective" and inherently unable to practice objective scholarship. Additionally, the supplement included a list of recommended readings for teachers to review after leaving the workshop. The supplement concluded, "With knowledge, prejudice can be defeated."<sup>457</sup>

The practice of focusing on education as a means to defeat prejudice seemed appropriate. A local Bay Area newspaper relied on stereotypes when reporting on an AIHS presentation before a group of fourth grade students. Hayward's *The Daily Review*

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<sup>455</sup> "Exhibit 5 Common Misconceptions about American Indians" U.S. Congress, Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Hearings on Indian Education: The Study of the Education of Indian Children Part 1*, 90 Cong., 1 and 2 sess. (1968), 408.

<sup>456</sup> Ibid.

<sup>457</sup> Ibid, 418.

poor attempt at humor at the expense of Indians illustrated the need for addressing misconceptions. In a facetious explanation for heavy rains, an unnamed author noted AIHS members had been scheduled to appear before some Fremont Unified School District fourth graders for a cooking presentation, but the event was postponed due to rain. The newspaper reported, Wes Peterson, coordinator for publications of the school district, “darkly” commented, “I hope next time the society doesn’t get its cooking dance mixed up with its rain dance.”<sup>458</sup> The cooking presentation occurred prior to the teacher workshops and one can only speculate if perhaps someone from the Fremont school district would not make such an insensitive comment after attending a Program of Indian Aid to Education.

In support of the teachers attending the workshops, for a brief time the AIHS provided copies of *The American Indian Review*, a bulletin for educators.<sup>459</sup> The bulletin contained practical articles on Indian history, life, and culture. Each bulletin included annotated bibliographies.<sup>460</sup> The teacher workshops opened a dialogue between Indians and educators and provided the space for alliances to form for the improvement of education.

The workshop held in Berkeley offered such an opportunity for open communication surrounding the junior high supplemental textbook *Land of the Oaks* used in Oakland school district. Written by James Harlow, a teacher, and published by the Oakland Board of Education, the school district regularly used his text in the classroom.

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<sup>458</sup> “Sideviews,” *The Daily Review*, November 16, 1965, 13.

<sup>459</sup> Personal correspondence, Michael Galvan to Board of Directors, April 30, 1966, pg. 2, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>460</sup> “Educators, Indians Combine Efforts,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 1 (January 1966): 3.

Originally published in 1953 the book was reprinted in 1955 and 1959. After a workshop held on November 5, 1966 several teachers from Oakland approached AIHS members and urged them to investigate the book.<sup>461</sup> As an organization, the Society formally determined to proceed with a protest against the volume.<sup>462</sup>

The AIHS evaluated the book and determined it degrading to Indians. In response to its findings, the AIHS sent a general evaluation to Superintendent of Oakland school district Stuart Phillips and requested a formal meeting to discuss their concerns about the textbook. The AIHS received full cooperation from the Oakland school district and had a productive meeting.<sup>463</sup> Additionally, the AIHS gained allies from Alfred Elgin, assistant director, of the Oakland Intertribal Friendship House and representatives from the Oakland American Indian Association.<sup>464</sup>

The general evaluation of the *Land of the Oaks* textbook by the AIHS revealed numerous misinterpretations and examples of prejudicial language. The AIHS noted the author, Harlow, prefaced his book with the comment, “it deals with anecdotal and humorous phases of local history, as well as the factual...to secure more dramatic reading.” However, the AIHS considered his comment “a plea for the reader’s indulgence,” and responded that his cavalier and facetious manner, “to try and be funny

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<sup>461</sup> “Book is Removed from Classrooms,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 1 (January/February 1967): 3.

<sup>462</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, December 10, 1966 pg. 1, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>463</sup> Executive Council Minutes, January 4, 1967, box 12, folder 12, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>464</sup> U.S. Congress, Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Hearings on Indian Education: The Study of the Education of Indian Children Part 1*, 90 Cong., 1 and 2 sess. (1968), 242-243.

about it adds insult to error.”<sup>465</sup> In one example cited, Harlow asserted, “They [the Indians] liked the land for the same reason the animals had. The weather was warm and comfortable.”<sup>466</sup> The AIHS responded, “The comparison between Indians and animals is degrading to the Indians as a people, as a race, and as individuals. All human beings have animal instincts and needs. Yet textbooks do not make such comparisons about others.”<sup>467</sup>

A central argument by the AIHS identified a lack of humanity given to Indians in textbooks. In total, the AIHS derived dozens of examples from the textbook. Terminology used by Harlow included “digger Indian,” “spooky songs,” “strange looking” houses, and “weird dances.” In evaluating Harlow’s description of shamanism, the AIHS reflective asked, “What is weird?” and further commented that “Modern women’s painted faces are “weird” to Indians even today.”<sup>468</sup>

Harlow issued broad assumptions and prejudicial comments which he attempted to partly conceal in poor attempts at humor. In one example Harlow tried to respond to a question about the health of Indians in which he wrote, “It might be that the Indians were so untidy that germs were afraid of them.”<sup>469</sup> In another he offered a definition of “Digger Indians,” named so because they “were always digging around in the ground for seeds

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<sup>465</sup> “Exhibit 2 Land of the Oaks by James Harlow evaluation” U.S. Congress, Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Hearings on Indian Education: The Study of the Education of Indian Children Part 1*, 90 Cong., 1 and 2 sess. (1968), 358.

<sup>466</sup> James Harlow, *Land of the Oaks* (1953; reprint, Oakland: Board of Education, Oakland Unified School District, 1955), 16.

<sup>467</sup> “Indian Criticism Cites Defamation,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 1 (January/February 1967): 5.

<sup>468</sup> “Exhibit 2 Land of the Oaks by James Harlow evaluation,” 362.

<sup>469</sup> Harlow, 22.

and bugs...They were very delicious, if you happen to like roasted bugs.”<sup>470</sup> In its critical review, the AIHS responded that Harlow designed the statement “to evoke indulgent laughter” and that the language he selected represented “an insidious display of innate prejudice and inexcusable ignorance.”<sup>471</sup>

The most outrageous example of Harlow’s poor attempt at humor centered on his description of California Indian life experiences. He asserted “If the white man had not come to this part of the country, the Indians would have gone living peacefully through the years, sitting alongside their mud houses, eating clams and throwing the shells on top of grandpa’s grave.”<sup>472</sup> The AIHS called Harlow’s comment “a slanderous statement, degrading, and the picture made of the Indian family is inaccurate in every respect.”<sup>473</sup> Harlow’s comment alluded to a commonly held belief that the arrival of Whites ensured a perceived cultural upgrade for Indians.

His remarks revealed a superficial understanding of California Indian culture and history. Harlow revealed his lack of knowledge by failing to mention the specific tribal group, broadly known as Ohlone, who historically resided in the bay area. Instead, Harlow utilized the derogatory term “Digger Indian.” He also made a false comparison between “Plains Indians” as he described them as brave and hard working while “Digger Indians liked to take life easy.”<sup>474</sup> Additionally, Harlow spoke of human remains

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<sup>470</sup> “Exhibit 2 Land of the Oaks by James Harlow evaluation,” 358 and 362.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid, 359.

<sup>472</sup> Harlow, 29.

<sup>473</sup> “Exhibit 2 Land of the Oaks by James Harlow evaluation,” 364.

<sup>474</sup> Harlow, 17.

dismissively when he noted, “Every time you dig into the ground, you are likely to bump into something you could use to decorate your home on Halloween.”<sup>475</sup> Harlow’s language deeply disturbed the AIHS, leading to its lobbying for the removal of the offensive textbook. As Oakland served as a city for the Bureau of Indian Affairs Relocation Program, a number of Indian students who attended the public schools would encounter *Land of the Oaks* in the public school system.

In part because of its proactive actions, the AIHS received formal notification of the Oakland school district’s decision to remove *Land of the Oaks*.<sup>476</sup> The AIHS reprinted the January 17, 1967 letter it received from Superintendent Stuart Phillips in which he announced a special review committee determined the book, “be withdrawn from use.” Further, Phillips shared the decision to distribute copies of the report prepared by the AIHS to “all Social Science Department heads” at its next meeting. In part, the committee determined many sections of the textbook were “no longer appropriate for classroom use in the context of today’s educational program.”

Superintendent Phillips expressed his gratitude towards the AIHS for its interest and “excellent contribution you have made to the committee’s thinking.” He continued that AIHS evaluation report assisted in a “positive effect upon the instructional program in our Oakland Public Schools.”<sup>477</sup> Yet, perhaps in a move to minimize the effectiveness of the AIHS and the Oakland American Indian Association, Helen Cyr, Director of

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<sup>475</sup> Harlow, 20.

<sup>476</sup> Executive Council meeting minutes, January 4, 1967, box 12, folder 12, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR. It mentions the Costos attended a meeting with the Oakland school district.

<sup>477</sup> Personal correspondence, Superintendent Stuart S. Phillips to American Indian Historical Society, January 17, 1967, *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 1 (January/February 1967): 4.



instructional media for Oakland Unified School District informed *The Oakland Tribune* the book was obsolete and already scheduled to be removed.<sup>478</sup> In any event, in the case of Oakland, the AIHS working with additional allies successfully lobbied on behalf of Indians, specifically children, and had a textbook removed from a local school district. Ultimately 1,652 educators attended the teacher workshops and returned to their classrooms with materials, teaching guides, and direct positive interaction with Indians.<sup>479</sup>

The authoritative nature of textbooks concerned the AIHS because they conveyed information accepted as accurate. Jeannette Henry-Costo expressed her concern surrounding the compulsory use of textbooks in her 1967 article *Our Inaccurate Textbooks*. She noted the ideas and information in textbooks used by students for learning “certainly influence his mind, bending him spiritually and mentally in a definite ideological direction.”<sup>480</sup> As a result, Henry-Costo questioned the racial socialization process of students. She queried, “What is the effect upon the student...when he learns that Indians were mere parts of the landscape and wilderness which had to be cleared out” and the effect on young Indian student who learns “Columbus discovered America, that Coronado brought ‘civilization’ to the Indian people, and that Spanish missionaries provided havens of refuge for the Indian?”<sup>481</sup> Henry-Costo’s questions reflected her recognition of the potential impact of negative content imagery of Indians. However,

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<sup>478</sup> “Indians Win-Text Junked,” *The Oakland Tribune*, January 5, 1967, 25.

<sup>479</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes December 10, 1966 pg. 1, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>480</sup> Jeannette Henry, “Our Inaccurate Textbooks,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 1 (December 1967): 21.

<sup>481</sup> *Ibid*, 22.

Henry-Costo equally recognized the potential positive impact of textbooks for future citizens if they contained accurate portrayals of Indians. She observed that if non-Indians could learn to understand Indians and Indian culture the result would serve to “strike a blow at prejudice more powerful than any picket line.”<sup>482</sup> While Henry-Costo concluded with an optimistic tone, her overall analysis received a personal rebuttal from an Arizona State University history professor.

Dr. Otis E. Young Jr., history professor at Arizona State University, wrote a condescending letter to Henry-Costo in 1967. He facetiously noted that she should send the article to every anti-defamation pressure group with instructions to replace Indian with their community name to “save time and trouble” with its letters to textbook commissions. Young pointedly accused Henry-Costo of being one of many “mischief-makers” partially responsible for the sad state of textbooks. He bemoaned, “every additional putsch of this sort only guarantees that our texts shall be even more vapid.”

Young offered a deal in which they would write a text on Indians together and tell the truth. Young noted that Henry-Costo should, “sing of their accomplishments and their wicked mistreatment by the wicked Spaniards and WASPs,” while he would educate the children about, “lice, infanticide, potlatches, slavery, xenophobia, intermittent [sic] starvation, intertribal war, annual divorce, and the institutionalization of thievery.” In closing, Young acidly asserted that if Henry-Costo wished to practice selectivity in facts for their fictive co-written text, “...then this places you on all fours with the very

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<sup>482</sup> Ibid., 24.

authors you have so heatedly condemned.”<sup>483</sup> Young believed strongly enough in his opinions to directly contact her and indirectly refer to her as a female dog.

The tone used by Young communicated his defensiveness while simultaneously showing that he was tone-deaf to Henry-Costo’s concerns. Further, in a postscript he referenced human sacrifice practiced by Aztecs, which had no presence in North America. However, his comment illustrates the broad strokes in which he described all Indian groups with his attempt to correlate the cultural and religious practices of one specific group and advance the idea that all Indians participated in identical cultural practices.

He did not mention any specific California Indian tribes, in itself demonstrating the need for content on the subject of California Indians. Despite the incendiary commentary by Young, his letter concerned the AIHS in only one manner. It wanted to determine if the Arizona State University campus library cancelled its subscription to the *Indian Historian* as a result of his letter.<sup>484</sup> Despite such criticism, the AIHS remained committed to challenging textbooks used in California’s classrooms.

The AIHS focused on public schools’ textbooks, with an emphasis on elementary and middle schools. However, it also hoped to facilitate discussions at the college level. In 1961, Professor Jack D. Forbes, Powhatan/Lenape, began circulating his paper “Proposal to create an American Indian University,” in which he called for the establishment of a pan-Indian and Chicano University. Forbes campaigned for his idea

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<sup>483</sup> Personal correspondence, Otis E. Young to Jeannette Henry-Costo, December 18, 1967, reel 15, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>484</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, June 15, 1968, pg. 2, box 12, folder 13, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

for several years but Costo had a different opinion about it. Costo remarked, “We are not in sympathy with it, even with a modified version of it. And even though we understand that certain specialization is needed in the study of the Indian history. We believe this ought to be done as part of the curriculum of ALL institutions of higher learning, and of college history courses.” He concluded, “But we have got our GUT full of segregated Indian schools. Enough is enough!”<sup>485</sup>

Costo opposed a separate school for Indians and instead argued for the inclusion of Indian material in curriculum for all students. Although Costo held a different opinion about a separate Indian University, he invited Forbes to write an article about it for AIHS publication *The Indian Historian*. Costo asked, “Would you care to engage in a controversy on this subject?” He continued, “I am all for controversy! How about you? Constructive controversy, fruitful controversy, controversy which stimulates thought and sparks ideas. Wonderful!”<sup>486</sup> Despite Costo’s invitation, an article by Forbes explaining his proposal for an Indian University never appeared, although he wrote other articles on different subjects for *The Indian Historian*.

The AIHS sought historical accuracy in public school textbooks. The Society worked with the Curriculum Commission, with varying degrees of success, eventually it turned to writing and publishing books. Costo’s growing wariness of working with publishing companies inspired him to declare, “when we attempted to show them where and how errors and misrepresentations were shown in the books, they became angry and

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<sup>485</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Jack D. Forbes, October 22, 1964, Forbes, Jack D. (1934-2011) Collection, D-046, Special Collections, University of California Library, Davis (UCD).

<sup>486</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Jack D. Forbes, November 30, 1964, Forbes Collection, Special Collections, UCD Library.

published the way they wanted to anyhow.” He described the textbook review process as “a fruitless effort” for the AIHS.<sup>487</sup> At the 1968 Special Senate Subcommittee Hearings on Indian Education in San Francisco, Costo testified “We are preparing our own books” because the AIHS evaluated texts and found them in “bad condition” and “not good.” He continued “They have done no research for many, many years and they don’t feel, most of these book companies feel they don’t have time to research the facts as they should be presented.”<sup>488</sup>

The responses from textbook companies convinced the AIHS to fully enter the publishing field with its journal, newspaper, and establish a printing press. The methodology embraced and practiced by authors, including the Costos, published by the Indian Historian Press may be deduced from an editorial “Back of the Book” published in *The Indian Historian* in 1965. The unnamed editorial, likely written by the Costos, asserted, “A true interpretation of our history and culture should combine the results of Indian scholarship, Indian memory, and the work of scholars the world over, and should be made available to the general public on the broadest scale possible.”<sup>489</sup> The Society entered into the new field of producing and publishing. By deciding to pursue publishing, it ensured that the Indian voice would have a platform, as writers and readers.

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<sup>487</sup> Council on Interracial Books for Children, ed. *Chronicles of American Indian Protest* (Greenwich: Fawcett Publications, 1971), 357.

<sup>488</sup> Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, 246.

<sup>489</sup> “Back of the Book,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 9 (November/December 1965): 31.

## CHAPTER 6

### “WE HAVE NO TIME TO LOSE. WE HAVE TO HAVE A BODY OF LITERATURE BEHIND US”: PUBLISHING AND FACILITATING COMMUNITY THROUGH COMMON READERSHIP

The American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or “the Society”) recognized the potential power imbued in the written word and its circulation. As a result of earlier government policies of genocide and relocation, the dramatically decreased California Indian population was scattered across the state. The written, published word served as a powerful tool, reconnecting and facilitating a network of artists, writers, scholars, and activists in California and across Indian Country. For a number of years, the AIHS worked towards correcting history textbooks used in public schools to better reflect the experiences of Indians peoples by eliminating one-dimensional caricatures. The Society pointed out the suppressed and largely unwritten history of Indians and the distortion of Indian heritage in many publications.

However, after years of working towards this goal with state officials and publishing houses, the AIHS determined that if published items did not properly represent Indian peoples then it would create and distribute its own materials. By responding in this manner, the Society offered an alternative of Indian peoples being ignored or misrepresented and provided an opportunity for Indians to assert their voices. Rupert Costo, Cahuilla and President of the AIHS, described being “dismally disappointed” about stereotypes that books still contained albeit, “much more sophisticated” than in books previously evaluated by the AIHS. After determining earlier AIHS activities as “useless in light of the power held by the publishers,” Costo

concluded, “the only way we could beat this would be to publish the books ourselves, and do something positive to change the situation.”<sup>490</sup> Bradford Chambers, directed the Council on Interracial Books for Children, founded in 1965 to promote literature for children that better reflected the multi-cultural society and affect positive change in books. Chambers indicated that any movement to support independent, minority publishers had to come from forces outside of the mainstream publishing industry, because symbolic tokenism and inadequate funding limited the entrance of minorities into publishing.<sup>491</sup> As an organization, the AIHS created parallel publications to mainstream media for both general readers and the educational community and sought to reveal the humanity and cultural diversity of Indians.

The establishment of a for-profit publishing press seemed an appropriate next step for the AIHS after years of working on textbooks. By 1969 it established The Indian Historian Press (IHP or the Press), the first Indian owned press, as a for profit press. Its first book *Textbooks and the American Indian* published in 1970 compiled and expanded upon the textbook reviews and critiques the AIHS originally completed for the California Board of Education during the 1960s. Costo remarked, “We believe that there is room for a Native American publishing business. We think that it will be good for the publishing business as a whole.” He continued, “We found it most difficult to get into

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<sup>490</sup> Bradford Chambers, “Why Minority Publishing?” *The Publishers Weekly*, March 15, 1971, 41.

<sup>491</sup> Bradford Chambers, “Book Publishing: A Racist Club?” *The Publishers Weekly*, February 1, 1971.

the business and find it increasingly so. We found also that established publishers didn't want us in the business."<sup>492</sup>

Funding for the Indian Historian printing press constituted one of the greatest challenges. The sources of funding varied. Initially, private funds of AIHS members, mostly the Costos, served as the seed money. However, the amount proved insufficient and the AIHS worked for months on the proposal application for a federal loan from the Small Business Administration. As a publishing press venture, however, it learned it was ineligible for funds. Next, the organization attempted to receive loans from private banks. Eventually the banks determined the AIHS held insufficient collateral.

At a meeting in July 1969, of the IHP founders, Henry-Costo spoke about applying for a loan from a new San Francisco corporation, Opportunity Through Ownership (OTO). Melvin Yocum, Vice President of Security Pacific National Bank in San Francisco, helped to start the group which specialized in loans to help minorities start their own businesses. She requested consent from the IHP to continue negotiations and complete the application process. Her motion passed unanimously by the four attendees: Rupert Costo, Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee, Leatrice Mikkelsen, Navajo, and Philip Galvan, Ohlone.

At the meeting, the founders named its new press corporation and established the principals of the corporation: Rupert Costo, Jeannette Henry-Costo, Leatrice Mikkelsen, Phil Galvan and non-Indian anthropologist Lowell Bean. Initially the IHP consisted of 10,000 shares at \$5 per share, with the Costos holding a 55% majority and the remaining

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<sup>492</sup> Council on Interracial Books for Children, ed. *Chronicles of American Indian Protest*. (Greenwich: Fawcett Publications, 1971), 357.



members holding 15%.<sup>493</sup> By the following month, the AIHS had its first three books tentatively planned: Textbooks Under Fire; California Indians; and Joseph Senungetuk's book on Alaskan Natives.<sup>494</sup> In October 1969, the Costos obtained a loan from OTO for \$26,000 but by February 1970, the Costos announced they secured a \$30,000 loan from OTO with a \$10,000 advance.<sup>495</sup>

Costo recalled feelings of friendship with Opportunity Through Ownership but this sentiment quickly deteriorated. The AIHS experienced many difficulties with OTO and Costo described it as "even worse than the usual banking institutions."<sup>496</sup> For example, the OTO attempted to offer new terms different from the preliminary agreement. When the AIHS refused to sign, the OTO cut off the remaining approved loan amount. Costo asserted the OTO made errors in handling the IHP account by not applying payments to the account for days causing great consternation. Costo indicated the souring relationship and exorbitant interest rate caused the AIHS to repay the loan amount by September 1971.<sup>497</sup> Further, Costo shared "interference" from the OTO

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<sup>493</sup> Founders and Directors of the Indian Historian Press (IHP) Meeting Minutes, July 14, 1969, pg. 2, reel 24, Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry Costo papers, *The Rupert Costo Archive of the American Indian filmed from the holdings of the Rupert Costo Library of the American Indian in the Department of Special Collections at the University of California at Riverside*. Native America: a primary record series, 1. Woodbridge, Conn: Primary Source Microfilm, 2001 (Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001).

<sup>494</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, August 29, 1969, box 12, folder 14, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>495</sup> IHP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, October 15, 1969, pg. 2, reel 24, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001. Indicates a personal loan from OTO for \$26,000 for founding corporation and publication of first books; IHP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, February 6, 1970, pg. 2, box 12, folder 21, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR. Acknowledges negotiating a \$30,000 loan with a \$10,000 advance from OTO.

<sup>496</sup> Council on Interracial Books for Children, 356.

<sup>497</sup> IHP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, July 15, 1971, reel 24, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

accelerated paying the loan and severing all ties.<sup>498</sup> A worsening relationship played a role in the dissociation between IHP and OTO. When the IHP discussed the loan, it passed a motion that the organization would promptly pay the loan with proceeds from book sales and personal loans from IHP Board of Directors.<sup>499</sup> The OTO approved a \$30,000 loan, Costo carefully pointed out that the IHP chose to borrow a lesser amount of \$21,150 including a \$4,120 transfer transaction fee, representing a loan amount of \$17,030.<sup>500</sup>

The IHP experienced difficulty obtaining and maintaining investors. It applied for grant monies in support of its publishing endeavors. In 1971, the AIHS received a Ford Foundation grant for \$115,000 “for development of the Indian Historian Press publishing program.”<sup>501</sup> The Ford Foundation money assisted in publishing a series of educational perspectives books entitled *The American Indian Reader* that focused on a range of topics: anthropology, education, literature, history, and current affairs with an emphasis on treaties. In 1981, the AIHS received another Ford Foundation grant for

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A motion passed to repay the loan within the next three months; Leach, Janice-Faye. “Promoting Self-Determination Through a National Indian Newspaper: Wassaja: a Case Study” MA Thesis. California State University, Fullerton, 1974, 97.

<sup>498</sup> IHP Board of Directors Meeting, January 8, 1972, reel 24, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>499</sup> IHP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes October 15, 1969, pg. 2, reel 24, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>500</sup> IHP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, October 30, 1971, reel 24, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>501</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, November 15, 1971, box 12, folder 22, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

\$250,000 to support the continued publishing of its newspaper *Wassaja*.<sup>502</sup> While grant money assisted the Press, financial security continued to concern the organization. The AIHS established the IHP as a for-profit press derived from a desire for a “more consistent and permanent” method of financing the overall organization.<sup>503</sup> Aware of the financial challenges, Henry-Costo declared a need for a promotional campaign for its publications “or else have difficulties in the near future in our operations.”<sup>504</sup> In support of this endeavor, the IHP advertised its books in *Mother Jones* magazine, a nonprofit San Francisco based publication.<sup>505</sup> Aside from this small undertaking, the Press rarely promoted itself through direct advertising or marketing. The books made an impact as illustrated with a letter from Castle Rock Public Librarian Carol G. Van Horn of Washington. After reading *Tsali* she was compelled to write to the press and thank them for publishing it. She commented, “I feel that most white Americans are just now becoming aware of the true history of the settling of this country, and books like *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* and *Tsali* are the main reason for this new knowledge.”<sup>506</sup> As a librarian, she also would recommend it to any curious readers seeking good books.

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<sup>502</sup> Personal correspondence, Willard J. Hertz, Deputy Secretary of the Ford Foundation to Rupert Costo, President of the American Indian Historical Society, November 12 1981, reel 14, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>503</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, June 12, 1971, pg. 2, box 12, folder 22, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>504</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, October 3, 1970, box 12, folder 21, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>505</sup> *Mother Jones*, January 1979, 7.

<sup>506</sup> Personal correspondence, Carol G. Van Horn to The Indian Historian Press, December 30, 1972, reel 16, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

Books selected by the Press to publish included some works that represented “firsts” in the field of cultural and social history. It chose to publish books from a myriad of tribal, geographical and cultural areas. This decision encouraged a general sense of drift in the overall mission of the press. It appeared unfocused with no cohesive theme for its collective publications. Some of the books appeared without reference notes making it difficult for readers and scholars to learn more about the subject.

In addition to original works, some of its publications reprinted earlier volumes. For example, the Press reprinted a mimeographed study in 1965 by anthropologist Ernest Schusky, under the Board of National Missions of the United Presbyterian Church with the cooperation of the Institute of Indian Studies of the State University of South Dakota. Schusky was a former graduate student of Sol Tax at the University of Chicago. The AIHS utilized portions of Schusky’s report in its series of teacher workshops held throughout California in 1966. The IHP published an initial run of 3,000 copies that quickly sold out, encouraging a second printing of 5,000 copies of *The Right to be Indian*.<sup>507</sup> Schusky’s brief study included general information for the uninformed person. For example, he discussed who is an Indian and the civil rights difficulties of Indians as “special citizens.”

Many of the authors had a personal connection to their subject; indeed some tell a greater story through the prism of personal history. For example, well known journalist Tim Giago Jr., Lakota, firmly believed a mainstream publisher would never have published his book of poetry reflecting on his experiences at boarding school. A close

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<sup>507</sup> IHP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes January 5, 1971, reel 24, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

personal friend of the Costos, Giago went on to found *Lakota Times*, which he renamed *Indian Country Today* in the 1990s. He deeply admired Costo and referenced him in several times in his syndicated column *Notes from Indian Country*. Ultimately, the IHP published dozens of books on topics that many mainstream publishing presses overlooked.

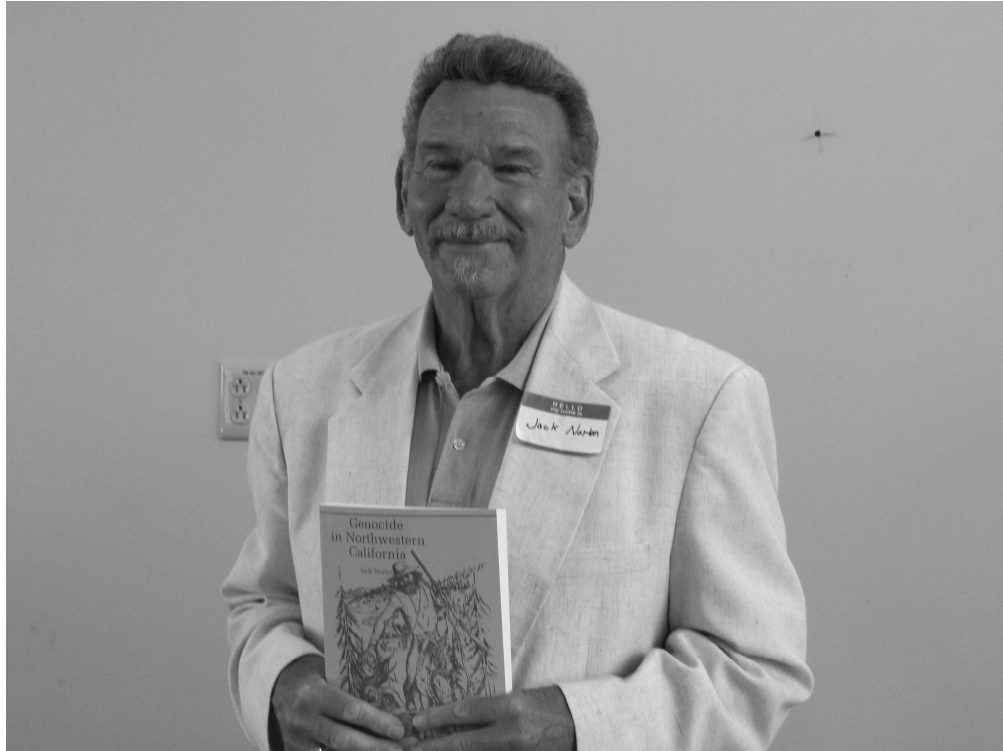


Figure 10 Jack Norton, Hupa/Cherokee, holding a copy of his book at the annual California Indian Conference. Image courtesy of author.

*Genocide in Northwestern California* by Hupa/Cherokee historian Jack Norton, published in 1979, represented the growing impatience among Indian scholars about the silence surrounding genocide in nineteenth century California. Professor Norton sought tenure at Humboldt State University at the time of its publication. The book used the United Nations definition of genocide and applied its use to California Indians.

The IHP published Lumbee historian Adolph Dial's *The Only Land I know*, one of the first general histories on the Lumbee Indians of Southeastern North Carolina, a federally unrecognized tribe. The Lumbee Indians received their name from the proximity of the Lumber River, commonly referred to as the Lumbee River, which travels through southeastern North Carolina. Dial acknowledged the unknown about Lumbee history and noted, "To be a Lumbee is to be cloaked in the myths and uncertainties of the past, to find your pride in Indianess being challenged and denigrated."<sup>508</sup> Regardless of the lack of federal recognition, Dial argued that Lumbees always knew themselves as Indians. He recognized that Lumbee cultural practices had disappeared. However, he noted historic mistreatment by local Whites, as an important reason for this disappearance. A segregated Indian school showed Lumbees to be Indian since they were treated as "others." Dial's work gave voice to a tribal group long silenced in history.

Another "first" in the field of cultural history for the Press included publication of *Give or Take a Century: An Eskimo Chronicle* by Alaskan Eskimo, or Innupiat, Joseph Senungetuk in 1971. It was as the first book written by an Alaskan Native without a non-Innupiat co-author. In the preface to the second edition, Henry-Costo described the significance of Senungetuk's work as a "distinct contribution, both to the literary world and his people."<sup>509</sup> Senungetuk was an artist who received his bachelors of fine arts from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1972 and created all the artwork that appeared in the

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<sup>508</sup> Adolph L. Dial, and David K. Eliades, *The Only Land I Know: A History of the Lumbee Indians* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press, 1975), xiv.

<sup>509</sup> Joseph E. Senungetuk, *Give or Take a Century: An Eskimo Chronicle* (1971; reprint, San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1982), ix.

book. Senungetuk underscored the importance of his work in describing Innupiat culture and noted, “There is much to learn about my ancestors, but I feel that the usual ‘authoritative’ sources do not offer this knowledge.”<sup>510</sup> Senungetuk recalled the Costos “force fed” him writing skills so that they could publish his only book and the Press’ first quality hardcover book including colorful art.<sup>511</sup> The book lacked a bibliography. It constituted more of a personal memoir about his immediate family.

The IHP also published *The Iroquois and the Founding of the American Nation* by historian Donald A. Grinde Jr., Yamasee. The book provided one of the earliest works to examine the Iroquois Confederacy influences on the authors of the United States Constitution, including Benjamin Franklin. Seneca artist Peter Jemison, provided the accompanying artwork. In the preface, Grinde noted the illiteracy of many colonists and asked readers to contemplate that perhaps, in part, they understood democracy not by reading John Locke but by observing Indians and their functioning government. The Press openly entered into the controversy and promoted the book as “a new and challenging approach.”<sup>512</sup>

Boarding schools received attention by Tim Giago Jr., Lakota, with a small book of poetry, *The Aboriginal Sin*, published by the Indian Historian Press in 1978. Giago dedicated the book “for those Indians who endured, and somehow survived this assault on their sense of value and their culture,” and offered it as a therapeutic testament for

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<sup>510</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>511</sup> Joseph Senungetuk, “Change is in the Words,” *Anchorage Daily News*, November 12 1989, E3.

<sup>512</sup> *The Indian Historian* vol. 10 no. 3 (Summer 1977): 64.

those who did not survive.<sup>513</sup> He hoped the book would educate non-Indians about the hardships experienced by Indian children because of policies based on the perceived inferiority of Indian culture. In the book, he noted the biographical nature of his poetry and commented that some boarding schools policies had improved for the better. Giago's book represented one of the earliest publications to publicly question the purpose of mission schools and discuss the harsh treatment experienced by some Indian students.

Based on his experiences as a former student at Holy Rosary Mission School (later renamed Red Cloud Indian School) located on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota, Giago offered a critical assessment of boarding schools. He believed his book spurred uncomfortable questions about the mission school leading to unknown employees' attempts to expunge him from school records and yearbooks. Giago recalled that the superintendent of the school called him and leveled the accusation that his book damaged the school's ability to fundraise. In addition, he asserted various priests worked in a coordinated manner to publicly deny his attendance. Their public statement of non-attendance was technically true, because the school name changed to Red Cloud Indian School and Giago had not attended the school under that specific name. He described their deception as a "pretty clever way to silence a dissenter."<sup>514</sup> Giago's experience demonstrated the burgeoning power of a small press and publications circulated among Indians and non-Indians.

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<sup>513</sup> Tim A. Giago Jr., *The Aboriginal Sin* (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press 1978), viii.

<sup>514</sup> Tim Giago Jr., "Catholic Church Can't Erase Sins of the Past," *Indian Country Today* December 15, 1994, A4.



In discussing AIHS publications, it is impossible to quantify total readership. Subscription numbers do not reflect total readers, as publications got passed around or read multiply times. Universities, libraries, classrooms, museums, reservations, and individuals received copies of AIHS publications. For example, Ernest Wettstein of Yuba College in Marysville, California noted its college library subscribed to *The Indian Historian* and assigned the first two volumes as required reading for all anthropology students.<sup>515</sup> Several of the books published by IHP experienced such high demand they required several reprinted editions. Regardless of the manner someone obtained IHP publications, they shaped a sense of community both between and among reservation and urban as it developed a cultural belonging through common readership. Undoubtedly, columns and scholarly articles segued into conversations in Indian and non-Indian households and communities.

AIHS publications provided a forum for communications both within Indian communities and between Indian and non-Indian communities. The power of communications rests in the process of being created, organized, distributed, and received in ways that support and confirm the dominant society's values and assumptions while purposely avoiding any possible challenges to it. Mass media historically served as a method to homogenize society and either purposely miseducate or undereducate the general public. The mass media assumed the role of defending the United States, or distracting from the issues raised by Indian peoples.

As a result, Indians initially found themselves placed in media communication practices without the ability to determine the content. Throughout U.S. history, media

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<sup>515</sup> "Viewpoints," *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 3 (Summer 1968):33.

developed a caricature of Indian peoples.<sup>516</sup> The mainstream print media tended to rely on a dichotomous construction of Indian peoples in which they appeared as either the good “noble savage” or the bad, “blood thirsty savage.”<sup>517</sup> The spectrum of good to bad placement of Indians depended largely on their relationship with whites in power and level of assimilation. Henry-Costo declared it premature to discuss an Indian Press. She asserted it is “not quite correct to speak about an ‘American Indian Press,’ since there is no national newspaper, and no authoritative news service edited and controlled by American Indians themselves.”<sup>518</sup> However, the AIHS participated in transforming that reality with its parallel publications to mainstream media. In addition, through communication it strived to correct the false dichotomy and to assert Indian content in media, and by extension into the minds of Indians and non-Indian peoples.

The Society publications reported on positive achievements of Indian peoples and historically contextualized events that assisted in bringing a level of accuracy and depth missing in many mainstream publications. The approach sought a balance of responsible and responsive writing. The publications sought accountability, and in contrast to mainstream media, talked with and to Indian peoples, rather than about them. Rather than speaking about statistics from studies or reports, the Society reporting provided the

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<sup>516</sup> See Robert F. Berkhofer Jr., *The White Man's Indian*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 25-26. The author asserts that White interpretation of Indians has been incorrect because of three main reasons: “1. generalizing from one tribe's society and culture to all Indians; 2. conceiving of Indians in terms of their deficiencies according to White ideals rather than in terms of their own various [cultures]; 3. using moral evaluation as description of Indians.”

<sup>517</sup> John M. Coward, *The Newspaper Indian: Native American Identity in the Press, 1820-90* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999); Mary Ann Weston, *Native Americans in the News: Images of Indians in Twentieth Century Press* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996).

<sup>518</sup> Jeannette Henry, “The Indian Press: A Slow Development,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 5 (Winter 1968): 15.

stories and voices behind the numbers. The AIHS furnished the tribal membership of authors, subjects, and interviewees quoted. By doing so, the AIHS maintained tribal identities and recognized the diversity within Indian Country.

From its earliest publications, the AIHS focused on treaties, treaty rights, and challenging treaty violations as fundamental to addressing Indian issues. It published the complete text of the first treaty with the Delaware in 1778, and the last negotiated treaty between the United States government and the Nez Perce in 1868.<sup>519</sup> It recognized the 100 year anniversary of the 1868 Navajo treaty by printing the complete text. In addition, the Indian Historian Press dedicated the last book in *The Indian Reader* series to the topic of treaties. The AIHS decided that all printed treaties should include the names of the signatories, ensuring the memory of those who signed treaties with the United States. As a result of its commitment to publishing the truth about treaties, AIHS publications addressed access to historic justice and accuracy in any discussion on Indian rights.

The motivation in establishing a diverse series of publications resulted in a strong desire to document and offer testimony for Indian peoples. Henry-Costo described Indian peoples as “in a hurry” to preserve stories, traditions, and poetry. She declared, “We have no time to lose. We have to have a body of literature behind us. And so far the Indian’s been struggling for justice-litigation, legislation. We’ve been fighting for the

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<sup>519</sup> In addition, it published the complete text of the Navajo treaty in 1868. See “The First Treaty with the Indians,” and “The Last Treaty with the Indians,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 10 (December 1965): 13 & 17; “Navajo-U.S. Treaty of June 1, 1868 The Complete Text,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 2 (Spring 1968): 35.

mere elements of survival and we haven't got those."<sup>520</sup> She maintained the need and desire of Indian peoples to express their feelings through the written word.

AIHS publications stood out because of the varied ages of participants. Henry-Costo concluded, "We're a motley group. We include a number of real old-timers and quite a few young people."<sup>521</sup> Through its various publications, the organization sought audiences of every age. The AIHS held a particularly urgent desire to offer an alternative to mainstream media and its frequent role of protecting and insulating the federal government and American citizens from Indian peoples' calls for access to historic justice.

The various forms of publications distributed by the Society offered an opportunity for diverse publishing, from scholarly articles and current affairs to artistic poems and humorous comics. The AIHS issued a monthly mimeographed newsletter *The Indian Historian* in October 1964. For the next few years, the journal appeared on a regular basis, but adjusted its schedule to bi-monthly and eventually quarterly. Beginning in December 1967 (-December 1979) a new series of *The Indian Historian* journal emerged as a quarterly publication with a professional format measuring approximately eight and a half inches by eleven inches. Henry-Costo served as editor and the journal maintained its editorial policy of being "open to any opinion, if that opinion is responsible and the points raised are properly authenticated."<sup>522</sup> The AIHS maintained the journal as politically neutral and provided equal space for opposing opinions. By

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<sup>520</sup> Raphael Rothstein, "In the White Man's Tongue," *The New York Times*, August 9, 1970, 5.

<sup>521</sup> Kimmis Hendrick, "History Revised: American Indians Talk Back to White Man's Views," *The Christian Science Monitor*, October 9, 1968, 3.

<sup>522</sup> *The Indian Historian* vol. 1, no. 1 (December 1967): 4.

doing so, it encouraged the process of critical thought, as they declared “Let the people decide for themselves what is true and what is false, what is right and what is wrong.”<sup>523</sup>

In addition, the AIHS published one of the first national Indian newspapers with original content, *Wassaja*, beginning January 1973 (-October/November 1979). In March 1980, due to production costs, lack of grant availability, decreasing article submissions, and labor requirements, the AIHS combined *Wassaja* and *The Indian Historian* into a newsmagazine. *Wassaja* briefly reemerged as a stand alone newspaper from fall 1982 through summer 1983. Finally, the AIHS published a children’s magazine, *The Weewish Tree*, from November 1971 through December 1980. Hawaiian scholar Noenoe Silva summarized the significance of community-controlled publications by noting they represent “a site for the practice of freedom.”<sup>524</sup> AIHS publications granted the opportunity to contextualize and report on issues rarely seen and reported on by mainstream media. By not limiting the organization to one form of publication, the AIHS reached a broad audience and ensured that if one publication experienced delay or problems its other publications would continue the work. AIHS publications served as a site for practicing freedom by promoting the humanity of Indian peoples and encouraging critical thought.

The earliest system of communication in the form of Indian journalism and publishing began in 1828 with the tribal publication *Cherokee Phoenix*. The apex of Indian publications, however, occurred in the mid-late twentieth century. The 1970s

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<sup>523</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>524</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 201.

through the 1980s represented a dramatic shift in the publishing field for Indian peoples because of the sheer volume of publications, establishment of an American Indian press association, and the emergence of Indian owned publication presses.<sup>525</sup> During this time, periodicals such as newsletters, newspapers, journals, magazines, issued irregularly, weekly, biweekly, monthly, and quarterly spoke to Indian peoples' perspectives and gained a non-Indian audience.<sup>526</sup> The publications increasingly included a strengthened call for self-determination and cultural revitalization.<sup>527</sup>

Indian publications filling the role of advocate and educator during the 1960s and 1970s joined the myriad of publications from various ethnic communities.<sup>528</sup> However, Indian periodicals differed by offering periodicals targeted toward a tribal, multi-tribal, regional, specialty (such as lawyers), or national audiences.<sup>529</sup> A shift in tone and information resulted partly from the decline in government and "friends of the Indian" publications, and an increase in Indian peoples creating, writing, and distributing publications.

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<sup>525</sup> Daniel F. Littlefield, "The American Native Press and American Indian Studies," *Wicazo Sa Review* 2, no. 2 (Autumn 1986): 51-57.

<sup>526</sup> Daniel F. Littlefield, and James W. Parins, eds., *American Indian and Alaska Native Newspapers and Periodicals, 1925-1970* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1986) and Daniel F. Littlefield, and James W. Parins, eds., *American Indian and Alaska Native Newspapers and Periodicals, 1970-1985* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1986).

<sup>527</sup> Patty Loew, & Kelly Mella, "Black Ink and the New Red Power: Native American Newspapers and Tribal Sovereignty" *Journalism and Communication Monograph* 7, no. 3 (October 2005): 99-142; Susan M. Murphy, "Native Print Journalism in the United States: Dreams and Realities" *Anthropologica* 25 (1983) 23-30.

<sup>528</sup> Sharon Murphy, *Other Voices: Black, Chicano and American Indian Press* (Dayton: Pflaum/Standard, 1974).

<sup>529</sup> James E. Murphy, & Sharon M. Murphy, *Let my People Know: American Indian Journalism, 1828-1978* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981).

Costo previously experienced receiving an Indian directed publication with the California Indian Rights Association (CIRA) newsletter *California Indian News* published 1935-1942. Costo described feeling “glad to receive it” and noted, “It certainly must have started our people to thinking.”<sup>530</sup> Thomas Largo, Cahuilla and founder of CIRA, acknowledged it primarily served “to give our Indian people the truth about their situation and to understand their legislative problems with the idea of helping them to distinguish true facts from false propaganda, which caused no end of confusion among our people.”<sup>531</sup>

Indian publications enabled broad accessibility by appearing in English. AIHS publications appeared in English but in some examples used Indigenous words and phrases. Specifically, tribal and cultural stories utilized Indigenous languages. Costo also used the written format to reclaim his surname “Costakik” and published a series of articles entitled “Meeahwhah Nahish” and “The Cahuilla” in *The Indian Historian* under Costakik. Costo explained the Coyote clan of Mountain Cahuilla referred to itself as “Costakiktum” or “Costakik” but when non-Indians put the name into writing they shortened it to “Costo.”<sup>532</sup>

In some instances, the AIHS attempted to use Indigenous languages, but its broad audience required a common language. In California, many languages are moribund and acute concern about tribal languages resulted in a broad language revitalization

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<sup>530</sup> Rupert. Costo, “News From Our Delegate in Washington, Rupert Costo,” *California Indian News*, April 1935, 3.

<sup>531</sup> “To Let You Know the Truth,” *California Indian News*, July 1940, 3.

<sup>532</sup> “Mee ah Wha Nah-hish,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 1 (January 1965): 10.

movement.<sup>533</sup> Yaqui scholar Elizabeth Archuleta observed, “if we continue to perceive English as an enemy and writing as an activity that make us ‘less than Indian,’ then many will be left without a language or a position of power from which to speak.”<sup>534</sup> Thus, the use of English assisted in speaking out and becoming visible, both literally and politically. The editors of *Reinventing the Enemy’s Language*, Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird, further assert that, “to speak, at whatever the cost, is to become empowered rather than victimized by destruction.”<sup>535</sup> The AIHS recognized the concerns about languages and published several articles on the topic, but determined communicating in English provided a common language and an effective manner to speak out.<sup>536</sup>

The process and power of “writing back” provided Indians and their allies the opportunity to advocate for Indian issues. The AIHS made a choice to maintain independence and not seek or accept federal monies for any of its publications. Rather, it depended on paid subscriptions, donations, grants, and eventually advertisement revenue from its newspaper. The Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts provided some of the largest grants to the AIHS. In addition, the Indian Historian Press Inc. operated as a for-profit endeavor of the AIHS.

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<sup>533</sup> Leanne Hinton, *Flutes of Fire: Essays on California Indian Languages* (Berkeley: Heyday Press, 1994); Teresa L. McCarty and Lucille J. Watahomigie, “Indigenous Community-based Language Education in the USA,” in *Indigenous Community-Based Education*, ed. Stephen May (Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters, Ltd., 1999).

<sup>534</sup> Elizabeth Archuleta, “‘I Give You Back’: Indigenous Women Writing to Survive,” *Studies in American Indian Literature* 18 (2006): 90.

<sup>535</sup> Joy Harjo, and Gloria Bird, eds., *Reinventing the Enemy’s Language: Contemporary Native Women’s Writings of North America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 21.

<sup>536</sup> Kenneth Hale, “American Indians in Linguistics,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 2 (Summer 1969): 15; Roland Garrett, “The Notion of Language in Some Kiowa Folk Tales,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 5 no. 2 (Summer 1972): 32-37; Bertha Desiderio, “My Language: Navajo Dirty Word?” *The Indian Historian* vol. 6 no. 2 (Spring 1973): 43.



Through its publications the AIHS sought constructive mutual understanding. For Indian peoples, the majority population historically held the power of printed word. With the rise of community or tribally controlled periodicals, narratives, and histories shifted to include Indians perspectives and assisted in cultivating critical consciousness. The Costos celebrated and promoted Indian cultures as culturally distinct, remarking “He doesn’t forget. And this tugging at the soul, this urging of the spirit, makes it almost impossible to exterminate his independent mind, just as it was not possible to exterminate him as a human being.”<sup>537</sup> In addition, the publications gave authors and editors the opportunity to profess pride in their histories, traditions, and cultures. By furnishing the space to write their own histories, AIHS publications allowed the freedom to challenge directly the commonly held historical narrative. The AIHS created publications not to erase distinct tribal differences but to inform Indian communities and encourage Indian solidarity while promoting self-determination and communication of ideas.

The Society began its foray into the world of periodicals in October 1964 with *The Indian Historian*. The periodical reemerged as a professional journal with a new series in December of 1967. Costo recalled the first discussion about publishing, “We first talked about some type of publication at a coffeeshop near the corner of Van Ness and Market, 5 or 6 people.”<sup>538</sup> The AIHS viewed *The Indian Historian* as a “journal of history, information, and literature about the American Indian in the past and his situation

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<sup>537</sup> “A Statement of Policy: Indian Journal to Study History and Development of Native Races,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 1 (October 1964): 1.

<sup>538</sup> “The People Behind Wassaja,” *United Indian Development Association Reporter* vol. VII, no. 7, September 1977, 1.

today.”<sup>539</sup> For the first three years of publication, Costo used a fifty year old AB Dick Copier mimeograph machine that he operated by hand.<sup>540</sup> In an undated speech, Costo recalled the timely process of putting it together. He had the task of cranking the machine, Bertha Stewart spent hours at night helping put it together, and Henry-Costo served as editor.<sup>541</sup> AIHS members received a complimentary copy as part of their membership dues.

Initially, the list of subscribers included only the fifteen-member Board of Directors, but quickly rose through the years. In November 1965, Costo reported *The Indian Historian* had 324 paid subscribers including universities, libraries, and schools.<sup>542</sup> In part because of the increasing subscriptions, the AIHS determined it should develop a professional published journal.<sup>543</sup> Henry-Costo assumed leadership on researching and recommending a publishing company. Ultimately, the AIHS voted and selected San Francisco based Garrett Press out of four bids to publish the new series.<sup>544</sup> The last edition of the old series proudly noted that it had grown to nearly 1,000 subscribers. Working together as editors, the Costos described the journal as a child grown into an adult and proclaimed, “Step with us along the paths of truth, reverence, and homage to

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<sup>539</sup> “A Statement of Policy,” 1.

<sup>540</sup> “Indian Historian to be Issued in Printed Form,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 9 (November 1966): 8.

<sup>541</sup> Rupert Costo speech, n.d. to unknown audience filed with 1967 meeting minutes, reel 15, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>542</sup> Board of Directors Meeting, November 6, 1965, pg. 1, box 12, folder 10, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>543</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, July 27, 1966, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>544</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes July 15, 1967, box 12, folder 12, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

our Indian traditions.”<sup>545</sup> The December 1967 new series had an initial run of 5,000 and by February 1968 the journal had 1,543 paid subscribers.<sup>546</sup> The readership exponentially grew and by 1971 the subscription reached approximately 6,280 subscribers.<sup>547</sup>

The success of the journal led the AIHS to pass an organizational resolution outlining the general format. The AIHS sought a clearly understood format as it identified its journal “now exerts wide influence upon the Indian world and among scholars generally.” The criteria detailed the organization’s commitment to articles written by Indians concerning their own tribal history. They also focused on a minimum of one professional article in anthropology, archaeology, or other social sciences on the topic of history or critical analysis of legislation; a minimum of one story demonstrating Indian humor; a pledge to publish short stories or poetry whenever possible; a vow to deal with news objectively without editorializing but showing all sides; and determined regular segments would include: book reviews, the arts, questions and answers, and viewpoints.<sup>548</sup> By outlining the general format of its journal, the AIHS emphasized quality and consistency. It embedded a commitment and preference to publishing tribal histories from tribal members that needed to be heard. In part, this pledge ensured Indian voices would be consistently heard. The journal served as a powerful recruitment tool for

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<sup>545</sup> “The Child is Now an Adult,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 3 (Fall 1967): 2.

<sup>546</sup> Board of Director Meeting Minutes, February 24, 1968, box 12, folder 13, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>547</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, June 12, 1971, box 12, folder 22, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>548</sup> Resolution of the Corporate Members of the American Indian Historical Society, March 9, 1968, box 12, folder 13, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

the Society and an instrument for constructive conversations, as several college classes utilized it in coursework.

The original mimeographed journal developed a strong statement of policy. The inaugural October 1964 issue of *The Indian Historian*, declared it would be “published, edited, and directed entirely by American Indians.” The AIHS mentioned its targeted audience for the journal included the “true scholar of every race.” Further, the statement clarified it would report on Indian peoples’ issues “to serve them intellectually in any way needed.”<sup>549</sup> *The Indian Historian* had modest beginnings. However, its major distinction was that Indian peoples directed the complete process of the journal. In addition to assuming parts played in decision-making roles, Indians selected topics, wrote, and overall determined the vision of the journal.

From its foundation, *The Indian Historian* published works that addressed a myriad of topical issues and concerns. The early editions issued monthly highlighted legislation and other government actions affecting Indian peoples. In addition, social, political, artistic, and cultural articles appeared on a regular basis. The scholarly emphasis resulted in articles from the diverse fields of anthropology, archeology, history, literature, ethnobotany, and the arts. For some scholars, their first major publications occurred within the pages of *The Indian Historian*. Some of the early writings of Indian scholars such as Henry Azbill, Maidu; Vine Deloria Jr., Standing Rock Sioux; Adolph Dial, Lumbee; Edward Dozier, Santa Clara Pueblo; Jack Forbes, Powhatan/Lenape; Tim Giago Jr., Lakota; Donald Grinde Jr., Iroquois; Clara Sue Kidwell, Choctaw/ Chippewa; D’Arcy McNickle, Salish; Beatrice Medicine, Standing Rock Sioux; Jack Norton,

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<sup>549</sup> “A Statement of Policy,” 1.

Hupa/Cherokee; Alfonso Ortiz, San Juan Pueblo; Simon Ortiz, Acoma Pueblo; Morgan Otis, Southern Cheyenne/Arapaho/Kiowa; James Riding In, Pawnee; and Katherine Siva Saubel, Cahuilla appeared in *The Indian Historian*.

As the new series grew in its popularity, non-Indians increasingly submitted articles to *The Indian Historian*. Indeed, AIHS members privately lamented about the difficulty in obtaining articles written by Indian scholars. The concern grew to such intensity that the organization considered eliminating it but determined it served too great a service to Indian educators and scholars.<sup>550</sup> Some of the non-Indian scholars whose work appeared in the journal included Lowell Bean, George Castile, Laurence Hauptman, Alvin Josephy Jr., Nancy Oestreich Lurie, Calvin Martin, Mary Fleming Mathur, Theda Perdue, William Sturtevant, and Oswald Werner. Although *The Indian Historian* emphasized academic works, it also published student work. A special issue “Dreams and Drumbeats” of the journal was written and produced by Indian students from Stanford University.<sup>551</sup> In this manner, the AIHS assisted in furthering the journalism education of Indian students.

In addition to articles, the journal also included editorials, book reviews, and briefly offered a section for letters to the editor and questions. In announcing the section letters to the editors, the Costos declared that “nothing is more needed today than a complete and untrammled discussion.”<sup>552</sup> Thus, the AIHS promoted a dialogue between the readers and producers of the journal. Indeed, some of the early questions served as

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<sup>550</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, June 9, 1974, box 12, folder 25, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>551</sup> *The Indian Historian* vol. 9 no. 2 (Spring 1976).

<sup>552</sup> “Full Page Planned for Correspondence,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 3 (Fall 1967): 4.

basic education. Examples of early questions included inquiries on taxes, cannibalism, and concepts of land ownership.<sup>553</sup> “Viewpoints” and “Commentary” replaced letters to the editor and question sections in which short opinions from letters appeared anonymously if the author requested. Costo also utilized the “Commentary” section to issue editorials.

Costo served as the editor for book reviews and unlike many other journals *The Indian Historian* published reviews that included candid critical analysis. Individuals wrote the reviews but in some instances when an organizational discussion occurred, the author listing appeared either as unlisted or as “AIHS staff review.” For example, Costo wrote a review of Richard Lancaster’s *Piegan: A Look From Within at the Life, Times, and Legacy of an American Indian Tribe* published in 1966 by Doubleday & Company. Costo evaluated the book as a literary work, not a memoir or scholarly work. As a literary work, he describes it as poor that “drools and lisps and rants interminably about the author’s feelings and responses.”<sup>554</sup> In conclusion, Costo argued the book failed to make any significant contribution to an understanding of the Blackfeet Nation or Indian peoples.

Alongside Costo’s review appeared a commentary letter from Chairman Earl Old Person of the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council. In the letter, Old Person expressed support for Costo’s review and noted, “He [Richard Lancaster] has not been welcomed as usual and, in many cases, the people have expressed their dislike and their distrust of

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<sup>553</sup> “Questions and Answers,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 1 (December 1967): 33.

<sup>554</sup> Rupert Costo, “Books,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 1 (December 1967): 25.

him.”<sup>555</sup> Further, while he acknowledged Lancaster may have been “adopted” by James White Calf, he carefully points out that an adoptee does not have any authority to speak on behalf of the Blackfeet tribal community.

As a result of publishing the review and letter from the tribal Chairperson, the AIHS furnished a forum from which a book published from a large press faced scrutiny from Indian peoples. Rather than solely as a subject for mass consumption, a tribal member from the Blackfeet Nation had the opportunity to respond in a public forum. Costo’s review gained more exposure when Gordon Pouilot wrote a letter to the editor of *Montana* magazine published by the Montana Historical Society. In his letter, Pouilot complained of the positive *Piegan* review in *Montana* and quoted from Costo’s review to support his viewpoint.<sup>556</sup>

An additional example of dialogue and discussion exchange occurred with Oklahoma Cherokee Diana Bynum’s review of University of Minnesota’s Arthur Harkins and Richard Woods report *The Social Programs and Political Styles of Minneapolis Indians*. A senior undergraduate at San Francisco State College, Bynum originally wrote the piece for her class taught by Professor Bea Medicine. After summarizing the report and asking some insightful questions, Bynum offered a critical assessment, describing it as a “misrepresentation of both White and Indian” and considered it “narrow, ignorant, and prejudiced.” In her judgment, reports and studies on Indian peoples issued from universities and government agencies constantly appeared, but the value of them seemed doubtful. Finally, she posed a fundamental question challenging the purpose and

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<sup>555</sup> Ibid, 26.

<sup>556</sup> Gordon Pouilot, “Letters to the Editor: Piegan Book and our Review Evince Sharp Comment,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 18 (Autumn 1968): 78.

usefulness of the report by asking, “why is it [money] being spent in such a fruitless quest?”<sup>557</sup> The authors, Arthur Harkins and Richard Woods, sought to respond to her review and the AIHS supplied space for the authors.

In a section labeled “Discussion” appearing before Harkins and Woods’ response, the AIHS described the discussion as a “highly desirable reaction,” as dialogue needs to occur for understanding. Further, the segment noted that reaction by Indian peoples toward reports were “deeply felt but largely unspoken” until the appearance of Bynum’s review. The AIHS concluded that Indians concerned about the information and research distributed about Indians would “stand up and ‘talk back’ to both reporters and reports” with increased frequency and “greater and greater insistence.”<sup>558</sup>

In their response to the review, Harkins and Woods recommended serious readers refer to the original report to gauge their intent. The authors proclaimed Bynum’s review “erroneous and misleading” and a “genuine lack of comprehension may have occurred.”<sup>559</sup> The authors systematically refuted Bynum’s review and consistently reiterated that their purpose was to report on poverty and the style of public Indian spokespersonship they termed “New Urban Chiefs.”

The authors’ sentiments about their purpose illustrated a point raised by Bynum. The research completed by the authors fulfilled their goals, but the value of the research for Indian peoples was lacking. Further, by not incorporating any discussion with “New Urban Chiefs” but verifying their conclusions about them through uncited “close Indian

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<sup>557</sup> Diana Bynum, “A Question of Discredited Research,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 3 (Summer 1970) 62.

<sup>558</sup> “Discussion,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 1 (Spring 1971): 58.

<sup>559</sup> Arthur M. Harkins, and Richard M. Woods, “The Minneapolis Controversy: A Response to a Negative Review,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 1 (Spring 1971): 60.



associates,” the authors left room for challenging their methodology. Instead, the authors place the responsibility of incomplete research upon the “New Urban Chiefs.” The authors asserted they had not prevented the “New Urban Chiefs” from explaining their positions or conduct, and indeed if presented with a clear and concise statement they would publish it. However, the authors ignored their lack of inviting and including the subjects of research in their report assessment.

In his commentary section, Costo entered this discussion. He supported Bynum’s review and raised additional concerns. Costo acknowledged that some reports yielded useful data but many also contained misleading information. The problematic nature of misleading information concerned Costo because of the lasting impact of it, “Decisions are reached, policies are drawn from such conclusions. Legislation is introduced and passed.” Costo also believed the construction and dependence on an “Indian expert” guaranteed the process of keeping Indian peoples “in subjection intellectually, socially, and economically.” On behalf of the AIHS, Costo carefully asserted the organization worked with all scholars and did not support the belief that only Indian peoples could provide authentic scholarly works. Rather it supported the belief that without Indian “direction, objective and scholarly, the researcher is lost in a wilderness of cultural ignorance.”<sup>560</sup>

Costo questioned Harkins and Woods’ scholarly expertise and qualifications to describe the style of Indian public spokespersons. He proceeded to call for an end of more research by unqualified personnel, and instead argued that money for unnecessary research should be “directed to positive actions leading to the betterment of the Indian

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<sup>560</sup> Rupert Costo, “Commentary,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 1 (Spring 1971): 64.

people.” In the end, Costo concluded the existence of far more cases of unity among Indian peoples than Harkins and Woods identified through their report. The AIHS facilitated a dialogue between the authors and reviewer and through that dialogue, provided for evaluation of methodology and even space to question the purpose and intent of research.

In part, *the Indian Historian* as a parallel publication exposed its broadening audience to opinions that countered and responded to problematic and misleading information that appeared in mainstream publications. In 1967 *The Los Angeles Times* printed a story about Jeanne Weldon, a young woman participating in the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program, and the only member living and working on an Indian reservation in California. VISTA sent her to the Santa Rosa *rancheria*, home to the Tachi Yokut tribe, located roughly forty miles outside of Fresno, for eighteen months because it believed the reservation to be one of the poorest in the state. On her last day, Weldon gave an interview to *The Los Angeles Times*, in which she summarized her experience, “There are no leaders here at all. No one cares. Look around. The windows in the shacks they live in are knocked out. Garbage and junk everywhere. They just don’t care about anything.” The twenty-three year old from Cleveland, Ohio described the Tachi in negative terms. She alleged, “they drink and fight all the time....It’s a nasty situation.”<sup>561</sup> Indeed, *The Los Angeles Times* chose to focus its article on Weldon’s heroic efforts and her perception of the hopeless nature of her work.

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<sup>561</sup> Charles Hillinger, “Indians Refuse to be Helped but VISTA Girl Plugs Away,” *The Los Angeles Times*, February 15, 1967, A6.

Rather than demonstrate compassion or informed understanding, Weldon appeared judgmental and insensitive because of her cultural ignorance. One wonders if VISTA sent her to the Appalachians if her reaction to community poverty would earn such scorn. President Lyndon Johnson initiated his anti-poverty program after his public tour of “poverty pockets” in the Appalachians.<sup>562</sup> Indeed, President Johnson’s War of Poverty provided the funding for VISTA through the Office of Economic Opportunity. Weldon’s comments painted a picture of Indian peoples as lazy and dirty. The article noted the Tachi men’s high unemployment rate and the twenty four families living on the reservation as welfare recipients. While discussing Tachi children, Weldon commented about the high rates of illness, “Poor little kids. They’re sick all the time with dysentery, colds, and have TB.” She continued, “The children come to the class filthy dirty with lice in their hair.”<sup>563</sup> Weldon declared her greatest accomplishment to be convincing eleven young men and women to leave the reservation and enter into vocational training programs in Oakland, San Jose, and Los Angeles. For Weldon, the triumph of persuading some Tachi to leave the community she was sent to assist demonstrated that she afforded minimal consideration to the historical and institutional circumstances that led to poverty on the *rancheria*.

The decision by *The Los Angeles Times* to emphasize Weldon’s story rather than the Tachi inherently offered a lack of contextual analysis and instead stressed a common predetermined narrative of the drunk, lazy, dirty Indian. The article featured one quote attributed to an unnamed Tachi tribal member in which this individual agreed with

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<sup>562</sup> Ted Sell, “Johnson Asks Millions for Appalachian Aid,” *The Los Angeles Times*, April 26, 1964, 1.

<sup>563</sup> Hillinger, “Indians Refuse to be Helped but VISTA Girl Plugs Away,” A6.

Weldon's assessment, noting, "the problem with the Tachis is they don't want to cooperate, to try and get along, and make something of themselves." Denton Bedford, Delaware and an AIHS member, brought the article to the attention of members. The Society responded by sending letters to President Johnson, Sargent Shriver, head of the Office of Economic Opportunity, and VISTA.<sup>564</sup> The Society decided to print portions of its letter in *The Indian Historian*. Additionally, it printed the response received from William Crook, Director of VISTA.

By utilizing an open letter format, the AIHS demonstrated a model of letter writing for its readers. The model showed readers how to write letters of concern and illustrated that a letter could receive a positive response that could lead to change. In its letter, the AIHS called Weldon's comments a "hateful spectacle." The primary complaint of the AIHS centered on Weldon in her capacity as a VISTA worker giving the interview and "turning on those she is supposed to [help.] More than that-to understand."<sup>565</sup> However, the AIHS also stressed the difference between what Weldon completed and what the Tachi reservation needed. In its letter the Society noted, "They need toilets, but they get a social center! They need a roof over their heads, but they get a place in which to play games." The AIHS succinctly added, "What do the Tachi want? They want more than the VISTA girl has understood. They want justice."<sup>566</sup> In his response, VISTA director William Crook apologized. He called Weldon's comments "unfortunate" and

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<sup>564</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, April 1, 1967, box 12, folder 12, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>565</sup> "VISTA Girl Defames Indians of Tachi Reservation," *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 2 (May 1967): 27-28.

<sup>566</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

shared his decision to distribute copies of the article and letters to all training centers as an example of harm caused by “thoughtless communication.”<sup>567</sup> In conclusion, Crook expressed his gratitude to the AIHS for raising concerns because it presented VISTA a “valuable training tool through which we may seek to avoid other incidents of this kind.” By gaining the audience of VISTA through effective communication, the AIHS assisted in providing a teachable moment for those currently working or in the future would work within Indian communities.

A couple of years later, *The Indian Historian* published a letter it received from David and Trudy Brunt, VISTA volunteers and AIHS associate members. Assigned to Birney, Montana on the Northern Cheyenne reservation, the Brunts described the isolated community. The Brunts acknowledged the deplorable and poor economic conditions but they also shared some community requests, including the creation of a cooperative grocery store and gas station, which the couple pursued. In contrast to Weldon, the Brunts wanted to support the community and their needs. The couple described Birney as “a town in real need of programs which will provide recreation, education.”<sup>568</sup> In support of local artists, the Brunts inquired about the AIHS Museum of Indian Arts at Chautauqua House exhibiting Birney artists. Costo responded positively about hosting the artists and publicly called upon its members to support the Brunts’ work at Birney. By publishing the letter exchange, Costo demonstrated a positive approach by VISTA volunteers. Although he did not reference Weldon, regular readers of *The Indian Historian* most likely recalled the article in which her name appeared. Therefore, Costo

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<sup>567</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>568</sup> “Viewpoints: How About Birney, Montana?” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 3 (Fall 1969): 35.

published a cultural practice of imparting a lesson of readers hearing that which is left unsaid.

The AIHS also utilized its pages to focus on the popular culture of television and film. Kent Mackenzie served as director, writer, and producer of *The Exiles*, a 1961 documentary on relocated Indians in the Bunker Hill neighborhood of Los Angeles. The independent film received many accolades but in response to letters received, the Society issued an editorial response. It maintained the film distorted the experiences of many urban Indians and called it “an insult to Indians everywhere.” The Society believed the film failed “to reveal the nature of the relocation program, nor does it tell the truth about the Indians’ problem when on relocation.” In conclusion, the editorial asserted that Mackenzie’s film neglected to demonstrate the diversity of urban Indians’ experiences and that “many Indians have managed to win out-even on relocation, in spite of all the unfavorable conditions.”<sup>569</sup> In addition to responding to *The Exiles*, the AIHS also published several articles focused on popular culture.<sup>570</sup> For example, the organization spotlighted the recruitment of Indians from Southern California used as movie extras in the 1969 film “Tell Them Willie Boy is Here.”<sup>571</sup> The AIHS commitment to publications provided for dialogue on Indian issues within the wider public discourse and with more contextual understanding.

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<sup>569</sup> “The Exiles Draws Indian Critics’ Fire,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 4 (April 1966): 24.

<sup>570</sup> For examples see “Carol Burnett TV Show Degrades the American Indian,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 6 no. 2 (Spring 1973): 23; Gerald Wilkinson, “Colonialism Through the Media,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 7 no. 3 (Summer 1974): 29-32; Hedy Hartman, “A Brief Review of the Native American in American Cinema,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 9 no. 3 (Summer 1976): 27-29.

<sup>571</sup> “...And Now a Film: Indians on Location,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 5 (Winter 1968): 27.

In part, to facilitate understanding of Indian history and culture the AIHS decided to publish a youth magazine, *The Weewish Tree*, in 1971. The magazine contained stories, drawings, poetry, and recipes. The initial editorial board included Jeannette Henry-Costo, Linda Lomahaftewa, Joseph Senungetuk, and John K. White. In describing the name selection for the magazine, the editors defined it as a Cahuilla word for “acorn food.” They concluded, “we like the name we have chosen for this magazine. We like the sound of it, and we hope you do too.”<sup>572</sup> The organization printed 10,000 copies of the first edition and decided to limit subsequent printings to paid subscriptions.<sup>573</sup> By 1973 *The Weewish Tree* achieved broad popularity with a paid subscription over 8,500.<sup>574</sup> The following year *The Weewish Tree* had a paid subscription of 9,000 and was now “nearly self-supporting.”<sup>575</sup>

While written for a younger audience, *The Weewish Tree* maintained a similar structure to other AIHS publications. It included a section “The Weewish Dictionary” that listed unfamiliar words and provided definitions. The magazine included a section “Indians of Today” and “Indians of Yesterday” to introduce its readers to specific Indian people. The second edition introduced readers to Ida Lujan Issacs, Pueblo recording artist and co-owner of Indian House Records, and Ramona, Cahuilla, whose life inspired Helen

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<sup>572</sup> “The Mighty Oak,” *The Weewish Tree*, November 1971, 3.

<sup>573</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, November 15, 1971, pg. 2, box 12, folder 22, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>574</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, September 13, 1973, pg. 2, box 12, folder 24, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>575</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, June 9, 1974, box 12, folder 25, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

Hunt Jackson's book.<sup>576</sup> Another section featured "Questions and Answers," where the editors invited their young readers to write letters about Indian history and life. Through this open approach, the AIHS encouraged active participation of its young readers.

In the first edition, the editors wrote an open letter to parents and teachers, encouraging them to use *The Weewish Tree* as a group or family activity. They suggested, "These stories may be read aloud, as study exercises. Or, they may be read in the family or school group, as plain enjoyment." They continued "The student is encouraged to read to himself, because we believe this stimulates thought....And thought is what's needed today as never before. A revival of the family reading circle is certainly needed. Why not use this magazine for such a purpose!"<sup>577</sup> By encouraging group or family interest, the AIHS hoped to promote the educational prospects of all ages. Eventually, the IHP would publish a compilation of works from *The Weewish Tree* in book format titled *A Thousand Years of American Indian Storytelling*. In the introduction of the book, the Costos anticipated questions about truth or legitimacy of its stories. They asserted, "Are they true stories? Some are. Some are not. But in each of these stories, one can find a kernel of truth, a lesson to be learned, and the heartbeat of love for all things that live and breathe. If only one will listen."<sup>578</sup> *The Weewish Tree* never attempted to serve as a formal, scholarly endeavor, but instead focused on stories that might capture the interest of youths. The Costos explained that the tradition of storytelling imparted lessons about values. Further, by encouraging cultural

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<sup>576</sup> *The Weewish Tree*, January 1972, 21 and 22.

<sup>577</sup> "To the Parent, to the Teacher," *The Weewish Tree*, November 1971, 40.

<sup>578</sup> Jeannette Henry Costo, and Rupert Costo, eds., *A Thousand Years of American Indian Storytelling: A Weewish Tree Reader* (1981; reprint, San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1988), viii.



understanding, they taught the importance of listening and understanding instead of ridicule or degradation. For historical context, the AIHS turned to its other publications to promote cultural understanding.

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The AIHS presented historical context to local protests by its members that supplied more insight than trite stereotypes and terminology that generally accompanied mainstream articles on Indians. The occupation of Alcatraz Island in the Bay Area received major national media attention. However, the AIHS protest to protect an Ohlone cemetery located about one mile west of Mission San Jose on Washington Boulevard in present-day Fremont, located in the San Francisco East Bay, received limited local media attention. Indeed, Ohlone Philip Galvan viewed the occupation of Alcatraz with a sense of detachment and indifference as illustrated with his observation, “We are all working people. We can’t take time off to go demonstrating. We’re just happy we got the burial ground at last.”<sup>579</sup> The AIHS took steps to ensure its protection from becoming a partial paved expressway extension and unsuccessfully challenged the Jehovah’s Witnesses building a meeting hall and church adjacent to the burial grounds.

Stories about the Ohlones and California Indians in general rarely appeared in mainstream media. However, in 1958 a story in *The Oakland Tribune* on Mission San Jose with an unflattering description of the Ohlones surfaced. This article publication corresponded with the government policy of Indian relocation in the Bay Area, which potentially directed both non-Indians and out-of-state Indians to draw negative conclusions about Ohlones. The article described Ohlones as “squat dark-skinned people

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<sup>579</sup> Caroline Turner, “Ancient Ohlone Burial Bowl Returned,” *The Argus*, July 25, 1971, 3.

with low foreheads” and “no history and no outstanding skills.” Additionally, it declared Ohlones as “a race with no past and no future” when describing the encounter with the padres at mission San Jose.<sup>580</sup> A photograph of an Ohlone cemetery accompanied the article with a caption that referred to the “extinct Ohlone tribe.”

The indigenous homelands of the Ohlone encompass current-day San Francisco Bay Area. Ultimately the Society provided the historical context in its pages of *The Indian Historian* of the Ohlone tribal story and the call for protection of Indian burial grounds. In the 1964 debut of *The Indian Historian*, Miwuk John Porter explained the origin of the word Ohlone in relation to Miwuks, a tribal neighbor. The Miwuk word for West is O’lo’no wit and people from the West are called O’Lo’Ni.<sup>581</sup> Some of the writings on the Ohlones published by the AIHS came from Ohlone people, a tribal group repeatedly declared extinct by anthropologists and mainstream media outlets. However, one must carefully point out that while government officials, scholars, reporters and even some Indians judged Ohlones as extinct, the Ohlones never forgot their tribal identity.

For many Ohlones perhaps the greatest blow to their public recognition came from anthropologist A.L. Kroeber. In his influential 1925 *Handbook of California Indians*, he asserted, “The Costanoan [Ohlone] group is extinct so far as all practical purposes are concerned. A few scattered individuals survive, whose parents were attached to the missions of San Jose, San Juan Bautista, and San Carlos,” but he concluded, “they are of mixed tribal ancestry and live almost lost among other Indians or

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<sup>580</sup> Bill Strobel, “Indians who met Mission Padres Lost in Oblivion,” *The Oakland Tribune*, January 31, 1958, E25.

<sup>581</sup> “Ohlone People: Known Well,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 1 (October 1964): 11.

obscure Mexicans.”<sup>582</sup> In part, Kroeber’s assessment and opinion sentenced the Ohlone to an accepted myth of extinction for years.

During the early twentieth century, Ohlones had federal recognition. A unilateral move by Sacramento Agency Superintendent of Bureau of Indian Affairs Lafayette Dorrington removed the Verona Band of [Muwekma] Ohlone from a listing of eligible “landless” Indians in need of land in 1927.<sup>583</sup> As a result, Ohlones lost their federal recognition, eligibility for land, and subsequently have fought for federal re-recognition for years. The misinformed declaration of extinction by Kroeber led Indians and non-Indians alike to dismiss the Ohlones as a people long gone. The assessment placed a shadow over the discussion of the Ohlone burial grounds. As a result, the stories in *The Indian Historian* extinguished the myth of Ohlone extinction.

The protection of the Ohlone burial ground partly motivated the formal incorporation of the AIHS in 1964. At a preliminary meeting of the organization, Bertha Stewart and Sylvia Green moved and seconded an investigation of the Ohlone cemetery based on the findings report shared by Rupert Costo who learned about it through his employment with the state highway department. He described the cemetery as seriously

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<sup>582</sup> A.L. Kroeber, *Handbook of the Indians of California* (1925, reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1976), 464.

<sup>583</sup> For more on the federal recognition process of the Muwekma Ohlone see Les Field, Alan Leventhal, Dolores Sanchez, Rosemary Cambra, “A Contemporary Ohlone Tribal Revitalization Movement: A Perspective from the Muwekma Costanoan/Ohlone Indians of the San Francisco Bay Area,” *California History* 1, no. 3 (Fall 1992): 412-431; Renya K. Ramirez, *Native Hubs: Culture, Community, and Belonging in Silicon Valley and Beyond*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 102-125; Philip Laverty, “The Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation of Monterey, California: Dispossession, Federal Neglect, and the Bitter Irony of the Federal Acknowledgment Process,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 18, no. 2 (Autumn 2003): 41-77.

damaged and without any care from any individual or organization.<sup>584</sup> At the request of the AIHS, a joint meeting took place with the Washington Township Historical Society, a local history association including Fremont, Union City, and Newark. At this session, President George Coit noted his organization had determined the cemetery a historical landmark but did not have the funds necessary to care for it. While the city of Fremont wanted a right of way order to construct a street because of the clouded land title it was not possible. Costo communicated the Society's commitment to protecting the cemetery. He asserted, "We want no personal gain, and no profit of any kind in this matter. We want only to see that a hot dog stand is not placed upon the bones of our ancestors." Costo also shared that he had talked with the parish priest of Mission San Jose, whom he described as emphatically and almost angrily repeating "I don't want any part of that cemetery."<sup>585</sup>

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<sup>584</sup> Minutes of a preliminary organization meeting, July 14, 1964, box 12, folder 9, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>585</sup> Minutes of joint meeting of AIHS and Washington Township Historical Society, July 25, 1964, box 12, folder 9, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.



Figure 11 Ohlone arch at burial grounds. Note the stone monument installed by Mrs. Clorinda H. Stephens in the background in 1915. Image courtesy of Galvan family.

By August 1964, Costo's research illustrated that the Catholic Church owned the cemetery but had long neglected it. As a result, Costo proposed that the AIHS contact the Church and if cooperative and amiable, it should attempt to obtain the land title and care for the cemetery.<sup>586</sup> The next month the AIHS met with Catholic representatives, including Father Moran, head of Catholic cemeteries; Monsignor O'Neill, pastor at Mission San Jose, and attorney Richard Logan representing the Diocese of Oakland at the parish house at Mission San Jose in Fremont. AIHS members in attendance included the Costos, Nancy Landuk, John Porter, and Bertha Stewart. Logan inquired about the funds the AIHS had to provide care for the cemetery and questioned if assurances could be

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<sup>586</sup> Meeting Minutes August 21, 1964, pgs. 2-3, box 12, folder 9, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

promised for the continued care. Costo responded on the irony of the question as the Church had ownership for over 100 years but had not ever “lifted a single hand to pull a weed, or set up a [grave plot] marker.”<sup>587</sup> He further found the question offensive, as an estimated 4,000 baptized Catholic Indians buried there were “most responsible for the building of the mission and the original church” and cared for both throughout the years.

For Costo, even an all volunteer group would be an improvement compared to the neglect of the Church. Few markers existed to announce the cemetery. The only permanent marker at the cemetery had been added in 1915 by San Jose resident Mrs. Clorinda H. Stephens, who erected a masonry wall to protect the site from grazing cattle and artifact hunters. She also placed a small stone monument inscribed: “Here sleep four thousand of the Ohlone Tribe who helped the padres build this Mission San Jose de Guadalupe, sacred be their memory.”<sup>588</sup>

At the end of the meeting both groups agreed to appeal to the state to assume responsibility for the cemetery. The Church representatives agreed to relinquish the land title to the state. However, by November the AIHS received notification that California’s division of State Parks had no interest in gaining ownership of the burial grounds because too many were being discovered with excavations and accepting one might create an expectation that other burial grounds would fall under its jurisdiction.<sup>589</sup> As a result, the

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<sup>587</sup> Minutes of a joint meeting between representatives of the Catholic Church and the Executive Council of the AIHS, September 24, 1964, box 12, folder 9, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>588</sup> Larry Smith, “Indian Burial Ground: Neglected Site to Become Landmark,” *The Daily Review*, February 2, 1965, 13.

<sup>589</sup> Meeting Minutes, November 29, 1964, pg. 2, box 12, folder 9, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

AIHS decided to contact Bishop Floyd L. Begin of the Oakland Diocese and request the Church provide the AIHS with the land title to the burial grounds for proper care.<sup>590</sup>

The lengthy activities of the AIHS promoted dialogue about the respectful manner in caring for the Ohlone burial grounds, and the Society reported on its actions in *The Indian Historian*. The first story to appear in *The Indian Historian* appeared with a headline that read simply “Ohlone Burial Site Acquired by Indians.” The article reminded readers that Ohlones built and cared for Mission San Jose, giving reason to question and formed a musical orchestra that attracted visitors to listen to their music. By reiterating the role of Indians, the AIHS inserted Ohlones into local history, mission history, and California history. In part, the insertion of Ohlones into history challenged the Spanish fantasy and romanticized mission era.<sup>591</sup> Additionally, an unspoken commentary in the story included reflection about the concept of ownership. As the indigenous population in their historic homelands, the Ohlones built Mission San Jose, giving reason to question the concept of ownership of the lands, mission, and burial grounds. The story served to remind readers of the humanity of the Ohlone and their acumen for music.

Coit, President of the Washington Township Society, expressed delight about the land transfer. He asserted, “This is a wonderful bit of news. It shows what can be done when the people of all races get together in any joint endeavor.”<sup>592</sup> Costo noted the need for clearing and cleaning for restoration but indicated that when those tasks were

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<sup>590</sup> Ibid.

<sup>591</sup> John O. Pohlmann, “California’s Mission Myth,” PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1974, Print.

<sup>592</sup> “Ohlone Burial Site Acquired by Indians,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 1 (January 1965): 5.

completed a religious and civic ceremony to honor the event would occur. The Society envisioned extensive plans for the burial grounds including building an Indian museum, religious and cultural center, as well as a Chapel.<sup>593</sup> The AIHS hoped to establish an Ohlone Indian memorial park. In support of the park, the San Lorenzo Women's Garden Club donated one hundred dollars to purchase plants for the cemetery.<sup>594</sup>

The following month a local newspaper *The Daily Review* based in Hayward reported on the Ohlone burial grounds with comments from Costo and John Porter. While the informative headline read "Indian Burial Ground: Neglected Site to Become Landmark," the opening sentence presented Indians as a forgotten group. The first line read, "A dusty page in American history, Fremont's Ohlone Indian burial ground, is going to be swept clean..." The article included a brief historical synopsis and overview with information provided by Porter and Costo. Costo concluded the significance of the repatriation of the Ohlone burial ground because to his knowledge, this was the first time "any church has handed back to the original inhabitants of this country any land in which their people are buried"<sup>595</sup> The AIHS continued the discussion about the Ohlone burial grounds and published the quit-claim deed in which Bishop Floyd L. Begin of the Oakland Diocese transferred the deed to the AIHS.<sup>596</sup>

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<sup>593</sup> "Ohlone Memorial Plans," *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 2 (February 1965): 12.

<sup>594</sup> "Society to Develop Park From Indian Burial Site," *The Argus*, March 29, 1968, 2; "Ohlone Historic Site Nears Completion," *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 3 (Summer 1968): 26; Executive Council Meeting Minutes, January 4, 1967, box 12, folder 12, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>595</sup> Larry Smith, "Indian Burial Ground: Neglected Site to Become Landmark," *The Daily Review*, February 2, 1965, 13.

<sup>596</sup> "Quitclaim Deed," *The Indian Historian* vol. 2, no. 3 (March 1965): 18.



In April 1965, the AIHS coordinated a rededication of the Ohlone burial grounds and a celebration accepting it on behalf of all Indians. The celebration attracted an estimated one thousand people, blended cultural celebrations and included a eulogy to the Ohlones and Miwuks in the Miwuk language by Viola Fuller Wessell, Me-wuk and AIHS member; a peace pipe ceremony led by Adam Nordwall, Chippewa; a presentation of the Lord's Prayer and Psalm twenty-three by Lowell Spotted Elk in the Lakota language; and a consecration of the cemetery by Bishop Begin of the Oakland diocese with the assistance of six Indian altar boys from Pala reservation of southern California.<sup>597</sup>

The Society planned the event with great care yet local media, rather than report on the significance, focused on the colorful, inauthentic Indian attire. For example, the reporter for *The Oakland Tribune* described a bonnet made of plastic bristles rather than porcupine quills.<sup>598</sup> Similarly, *The Daily Review* included an apology from a pipe dancer Randall (Jim) Walmeo in attendance who contritely noted "I'm afraid I'm getting a bit commercial" as he pointed to his plastic beads, nylon shirt, and buzzard feather headpiece.<sup>599</sup> *The San Francisco Chronicle* carried a front page story about the event accompanied with a large picture of Bishop Floyd L. Begin dancing along with Indians in full powwow regalia. The story titled "Bishop's Big Pow-Wow" relegated the significant victory of Indians getting the Catholic Church to return burial grounds to a story about Bishop Begin. The author began his reporting by sharing about the opening of the dance

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<sup>597</sup> "The Program," *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 3 (March 1965): 5.

<sup>598</sup> Dodie Livingston, "Fremont Puffs Peace Pipe at Indian Cemetery Dedication," *The Oakland Tribune*, April 4, 1965, 30.

<sup>599</sup> Bob Lira, "Bishop Begin Officiates: Indians Whoop it up at Grave Site Ritual," *The Daily Review*, April 4, 1965, 6.

with Bishop Begin calling “Come, dear princess” to sixteen year old Marlene Chibitty, Comanche.<sup>600</sup>

The local media issued judgments about the perceived lack of authenticity and revealed the commonly held preconceived notion that “real” Indians had to remain static to fulfill non-Indians concepts of realness. By extension, the unstated conversation included an undercurrent belief that contemporary Indian held no land rights to claim violation as they were perceived as culturally inauthentic or not real Indians. As a result, the media attention focused on catchy titles and pictures while talking about the issue in the abstract rather than specifically reporting on the victory of Indians. The AIHS public commitment to protecting the burial ground attracted the attention and participation of surviving Ohlones living in the Bay Area.<sup>601</sup>

Within weeks of the cemetery rededication, the AIHS faced the prospect of Fremont approving the Paseo Padre Parkway, a portion of which would run across part of the cemetery. Ultimately, the AIHS emerged victorious in stopping the road from encroaching on the burial ground by lobbying for an alternative path for the road.<sup>602</sup> The Society protest benefited from the participation of father and son, Philip and P. Michael (known as Michael) Galvan, Ohlone, who became active AIHS members in 1965 and established an Ohlone group within the AIHS.<sup>603</sup> Philip Galvan worked for years as a

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<sup>600</sup> Jack Lind, “Bishop’s Big Pow-Wow,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, April 4, 1965, 1.

<sup>601</sup> “The Ohlones,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 8 (October 1965): 19.

<sup>602</sup> Larry Smith, “Fremont Freeway: Indians Rout Politicians,” *The Daily Review*, April 18 1965, 8; “Fremont Zoning Planners to Discuss Key Items,” *The Daily Review*, July 26, 1965, 12; “Parkway Battle Won by Indians,” *The Daily Review*, August 18, 1965, 19.

<sup>603</sup> “Indians Protest Fremont Planning,” *The Daily Review*, June 29, 1965, 17; “Indian Life Film Showing,” *The Daily Review*, August 20, 1965, 11. Philip Galvan formally resigned from the AIHS Board of Directors

grounds caretaker at the Sisters of the Holy Family convent in Fremont. As an AIHS member, he drew many of the illustrations that appeared in *The Indian Historian* including drawings that appeared on the journal cover.<sup>604</sup>

During the same time the AIHS engaged in stopping the road, Philip's mother, Dolores Galvan, Ohlone, publicly challenged the notion of Ohlone extinction in a local bay area newspaper *The Daily Review*. Galvan shared her life story and revealed that her four month old daughter Eva Alvarez had been one of the last people buried at the Ohlone cemetery in 1919 and that a fire had destroyed the wood grave markers.<sup>605</sup> By sharing her story in a local newspaper, Dolores Galvan, disputed earlier print stories claiming the demise of Ohlones and the depiction of them as less than human. Perhaps part of her motivation in speaking out included gaining support for Ohlones and the AIHS during its protest against the Paseo Padre Parkway. The Galvan family participation in the AIHS provided an opportunity to publicly challenge the image of extinction and the derogatory stereotypes of Ohlones and by extension California Indians in general.

The AIHS committed to care for and protect the Ohlone burial grounds. After acquiring the land title, the organization encountered difficulties with vandals. The city of Fremont also issued a use permit for Jehovah's Witnesses building next to the burial grounds. Local newspapers regularly termed AIHS protests and expressions of concern as going on the "warpath," a trite, dismissive word that evoked any disagreement as an

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in July 1970. See Executive Council Meeting Minutes July 11, 1970, pg. 2, box 12, folder 21, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>604</sup> "Artist," *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 8 (October 1966): 19.

<sup>605</sup> Larry Smith, "Fremont Tribe: Indian Woman Link to Past," *The Daily Review*, August 8, 1965, 3.

inherently hostile pursuit without merit. The AIHS experienced growing concerns about vandals at the Ohlone cemetery. At a December 1965 meeting Michael Galvan reported someone stole a metal sign installed at the cemetery.<sup>606</sup> Philip Galvan asserted, “We can’t do a thing unless we can be assured of protection against such heartless vandalism.”<sup>607</sup> Due to the lack of support by local authorities, within a year the AIHS decided to enclose the burial grounds with steel fencing materials for \$1,200.<sup>608</sup>

The AIHS unsuccessfully organized a challenge to the Jehovah’s Witnesses building next to the Ohlone burial grounds. Indeed, it received a \$500 donation from local philanthropist and conservationist Olive Hyde to purchase the land from the Jehovah’s Witnesses.<sup>609</sup> The organization argued that the land was part of the original Ohlone burial grounds and that the city violated an ordinance that at minimum a one acre lot be provided for use permits.<sup>610</sup> Despite the legitimate concerns of the AIHS, local media minimized the concerns by inserting poor attempts at facetious humor. An article in *The Oakland Tribune* opened with a description of a Fremont city council meeting. The reporter remarked “Recently City Councilman Dr. Hugh Block quipped during a

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<sup>606</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, December 10, 1965, box 12, folder 10, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>607</sup> “Cemetery Vandals Draw Fire,” *The Daily Review*, December 23, 1965, 16.

<sup>608</sup> Report to Board of Directors October 1966, pg. 2, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>609</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, June 25, 1966, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>610</sup> “Indians to Press Cemetery Battle,” *The Argus*, July 29, 1966, 1; Jim Wilson, “In Burial Battle: Ministers Urged to Back Indians,” *The Argus*, July 30, 1966, 1; “Graveyard: Indians on ‘Warpath’ in Fremont,” *The Oakland Tribune*, August 17, 1966, 17; Bob Lira, “Indian Society Challenges Church Title Claim,” *The Daily Review*, August 31, 1966, 4; Bob Lira, “Jehovah’s, Society at Odds,” *The Argus*, September 21, 1966, 1 & 8.

recess of the meeting ‘ffffttt! I just got an Indian arrow in the back.’ He grimaced in pantomime, laughed, and returned to work.”<sup>611</sup> Such reporting trivialized the legitimate concerns of the AIHS.

While the AIHS unsuccessfully protested the Jehovah’s Witnesses, it continued to inform readers and the public about Ohlones with help from Galvan family members. The AIHS collected information in its Indian Archives to challenge the Ohlone extinction. It received records from Bishop Begin containing the names of Ohlones buried at and near Mission San Jose. The Society learned of more than one hundred Ohlone descendents in the Bay Area. The AIHS published a summary of its findings and its Indian Archives. According to the report, Ohlones “know where their grandfathers and uncles and brothers and sisters are buried at Ohlone....they are certainly not extinct.”<sup>612</sup> The Society planned “living lectures” on Ohlone life and culture during summer 1967.<sup>613</sup> Also during the summer, the AIHS invited the public to the Ohlone burial grounds for Memorial Day candle lighting rites. Young members of the Galvan family, Michael, Andy, and Eleanor, led the candlelighting of their ancestors’ resting place.<sup>614</sup> Seventeen year old Michael Galvan participated in textbook reviews in which he objected to the lack of Indian representation, and wrote an article entitled “People of the

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<sup>611</sup> Bob Carr, “Indians Promise to Fight,” *The Oakland Tribune*, August 18, 1966, 16.

<sup>612</sup> “A Report: The Indian Archives,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 5 (May/June 1965): 20.

<sup>613</sup> General Program of Activities 1967 adopted by Executive Council, December 10, 1966, pg. 2, box 12, folder 11, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>614</sup> “Indians in Memorial Day Candle Lighting Rites,” *The Oakland Tribune*, May 28, 1967, 20.

West”: The Ohlone Story,” in which he furnished general educational information on the broad historical presence and survival of Ohlones.<sup>615</sup>

The AIHS determinedly sought the return of Ohlone burial grounds land title to Ohlones, in keeping with its policy of supporting the return of land to indigenous owners. A condition for the transfer included the establishment of a non-profit incorporation under the name Ohlone Indian Tribe Inc. that would perpetually care for the burial grounds, which Philip Galvan successfully established in 1971. Speaking on the land transfer, Costo noted, “we are not in the cemetery business” and expressed that the AIHS always wanted the land to belong to the rightful descendents.<sup>616</sup> The AIHS sent a resolution to Philip Galvan, Secretary of the newly established Ohlone Indian tribe Inc., along with the pen that AIHS members used signing the resolution. The AIHS celebrated the land transfer by printing the resolution in *The Indian Historian*.<sup>617</sup> Henry-Costo recalled there had been early discussions on establishing the cemetery as a historical site “but we did not want it open to the public, a gravesite isn’t a park but sacred ground.”<sup>618</sup>

As a federally unrecognized tribe, the Ohlone had neither the legal right nor access for a reservation or *rancheria* lands, which made the land transfer a significant event as it was the only Ohlone owned land which included an ancestral burial ground.

Philip Galvan described his sentiments when speaking about cultural artifacts and the

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<sup>615</sup> Michael P. Galvan, “People of the West”: The Ohlone Story,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 1 no. 2 (Spring 1968): 9-13.

<sup>616</sup> Board of Director Meeting Minutes, June 12, 1971, pg. 10, box 12, folder 22, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>617</sup> “The Ohlone Story,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 2 (Summer 1971): 42.

<sup>618</sup> Ruud Van Der Veer, “Ohlone Tribe Inc. Gets Cemetery,” *The Oakland Tribune*, July 8, 1971, 1.

burial ground, “It’s ours and that’s all we have.”<sup>619</sup> The AIHS and Ohlone members remained committed to protesting intrusions upon Indian burial grounds.<sup>620</sup> In addition, Ohlone Indian tribe Inc. utilized the Ohlone cemetery to intern Ohlone remains discovered when new construction unearthed them in the Bay Area.<sup>621</sup>

However, Costo purposefully pointed out the need to recognize tribal sovereignty among Indian tribes in regard to individuals entering into action “on behalf” of any tribe without the tribe’s knowledge or agreement. Specifically, Costo publicly chastised American Indian Movement (AIM) co-founder Dennis Banks, Ojibwa, for prematurely taking up the issue of Indian remains and artifacts found in San Jose at a Holiday Inn garage construction site “on behalf” of Ohlones without their knowledge. Philip Galvan remarked on the lack of consultation from Banks with Ohlones. He noted, “Banks nor any other Indian speaks for the Ohlone Indians.” Costo expressed full support for Galvan and the Ohlones. The Ohlones, according to Costo, had previously consulted with builders and worked to re-intern their ancestral remains. Costo recognized the difficulty when Indians from various tribes moved into a city and with good intentions often intruded upon issues concerning local indigenous tribes. He noted that Banks demanded the builders cease construction, and urged a boycott of the hotel chain, leading Costo to proclaim “That’s not his business....This is not a question of fancy-stepping protocol. It is tribal sovereignty.” Thus Banks had no right to speak for the Ohlones or to take action

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<sup>619</sup> Caroline Turner, “Ancient Ohlone Burial Bowl Returned,” *The Argus*, July 25, 1971, 3.

<sup>620</sup> “Old Indian Bones Uncovered at Apartment Complex Site,” *The Oakland Tribune*, July 6, 1972, 34F; “Burial Ground: Building Site Taken Over in Indian Protest,” *The Los Angeles Times*, March 20, 1975, 3.

<sup>621</sup> “Bones Unearthed: Ohlone Indian Remains to get a Reburial,” *The Daily Review*, July 13, 1972, B1.

without their informed broad consent. Costo who acknowledged supporting Banks' earlier causes, concluded Banks needed to "back off" with interjecting himself.<sup>622</sup>

Eventually, California passed legislation establishing the Native American Heritage Commission and charged it with mediating between Indians and non-Indians, and being responsible to work towards identifying and cataloging sites of cultural historical significance.<sup>623</sup> During the late 1980s, Ohlone members found themselves in the center of a debate within Indian, anthropology, and museum circles. They worked towards an agreement in which Stanford University became the first major university to repatriate the skeletal remains of over 500 Ohlones for reburial.<sup>624</sup>

Working in support of the Ohlones, the AIHS supported the recommendation for the name for the new Fremont-Newark community college to be Ohlone College in 1967. Wilma Prewitt, an associate member of the AIHS, officially submitted the first name recommendation prior to the trustees even developing name-adoption procedures.<sup>625</sup> Philip Galvan appeared before the College Board of Trustees to represent Ohlones and the AIHS. He noted, "Whether you choose this name or not, we will always be willing to help the teachers and particularly this college."<sup>626</sup> His statement fully illustrated the AIHS commitment to education with particular willingness to work collectively towards

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<sup>622</sup> Rupert Costo, "Speaking Freely: Tribal Sovereignty," *Wassaja*, February 1977, 2.

<sup>623</sup> John Hurst, "Final Ignominy to U.S. Indians: Grave Robbing," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 21, 1977, 1.

<sup>624</sup> Jane Gross, "Stanford Agrees to Return Ancient Bones to Indians," *The New York Times*, June 24, 1989, 1; Jay Matthews, "University to Return Ancestral Bones to Tribe," *The Washington Post*, June 23, 1989, A4.

<sup>625</sup> "Ohlone, Indian's Tribes Name, Urged for Junior College," *The Argus*, June 1, 1967, 1.

<sup>626</sup> "New College is Named Ohlone," *The Indian Historian* vol. 4 no. 3 (Fall 1967): 12.



informing both educators and students through various methods. Galvan embraced his role as teacher and expressed his feelings about the continued inaccurate reporting on Ohlones. Eventually he ceased speaking with local mainstream newspapers. The Society supported his decision, and in a show of alliance refused to speak with local Bay Area newspaper *The Argus*.<sup>627</sup>

Out of a desire to inform and provide news to Indians the AIHS turned to developing its own national newspaper. Misrepresentation and misinterpretation on Indian events and priorities within mainstream media demonstrated a need for Indian perspectives. Many of the stories in mainstream media did not fully cover the reasons for Indian concerns and protests. As a result, many people received information without context and therefore limited readers' understanding. Therefore, the AIHS developed *Wassaja* as homage to Carlos Montezuma, a lesson in Indian history itself, and continued the work of letting people know.

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<sup>627</sup> Pachter, John. "Mistrust Halts Telling of Ohlone Story," *The Argus*, June 27, 1975, 2.

## CHAPTER 7

### “COMMUNICATIONS IS THE DESPERATE NEED AMONG INDIANS”: WASSAJA

During the 1960s and 1970s, three major Indian newspapers began. *Indian Voices* was published sporadically from 1963 to 1968. It received financial support from the University of Chicago. Members of the Iroquois Confederacy, also known as Haudenosaunee or Six Nations, established *Akwesasne Notes* in 1968. It became a national newspaper, primarily reprinting newsclippings. In 1973, the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or “the Society”) created its own newspaper, *Wassaja*. It promoted Indian self-determination through original articles.

Rupert Costo, Cahuilla and president of the AIHS, pondered for years the possibility of such a newspaper. He disapproved of the practice of *Akwesasne Notes* of copying articles from all over the country without giving any credit. Some of these articles contained misinformation, which subsequently promoted misunderstandings. *Wassaja* also encountered mainstream media coverage whose narratives tended to categorize Indians as marginal and their issues as trivial, ineffective, or without cause. Costo commented the idea of a national newspaper developed out of his observation that no newspaper delivered “Indian news to the Indian people directly.”<sup>628</sup>

In contrast to mainstream publications, *Wassaja* displayed the hopefulness for successful protests and considered Indian concerns and disputes as purposeful because it viewed them through the lens of historical contextualization. By providing a rich contextualization of the social, racial, economic, and political complexity of issues, *Wassaja* presented a more complete picture of events and countered mainstream media

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<sup>628</sup> Janice-Faye Leach, “Promoting Self-Determination Through a National Indian Newspaper: Wassaja: a Case Study” MA Thesis. California State University, Fullerton, 1974, 89. Print.

with its skewed reporting and stereotypical language. As a parallel news source *Wassaja* challenged mainstream publications that tended to defend and distract from the issues Indians raised.

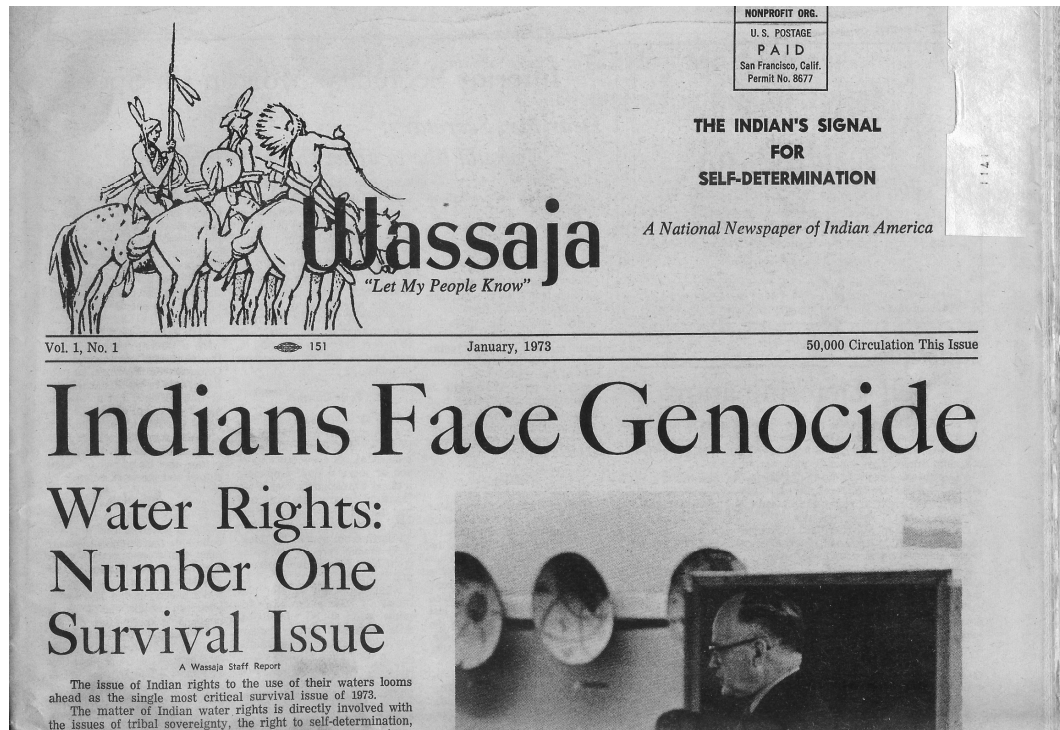


Figure 12 inaugural edition of *Wassaja* above fold. Note the masthead image and headline. Image courtesy of author.

Costo insisted that *Wassaja* hold self-determination as its guiding philosophy. In the leading editorial of the inaugural issue, Costo identified self-determination as “the one strategic need of our people” and noted that all areas of concern for Indian communities derived from it. Self-determination meant an end to bureaucratic control and Indians making their own decisions and mistakes. He regarded sharing accurate news information as a supportive tenet in supporting Indian self-determination. Costo shared the story of Chautauqua House, the formal AIHS headquarters, receiving over fifty copies

of an identical editorial concerning “Indian Oratory” sent in by family and friends across the country. Costo summarized the editorial as lamenting the lack of one passionate and eloquent Indian to speak for all Indians. The editorial outraged him and he viewed its broad dissemination as problematic. Costo responded, “What is it with these white people, they simply refuse to understand us! There are so many eloquent Indian voices that one can only say: The gift is rich indeed. What do these people listen to, that they can’t hear the Voice of the Indian today.” He added, “The trouble is that we get [sic] dam little coverage in the mass media—coverage of our best people, our most eloquent people, the men and women who truly have something to say and say it well.”<sup>629</sup> Costo disapproved of mainstream newspapers because he found the information on Indian affairs “meager, and largely inaccurate,” and felt a particularly strong need to provide correct information since legislation, policies, and general public support or opposition to legislation on Indian affairs depended largely on available printed reporting.<sup>630</sup>

The Society recognized that Indians needed to be informed about legislation, litigation, programs, educational and economic opportunities and the successes and failures in Indian affairs on an individual, tribal, and urban level. While Costo considered *Wassaja* primarily an Indian newspaper, from previous lobbying efforts, he recognized and understood the benefit of building alliances among diverse tribal groups and non-Indians. Alliances based on respect rather than pity or charity assists Indians because an informed non-Indian speaking about Indian self-determination had the potential to provide broader discussions in non-Indian communities. Further, by

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<sup>629</sup> Rupert Costo, “Speaking Freely,” *Wassaja*, February/March 1973, 3.

<sup>630</sup> Rupert Costo, “Editorials: Self-Determination,” *Wassaja*, January 1973, 2.

promoting understanding of tribal issues in one part of a state, region, or country provided a model for other tribes and an opportunity to offer multiracial support.

Communications remained central to the purpose of the newspaper. Costo relayed the importance of bringing information to Indian communities because previously mostly gossip or the grapevine informed people as mainstream publications infrequently reported on government policies, general events, or relevant new stories to local Indian communities. He supported publications such as *Wassaja* because, “It is impossible for any people to make wise decisions unless they have all the facts at their disposal.” Ultimately, he concluded, “People talking to people; people listening (and hearing) people; and people determined to get the news out to others-this is what’s so necessary now, as never before.”<sup>631</sup> Costo’s wife, Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee, brought significant journalistic experience and played a key role in the newspaper, eventually serving as editor. In discussing the establishment of its newspaper, Henry-Costo remarked, “communications is the desperate need among Indians.”<sup>632</sup> The Costos committed to a journalistic endeavor to maintain a level of journalistic integrity and accuracy.

The AIHS received letters that revealed varying public responses to *Wassaja*. Tim Breasher, from Des Moines, Iowa complained the newspaper held a “blah position on many things” and suggested it become more “militant” in its reporting. In contrast, Arnie Stepford, from Newark, New Jersey decried the newspaper as “pretty militant” and urged the newspaper to be more “conservative.” Jud Chalmers, from Chicago, Illinois,

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<sup>631</sup> Rupert Costo, “Editorials: One Axe to Grind,” *Wassaja*, May 1975, 2.

<sup>632</sup> Wallace Turner, “Paper for Indians Issued on Coast,” *The New York Times*, February 15, 1973, 11.

objected to the name *Wassaja* and even suggested a name change because, “We don’t know how to pronounce that name, and we don’t know what it means either.”<sup>633</sup> Another reader, Jackson Deere of Kansas City, Kansas complained, “Everything is so serious” in the newspaper with its focus on laws and policies. Ultimately, he suggested a “lighter touch.”<sup>634</sup> Despite the varying criticisms representing a spectrum of opinions, *Wassaja* maintained its journalistic integrity with an emphasis on accurate news reporting, although it eventually incorporated satirical political cartoons. For the Costos, the newspaper represented a mode of communicating broadly within Indian country to reservation and urban Indian residents, given limited finances and distant signals for televisions or radios. As many mainstream newspapers neglected to provide in-depth reporting on Indian affairs, Indian newspapers regularly served as a principal mode of communication.

Costo valued tribalism and expressed a preference that tribal groups publish their own newsletters and Indian organizations communicate its information and decisions in a transparent manner through regular publications. He called for Indian support of *Wassaja*. Costo asked, “How can we influence public opinion without such a means of communication? How can we let government know what the situation really is all over Indian country? How can we even influence the mass media, who look down their noses at us, unless we have a newspaper that ‘leaves tracks?’”<sup>635</sup> Costo understood the significance of a newspaper issued on a regular schedule and its powerful impact as a

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<sup>633</sup> “Voice of the Indian: Too Blah, The Name, Too Militant,” *Wassaja*, May 1977, 4.

<sup>634</sup> “Voice of the Indian: Fun Please,” *Wassaja*, March 1978, 18.

<sup>635</sup> Rupert Costo, “Communications?” *Wassaja*, June 1976, 18.

communications tool. Indeed, he expressed a desire to eventually publish the newspaper on a weekly or daily basis because he felt the amount of new stories warranted such a publishing schedule.

As an organization, the AIHS wanted to ensure accessibility and affordability of its newspaper. The organization understood the role *Wassaja* represented in developing a community network. In describing *Wassaja*, Henry-Costo asserted, “our newspaper will be a force in welding Indians together.”<sup>636</sup> In support of that vision, the AIHS subsidized subscription costs for its newspaper with two tier pricing: ten dollars annually or five dollars annually for Indians who could not afford more.<sup>637</sup> Eventually, it also subsidized student subscriptions charging two dollars and fifty cents, eventually increased to three dollars, for a yearly subscription. In addition, at brief intervals the AIHS offered its newspaper free of charge or in an exchange program to reservations and organizations throughout the United States. The AIHS also offered bulk sales of annual subscriptions in bundles of five for \$15; ten for \$25; and twenty for \$30 a year.<sup>638</sup>

Similar to other AIHS’ publications, it is not possible to quantify total readership of *Wassaja* since subscription numbers do not reflect all readers. For example, faculty members at colleges requested copies for use in their classes and to distribute on campus. Historian Ken Owens, California State University, Sacramento, wrote in offering his congratulations on the newspaper and asked for thirty additional copies of subsequent issues because he concluded, “They will prove, I am certain, a valuable aid to our

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<sup>636</sup> Carrick Leavitt, “Newspaper for Indians Flourishes,” *The Washington Post*, May 27, 1973, F15.

<sup>637</sup> *Wassaja*, March/April 1974, 20.

<sup>638</sup> *Wassaja*, June 1974, 8.

teaching efforts on this campus.”<sup>639</sup> Chairperson of the newly established Native American Studies (NAS) at California State University, San Francisco, Donald Patterson, declared the newspaper “long overdue” and shared that the NAS faculty used copies of it in their classrooms “to further inform our students of the contemporary problems and movements of our Peoples.”<sup>640</sup> The newspaper also served as a practical tool in college class discussions. A reader from Anchorage, Alaska, Adam John, shared that he led several college discussions on the occupation of Wounded Knee and found *Wassaja* “invaluable” in assisting his discussion.<sup>641</sup>

Passed along to family members, tribal members, friends, students, or handed out from Indian owned businesses and urban centers, copies of *Wassaja* exchanged hands. Max Mazetti, Luiseño, wrote to the AIHS newspaper and described how the Broken Arrow Cafe on the Rincon reservation in southern California, distributed copies of the newspaper. He shared a story of someone who forgot their copy and drove twenty two miles back to the cafe to retrieve it.<sup>642</sup> A letter from disgruntled subscriber Joseph Bear, from Michigan, illustrates the practice of sharing and passing it along. He wrote to *Wassaja* complaining about the tardiness of his subscription. Explaining that he passed around his copy to “maybe 25 people until it’s all torn up by the time it gets back to me if it ever gets back to me” and he wanted to ensure a guaranteed arrival time for his

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<sup>639</sup> “Voice of the Indian,” *Wassaja*, February/March 1973, 2.

<sup>640</sup> “Voice of the Indian: Long Overdue,” *Wassaja*, June 1973, 2.

<sup>641</sup> “Voice of the Indian: Communication Needed,” *Wassaja*, June 1973, 2.

<sup>642</sup> “Voice of the Indian: 22 Miles for Wassaja,” *Wassaja*, April/May 1973, 2.



subscription.<sup>643</sup> Gluxu Taat Ploeu, Leni/Lenape, wrote to the newspaper expressing her delight in finally deciding to subscribe to it “rather than having to scrounge second hand copies” of the newspaper.<sup>644</sup> The lengths people traveled for their copies of *Wassaja* demonstrate a strong interest in the publication, a commitment to reading it, and perhaps the intention to pass it along.

In 1977 the AIHS discussed a unique predicament. The newspaper had gained more readers, yet lacked paid subscriptions. It contemplated decreasing circulation with the understanding that the paper circulated by hand and “one subscription could serve as many as ten readers.”<sup>645</sup> The AIHS openly encouraged sharing and printed a banner that read, “When you have finished reading *Wassaja*, won’t you pass it along to a friend, a relative!”<sup>646</sup> Perhaps the AIHS hoped greater exposure would increase subscriptions, but more likely it wanted to inform readers whether or not they paid a subscription fee.

From its first issue, *Wassaja* had a professional format. Measuring approximately eleven by seventeen inches, the newspaper appeared in black ink and with red ink periodically in the masthead or headlines. The AIHS selected an image of three Cheyenne men adorned with feathers and mounted on horses as its official image that appeared on the masthead of *Wassaja* and on its official organizational letterhead. Some may consider the picture selection as an internalization of non-Indian stereotype of

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<sup>643</sup> “Voice of the Indian: Waiting for *Wassaja*,” *Wassaja*, March 1978, 18.

<sup>644</sup> “Leni-Lenape,” *Wassaja*, October/November 1974, 25.

<sup>645</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, January 29, 1977, box 12, folder 27, Rupert and Jeannette Costo papers, Collection 170. University of California, Riverside Libraries, Special Collections & Archives, University of California, Riverside.

<sup>646</sup> “Voice of the Indian,” *Wassaja*, August 1975, 8.

“Plains” Indians. However, the image publicly and unmistakably identified it as an Indian production.

Costo may have been influenced by memories of the California Indian Rights Association (CIRA) newsletter *California Indian News* with its permanent cover art by Sherman Institute student Elmer Curlie [Curley], Navajo.<sup>647</sup> Its cover design included three Indian women wearing skirts, feathers in their hair, and surrounded by arrows. In an editorial that introduced the Cheyenne image, most likely written by the Costos, it described the peaceful nature of California Indians, yet carefully pointed out, “But peace does not mean servility.” The editorial continued with admiration, noting “Cheyenne Indian people, like those pictured below, made a stand against all others, because they had to.”<sup>648</sup> Thus, the image conveyed standing against those who would deny the humanity of Indians or sought to destroy Indian cultures.

Unlike other Indian newspapers, *Wassaja* had no direct ties to any academic institution or a specific tribal Nation. It began as a national newspaper issued on a monthly basis except December, though in its later years it would be issued bi-monthly. The newspaper maintained a national audience. Costo committed the majority of reporting target tribal issues on reservations because as he commented, “that’s where Indian life is.”<sup>649</sup> He emphasized that reservations remained the primary focus because the majority of Indians living in cities were tribal people and had the same rights off reservations. As a result, articles regularly appeared on reservation economies and

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<sup>647</sup> “Our Cover Page Design,” *California Indian News*, April 1935, 1.

<sup>648</sup> “Out of the Past,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 3 (March 1965): 2.

<sup>649</sup> Janice-Faye Leach, “Promoting Self-Determination Through a National Indian Newspaper: *Wassaja*: a Case Study,” 91.

development, water and fishing rights, litigation, legislation, and treaty rights. The articles informed readers and also demonstrated that the government was not giving Indians anything. As Costo explained, “They’re actually paying for what they haven’t paid for many years.”<sup>650</sup>

Similar to *The Indian Historian*, the AIHS remained committed to its policy of not providing opinion. Instead, Costo asserted, “If we do give an opinion, it’s an opinion on both sides, thereby enabling the reader to make his own conclusions as to which is right and which is wrong.”<sup>651</sup> Through such a practice, the newspaper encouraged critical thinking by its readers. The first issue of *Wassaja* welcomed discussion and disagreement, proclaiming, “There pages are wide open for the Native American, and for all others who wish to discuss or comment on Indian affairs, or to bring us news, to complain, defend, attack , as well as to offer suggestions.”<sup>652</sup> Some articles framed a story in a manner that revealed an opinion from the reporters or editors.

Eventually, the editors announced that articles listing a byline could contain the writer’s opinion, which did not necessarily represent the opinion of the organization. As a result, the reporter’s insertion of interpretation or definition potentially limited reader’s opportunity to form their own conclusions. As the leading editors, the Costos had the power to decide what stories appeared, resulting in some Indian news stories appearing in mainstream publications but not in *Wassaja*. For example, Bay Area resident Adam Nordwall (Fortunate Eagle) traveled to Italy and claimed it by right of discovery in

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<sup>650</sup> Ibid, 94.

<sup>651</sup> Ibid, 106.

<sup>652</sup> “Editorials: The Right to Know,” *Wassaja*, January 1973, 2.

1973.<sup>653</sup> Despite the story appearing in several mainstream newspapers, *Wassaja* never published an article on his actions.

To offer his opinion, Costo regularly wrote an editorial column, “Speaking Freely,” in which he discussed his thoughts, opinions, and reflections. In his first column, Costo gleefully described it as a “gift” from the *Wassaja* editorial board. He declared, “Here, in this corner, I am supposed to say exactly what I think—no holds barred. I suppose this was done because I have, at the over-mature age of 66, the right to say what I please. I’ve done it all my life anyhow. It’s too late to change. So let the chips fly.”<sup>654</sup> Costo described himself as “just an old country boy who doesn’t know about keeping his mouth shut.” In addition, he noted his earlier life experiences explained his desire to speak up, asserting, “After a good 50 years in the Indian movement, fighting, lobbying, talking, and taking direct action in ways more in the Indian tradition than is known in these days, I have a right to speak out.”<sup>655</sup> His column appeared regularly and provided insight into his ardent, and at times, forceful opinions.

As the editor-in-chief, Costo wrote the editorials most likely with the aid of Henry-Costo who initially served as associate editor and eventually co-editor. Costo’s fiery editorials attracted the attention and admiration from Tim Giago Jr., Lakota, who recalled, “If there is any journalist who served as a role model for me when I took my

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<sup>653</sup> “Leandro Indian to Discover Italy,” *The Daily Review*, September 22, 1973, 1; “U.S. Indian Planning to Discover Italy,” *The Los Angeles Times* September 24, 1973, 20.

<sup>654</sup> Rupert Costo, “Speaking Freely,” *Wassaja*, February/March 1973, 3.

<sup>655</sup> Rupert Costo, “Which Way the American Indian Movement?” *Wassaja*, March/April 1974, 10.

first wobbly steps into news writing, it was Rupert Costo.”<sup>656</sup> Giago affectionately recalled Costo as his mentor and frequently mentioned in his editorials that without Costo’s friendship and support he would not have entered into journalism. As Costo’s student, Giago received lessons on the pugnacious nature of objective reporting and the enemies such reporting attracted. He adopted an attitude strongly reflecting Costo’s as illustrated by his comment, “I don’t give one damn whether anyone likes me or not. I seldom join anything that I may have to report on at one time anyway. I just try to do my job.”<sup>657</sup> Similarly, Costo directed *Wassaja* to adhere to objective reporting, however if the editorial board considered any individual, group, or method as detrimental or misleading, it would report it as such, much to the chagrin of Indians and non-Indians alike.

Giago received criticism for an article he published in *Wassaja* that documented how Holy Rosary mismanaged funds collected for Indian education and instead used the money to purchase large tracts of land for the Catholic Church.<sup>658</sup> The article gained attention from Monsignor Paul A. Lenz of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. In his letter, Lenz described feeling disappointed about Giago’s article which he called “inaccurate.” However, he acknowledged faithfully reading *Wassaja* to help “in appreciating and understanding my Indian sisters and brothers.”<sup>659</sup> Costo responded to Monsignor Lenz by asking clarifying questions and expressed concern that Lenz choose

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<sup>656</sup> Tim Giago Jr., “Notes from Indian Country: Breaking Ice in San Francisco,” *Indian Country Today*, April 30, 1986, 4.

<sup>657</sup> Julie Sullivan, “Publisher Takes a Stand,” *The Spokane-Review*, December 2, 1996, A1.

<sup>658</sup> Tim Giago Jr., “Holy Rosary in Begging Game Using Indian Kids as Bait,” *Wassaja*, December 1978, 4.

<sup>659</sup> *Wassaja*, May 1979, 6.

not to open an investigation and instead responded “in a defensive and protective manner.”<sup>660</sup> Father Bob Goodyear also contacted *Wassaja* and explained his concern about what he termed the “one-sided” nature of Giago’s article which “leaves readers with an inaccurate vision of the Catholic Church and its ministry among the Indian people.”<sup>661</sup> Costo printed all letters and given his penchant for letting readers form their own conclusions, he defended Giago and his publications but would not tell readers what to think.

Over time *Wassaja* received attention and promotion from non-Indian publications. The American Library Association periodical *American Libraries* promoted the AIHS newspaper in a brief listing for materials. It declared *Wassaja* important for non-Indians to read for greater understanding and concluded “any library with a significant collection of Indian materials will want to subscribe.”<sup>662</sup> In *Learning: The Magazine for Creative Teaching*, a short feature on *Wassaja* appeared. It announced the newspaper “an eye-opener into the lives of modern Indians.”<sup>663</sup> Although unclear if these positive endorsements led to a rise in subscriptions, the articles increased the exposure of the newspaper to non-Indians.

An advertisement for *Wassaja* illustrated its scope. It read, “Nationwide news. Tribal news. Special section on educational activities. News of every part of the Indian

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<sup>660</sup> Ibid.

<sup>661</sup> “Voice of the Indian: Holy Rosary,” *Wassaja*, September 1979, 6.

<sup>662</sup> “Materials: Monthly Newspaper by and about American Indians,” *American Libraries*, October 1973, 552.

<sup>663</sup> “The Red Man Finally Speaks Up for Himself,” *Learning: The Magazine for Creative Teaching*, April 1974, 57.

world...TODAY. The problems, experiences, and above all accurate, authenticated INFORMATION.” The advertisement continued by asking for charter support “Help us bring the correct news, the accurate information to the Indian people of North America, and to the general public as well.”<sup>664</sup> In a later advertisement, the AIHS described the role of *Wassaja* as “The Indian speaks through *Wassaja*. The Indian is heard through *Wassaja*...Communication is the most vital need of the Native American. *Wassaja* is providing this service.”<sup>665</sup> Unlike additional organizations, the AIHS offered a range of publications that attracted audiences from scholars, educators, children, and curious Indian and non-Indian readers. The various publications by the AIHS provided for cross advertising and solicitation for writers and support. For example, advertisements for books published by the Indian Historian Press (IHP) appeared in the *The Indian Historian* and *Wassaja*. The AIHS continued publishing its scholarly journal while the newspaper focused more on current affairs.

The newspaper *Wassaja* bore the strong influence of former American Indian Federation (AIF) member Dr. Carlos Montezuma, Yavapai, in its name, approach, and content. Costo regarded Montezuma with great respect and believed the AIHS version of *Wassaja* continued the struggle for self-determination. In the original *Wassaja*, Montezuma declared “the time has now arrived to present the real conditions, for the public, and for those in power to consider and be in position to remedy the appalling slavery and handicap of the Indian race.”<sup>666</sup> The Society honored Montezuma and in its

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<sup>664</sup> *The Indian Historian* vol. 5 no. 4 (Winter 1972): 18.

<sup>665</sup> *The Indian Historian* vol. 6 no. 2 (Spring 1973): 44.

<sup>666</sup> “Introduction,” *Wassaja* vol. 1, no. 1, April 1916, 1.

inaugural 1973 edition, a dedication to the memory of Montezuma appeared, “He waged a continuing struggle for Indian rights....He will always be remembered with love and respect. We dedicate Wassaja to Carlos Montezuma. May his spirit live in all of us.”<sup>667</sup>

Another organization from the Bay Area, United Native Americans (UNA) led by Lehman Brightman, Sioux/Creek, recognized the legacy of Montezuma as the father of modern militant activism in its organizational newspaper *The Warpath*.<sup>668</sup>

The AIHS version of *Wassaja* regularly recalled the legacy of its historical namesake. An editorial explained, “The name of this All-Indian newspaper comes from the Indian name of Dr. Carlos Montezuma, whose life was dedicated to the struggle of our people for self-determination.” The editorial continued, “The issues he confronted then are different from those we confront today. But his fighting spirit, his longing for knowledge, his dedication to his people, are examples to all of us today.”<sup>669</sup> In addition to asserting Montezuma could serve as a model for all Indians, the editorial commented on self-determination and noted, “The struggle today is a continuation of the historic struggles of the past. We believe this should not be forgotten, but rather that we should learn the lessons of the past, in order to win the fight today.”<sup>670</sup> By contextualizing the newspaper in the tradition of Montezuma’s *Wassaja*, the AIHS illustrated the struggle for self-determination existed not as a recent event with Red Power but rather as a continuing campaign for Indian rights. Further by explaining the role of Montezuma, the AIHS

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<sup>667</sup> “Carlos Montezuma-Fighter for Indian Rights,” *Wassaja*, January 1973, 3.

<sup>668</sup> “Carlos Montezuma: The Father of Modern Militant Indianism,” *The Warpath*, 1970, 14.

<sup>669</sup> “Wassaja-The Name,” *Wassaja*, January 1973, 2.

<sup>670</sup> *Ibid.*



introduced him to a group of readers who otherwise may not be aware of his significance in the struggle for self-determination. In later years, the newspaper regularly included a small section describing the background for its name.

Montezuma's influence on Costo continued with the newspaper regularly featuring stories on water rights. The issue of water rights appeared prominently in the first issue article boldly titled with one inch font, "Indians Face Genocide." Most likely Costo wrote an additional column in which he explained the title selection derived "not merely to get attention. It is for real. Indians face genocide." He continued, "The source of this deliberate effort to crush our economy, to squeeze our reservations dry, is in the issue of water rights."<sup>671</sup> In the fourth issue of the newspaper, Costo reiterated the influence of Montezuma on water rights. Montezuma started the water struggle for his home reservation, Fort McDowell, and aided the Pima and Tohono O'odham. Costo concluded fighters for Indian rights should advocate for self-determination "not only for a better life" but "for the continued existence of the Natives as a race, as a culture, and as a people."<sup>672</sup> In an editorial entitled "Fake Self-Determination" the editors expressed frustration about the continued practice of BIA paternalism and Indian tokenism. Additionally, the editors conveyed a simple message, that Indian peoples should determine the content of Indian policy noting "We also have the best conception as to what is good for our people."<sup>673</sup>

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<sup>671</sup> "The Source of Genocide," *Wassaja*, January 1973, 5.

<sup>672</sup> Rupert Costo, "Fighter for Indian Rights: Carlos Montezuma (Wassaja)," *Wassaja*, June 1973, 10.

<sup>673</sup> "Editorials: Fake Self-Determination," *Wassaja*, June 1973, 2.

Costo lived in San Francisco, but concern for his homelands of the Cahuilla reservation always remained with him. He understood the false dichotomy of reservation v. urban. Indeed, he openly solicited for collaborative work within the pages of *Wassaja*. For example, in regard to water rights, Costo perceived important roles for reservation and urban residents. He declared, “Reservation Indians! Inform yourselves about your water rights. Give help to your tribal councilmen. Ask them what is happening. If you are also residents in the city, inform the urban Indian centers and the urban Indians about the situation.” He continued, “Urban Indians! You can be our political arm....Go to the nearby tribes; ask what is happening; inform yourselves. Then mount a campaign of information to the public...Contact members of Congress. Let them know the facts. Ask that they cooperate with the tribes.”<sup>674</sup> Regardless of where they resided, Costo perceived an activist role for all Indians. He recognized reservation Indians may reside in the cities and could play a significant role in informing urban Indians. The centrality of land guided his commitment to water rights. Costo recognized that without water, Indians would cease living on reservation lands, effectively stagnating reservation economies. Without a land base, Indian culture and the connections with homelands would cease to exist. Therefore, Costo utilized *Wassaja* as a communications tool to promote greater control over water rights.

*Wassaja* countered stories generated by mainstream media that tended to oversimplify issues and equate Indians as an additional minority group in the United States of America. As one of the earliest national newspapers with original content, *Wassaja* provided for news reporting parallel to mainstream media. With the increasing

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<sup>674</sup> “The Source of Genocide,” *Wassaja*, January 1973, 5.

popularity of Indian self-identity during the 1970s, some mainstream newspapers began to venture into Indian country for stories. Although some supplied historical context and accuracy, many fell short of that prospect. Sensationalized news coverage on Indian occupations may garner public interest but without fully revealing the reasons the occupations occurred, some news stories further misinformed readers and left them with the impressions that occupations occurred for the simple reason that Indians wanted something. Since many non-Indians form an impression of Indian life and culture from the media, reporters have the influence to, either intentionally or unintentionally, reinforce preconceived notions they may carry. Misinterpretation, mistaken views on priorities, and attitudes in news articles potentially absorbed and transmitted by the media could transfer to the public. When non-Indian reporters have no curiosity about Indians or Indian country and report their portrayal of Indian culture through such a lens, the resulting story inherently compounds any Indian concerns since the poor reporting misses the opportunity to inform and educate.

As a national newspaper, the AIHS organized regional reporters from across the country to access stories. Initially, the newspaper had a committee largely of Stanford University students but it needed assigned reporters throughout the country. The first geographical region reporters included: Barbara Sinclair Sage, Washington; Larry Murray (Wind River reservation), Wyoming; Leroy Selam (Yakima), Oregon; John Winchester (former coordinator for the North American Indian Affairs Office at Michigan State University), Michigan; Chuck Poitras (Turtle Mountain Chippewa), Massachusetts and Northeast; Bette Mele (Seneca), New Jersey and New York; Beth

Garza, Alaska.<sup>675</sup> However, *Wassaja* struggled to find and keep a reliable reporting staff as a review of the first few years of publications illustrates a high turnover rate of regional reporters.<sup>676</sup> By the summer of 1973, regular regional reporters included: Lorraine Edmo (Shoshone-Bannock), Idaho and Nevada; Bruce Barton (Lumbee), North Carolina; Andrew Roberts, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.<sup>677</sup> The regional reporting staff in 1974 included: Bette Crouse Mele (Seneca) replaced mid-year by Patricia Porter, Washington D.C.; Susan Arkeketa (Otoe-Missouria and Creek), Oklahoma; Charles Tate (Chickasaw), Southwest; Bill Thacker (Paiute), Nevada; Joe Senungetuk (Eskimo), Alaska; Adolph Dial (Lumbee), Southeast. In addition, department heads included Gwendolyn Shunatona (Prairie Band Potawatomi/Pawnee/Otoe-Missouria) for education and Cory Arnet for the arts.

Although *Wassaja* had regional reporters during the formative early years, the newspaper struggled with retaining reliable reporters. For instance, Costo dismissed Shunatona from the Board of Directors, after three years of participation, and discontinued her column. Costo expressed deep appreciation for her personal friendship, but he complained that her column “floundered” and “it has been necessary to prod and insist” to obtain a regular column from her.<sup>678</sup> The newspaper regularly solicited for

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<sup>675</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, November 15, 1972, pg. 2, box 12, folder 23, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>676</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, September 13, 1973, pg. 2, box 12, folder 24, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>677</sup> “People You Should Know,” *Wassaja*, July 1973, 17.

<sup>678</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Gwen Shunatona, May 5, 1975, reel 16, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

reporters from all states and Canada in its pages and asked for any interested people to contact *Wassaja*.

*Wassaja* advised free-lance writers could submit information or articles for publication in what the editors termed the “Red network.” The Red network served as an informal reporting system in which a tribal member, organized group, individual, student or teacher gathered information and passed it along to *Wassaja* by telephone, letter, news clippings, or word of mouth.<sup>679</sup> A staff member would personally confirm the information by telephone or personal interview. Increasingly, *Wassaja* relied on the Red network and also hired a company known as N.E.W.S. Photo News located in Washington D.C. to supply photographs and news reports.<sup>680</sup>

A self-supporting endeavor, the newspaper regularly published reminders to its readers to bring their subscriptions up to date. The staff attempted to make the newspaper available at newsstands but encountered resistance and it remained available through mail subscription.<sup>681</sup> While the reason or reasons for newsstands not distributing the newspaper is unclear, perhaps some believed it represented a niche market. Largely due to financial challenges, the newspaper actively sought advertising dollars.<sup>682</sup>

By the second year of publication advertisements for colleges, universities, rodeos and powwows, books, United States military and ROTC, and employment listings began

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<sup>679</sup> “How the Wassaja Red Network Operates,” *Wassaja*, May 1977, 17.

<sup>680</sup> Board of Director Meeting Minutes January 15, 1977, pg. 2, box 12, folder 27, Costo Collection

<sup>681</sup> “Distributors Refuse News Stand Plea for Wassaja Sales,” *Wassaja*, October/November 1974, 2.

<sup>682</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes June 8, 1974, pg. 2, box 12, folder 25, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

to appear. The decision to print advertisements for the U.S. military upset some readers. *Wassaja* received a letter from a person who viewed the military advertisements as a “lack of principled policy.” For Costo, the complaint from a person he termed a “fake militant” personally offended him because his mother and brother, Manuel, worked at Consolidated Aircraft during World War II, paternal Uncle Martin served in the navy and his cousin Sylvester received a Bronze Star during World War II.<sup>683</sup> He concluded “Who are you to dictate to them what they should do, how they should think, and what they should support?”<sup>684</sup> Further, he pointed out the newspaper reflected diverse Indian concerns and interests.

The fees for advertising depended upon the number of times it would appear. Display ad rates for one time appearance consisted of \$900 full page, \$500 half page, \$300 for quarter page. For two to four time insertions the price decreased to \$800 full page, \$400 half page, \$200 quarter page. The want ads cost thirty-five cents for a five line minimum.<sup>685</sup> By 1978, the classified directory rates had changed depending on the run on the advertisement: \$1.75 per line for up to three issues; \$1.25 per line for four to seven issues; \$1.00 per line for eight to eleven issues; and \$0.80 per line for twelve issues.<sup>686</sup>

A primary goal for *Wassaja* included sharing information with regular columns covering a broad range of issues. Similar to *The Indian Historian*, *Wassaja* regularly

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<sup>683</sup> Lester Reed, *Old Timers of Southeastern California* (Redlands: Citrograph Printing Co., 1967), 15, 22-23.

<sup>684</sup> “Voice of the Indian: Alarmed,” *Wassaja*, January 1976, 9.

<sup>685</sup> *Wassaja*, October 1973, 24.

<sup>686</sup> *Wassaja*, January/February 1978, 20.

provided space for letters from readers in “Voice of the Indian.” Indeed, the newspaper invited input from readers who objected to any article or story. The Costos served as the editors and welcomed opinions, noting, “That’s what this newspaper is all about. The greatest exposure of all kinds and varieties of opinion is needed for the people to make up their own minds.”<sup>687</sup> However, *Wassaja* as an editorial policy insisted on not publishing anonymous letters; however, it refrained from publishing the name and address of anyone if they so requested.

Columns appeared dedicated to the arts, law and the American Indian, Natives of the western hemisphere, and a section entitled “People You Should Know.” The newspaper addressed education and economic programs, religious and cultural freedom, and reported news from particular Indian tribes as it could potentially impact other tribes or serve as a model. A regular column “Along the Tribal Trail” served as an announcement board as it listed news, events, and general goings on in Indian country. Special reports regularly revealed and reviewed legislation and litigation at local, state, and federal levels. A sports section eventually became a regular feature that highlighted various athletics from golf, basketball, boxing, track, and football.

In addition, the newspaper issued corrective information in its pages and providing connections for its readers. For example, a brief column responded to an article appearing in the San Luis Obispo *Telegram-Tribune* that noted the Chumash “vanished.” An unnamed writer for *Wassaja* responded, “This is news to the *Wassaja* staff and must be even more enlightening to the Chumash community in and around Santa

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<sup>687</sup> “Editorials: Your Opinion is Invited,” *Wassaja*, July 1973, 2

Ynez,” California.<sup>688</sup> The brief statement corrected the information published in a mainstream publication. In another example, Carol Wetcher of Pasadena wrote a letter to *Wassaja* protesting an article that appeared in *The Los Angeles Times* written by William Drummond. Specifically, she objected to his “glib and superficial account” of Eskimo people and culture. Wetcher wrote a letter to *The Los Angeles Times*, but she also wanted to bring attention to the article. She pointed to it as an example of “the inaccuracies that will proliferate if the articles and information are not challenged.”<sup>689</sup> The decision to publish the letter in *Wassaja* provided greater exposure to the article as an example of unacceptable writing.

The newspaper also assisted in developing a sense of community for its readers. *Wassaja* announced college graduations of Indian students and shared the news of prominent Indian activist’s deaths. The newspaper printed several letters from residents of Canada, Germany, Holland, Italy, Switzerland, and incarcerated Indians who all sought personal correspondence exchanges. Students sent letters seeking information for school projects. Additionally, Indians raised outside the Indian community, perhaps because of adoption, sent letters seeking for information on their tribe. By printing the letters and addresses of those seeking information, *Wassaja* offered a thoroughfare of communications and provided the opportunity for personal connections. Through common readership, *Wassaja* cultivated a sense of community both between and among reservation and urban Indians, and promoted understanding by its non-Indian readers.

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<sup>688</sup> “Chumash not Extinct,” *Wassaja*, September 1973, 16.

<sup>689</sup> William J. Drummond, “Government Concern Cannot Halt the Eskimo Slide into the Twilight,” *The Los Angeles Times*, June 19, 1977, G3; “Voice of the Indian: Los Angeles Times,” *Wassaja*, September 1977, 31.



Issued in the aftermath of the Alcatraz occupation and during the 1973 Wounded Knee occupation at Pine Ridge reservation, Costo utilized the newspaper to present alternatives to violence for Indians in attaining their goals. He believed in the adage, the pen is mightier than the sword. AIHS members discussed Wounded Knee and how the organization would address the issues the occupation raised. Henry-Costo expressed concern about the organization taking a position without becoming involved in political matters. She also wanted to ensure the organization respected the differing opinions of all its members. Henry Azbill, Maidu, shared Henry-Costo's concern, but he determined "we should take a position, that's what a paper is for" and believed the AIHS should support legislation "for the good of our people." Ultimately, a motion carried and the AIHS took positions and issued opinions on Wounded Knee, the BIA building occupation, and other current situations, but permitted all to voice an opposition opinion.<sup>690</sup>

Within a week of the AIHS passing the motion, another discussion ensued regarding how the organization would report on Wounded Knee. Members expressed their apprehension, specifically about the use of violence. Costo opened the discussion by declaring, "We cannot encourage nor can we endure violence." Although he maintained the situation at Pine Ridge had become intolerable, he believed legal measures and investigations could resolve some of the concerns. Cherokee member

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<sup>690</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, February 26, 1973, box 12, folder 24, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

Helen Redbird Selam simply noted, "I'm absolutely against such violence." Again, the AIHS passed a motion to provide full publicity about both sides of Wounded Knee.<sup>691</sup>

The February issue of *Wassaja* reflected the internal discussions within the AIHS. Bette Crouse Mele, Seneca, wrote a lead article on Wounded Knee in which she described it as "a badly organized, spontaneous movement" but remarked how Indians were no longer willing to wait for justice and concluded "the movement for justice is bound to continue."<sup>692</sup> Costo's lead editorial read, "No one has the right to condemn or criticize those who have chosen to make a stand at Wounded Knee. Considering the current situation which has existed for hundreds of years and appears to be getting no better, we can only give them our support." The editorial concluded, "Alternatives to violence might well begin with such an investigation of the treaties and their violation."<sup>693</sup> The writers recognized Wounded Knee as a continuation of activism and previous calls for justice. Therefore, the Costos and the AIHS considered treaty rights as central to protests and resolving violent exchanges.

As a result, in July 1973 *Wassaja* published an eight page special supplement edition that included the entire text of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty along with the names of all the signatories. Additionally, the supplement included the Constitution and By-Laws of the Oglala Sioux, Pine Ridge reservation. Costo explained the role of treaty-making between Indians and federal government. He observed the growing unrest among Indians, but affirmed "I do not believe in violence, and will never condone it.

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<sup>691</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, March 3, 1973, box 12, folder 24, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>692</sup> Bette Crouse Mele, "Wounded Knee Seen Symbol of Resistance," *Wassaja*, February/March 1973, 24.

<sup>693</sup> "Editorials: Alternatives to Violence," *Wassaja*, February/March 1973, 2.

Other means must be explored, which are not self-defeating.” However, he continued, “But I would be foolish and out of my head were I to believe that violence can be prevented in the light of the present situation.”<sup>694</sup> In an effort to show all sides, *Wassaja* published statements from Pine Ridge tribal President Dick Wilson and his supporters criticizing the Wounded Knee occupation and AIM. However, through editorials, Costo made clear his position supporting the reasons for Wounded Knee, but not necessarily the chosen method of protest.

Instead of violence, Costo supported the process of negotiation partly because he remained ambivalent about the lasting results achieved through violence. In discussing the need for negotiation skills, Costo asserted, “Intelligent appraisal of any situation, with intelligent approaches to methods of redress. It usually works.” He continued, “In a fight, you had better learn how to negotiate. That is something we have still to learn how to do. The quicker the better. A good fight is often lost because of lack of negotiating knowledge.”<sup>695</sup> The mainstream media’s fascination with Wounded Knee resulted in the nation’s brief attention. However, without in-depth information and discussion, the practical calls for historic justice remained unanswered. Throughout *Wassaja* articles covered the multifaceted reasons for various protests since central to its purpose focused on providing information to its readers. It also called for a complete fulfillment of self-determination.

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<sup>694</sup> Rupert Costo, “Indian Treaties: The Basis for Solution of Current Issues,” *Wassaja* (Special Supplement), July 1973, 1.

<sup>695</sup> Rupert Costo, “Speaking Freely,” *Wassaja*, September 1973, 3.

A motivation in the organization's commitment to provide information to its readers appeared in an advertisement soliciting subscriptions to its newspaper. The advertisement remarked that at one time, Indians held the majority population but currently stood as one of smallest populations. As a result, "The Indians depend for their power on an informed public, and informed Native American people." The advertisement demonstrated the AIHS' understanding that Indian peoples' small population limited the prospects of specific forms of activism as an economic power or social force. The advertisement concluded, "we do have *Wassaja*, and through *Wassaja* both Indians and the general public can become informed."<sup>696</sup>

As a parallel publication, the newspaper unapologetically placed a priority on issues central to Indian peoples and underreported or ignored issues regularly found in mainstream media. For example, Costo candidly discussed his reasoning for ignoring President Richard Nixon's administration's Watergate scandal that erupted during the Wounded Knee trials. In an editorial, Costo summarized what he termed the "peculiarity" of the American news media, as it moved away from coverage of Wounded Knee and South Dakota Democratic Senator James Abourezk's, chair of the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs, hearings on the events and issues that lead to the confrontation and occupation. Instead, the media focused on Watergate. Costo pledged the newspaper would publish as much as possible from the hearings because he determined the hearings held a "greater importance to the health of the American Nation, than are those being held on Watergate...which expose the corrupt quality of American

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<sup>696</sup> *Wassaja*, October/November 1974, 29.

government...all of which has been going on for years.”<sup>697</sup> Costo issued another editorial in which he commented on the reasoning for ignoring Watergate noting, “While Watergate boils, we are confronted with the loss of our waters, our land, our economic base.”<sup>698</sup> Not every reader embraced Costo’s reasoning. V.V. Roe of La Puente, California wrote a letter and argued that previous Senate investigations resulted in “fancy rhetorical promises...an appeasing reform or two, to be sabotaged in application.”<sup>699</sup> The newspaper continued coverage beyond the actions of the participants of Wounded Knee and obtained an interview with Senator Abourezk. When discussing mainstream media coverage of Wounded Knee, Senator Abourezk remarked, “All they did was highlight Indians with guns, Indians silhouetted against the sky with more guns...they weren’t doing a thing to tell the world what’s really wrong out there.”<sup>700</sup> Costo’s editorial decisions also limited information or commentary about major national events.

In 1975, Costo revised his opinion and wanted to embrace some national news stories or at least dialogue about the inclusion of national stories. “We are not an island,” wrote Costo in an editorial. He described surveying Indian newsletters and newspapers and realizing they did not reflect current affairs: Vietnam, Watergate, national economic instability or the two major political parties. He considered these national issues of “critical importance” to Indian country. He noted Indians did not have a lack of interest as illustrated by the numerous letters received by *Wassaja* expressing their opinions about

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<sup>697</sup> “Editorials: The Abourezk Hearings,” *Wassaja*, July 1973, 2.

<sup>698</sup> “Editorials: Watergate and the Indians,” *Wassaja*, August 1974, 2.

<sup>699</sup> Roe, V.V. “Voice of the Indian: Watergate?” *Wassaja*, October 1973, 4.

<sup>700</sup> Pat Porter, “Abourezk: Indian Advocate,” *Wassaja*, October/November 1974, 13.

these particular issues. However, he noted, “The Indian press is not reflecting the concerns of the Indian people, nor how these concerns of the general society are affecting our lives and our future. I think we should.”<sup>701</sup> Despite Costo’s revised opinion and recognition of the newspaper’s limitations, few articles appeared on national issues.

He attempted to respond to his own criticism by dedicating an editorial to Vietnam in which he called it an “irresponsible war,” but few articles appeared on Vietnam.<sup>702</sup> Costo further attempted to generate discussion on the 1976 presidential election by calling for a get out the vote campaign, educational campaign to inform Indians how government works, and a program of questioning in which groups of Indian people would follow legislators whenever they appear to ask vital questions. In conclusion, he remarked Indians “need to get with it” on the importance of the presidential election because “This is the government we live under, and that is what has to be done if we want anything done to change our conditions.”<sup>703</sup> Political antipathy toward national politics aggravated Costo because he recognized policies affected Indian country. Perhaps he recalled the lesson from the IRA vote on Cahuilla reservation where non-participation in the vote counted as a “yes” for the policy.

In support of generating more discussion about the presidential election, in the fall of 1976 Costo wrote to President Ford. In his letter, he shared that *Wassaja* hoped to prepare a front page story and asked President Ford to complete an enclosed questionnaire to reveal his position on issues “of critical importance to the Indian

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<sup>701</sup> Rupert Costo, “Speaking Freely,” *Wassaja*, May 1975, 2.

<sup>702</sup> Rupert Costo, “Speaking Freely,” *Wassaja*, June 1975, 2.

<sup>703</sup> “The Coming Elections,” *Wassaja*, June 1976, 2.

people.”<sup>704</sup> The questionnaire included twelve questions ranging from water rights to unemployment rates on reservations. Bradley Patterson, President Ford’s Special Assistant for Native American Programs, perhaps seeing an opportunity to politically connect with potential Indian voters, expressed a desire to answer the specific questions posed by *Wassaja*.

The newspaper reprinted an editorial from *Humming Arrows*, the Stanford University Indian student newsletter, by Mike Benson. The reprint appeared with a preface that *Wassaja* found it “very worthy of a guest article.” In the reprinted editorial, Benson discussed the innate limitations of only defending issues considered “Indian issues.” Further, he determined Vietnam should be an Indian issue and concluded, “There is an Indian issue wherever there is human suffering. There is an Indian issue wherever there is inequality.”<sup>705</sup> Costo’s decision to reprint the article illustrates a growing sense of indigenous issues throughout the world. Indeed, *Wassaja* published an article in which the authors described the cultural similarities between American Indians and Hmongs who secretly fought as American allies during the Vietnam conflict in Laos.<sup>706</sup> During Vietnam, little information or opinion appeared in *Wassaja*.

However, in the aftermath of Vietnam it published several articles about Vietnam veterans. The AIHS discussed its position on Vietnam at an Executive Council Meeting in 1970 and indicated a letter would be written addressed to the President and

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<sup>704</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to President Ford, September 7, 1976, folder: *Wassaja* Story, box 6, Bradley H. Patterson Files, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

<sup>705</sup> Mike Benson, “Other Scenes, Other Papers: What Issues are Indian Issues?” *Wassaja*, June 1974, 7.

<sup>706</sup> Susanne Bessac and Xia Moua Xiong, “The Culture of Laos is Found Similar to Native Americans,” *Wassaja*, January/February 1983, 17.

Congress.<sup>707</sup> The Society planned to print its letter in the next issue of *The Indian Historian*, but for reasons unknown it never appeared and it remains unclear whether the organization wrote a letter. Rather than focus solely on Wounded Knee and AIM, *Wassaja* covered a broad spectrum of issues and protests. The newspaper reported on specific tribal stories if it could serve as a model on tribal management and response to issues.

At the one year anniversary, the editors surveyed the newspaper and noted its rapid circulation growth from 50,000 to 82,000 subscribers. Banners promoting its circulation read “The Newspaper Most Indians Read.” Costo reiterated the purpose of the newspaper: to put information into the hands of Indians. In addition, he directly commented on letters the newspaper received about the perception that the newspaper defended violence at Wounded Knee and BIA building takeover. He determined the letter writers had a false sense of outrage about violence because they passively tolerated and even accepted regular violent occurrences within Indian communities. He remarked, “Those who quaver at the violence are not as quick to voice their alarm when young Indian people are murdered,” he continued, “not so quick to look squarely at the facts when Indian people are killed for presumed infractions, when Indians die of tuberculosis.”<sup>708</sup> Costo described violence as “distasteful,” but he questioned the lack of leadership to help address concerns in a more diplomatic manner. He also observed violence would continue as long as current conditions existed. By calling out those who criticized violence, Costo highlighted the tolerance of internal violence within Indian

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<sup>707</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, May 9, 1970, box 12, folder 21, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>708</sup> “Editorials: Let the People Know,” *Wassaja*, January 1974, 2.



country or acceptance of violence directed to Indians by non-Indians. *Wassaja* addressed the issue of violence with its story on the protest marches in the border town of Farmington, New Mexico located near the Navajo Indian reservation.

In 1974, the bodies of Dodge Benally, John Harvey, and David Ignacio were found in Farmington. The Navajo men's bodies were found partially burned with crushed skulls in arroyos outside of Farmington, New Mexico. In response, Farmington area Navajos organized marches downtown, effectively closing all businesses for several weeks in response to the murders and to express their outrage about the physical and verbal harassment, intimidation, and "sport" of non-Indian youths beating, attacking, and robbing Indians known idiomatically as "Indian rolling." *Wassaja* reporter Steve Atencio wrote a front page article about the murders and protest marches. He highlighted a press conference held by John Redhouse, Navajo, an activist with Indians Against Exploitation, who described the "sick perverted tradition" of non-Indians regularly going into Indian sections of town to physically assault and rob elderly and intoxicated Indians. Redhouse condemned Farmington police for few arrests and called for charges against "Anglo renegades." Further, Redhouse warned "We Indian people will be forced to take the law into our own hands and apply it accordingly....We must be prepared to meet violence with violence."<sup>709</sup> Atencio reported the Coalition for Navajo Liberation presented demands before the city council and mayor including issuing a formal request that the U.S. Civil Rights Commission convene hearings in Farmington.

The local Farmington newspaper published a series of articles on the murders and protests. National media also reported on the events, but minimized the violent

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<sup>709</sup> Steve Atencio, "Indians March in N.M. Protest Against Violence," *Wassaja*, July 1974, 1.

exchanges and reasonable opinion of Redhouse that Indians had an inherent right to self-defense when and if violence occurred.<sup>710</sup> Ultimately, the Civil Rights Commission investigated Farmington and released “The Farmington Report: A Conflict of Cultures,” in 1975, which described widespread prejudice, injustice, and mistreatment across Farmington. Through *Wassaja* the story discussed the historically based violence perpetuated by non-Indian youths raised in an environment that accepted and expected the subhuman treatment of Indians. *Wassaja* continued the effort to report on issues not easily identified by the mainstream media as illustrated through the reporting on a building fire in San Francisco.

About two weeks before Christmas in the early morning hours of December 12, 1975, a fire blazed through the Gartland Hotel-Apartments located at 16<sup>th</sup> and Valencia in San Francisco. The five story building quickly engulfed in flames because an arsonist poured gasoline through the only hallway and staircase of the building and lit it. The death toll climbed as rescuers searched and over a dozen people perished and several firemen and residents received injuries or burns. *Wassaja* reported on the deaths of two women, Eleanor Andrews and Marie Felton, from the Rosebud Sioux reservation, and framed the story with an economic lens, attributing the poverty to the “monumental failure” of the BIA relocation program. Henry-Costo wrote a front page story in which she described the “ghetto conditions” of the apartment houses in The Mission District familiar to Indians because the San Francisco Indian Center stood four blocks away from the building and the Native American Health Clinic only three blocks away. Henry-Costo

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<sup>710</sup> Carrol W. Cagle, “Navajo Activism Forcing Clashes Between Cultures,” *The Washington Post* July 7, 1974, B4; Martin Waldron, “Farmington, N.M., is Beginning to Harvest Fruits of 100 Years of Indian Bitterness and Frustration,” *The New York Times* July 6, 1974, 45.

noted diverse ethnic and racial groups lived in The Mission District, bound by their poor economic positions. She reported that Gartland Apartment floor plans contained a kitchen and a living room with one wall bed but sometimes families of up to six people lived in the rooms.

The poor conditions led to dozens of fire and safety violations including citations for inadequate fire escapes and open staircases, no lights in the hallway, and no doors in the stairwell. Indeed the city condemned the building two years prior to the fire but it remained open through legal maneuvering. Belva Cottier, Rosebud Sioux and director of the Native American Health Clinic, noted, “Housing is the root of the evils we must contend with. Unless this is remedied, we are merely fighting a holding battle against disease, malnutrition, alcoholism, and desperately unsafe conditions.”<sup>711</sup> In addition to bringing attention to the awful housing conditions, Henry-Costo purposefully placed responsibility on the phasing out of the BIA Relocation program, noting that Indian relocatees placed in the Mission District remained “locked into poverty” with substandard housing. In a lead editorial, Costo decried the relocation program as Indians being “dumped” into cities. He described housing as bad on reservations but commented “it is even worse in the urban ghettos where most Indians live.” He called for Indians to unite for better housing both on and off the reservation but cautioned a need for an Indian Housing Development agency directed by Indians, organized by Indians, and selected by Indian peoples.<sup>712</sup>

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<sup>711</sup> Jeannette Henry, “Two Indians Die in Ghetto Fire: Urban Poverty Blamed as Search Continues for Bodies,” *Wassaja*, January 1976, 1.

<sup>712</sup> Rupert Costo, “Editorial Comment: The Housing Tragedy,” *Wassaja*, January 1976, 2.

Stories on the fire appeared in several local newspapers because it stood as one of the largest mass murder arson fires in San Francisco. The mainstream stories remarked on the slum conditions of Gartland Hotel-Apartments and the role of lax housing code enforcement. The headline in *The Oakland Tribune* read “10 Die in S.F. Holocaust” as it described the terror as residents escaped by jumping from their windows or onto firemen’s ladders hurriedly placed against the building.<sup>713</sup> However, mainstream articles reported the fire without discussing the issue of poverty, Indian Relocation, or mentioning the deaths of two Indian women in the fire. As a result, the link between poverty and low wages, underemployment, and high rents received minimal discussion in mainstream newspapers.

*Wassaja* continued examining housing through an article on an incomplete and insufficient housing rehabilitation program funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on four *rancherias*: Pinoleville, Redwood Valley, Yokayo, and Hopland, located in Mendocino county about one hundred sixty miles northwest of Sacramento. According to the front page article, a “snarl” within Mendocino county administered Community Development Commission (CDC) resulted in many Indian home repairs being left incomplete, some with dangerous living conditions. The California Indian Legal Services (CILS) served as legal representation for the homeowners and provided some photographs.<sup>714</sup> In one, a lawyer points to a bedroom

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<sup>713</sup> Jim Douthit and Jim Greaver, “10 Die in S.F. Holocaust,” *The Oakland Tribune*, December 12, 1975, 1.

<sup>714</sup> The California Rural Legal Assistance had provided legal representation to rural areas, which included many Indians and Indian tribes. However, legal complexity led to an Indian services division. Eventually, in 1967 the California Rural Legal Assistance director George Duke and David Risling Jr., Hupa, decided to incorporate an entity dedicated to Indian law. The CILS offers free or low-cost legal representation to Indians and Indian tribes. See Malcolm Margolin, “Indian Law for Indian People: The Origin of California Indian Legal Services,” *News From Native California* 7, no. 1 (Winter 1993): 22-24.

which had paneling installed without insulation or sheetrock. In another example, workers installed a wood-burning stove but failed to provide proper ventilation or fix the roof. As a result, the roof leaked, the stove rusted, and the walls blackened because of poor ventilation. Though not directly mentioned, one should question the serious health dangers in having an improperly ventilated wood stove. Robert Gibb, an attorney from the Ukiah office bluntly stated, “The people said what needed to be done, but I don’t think the CDC fulfilled its promises.” The article detailed the numerous concerns of residents but noted they wanted the program to continue. However residents feared questioning the program would cause an end to it and leave residents with incomplete work.

By exposing the story to a larger audience, the newspaper brought attention to California Indian *rancherias* and illustrated that poor housing conditions continued to exist. Also, sharing the story exposed the CILS to a broader audience and the aid it provided. Finally, the story demonstrated that in many instances, a program developed for housing improvements left many in worse conditions, therefore requiring provisions for supervision and homeowners input. The article noted exceptions existed but “one doesn’t spend billions for exceptions.” *Wassaja* staff concluded that “It’s time to re-evaluate the programs with all speed, while continuing to provide the people with homes they so desperately need.”<sup>715</sup> *Wassaja* openly criticized housing conditions but within the context of insisting on a better quality program.

*Wassaja* circulated during the feminist movement and though the word feminist rarely appeared in print, through regular reporting on Indian women and their successes,

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<sup>715</sup> “Housing Hit a Big Mess,” *Wassaja*, February 1977, 6.

the AIHS demonstrated support for gender equality. The election of Indian women leaders appeared in the pages of *Wassaja* as did job appointments, and reports on Indian women meetings. Costo attended the Southwest Indian Women Conference held in Window Rock, AZ and coordinated by Annie Wauneka, Navajo and second woman to be elected to the Navajo tribal council.<sup>716</sup> In her opening address at the conference, Wauneka noted “We cannot afford to sit with arms folded and wait for the responsibility to be delivered to us: we must develop strategies designed not to replace men but to work on equal basis with them.”

Costo expressed tremendous support for the women’s conference and called Indian women’s social progress “one of the most heartening developments in Indian affairs.” The meeting attracted an estimated twenty-one tribes and eight hundred registered women attendees. On behalf of *Wassaja*, Costo offered to help in any way the newspaper forum could provide against “the fight against male chauvinism” and commented, “don’t think the Indians are immune from this sickness.”<sup>717</sup> *Wassaja* also reported on a Northwest Regional Ohoyo Conference for women to motivate action for advancing women’s opportunities.<sup>718</sup>

The newspaper bore the editorial influence of Henry-Costo. Many articles spoke about women and women’s issues, but tended to connect them to the broader Indian community. Thus, rather than speak of women’s issues in isolation from family or tribal community, articles demonstrated an interdependent relationship between the sexes.

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<sup>716</sup> Peter Iverson, *Diné: A History of the Navajo* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002).

<sup>717</sup> Rupert Costo, “A Historic Indian Women’s Meet,” *Wassaja*, January 1976, 5.

<sup>718</sup> Owahan Anderson, “When 300 Indian Women Get Together,” *Wassaja*, September/October 1982, 25.

Additionally, the newspaper incorporated the arts by publishing the poetry of Cree artist Buffy Sainte-Marie. In one poem entitled, “America” she wrote “I can powder my face in/shades of alabaster, chalk/and eggshell/but my bones are still those/of an Indian.”<sup>719</sup> In part, the poem addresses the process of an Indian woman attempting to lighten her skin color through cosmetics. However, even with her attempts to acculturate to the dominant society, at her core she remains an Indian and could never conceal it from herself.

In addition to poetry, the newspaper addressed the women’s liberation movement by incorporating it into a profile story about Jessie Pierce, Onondaga. In her early eighties, Pierce’s family had numerous prominent members including her son Leon Shenandoah, head of the Iroquois Confederacy. The profile noted the Onondaga functioned as a matriarchal society in which ownership and clan derived from one’s mother. Additionally, clan mothers retained the right to name a new leader thereby influencing future tribal policies. As a result, the article noted the Onondaga had women’s liberation “long before contemporary women thought of it.” The article described the practice as a matriarchal society as “a natural thing” because culturally women inherently received respect.<sup>720</sup>

The editors dedicated a special issue of *Wassaja* to Lucy Covington, Coleville, who fought against termination and served as one of the first women elected tribal chairperson. Within the pages of the dedicated issue, Henry-Costo examined popular culture and Indian women by detailing a video game “Custer’s Revenge” made for the

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<sup>719</sup> “The Poetry of Buffy Sainte-Marie,” *Wassaja*, October 1977, 7.

<sup>720</sup> “Devoted to Longhouse Way: Jessie Pierce Keeps the Ancient Onondaga Faith,” *Wassaja*, September 1974, 20.

Atari gaming console. The player's goal in the game is to unite Custer with an Indian maid in movements simulating rape. The back of the video game package read "You are Custer. Your dander's up and your pistol's smoking. A ravishing Indian maiden is in your view. To get to her you must dodge a hail of arrows." Henry-Costo observed numerous organizations protested the game including the National Organization of Women (NOW), national Indian women's organization Ohoyo, National Tribal Chairmen's Association, The Urban League, and others. Henry-Costo remarked the growing significance of video games because they, "can also influence understanding, build ideas and nourish the imagination." Therefore, she had concerns about a game that promoted racist and demeaning treatment of Indian women. She termed it a "drooling sexual fantasy" and the organization Ohoyo called it "an insult to the American Indians and particularly to the Indian women."<sup>721</sup> By citing Ohoyo, Henry-Costo illustrated the negative and detrimental impact on all Indian peoples rather than destructive only to women.

An additional article in the Covington dedicated issue by Majorie Bear Don't Walk, Salish, discussed the women's rights movement in the United States. She commented, "The women's movement is essentially a white woman's movement. I don't see women treating other races as equal." She added, "There is a lack of recognition that we as Indian women exist." In speaking on Indian women activism, Bear Don't Walk remarked women should organize and engage with voting power on reservations. She cautioned such action, "will make Indian men insecure, but they will survive it."<sup>722</sup> In

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<sup>721</sup> Jeannette Henry, "Defaming the American Indian Woman: Space Age Pornography," *Wassaja*, November/December 1982, 3.

<sup>722</sup> Marjorie Bear Don't Walk, "The U.S. Women's Movement: 'It's White-Dominated,'" *Wassaja*, November/December 1982, 12.



part, she addressed the possible challenges encountered from white women and Indian men. An unspoken portion of her commentary addressed the internalization of gender roles and misogynistic attitudes accepted by some Indian men. She described Indian women as inexperienced in entering politics, but noted the importance of any involvement because participation in politics provided a growing process. In addition to social issues, *Wassaja* also examined economic issues.

A particular issue of interest to the AIHS encompassed what Costo termed the “vulture culture” consisting of archaeologist and souvenir hunters pilfering Indian remains. An extension to the AIHS’ previous activity protecting Ohlone burial grounds, it utilized the newspaper to sharpen the focus on “vulture culture.” In a special 1975 staff report, *Wassaja* detailed a three day tourist event located near Kampsville, Illinois and the Dickson Mounds State Museum. Organized by the archaeology department of Northwestern University and seemingly promoted by the American Express Corporation, the program taught about Indian cultures by examining skeletal remains, a process the AIHS called “revolting” and perpetuated by an “insensitive, profit-orientated company.” Rather than an intriguing presentation of complex Indian culture, the tourist event focused on disturbed burial grounds. The report lambasted the program for playing on the “morbid curiosity” of people rather than “instill respect for Indian heritage.” The article drew attention to the inherent cultural double standard by concluding, “Countless graveyards across the country contain the bones of Anglo Americans, yet no tour company would have the gall or the insensitivity to prey upon them in order to make a buck.”<sup>723</sup> Alongside the article appeared a photograph of eight skeletal remains,

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<sup>723</sup> “How to Make a Dollar on Indian Graves,” *Wassaja*, July 1975, 3.

including one of a child. In part, the inclusion of the photograph intended to shock the reader and agitate action.

The following month *Wassaja* published two photographs on the front page from a dig site in Cincinnati, Ohio. One image showed about a dozen people digging with the caption “Nobody raised the question of whose graves were being dug up.” The other photograph included a close up of jewelry dug up. The caption notes “Fact is, when such items are buried with an Indian, they are sacred, of religious import, and should not be dug up, and certainly not displayed.” The inclusion of the photographs demonstrated the delicate cultural balance *Wassaja* sought between informing and agitating readers while not being culturally offensive. For some Indian peoples, buried remains should not be displayed or looked upon. Ultimately, the AIHS determined the photographs demonstrated the macabre method of “vulture culture.” Some readers appeared in agreement. Paul Tremaine from Albany, New York noted that perhaps with continued exposure, non-Indians would begin to realize the offensive nature of digging up burial grounds. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania resident Sara Lewis called the “vulture culture” practice of digging up remains an insult to Indians.<sup>724</sup>

The “vulture culture” topic remained an item of interest to *Wassaja*. It continued to explore how Indians could respond to such cultural insensitivity. It shared how the Hopi tribal chairperson, Abbott Sekaquaptewa, issued an executive order controlling visits from outsiders to prevent further desecration. Specifically, visitors had to obtain written permission from the tribal chairperson and while on the reservation must be

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<sup>724</sup> “Voice of the Indian: Vulture Culture,” *Wassaja*, August 1975, 8.

accompanied at all times by a Hopi tribal member.<sup>725</sup> For Indians in Alabama, an exhibit of Indian artifact collections demonstrated the continued “vulture culture” practice despite protective state laws. The reporter blamed “amateur archeological collectors” as archeologists preferred a careful excavation to preserve items. The article concluded by offering readers a list of what to do if they suspected desecration of Indian burial grounds: contact the police department, alert local Indian organizations, and notify archeological societies.<sup>726</sup> If readers received a lack of cooperation, it suggested they contact the AIHS. The article provided concrete steps for *Wassaja* readers to report, and hopefully resolve, “vulture culture” activities. While *Wassaja* clearly communicated its loathing towards “vulture culture” other economic designs for reservation economies received ambiguous assessment.

*Wassaja* offered a platform for discussion about reservation tourism for economic development. Initially, *Wassaja* appeared to embrace and endorse tourism on tribal lands as a means for economic prosperity. In correlation with the Colorado based non-profit American Indian Travel Commission (AITC) receiving federal grant money to help tribes cultivate tourism economies, a *Wassaja* staff report promoted facilities and recreational events at several reservations. Several photographs provided courtesy of the AITC accompanied the article. In describing various locations, the report noted, “There are natural places on Indian reservations rivaling the wonders of the Swiss Alps, the beauties of India, and the lore of Africa.”<sup>727</sup> While *Wassaja* initially promoted reservation tourism,

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<sup>725</sup> “Hopis Order Halt to Pot-Hunters,” *Wassaja*, June 1978, 18.

<sup>726</sup> “The Vulture Culture Strikes Again,” *Wassaja*, January/February 1983, 8.

<sup>727</sup> “Natural Wonders of the World Seen on Indian Land,” *Wassaja*, April 1975, 5.

it had some growing concerns about the potentially negative impact of tourism. In a preface note, an unnamed source, though likely Costo, asserted that reservation tourism could be successful if conducted properly with adequate direction from the tribe but without these qualities, reservation tourism would result in disaster.

The concern about culturally appropriate tourism without verging into cultural exploitation and harmful stereotypical imagery led *Wassaja* to publish an article with a cautionary tale. Laurence French wrote specifically about the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians' reservation, and his article appeared in both *Wassaja* and an expanded version in *The Indian Historian* because the editors determined it of "such importance" that it merited publication in both.<sup>728</sup> French indicted the role of the non-Indian Cherokee Historical Association as an exploitative force that owned and ran a profitable play "Unto These Hills," the Museum of the Cherokee Indians, and the Oconoluftee Indian Village. Specifically, French criticized the play for its false portrayal of Cherokee history and culture. He argued the play perpetuated a false myth about Will Thomas as a savior and friend of Cherokees.

In contrast, French asserted Thomas served his own self interests and amassed wealth through his real estate transactions that placed Cherokees at a distinct economic disadvantage. The false tourist image of Cherokees perpetuated strained relations between Indians and non-Indians. In closing, French determined little had changed over the years and that "attempts at controlling, exploiting and misrepresenting Native Americans for the purpose of self-interest and personal profit, amounts to nothing less

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<sup>728</sup> Laurence French, "Tourism and Indian Exploitation," *The Indian Historian* vol. 10 no. 4 (Fall 1977): 19.

that cultural genocide.”<sup>729</sup> While his article addressed the Eastern Band of Cherokee, *Wassaja* issued a summary on the report *The Gift that Hurt the Indians*, financed by the BIA and the Ford Foundation in which it reported most reservation tourist ventures had been failures. *Wassaja* staff reported on the study, but it went further and admonished “They [reservation Indians] must, if money is to be made, cater to the nonIndian. They will be surrounded, swamped, and filled to overflowing with nonIndians,” and expressed concern, “It will be nearly impossible to keep curious people from wanting to ‘visit’ Indian homes, attend Indian sacred ceremonials, and become involved in many cases, in Indian affairs.” It continued, “Do you want this? Ask the people. Make them realize what is at stake.”<sup>730</sup> Even though the report expressed cautious optimism, with the presence of proper tourism management, *Wassaja* demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the possible pitfalls of reservation tourism. Further, the newspaper cautioned about cultural exploitation and advised for a community decision about reservation tourism.

In regard to terminology, *Wassaja* utilized the term genocide in its first issue in relation to water rights, but increasingly used it in articles written by staff reporters or guest articles. Initially the newspaper used the term to describe events occurring in South America, largely Paraguay, Venezuela, and Brazil in its “natives of the western hemisphere” section. Through this practice, genocide largely appeared to occur outside the United States of America. However, in the summer of 1969, Costo wrote in *The*

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<sup>729</sup> Laurence French, “Tourism and Indian Exploitation: A Social Indictment,” *Wassaja*, September 1977, 20.

<sup>730</sup> “Looking a Gift Horse in the Mounth-Do it!” *Wassaja*, March 1978, 15.

*Indian Historian* about the need for Indian self-government and within that context described the exceptional achievements of Indians relative to the dramatic population loss due to “times of attempted genocide.”<sup>731</sup> A minor reference, the application of the term to describe US policy reverberated within AIHS publications.

The Costos began to describe various events and practices in the United States as genocide and published writings by authors who used the term. One of the earliest instances of *Wassaja* using genocide in relation to the United States of America appeared July 1975. In discussing the country’s bicentennial celebration with a wagon train crossing the country, an unlisted *Wassaja* reporter remarked the wagon symbolized “the illegal entry of the settlers who took the Indian land, the adventurers who committed genocide, the destruction of Indian lives and Indian cultures.” The newspaper labeled the event a “circus” and conducted an informal survey of about fifty Indian leaders in which it asked their opinions about the bicentennial celebration. In response, every respondent indicated no reason existed for Indians to celebrate. Instead, *Wassaja* asserted a “true history” inclusive of friendship and betrayal between Indian and non-Indians could be shared but “propagandists are at work manufacturing information.”<sup>732</sup>

The AIHS also published authors who used the term genocide to describe Indian history. In a 1976 article, Van Hastings Garner described federal Indian policy during the 19<sup>th</sup> century as “effectively genocidal.”<sup>733</sup> In addition to publishing works that included

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<sup>731</sup> Rupert Costo, “Native Americans Need Self-Government Now,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 2 (Summer 1969): 21.

<sup>732</sup> “The Bicentennial: Crossing the U.S. in Honor of Genocide,” *Wassaja*, July 1975, 12.

<sup>733</sup> Van Hastings Garner, “The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the California Indians,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 9 no. 1 (Winter 1976): 13.

the use of the word genocide, the organization also reported on American Indians participation and presence within the United Nations (UN).

In 1977 and 1978, *Wassaja* printed several stories on the UN, relaying information on an organized international conference on discrimination against Indigenous peoples under the auspices of the UN Division on Human Rights and the World Conference for the Eradication of Racism and Racial Discrimination convened by the World Peace Council. For informational purposes, a full page dedicated to listing the Program of Action recommendations adopted at the Indigenous Discrimination Conference detailing the legal, economic, and social/political aspects of discrimination. The page also listed the conference participants.<sup>734</sup> The informational page preceded a report derived from an unnamed correspondent, who forwarded the minutes of the economic discussion at the conference to *Wassaja*. The report offered testimonial summaries of representatives from the Six Nations, Lakotas, International Treaty Council, Hopi, Alaskan Natives, Mapuches of Chile, and additional peoples. The representative from the Six Nations “called for the external pressure of the international world on the U.S. to address treaty grievances.”<sup>735</sup> *Wassaja* also included articles on the UN Genocide Convention.

Henry-Costo wrote a front page story in which she called for the United States Senate to endorse the UN Covenant Against Genocide originally passed in 1946. Henry-Costo described the political atmosphere in which objections centered on the belief it infringed on United States’ sovereignty. She surmised the United States failure to adopt

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<sup>734</sup> “Native People in Effort for International Unity,” *Wassaja*, November/December 1977, 18.

<sup>735</sup> “Report on International Treaty Confab Sessions,” *Wassaja*, November/December 1977, 19.

the international covenant binding nations to respect the human rights of all peoples of the world led to persistent charges of racism. She concluded the practice of genocide after contact “has been authenticated beyond doubt.” In addition, she charged genocide continued in the United States and cultural destruction persisted.<sup>736</sup> The AIHS continued reporting on the UN, with a special international report by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz detailing the World Conference for the Eradication of Racism and Racial Discrimination. *Wassaja* published the complete text of the World Conference Resolution on Racism in the United States. In part, it read “The conference supports the rights of Native American peoples to their own lands, resources, wealth derived therefrom, federal services guaranteed by treaties, and the inalienable rights of Indian governments and peoples.”<sup>737</sup> The following month *Wassaja* printed the text of The Genocide Convention of the United Nations with the sole commentary “To the United States Senate: This is what happened in America. Now will you ratify the Genocide Convention?”<sup>738</sup> *Wassaja* stories on the UN shared the proposals verbatim. In this manner, the newspaper provided information and maintained the need for Indian peoples’ participation in the international assembly.

In part, the use of the word entered the lexicon with increased participation and exposure to the UN. In 1978, a coalition of Indian activists participated in the Longest Walk, a public protest march across the country to the nation’s capitol. Reporter Phil Oaks covered the event for *Wassaja*. He described how several speakers charged the

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<sup>736</sup> Jeannette Henry-Costo, “Genocide Pact Seen as Major Rights Issue,” *Wassaja*, June 1978, 1.

<sup>737</sup> “The World Conference Resolution on Racism in the United States,” *Wassaja*, June 1978, 7.

<sup>738</sup> “The Genocide Convention of the United Nations,” *Wassaja*, July 1978, 5.



government “with committing genocide and other wrongdoing.”<sup>739</sup> In addition, *Wassaja* published the Native Manifesto as presented to the United States Congress and President Carter, which included a call for the US to sign the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Additionally, the authors of the manifesto asserted “The clearest policy of genocide of the last century continues in most sophisticated forms in this century” in describing bills before congress calling for abrogation of treaties and termination of Indian lands and resources.<sup>740</sup>

Costo’s commitment to identify and name genocide strengthened over the years. By 1980, Costo publicly reversed his previous practice of examining Indian issues within the United States while providing limited discussion on international affairs. He described the practice of Indian peoples avoiding the international sphere as isolationist and asserted, “The time is long past when we could afford isolationism, particularly where international affairs are involved.” He continued, “I believe the Native people must enter the political arena in every area, particularly on issues of international significance.”<sup>741</sup> While made within the context of nuclear war, Costo clearly shifted from viewing politics through the narrow lens of North American Indian issues and progressed to view indigenous global issues.

Later in the year, Costo remarked on the increasing international Indigenous movement as a uniting force to exchange information and aid one another. Specifically,

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<sup>739</sup> Phil K. Oaks, “The Longest Walk: A New Type of Demonstration,” *Wassaja*, August/September 1978, 7.

<sup>740</sup> “A Native Manifesto,” *Wassaja*, August/September 1978, 10.

<sup>741</sup> Rupert Costo, “Speaking Freely: The Native Americans in International Affairs,” *Wassaja/The Indian Historian* 13, no. 1 March 1980, 5.

he commented on environmental protection, nuclear proliferation, and control over nuclear waste storage asserting, “What happens in this country will affect, as it has already affected, the entire world. Support from the natives of the United States to the peoples of Chile, or Bolivia, for example, will do much toward gaining strength among the natives of those countries.”<sup>742</sup> Increasingly the Costos and additional writers began publicly citing genocide in the context of United States history, AIHS publications also continued to report on Central and South America. *Wassaja* reprinted testimonial from Rigoberta Menchú describing terrors in Guatemala during its violent civil war. In an editorial, Costo described the horrors as more than human rights violations but an “open, unabashed genocide” against the Natives of the land who stood on the other side of the political boundary of those in power. Further, Costo criticized President Reagan for condoning genocide because of his administration’s silence.<sup>743</sup>

Through its publications *Wassaja* and *The Indian Historian* the AIHS briefly worked within the short-lived American Indian Press Association (AIPA). Charles Trimble, Sioux and editor of Denver-based *Indian Times*, organized a meeting of several editors from tribal newspapers because of “loneliness” in editing a tribal publication and out of a desire to discuss the process of improving their respective publications.<sup>744</sup> A third meeting of the editors was scheduled at the Chautauqua House, the formal AIHS headquarters. Despite early participation, AIHS members discussed feelings of

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<sup>742</sup> Rupert Costo, “Speaking Freely: An International Movement?” *Wassaja/The Indian Historian* 13, no. 3 (September 1980): 5.

<sup>743</sup> Rupert Costo, “Speaking Freely: The Emperor’s Clothes,” *Wassaja*, January/February 1983, 3.

<sup>744</sup> Mark Trahant, “First Native American Media Association: 25 Years Ago,” *News from Indian Country*, August 15, 1995, 9.

apprehension particularly about membership and funding sources. They recognized and appreciated the need for the AIPA and promoted its establishment in a brief article.<sup>745</sup>

When reporting to AIHS on the IPA, Costo indicated the AIHS “cannot oppose it” and stressed his belief that the AIPA should be an Indian run organization. In response, the AIHS passed a motion on its working relationship with the AIPA: “That we should support the Indian Press Association and state that position that it must be an Indian controlled organization with voting members comprised entirely of native people”<sup>746</sup>

Despite early involvement, Costo left the organization in part because of concern about BIA funding. A fellow member in the AIPA, Marie Potts, Maidu and editor of *Smoke Signal*, responded to a letter from Costo. In the exchange, Potts remarked “I am sorry to hear that you are resigning from the Indian Press Association. I have known about your feelings about BIA and its connection with the organization. I am not happy about it either.” She explained the usefulness of the AIPA remarking, “I am in it for the news and that only. I am learning something from the other writers.”<sup>747</sup> The AIHS had only limited involvement in AIPA, *Wassaja* received recognition for its work from the AIPA in November 1974 with the Marie Potts Journalism Achievement Award.<sup>748</sup>

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<sup>745</sup> “Indian Press Association is Founded,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 4 (Fall 1970): 58.

<sup>746</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, November 29, 1970, box 12, folder 21, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>747</sup> Terri Castaneda, “Making News: Marie Potts and the *Smoke Signal* of the Federated Indians of California” in *Women in Print: Essays on Print Culture of American Women from the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, eds., James P. Danky and Wayne A. Wiegand (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006, 102.

<sup>748</sup> “Wassaja Wins AIPA Award,” *Wassaja*, November/December 1974, 2.

## CHAPTER 8

### “LET THE SCHOLARS SPEND THEIR VERY LIVES AND ENERGIES IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR PEOPLE”: CONVOCATION OF AMERICAN INDIAN SCHOLARS

Standing before a group of about one hundred and fifty college students at California State University, Los Angeles, in 1969, Lehman (Lee) Brightman, Sioux and Creek, proclaimed, “We call ourselves native American because we were given the name Indian by some dumb honky who thought he landed in India.”<sup>749</sup> Francis Allen, Kickapoo, introduced Brightman at the event as an angry Indian and referenced “Uncle Tomahawks,” a derisive term that labeled those whose moderate politics or allegiances were considered by their critics as detrimental to Indian country. It is a term derived from “Uncle Tom,” the title character from Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and subsequent adapted theater productions in which he appeared as a dutiful African American man, subservient to whites.

Brightman was born on the Cheyenne River Sioux reservation. He grew up primarily in Oklahoma. He had been a football star at Oklahoma State University and moved to San Francisco in 1959 after an injury ended his football career in Canada. A former United States Marine who received a Purple Heart during the Korean Conflict, for years Brightman wore his hair in a military buzz haircut style until he grew it out and wore it in braids during the early 1970s. Brightman participated in the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or “the Society”) during its early years, but left and co-founded the San Francisco based United Native Americans Inc. (UNA) in the summer of 1968,

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<sup>749</sup> Jean Murphy, “U.S. Indians-Low Men on the Totem Pole,” *The Los Angeles Times* April 10, 1969, F1.

one of the first organizations to incorporate the term “Native American” in its name. Brightman received national media attention when he sheltered fugitive Dennis Banks, Ojibwa and founder of the American Indian Movement (AIM) at his Bay Area home after Wounded Knee.<sup>750</sup> Rupert Costo, Cahuilla and President of the AIHS, described Brightman as a “rabid speaker, a spirited personality” and for a few years believed he represented “the growing spirit of revolt among the Indians.” However, Costo also pointed to Brightman as a motivating factor in the AIHS organizing the first Convocation of American Indian Scholars in 1970 (the Convocation).

Costo explained the reasons he became upset with Brightman. He had labeled Indians as an extremely impoverished people with “only one engineer, only ten teachers, only one physician and one dentist” among Indian professionals. AIHS members described feeling “horrified” at the implications of Brightman’s irresponsible and incorrect statement about Indian professionals in lectures and interviews. As a self-described “old-timer” Costo recalled the Society of American Indians (SAI) included several professionals, including founding member Carlos Montezuma, a formally trained physician and one of Costo’s idols. In addition, Costo believed Brightman dismissed earlier Indian movements and achievements of both reservation and urban residents. As a result, Costo remarked, “The ideology spawned by Brightman had to be combatted and so we considered the possibility of gathering together the best of the Indian scholars together with the traditionalists and religious people,” he continued describing the meeting as necessary, “to discuss what needed to be done in order to broaden the range of

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<sup>750</sup> Dennis Banks and Richard Erdoes, *Ojibwa Warrior: Dennis Banks and the Rise of the American Indian Movement* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 312-316.

Indian effort on the highest and most effective plane.”<sup>751</sup> Brightman, a proud self-proclaimed militant, regularly called for “Indian power” and in part his organization represented an impatient younger generation who wanted swift change.

In *Warpath*, the official UNA newspaper, an article described Indian liberation. It noted, “Unlike many of the other minority groups, Indian people have not been able to develop a group of its own intellectuals-writers, political thinkers, scientists, and educated people who can help the movement.”<sup>752</sup> In part, the statement represented an attitude that prickled Costo since it inferred a lack of action and educational or intellectual acumen of previous and contemporary Indians. The UNA understood without tangible results, many perceived Red Power as irrelevant to reservation communities. It acknowledged reservation communities had little concern for Red Power “unless it assures them of food and shelter for that day.”<sup>753</sup> Yet, the UNA appeared to dismiss earlier activities in California which had sought economic restitution and justice for the eighteen unratified treaties.

Costo also viewed the occupation of Alcatraz in 1969 as a driving force for organizing the Convocation. He cautioned Alfonso Ortiz, Tewa and anthropology professor at Princeton University, against supporting Alcatraz. Costo reminded Ortiz that the Society had a policy that without unanimous support, it and its members would not participate. He asked Ortiz to avoid association with Alcatraz because of his involvement

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<sup>751</sup> A Foreword to the Rupert Costo Collection on the Convocation of American Indian Scholars, pg. 2, box 62, folder 1, Rupert and Jeannette Costo papers, Collection 170. University of California, Riverside Libraries, Special Collections & Archives, University of California, Riverside (Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR).

<sup>752</sup> “Indian Liberation,” *Warpath*, Spring 1970, 11.

<sup>753</sup> “Red Power,” *Warpath*, Spring 1970, 11.

as Chairperson of the Convocation. Costo commented, “It is a delicate situation, and we will not make a public statement.”<sup>754</sup> In a letter to Helen Scheirbeck, Lumbee and Director of Education for American Indians in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Costo expressed his unease about Alcatraz. He criticized many Alcatraz participants as relocated Indians from outside California with little knowledge of California Indians. Concerned about participant’s youthful naiveté, Costo believed many had a lack of cultural knowledge.

He bemoaned the participation of Indian college students who appeared to abandon their studies. He commented, “How can they do such a thing, I do not know.” Concerned about the numerous Indian college students leaving newly established Native American Studies (NAS) programs, Costo believed the decrease in student enrollment jeopardized the programs and disregarded the work of those who fought for the establishment and funding of these educational programs. Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry Costo, Eastern Cherokee, sat on a community advisory board that helped form the NAS program at San Francisco State College (later renamed San Francisco State University).<sup>755</sup> Moreover, since Costo regarded education as a method to reach non-Indians, the absence of Indian college students limited non-Indians direct exposure to Indians and Indian issues.

Costo informed Scheirbeck he had attended a national conference on Indian education in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1969, along with AIHS member Bob Kaniatobe,

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<sup>754</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Al Ortiz, December 16, 1969, box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>755</sup> Luis S. Kemnitzer, “Personal Memories of Alcatraz, 1969” in *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk*, eds. Troy R. Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 115.

Choctaw. Never one to temper his comments, Costo criticized the conference asserting, “It was very bad, and will yield little, if any results. Badly organized, badly handled, and too many whites in attendance.” However, he expressed hopeful optimism about some of the young Indian students he met there who planned to apply for the Convocation. His attendance at a national conference on Indian education helped Costo identify what he envisioned for the AIHS Convocation.

Costo acknowledged the “romance” of Alcatraz attracted many Indians and non-Indians but he remained reserved about it as a political act. He explained to Scheirbeck the situation in San Francisco where, “Groups of young Indians, half drunk, are going from house to house, on the streets, and into restaurants on the wharf, asking for ‘Alcatraz money.’” “It is a bad scene,” he advised. Costo noted his concerns about Alcatraz but believed he could not openly say anything “without being crucified by our own people.” He concluded, “What is going on there now, is a big picnic and pow-wow. If they continue, it will wreck the work of generations.” His emphatic concern led him to comment, “That is why WE MUST HAVE this Convocation.”<sup>756</sup> The emphasis of his capitalization underscored his belief that the Convocation represented an organized response to the actions of those he viewed as irresponsible or misguided.

Costo cautioned against untenable projects lacking any long term planning. He noted, “Frivolous programs, impractical actions, irresponsible and unwise proposals will lead inevitably to a jaded reaction, and in the end will result in an irrecoverable loss to the

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<sup>756</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Helen Scheirbeck, December 1, 1969, pg. 2, box 62, folder 2, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.



whole Indian population.”<sup>757</sup> Costo understood that the occupation of Alcatraz garnered mainstream media attention and broad base support, but recognized support could be fleeting. Instead, he wanted to turn that attention towards thoughtful and practical discussions within Indian country and effectively communicate the issues raised to non-Indians.

As a result, the AIHS determined to organize a formal gathering to explore issues affecting Indian country. According to the application pamphlet, the purpose of the AIHS Convocation consisted of demonstrating “that we are not the inarticulate masses about whom so much benevolent concern has been voiced in the past.”<sup>758</sup> The Convocation illustrated an attempt to disrupt the common narrative in mainstream media that tended to depict increased visibility of Indian political activity as disjointed and filled with numerous leaders who had no community authority to speak on behalf of all Indians.

The Society tapped into the success, interest and discussion generated by Indian literature and arts. In 1969 N. Scott Momaday, Kiowa, won the Pulitzer Prize in fiction for *House Made of Dawn* and popular mainstream Macmillan press published Vine Deloria Jr., Standing Rock Sioux, *Custer Died for Your Sins*. Both men attended and spoke at the Convocation. In addition, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Cree, performed at the Convocation. Sainte-Marie gained mainstream attention and criticism for her song “My County Tis of Thy People You’re Dying,” from her album *Little Wheel Spin and Spin* released in 1966. Her lyrics addressed the distorted and biased nature of history

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<sup>757</sup> Rupert Costo, “Alcatraz,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 1 (Winter 1970): 12.

<sup>758</sup> The language is borrowed from Alfonso Ortiz’ published call for the first Convocation in *the Indian Historian*.

textbooks, “When Columbus set sail out of Europe and stress/That the nations of leeches who conquered this land/Were the biggest, and bravest, and boldest, and best/And yet where in your history books is the tale/Of the genocide basic to this country’s birth?”<sup>759</sup>

The Convocation provided a platform for Indian writers, scholars, and artists to meet, network, and discuss issues in Indian affairs.

For the AIHS, a project conceived, developed, organized and directed by Indians for Indians had significant meaning. The convocation would be “an interdisciplinary event in the exploration of knowledge.” The first Convocation of American Indian Scholars, held in March 1970, represented a coordinated attempt to cultivate responsive leadership from Indian scholars, students, artists, and traditional historians and accord them equal treatment. The goal was to offer effective assistance to Indian country and by extension, demonstrate an informed and scholarly Indian population existed and could serve as experts. In *The San Francisco Chronicle* in December 1969, Costo commented on the purpose of the Convocation. “In the field of scholarship and in every field which involves the use of experts, authorities and professionals” Costo bluntly continued, “we want to put the Bureau of Indian Affairs out of business.”<sup>760</sup> Thus, Costo wanted to shift the expertise on the subject of Indians from the BIA to Indians.

At a June 1969 executive council meeting, months before the successful occupation of Alcatraz in November, the AIHS decided to establish a steering committee for the Convocation and scheduled a meeting the following month in New Mexico to

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<sup>759</sup> Buffy Sainte-Marie, “My Country Tis of Thy People You’re Dying,” *Little Wheel Spin and Spin*, Vanguard, 1966.

<sup>760</sup> “U.S. Indians Plan Meeting of Scholars,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, December 22, 1969, 4.

begin planning. The selection of Princeton University as the site for the first Convocation and the location of the first steering committee meeting in New Mexico was due to the association of Convocation steering committee chairperson Dr. Alfonso “Al” Ortiz, Tewa and assistant professor of anthropology at Princeton University.<sup>761</sup> Selecting Princeton, a private Ivy League college located in New Jersey, was an unusual choice for a meeting of Indians, particularly since the institution did not have a strong history with recruiting Indian faculty or students.<sup>762</sup> However, Ortiz’ dedication to the Convocation played a key role in selecting the school, as did the school’s supportive yet “hands off” approach, which empowered the Society to direct it without institutional interference and simultaneously have access to university resources. Princeton University, cognizant of shifting college environments, had started to enroll women in its undergraduate ranks in 1969. Perhaps the school also sought establishing a relationship with Indian communities and viewed hosting the Convocation as a first step.

The thirty year old Ortiz, who published in *The Indian Historian* and served on its editorial board, assumed much of the day-to-day planning leading up to the Convocation since the Society headquarters was located across the country. He placed an advertisement in *The Daily Princetonian* seeking residents of dormitories who would provide campus housing for Indian student participants of the Convocation.<sup>763</sup> In promoting the Convocation, Ortiz commented on its uniqueness: “Other such gatherings

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<sup>761</sup> For more information on Ortiz see D’Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian, *Remembering Alfonso Ortiz* (Chicago: Newberry Library, 1998).

<sup>762</sup> Phil Parnell, “Recruiting Programs Neglect Indians,” *The Daily Princetonian*, March 20, 1970, 1. However, Princeton would improve its Indian recruitment policy see Denny Chin, “Admissions Grants Recruiting Funds to Chicano, Indian Undergraduates,” *The Daily Princetonian*, October 25, 1972, 1.

<sup>763</sup> *The Daily Princetonian*, February 19, 1970, 6.

have usually been of political lobbying groups or pan-tribal organizations, usually agitational groups. The number of panels we have indicates that we are gathering to discuss everything that is pertinent to Indians.” He continued, “Anything concerning Indians is fit fodder for our scrutiny.” Therefore, Ortiz viewed the Convocation as purposefully examining challenges in Indian country and devising ways to address them.

The steering committee had several discussions and meetings working on the selection of panel themes. Additionally, the committee selected Indians as panel moderators and discussants, including Indian college students. Unlike other conferences, Indians held positions of power in generating and leading discussions and students received equal treatment to professionals. Ortiz also expressed optimism that the Convocation would force the “intellectual and financial world and the media” to recognize the existence of Indian scholars and to consider them when in search of research on Indians. Ortiz believed many Indian scholars received a muted response from the academic community, and many in the general population seemed hesitant to gather research information from Indian scholars. Ortiz viewed the Convocation as “real sign of coming of age of as small a minority as ours.”<sup>764</sup> The gathering of Indian scholars to discuss issues represented a valuable step towards Indians leading conversations on a variety of issues affecting Indian country.

In later years, Professor Ortiz received an unflattering portrayal from Russell Means, Lakota and AIM activist. Means detailed Ortiz’ “three-piece, cream colored suit with matching loafers” and commented that he darted his eyes “furtively around the

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<sup>764</sup> Phil Parnell, “Indian Scholars to Powwow in Historic Convocation” *The Daily Princetonian*, March 16, 1970, 1.

room” at AIM. activists with their long hair, ribbon shirts, and Indian jewelry at the 1969 national conference on Indian education.<sup>765</sup> Clearly, Means portrayed Ortiz as an example of an Indian attempting to fit into mainstream society, and suggested he appeared embarrassed or intimidated by overt Indian style of dress.

However, it should be noted that Ortiz openly supported AIM and the 1973 Wounded Knee occupation and invited several AIM activists, including Vernon Bellencourt, Leonard Crow Dog, and Maynard Stanley as guest speakers in his classes and to speak before a general audience at Princeton University, exposing the college campus directly to AIM activists and provide them the opportunity to fundraise for the Wounded Knee Defense Fund.<sup>766</sup> Perhaps Means’ commentary resulted from the unease some Indians feel towards anthropologists. Ortiz received minor criticism from his Tewa community because some believed he revealed important religious secrets in his book *The Tewa World* published in 1969. Regardless of commentary about one’s personal dressing style, Ortiz diligently worked on the first Convocation and Indian recruitment for Princeton, which graduated its first Indian students in 1975.

The Convocation steering committee named by the AIHS consisted of all Indian members. The Society conceived of the convocation as a working event held during Princeton University’s Easter break, March 23-26, 1970. The original steering committee named included several individuals with professional training including Ortiz; Rupert

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<sup>765</sup> Russell Means and Marvin J. Wolf, *Where White Men Fear to Tread: The Autobiography of Russell Means* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 173.

<sup>766</sup> Denny Chin, and Harry Irizarry, “AIM Leader Speaks on Wounded Knee,” *The Daily Princetonian*, April 4, 1973, 1; Steve Freedman, “Professor Supports Action at Wounded Knee,” *The Daily Princetonian*, March 6, 1973, 1; David Liemer, “Indian Leader Blasts US Government,” *The Daily Princetonian*, March 7, 1973, 1; Bob Ruxin, and Cynthia Read, “Crow Dog Proposes Return to Rituals,” *The Daily Princetonian*, November 7, 1973, 1.

Costo, Cahuilla; Edward Dozier, Tewa Pueblo and anthropology and linguist professor at University of Arizona; David Warren, Santa Clara Pueblo, historian, and director of curriculum and instruction at the Institute of American Indian Arts; and Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee.<sup>767</sup> Membership on the steering committee changed, as some additions and at least two departures occurred. At an executive council meeting in November, the Society added Roger Buffalohead, Ponca historian and American Indian Studies professor at University of Minnesota and Bea Medicine, Standing Rock Sioux and anthropology professor at San Francisco State College. Eventually, the steering committee also included Leonard Bear King, Sioux and student at University of New Mexico; Bob Kaniatobe, Choctaw and student at San Francisco State College; N. Scott Momaday, Kiowa and English professor at University of California, Berkeley; Fritz Scholder, Luiseño and artist; Joseph Senungetuk, Inupiaq Alaskan Native and student at San Francisco Art Institute; and briefly Louis Ballard, Cherokee and instructor at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

In the end, David Warren would not serve on the steering committee, possibly because he expressed changing his panel presentation from pre-Columbian history to the oral history program of the Doris Duke Foundation. Costo perceived Warren's panel revision as an attempt to use the Convocation as a means to gain grant monies to complete his personal research.<sup>768</sup> In part, the inclusion of college students on the

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<sup>767</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, 7 June 1969, pg. 2, box 12, folder 14, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>768</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Louis Ballard, November 27, 1969, pg. 3, box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

steering committee represented the desire to fully embrace Indian students and consider them as scholarly equals to professional participants.

The Society also continued its strong commitment to Indian arts and Indian artists. It previously promoted them through its publications and the Museum of Indian Arts which included a small art gallery and museum at Chautauqua House, the formal headquarters for the Society. The AIHS integrated the arts into the Convocation program. Fritz Scholder, Luiseño, coordinated nearly one hundred pieces of art for the special Convocation exhibit displayed at the Woodrow Wilson School of International Affairs on campus including paintings, drawings, statuary, and prints. Henry-Costo reported some of the art was stolen from the Princeton Inn and the Woodrow Wilson School display.<sup>769</sup> Some of the artists attended or taught at the American Indian Art Institute, a BIA supported boarding school established in 1962 for high school and post-graduate students interested in the arts and located in Santa Fe, New Mexico.<sup>770</sup> For some of the artists, the Convocation represented the first exposure of their art to a large audience since few art galleries embraced Indian art at the time.

The Convocation steering committee experienced some complications with the arts panel. Louis Ballard, Cherokee and instructor at the American Indian Arts Institute (AIAI) originally served as chairperson of the arts panel. However, assumptions and disagreements led to Scholder replacing Ballard. Initially, Ballard expressed displeasure about Ortiz' rumored affiliation with a Santa Fe conference held in November 1969

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<sup>769</sup> "Indian Paintings Taken," *Town Topics*, April 2, 1970, 16.

<sup>770</sup> United States Department of the Interior and Indian Arts and Crafts Board, *Native American Arts I: Institute of American Indian Arts* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office: 1968).

under the sponsorship of the School of American Research (later renamed School for Advanced Research) in which he believed Ortiz ignored Indian scholars who could have participated. Ballard registered his complaint to Costo. In response, Costo indicated the Society practiced “solidity of prudent and responsible conduct,” and could not “permit disharmony to take foothold,” in planning the Convocation. Further, he explained the Society selected each steering committee member with care, and considered their responsible attitudes and capacity to work together. Costo advised Ballard if he considered it impossible to work with Ortiz, then he could not participate with the steering committee.<sup>771</sup> At the time, Ballard chose to continue on as the chairperson of the arts panel but subsequent disputes occurred.

Ballard wanted autonomy in his creative process and insisted participating artists receive payment for their participation. Costo communicated his displeasure towards Ballard’s position and declared, “I think we have the right to ask the artists, for ONCE, to do what we have been doing for years. They will receive transportation and lodging and food. No more.”<sup>772</sup> Costo indicated most members of the Society completed their work without pay. Indeed, most considered their work important for the Indian community and labored without compensation. A little over a month before the Convocation, the working relationship ended when the Society canceled a proposed concert on March 24 with music and performing arts because of the increasing discord. In a letter dated February 7, Costo uninvited Ballard to the Convocation. Costo informed him, “We cannot

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<sup>771</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Louis Ballard December 6, 1969, pg. 2, box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>772</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Louis Ballard, n.d., box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.



have haggling and factionalism take place, and we will not permit it. We cannot work with you.”<sup>773</sup>

In part, Ballard’s steadfast insistence that the BIA receive credit and billing in the Convocation caused the working relationship to deteriorate. Letters and counter letters sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and the Ford Foundation which provided the Society with grant money support. Undoubtedly Costo and Ballard spoke over the telephone with personal conversations rather than limiting communications through letters, but the conflict percolated and resulted in public accusation and name-calling. Philip Galvan, Ohlone and Secretary of the Society, wrote to Louis Bruce, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, after the Society learned Ballard sent a letter of complaint. Galvan commented Ballard’s “injured vanity” led to difficulties in working with him. Further, Galvan insinuated the BIA used Ballard “to disturb and disrupt our Convocation.”<sup>774</sup> Galvan’s commentary illustrated the Society’s concerns about the BIA interfering or discrediting the Convocation. Compelled to write to Bruce again, Ballard called Costo “anti-Bureau of Indian Affairs,” and argued the problems derived from Costo’s “deliberate attempts to undermine the prestige of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.”<sup>775</sup> In

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<sup>773</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Louis Ballard, February 7, 1970, box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>774</sup> Personal correspondence, Philip Galvan to Louis Bruce, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 8, 1970, Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry Costo papers, reel 44, *The Rupert Costo Archive of the American Indian filmed from the holdings of the Rupert Costo Library of the American Indian in the Department of Special Collections at the University of California at Riverside*. Native America: a primary record series, 1. Woodbridge, Conn: Primary Source Microfilm, 2001 (Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001).

<sup>775</sup> Personal correspondence, Louis Ballard to Louis Bruce, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 28, 1970, reel 44, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

addition, Ballard inferred Costo held anti-American sentiments because he objected to the performance of a Flag song, a tribute to the United States of America.

Costo wrote to Ballard and shared the Society never opened an art event with a Flag song. Instead, he viewed it as practical “for a patriotic rally, not a concert.” He concluded, “I don’t care what others do. We don’t do it.”<sup>776</sup> His sentiments contained no contempt for the United States of America; rather he considered it inappropriate for the venue and culturally irrelevant to an Indian concert of dance, music, and poetry. However, Ballard inferred that Costo held a negative attitude towards the BIA, and enclosed a press release with the *San Francisco Chronicle* newspaper clipping with Costo’s comment about putting the BIA out of business. Perhaps Ballard had growing concern about his Institute of American Indian Arts job as he remarked, “I have brought added prestige, kudos, and acclaim to the Bureau, and will continue to do so.”<sup>777</sup>

Ballard also contacted Siobhan Oppenheimer, Senior Program Officer of the Ford Foundation, to complain about Costo and the cancellation of the concert. According to Ballard, Costo had no concern for his work or the work of other Indian artists. Further, Ballard advised Oppenheimer that Costo’s actions were “antagonistic” to his aims and “disrespectful” of his achievements. Finally, Ballard objected to Scholder’s planned art exhibition because “ORIGINALLY THIS WAS MY IDEA IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CONCERT!!!”<sup>778</sup> His capitalization clearly demonstrated his extreme irritation.

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<sup>776</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Louis Ballard, February 1, 1970, box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>777</sup> Personal correspondence, Louis Ballard to Louis Bruce, March 28, 1970, pg. 2, reel 44, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>778</sup> Personal correspondence, Louis Ballard to Siobhan Oppenheimer, Senior Program Officer of the Ford Foundation, February 25, 1970, pg. 2, reel 44, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

Although unclear who had the idea first, for several years prior the Society engaged with Indian art and Indian artists.

The Chautauqua House contained the Museum of Indian Arts and the Society could have planned an art exhibit component without Ballard's suggestion. For example, Costo wrote to Alfred Bush, Curator of the Princeton Collections of Western Americana, in November 1969. He sent a letter to Bush as a follow up to their phone conversation and to confirm details. Costo detailed Bush would set up an exhibit for the Convocation and inquired if he had adequate California or Northwest items because if he did not, the Society could send additional items for inclusion in the exhibit.<sup>779</sup> Early on, the Society depended on curator Bush for an art exhibit, not Ballard. Clearly, the working relationship between Ballard and the steering committee dissolved. Costo viewed Ballard's letters as an attempt to disrupt and attack the Convocation.

The series of increasingly negative interactions with Ballard proved to be the opposite of what Costo and the Society wanted. Instead, it desired the Convocation, including the planning, to demonstrate Indian professionalism and show Indians could work together without conflict. Costo desired lively discussion and debate, not destructive interactions. Despite the late changes to the steering committee and the arts panel, the remaining members determinedly moved forward with plans.

The steering committee formulated panel themes and selected participants from submitted applications. One panel theme that received a revision to its title was chaired by Bea Medicine, "Red Power: Real or Potential?" Initially, the steering committee selected the title "Red Power: (OK) What Else?" but in discussing the title, Medicine, a

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<sup>779</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Alfred Bush, Princeton University Curator of Western Americana, November 15, 1969, box 62, folder 2, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

late addition to the steering committee, personally found the original title undignified and suggested a change to either “Red Power- Meaning and Misuse” or “Red Power-Real or Potential.” Her concern led to a change to the panel name, a name less offensive and perhaps more inclusive to the younger, student participants. Medicine’s presentation on Red Power called for participation in mainstream politics. She observed, “You know, marching and planning these confrontations results in this: the minute they leave the meeting room the decisions are still being made by people other than the Indians.”<sup>780</sup> Medicine’s comment illustrates the challenges of Indians entering the political arena. However, Medicine strongly believed for any successful political action, a significant number of Indians needed to participate.<sup>781</sup> Similarly, the Convocation steering committee wanted extensive and attentive participation.

Since they perceived it as a working event, the steering committee insisted that selected participants attend all morning general sessions, but allowed attendees to chose what afternoon panels to attend. By insisting on active participation, the steering committee hoped to thoroughly engage attendees. Also, as Costo reiterated in personal letters, he wanted the Convocation to differ from earlier conferences by discouraging unwanted social behaviors. For instance, a lack of involvement from attendees could result in empty presentation rooms and inebriation. The AIHS wanted to avoid “conference Indians,” those who attended various events throughout Indian country but

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<sup>780</sup> Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry-Costo, eds., *Indian Voices: The First Convocation of American Indian Scholars* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press Inc., 1970), 311.

<sup>781</sup> Bea Medicine and Sue-Ellen Jacobs, ed., *Learning to be an Anthropologist and Remaining Native* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2001).

rarely contributed to the positive outcome of conferences.<sup>782</sup> In addition, it wanted the Convocation to represent through, thoughtful, discussions of consequence. The Society promoted the Convocation in *The Indian Historian*.<sup>783</sup>

Ortiz wrote an accompanying piece in which he described how some Indian voices were heard, but noted little representation of Indians, if any, appeared at the highest levels where decisions and long-range policies formed. As a result, Ortiz issued a call for the first Convocation of American Indian scholars observing Indians obtained consultation “during discussions of symptoms and outcomes of particular long-standing and deep-seated problems, but, as always, when discussion turns to causes and solutions the Indian viewpoint is not considered.” He continued, “Especially lacking is the reasoned and disciplined voice of Indian scholars speaking in concert to the grand issues before our people and before the nation.”<sup>784</sup> Ortiz also commented on the timing pointing to the national mood of tolerance and good will as an opportune time to hold the Convocation. Unstated in his assessment of the national mood included the funding possibilities for the Convocation.

The AIHS received the overwhelming majority of its funding for the Convocation from a Ford Foundation grant it received in 1969. The Foundation provided \$52,852. The Society ultimately received the grant but it expressed apprehension about the logistics of paying for the Convocation without grant monies. At an executive council

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<sup>782</sup> Jim Porter, “Call Me Brother,” *Wassaja*, March/April 1974, 8; “Voice of the Indian: Conference Indian,” *Wassaja*, July 1974, 4.

<sup>783</sup> “An Interdisciplinary Event in the Exploration of Knowledge,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 3 (Fall 1969): 4.

<sup>784</sup> Alfonso Ortiz, “Call for the First Convocation of American Indian Scholars,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 2 no. 3 (Fall 1969): 5.

meeting, Costo reported the application remained before the Ford Foundation and had received assurances it would appear before the next meeting of its Board of Directors. Costo commented, “We can do nothing but wait at this time, and we can not engage in extensive preparation for the Convocation until we know how much, if any, money we will have.” Costo continued, that without the Ford Foundation grant, the Society would be forced to get “bits and pieces” of funding from other various sources.<sup>785</sup>

The AIHS received a response to its November 13, 1969 funding request in a letter from assistant secretary William H. Nims of the Ford Foundation on December 1, 1969. Nims notified the Society that it had received a grant, to be used over a five month period, to support a conference to “explore the problems and concerns of American Indians.” In closing, he extended “every good wish for the success of the Convocation.”<sup>786</sup> The bulk of the approved budget for the convocation included: \$26,427 participant travel expenses; \$12,970 participant lodging and meals; \$4,235 publication of materials; \$4,200 in salary for individual to contact panelists, moderators, and presenters; \$1,900 travel expenses for said individual; \$1,500 for Convocation Chairperson salary and expenses. Other incidentals of the approved budget included telephone, printing, mailing, set up, typists and office help.<sup>787</sup> The AIHS received the money by December 19, 1969, which allowed only a short time frame for planning the Convocation.

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<sup>785</sup> Executive Council Meeting Minutes, November 1, 1969, pg. 2, box 12, folder 14, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>786</sup> Personal correspondence, William H. Nims, Assistant Secretary of the Ford Foundation to Rupert Costo, December 1, 1969, reel 14, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>787</sup> Ibid, pg. 2.

The Convocation charged a minimal registration fee of forty dollars for participants, and provided a discounted rate for students housed in Princeton University dormitories, with financial assistance available to the majority of attendees for transportation and lodging. All meals were supplied and served at the Princeton Inn where most of the non-student attendees stayed for the duration of the Convocation. The steering committee limited the participants to two hundred people, because of the facilities accommodations and selected them from submitted applications.<sup>788</sup> The steering committee sent out invitations to some Indian scholars, personally extending to them an invitation to attend.

The majority of funding for the Convocation came from the Foundation grant and Princeton University contributed housing, reception, meals, and presentation rooms for little or no charge. The committee determined attendees' eligibility requirements, which included: scholars and professionals, minimum college graduation; students attending college on a regular basis; tribal leaders or historians, tribal activity necessary and knowledge of indigenous language required; and non-Indian professionals and observers by invitation only.

In contrast to other conferences, the Convocation purposefully limited the number of non-Indian attendees and only those personally invited could attend. In contrast, for example, the American Indian Chicago Conference (AICC) in 1961 had about 145 non-Indian participants. By not embracing non-Indian scholars, the Society demonstrated it wanted the Convocation to facilitate Indian driven discussions and perhaps to prevent, for

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<sup>788</sup> The Costos, Bea Medicine, Alfonso Ortiz, and student Bob Kaniatobe selected the Convocation attendees.

example, non-Indians dominating discussions or arriving with pre-conceived notions and stifling conversations. However, the Convocation did not completely exclude non-Indians. In the Convocation program, Costo noted the “experimental” nature of the event and hoped the discussions generated would address “questions of ideology, scholarship, and principles” from which to guide the future of Indian scholarship in practical terms.

The Society encouraged the participation of Indian college students and looked for creative approaches to generate interest. Costo informed Scheirbeck about Stanford University providing a student participant five college credits for attending the Convocation.<sup>789</sup> Costo found encouragement in Stanford University offering college credit and hoped other colleges would follow suit. Although unclear if additional colleges and universities issued credit for attendance, Stanford’s willingness to do so illustrates the respect the Convocation received.

Leading up to Costo sending letters directly to colleges and universities, he expressed his apprehensions to Ortiz about the process of selecting student attendees. Costo considered it “a thorny subject,” but the steering committee handled it. He wanted to avoid student organizations because regardless if students were members of clubs, their participation should be encouraged. Further, Costo warned Ortiz about what he termed the “kangaroo court enforcers” people whom he believed harassed and generally made life miserable for “the young Indian student who wants a thorough academic, scholarly education.” As Costo viewed Brightman and the occupation of Alcatraz as motivation for organizing the Convocation, he commented that it acquire “the best of our

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<sup>789</sup> Although Costo does not provide the name of the Stanford student, from the Convocation participant list, one may infer it was Raymond Cross, Mandan-Hidatsa; Chris McNeil, Tlingit; or Ann Rainer, Taos Pueblo.



youth, not just the loudest.”<sup>790</sup> An indirect commentary about the attention some college students were receiving, Costo wanted to ensure outstanding students and potential future Indian scholars participated in the Convocation.

Costo wanted Indian college student participation to present a counterpart to current events. Further, he wished to provide college student attendees a sense of responsibility, bolster their endurance for college, and provide a safe cultural respite from the challenges of student life. He concluded, “all I want to see is that they [college students] are serious, thoughtful, articulate people.”<sup>791</sup> Costo desired critical thinking and for students to attend, learn, and to share their knowledge with other attendees.

In an exchange with Leonard Bear King, a student member on the steering committee and scheduled presenter, Costo explained his preference for presentations which he hoped could generate discussion. Bear King’s topic, on child development, caused Costo consternation because he wanted Bear King to offer more critical analysis. Costo advised him, “why not tell them simply and sharply, how it really is, how it really was—and how it could be. Dammit, only YOU can bring out the Indian viewpoint, and that’s what we want you to do. You have the brains and the guts.” He continued, “I don’t care how sharp you get, but for Wovoka’s sake, stir up some THINKING, even controversial thinking.” Costo’s encouragement demonstrates his commitment to panel presentations generating discussion, but also his support of a college student providing their expert opinion on a topic. He further cautioned Bear King that if he chose not to

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<sup>790</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Al Ortiz November 16, 1969, pg. 2, box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>791</sup> Ibid, pg. 3

approach his presentation with critical analysis, “nothing will happen,” meaning his address would not inform or teach anyone anything. Perhaps to soften the blow of criticizing Bear King’s submitted paper, Costo signed his letter, “as ever your friend, Rupert,” an indication of Costo’s assured support and friendship.<sup>792</sup> For reasons unknown, Bear King did not present at the Convocation though his name appeared in the program as a member of the steering committee.

In soliciting college students’ attendance, the steering committee generated a formula for cultivating tribal diversity. Entitled, “College Students: A suggested strategy for ensuring geographical/tribal balance,” the steering committee outlined how it would approach the selection process. It determined “every effort should be made to prevent the delegates [students] from being selected by non-Indian professors,” because the committee believed in restricting the role of non-Indians. Additional preferences expressed by the committee included students who spoke their indigenous language, had an understanding of the socio-cultural conditions on their reservations and perhaps most importantly, “be willing to talk about their knowledge” at the Convocation. Thus, the steering committee sought vocal and equal participation from student attendees. Finally, the committee decided if students came from the same school they should not be, if at all possible, from the same tribe to ensure tribal diversity. Prior to sending a form letter, the Society sent an announcement to all the universities and colleges in the country, approximately five hundred, to inform them of the upcoming Convocation and to catch the attention of those before the winter break.

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<sup>792</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Leonard Bear King, March 9, 1970, box 62, folder 6, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

Rupert Costo sent form letters to Indian student clubs soliciting applications and to ensure participation of, at minimum, forty students. Dated January 27, 1970, the students had only a brief time frame to submit the enclosed applications. Costo targeted college and university campuses with large Indian student populations. As a result, the majority of letters were sent to major public universities and colleges in the Midwest and West. Some of the schools included: Arizona State University; University of Montana; University of New Mexico; University of North Dakota; University of Oklahoma; University of South Dakota; University of Utah; and University of Wyoming. Since the Convocation occurred during the nadir of the Alcatraz occupation, many Indian college students in California, particularly in the Bay Area, were not attending classes but residing on the island. Aware of the students' absence, Costo sent few letters to California colleges and universities.

In the form letter, Costo communicated the committee's preferred qualifications for student attendees. Costo also incorporated gender neutral language by indicating "He (or she)" would "hopefully" have the desired qualities.<sup>793</sup> A minor inclusion, Costo recognized Indian college students consisted of men and women and avoided patriarchal language. In his letter, he also asked for a preference for senior or graduate student level students. In an era of youthful social movements that embraced the mantra "don't trust anyone over thirty," the Convocation actively sought diverse ages of its participants. Ultimately, sixty participants were thirty years old or younger with nearly forty college students and thirty seven women. Students hailed from such schools as: University of Arizona; University of California, Davis; Colorado State University; Dartmouth College;

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<sup>793</sup> Form correspondence, Rupert Costo to college students, January 27, 1970, box 62, folder 3, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

University of Minnesota; University of Montana; University of New Mexico; Oberlin College; Oklahoma State University; University of Oregon; Stanford University; State University of New York; University of Southern Mississippi and University of Wisconsin.

As the Convocation date approached, some members of the steering committee had concerns protests could disrupt it. Ortiz met with school administrators and they reached an agreement that if any student disturbances occurred, only the University President could contact the authorities. He expressed a feeling of “unease” ever since Henry-Costo visited the campus and inquired about security. To resolve any possible protest from unexpected visitors, Ortiz devised a plan of action. He would give protesters an opportunity to make a brief statement and then ask them to peacefully leave. If they refused, they would be offered an available room on campus to meet. At all costs, Ortiz wanted to work out any problems and avoid police intervention. He worried, “such a move would devastate all of the programs aimed at aiding non-Cadillac Indians.”<sup>794</sup> Costo assured Ortiz he did not anticipate “any scene” and believed Henry-Costo only expressed “strict concern.” He further commented, “It is odd the way most people take off on her when it is really me they are talking about.”<sup>795</sup> Although the steering committee discussed and prepared for the possibility of protests, none occurred and it remained committed to encouraging the participation of college students.

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<sup>794</sup> Personal correspondence, Al Ortiz to Rupert Costo, March 11, 1970, box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>795</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Al Ortiz, March 14, 1970, box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

In addition to college students, Costo encouraged the attendance of Philip Martin, Choctaw and first Board of Regents President for Haskell Indian Junior College (later renamed Haskell Indian Nations University). In a letter to Martin, Costo reiterated his belief that the Convocation represented “the most important event to be arranged in our history.” He viewed the Convocation as distinct from previous conferences and meetings and believed it showed “the leadership of our people, and makes certain that this leadership will be recognized and heard.”<sup>796</sup> Martin did not attend the Convocation, perhaps because of scheduling difficulty, but Costo clearly recognized the significance of what the Society was organizing.

Costo continued to express his opinion that the Convocation represented a new and unique meeting. He declared, “This is not just another BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] or OEO [Office of Economic Opportunity] conference, to which most tribes are so eager to send representatives, and which result in absolutely nothing,” in a personal letter to Warren Clements, Education-Recreation Director of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon.<sup>797</sup> Costo explained the Convocation represented the first time a group of Indian scholars would come together and show Indian scholarly leadership existed. In addition, he pointed to Indian scholars as lending themselves to aid the work of tribes and Indian people. In the end, neither Martin nor Clements attended the Convocation, but Costo clearly sought to excite Indians about the prospects of the Convocation. Since the steering committee received funding in mid-

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<sup>796</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Philip Martin, March 2, 1970, box 62, folder 3, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>797</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Warren Clements, March 11, 1970, box 62, folder 3, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

December, it had only a short time to publicize and recruit for the Convocation, which may have played a role in some invited members not attending.

The Society ultimately published *Indian Voices: The First Convocation of American Indian Scholars* through its Indian Historian Press, which included the papers presented and subsequent discussions, report on resolutions, and a list of participants. The publication granted those who did not attend the Convocation the ability to access the discussions it generated. In a unique move, the list of participants included the tribal identity, occupation or institutional affiliation, and the ages of participants. By including the ages, the Society illustrated the multigenerational nature of the Convocation. In the publication, the Society described it as a “milestone” and proudly described it as “challenging thought, creative ideas” which would serve as an “effective tool” for Indian country for years to come.<sup>798</sup> In addition to the presentations and discussion of the Convocation, the Society believed it illustrated Indians could direct and organize an event dedicated to generating discussions on Indian country without the leadership of non-Indians.

The four day Convocation schedule included four morning general assembly sessions and afternoon panels on various themes. Speakers for the morning assemblies included: Rupert Costo keynote address, “Moment of Truth for the American Indian,”; Alfonso Ortiz, “American Indian Philosophy and its Relation to the Modern World”; N. Scott Momaday, Kiowa, Pulitzer Prize recipient and professor at University of California, Berkeley, “The Man Made of Words”; and Vine Deloria Jr., Standing Rock Sioux, former director of National Congress of American Indians, and at the time, law student at

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<sup>798</sup> Costo and Henry-Costo, eds., *Indian Voices*, vii.

University of Colorado, Boulder, “Implications of the 1968 Civil Rights Act in Tribal Autonomy.”

Each of the morning presentations spoke to the development by Indians of Indian scholarship and defending Indian rights. Ortiz observed modern America was prepared to listen to the practical wisdom of Indians. He listed Indian concepts of freedom, architecture, and the ability to appreciate “just being,” as topics mainstream America could learn. He commented on the responsibility of teachers. Speaking about the field of anthropology, Ortiz observed as a teaching method they “can not continue year after year mindlessly reciting in the classrooms our litany of Indian exotica and assorted trivia.”<sup>799</sup> Ortiz believed the solutions for many dilemmas could be found in Indian communities.

Momaday argued for the continued study of oral traditions and language. He opened his presentation with the comment, “we are all made of words.” For Momaday, the process of storytelling was more than words; rather, it raised central questions about humanity and the unknown. He focused on the role and impact of imagination. He commented, “Our best destiny is to imagine, at least, completely who and what, and that we are. The greatest tragedy that can befall us is to go unimagined.”<sup>800</sup>

Deloria spoke on the Civil Rights Act of 1968 which outlined Indian rights by extending the Bill of Rights to individual Indians against tribal governments and directed the Secretary of Interior to create model courts for Indian offenses. Deloria outlined two legal concepts, tribal rights and individual Indian rights. In describing tribal autonomy, Deloria remarked that through treaty relationships, the federal government considered

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<sup>799</sup> Costo and Henry-Costo, eds., *Indian Voices*, 11.

<sup>800</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

tribes either as corporate organizations or conglomerates of individuals without political entity. He commented that the end result is “confusing as hell, and technical,” but he questioned the legality of the federal government unilaterally forcing tribes to be placed under the act. Deloria concluded, “our Indian courts and tribal councils can create an Indian common law and justly define this relationship [with the federal government].”<sup>801</sup> He wanted to strengthen and reaffirm the role and political entity of the tribe and described legal challenges as a method to access power.

The Convocation steering committee considered all morning sessions mandatory because it viewed them as particularly relevant to the purpose of the event. Not just discussing issues of concern, but to cross tribal and discipline lines and determine how scholars could jointly contribute to solutions. As Costo remarked in his keynote address, “It is not the purpose nor the intention of this Convocation to dictate policies or to make decisions which will affect all of our people, or to impose upon the sovereignty of the tribes.” He continued, “It is our purpose only to point out a direction, to provide the help needed to reach certain necessary goals.”<sup>802</sup> In support of his vision, the Convocation included a series of afternoon panels.

Attendees selected which afternoon panels to attend. Each day had three or four panel presentations. Some of the panel topics included: “Native American Studies Programs: Review and Evaluation” by Roger Buffalohead; “Forms and Uses of Tribal Government,” by Rupert Costo; “The Urban Scene and the American Indian” by Vine Deloria Jr.; “Indian Land Development-Good or Bad Economics” by D’Arcy McNickle;

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<sup>801</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>802</sup> Ibid., 4.



and “Native American Arts in America” by Fritz Scholder. The gathered artists and community members discussed the qualities that made “authentic” Indian art. Buffy Sainte-Marie recommended artists form a non-profit corporation to promote and protect authentic Indian art. They discussed the possible role of repatriation, because many museums in the United States and Europe had religious and cultural items.

Buffalohead’s presentation revealed the complex nature of Native American Studies programs where factionalism emerged between students and community members surrounding the purpose and curriculum. Buffalohead shared the program at the University of California, Los Angeles precariously balanced between “remedial and revolutionary materials” and as a result, he believed the program accomplished very little. Representatives from diverse schools, including University of Oregon and Black Hills College, discussed funding and student retention. They also spoke about the struggle between supporting student activism, and as with the case of Alcatraz, what it meant for programs if students left to participate in activism outside of campus. Stanford University undergraduate Chris McNeil illustrated the strength added by Indian students attending when he expanded the conversation with the comment, “you find that what attracts Indian students in the first place is familiarity, and any kind of sense of unity that has developed there.”<sup>803</sup> His comment revealed that a significant contributing factor for Indian student recruitment is a preexisting campus Indian community.

Two special evening sessions occurred with voluntary attendance for Convocation attendees. Bea Medicine presented “Responsibilities of the Foundations in Funding Indian Programs...and the Other Side of the Coin” Tuesday evening. Wednesday

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<sup>803</sup> Ibid., 181.

evening, Jeannette Henry-Costo delivered a paper entitled, “The Native American in Textbook Literature-an Irreverent Approach.” Both presentations sought to facilitate open, truthful discussion and mutual understanding. As a result, the Society decided against stenographic records and names of the discussants were withheld. Medicine’s presentation considered the role of foundations in funding Indian programs, and four out of ten foundations that had been invited to the Convocation attended. Henry-Costo’s presentation was attended by seven publishers out of the eleven invited.

Approximately thirty Convocation attendees decided to join the lively textbook discussion, which lasted until after eleven in the evening. Henry-Costo argued textbooks “are inaccurate at best, and utterly insulting at least,” and could be more thoroughly examined. She also raised the issue of publishers requesting research based materials and information for its books. Henry-Costo chided publishers for seeking authentic information and expecting Indians to accomplish the work of its author without compensation. Her frustration led her to declare the Society would no longer do this and, “if you want our services as consultants, readers, evaluators, you will have to pay for it.”<sup>804</sup> The discussion following Henry-Costo’s presentation illustrated a call for Indian publishing presses and the desire for bilingual texts to encourage students to learn their indigenous languages. A publisher commented on the difficulty of incorporating historical truth because of the differences in what Indians and school boards wanted children to be exposed to in textbooks. Perhaps neither evening session generated solutions to concerns raised; however, both encouraged opening dialogue between Indians and grant awarding foundations and publishers.

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<sup>804</sup> Ibid., 372.

Indeed, a primary function of the Convocation was to generate discussions. Lively contact between Indian scholars, known and unknown, and facilitating connections served as a primary purpose of the Convocation. One attendee remarked, “Last night one or two of us, as many of you did, sat up until all hours of the evening discussing what this conference is about, and what we thought we could do to extend everything here that’s going on.”<sup>805</sup> To encourage a legacy of the first national Convocation of American Scholars, the attendees passed a series of resolutions on the last day chaired by Resolution chairperson Bea Medicine. The resolutions addressed a number of issues including: holding an annual Convocation; supporting the Iroquois in their demands for restoration of wampum belts from New York state; endorse the continued development of the Navajo Community College and demand the Department of Interior provide funding for it; and supporting actions in the movement of Indian rights not resulting in harm to innocent people.

The Convocation established a national agenda for studies on Indians. The resolutions passed at the Convocation included opinions on inclusion of Indians in studies on Indians, communications between Indian groups, support for educational endeavors at various levels, examination of emerging Native American Studies and American Indian Studies programs as an academic discipline, and support for Indian artists and their arts. In summarizing the success of the Convocation, Ortiz commented, “On Monday morning we merely had purpose [Costo keynote address]. On Monday night we had soul [Sainte-Marie performance].” He continued, “On Tuesday morning we had power [Deloria presentation]. On Tuesday night the full moon over Princeton was wearing an eagle

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<sup>805</sup> Ibid., 326.

feather [first time hundreds of Indians gathered at Princeton University campus]. On Wednesday morning we had majesty [Momaday presentation].”<sup>806</sup> Through the use of metaphor, Ortiz shared the schedule and correlated presentations with its significance. *The New York Times* reported on the Convocation but focused largely on Deloria’s speech without much comment on the significance of the event.<sup>807</sup>

From the first Convocation of American Indian scholars emerged the idea for the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) which incorporated in August 1970 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Rosemary Christensen, Chippewa, organized the national conference in 1969 on Indian education as part of her work at the Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory (UMREL) in Minneapolis of which Costo dismissed to Scheirbeck. Christensen attended the Convocation and found people with similar interest in establishing a national organization on Indian education.

In addition to Christensen, many NIEA founding Board members attended the Convocation and presented or attended the afternoon panel “Innovations in Education” facilitated by University of Arizona Ph.D. candidate Samuel Billison, Navajo. The panel members included several people who would become founding Board Members of the NIEA: John Compton, Sioux and teacher at the University of Iowa, Hershil Shamant, Kiowa and Human Relations Committee Chair under Oklahoma State Department of Education, Dillon Platero, Navajo and director of Rough Rock Demonstration School. Other NIEA founding members in attendance included Lee Antell, Chippewa, Sparlin

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<sup>806</sup> Phil Parnell, “Indian Scholars Consider Future, Pass 22 Resolutions,” *The Daily Princetonian*, April 1, 1970, 5.

<sup>807</sup> Nancy Hicks, “Indian Links Gains for his People to Recognition of Tribal Power,” *The New York Times*, March 29, 1970, 45.

Norwood, Cherokee, Marigold Linton, Cupeño, John Winchester, Potawatomi, Elizabeth Whiteman, Crow and William Demmert, Tlingit.

According to Demmert, several teachers and administrators met the first day of the Convocation to acquaint themselves with each other. Some knew each other from earlier participation in the National Education Association (NEA). By the second evening of the Convocation, the idea crystallized to create a national organization and Demmert and Norwood suggested the name National Indian Education Association because they believed the NEA served as a great model.<sup>808</sup> The NIEA, still in operation today, dedicates itself to bringing Indian educators together to discuss how to improve schools and education of Indian students, promote cultural and language maintenance, and influence policy and policymakers. Although founders like Christensen had organized earlier conferences, discussion and participation with like-minded educators and administrators at the Convocation precipitated the formal organization. The continued activity of the NIEA stands as an enduring legacy of the first Convocation.

After the Convocation, the Society met and debriefed on its successes and what it needed to improve. In early April 1970, the Board of Directors met and detailed its concerns from the Convocation. The issues raised ranged from “students were afraid to speak up at sessions,” to “too long, people became restless towards end.”<sup>809</sup> Another question to consider was whether the Convocation would occur annually. Costo explained, “we resisted this [holding the Convocation annually], since we believed the

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<sup>808</sup>William G. Demmert Jr., “Indian Education Revisited: A Personal Experience,” *Journal of American Indian Education* 38, no. 3 (Spring 1999): 5-13.

<sup>809</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, April 3, 1970, box 12, box 21, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

Convocation should point the direction, not become a power instrument.” Further, Costo noted, the first Convocation “accomplished everything we had hoped for it.”<sup>810</sup> With some caution, the Society committed to organizing another Convocation in 1971.

Despite private hesitation, the Society pursued a second Convocation. In an article, the AIHS declared with “fair certainty” the Convocation would become an annual event. Several locations suggested for the next Convocation included University of New Mexico, University of Oklahoma, and Stanford University.<sup>811</sup> The first Convocation garnered the participation of 164 Indian scholars from 25 universities and colleges, 10 professionals, and 12 invited observers. Scholars primarily came from the United States but a few came from Canada and New Zealand.

Held at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies in Aspen, Colorado, the second Convocation of American Indian Scholars, focused on water rights and education. In contrast to the first Convocation, attorney William Veeder, with a specialty in water rights, was the only non-Indian to attend. Several attendees returned to the second Convocation. In addition to the Costos, Roger Buffalohead, Vine Deloria Jr., William Demmert Jr., Adolph Dial, John Echohawk, Gloria Emerson, Bea Medicine, Charles Poitras, Helen Redbird, Joe Sando, William Thacker, Barry White, Richard Wilson, and Joseph Senungetuk attended. The second Convocation did not receive large grant support perhaps because foundations will furnish “seed money” rather than continually fund an event or organization.

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<sup>810</sup> A Foreword to the Rupert Costo Collection on the Convocation of American Indian Scholars, pg. 2, box 62, folder 1, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>811</sup> “Convocation of American Indian Scholars is Success: Preparations Begin for 1971,” *The Indian Historian* vol. 3 no. 2 (Spring 1970): 37-38, 50.

Its location, unaffiliated with a specific university or college, also served as a reminder of the Society's tangled interest in participating within the academy. The Society tended to view the academy with caution and proudly declared Princeton had no role in the first Convocation. This disheartened Ortiz, who asked the Costos to avoid publicly and loudly making such declarations while on campus.<sup>812</sup> The Society also published a book reporting on the second Convocation *The Native American Today: A Report on The Second Convocation of Indian Scholars*.<sup>813</sup> Similar to its predecessor, it provided a report from various panels held at the Convocation. The Society clarified its purpose of Convocations and explained, "It is not convened on a regular basis. It is convened when emergencies in Indian life exist; when changes are needed."<sup>814</sup> Thus, after the second Convocation, the Society clearly communicated its decision against holding an annual Convocation. Indeed, the AIHS organized a meeting dedicated to water rights between the Jicarilla Apache Water Resources Inventory Committee and the AIHS Board of Directors, and invited tribal representatives on June 10, 1972 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.<sup>815</sup>

For reasons unknown, though one may speculate connected to funding, time, and growing redundancy of meetings and conferences, the Society stopped hosting national Convocations. Regardless, the Society accomplished its goal of starting discussion and

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<sup>812</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Al Ortiz, March 11, 1970, pg. 3, box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

<sup>813</sup> Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry-Costo, eds., *The Native American Today: A Report on the Second Convocation of Indian Scholars* (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1974).

<sup>814</sup> *Ibid.*, v.

<sup>815</sup> Opening Statement, June 10, 1972, box 38, folder 2, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.

dialogue within the Indian community. The idea for the NIEA was born at the Convocation. The panels and resolutions illustrate early advocacy for tribal review boards, protection of Indian arts, Indian publishing, and examining what American Indians Studies programs should include.<sup>816</sup> Finally, it demonstrated Indians could conceive, organize, and direct an agenda for the community without the aid of non-Indians.

For the Society, the Convocation represented the gathering of Indian students, scholars, artists, and intellectuals to unite their energies and forces on behalf of Indian country. The steering committee desired the active participation from all attendees to generate creative ideas on how to approach concerns. The first Convocation had minimal participation from tribal leaders, but the second Convocation was attended by tribal chairperson Ted James, Paiute, Pyramid Lake reservation, and Buffalo Tiger, Miccosukee of Miccosukee tribe of Florida. The participants included many of the most influential Indian intellectuals of the time. In addition to the Costos, Roger Buffalohead, Vine Deloria Jr., John Echohawk, Kirk Kickingbird, D'Arcy McNickle, Bea Medicine, N. Scott Momaday, Al Ortiz, Fritz Scholder, and more attended. Collectively, many of these scholars represented the "firsts" in their respective fields of expertise and individually advocated for Indian rights. The Convocation steering committee actively sought preeminent intellectuals. For the committee, the strength of united Indian scholars, students, artists, and tribal activists through their talents could illustrate the resilience of

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<sup>816</sup> Susan Miller, "Native America Writes Back: The Origin of the Indigenous Paradigm in Historiography," *Wicaza Sa Review* 23, no. 2 (Fall 2008): 9-28.



Indians. Further, the Convocation showed Indians had the skills necessary to build a stronger future.

## CHAPTER 9

### CONCLUSION: “TO TAKE POSITIVE AND EFFECTIVE ACTION”: THE LEGACY OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In February 2002, the Tomás Rivera Library on the University of California, Riverside campus was filled with the rhythm of handmade gourd rattles accompanied with the songs of Bird Singers, a traditional form of music and singing from the Southwest, including southern California and the Cahuilla tribe. More than one hundred people gathered for the rededication of the Rupert Costo Library of the American Indian, located on the fourth floor in the Costo room. A luncheon served traditional foods including nettle soup, venison with tepary beans and *weewish*. Alvino Siva, a Cahuilla elder of the Los Coyotes reservation and leader of the Cahuilla birdsingers, provided an invocation in the Cahuilla language. The gathered participants celebrated Rupert Costo, Cahuilla and president of the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS or “the Society”) and Jeannette Henry-Costo, Eastern Cherokee. The attendees recognized the continued legacy of the Costos and the organization they founded nearly forty years ago in 1964. Now, nearly fifty years later, the Costos and many founding members may be gone but the dialogue and activities sparked by their activism can be observed throughout California and Indian country.

The Society represented the ongoing tradition of multitribal or intertribal organizational activism among California Indians. They strongly believed they had a responsibility to advocate for the betterment of the people. From one generation to the next, stories of treaties were passed down in California Indian families. Congress disclosed the unratified treaties in 1905. The unratified treaties furnished a central focus

and encouraged the establishment of early 20<sup>th</sup> century California Indian organizations. This form of activism is a historic cultural practice among California Indians.



Figure 13 Rupert Costo speaking at unknown location. Note Jeannette Henry-Costo standing in the background. Used by permission of Special Collections & Archives, UCR Libraries, University of California, Riverside

In a 1983 *Wassaja* editorial, Costo wrote about many Indian intellectuals isolating themselves from participating directly in the Indian social movement for change and working to strengthen Indian self-determination, protect water rights, treaty rights, and defend against racism and poverty.<sup>817</sup> The following edition of *Wassaja* included Costo's response to the letters he had received. He celebrated the volume of letters because they illustrated the evidence of an intellectual Indian activist community

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<sup>817</sup> Rupert Costo, "Speaking Freely: Where are the Intellectuals?" *Wassaja*, January/February 1983, 3.

comprising of many disciplines. However, he rejected the excuses by some who believed those in leadership positions did not want any interjection by Indian intellectuals. Costo reminded his audience, “Nobody will invite you to come in and take charge. They won’t even invite you to come and help.”<sup>818</sup> His words offer a lesson for any activist and demonstrated Costo’s personal principle of interjecting himself and not waiting to be asked. Costo did not hesitate to lobby on behalf of his community. When he observed anything he considered destructive to Indians, he spoke out against it.

The Costos partnership helped them reach their mutual achievements. Costo’s activism was embedded in his Cahuilla identity. He worked as the elected tribal spokesperson of the Cahuilla reservation for a number of years while living hundreds of miles away in San Francisco in the 1960s. His early participation with the California Indian Rights Association led him to advocate in Washington D.C. on behalf of all California Indians. However, with Jeannette Henry-Costo, a trained reporter, they dreamed big and developed a publishing press, a regularly issued scholarly journal, and a monthly newspaper. Henry-Costo may not have had equally strong ties to her tribal community, but she wholeheartedly worked on behalf of all Indians.

A dynamic couple, the Costos made formidable foes and tireless allies. Their mutual support and love, their courage in seeking new avenues of activism, inspired other Indian people to take their first steps into activism. Other organizations emerged with similar goals. For example, the California Indian Education Association (CIEA) emerged in 1967. The Society moved away from challenging textbook companies through the Curriculum Commission and instead began publishing its own books. The CIEA filled

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<sup>818</sup> Rupert Costo, “Speaking Freely: The Intellectuals: Bless ‘em All,” *Wassaja*, March/April 1983, 3.

the void left by the Society's absence. However, few if any Indian organizations considered challenging the historical narrative as a central tenet to its foundation. In addition, by publishing a journal, newspaper, and a series of books, the Society had a process for speaking directly to mainstream journalists, academics, and uninformed Indians and non-Indians.

The Costos had their critics. Some viewed them as arrogant. Some perceived them as elitist gatekeepers. They criticized the Convocation for not being open. They disliked having the steering committee select attendees from submitted applicants. However, the Costos reveled in criticism because it meant they were doing something right. In a personal letter Costo commented, "I have often been accused of being an INDIANIST. I am proud of it...I am interested, and will fight like hell, and will sweat like hell, for MY people." Based on his life experience with California's unratiified treaties and the federal government's redefinition of majority with the Indian Reorganization Act, Costo critically viewed the federal government and institutions. He remarked, "nobody is going to trap me into giving over one smidgen of Indian authority, in ANYTHING I do."<sup>819</sup> Costo courted controversy and took glee in it. He represented and advocated for Indians to do something to address challenges in Indian country but he embraced intellectual rigor over violence. Costo enjoyed his editorial column "Speaking Freely," which provided him the ability to publicly celebrate or criticize various stories of the day.

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<sup>819</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to Louis Ballard, November 27, 1969, pg. 2, box 62, folder 7, Costo papers, Collection 170. UCR.



Figure 14 Costos holding hands at unknown location. Used by permission of Special Collections & Archives, UCR Libraries, University of California, Riverside.

The environment of late 1960s and 1970s in California shaped the opportunities for the AIHS. Indians publicly entered into previously untapped spheres of activism, foundations provided grant monies and many non-Indians appeared receptive to the concerns and issues raised by Indians. A prime example of alliance building occurred between the Society and California Superintendent of Instruction Max Rafferty. Rafferty, agreed to textbook revisions based on removing negative Indian stereotypes. He briefly supported Indians in their protests against textbook depictions.

San Francisco and its environment played a role in the flourishing of the Society. The city embraced and celebrated its growing diversity and many residents lived and operated “outside the box” and welcomed critical thought and discussion. One can hardly imagine the success of the AIHS if, for example, it established its formal headquarters in a small, rural town with a monolithic population. The federal government policy of relocation promoted the San Francisco Bay Area and as a result it contained a large urban Indian population. Thus, the Society operated within an area with a built in audience of Indians and empathetic, or at least curious, non-Indians.

Relocation also dramatically increased the out of state Indian population. As a result, the majority of the Indian population in California is not indigenous to the state. This situation has caused some tension because as the occupation of Alcatraz illustrates, some California Indians viewed it as a threat to indigenous tribal sovereignty and self-determination by out of state Indians.

In another example, at the behest of Dennis Banks, California’s only tribal college, DQ University, held the first Sun Dance conducted in California. He asked permission of

the University board and Lakota spiritual leaders.<sup>820</sup> It is unclear if Banks sought the permission of the local tribal community or spiritual leaders. As indigenous spiritualism is deeply connected to traditional and historic homelands, it would be recommended for Banks to consult or ask the local Indigenous community if a Lakota religious ceremony was culturally appropriate. The presence of a majority non-indigenous population had the effect of increasingly rendering California Indians invisible as the mainstream media focused its reporting on the Cherokee, Navajo, Lakota and other tribes.

History and history textbooks excluded the experiences of California Indians. Poet Janice Gould, Konkow Maidu, speaks to this sentiment in her poem “We Exist.” in which she writes, “Indians must be the loneliest people on Earth/lonely from our histories/our losses/even those things we can not name/which are inside us/our writers try to counteract the history/that says we are dead, a conquered people/but our words are like a shout in a blizzard.”<sup>821</sup> The poem demonstrates the constant battle to advocate for Indian history in California that is based in fact. The Society dedicated much of its activism to examining history and demanding an accurate depiction of Indian cultures. Though the Society never officially participated in the academy, its message was heard by non-Indian scholars.<sup>822</sup> In 2003 Edward Castillo, Cahuilla/Luiseño, received a grant from California State Library Research Bureau to produce a teacher’s guide to assist public school teachers with the lesson plans on California Indians.

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<sup>820</sup> Dennis Banks and Richard Erdoes, *Ojibwa Warrior: Dennis Banks and the Rise of the American Indian Movement* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2004), 323.

<sup>821</sup> Wendy Rose, “We Exist” in *The Sound of Rattles and Clappers: A Collection of New California Indian Writing*, ed. Greg Sarris (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994), 7.

<sup>822</sup> Wilbur R. Jacobs, “The Indian and the Frontier in American History-A Need for Revision,” *The Western Historical Quarterly* 4 (Jan. 1973): 43-56.



The Costos began the Society because they were concerned with the lack of accurate depictions of Indians, or their complete absence in books. One of the last books they worked on together, *The Missions of California: A Legacy of Genocide*, confronted the romanticization of benign missions and opposed the canonization of Junípero Serra, founder of the California mission system. The publication revealed the beatification controversy between supporters and opponents.

Since 1934 the Diocese of Monterey compiled records in support of the canonization of Serra. Fr. Noel Moholy of San Francisco, who challenged the Indian History Study Committee textbook criteria, began lobbying for Serra's sainthood in 1958. The Costos issued the book as a response to a report released in late 1986. Bishop Thaddeus Shubsda of the Diocese of Monterey retained a Los Angeles publicist, Valerie Steiner, to compile a scholarly defense of Serra in the hope Pope John Paul II would choose to beatify him during a visit to California.<sup>823</sup> Her report included interviews with eight historians and museum curators defending Serra and challenged any critics to document their allegations.<sup>824</sup>

The Costos answered the call. Their publication included several depositions, interviews, and tribal resolutions opposing the canonization of Serra. Ultimately, Pope John Paul II beatified Serra in 1988, but the Catholic Church considered the Costo's book

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<sup>823</sup> Herbert A. Michelson, "How Saintly was Serra? Pope's planned California Visit Stirs Up Old Debate," *The Sacramento Bee*, August 19, 1987, B9.

<sup>824</sup> Mike Dunne. "Serra: Saint or Sinner?" *The Sacramento Bee*, February 4, 1987, E1. The historians and curators included: Dr. Iris Engstrand, Dr. David Hornbeck, John Johnson, Dr. Harry Kelsey, Dr. Michael Mathes, Dr. Gloria Miranda, Dr. Norman Neuerburg, and Dr. Doyce Nunis Jr.

as part of its investigation.<sup>825</sup> The Costo's publication publicly raised the issue about the romanization of California missions and led to public discussion about it. Since the 1980s and the beatification controversy, the position of California Indians has transformed.<sup>826</sup>

In part, the contemporary experiences of California Indians changed with the rise of Indian gaming. The pivotal 1987 *California v. Cabazon Band of Mission Indians* decision opened the doors to gaming in the state and across the country. It helped lead Congress to enact the 1988 Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA). The economic independence provided by gaming led California Indians to become politically and economically empowered.<sup>827</sup> Costo passed away prior to the rise of Indian gaming but he supported economic development including bingo. He commented, "If bingo, or any other activity can be controlled, well managed, security established, with fund accountability, more power to them."<sup>828</sup>

In the 1990s with Republican Governor Pete Wilson's refusal to negotiate gaming compacts, California Indian tribes throughout the state built an alliance and sought state initiatives. In 1998 with Proposition 5 and in 2000 with Proposition 1A California tribes sought approval with a "yes" vote from state voters to amend the state constitution. Both

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<sup>825</sup> Roberto Suro, "An Assailed Missionary to America is Beatified," *The New York Times*, September 26, 1988, A12.

<sup>826</sup> For more on the California mission system see Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2005).

<sup>827</sup> For more on gaming see Paul H. Gelles, *Chumash Renaissance: Indian Casinos, Education, and Cultural Politics in Rural California* (North Charleston, N.C.: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013); Alexandra Harmon, *Rich Indians: Native People and the Problem of Wealth in American History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

<sup>828</sup> Rupert Costo, "Indian Bingo a Success and a Troublemaker," *Wassaja*, May/June 1983, 7.

propositions passed with over sixty percent voter approval. Tens of millions of dollars were spent supporting and opposing the ballot initiatives. For the first time, television commercials featured California Indians directly asking for voter approval appeared throughout the state. Advertisements aired on radio and it seemed every newspaper issued an editorial about Indian gaming. Some local news stories featured Californians who were surprised to learn a reservation or *rancheria* was located near their residence.

Gaming has increased the visibility of California Indians. About half of the one hundred and ten federally recognized tribes operate gaming in the state. Anti-gaming groups formed in the state, advancing a “not in my backyard” approach towards Indian gaming including the group “Stand Up California” whose rhetoric sometimes bears a close resemblance to an anti-Indian attitude. Even with the negative responses, California Indians entered into mainstream politics with political contributions and lobbying.

With gaming funds, numerous tribes created education scholarships for its tribal members or fund centers or faculty positions dedicated to California Indians. The Morongo Band of Mission Indians created the Rodney T. Mathews Jr. Scholarship, a \$10,000 scholarship, available to any California Indian enrolled in a federally recognized tribe. Tribes fund major positions and centers at California colleges and universities. The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation (previously known as Rumsey Band of Wintun Indians) has donated millions of dollars to the University of California, Davis (UCD) and created an Endowed Chair in California Indian Studies in its Native American Studies department in 2000. Dr. Martha Marci, Cherokee, whose work includes linguistic study of California Indian languages, held the position from 2008 until her retirement. Dr. Joely Proudfit, Luiseño from the Pechanga reservation, founded the California Indian

Professors Association and at California State University, San Marcos established the California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center. UC Riverside maintains its dedication to surrounding tribal communities and has plans to build a California Center for Native Nations. Indeed, the majority of colleges and universities in California offer Native American Studies courses.

In addition to education, California Indian tribes are also investing in reservation based cultural centers with an emphasis on history and language revitalization. Many built archival research libraries on their reservations and *rancherias* and obtained copies of all archive materials from National Archives and Research Administration (NARA). This ensures tribal members do not have to travel to distant federal buildings to find records.

With the rise of gaming, the visibility of California Indians increased. When one drives on freeways, signs prominently advertise nearby casinos and commercials regularly air on television. In addition to signs, most tribes have created philanthropic foundations and donated tens of millions of dollars to local communities, including fire and police departments, health centers, museums, homeless centers, rehabilitation centers, the arts, and many other groups and organizations. They also sponsor sports teams and their logos appear in the background of games aired on television. Thus, the historic attitude of viewing California Indians as economic obstacles has changed to viewing California Indians as economic partners. However, a stereotype of the “rich” California Indian emerged. Additionally, the majority of popular images relates to Indian gaming and not the diversity of California Indian histories, cultures, arts, or languages.

Thus, a problematic situation emerged in which many Californians can readily name nearby tribal casinos, but may be unable to name the tribes who owns and operates them.

When the Society ceased publishing *Wassaja*, *The Indian Historian*, and its books in the early 1980s it created a void. However, a new publishing group has stepped forward. In 1987, Malcolm Margolin started the Berkeley based, *News from Native California*, a quarterly magazine published by Heyday devoted to California's Indigenous peoples. Regular features include articles emphasizing the California Indian point of view: historic and contemporary, a calendar of events, the arts, health, poetry, languages, law, and more. Additionally, Heyday publishes a series of books on California Indians. Through its publications, Heyday continues the tradition of creating common readership and reconnecting and facilitating a network of artists, writers, scholars, and activists. It also reveals previously untold stories as with the case of members of the Yokayo *rancheria*. They stopped grave robbing when they threatened to file a lawsuit against the University of California and bring felony charges against anthropologist Alfred Kroeber for digging up human remains, their ancestors, in 1906.<sup>829</sup>

An annual conference and gathering has facilitated an emphasis on California Indian cultures similar to the Convocation organized by the Society. The California Indian Conference and Gathering is an annual event for the exchange of views and information among academics, educators, California Indians, students, tribal nations, native organizations and community members focusing on California Indians. It began in 1985 at UC Berkeley and subsequently has been held at various colleges and universities, typically rotating between northern and southern California. It has no direct ties to any

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<sup>829</sup> Tony Platt, "The Yokayo vs. The University of California: An Untold Story of Repatriation," *News From Native California* 26, no. 2 (Winter 2012/2013): 9-14.

institution and not formally “owned” by any group or organization. It is a unique conference because it provides the opportunity for tribal communities to hear about the research occurring in the social sciences and humanities. In some instances, the conference provides the opportunity for California Indians to critique methodology and conclusions drawn by scholars.

The history of missions in California has also shifted with the participation of California Indians. In 2004, Andrew Galvan, Ohlone/Miwok/Patwin, became the first Indian curator to oversee a California mission. At Mission Dolores in San Francisco, Galvan along with Vincent Medina, Ohlone, have incorporated Ohlone stories into their presentations. Galvan jokes he should hang a banner on the mission that reads “Under New Management,” as some visitors are surprised by the unknown stories included in the presentations.<sup>830</sup> Recently, Vincent Medina shared how he helped his younger brother with his fourth grade mission diorama project. Rather than the typical sugar-cube model, they built Mission San Jose under siege to demonstrate the rebellion led by Estanislao in 1829.<sup>831</sup> As Galvan, Medina, and many other California Indians point out, there would be no missions if not for the California Indians who built them.

The Costos served as a remarkable team in fighting on behalf of the Indian community. Perhaps one of their greatest shortcomings remained their perfectionism and stubborn commitment to complete everything themselves. By the early 1980s, many Society members had left the organization, some for personal reasons, while others joined

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<sup>830</sup> Andrew Galvan, “Old Mission Dolores, Under New Management: An Open Letter,” *News From Native California* 26, no. 4 (Summer 2013): 11-13.

<sup>831</sup> Vincent Medina, “Plastic Siege: A New Twist on the Fourth Grade Mission Project,” *News From Native California* 27, no. 1 (Fall 2013):4-5.

different organizations and continued activist work in other areas. In addition, several of the core early members had passed away including Henry Azbill, Maidu; Martina Costo, Cahuilla; Edmond Jackson, Quechan; Nancy Landuk, Karuk; and Patrick Swazo Hinds, Tesuque Pueblo. The time period in which the Society operated with a thriving activist agenda began to shift towards activism in a court of law. Foundation money, central to the regular functioning of the group, began to dry up with the changing tide of the national economy.



Figure 15 Costo Hall as it is today at UC Riverside. Image courtesy of author.

The Costos remained committed to continue their important work but began to slow down with the advancement of their ages. The Costos also had difficulty maintaining membership. Costo expressed a desire for members who accomplished more than advising or acting as devil's advocates. He commented, "We need those, but more than that, we need people who can help." He continued, "It's a thankless job, and while I don't expect thanks, I sure in hell don't expect the enormous responsibilities we have had to continue without sharing them with other Board members."<sup>832</sup> Regularly scheduled publications disappeared, and the organization diminished and ceased operating with the failing health of Rupert Costo.

Its formal dissolution occurred in 1986, though the Indian Historian Press continued to function in a limited way. In 1988 the Society discussed winding up all of its affairs. Costo commented, "the aims of the Society had been met," and "over the years the Indian tribes had taken up pursuit of similar goals."<sup>833</sup> The Costos' legacy remains. The Costo library, Costo hall, and Costo chair will acquaint generations of students and visitors to UC Riverside with their extraordinary work. The current Costo chair holder, Clifford Trafzer, jokes at times he has to specify his position is not affiliated with Costco, a membership only warehouse, because of the similar sounding names. Nevertheless, students quickly learn of the achievements of the Costos.

The continued scholarship of professors in California colleges and universities ensures the Costos' work will not be forgotten. For example, Dr. Tanis Thorne at the

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<sup>832</sup> Personal correspondence, Rupert Costo to John White, May 6, 1975, reel 16, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.

<sup>833</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, April 23, 1988, pg. 2, reel 16, Costo papers, Primary Source Microfilm, 2001.



University of California, Irvine distributes articles from *the Indian Historian* in her classes and recommends her students read the Costos' edited collection *The Missions of California: a Legacy of Genocide* and Jack Norton's *Genocide in Northwestern California*.

The Costos rooted activism in their hopes for the future. They realized that without information and knowledge, it would be difficult for non-Indians to empathize with Indian priorities of land, water, and treaty rights. Costo recognized the relatively small population of Indians required an effective combined effort of activism. At the Convocation in 1970, Rupert Costo asked, "Where shall we look for help?" and he answered, "We ourselves will have to take positive and effective action to make this change possible."<sup>834</sup>

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<sup>834</sup> Costo and Henry-Costo, eds., *Indian Voices*, 7.

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APPENDIX A

MEETING MINUTES OF PRELIMINARY AMERICAN INDIAN HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY MEETING

Minutes of a Preliminary Organization Meeting for the Founding of the American Indian Historical Society

In the City of San Francisco, on Tuesday, July 14, 1964.

The meeting was opened by Rupert Costo, who thereupon, with the agreement of those present, acted as chairman.

Present were: R. Costo, Bertha Stewart, Sylvia Green, J. H. Costo

The purpose of the meeting was stated by the chairman as being: To take the proper organizational steps needed to found a new organization to be styled tentatively as the American Indian Historical Society. Mr. Costo then called upon the others present to participate in defining the purposes and objects proposed as the purposes and objects of such an organization, and from the discussion that ensue, the following was formulated:

1. To study, interpret and disclose the facts concerning the history of the American Indians, to preserve and protect the remaining evidence of Indian customs, arts, and cultures, and to correct the historical record as to the true story of the Indians and their contributions to civilization.
2. To inform and educate the public at large concerning the history of the American Indians.
3. To work for the education, the good and welfare, and the cultural development of the American Indians.
4. Agreed that the organization must be non-profit, absolutely, and that the organization be nonpolitical absolutely.

Motion made by Mrs. Costo, seconded by Mrs. Stewart that we proceed with the plans to organize this Society as a contribution to the country at large and the Indians particularly. Carried unanimously.

Motion made by Mrs. Grees, seconded by Mrs. Costo, that the following be the first temporary officers of the organization: R. Costo, president; J.H. Costo, executive secretary; B. Steart, treasurer; S. Green, director. Carried unanimously.

Motion made by Mrs. Stewart, seconded by Mrs. Green, that there be an investigation of the Ohlone Indian Cemetary, reported by R. Costo to be in seriously damaged condition, having no care, and no person or organization responsible for this ancient cemetary. Carried unanimously.

Motion made by Mrs. Green, seconded by Mrs. Costo, to hold an informal meeting with several of the Indian people in the Sacramento area, to obtain their vieews as to the possibility of forming such an organization as this under discussion, and what they thought must be the priciples, purposes, and conditions of membership for such a Society. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Mrs. Stewart, seconded by S. Green, to hold another meeting of the group within a month. Carried unanimously.

The meeting then adjourned.

Jeannette Henry Costo  
Secretary Pro Tem



APPENDIX B

MEETING MINUTES OF FIRST AMERICAN INDIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MEETING

Report to the Members by Rupert Costo

Meeting, August, 21, 1964  
At the California Historical Society  
San Francisco, Calif.

This is the first meeting, and as it happens, a business meeting of the American Indian Historical Society.

Our purpose today is to complete the process of founding a new and significant organization. After today, our real work begins. The building of this Indian organization will be a task of pleasure. We don't intend to push, shove, or be pushed or shoved. We are going to take this one real slow and easy, and build for the future.

We are going to study, and learn a little about ourselves and our fellow citizens. We are going to write, and publish books, so that the truth shall be known about our history.

We are going to revive our old and happy festivals, only better and happier in our observances of them.

We will open up a new day for our old people and we will give them a few years of pride and joy yet.

We will begin a watchful study of our youth, and we'll do our best to steer them to the finer, prouder and more worthwhile kind of life.

We'll gather around us the best brains of our times, not to prey upon them, and use them for profit making, but to help us build a better future for the Indian in America.

We will ask them to help us correct the inaccuracies and misrepresentations that have been written into the books and publications of civilized man.

These things will be done. Because there are fine men and women in our country, Indian as well as non-Indian. And we want these people with us.

We need a compact, sturdy organization of Indians and their friends to do these things. That is what we are here for today.

APPENDIX C

THE INDIAN HISTORIAN POLICY STATEMENT

A Statement of Policy  
Indian Journal to Study History and Development of Native Races

With this issue, a new publication enters the field of journalistic endeavor, and a new influence enters American life. The Indian Historian is a journal of history, information, and literature about the American Indian in the past and his situation today. It is published, edited, and directed entirely by American Indians.

This journal is for the Indians in tribe, community, and Indian organization. Their activities, problems, history and languages will be reported here. To answer their questions, to probe their past and report it honestly, to serve them intellectually in any way needed. This is our task.

This journal is for the Indian in every sphere of life: farmer and professional, scholar and laborer. For the true Indian bears within him the pride of the race, the love for his people, the desire to serve them, the longing for truth and justice. He doesn't forget. And this tugging at the soul, this urging of the spirit, makes it almost impossible to exterminate his independent mind, just as it was not possible to exterminate him as a human being.

This journal desires to make a home for the true scholar of every race. In the past, Indians have had good reason to distrust and even to scorn the professional researcher. Too often have they misrepresented the Indian history, misrepresented their way of life. It becomes necessary now to correct the record, to write the history as it should be written, to interpret correctly the aboriginal past, to report honestly the immense contributions to modern society made by the Indian American.

There is a great and rich store of information still locked in the hearts and minds of Indians all over the nation. Only the Indian Historian is so placed as to uncover this treasure. Friends of the Indian may join in our great work, helping but not leading, aiding but not pushing, taking part but not taking over.

From the beginning, Indians have desperately desired learning. We pray that the Indian Historian may do its small part in its own way to make that possible.

The American Indian Historical Society  
Publisher & Editor

APPENDIX D

AMERICAN INDIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION  
AND BY-LAWS

American Indian Historical Society  
Articles of Incorporation & By-Laws

A nonprofit corporation

Founded and directed by American Indians who are dedicated to the protection and preservation of their Indian people. Educational. Cultural.

National in Scope..Tribal in Application

Articles of Incorporation of the American Indian Historical Society

Know all men by these presents:

That we, American Indians of native aboriginal ancestry have this day voluntarily associated ourselves for the purpose of forming a nonprofit corporation having no capital stock, under the laws of the state of California, pursuant to the provisions of the General Nonprofit Law of the state of California and we do hereby certify:

First: The name of the corporation is American Indian Historical Society

The principal office for the transaction of the business of this corporation shall be at the city and county of San Francisco, state of California.

Second: The objects for which this corporation is founded are to study, interpret, and disseminate the facts concerning the history of the American Indians; to preserve and protect the remaining evidences of Indian customs, arts, inventions, traditions, and cultures, for all mankind to understand, enjoy, and respect; to correct the historic record as to the manner of life, beliefs, religions, and contributions to civilization, of the American Indians.

Third: The primary purpose of this corporation shall be educational, literary and charitable; to promote and develop the culture, education and general welfare of the American Indians; to inform and educate the American public, concerning the history of the American Indians. The nature of business to be carried on by the corporation includes these activities:

1. To organize and maintain study sections, educational centers, museums, archives, historical monuments and landmarks, research centers, libraries, forums, arts and crafts centers, speakers bureaus, schools and classes, and any other forms of activity within the purposes and laws of this corporation and the state of California.
2. To produce and promote literary works, publications, records and recordings, motion pictures and television programs.
3. To cooperate with American Indian Tribes, Bands, Communities and organizations in providing information concerning the history of the American Indians as needed and requested by the Indian organization, and under the specific regulation of the Board of

Directors. Such information to be educational, nonpartisan, informative and free from bias or opinion.

4. To cooperate with nonIndian groups, governmental agencies, fraternal, scholastic and historical groups or societies, and any other groups lawfully organized and operated, in providing information concerning the history of American Indians.

5. To direct Indian students to sources of information regarding scholarships and schools.

6. To defend the lawful rights of Indians who desire to maintain their ancient religions.

To protect and preserve the remaining aboriginals burial grounds, artifacts, relics, songs, stories, ceremonies, legends, music, languages and dialects of the native Americans. To promote conservation of forests, fish, game, lands, and natural resources, as part of the great American heritage, which the American Indians have a particular interest to preserve.

Fourth: This corporation shall also have to power to conduct, promote, and maintain any and all types of activities in any legal manner, form or sequence best suited to the growth and development of the corporation, as may be decided by the Board of Directors and the members, according to the laws of the corporation, in as efficient and suitable a manner as possible.

Fifth: This corporation is a nonprofit corporation, and all of the earning and assets thereof shall become the sole property of this corporation, and shall be used for its purposes, and no part of the earnings of assets of this corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or go to any of its members. Neither membership in this corporation, nor any interest in the property thereof, shall be transferable or assignable in any form, either by voluntary or involuntary act of any member, nor shall it be assigned or transferred by operation of law, nor shall it descend to the heirs, legatees or devisees of any member, nor shall it become an asset of the estate of any member.

Sixth: The corporation may solicit, accept, hold, and use as provided in the laws of this corporation, funds received in payment of membership dues and fees, or any other funds, assets, properties, stocks and bonds, grants, devises, bequests; and the proceeds of such funds and assets shall be utilized solely for the purposes and objects of this corporation.

Seventh: the corporation may acquire by operation of law, gift, devise, bequest, lease, purchase or otherwise; to build, hold own, improve, enjoy, use, to grant, bargain, sell and convey, exchange, mortgage, pledge, lien, hypothecate, lease, hire and deal in, any and all kinds of property, both real and personal, lands, tenements and hereditaments and any and every interest therein, corporeal or incorporeal, personal property, furniture, fixtures and libraries, shares of stock of corporations, bonds, notes, securities and any and all kinds of choses in action.

Eighth: The corporation may make, enter into , execute, deliver, receive, transfer and carry out contracts of every kind and character with any person, firm association, club, or public or private or municipal corporation necessary to carry out the purposes of this corporation.

Ninth: This corporation shall not engage in political actions, nor attempt to influence legislators or legislation, except as may be deemed necessary solely to protect the assets and purposes of the corporation, to promote and advance the general welfare of the Indians of the United States, or to defend the policies and objects of this corporation. The corporation shall not promote the purposes and activities of any political parties, groups, or societies.

Tenth: The membership of the corporation shall consist of four classes: Corporate Members, Associate Members, Honorary Indian Historians, and Consultant Members, as provided in the By-laws.

1. A roll of members shall be kept and certificates of membership shall be issued to each member of every class of membership. Issuance to and acceptance of such certificate of membership by such member shall be conclusive evidence of his consent to become a member of this corporation and of his agreement to comply with and be governed by all the provisions of these Articles and By-laws.

2. Any member who shall fail to comply with the requirements of the By-laws or the rules and regulations made pursuant thereto shall, if the Board of Directors by majority vote so determines, forfeit his membership and any and all rights and interests in this corporation and its property.

Eleventh: The governing body of the corporation shall be a Board of Directors, of fifteen corporate members, each of who shall be elected by the members, as provided in the By-laws.

1. The officers of the corporation shall be an Executive Council of seven directors, to be elected by the members as provided in the By-laws, such officers to be: a President, a Vice President, an Executive Secretary, a Treasurer, and three Directors who shall serve on the Executive Council, performing such services as may be required and decided upon by the Board of Directors.

2. The names and residences of the first Board of Directors of the Corporation are:

Rupert Costo, 206 Miguel St., San Francisco, Calif.

Bertha Stewart, 138 Hyde St., San Francisco, Calif.

Jeannette Henry Costo, 206 Miguel St., San Francisco, Calif.

John Porter, Ione, California

Richard Fuller, Tuolumne City, California

Viola Wessell, Tuolumne City, California

Alton Wilder, 17 South Washington St., Sonora, Calif.

Sylvia S. Green, Box 184, Smith River, Calif.

Robert W. Kaniatobe, 465 Ellis St., San Francisco

Twelfth: In the event of the dissolution, liquidation, or abandonment of this corporation and of the termination of its corporate status for any reason whatsoever, the assets thereof, after deducting an amount sufficient to cover all of its liabilities of whatever nature, shall be distributed, upon dissolution, liquidation or termination, to the University



of California for the establishment of a scholarship fund for American Indian students, according to the regulations set by the University of California.

Should the University of California refuse, or be unable for any reason to accept such assets of the corporation in the event of the dissolution, termination, or abandonment of the corporation, the said assets shall be distributed to a nonprofit corporation or to nonprofit corporations of like aims and purposes, the distribution to be determined by the Superior Court of the state of California in and for the City and County of San Francisco.

In witness whereof, we, the incorporators, and also the persons named hereinabove as Directors, have hereunto set our hands and affixed our seals as such incorporators and directors, the 30<sup>th</sup> of July, 1964.

Rupert Costo  
Bertha Stewart  
Jeannette Henry Costo  
John H. Porter  
Richard Fuller  
Alton E. Wilder  
Viola Wessell  
Robert W. Kaniatobe  
Sylvia S. Green

Notaries:  
D.L. Costo, commission  
Expires Aug. 24, 1966

Ann B. Riddle, commission  
Expires 7-25-66

John F. Brown, commission  
Expires April 24, 1968

(All of the state of California)

## By-laws of the American Indian Historical Society

### Name and Title

Article 1: The name and title of this nonprofit corporation is American Indian Historical Society

### Membership

Article II: The membership of this corporation shall consist of four classes: Corporate Members, Associate Members, Honorary Indian Historians, and Consultant Members. None but Corporate Members shall have a vote or have any determining voice in the business or other interests of the corporation. Upon the death, resignation, or termination of the membership of a Corporate Member for any cause, neither he nor his estate shall have any interest in the property assets of the corporation.

Section 1: Corporate Members shall be American Indians, descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of this continent. For purposes of this corporation, an American Indian is one whose Indian ancestry is recognized by his Tribe, his Band, or his bona fide Indian organization, and by the Board of Directors of this corporation.

A. The voting rights of each Corporate Member shall be equal to that of every other Corporate Member. Each Corporate Member shall be entitled to one vote upon all propositions submitted.

B. The dues of Corporate Members shall be \$5 per annum. The dues of students who are Corporate Members shall be \$1 per annum.

C. Upon the request of the Corporate Member to the Board of Directors, the current dues may be exempted for good cause.

Section 2: Associate Members shall be any persons whose application is approved by the Board of Directors. The dues of Associate Members shall be \$10 per annum.

The Board of Directors or the Executive Council may accept Institutional Associates, who shall be scholastic societies, schools and school districts, libraries, patriotic organizations, business and other institutions whose aims and purposes meet with the goals and purposes of this corporation and with the Constitution of the United States. Fees for such Associates shall be set from time to time depending upon the amount of services required by such Institutional Associates.

Section 3: Honorary Indian Historians shall be those American Indians, proposed by the Board of Directors and elected by the Corporate Members, who have contributed to the discovery, collecting, recording and interpretation of the facts of Indian history.

Honorary Indian Historians shall not be required to pay dues. The election of Honorary Indian Historians shall not depend upon formal education or intellectual skills, but upon living contact with the past and present of the American Indians, and faithfulness to their role as native historians of the American Indian people.

Section 4: Consultant Members shall be those elected to such membership, whose interest in the American Indians and whose attainments and contributions to the history of the American Indians is deemed to be of particular significance in the work of the corporation. Consultant Members shall not be required to pay dues.

Section 5: Applications for membership shall be made in such form as the Board of Directors shall prescribe. All names proposed for all classes of membership shall be submitted to the Executive Council, which shall determine the fitness of the applicants, and recommend the election of such persons.

#### Board of Directors

Article III. The governing body of this corporation shall be vested in a Board of Directors consisting of fifteen (15) Corporate Members.

Section 1: The Board of Directors shall meet at the call of the President, but not less frequently than once in each four months' period.

Section 2: Seven Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the Board of Directors.

Section 3: Any Director may be removed from such office by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Board of Directors, at any regular or special meeting.

Section 4: Vacancies in the Board of Directors shall be filled by appointment by the Executive Council, by the President, or by the Board of Directors.

Article IV. The Board of Directors shall conduct, manage, and control the affairs of the corporation; shall make rules and regulations in accordance with the laws of the corporation and the state of California for the guidance of the officers and management of the affairs of the corporation, and generally to exercise all the powers and carry out all the purposes of this corporation.

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall have power to call special meetings of the Corporate Members whenever they deem it necessary. The Directors shall assign the rights and privileges, the duties and responsibilities of every class of members, all of which to conform to the laws of corporation and of the state of California.

Section 2. The Board of Directors shall appoint and remove, at pleasure, all agents and employees of the corporation, prescribe the duties, fix their compensation, and require from them security for faithfulness in service.

#### Officers

Article V. The officers of the corporation shall be a President, a Vice-President, and Executive Secretary, a Treasurer and three Directors.

Section 1. The officers of the corporation shall be termed an Executive Council, with authority to act for the corporation between meetings of the Board of Directors, and as instructed by the Board of Directors, according to the laws of the corporation and the state of California. The duties of the officers shall be implied in their titles, and shall include any and all duties imposed upon them by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. All officers of the corporation shall be bonded, in such sums as may be determined by the Board of Directors, the premium upon which shall be paid by the corporation.

Section 3. The Board of Directors may assign assistants to one or more of the officers, and such assistants need not be Directors, but must be members of the corporation.

#### Funds

Article VI. All funds of the corporation shall be held in a bank account or bank accounts in one or more banks of the United States, under the name of the American Indian Historical Society.

Section 1. An Annual audit shall be made of the funds and assets of the corporation by an accredited accountant who is not a Corporate Member of this corporation, prior to the Members' annual meeting. The Treasurer shall report on the financial status of the corporation and such report shall be in writing, at the first and third meetings of the Board of Directors during the year; and upon request of the Executive Council. The records of the corporation shall be kept in an efficient and orderly manner at all times.

Section 2. The President shall present to the Annual Members' Meeting a proposed budget for the work of the corporation during the ensuing year and a majority vote of the members present shall be sufficient to adopt such budget. Expenditures shall be determined thereon by the Executive Council from time to time, and checks of the corporation shall be signed in payment therefore by the President and Treasurer; in the absence of the Treasurer, by the President and the Executive Secretary.

#### Elections

Article VII. At their last quarterly meeting in an election year, the Board of Directors shall name a nominating committee of three Corporate Members to nominate their candidates.

Section 1. The nominating committee shall present to the secretary a complete list of candidates in time to be communicated to the members at least one month before the Annual Meeting. If no additional nominations are received, those nominated by the

nominating committee shall be declared elected at the said meeting. Any vacancies in the list of nominees shall be filled by nomination and election at the Annual Members' Meeting.

Section 2. Additional nominations may be made over the signatures of at least 15 members, to be received by the Secretary at least one month before the Annual Meeting. When such nominations are received, the following shall be the election procedure:

A. Election shall be by mail ballot, and said ballot to be mailed to each member three weeks before the Annual Members' Meeting, and shall be returned to the Secretary not later than midnight of the day before the date of the Annual Meeting.

B. At the Annual Members' Meeting, a committee of three shall be elected from the members present. These three shall open and count the sealed ballots, and shall testify to their findings in the election of the new Directors, by affidavit, then and there at the said meeting.

Section 3. The Board of Directors and Officers shall serve for a term of three years from the date of their election.

Section 4. Immediately after their election, the Board of Directors shall meet and elect officers.

#### Corporate Offices

Article VIII. The principal office for the transaction of the business of this corporation shall be at the city and county of San Francisco, state of California. The corporation may also have an office or offices at such other place or places within or without the state of California, as the Board of Directors shall from time to time designate.

#### Corporate Seal

Article IX. The corporation shall have a seal, circular in form, with the name of the corporation, the date of incorporation, and the word "California" inscribed thereon.

#### Meetings

Article X. The Annual Meeting of this corporation shall be held in August of each year, at such place and time and in such appropriate form, as shall be properly planned by the Executive Council, with at least one month's proper notice of such meeting given to the members by mail, or by publication in the official corporation publication.

Section 1. Special meetings may be called by the President, shall be called upon the written request of twenty Corporate Members, and shall require ten days notice. The object of such meeting shall be stated in the notice by which it is called.

Section 2. Fifteen members shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the members of the corporation. Three members shall constitute a quorum of the Executive Council. A simple majority of those Corporate Members present and voting at any meeting shall decide a proposition, unless otherwise provided in these By-laws.

#### Amendments

Article XI. The By-laws, or any By-law of this corporation may be amended by the Corporate Members, at any meeting of the Corporate Members, or at special meeting for this purpose called by the President, by a two-thirds majority of vote of those Corporate Members present and voting at such meeting, provided notice is given of the proposed amendment in the notice by which the meeting is called. Absence ballots shall be provided in the case of such voting upon the proposed Amendment.

#### Certificate of Electors

The foregoing By-laws were adopted by each and every Director of this corporation and by each and every one of the Incorporators of this corporation, all of whom constitute the first members and the first Board of Directors of the American Indian Historical Society, and the same are and shall be the By-laws of this said corporation.

In witness whereof, we, the undersigned, constituting the entire Board of Directors of American Indian Historical Society.

Hereunto set our respective hands

Rupert Costo  
Bertha Stewart  
Jeannette Henry Costo  
John H. Porter  
Richard Fuller  
Alton E. Wilder  
Viola Wessell  
Robert W. Kaniatobe  
Slyvia S. Green  
Nancy Landuk  
George Wessell  
Emmett St. Marie  
Edmond Jackson, Jr.  
Lee Emerson  
Jane Penn

I, Jeannette Henry Costo, do hereby swear, upon penalty of perjury, that the above are the By-laws adopted at a meeting of the members and the Board of American Indian

Historical Society, and that the above are the names of the first Board of Directors of said Corporation.

APPENDIX E

INDIAN HISTORY STUDY COMMITTEE PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR  
CALIFORNIA TEXTBOOKS



Adopted August 21, 1964

Indian History Study Committee

Proposed criteria

As to the role of the American Indian in State-adopted textbooks

The first criterium: In every phase of the teaching of American or California history as such, the role of the Indian shall be truthfully described and correctly interpreted.

The second criterium: The discovery of America and the human beings found here, and the finding of human beings in California was one of the greatest achievements of history, and opened up a new era for the entire world.

The teaching of history in this regard shall include a description of the aboriginal (not "savage") society found here, shall explain that, for a people in this land at this time, under these conditions, it was necessary and a decent way of life for them. It was an efficient and complex culture which the Indians had developed through many centuries of remarkable human effort.

The third criterium: A complete delineation of the contributions of the American Indian to the economy of our country and to the world, shall be included in the history of California and America, as taught in class and expressed in the textbooks.

Such as the various agricultural products found here and then carried to the world. Such as the medicinal herbs and practices, the methods of cultivating the soil and maintenance of forest lands, rivers and streams. In this respect, there is in store for the children of our state, a superb wealth of information at once fascinating and informative which be utilized to teach frugality, efficiency, morality, good manners, elementary engineering, forestry, and natural science. It is not enough to merely mention the names of Indian-developed foods. More to the point, is the understanding to be gained in learning how such foods were found, used, and stored. Still more important, is to learn how the Indian lived with the balance of nature, and was careful not to upset this balance of nature, developing a whole world of verbal literature and legend, tradition and culture, conforming to this balance. And how he did it with intense love and respect for the natural gifts of the Great God whom he worshipped with such clean and decent reverence.

The fourth criterium: The Indian people thrived in this area. They lived well. The foreign incursion, while it brought certain advantages, such as a limited protection from natural disasters and dangers, generally served to decimate the Indian population and to destroy their culture, without bringing them appreciable advantages in the form of a general education, a better economic life, and a wiser philosophy of life. A small number of Indian people did learn the arts of a higher form of society, but the great majority of Indians either died, were killed, or were brought to disastrous poverty.

The fifth criterium: The true relationship between the Spanish-Mexican-American colonists who came to this area, and the Indian people who occupied it, should be accurately described. Their own needs for advancement and expansion brought them here. But their failure to understand the true position of the Indian and to recognize Indian rights brought serious injustices to the Indian people.

The sixth criterium: To ignore the relationship of the federal government with the tribal Indian people is foolish and unwise. The child is then unprepared for the facts of life which will confront him sooner or later. The textbooks must reflect the situation as it is in fact, and must attempt to explain certain inequities and injustices which still exist.

The seventh criterium: A general body of misinformation and misconceptions derived therefrom, exist today concerning Indian culture and way of life. There are, in fact, gross untruths, half-truths and misinterpretations existing in the textbooks. The textbooks should present, in a positive way, refutations of such untruths.

The eighth criterium: The Indian tribal society should be accurately described and a knowledge of this material made available to the teachers. In California a great wealth of material exists, and the child can look forward to a fascinating experience and breadth of learning which opens new horizons in understanding; in feeling and seeing, in doing and learning.

The ninth criterium: The textbooks should reflect a knowledge of the current relationship between the Indian people and the Federal Government as it exists in the courts and Federal agencies. At least in the upper grades, mention should be made, and an explanation given, of this condition. Ignoring a situation which is constantly being described in the newspapers, on radio and television, is an unrewarding waste of intelligence.

The tenth criterium: The textbooks should describe, and correctly explain, the cultural significance of the arts and crafts of the Indian tribes. The child should be taught to distinguish between the authentic article and the imitation. Much can be acquired in the way of basic general knowledge in a variety of subjects, by examining materials used in Indian life and culture.

The eleventh criterium: The textbooks should contain a complete and richly descriptive account of the Indian as he is today, his condition and his problems, as well as his current tribal organization wherever it still exists. The hopes, aspirations, and activities of the Indians of America are expressed in many publications of the tribes, Indian communities and organizations, as well as in current reports. These should be made available to the teacher, just as other source material is made available, in many other subjects.

APPENDIX F

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS, CONVOCATION OF AMERICAN INDIAN SCHOLARS  
IN 1970

Indian scholars:

- George H. Abrams, 30, Seneca, University of Arizona, Tucson, applied anthropology, Ph.D. candidate.
- Andrew Acoya, 36, Laguna Pueblo. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, architecture, graduate student.
- Lee Antell, 27, Chippewa, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, graduate student.
- Russell Ayers, 67, Oklahoma Cherokee, Dartmouth College graduate, electronics and automation engineer.
- Lee R. Bacon, 41, Choctaw, Mississippi Choctaw Reservation, Philadelphia, school counselor.
- Benjamin Barney, 24, St. John's College, Santa Fe, N.M., medicine.
- Lew Barton, 52, Lumbee, Pembroke, North Carolina, teacher, author.
- John W. Bates, 19, Omaha, Central State College, Edmond, Okla., business management.
- Linda Belarde, 22, Tlingit, University of Washington, Seattle, special education.
- Eugene Benally, 21, Navajo, Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, finance.
- Robert L. Bennett, 57, Oneida, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, law.
- Samuel Billison, Navajo, University of Arizona, Tucson, Ph.D. candidate in educational administration.
- Herb Blatchford, 42, Navajo, Gallup Indian Community Center, leadership training.
- Henrietta Blueye, 22, Seneca, Radcliffe College, pre-medical.
- Joseph Brown, S.J., 53, Blackfeet, Gonzaga University, Spokane, Wash., history.
- W. Roger Buffalohead, Ponca, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, American Indian history.
- Mary Gloyne Byler, Cherokee, Editor, Indian Affairs.
- Philip Cassadore, 37, San Carlos Apache, University of Arizona, Tucson, linguist, singer, lecturer.
- Herman Laluz Cata, 35, San Juan Tewa, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, graduate student, guidance and counseling.
- Rachelle Laluz Cata, 28, Cochiti Pueblo, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, graduate student, education.
- Rosemary Christensen, Chippewa, Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory, history.
- Edward L. Clark, Comanche, Arizona State University, graduate teaching assistant.
- Solomon Cook, 50, St. Regis Mohawk, Cornell University, Ph.D., teacher-counselor; farmer.
- John H. Compton, 40, Sioux, University of Iowa, Iowa City, assistant professor, social work.
- Maria De Oca Corwin, 28, Seneca, Smith College School for Social Work graduate student.
- Jeannette Henry Costo, 60, Eastern Cherokee, editor, The Indian Historian.
- Rupert Costo, 63, Cahuilla, President, American Indian Historical Society; spokesman Cahuilla Indian Tribe of Southern California, engineer.
- Raymond Cross, 24, Mandan-Hidatsa, Stanford University senior, political science.
- George M. Crossland, 33, Osage, University of Chicago Law School.
- Dorothy Davids, 46, Stockbridge-Munsee, education and human relations specialist.

Philip Sam Deloria, 28, Standing Rock Sioux, Yale Law School.  
 Vine Deloria, Jr., 36, Standing Rock Sioux, University of Colorado School of Law.  
 William G. Demmert, Jr., 36, Tlingit, Klawock public school, Alaska, administrator.  
 Denise Deane, 19, Arikara, Oberlin College, Ohio, government-history-law.  
 Louise Descheeny, 21, Navajo, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Indian education.  
 Lionel H. Demontigny, 34, Chippewa, University of Oregon Medical School, professor.  
 Brian Deering, 25, Iroquois, Caughnawaga Reservation, teacher, education.  
 Adolph L. Dial, 47, Lumbee, Pembroke State University, chairman of the Department of History and Political Science.  
 Patricia Ann Dixon, 21, Luiseño of Southern California, University of San Diego.  
 Wilbur V. Dixon, 43, Navajo, Navajo Community College, Edmond, Okla., associate professor, elementary education.  
 John E. Echohawk, 24, Pawnee, University of New Mexico School of Law, Albuquerque.  
 Emerson Eckiwardy, 41, Comanche, social worker.  
 Jack Edmo, 29, Shoshone-Bannock, Idaho State University, history.  
 Gloria Emerson, 30, Navajo, Harvard University, education.  
 Duane Evans, 33, Potawatomi, Kansas public schools, co-ordinator.  
 P. Michael Galvan, 19, Ohlone of California, St. Patrick's College, Calif., history.  
 Velma M. Garcia, 24, Acoma Pueblo, University of Arizona, Tucson, cultural anthropology.  
 George A. Gill, 44, Omaha, Arizona State University, Tempe, assistant professor of education.  
 Jesse Greene, Nez Perce, Lapwai Nez Perce Reservation.  
 Ronald Halfmoon, 37, Umatilla, Washington State University, Pullman.  
 Benjamin Hanley, 28, Navajo, Arizona State University Law College  
 Kathryn Harris, 20, Comanche, Radcliffe College, sociology.  
 Annie Lee Henry, 32, Choctaw, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, education.  
 Frank Henry, 40, Choctaw, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, education.  
 Jerry M. Hill, 31, Oneida, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, education.  
 Bernard A. Hoehner, 46, Standing Rock Sioux, veterinarian.  
 Pare Hopa, 34, Maori (observer), New Zealand, assistant professor in anthropology.  
 Kathy Hurst, 20, Creek, Central State College, Edmond, Okla., business education.  
 Calvin J. Isaac, 36, Choctaw, Sequoyah High School, Tahlequah, Okla., teacher.  
 Wanda Janis, 21, Oglala Sioux, Augustana College.  
 Arthur S. Junaluska, Cherokee, dramatist, playwright, director.  
 Robert Kaniatobe, Choctaw, San Francisco State College, anthropology and native American Arts.  
 Gary Kimble, 28, Gros Ventre, University of Montana Law School, Missoula.  
 Travis F. Kinsley, 19, Papago-Hopi, Dartmouth College, psychology.  
 Vincent L. Knight, 24, Ponca, University of New Mexico Law School, Albuquerque.  
 Edmund D. Ladd, 44, Zuni archeologist, Hawaii National Park Service.  
 Frank Lapena, 32, Wintun, Shasta College teacher, Calif.  
 Marigold Linton, Cupeño, San Diego State college, professor psychology.  
 Joseph Little, 20, Mescalero Apache, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, English.

Peter Little, 33, Apache-Tewa, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, social welfare.  
 Charles Loloma, 46, Hopi, artist.  
 Simon Looking Elk, 32, Sioux, University of Dubuque, Iowa, ministry.  
 Edwin L. Madsen, 33, Flathead, University of Idaho, Moscow, administration.  
 Laverne Masayesva, Hopi, University of Arizona, Tucson, anthropology, linguistics.  
 N. Scott Momaday, Kiowa, University of California, Berkeley professor of comparative English, author.  
 Bud Mason, 33, Arikara-Mandan, Black Hills State College, Spearfish, S.D., social psychology.  
 Bea Medicine, 30, Standing Rock Sioux, San Francisco State College, assistant professor, anthropology.  
 Ilarion Mercurieff, 20, Aleut, University of Washington, Seattle, law.  
 Mrs. Arlene Millich, 31, Southern Ute, Ft. Lewis College, Durango, Colo., education.  
 Michael A. Misiasek, 24, Colville, Gonzaga University, Spokane, Wash., business.  
 William Morgan, Sr., 51, Navajo, Navajo Community College, linguistics instructor.  
 Mrs. Joann S. Morris, 25, Chippewa, University of California, L.A., anthropology.  
 Harriett Marmon, 29, Laguna Pueblo, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, bilingual education.  
 Solomon McCombs, 54, Creek artist.  
 Harvey McCue, 25, Ojibway, Trent University, Canada, assistant professor, sociology.  
 Taylor McKenzie, 38, Navajo, Indian Hospital, Shiprock, N.M., physician.  
 Steve McLemore, 33, Cherokee-Pima, University of Oklahoma, Norman, environmental science.  
 Chris McNeil, 21, Tlingit, Stanford University, political science.  
 D'arcy McNickle, 65, Flathead, University of Saskatchewan, professor in anthropology, chairman of department.  
 Mary F. Nelson, 36, Colville, Eastern Washington State College, Cheney, assistant professor, art/anthropology.  
 Barry Nicholas, 27, Malecite, teacher, Indian education.  
 Rosalie Nichols, Miwok, University of California, Davis, graduate student, history.  
 Sparlin W. Norwood, 32, Cherokee, Central Jr. High School, Bartlesville, Oklahoma, teacher.  
 Dale Old Horn, 24, Crow, Montana State University, Bozeman, counseling.  
 Emmett Oliver, 55, Quinault, University of California, Los Angeles, Indian Culture Program.  
 Alfonso Ortiz, Tewa, Princeton University, associate professor anthropology.  
 Simon J. Ortiz, 28, Acoma Pueblo, Rough Rock Demonstration School, Poet.  
 Hurley Parkhurst, 35, Oneida, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, graduate, soil science.  
 Michael M. Paul, 34, Colville-Salish, artist.  
 Robert Penn, 22, Sioux, University of South Dakota, Vermillion, art.  
 James C. Peterson, 35, Blackfeet, Brigham Young University, Provo, sociology.  
 Mrs. Karen S. Peterson, 27, Cherokee, Western Carolina College, science.  
 Robert L. Pierce, 18, Seneca, State University of New York at Buffalo, social welfare.  
 Dillon Platero, 43, Navajo, director, Rough Rock Demonstration School.  
 Charles. A. Poitras, Jr., 31, Sac and Fox, Shawnee Reservation, leadership development.

Ann P. Rainer, 28, Taos, Stanford University, anthropology, pre-med.  
 Vincent E. Randall, 29, Camp Verde Apache, tribal government, education.  
 Coey Real Bird, 23, Montana State University, Bozeman, elementary education.  
 Helen Marie Redbird, Cherokee, Oregon College of Education, Monmouth, professor,  
 social science.  
 David J. Red Fox, University of Oregon, Eugene, history, law.  
 Jacob Reynolds, 19, Cheyenne-Arapahoe, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins,  
 sociology.  
 Montana H. Richards, 57, Cherokee, Oregon College of Education, Monmouth, associate  
 professor, humanities-education.  
 Jack R. Ridley, 35, Shoshone, University of Idaho, Moscow, assistant professor,  
 physiology.  
 Dawn Good Elk (Reiker-stepfather's name), 21, Standing Rock Sioux, South Dakota,  
 University of Oregon, Eugene: Public Affairs and Arts, University of Princeton, Graduate  
 School — Anthropology and Art.  
 Leonard Robbins, 23, Navajo, Utah State University, Logan, natural resources, wildlife.  
 Donald D. Ross, Sioux, University of Omaha, Nebraska, education.  
 Hershhal Shamant, 36, Kiowa, Oklahoma City University, consultant.  
 Marlene Salway, 24, Blackfeet, University of Montana, Missoula, social worker.  
 Mrs. Catherine B. Sanders, 51, Cherokee, Cherokee Elementary School, North Carolina,  
 teacher.  
 Joe Sando, 46, Jemez Pueblo, Talent Search Program, Albuquerque, N.M., history.  
 Buffy Sainte-Marie, Cree, singer, composer.  
 Kenneth L. Saupitty, 32, Comanche, Oklahoma College for Continuing Education,  
 Norman.  
 Fritz Scholder, 32, Luiseño, artist, Santa Fe, N.M.  
 Joseph Senungetuk, 30, Eskimo, artist, writer.  
 Jackie Sine, 20, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, education.  
 Fred Smith, 30, Seminole, education, Hollywood, Florida.  
 Thelma Stiffarm, Gros Ventre-Cree, University of Montana, Missoula, law.  
 William A Thacker, 28, Paiute, rancher, farmer, Owyhee, Nevada.  
 Bobby Thompson, 24, Choctaw, University of Southern Mississippi, education.  
 Donald W. Wanatee, 37, Mesquakie, Central College, Pella, Iowa.  
 Kent C. Ware II, 28, Kiowa, Arizona State University Law School.  
 Wilfred C. Wasson, 45, Western Washington State College, Bellingham, education,  
 anthropology.  
 James L. West, 24, Southern Cheyenne, Andover Newton Theological School.  
 Dick West, Jr., 27, Southern Cheyenne, Stanford University Law School.  
 Barry White, 19, Seneca, State University of New York at Buffalo.  
 Dennis R. White, 23, Chippewa, University of Wisconsin, Madison, graduate student,  
 mathematics.  
 Elizabeth Whiteman, 22, Crow, University of Montana, education.  
 Richard N. Wilson, 33, Santee Sioux, University of Oregon, Eugene, education.  
 Sandra Wilson, 20, Sioux, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, S.D., special education.  
 John R. Winchester, 48, Potawatomi, Michigan State University, Lansing, instructor.

Barbara Woelk, 21, Kiowa, Kansas University, Lawrence.  
Floyd M. Wyasket, 23, Ute, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, education.  
Frederick Young, 37, Navajo, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, physicist.

Artists exhibiting their work:

Fred Beaver, Muscogee Creek/Seminole; Larry Bird, Laguna/Santa Domingo Pueblo; Blackbear Bosin, Comanche/Kiowa; George Burdeau, Blackfeet; T. C. Cannon, Kiowa; Robert Chee, Navajo; Jimmie C. Fife, Creek; Henry Gobin, Tulalip; Barbara Goodluck, Navajo; Joan Hill, Creek/Cherokee; Patrick Swazo Hinds, Tesuque Pueblo; Allan Houser, Apache; John Hoover, Aleut; Oscar Howe, Dakota; Peter Jones, Onondaga; Fred Kabotie, Hopi; Mike Kabotie, Hopi; Yeffe Kimball, Osage; Otellie Loloma, Hopi; Solomon McCombs, Creek; Leatrice Mikkelsen, Navajo/Cherokee; Al Momaday, Kiowa; George Morrison, Chippewa; Lawney Reys, Sinixt of Conferated tribes of Colville; C. Terry Saul, Chickasaw/ Cherokee; Fritz Scholder, Luiseño; Bill Soza, Cahuilla/ Luiseño; Willard Stone, Cherokee; Jose Rey Toledo, Jemez Pueblo; Pablita Velarde, Santa Clara Pueblo; (Richard) Dick West, Cheyenne.

NonIndian scholars:

Lowell J. Bean, California State College at Hayward  
William Brandon, author and educator  
Edward M. Bruner, University of Illinois at Urbana, anthropologist  
Harold E. Driver, Indiana University at Bloomington, anthropologist  
Bernard L. Fontana, University of Arizona, ethnologist  
Richard I. Ford, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, professor in prehistory  
Kenneth Hale, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, linguistics  
Edward H. Spicer, University of Arizona at Tucson, anthropologist  
William Sturtevant, Smithsonian Institution, anthropologist  
Gary Orfield, Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School of International Affairs



APPENDIX G

RUPERT COSTO KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT CONVOCATION OF AMERICAN  
INDIAN SCHOLARS IN 1970

Moment of Truth for the American Indian  
Rupert Costo, Keynote Address at Convocation in 1970

This is a moment of truth for the American Indian—a moment when we stand on the threshold of great change. We have it in our power now to overcome the disasters of centuries, and to perform a miracle of change in favor of a better life for our people.

Our history in this land has a force of thousands of years' duration, and cannot be overlooked. Our profound concern for this land and for our people, has a force so ancient and all-absorbing that it cannot be ignored. Yet we are indeed ignored and we are overlooked, in all the practical elements of life as it affects our people. Somehow, despite the many promises, and despite the many evidences of concern, the Native American lives in poverty, receives a complete and fruitful education only by the exercise of the greatest personal sacrifices, and dies in squalor.

At this moment in our history, our American Indian Historical Society conceived the idea of calling a Convocation of American Indian Scholars. Our purpose is to set in motion a responsive leadership that can give effective help in performing that miracle of change so desperately needed for our people. We entered upon the planning and organization of this Convocation with a sense of great pride in our people. In spite of centuries of being cheated out of our land, defrauded of our rights, and denied every privilege accorded all others in this nation, we have survived as a people. We have among us distinguished Native Americans who possess magnificent leadership qualities. Among us there are scholars who have contributed to knowledge, as well as those who, without formal education, have managed to help their people, and with utmost dedication. Above all, there is an upsurge of student population in higher education. Indeed it is in these young people that the hope of our race resides.

It is not the purpose nor the intention of this Convocation to dictate policies or to make decisions which will affect all of our people, or to impose upon the sovereignty of the tribes. It is our purpose only to point out a direction, to provide the help needed to reach certain necessary goals, and to support our own people wherever and whenever the need us.

Among us traditionally, the scholars are the servants of the people. The people reign supreme, by virtue of their right to approve or disapprove actions in all areas of life, and by reason of their prerogative to protect individual and tribal rights. And so we say—let the people come for help to their own scholars. And let the scholars spend their very lives and energies in the service of their people.

To perform this miracle of change, we must, however, deal with our own problems and our own situations. The problems that disturb us—the issues that we need to talk about openly—the facts of life that beg for a meeting of our minds, these are the things we must deal with in our tribal meetings, and in our organizations, if we are to achieve our goals. We need to ask questions of ourselves, and of one another. We need to explore areas of concern, and come to mutual and unified decisions. It is not true that Indians cannot unite. We have united for years in our immense effort for sheer survival. In matters of practical need, it is enough if we can unite on a point no larger than the head of a pin, in order to make gains. In matters of the larger concern, it becomes a matter of exploration of thought and ideology, or ideas...and the use of creative intelligence. Let us

ask ourselves some of these questions...questions of profound concern for ourselves as a people.

Is there, truly and honestly, anything left of our Indian cultures, traditions, and lifeways? I know there is, and you know it too. Therefore, let us pinpoint these areas of remaining Indian heritage, preserve the remaining cultures, traditions, philosophy, and the languages of our people. Indeed we have a duty to our historical heritage. I don't believe there is anybody here who would disagree.

Just the same, there is a tendency to vulgarize our cultures and history, even among our own people. For example, there is a class being conducted in Native history, at California State College at Hayward, in which the white students are given "cute" Indians names, are assigned to imaginary and "cute" Indian tribes, and who then conduct themselves as though they are "real Indians." This is a class taught by an Indian. We all know about some of the things that are taught by white teachers, degrading to our people. But when an Indian pursues this type of vulgarization, then we must stop and view the whole situation, and we must begin to teach the true history of our people, teach it with respect and scholarly interpretation both to our own people, and to the American public at large. Among us, we have been remiss with respect to our children. We should have had, long ago, practical schools for our children, to keep the languages alive, to keep the beauty of our heritage alive. It is not too late to do this even now.

Another question: Shall we allow tribal society and leadership, tribal autonomy and rights, to be wiped out? Or, shall we fight to preserve our ancient sovereign rights. The present situation, I grant you is bad, and the present leadership in many tribes has been criticized, especially by our young people. Is it not time to make a stand, and change this situation, to change this leadership if change is needed?

If we do not improve our tribal leadership, by action of the people themselves, we are faced with total destruction of Indian life and cultures. What is left of Indian culture, when the tribal entity is gone? I ask this question of our young people who are so active on the urban front, who find it impossible to act on the tribal front, and who have forsaken their own Indian people in favor of a struggle with windmills and shadows. For, if tribal life disappears, so too does the Indian as an Indian. This is our political entity. This is what remains of our social structure and lifeways. And this is where it is at. In my opinion, tribal society has been deformed and degraded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. I think this should be changed, and I think it can be changed-but only with the greatest courage and single-mindedness, and only by our young people.

Let me pose another question...Shall we continue to allow our scholars, artists, and leaders to be overlooked and overshadowed, and even completely ignored by educational institutions, cultural programs, and institutional projects? Is it not time that we refuse to allow ourselves to be exploited for the sake of the self-interest of an ambitious intellectual, an ambitious city or state, or a Chamber of Commerce seeking to develop tourist attractions?

I say that we must insist that wherever Indian programs are considered, Indian scholars and tribal people shall be dealt with, and shall constitute the leadership of such programs. We are continually confronted with ready-made programs that are carbon copies of programs for blacks, Chicanos, and other ethnic groups. These programs that have no relationship to our history and culture, nor to our situation today, and they are

absolutely worthless, either for teaching about Indians, or for teaching Indians themselves.

I would like to deal more directly with some of the profound questions with which we are faced in this moment of truth, at this time of change. And these questions can find answers only if the Indian scholars work well with the Indian people, and if the Indian people will turn to their own scholars for help.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has dominated the Indian world for nearly a hundred and fifty years. It has stultified our initiative, corrupted our society, and caused a creeping paralysis to set in among our people-economically, and socially as well. Notwithstanding this fact, I don't know any Indians who want termination to take place. It would automatically abrogate our treaties, which are valid under international law, and valid in the constitution of the United States of America. Despite the seriousness of this question, there is not unanimity of opinion as to the course of action that should be taken to rid ourselves of this incubus of Bureau domination. I submit to you, that the method of supplanting Bureau controls of programs, by Indian tribes and organized groups, is one good way to accomplish this.

The greatest and most important problem for us is the development of support for one another, as tribes, as organized groups, and as individuals. Some practical consideration as to the method of developing such support should be given. It is not enough simply to support one another, regardless of the quality of the program, or its administration. Support should be given after one is permitted the right to be consulted, to be informed, to be assured that there is a responsible intelligence at work. We must have a standard of leadership, and we must insist upon the highest standards. We must make it clear, to ourselves, to our own people, and to the general public, that leaders are chosen by the people, and that no one has a right to this status unless he is so chosen. This is an internal problem, and how we shall solve it is for ourselves to determine, and nobody else.

I would like to say that most of our so-called internal problems are not part of our heritage, nor are they part of our philosophy of human relations. To take one example-that of factionalism among the Indian peoples and tribal groups. This is a condition that has been elevated by certain anthropologists.

Factionalism, as it is understood in the western sense, is not an Indian tradition. It was not a normal way of life for the Native American. It is a European influence, a result of the disruption of Indian life, standards, and of the total destruction of distinctive Indian tribal land bases. In OUR tradition, man lived in peace with his brothers. Only when tribe after tribe was pushed off their land into the land of another tribe, did intertribal conflict occur. The ideology of THIS type of European or western civilization and its influence must be wiped out of our Indian society if we are to survive and prosper, in any area of our lives.

I say, let us be aware of these influences. Let us put a stop to it. Let us DEFEND one another, protect and help one another in our relationships both individually and as a race. This is not to say that Indian people who are wrongdoers should be covered up for their evils. But surely we can handle these things ourselves. Not all Indians are noble...not all Indians are little red angels.

I think the time has come when we must consider the question of land usage, land development, and land reclamation-as a whole. It seems foolish to fight for the reclamation of land in purely general terms. It seems foolish, too, when one considers that many Indians are being forced to SELL, at lowest prices, their land, now currently held by tribes or individuals. A glance at the Pine Ridge or Rosebud situation is an example. These people have only a small fraction of their land left to them, and an effort should be made, to help them out of their poverty, to develop them economically, so that they are not confronted with the loss of their land. This too, is one of the questions which scholars, students, and tribal people should be able to discuss and develop programs about.

The Native American population is small, compared to that of the whole country. It would appear that efforts should be combined, expended wisely and with the greatest promise of effectiveness. I know there are some who have become stupefied with the public interest, the publicity, the headlines. By itself, it will not solve anything. Together with a sound program of change, it will help enormously.

Where shall we look for help, to cause a miracle of change to happen? Certainly not from the federal government. Neither the Eisenhower, the Johnson, nor to date the Nixon administration have developed a single effective and successful program leading to the practical improvement of our condition. We ourselves will have to take positive and effective action to make this change possible.

In this great effort, those who are scholars, those who are students, and those of us who are tribal activists, must unite all our energies and talents, so that the people may once again be the leading force in our lives and in our destiny.

Today's society is being torn apart by internal struggle. There is destruction ahead. Already there are forces in motion, questioning the whole fabric of American society, questioning the form of government here in this country, struggling and fighting-but truly the don't know for WHAT, and often they don't even know WHY. This land is rotting to death. It is corrupt in so many ways and in so many places that water pollution is secondary to spiritual pollution.

Poverty is rampant in this nation, and the Indian is suffering most from this disease. I don't see any way to help, other than by our own people helping one another. We have to be aware of the current tumult in this land. Every value is being questioned, and many are already discarded like a dirty rag. The government that exists in peace today, may be confronted with questions of mere survival tomorrow. The society that has been happy with its porcelain bathtubs, its television sets, automobiles, and all the supposed comforts of life, is no longer happy to own an automobile and a television set, while also being owned by a finance company. In the intellectual world, the same turmoil is taking place, and perhaps even more. Because all the beliefs of western civilization are now being challenged. The honors that men receive with such gladness today, may well be the shame of tomorrow.

I think that the true Indian values, however, persist. And I am proud to know this, and to know that MY people still hold to their spiritual life and their love of their land. I believe in their deep and profound goals. I believe that WE INDIANS have more to offer this world than any other section of society.