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Baringer, Sandra K.

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BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

Indian Activism and the American Indian Movement: A Bibliographical Essay

SANDRA K. BARINGER

Though much has been written about the growth of Indian activism in the sixties, academic studies of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and other Native American activist organizations that have advocated confrontational tactics have been somewhat varied in their topics and approaches. Many works in the popular press have covered a broad range of Indian issues, while other works have focused attention on particular personalities and particular incidents involving AIM. This essay will provide an overview of the written material available for the use of scholars choosing materials for teaching purposes or for pursuing further research.

Sandra K. Baringer is a Ph.D. candidate in American cultural studies at the University of California, Riverside. She received a law degree from the University of Denver and practiced law in Oregon during the 1980s.

GENERAL WORKS ON INDIAN ACTIVISM IN THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The first of many books aimed at a popular audience commenting on the rise in Indian activism appears to have been *The New Indians* by Stan Steiner in 1968. It introduces the concept of Red Power and includes useful information on confrontational activism in the sixties—for example, it opens with a review of an armed demonstration over a deer-hunting prosecution of a Cherokee in Jay, Oklahoma. The book includes extensive commentary from Vine Deloria, Clyde Warrior, Mel Thom, and other National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) leaders. A briefer and more quantitative source on the rise of activism in the sixties appears in an essay by Robert C. Day, entitled “The Emergence of Activism as a Social Movement” in *Native Americans Today: Sociological Perspectives*, edited by Howard M. Bahr, Bruce Chadwick, and Robert C. Day (1972). This essay covers the emergence of the NCAI, the NIYC, Red Power, the Red Muslims, the fish-ins, and their antecedents in the 1950s. Day provides a complete picture that is lacking in Steiner’s anecdotal approach, including a table of collective actions from 1961 through 1970, classified as “obstructive” or “facilitative” and broken down by year: an increase from four in 1961 to fifty-seven in 1970.

Probably the best known of the late sixties publications was Vine Deloria Jr.’s *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* in 1969. Deloria, of course, is a prolific author and has published a number of books and essay collections, but this one was widely read by college students and had a profound influence on some of the young people who became leaders at Alcatraz and thereafter.

Most of what was published during the seventies will appear under the sections below on the American Indian Movement and related actions. At the same time, several collections of Native American speeches and proclamations were published. One was *Chronicles of American Indian Protest*, edited by the Council on Interracial Books for Children in 1971 and 1979. This small paperback provides transcripts of important speeches and declarations throughout the centuries. Of significance here are the “Proclamation of the Indian Tribes of All Nations” issued at Alcatraz followed by an interview with Richard Oakes (310-316); “Six Nations Statement on Wounded

Knee" (334-336); "Declaration of Continuing Independence" (339-342) issued by the International Indian Treaty Council at the convention in Mobridge, South Dakota in 1974; a proclamation of the Women of All Red Nations; and numerous documents presented at the Geneva conferences on indigenous rights. Another collection of essays, speeches, and policy statements published in 1971 was Alvin M. Josephy Jr.'s *Red Power: The American Indians' Fight for Freedom*, which includes the "Declaration of Indian Purpose" drafted at the 1961 Chicago conference that engendered the NIYC, an open letter from the Indians of All Tribes at Alcatraz, a 1970 proclamation by the Pit River Indian Council, and statements from Clyde Warrior, Sidney Mills, Laura McCloud, Vine Deloria, and others.

A compilation of famous Indian speeches designed for younger readers is Jane B. Katz's *Let Me Be a Free Man: A Documentary History of Indian Resistance* (1975). It starts with Powhatan, connecting speeches with historical narrative so that it can be used as a textbook. The latter part of the book contains excerpts from public statements by Vine Deloria, Clyde Warrior, Indians of All Tribes, John Trudell, Hank Adams, Clyde Bellecourt, Russell Means, Dennis Banks, the International Indian Treaty Council, and others less well known. Most of them are very short—less than one page.

A more recent collection is *Native American Testimony: A Chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to the Present, 1492-1992*, edited by Peter Nabokov (1991). Like the previous collection, it covers a broad historical range. Chapter 17, "Let's Raise Some Hell," contains five short pieces: Laura McCloud on the Northwest fishing controversy (from Josephy's *Red Power*); Adam Fortunate Eagle on Alcatraz (taken from his book); Vernon Bellecourt on "The Birth of AIM" (taken from his *Penthouse* interview); Gerald Vizenor on Dennis Banks (clearly adapted from the essay discussed elsewhere in this bibliography), and an anonymous piece of satire on the BIA—"The Beeah Tribe"—from a 1970 issue of *ABC (Americans Before Columbus)*, the publication of the National Indian Youth Council.

A brief essay published by Joane Nagel in 1982, "The Political Mobilization of Native Americans" (*Social Science Journal* v19 n3), gives an overview of Indian organizations, classifying them as tribal, pan-tribal (as represented by NCAI, NATC, Native American Rights Fund, Council of Energy Resource Tribes, and so forth) and pan-Indian (NIYC, AIM).

Predictably, she finds that pan-tribal organization has been facilitated by the Indian Reorganization Act as well as by Office of Economic Opportunity programs and the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act; however, she notes that OEO and Nixonian policies have a "tripartite mobilizing impact" at all three organizational levels. She ascribes pan-Indian organization to allotment, the boarding schools, the hiring policies of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and educational assistance policies.

The following three books follow in the Stan Steiner subgenre, providing an overview of various Indian controversies for a popular audience: *Wasi'chu: The Continuing Indian Wars* by Bruce E. Johanson and Roberto Maestas (1979); *Now That the Buffalo's Gone: A Study of Today's American Indians* by Alvin Josephy Jr. (1982); and *Blood of the Land: The Government and Corporate War Against First Nations* by Rex Weyler (1992). *Wasi'chu* covers the usual ground of the Pine Ridge war of 1973-76 (mainly in Chapter 4, "The Colonial Police Force") as well as violence on the Navajo reservation, the energy issues at Black Mesa and in Montana, and the Northwest fishing controversy. As in many books of this genre, it's difficult to tell what is in each chapter by the chapter titles. The death of Richard Oakes and the Trail of Broken Treaties is covered in Chapter 9, "The Third World at Home."

The most interesting passage in the context of this project is Chapter 2, "The Making of a Savage: The FBI's Creative Writers' School," which covers some of the more imaginative excerpts from Doug Durham's testimony at the U.S. Senate hearing. It also quotes extensively from other internal FBI documents, detailing the fantasies of various informants and other anonymous contributors about the "kill a cop a day" and other related conspiracies to disrupt the bicentennial in 1976.

Now That the Buffalo's Gone is compromised by a lack of footnotes (it provides a chapter-by-chapter bibliography) and the misleading nature of the chapter titles, but includes some good narratives on particular topics. Chapter 6, "The Great Northwest Fishing War," presents a good history of the fishing rights activism led by Hank Adams and the McClouds in Washington state in the sixties. Chapter 7, "The Sioux Will Rise Again," in addition to discussing the Sioux, covers confrontational actions from Alcatraz through the Trail of Broken Treaties and Wounded Knee. It offers a good overview of AIM's heyday for the uninitiated.

The Blood of the Land covers much of the same ground ten years later, with a chapter on the Yellow Thunder Camp in the Black Hills.

A more scholarly treatment of the subject matter is contained in Stephen Cornell's *The Return of the Native: American Indian Political Resurgence* (1988). This is a general study of Indian politics in the twentieth century. It does not describe confrontational incidents of the latter twentieth century in depth, but provides, in the last pages, an assessment of the government response to AIM, putting it in the perspective of overall developments in power relationships.

A bibliographic essay from Velma S. Salabiye and James R. Young, "American Indian Leaders and Leadership of the Twentieth Century: A Bibliographical Essay," *Journal of the West* v23 n3 (1984), covers the entire twentieth century. Another, Michael L. Tate's "Red Power: Government Publications and the Rising Indian Activism of the 1970's," *Government Publications Review* v8A n6 (1981), focuses on government publications.

ALCATRAZ

There are several publications of interest on the Alcatraz occupation, the most recent of which is Troy Johnson's *Alcatraz: Indian Land Forever* (1994). Published to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the occupation, the book is a collection of poetry, photographs, and political statements. Of particular note are some brief transcriptions from John Trudell's radio broadcasts from the island (otherwise available from Pacifica archives). The other recent book is Adam Fortunate Eagle's *Alcatraz! Alcatraz!: The Indian Occupation of 1969-1971* (1992). This is a brief (155 pages including several photographs) insider account of the Alcatraz occupation by one of the leaders, an older (born 1929) urban Chippewa adopted into a Crow clan who was chairman of the United Council of Bay Area urban Indians from 1962 to 1976. It is quite readable and honest in its account of some of the internal conflicts on Alcatraz, especially the issue of Richard Oakes' assumption of leadership. In 1994 the *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* published a *Special Edition: Alcatraz Revisited: The 25th Anniversary of the Occupation, 1969-1971* v18 n4 (Fall 1994), featuring thirteen articles that deal in some way with Alcatraz, mostly by participants in the occupation. The authors are Troy

Johnson and Joane Nagel, Vine Deloria Jr., Adam Fortunate Eagle, Tim Findley, LaNada Boyer, Steve Talbot, Luis Kenmitzer, Edward D. Castillo, Jack D. Forbes, Lenny Foster, George P. Horse Capture, John Garvey and Troy Johnson, and Robert A. Rundstrom.

An earlier publication by the group who organized the occupation, Indians of All Tribes, is *Alcatraz Is Not an Island*, edited by Peter Blue Cloud (1972). Also worth reading is Steve Talbot's "Free Alcatraz: The Culture of Native American Liberation," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* v6 n3 (1978). Talbot was a graduate student in anthropology and a volunteer instructor of "Indian liberation" in Native American studies at Berkeley when twenty students in his class disembarked to Alcatraz. As he put it, "the class became extremely relevant to the course aims," and the students returned to class occasionally to report.

If practicable, researchers should investigate John and Deborah Marcus Noxon's *Inventory of Occupation Graffiti 1969-1971: Alcatraz Island, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, California* (San Francisco: Division of Cultural Resources Management, Western Region [1971]; series title, American History and Culture Research Studies by the National Park Service, 1935-1984).

AMERICAN INDIAN MOVEMENT

Publications about AIM tend to focus on personalities or incidents rather than the organization itself. However, a brief introduction to the history of the organization can be found in an essay by Rachel Bonney, "The Role of AIM Leaders in Indian Nationalism," *American Indian Quarterly* v3 (1977). The essay discusses the origins of AIM in Minneapolis, its spiritual resonance, and its value to urban and mixed-blood Indians in dealing with identity problems.

Two fairly recent dissertations have been written about AIM but remain unpublished. The first, *Wocante Tinza: A History of the American Indian Movement* by William Keith Akard of Ball State University (1988), is a cultural anthropology or ethnohistorical study by a participant observer who did some, though apparently not all, of his fieldwork on the Rosebud reservation. He discusses AIM's function as "a social enclave to help socially disenfranchised Indian individuals re-enter Indian society," classifying it as a "social reform movement" at odds with IRA

tribal governments. He calls it "a formal social organization with a blend of traditional and acculturated social components." His conclusion that it is a functioning organization "successfully integrated socially to all levels of society" may surprise those who thought it died out in the seventies. Since his findings are now ten years out of date, a follow-up study would be useful.

Tim Baylor's dissertation, *Modern Warriors: The Mobilization and Decline of AIM, 1968-1979* (University of North Carolina, 1995) "applies and expands social movement theory" to explain the decline of AIM. Baylor argues that AIM "became synonymous with Native American protest" through media attention to its direct-action tactics. Baylor discusses the FBI's use of informants and agents to destroy trust, arguing that the informal nature of AIM's organization made it more vulnerable to the FBI's tactics in sowing mistrust and dissension. See also Baylor's article, listed below, on the ways in which media attention distorted AIM objectives.

Following is a summary of publications concerning particular events in AIM's history. No attempt is made to index the vast amount of coverage these incidents garnered in the mainstream press, though a few examples will be provided. Anyone doing research on Indian activism in the seventies should look first to *Akwesasne Notes*, in continuous publication throughout most of the relevant times, and *Wassaja*, also published as *The Indian Historian*.

TRAIL OF BROKEN TREATIES/BIA OCCUPATION

The primary source on the Trail of Broken Treaties and subsequent occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Building in late 1972 is *Akwesasne Notes'* publication, *Trail of Broken Treaties: "B.I.A., I'm Not Your Indian Anymore"* (1974). The quote in the title is from a Floyd Westerman song. This ninety-page book includes the full Twenty Point Proposal and the complete text of the government response. The rest of the text is a composite of newspaper articles, photos, and artwork from the Trail of Broken Treaties and BIA occupation in the fall of 1972.

Robert Burnette, former tribal chairman at Rosebud, claims credit for suggesting the idea of the Trail of Broken Treaties to the AIM leadership in the summer of 1972. He covers the events well in the ninth chapter of his 1974 book, *The Road to*

Wounded Knee, showing how an orderly march on Washington ended in an unplanned destructive occupation of the BIA building. Other accounts appear in Josephy's *Now That the Buffalo's Gone*, cited above, and more recently, in Russell Means' autobiography. But probably the best analysis of what happened appears in Jack D. Forbes' *Native Americans and Nixon: Presidential Politics and Minority Self-Determination 1969-1972* (1981). Forbes argues that Nixon pursued a policy of appeasement on Native American issues, strengthening tribal governments with an influx of federal spending and other legislation in order to set them up for exploitation by corporate energy interests. In the process of developing this thesis, Forbes analyzes the Trail of Broken Treaties and ensuing BIA occupation of October 1972 in terms of the Nixonian strategy of labeling the marchers as "militants" and "activists" and lacking in support among their alleged constituents, establishing that in spite of such demonizing of AIM by government interests in the media, more than 80 percent of the marchers were from reservations. Forbes discusses the conspiracy allegations on both sides, arguing that neither the protesters nor the government planned such a confrontation, with the government making up the described strategy as it went along and AIM reacting about as the government should have expected, given the circumstances.

Vine Deloria Jr. published *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence* in 1974 in support of the Twenty Points presented by the participants in the Trail of Broken Treaties—a scholarly development of the arguments in favor of sovereignty and the concomitant dismantling or radical restructuring of the BIA. Deloria's book does not provide the actual text of the Twenty Points; he summarizes them and provides the text of the government's response to the first in the preface.

WOUNDED KNEE

There are several sources for eyewitness accounts of the Wounded Knee occupation of February 27 through May 7, 1973. The most comprehensive primary source is *Voices from Wounded Knee, 1973: In the Words of the Participants*, published by the Akwesasne Notes editorial collective (1974). Three staff journalists were on the inside for most of the occupation, and the book consists for the most part of transcribed taped statements and photographs. Unfortunately, many of the state-

ments are anonymous, presumably due to the fact that prosecutions were still ongoing at the time of publication. Statements and photographs of various reservation residents and law enforcement personnel on the outside are also included. Perhaps the best less-than-book-length narrative of the occupation is the tenth chapter of Robert Burnette's *The Road to Wounded Knee*, cited above. Burnette makes some astute observations on the attitudes and role of the media, as well as the roles of various AIM leaders. He takes a decidedly dim view of the tactics of William Kunstler and the Wounded Knee Legal Defense/Offense Committee, which he views as a plague of East Coast lawyers who do not understand local politics.

The most recent work on the Wounded Knee occupation is *Ghost Dancing the Law: The Wounded Knee Trials*, by John William Sayer (1997), assessing the impact of mass media and legal institutions on political dissent. Another, is that of Stanley David Lyman, local BIA superintendent at the recent work time. *Wounded Knee 1973: A Personal Account* was published posthumously in 1991, Lyman having died in 1979; it is edited by Floyd A. O'Neil, June K. Lyman, and Susan McKay.

The other important insider accounts are contained in the autobiographies of Mary Crow Dog (*Lakota Woman*, 1990), Leonard Crow Dog (*Crow Dog*, 1995), and Russell Means (*Where White Mean Fear to Tread*, 1995). Mary Crow Dog was the mother of the baby born at Wounded Knee, who married Leonard Crow Dog, the prominent Lakota spiritual leader, after the occupation. Her account of Wounded Knee underwent substantial fictionalization in the TV movie of the same name made by Ted Turner and Jane Fonda in 1994.

The parallel between government policy at Wounded Knee and in Vietnam is examined by Bill Zimmerman in his book *Airlift to Wounded Knee* (1976). Zimmerman was an anti-war activist in Boston who organized the parachute drop of food by three single-engine planes during the latter weeks of the occupation. This is not an academic study, but it does include substantial material—almost half the book—from Dennis Banks and Gladys Bissonette, making it the best source for accounts from the perspectives of these two occupation leaders. The Vietnam parallel is also drawn in an article-length retrospective by a Blackfeet Vietnam veteran who participated in the occupation, "The Eagle I Fed Who Did Not Love Me" in the 1994 special edition of *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* cited above.

For those interested in the pro-FBI perspective on Wounded Knee, Rolland Dewing's *Wounded Knee: The Meaning and Significance of the Second Incident* (1985) is essential reading. Dewing's book utilizes FBI files on the incident which had become public by that time; other work on the FBI's involvement with AIM is discussed below. See also Dick Wilson's "Real Indians Condemn AIM" in *Contemporary Native American Address* edited by John R. Maestas.

An interesting example of instant historical analysis from 1973 appeared in *The American West: "The Second Tragedy at Wounded Knee: A 1970's Confrontation and Its Historical Roots"* by Clyde D. Dollar (v10 n5). Dollar reviews records of first contacts: James McKay in 1797, Pierre Antoine Tabeau in 1803, and Lewis and Clark in 1804 to establish his thesis that AIM warriors' behavior patterns are "a revival, not a continuation, of older warrior society values ... these patterns may have been suggested (to AIM) by an exposure to Indian history gained from reading that history..." (59). The qualities of the old warrior society, he asserts, were "highly aggressive behavior, strong independence of personal actions, insensitivity to those outside the defined band or tribe, well-developed egocentricities, and concepts of property limited only to those within the tribal society itself" (58). It is this revival of "early Teton Sioux warrior cultural values" that he finds to be "perhaps the ultimate tragedy of the second Wounded Knee" (61). Dollar adopted rather uncritically some outdated anthropological notions as well as the worst contemporary interpretations by the media; media response to Wounded Knee is further discussed later in this essay.

Also indispensable for researchers is the transcript of the United States Senate hearings during the occupation: *Occupation of Wounded Knee, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Indian Affairs June 16-17, 1973, 93rd Congress, 1st session* (1974). Burnette comments on these hearings that "the chairman, Representative James Haley of Florida, seemed more interested in insulting (Russell) Means than in determining where the blame lay for the whole episode" (245).

MISCELLANEOUS LAKOTA ISSUES

Since the fate of AIM became inextricably tied to the course of events on the Pine Ridge administration during the Dick

Wilson regime from 1972 through 1976, analyses of Pine Ridge politics during this era are important to an understanding of what happened. A good place to start is an essay by Philip D. Roos, Dowell H. Smith, Stephen Langley, and James McDonald, "The Impact of the American Indian Movement on the Pine Ridge Reservation," *Phylon* v41 n1 (1980). This article establishes the context of AIM intervention at Pine Ridge and attempts to assess the outcome of the actions from March 1972 (immediately following the murder of Raymond Yellow Thunder) to June 1973 (aftermath of Wounded Knee occupation). Under Enos Poor Bear, tribal chairman from 1968 to 1970, the tribal budget was about \$100,000. This increased to over \$3 million under Gerald One Feather (1970-72), who was clearly aligned with traditionalists like Calvin Jumping Bull. The authors say that up until "about 1969" full bloods tended to hold the chairmanship whereas employees tended to be mixed-blood assimilationists; when the One Feather regime started handing out the new federal grant jobs to Lakota speakers, the mixed-blood/assimilationist backlash put Dick Wilson in office. But after Wounded Knee II, funds for these new programs such as "New Careers, Foster Grandparents, and VISTA" (94) were drastically cut and replaced with funds for law enforcement. Albert Trimble defeated Wilson in 1975, and by 1977 "tribal programs employed over 1300 people and were funded for about \$6.5 million" (99).

Though the authors are cautious in drawing causal connections from circumstantial evidence, they point out that local control over schools improved in the mid-seventies and that there was also a dramatic rise in the frequency and performance of various spiritual ceremonies on the reservation.

An earlier essay by Robert White, "Value Themes of the Native American Tribalistic Movement Among the South Dakota Sioux," *Current Anthropology* v15 n3 (September 1974), could serve as a Pine Ridge counterpart or addendum to Steiner's *The New Indians* in the way that it describes the spectrum of political attitudes and contemporary culture at Pine Ridge and among Indians in Rapid City. It seems already out of date by the time it was published, since the only militant action it mentions is the demonstration in Gordon, Nebraska in response to Raymond Yellow Thunder's death, but within the limitations of a strictly anthropological approach, it seems like a fairly levelheaded and probably accurate assessment of how young people were thinking at the time: retreat from assimi-

tion, develop political and economic autonomy, and develop contemporary Native American art, literature, and music.

Organizing the Lakota: The Political Economy of the New Deal on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations by Thomas Biolsi (1992) is significant vis à vis the Wounded Knee occupation due to its assertion that Wounded Knee was more an attack against the tribal government than against the federal government (182-184). This is not a new interpretation, but Biolsi's Foucauldian study of the mechanizations of power is probably the most sophisticated treatment of Lakota politics to date in terms of the field of cultural studies.

Tom Holm's essay, "The Crisis in Tribal Government," in *American Indian Policy in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Vine Deloria, Jr. (1985), contextualizes the Wounded Knee occupation as a primary example of the problem deriving from the tribal governments constructed under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. He argues that the media misunderstood the occupation to be directed against the white government, that it was a traditional versus nontraditional conflict which most of the demonstrators would have preferred the whites to stay out of.

A discussion of Pine Ridge issues would not be complete without mentioning its land claim litigation, the legal history of which appears in *Black Hills, White Justice: The Sioux Nation Versus the United States 1775 to the Present*, by Edward Lazarus (1991). The author is the son of the lead attorney on the case, currently persona non grata with Lakotas who refuse to accept the cash judgment in lieu of land. References to AIM and AIM figures are well indexed, and though much of the seventies narrative covers old ground, the sections on the Mt. Rushmore demonstration and the Yellow Thunder camp established in 1981 in the Black Hills are worth looking at. The author's legal training helps in providing succinct summaries of what transpired in court regarding the various protests—and no one can accuse him of being a bleeding heart apologist for the Indians.

Mary Crow Dog has written a sequel to *Lakota Woman* under her own family name, *Mary Brave Bird, Ohitika Woman* (1993). Both books were cowritten with Richard Erdoes, and the authors have been subjected to criticism for pandering to New Age readers. Be that as it may, the first book contains valuable insight into the Wounded Knee occupation from an Indian woman's perspective, and the sequel discusses the uranium mining and pollution issues of the eighties. These issues have

been a major concern of Women of All Red Nations (WARN), a group that was initially organized due to the dissatisfaction of some Indian women activists with male domination of AIM. Brave Bird pays tribute to many AIM women in her second book. The other significant Lakota autobiography is Russell Means' *Where White Men Fear to Tread*, also cited above. This is a very long and complete autobiography, and for those who have the time, it provides a good overview of postseventies AIM activism as well as Means' perspective on all the better known events.

Though she was not Lakota, Anna Mae Aquash was an important figure in AIM, murdered at Pine Ridge, and so her biography, *The Life and Death of Anna Mae Aquash* by Joanna Brand (1978), is a good source on the civil war that transpired there from 1973 through 1976. The book begins with an excellent brief timetable of significant events in the Pine Ridge controversy up to the discovery of her body in early 1976.

PELTIER CASE

The firefight at the Jumping Bull compound on the Pine Ridge reservation on June 26, 1975, leading to the death of two FBI agents and one AIM member and the subsequent prosecution of Leonard Peltier, has engendered its own body of literature due to the widespread view that Peltier is unjustly imprisoned. The leading work on the Peltier case is Peter Matthiessen's *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*. It was originally published in 1983 but was taken off the market soon thereafter due to a defamation lawsuit by former South Dakota governor William Janklow and FBI agent David Price. Thus, while most of the litigation was going on to attempt to reverse Peltier's conviction, the book that was intended to call public attention to the case was generally unavailable. The defamation case went all the way to the Supreme Court, which declined to review the appellate court ruling in Matthiessen's favor, and so the book was finally re-released with a new epilogue in 1991. Matthiessen's reputation as a novelist, naturalist, and environmental writer was well established before he wrote this book, and must have contributed to the unusual level of access he obtained to many key figures in the 1973-76 civil war on the Pine Ridge reservation, both in AIM and the FBI.

Matthiessen has written the most comprehensive and well-

researched book to date on the history of AIM at Pine Ridge, up to and including the Peltier case. Other books, cited above, cover the Trail of Broken Treaties and Wounded Knee, but Matthiessen's covers in depth the companion prosecution of Dino Butler and Bob Robideau for the FBI murders (they were acquitted). The book is controversial and detailed to a fault, but consequently thorough enough that readers can draw their own conclusions about the case.

An alternative to Matthiessen's book for those who want to read a shorter account of the Peltier case is *The Trial of Leonard Peltier*, by Jim Messerschmidt, with a forward by William Kunstler (1983). It is well researched and well footnoted; for example, the footnotes include a list of thirty-three AIM members or sympathizers killed at Pine Ridge between 1973 and 1975 with a breakdown of investigatory results (usually none). The book includes a final chapter on the more current Pine Ridge controversy over corporate energy depredations. Amnesty International published a 1981 report which discusses the Peltier case, *Proposal for a Commission of Inquiry Into the Effect of Domestic Intelligence Activities on Criminal Trials in the United States of America*.

POST-PELTIER

Russell Means' autobiography, cited above, is probably the most comprehensive published account to date of post-1975 AIM activism. As will be discussed further, most of the leadership's energies in the late seventies were devoted to defending themselves in court. One brief article that discusses the move of AIM in the direction of spiritual issues and interviews directors of some of the AIM-sponsored alternative schools in the seventies is Dan Lounberg's "The New Face of the American Indian Movement," *Crisis* v84 n10 (1977). Two other articles do not directly focus on AIM but discuss the move to the forefront of spiritual issues in Indian activism. The first, Steve Talbot's "Desecration and American Indian Religious Freedom," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* v12 n4 (1985), is an overview of sacred lands controversies which includes the Yellow Thunder camp and Big Mountain occupation but does not discuss them in depth. The second is Amanda Porterfield's "American Indian Spirituality as a Counter-Cultural Movement," in *Religion in Native North America* (1990).

A valuable source for a picture of grassroots AIM activism outside the purview of the media-recognized personalities is W. Dale Mason's "'You Can Only Kick So Long...': AIM Leadership in Nebraska 1972-1979," *Journal of the West* v23 n3 (1984). Though the murder of Raymond Yellow Thunder in Gordon, Nebraska in March 1972 marked the beginning of AIM's presence on the Pine Ridge reservation, the AIM chapter in Gordon is one of many which has received precious little media attention in the wake of the BIA takeover in November 1972, the Wounded Knee occupation in the spring of 1973, and the FBI deaths at Oglala in June 1975. This article recounts the history of Bob Yellow Bird's seven-year campaign against police misconduct in Gordon, written by a VISTA volunteer paralegal with the Nebraska Indian Commission. Bob Yellow Bird ran the AIM chapter in Gordon out of the one-room house he shared with his wife Joanne and their seven children, holding sweats and AIM meetings in his yard and publishing an AIM newsletter on a mimeograph machine. Meanwhile, he commuted to his community college classes an hour away from Gordon in Chadron. Though he was involved in a sit-in at Fort Robinson demanding its return to the Lakotas (it was being surplused by the federal government to the state of Nebraska and its return to Indian people was sought under the same legal theory regarding government surplus that instigated the Alcatraz occupation), the primary platform of AIM in Gordon was simply the cessation of harassment of Indian citizens by the local police. Though AIM achieved partial victories in city policies and hiring practices, harassment continued, culminating in a street brawl in 1976 in which a police officer kicked seven-months-pregnant Joanne Yellow Bird in the stomach, causing a miscarriage. By the time a jury awarded her \$300,000 in 1979, the Yellow Birds had moved to the Pine Ridge reservation and Joanne had suffered another miscarriage. She committed suicide there in 1980.

The Black Hills Survival Gathering of July 1980, sponsored by the Black Hills Alliance with the cooperation of AIM and a number of anti-nuclear groups, led to a collection of essays compiled by Ward Churchill in *Marxism and Native Americans* (1983) that should put to rest the old red herring of Marxist influence on AIM. Starting with the address to the gathering that Russell Means describes in his autobiography as his "most famous speech" (401), the essays explore the ways in which Marxist theorists fail to address indigenous people's issues and

the ways (minimal, according to the editor) in which Marxist theory can assist indigenous people's movements. Churchill's concluding essay accuses Marxists of cultural imperialism in "enrich(ing) themselves with the knowledge and at the expense of non-Europeans," and "resorting to all manner of strange and wonderful arguments as a means of defending the sanctity and hegemony of their theoretical domain" (190). Churchill will allow, however, that Baudrillard's "Marxist Anthropology and the Domination of Nature" arrives independently at some of the same conclusions as Means, Deloria, and Churchill. The essays by Bob Sipe and Vine Deloria contain useful discussions of Frankfurt School and other post-Marxist philosophy in the context of Native American concerns. Frank Black Elk's essay is a well-written argument that the Lakota are better dialecticians than the Marxists, easier reading than Sipe's and Deloria's.

THE FBI

Advances in access to FBI files through 1974 amendments to the Freedom of Information Act have required extensive litigation in order to obtain FBI compliance, and thus many of these documents first started becoming available during the late seventies and the eighties. One result has been Ward Churchill's *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian* (1988), a work which meticulously documents the FBI strategies of surveillance of dissident political groups and the use of undercover informants as planters of disinformation and provocateurs of dissension and violent acts. It has 388 pages of text plus extensive footnotes and a detailed index. Certainly the author's tone is angry and strident, but the book would not have been written by someone who was not. It covers many AIM prosecutions and persecutions not covered elsewhere. A companion work is *The COINTELPRO Papers: Documents from the FBI's Secret Wars Against Domestic Dissent* by Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall with a foreword by John Trudell and preface by Brian Glick (1990).

A more recent book on the federal offensive against AIM is Kenneth Saul Stern's *Loud Hawk: The United States Versus the American Indian Movement* (1994). The Loud Hawk case started with the arrest of Kenneth Loud Hawk, Russ Redner, Anna

Mae Aquash, and KaMook Banks as they were headed east out of Oregon on November 14, 1975 in a station wagon filled with dynamite and a motor home registered to Marlon Brando. Stern, on the defense team throughout, was a law student when the case started and eventually became Banks' lead counsel. The case apparently endured the longest federal prosecution in U.S. history; it died many deaths only to keep on kicking, ending finally in a plea bargain in 1988 in which Banks received probation. The government's extraordinary tenacity was fueled by an obsession with convicting Dennis Banks of something—fundamentally, escaping with Leonard Peltier from the motor home into the high desert plains.

The book is written in crime genre fashion—a narrative intended to be spellbinding, but without footnotes, except for the list of citations to the published court opinions contained in the preface. Though the book is indexed, it is difficult to put together a sequence of what happened when, such as one can get from Messerschmidt's or Lazarus' books—a timetable of court actions would have helped. Stern doesn't try to white-wash the facts of the case in an idealistic haze, and this book is important not only for what it says about the Department of Justice and the FBI, but because it provides a broader perspective on AIM in showing its presence on the West coast. Numerous conversations with AIM members are reconstructed in this text. Churchill's book provides a more scholarly treatment of the prosecutions, however, and a more concise summary of what happened in the Loud Hawk as well as in other AIM prosecutions.

A primary source on the FBI's investigation of AIM is Rolland Dewing's collection, *The FBI Files on the American Indian Movement and Wounded Knee* (1986). There is a short but essential companion publication in folio form, *A Guide to the Microfilm Edition of The FBI Files on the American Indian Movement and Wounded Knee*, compiled by Martin Schipper (1986) with an introduction by Dewing. The guide includes an eighteen-page FBI-generated white paper on AIM, but mostly consists of an index outlining what is on each reel of microfilm. The collected files, however, end in 1981. The FBI officially closed its AIM investigation "by July 1979"; Dewing's introduction says "some information concerning AIM can be found in the file after that date, but the FBI's judgment was essentially accurate." This should not be taken as assurance that there is nothing of significance in post-1981 FBI files worthy of further

research. Dewing's stance is pro-FBI. He asserts that AIM completely fell apart as early as 1974, after Carter Camp shot Clyde Bellecourt in August 1973. FBI surveillance of certain AIM members, however, is known to have continued.

Another interesting source is the testimony of Douglass Durham, an FBI informer who became closely associated with Dennis Banks and reported from inside the organization until his affiliation was discovered by AIM in March 1975. Durham was the sole witness before a United States Senate subcommittee on AIM; see *Revolutionary Activities Within the United States: The American Indian Movement*, "Hearing before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary," 94th Congress, second session, April 6, 1976, followed by the subcommittee's report, *Revolutionary Activities Within the United States: The American Indian Movement*, in September 1976. As noted above, the second chapter of Johansen and Maestas's *Wasi'Chu* on the "FBI Creative Writers' School" comments on Durham's testimony and related FBI reports and theories about AIM's activities and unconsummated plans during the mid-seventies. Joanna Brand's biography of Anna Mae Aquash, cited above, includes a chapter on Durham which includes research by Paula Geise documenting his CIA training and his severance from the Des Moines police department over issues of spousal abuse and organized crime connections.

An earlier examination of FBI surveillance of AIM is the Minnesota Citizens' Review Commission on the FBI. See *Hearing Board Report*, series title: Native American Legal Materials Collection, Title 2581 (Minneapolis: The Commission, 1977).

Those interested in more comprehensive works on FBI surveillance should refer to James Kirkpatrick Davis' *Spying on America: The FBI's Domestic Counterintelligence Program*, (1992); Brian Glick's *War at Home: Covert Action Against U.S. Activists and What We Can Do About It* (1989), an educational handbook about FBI tactics for political activists by a lawyer with a brief bibliography of late seventies, early eighties works on his topic; Eve Pell's *The Big Chill: How the Reagan Administration, Corporate America, and Religious Conservatives Are Subverting Free Speech and the Public's Right to Know* (1984), which provides a good history of the Freedom of Information Act in the first chapter and discussion of the CIA's authorization to engage in domestic surveillance and

the results; and Nelson Blackstock's *COINTELPRO: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*, edited by Cathy Perkus with an introduction by Noam Chomsky (1975, reprint 1988), the product of information obtained from FBI files via the lawsuit filed by the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance in 1973. Though most of these documents were obtained in 1974 and 1975, the suit was not finally resolved until the Justice Department withdrew its appeal in 1988.

WRITING BY AND ABOUT AIM MEMBERS

This section discusses works focusing on particular AIM personalities as well as works written by AIM members to the extent they have not been cited above.

Gerald Vizenor's character sketch of Dennis Banks appears in "Dennis of Wounded Knee," *American Indian Quarterly* v7 n2 (1983). This is a chapter from *The People Named the Chippewa: Narrative Histories* (1984), and another version of it appears in the compilation *Native American Testimony: A Chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to the Present, 1492-1992*, cited above. Vizenor's assessment of Banks is decidedly unkind, but the 1972 meeting at the Leech Lake reservation that he describes was not one of AIM's finest hours; Burnette describes it as "their greatest fiasco" (197). In the *Black Scholar's* 1976 interview, it is hard to envision the person speaking as the same person Vizenor describes trying to get the gun out of his rope holster for the photographers. In "The *Black Scholar* Interviews: Dennis Banks," *Black Scholar* v7 n9 (1976), Banks recounts the accomplishments of AIM in Minneapolis in employment and housing, alternative schools, and court counseling. His position on the BIA, to remove it from the Department of the Interior, is comparatively conservative compared to demands that it be abolished. Other topics touched on include taconite trailings in Lake Superior, the dismissal (at that time) of the Loud Hawk case, and an incipient IRS investigation of his income.

A new biography of Banks has just been published in a Native American Biography Series aimed at young readers, *Dennis Banks: Native American Activist*, by Kae Chaetham (1997).

An interview with Vernon Bellecourt appeared in *Penthouse International Magazine for Men* (July 1973). See also Vernon

Bellecourt: The Nicaraguan Revolution and Indian Rights, edited by Richard Congress, published in 1986 by the Atlanta Committee on Latin America (P.O. Box 4184, Atlanta 30302).

Leonard Crow Dog has recently published an autobiography, *Crow Dog* (1995), cowritten with Richard Erdoes. It includes accounts from his perspective of the Trail of Broken Treaties and Wounded Knee occupation.

The Life and Death of Anna Mae Aquash by Joanna Brand (1978) is cited above in connection with her murder at Pine Ridge. The book is worth reading as a biography of one of the few AIM women in leadership roles, but one problem with it for those interested in how she died is that it was written before the FBI files became available. See Matthiessen and Churchill's *Agents of Repression* for further discussion of the circumstances of her death.

Where White Men Fear to Tread: The Autobiography of Russell Means (1995) has already been mentioned, but for those who want a shorter look at his politics, an interview in *Reason* v18 (August/September 1986) is a good choice. For the most part, this interview pertains to Means' then-recent trips to Nicaragua to support the Miskito resistance against the Sandinistas. There are graphic eyewitness descriptions of Sandinista atrocities against indigenous people, and a rebuttal to mid-eighties leftist criticism of his opposition to the Sandinista regime and to any attempts to classify Indian politics in terms of progressive/conservative ideologies. He calls for the abolition of the BIA (compare Banks' position in 1976), and argues that Wounded Knee II was the catalyst for "cultural revolution" throughout the western hemisphere.

The 1994 special edition of *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* contains two essays by AIM members: Karren Baird-Olson's "Reflections of an AIM Activist: Has It All Been Worth It?" and Ward Churchill's "The Bloody Wake of Alcatraz: Political Repression of the American Indian Movement during the 1970s." Baird-Olson's essay includes a narrative of her arrest on the steps of the BIA building during a bicentennial protest in 1976, and makes compelling arguments about the ongoing contributions of AIM to Indian self-esteem, refutation of stereotypes, institutional changes, and grassroots networking among rural and urban Indians. She asserts that AIM's decentralization has been a valuable strategic force (243), an argument that provides an interesting counterpart to the thesis of Baylor's dissertation.

Churchill's essay provides a good brief overview of AIM history. It covers not just the seventies but more recent AIM developments: the dissolution of national leadership following the death of Trudell's family in 1979, the Black Hills Alliance, the Yellow Thunder and Big Mountain camps, the decline of the International Indian Treaty Council, and the dual pre-Quincentenary reorganizations in 1993—the sixteen-member "Confederation of Autonomous AIM Chapters" organized at a New Mexico conference and the independent attempt of the Minneapolis chapter to establish itself as national headquarters. Churchill does not discuss the reasons behind this split; he is himself a subject of dissension within the organization and exercises a somewhat uncharacteristic degree of restraint on the issue.

John Trudell was one of the Alcatraz residents, and the Pacifica Radio Archive has a collection of his broadcasts from Alcatraz. He became a national officer of AIM in 1973 after the Camp-Bellecourt shooting, and dismantled the national office in 1979 after the death of his family in a suspicious fire in Nevada twelve hours after Trudell burned a flag on the steps of the BIA building in Washington, DC. Trudell is a poet and musician who has produced a number of sound recordings. A written compilation of some of his work appears in *Stickman: John Trudell Poems, Lyrics, Talks, a Conversation*, edited by Paola Iglioni (1994). Those interested in his earlier work should look for a copy of a report he compiled with Tina Manning, who died in the 1979 fire: *The James Gang Rides Again: A People's Report of the Misuse of Federal Funds for Indian Education in Oklahoma* (Washington, DC: The Children's Foundation, 1973). This folio document indicts Oklahoma's failure to utilize funds appropriately under the Johnson-O'Malley Act of 1934 for education of Indian children. The authors proposed that funds earmarked for Indian education, rather than being used for teachers' aides in integrated classrooms, be used for special needs of Indian children and for reimbursement of costs for transportation and educational supplies for impoverished Indian parents. Also included is material relating to the Trail of Broken Treaties: a copy of Secretary of Interior Loesch's memo prohibiting the BIA from providing assistance to the participants, and further elucidation of the portions of the Twenty Point Proposal's demands regarding the fate of the BIA.

MEDIA STUDIES

The media had a love/hate relationship with AIM: The activists had visual appeal, but some of the media were as paranoid about being manipulated as AIM was paranoid about informants and the FBI was paranoid about bicentennial conspiracies. Burnette's analysis of the mainstream press's attitudes and naiveté at Wounded Knee is a good starting point. The fear of manipulation he refers to is exemplified in "Bamboozle Me Not at Wounded Knee: The Making of a Media Event that Had Everything but the Truth," Terri Schultz, *Harper's* (June 1973). A similar view of the activists is found in a series of articles in the British magazine *Encounter* by George Feaver in 1977. Feaver describes a white-derivative "renaissance of 'radical chic'" which "manipulat(ed) the media in its staging of a revolution-*manqué* in the by now well-worn politics-as-street-theatre style" ("Vine Deloria: The American Indians [III]" v44 n5 p45). Feaver paints a picture of degeneration from "Cultural Nationalism ... to ... defiant, university-educated 'braves' ... and then to the uneducated and self-appointed vanguard of the slum-dwelling Indian urban *lumpenproletariat* who had a more sinister understanding..."(45). In the following installment ("An Indian Melodrama [IV]") covering the BIA takeover and Wounded Knee, Feaver ridicules Native American religion by always putting the term *spiritual* in quotes when used by AIM activists. The fifth and final installment ("The True Adventure: Epilogue to 'The American Indian'") covers the Menominee Warrior Society's takeover of the Alexian Brothers monastery in Gresham, Wisconsin and laments the further deterioration of life at Pine Ridge. Feaver concludes that Americans must "come to terms with the debilitating and self-defeating sense of guilt" and outgrow the "infantile adventurism" that makes them susceptible to such antics (v5 n4 p32).

It is interesting to juxtapose Feaver's thesis that the Indians were cashing in on white radical chic with the approach of Harry Russell seven years earlier. In "The Barbarians: A Description of Some Tendencies in Post-War Cultural Radicalism," *Journal of Popular Culture* v4 n1 (1970), Russell ridicules the white radical left for its fascination with "Oriental and American Indian cultures," wherein he finds the "key" to understanding them.

At least two studies have been done of the coverage of

Wounded Knee by specific media. One is Rolland Dewing's "South Dakota Newspaper Coverage of the 1973 Occupation of Wounded Knee," *South Dakota History* v12 n1 (1982). The other is Tim Baylor's "Media Framing of Movement Protest: The Case of American Indian Protest," *Social Science Journal* v33, n3 (July 1996). Baylor based his study on NBC news coverage from 1968 to 1979, and constructed from the data what he calls five "media frames" applicable to AIM: Militant, Stereotype, Treaty Rights, Civil Rights, and Factionalism. He found that 98 percent of NBC's coverage included either the Militant or the Stereotype frame, and that though AIM wanted to emphasize treaty rights and civil rights, these frames together were present in only 62 percent of the coverage. He points out that though a Harris poll showed the majority of Americans supporting the Wounded Knee occupation, media frames were largely negative during this time (244-47). Baylor says, "evidence suggests that the television news media never had any serious intention of trying to understand and fully cover the Indian movement," and that rather than advancing the protesters' cause the media "often directly hindered it" (249). He also notes "failure to cover the violence directed against the movement" (249) and cites possible causes for general negative coverage. Baylor concludes that confrontational tactics are a "risky choice": without them, sometimes the group will receive no attention whatsoever, but that inevitably "a distorted and incomplete picture of a movement's message and goals will result from media coverage" (251).

Forbes' book, cited above, gives insight into the way the federal government manipulated the press during the BIA occupation, considerations that are somewhat relevant to Wounded Knee as well.

The entire basis for the assessment of confrontational politics as a strategy for media attention is contested by Randall Lake in "Enacting Red Power: The Consummatory Function in Native American Protest Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* v69 n2 (1983). Lake argues that the flashy, confrontational AIM strategies which the mainstream press has generally seen as a self-parodic, "comic, and therefore counterproductive, image of the militant struggle" (127) were actually not directed at white audiences at all, but in fact a "form of ritual self-address" when viewed in terms of traditional religious belief and mistrust of white rhetorical modes. While allowing that he is generalizing about a widely diverse range of Native American reli-

gious beliefs, he asserts that the confrontational strategies identified with white radicals are "inconsistent with certain traditional Indian religious and cultural precepts" (132), that in Indian metaphysics "neither humans nor language is considered a primary agency of change" (133), and that all knowledge is essentially experiential, deriving from a supernatural force, the peyote religion being only one example. These factors, in combination with the mistrust arising from "the way whites historically have misused language when dealing with the tribes" (134), support the contention that the sit-in strategy deployed at Alcatraz, the BIA, Wounded Knee, and so forth has not endeavored to persuade whites to support the cause of land return and sovereignty, but rather has served as ritual reenactment thereof. He cites the establishment of survival schools and various performative utterances as further illustrations of self-addressed enactments of the demand for sovereignty (140), and notes that since 1976 "visible Indian-white confrontations" have been supplanted by "a pervasive, decentralized spiritual movement woven into the fabric of traditional Indian culture" (142).

See also Murray Wax's "Indian Protest: Romance and Reality," *New Society* (July 19, 1973), which argues that the media created instant Indian leaders and did not understand the makeup of the AIM organization. The arguments of Lake and Wax are consistent with those of scholars who have noted that the Wounded Knee occupation was primarily a conflict between factions at Pine Ridge and was not, at least initially, directed against the federal government. What they do not account for is the media posturing of leaders such as Russell Means.

This overview of the literature to date on AIM and the use of the sit-in as an activist strategy from the sixties leads to two conclusions. First, the dual nature of the sit-in as a confrontational attention-getting strategy and as a self-addressed enactment of a land-based identity has not been widely discussed in terms of the history or theory of political activism. Second, no broad-based study of AIM as an organization exists. Biographical and autobiographical literature about AIM members exists, the most famous sit-ins have been well covered, and the government's counterinsurgency strategy has been studied. But historical analysis of AIM as an informal and for the most part radically decentralized grassroots organization has not been pursued, nor have the apparent

ideological conflicts within the organization been publicly discussed to any great extent. This is a sensitive topic, but worthy of further attention.

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The compilation of FBI documents listed herein ends in 1981, when the FBI investigation of AIM officially ended. The investigation and prosecution of AIM members that has transpired since then can be obtained from the FBI through Freedom of Information Act requests. Though the FBI will not release material related to pending investigations, this could still be a fruitful field of primary source work for an interested historian.

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