

Native Americans: Stereotype vs. Reality

Who are Native Americans? What stereotypes distort outsiders' perceptions of Native Americans? Some of these books describe the reality; others analyze the stereotypes.

The Stereotypes

Acoose, Janice, or Misko-Kisikāwihkwè (Red Sky Woman). 1995. *Iskwewak-Kah Wahkomkanak: Neither Indian Princesses nor Easy Squaws*. Toronto: Woman's Press. A deconstruction of the stereotypical images of Indigenous women in popular literature.

Bataille, Gretchen M., & Charles L.P. Silet, editors. 1980. *The Pretend Indians: Native Americans in the Movies*. Ames: The Iowa State University Press. A collection of essays that analyze the stereotypical treatment of Native Americans in the movies.

Berkhofer, Robert F., Jr. 1978. *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. Beginning with the early 15th century, the author traces the history of stereotyping of Native Americans.

Churchill, Ward. 1998. *Fantasies of the Master Race: Literature, Cinema & the Colonial American Indians*. San Francisco: City Lights Books. A collection of essays that analyze stereotyping and misrepresentation as weapons of genocide. First published 1992 by the University of Massachusetts Press, then by Courage Press, Monroe, ME.

Coward, John M. 1999. *The Newspaper Indian: Native American Identity in the 19th Century*. Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press. An in-depth look at how 19th century newspaper reporting shaped the image of Native Americans.

Deloria, Philip J. 1998. *Playing Indian*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Explores the culture's fantasies about Native people and the co-optation of Native symbols, from colonial days to the present.

Dilworth, Leah. 1996. *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of the American West*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press. The author examines the creation and potency of the early 20th Century myth of the primitive Indians and discusses the ways that Native people have resisted cultural colonialism.

Doxtator, Deborah. 1992. *Fluffs & Feathers, An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indian Culture*. Brantford, Ontario: Woodland Cultural Centre. A resource guide to accompany an exhibit designed to examine the false symbols of "Indianness" that perpetuate harmful stereotypes.

Francis, Daniel. 1992. *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Literature*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press (103-1014 Homer Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 2V9). A study of the images projected upon Native Canadians.

Friar, Ralph E., & Natasha A. Friar. 1972. *The Only Good Indian: The Hollywood Image of the American Indian*. New York: Drama Book Specialists/Publishers. Detailed analysis of the stereotyping of Native Americans, especially in film.

Kilpatrick, Jacquelyn. 1999. *Celluloid Indians: Native Americans & Film*. Lincoln: Nebraska Press. An overview of a century's worth of representations of Native Americans in film.

Loewen, James W. 2005. *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*. New York: The New Press. A critique of high school history textbooks. A good deal of information on what textbooks get wrong, omit, or distort about Native Americans. First published 1995.

Mihesuah, Devon A. (Choctaw). 1996. *American Indians: Stereotypes & Realities*. Clarity Press. This useful resource dispels many misconceptions and negative stereotypes. It includes a list of do's and don'ts for teaching about Indian history and culture.

The Racism & Sexism Resource Center for Educators. 1977, 1981. *Unlearning "Types": A Teaching Unit for Elementary Teachers & Children's Librarians*. New York: On Interracial Books for Children. Includes a discussion of stereotyping in picture books for teachers, writers, illustrators, and publishers, and Native American perspectives on Thanksgiving, Columbus Day, and Washington's Birthday.

The Reality

Anderson, Marilyn, & Johathan Garlock. 1988. *Granddaughters of Corn: Portrait of a Woman*. Willimantic, CT: Curbstone Press. Describes the everyday reality faced by women in modern-day Guatemala.

Angel, Adriana, & Fiona Macintosh. 1987. *The Tiger's Milk: Women of Nicaragua*. Seaver Books/Henry Holt & Company. Native women of Nicaragua tell their own stories.

Armstrong, Virginia Irving. 1971, 1984. *I Have Spoken: American History Through the Indians*. Athens: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press. A collection of Native American oratory from the 17th to the 20th Century.

Bordewich, Fergus M. 1996. *Killing the White Man's Indian: Reinventing Native America at the End of the 20th Century*. New York: Doubleday. Presents an in-depth examination of political developments in Indian country.

Caldwell, E.K. 1999. *Dreaming the Dawn: Conversations with Native Artists & Activists*. University of Nebraska Press. Interviews of twelve Native artists and activists of the Northern Plains: Winona La Duke, John Trudell, Sherman Alexie, and Elizabeth Woody.

Cash, Joseph H. & Herbert T. Hoover, editors. 1995. *To Be an Indian: An Oral History*. Minnesota Historical Society Press. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston. This book contains interviews with Native people of the Northern Plains conducted during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Topics discussed include spirituality, reservation life, and Indian-white relations. First published by Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1971.

Chapman, Serle. Two books: 1998, 2002. *Of Earth & Elders: Visions & Voices from America*. 2001. *We, the People: Of Earth & Elders, Volume II*, 2001. Missoula, MT: A unique look at contemporary Native Americans. Works to counteract stereotypes.

Farley, Ronnie, editor & photographer. 1998. *Women of the Native Struggle: Photography of Native American Women*. New York: Random House Value Publishing. A collection of photographs of Native American women of today. First published by Orion Books (Crown), New York, 1993.

Garrod, Andrew, & Colleen Larimore, editors. 1997. *First Person, First Peoples: College Graduates Tell Their Life Stories*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Personal stories of Native American graduates of Dartmouth College.

Hirschfelder, Arlene, editor. 1995. *Native Heritage: Personal Accounts by Americans from 1790 to the Present*. New York: Macmillan. Includes over 120 narratives drawn from oral histories, autobiographies, newspapers, and journals.

James, Cheewa (Modoc). 1995. *Catch the Whisper of the Wind: Inspirational Stories from Native Americans*. Deerfield Beach, Florida: Health Communications, Inc. A collection of Native life from Olympic Gold Medalist Billy Mills, U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Cherokee stateswoman Wilma Mankiller, political leader Ada Deer and others. Brief views by Cheewa James.

Kohn, Rita, & W. Lynwood Montell, editors. 1997. *Always a People: Oral Histories of Temporary Woodland Indians*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Forty-one woodland nations were interviewed for this book.

McLuhan, T.C. 1992. *Touch the Earth: A Self-Portrait of Indian Existence*. Edison, NJ: Prometheus Publishing. A collection of short statements and writings by North American Indians convey Native history and values. Illustrated with historic photographs. First published by Prometheus Press, New York.

Nabokov, Peter, editor. 1999. *Native American Testimony: A Chronicle of Indian Life from Prophecy to the Present*. New York: Penguin Books. Accounts drawn from various sources, including traditional narratives, autobiographies, government transcripts, and interviews. First published by Crowell, New York, 1978.

Niethammer, Carolyn. 1977, 1996. *Daughters of the Earth: The Lives & Legends of Indian Women*. New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster. A detailed account of the ways of life of Native North American women. Includes numerous short quotations from women of the past.

Page, Susanne. 1989. *A Celebration of Being: Photographs of the Hopi & Navajo*. Northland Publishing. Presents a picture of modern-day Native life in the Southwest.

Riley, Patricia, editor. 1993. *Growing Up Native American*. New York: William Morrow (hard cover) and Avon Books (soft cover). Twenty-two people of the 19th and 20th centuries share the experience of growing up Native American.

Roche, Judith, & Meg McHutchison, editors. 1998. *First Fish, First People: Salmon and the North Pacific Rim*. Seattle: University of Washington Press / Vancouver: UBC Press. Voices of contemporary Native writers and storytellers of the Northwest Coast, whose traditions loom large in traditional life and beliefs.

Rosenstiel, Annette. 1983. *Red & White: Indian Views of the White Man, 1492-1890*. New York: Universe Books. A chronological collection of Native accounts, including both spoken and written material.

Sando, Joe S. (Jemez). 1998. *Pueblo Profiles: Cultural Identity through Centuries*. Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishers. The stories of more than thirty leaders, educators, and artists of the past and present.

Schweitzer, Marjorie M., editor. 1999. *American Indian Grandmothers: Traditions and Values*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. Nine essays about the complex work of mothering in Native America.

Vanderwerth, W.C. 1971, 1979. *Indian Oratory: Famous Speeches by Noted Indians*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. A collection of speeches by Native Americans from the mid-18th to the early 20th Century.

Wall, Steve. 1993. *Wisdom's Daughters: Conversations with Women Elders of Native America*. New York: Harper Perennial. Interviews with Native American women of many reservations.

Wall, Steve, & Harvey Arden. 1990, 2006. *Wisdomkeepers: Meetings with Native American Spiritual Leaders*. Hillsboro, Oregon: Beyond Words Publishing. Interviews with spiritual leaders from various Native American nations.

from many Native communities.