THE ADOPTION OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN:
AN ANNOTATED AND SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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INTRODUCTION

The publication of the Liberal Government’s White Paper on Indian Affairs in 1969 outlining its assimilationist policy mobilized Native people throughout Canada in their historical quest for self-determination, autonomy, and cultural preservation. The past year has witnessed confrontations between several Native groups and the RCMP as well as other federal, provincial and local authorities. Native conflicts with government and mainstream White Canadians have escalated and must be addressed. The recent stand taken by the Lubicon Nation in Northern Alberta highlights the urgency of the issue. These confrontations reflect the deep conviction of indigenous people that they must take control of their own destiny.

In several parts of Canada, Native communities have begun to develop their own social services. This year, Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, admitted its first students in the Native Social Work Program. Such encouraging signs are to be found elsewhere in the country but the bulk of social services to Native people is still being provided by White professionals who have little or no knowledge of Native culture. It is essential that all professionals, Native and non-Native, develop this knowledge so that the services they provide will be culturally relevant. This bibliography contributes to the effort to create such a culturally relevant database. It should facilitate the needs of service providers in Native social work programs. The bibliography was developed as preparatory research for the senior author’s doctoral
study of the adoption of Native children in Ontario by non-Native families. The term, "Native", in the context of this article, is used in the broad sense and includes not only status Indians but also non-status Indians. Focus is primarily, but not exclusively, on Native Indians. The present list of citations comprises an abridged version of a more extensive bibliographic database on Native Child Welfare available on diskette or hard copy from the senior author currently on faculty in the School of Social Work at Laurentian University, Sudbury, Ontario. Included in the present paper are selected Canadian and American citations from the literature for the last two decades in the areas of child welfare, culture, education, the law, mental health, psychology, social policy, and social work. References were chosen from several sources: child welfare journals such as Child Welfare, The Journal of Child Care, and Child Abuse and Neglect; social work journals such as Social Casework, Native Studies and education journals, as for example, The Canadian Journal of Native Studies, and The Alberta Journal of Education respectively; as well as selected texts in social work, social policy, anthropology, psychology and sociology. The review is comprehensive but not by any means exhaustive. Its focus reflects, (1) the scholarly and research interests of the authors in Canada minorities and (2) the usefulness of the selected citations for professionals working with the Native children.

CHILD WELFARE


Reviews the passage of the Child Welfare Act in the U.S. The Act provides for the integrity and stability of the family and tribal life. The author discusses some of the points of the Act that have caused confusion. While this article is basically a discussion of the implications of the Child Welfare Act, it is useful because developments in child welfare in the U.S. often precede developments in Canada.


Provides a bibliography of material related to the subject of Native neglect and abuse. With the passing of the Ontario Child and Family Services Act of 1985, the authors developed this bibliography as a guide for professionals providing information about services that recognize the uniqueness of Native culture and child welfare needs. Included among other subjects are causative factors, identification and reports, treatment, prevention, and related issues. A timely and very useful resource.


Describes the growing effort to draw on traditional Native strengths such as the extended family, natural helpers, and spiritual beliefs that once made a child welfare system unnecessary. This article describes a current trend in social work towards making interventions more culturally relevant. As a discussion of current trends, this is a useful article for practitioners in child welfare.


Describes a group approach to enhance self-concept and "Indianness" of American Indian girls. An activity-discussion framework was used. Participants gained skills in a number of Indian activities while, at the same time, developing a greater appreciation of their cultural heritage. Evaluations from participants, parents and leaders were positive. This article provides a useful model for practitioners.

Reports on a study of Native self-concept conducted on Native school children using structured reactions to ethnic dolls. Visual and interactive preferences, objective and subjective accuracy were measured. Results showed that self-concept was positive up to graduation into the public school system from a tribal Head Start program. Positivity then dropped but rose again soon after. The study concluded that tribal school and public school did help to foster heightened self-concept. These results are encouraging and suggest that a Native identity can be maintained in the public school system. Of interest to educators and other professionals working with Natives.


Portrays a programme run by the Jewish Family Agency of Phoenix, Arizona, to find culturally appropriate adoptive families for American Indian adoptees either through the extended family or with other families of the same tribe. This programme was very innovative and preceded by several years similar conceptual thinking found in legislative policy in Canada. Useful to those interested in Native child welfare.


A review of the developments of child welfare services in Alberta. This work was done to assist Native bands in Alberta and, in particular the Peigan Nation, to determine the best course of action in the development of Native child welfare services for their nation. The work includes a history, a description of the current situation and recommendations. For instance one of the recommendations is that all adopted Peigan children be traced, and have their records reviewed. This work is important because it demonstrates a growing awareness of the need to keep Native
children within their own culture. Of interest to practitioners working in Native child welfare.


Provides a comprehensive description of foster care and adoption in Canada. Data were collected from Statistics Canada and from welfare departments of various provinces. The study is one of the most widely quoted reference sources on the subject of Canadian child welfare.


Describes the child welfare system in Canada and its impact on Canadian Native people. The author draws on census data and data from the various provincial ministries responsible for child welfare in support of his contentions. This is a rather disturbing book about child welfare practices in Canada because it shows how the large majority of Native children apprehended by Children's Aid are placed with non-Native families. The study is often quoted in defense of Native control over their own child welfare system.


Describes a project to establish policies based on parental participation. The major aim was to secure total community involvement and support. This was accomplished through conferences in local communities in which input from parents, relatives and tribal staff was received. This approach seems consistent with traditional Native practice, that of broad participation in decision-making. A useful anecdotal discussion for those interested in Native child welfare.

Examines the role of the child welfare system and its interaction with Native people from the perspective that a colonial relationship exists between Native people and the dominant White society. This is a very critical and thought-provoking commentary on Native child welfare. Important for those interested in Native child welfare.


Explores the "attachment" variable of Reiss's social control theory, and its relationship to juvenile delinquency. Questionnaires were administered to 129 Seminole youth from Florida. Results showed that delinquency was related in varying degrees to attachment to teachers, school, and the police. Attempts to measure levels of attachment were unsuccessful. The author speculates that the data suggest that Seminole youth show adaptive behaviour to their own culture and that of White society. This is of interest to those studying cross-cultural psychology.


Reviews the problem of substance abuse and suggests preventive measures, such as the development of social networks and the acquisition of both interpersonal communication and problem-solving skills. Future implications of drug and alcohol abuse are also discussed. A practice oriented paper of use to social workers working with Native youth.

Using the theme of the book by Goldstein, J., Freud, A., and Solnit, A. (1973), "Beyond the Best Interests of the Child," the author suggests that when it comes to Native children, issues about the continuity of cultural identity should take priority over permanency planning. This shows how strongly practitioners feel about Native identity. Of interest from a policy planning perspective.


A review of child welfare practices in Canada. The author discusses the failure of the child welfare services to respond in a culturally relevant manner to the needs of Native children. He supports the move to establish services designed and run by Native people. Five case examples are presented to illustrate the problems. The article also provides a useful examination of traditional customs that child welfare workers frequently fail to appreciate in making decisions about what constitutes neglect. This is of interest to practitioners working with Native children.


Describes a study about the impact of an inter-agency, multidisciplinary team approach in reducing the incidence of child abuse and neglect on a major Indian reservation in South Dakota. Figures on the incidence of child abuse and neglect were obtained from a central registry. By eliminating service gaps and mobilizing community resources, the child protection team made up of representatives from the state social service department, Bureau of Indian affairs, and Indian Health services were successful in reducing the incidence of child abuse and neglect by 42 percent from the previous year. The study also covers the problems of abuse and neglect with Native people and the jurisdictional
obstacles encountered in providing effective services. This study is one of the few empirical evaluation studies found in the literature on Native child welfare.

CULTURE


Provides a succinct overview of the phenomenon of acculturation (defined as culture change which results from continuous first hand contact between two distinct cultural groups) and how this relates to health of indigenous people.


Reviews the history of Native people in Canada from a legal, socio-economic, political and cultural perspectives and considers how current problems in these areas have evolved. This paper provides a concise but very useful summary of the issues faced by Native people in Canada today; and stresses Native participation in jurisdictional areas. Of general interest to a broad range of people.


Provides a very useful summary of definitions and proposals coming from Native people on how to preserve their cultural heritage. Focuses on the Algonkian, Iroquoian, and Metis peoples of Ontario and deals with the history, cultural definitions, and proposals for maintaining cultural identity for each of the three groups. This is an excellent summary for those requiring a brief description of the Native people of Ontario.

Examines excerpts of Native oratory and their significance as a basic cultural process in times of social change or stress. These excerpts are analyzed and compared to examples of oratory from European traditions. Those interested in Native culture should find these excerpts quite moving.


Provides a thorough analysis and description of the League of the Iroquois by H.L. Morgan, the "Father of American anthropology". Also contains ethnographic information about material culture. Although modern work has added new information and often from a different perspective, Morgan's volume remains a basic reference tool.


Examines the different terms used by Barren Ground Band and Davis Inlet Band for cousin and cross-cousin marriages. This article shows the importance of cross-cousin marriage as a social form of contact between groups and individuals. This article would also explain the importance of this phenomenon among the Naskapi, a neighbor to the Barren Ground Band.

EDUCATION


Examines the views and feelings of Native parents with regard to culture, education and related matters. Findings showed that their most immediate concern was their children travelling to schools of higher education in other communities.
An additional finding was that parents were hesitant to meet with teachers. Of interest to those involved in Native education.


Discusses the problem of adjustment to schools that are remote from the family. The author describes the need for the education of Natives to be more family-oriented. He concludes that unless education becomes more supportive of family life, then the gap between the two cultures will increase. This is one of the earliest proposals in support of culturally relevant education.


Provides an insightful look at Native children in the school system. The author states that Natives do not assimilate into the majority culture as well as other ethnic groups. The reasons for this are not explained. However, the values of the Native children are different from those of White children; therefore, adjustment in school is more difficult. The author suggests tolerance in Native education. Of interest to educators working with Natives.


Looks at comparative attitudes between Indian and non-Indian high school students. The results showed that both groups were in agreement that full integration was not the answer to the problem. However, a number of Natives stated that they would rather adopt a more White lifestyle than maintain their own.
LAW


A small book (31 pages) that provides a critical analysis of the Indian Act, first passed in 1874 and most recently amended in 1985, from a legal, historical and humanitarian perspective. Provides a brief but useful summary of the legal issues facing Native people today.


Reviews the impact of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1979 and the problems related to the implementation of the various sections. For instance, there is no standard procedure for registering Indian people and this makes it difficult to determine who falls under the law. There are also problems in service delivery related to the fact that workers, both Indian and non-Indian, need special training. A list is provided of what this training should encompass. This is important for practitioners and legislators in Canada and, in particular, Ontario which has passed child welfare legislation that includes similar provisions for Native people.


 Discusses the implications of the U.S. Indian Child Welfare Act of 1979 for practitioners. The Act provides for the respect of cultural heritage, and the strengthening of Indian tribes against the encroachment of the dominant society. Professionals are urged to follow the spirit of the Act as a way of avoiding potential subsequent problems with the placement of children in substitute care. Of interest from a legal perspective as well as a service delivery perspective.

Discusses the principles of Bill 77, article 10, which permits Native participation in the child welfare system. It correctly points out that the success of these principles will depend on future policies and procedures. Of interest to Ontario practitioners in child welfare as well as those interested in Native self-determination.


A small but very useful booklet that covers the highlights of the Child and Family Services Act. The Act deals with all aspects of child welfare including Native child welfare. Throughout the Act reference is made to Native children and section 10 of the Act deals specifically with Native control over their child welfare services. An excellent reference source.


An expanded and rewritten edition of a text that was first published in 1978. The book covers most areas of child welfare legislation in Canada, including Native child welfare, the laws, various interpretations and important court cases. This is an important reference source for those concerned about Native issues.

MENTAL HEALTH


Examines the mental health of Native people and identifies two issues: (1) the community power loss attributed to economic,
social, religious, political and legal disenfranchisement, and (2) the establishment of norms based on the myth of White superiority, that contribute to diminished individual self-esteem and collective power loss. The author states that entrenchment of Native political rights in the Constitution is a necessary step towards improvement in this situation. Of interest from a mental health perspective.

Canadian Psychiatric Association (1978).
Statement by the Canadian Association’s section on Native people’s mental health. White Cloud Journal, 1(2), 11-12.
A statement supporting much of the Native people’s demands for self determination published by the Association. Coming from the medical profession, these recommendations should have had an important impact in mental health circles, as well as government.

Presents an overview of Indian mental health needs, problems, and services in predominantly rural populations in the United States, including Alaska. The author considers the problems of integrating traditional healing with modern techniques. This is of interest to mental health professionals.

Covers American Indians, Canadian Natives and Alaskan Natives. The author includes 65 citations found in scholarly journals and federal government papers presented at major conferences. The citations include anthropology, medicine and psychology. Comments on the design, results, conclusion and limitations for each citation are given.

Discusses the importance of ensuring that research on mental health of American Indians be related to the problems faced by Indian people. Stresses that the research be made available to Indian people and worded in a manner that is understandable to them. The author offers a model to be used as a guide for involving the community to ensure the relevance of the research. These are important considerations to be kept in mind by those involved in research with Native Indian people.


Provides personal observations on current mental health research. The authors feel that if anyone is to come close to understanding the mental health of American Natives, it will be professional educated people of Native heritage who know the White world but who have not forgotten the Native world. Of interest to professionals working with Natives.

**PSYCHOLOGY**


Attempts to identify value conflicts in northern Alberta Native children by using a Kluckhohn Form Test (1961). Results showed that Natives did not differ from their White counterparts except on one scale: relational. Here the White students put more emphasis on individualism and the Natives on collaterality. Similar results have been replicated many times. Of interest to professionals working with Natives.

Attempts to find a relationship between tribal acculturation and self-esteem using the Piers-Harris Self Concept Scale (1969). Results showed that the Miccosukee Natives (judged as less acculturated) scored higher on self concept as compared to Seminole Natives. The Miccosukees have made a firmer commitment to tradition and show a higher level of social integration. This supports the hypothesis that less acculturated Natives or those who live in more traditional life-style may have a higher self concept. Of interest to professionals working with Natives.


Reviews of extensive literature on Ojibwa personality and culture with specific attention to acculturation studies and child rearing practices. The authors suggest a limited new focus for further research, specifically, in the areas of adolescent developmental conflicts and adult interaction. Of interest to non-Native practitioners because it points out the importance of culturally relevant counselling.


Provides a look at co-operative behaviour among the Blackfoot. To measure this phenomenon the experiments used a game format. There were three groups of subjects: Native, White, and integrated. The results showed that all the Native groups displayed cooperative behaviour; however, Natives in White schools lost this co-operativeness. Of interest from a cross-cultural perspective.
SOCIAL POLICY


Written as a reaction to the assimilationist policy of the Trudeau government as described in the White Paper of 1969. The author used the title of Trudeau’s book The Just Society to denounce assimilation and advocate for political activism by Canadian Native people. The book examines the relationship of Native Canadians to the dominant European Canadians from the perspective of a Native Canadian. Of interest because it is one of the first works by a Native Canadian on self-determination and coincides with the beginning of the mobilization of Native organizations as an effective political force.


Reviews the development of the White Paper of 1969 outlining the policy of the Trudeau government towards Canadian Native people. Essentially, the Trudeau government did not accept the special status of Native people or any ethnic group and hoped that Native people would eventually assimilate into mainstream Canadian society. The author describes the events that led up to the presentation of the paper as well as the personalities and motivations of the key players during this period. The public reaction to the White Paper is also examined. The White Paper is described as the catalyst that helped mobilize Native groups in pursuit of Native self-determination. Provides an excellent picture of the dynamics behind the creation of social policy.

SOCIAL WORK


Describes the complexities and variation of American Indian culture, the failure of the social services provided by the White dominant society to understand the differences, and the failure of
the Bureau of Indian Affairs to find workable solutions to Indian problems. The author suggests that the only solution is to encourage self-determination. Of interest to professionals working with Natives but reflects the author's opinion and, like so many papers of this nature, does not provide new solutions.


Examines alcoholism over a seven year period among American Indians. The author suggests that Indians must re-spiritualize through traditionally based treatment and through participation in the global community of people concerned with the survival of the natural world and natural people (people living in harmony with nature). This article points out the importance of culture specific interventions. Of interest to social workers involved with Native people.


Examines differences in cultural values of thirty-six American Indian social workers and thirty-six White social workers using the Kluckhohn Value Schedule (1961). Results showed that there were differences in such areas as time, relational values (that the welfare of the group is more important than the welfare of the individual), and man-nature (that Natives showed a higher preference for harmony with nature), but not on activity orientation (that intrinsic worth is more important than education, wealth or power). These findings are important because they demonstrate that there are differences between the two groups that can be attributed to culture. Important for professionals working with Natives.
American Indians: Working with Individuals and groups. 
Social Casework, 61(8), 398-506.

Covers a broad range of areas that must be kept in mind by social workers working with Indian clients. The author stresses the importance of culture specific counselling and gives many examples of the behaviours that workers should be aware of during counselling. For example, eye contact should be avoided as much as possible. Also, Indians do not normally engage in introspection. The implications for working with groups are also covered. This is an interesting and useful discussion on culture specific counselling.

Working with American Indian parents: A cultural approach. 
Social Casework, 61(8), 472-475.

Describes the work of the Jewish Family and Children Services of Phoenix in developing the Indian child welfare program. In particular the authors discuss the effort of involving the natural father in permanency planning for his children. In the six years that the program was running, there were 100 adoption placements. In the cases where the father was locatable, total cooperation was obtained. Of interest to practitioners in Native child welfare.

Hanson, W. (1980). 
The Urban Indian Woman and Her Family. Social Casework, 61(8), 476-483.

Describes the role of American Indian women in modern urban society. Traditionally, Indian women were homemakers. This role is now in conflict with the leadership role that many women are taking on in modern urban society. Combining roles that are potentially in conflict is something Indian women must come to terms with. Of interest to students of Native culture because it deals with Indian people as a developing society.


Points out the necessity of considering cultural norms in designing and implementing strategies in dealing with family violence, child neglect and substance abuse in Native families. The author suggests fusing Indian traditions with effective mental health practices. Helpful to mental health practitioners.


A discussion of the need to provide culturally relevant child welfare services to Native Americans. The author briefly reviews past efforts and current trends. Indian and non-Indian cultural characteristics are contrasted to emphasize the need for special knowledge and training. This is useful to practitioners working with Natives and provides another example of the growing awareness of the need to provide culturally relevant services.


Describes the experiences of a student placement in an off-reservation Indian boarding school. This is used to illustrate the importance of training in culture specific counselling. This is of interest to practitioners working with Native people.


Describes an empirical study which compared attitudes on leadership. A questionnaire, developed by combining several existing questionnaires, was administered to 40 Indian students and a comparison group of 40 non-Indian students. Results showed that Indian students felt that personality was more important than skill and knowledge. The non-Indian students felt the opposite. The implications for social work is that leadership for Natives

involves acting as a facilitator, advocate and experience giver. This is useful and interesting to social workers as well as those interested in Native culture.

Manitoba Metis Federation 1982 [Document One, (1986)].
Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) Inc. position paper on child care and family services. Native Studies Review, 2(1), 125-139.

Contends that Native child care problems originate with economic underdevelopment. Provides a rationale and model for increased Native control over child care and family services, especially regarding Manitoba's out-of-province adoption policy, identified as "Native Child Exports."

These MMF recommendations have successfully shifted the province's policy on child care/family services by reforming the Child Welfare Act, the decentralization of child care services, and the training of Natives for child and family support services.


Looks at the impact of social work practice as representing White dominant society. The author is very critical of the profession and raises some important issues. For example, the author believes that social workers have participated in cultural colonialism, that is, normative control of a dominant culture within a society over a minority culture. Important for professional working with Natives.

Family structure and value orientation in American Indians. Social Casework, 61(8), 462-467.

Reviews the characteristics of the Indian family. In particular, the authors refer to the value orientation and the purposeful behaviour of the American Indian family. The extended system model of the Indian family is contrasted to the White nuclear system model. This is offered as a guide for mental

health professionals responsible for providing culturally relevant services. Of interest to practitioners working with Native people.


Proposes using Levine's Social Conservative Model to develop human services systems that identify long standing cultural attributes and reaffirm a sense of family purpose. The approach described does seem to offer some hope in providing services that are culturally more relevant. Of interest to professionals working with Natives.


Discusses the role of the elders in the day to day role of Indian family life. Elders sustain family strength and assume family responsibilities and obligations, such as providing guidance to children's relational bonding, and spiritual guidance. The authors suggest that professionals should use elders as a resource in dealing with social problems and let the elders set the example for the rest of the community to follow. Of interest to practitioners working with Native families.


Describes tribal communities and contrasts this portrayal to the perception held by the dominant White society. The author suggests that the best approach is a wholistic family service approach respecting the integrated and interdependent Native social systems. Important to professionals working with Natives because it points out the saliency of culturally relevant assistance.