

Editorial and Opinion Page

Along the Robeson Trail

by Dr. Stanley Knick
Director, UNCP Native American Resource Center

In the past few weeks, we have been discussing the Lumbee in context. We have seen that situating the Lumbee in a broad context requires us to think about a lot of different things, including the process of how we think. How might an anthropological perspective fit in this study of Lumbee context?

Anthropology is the study of human beings in all their diversity. As an academic discipline it bridges between science and the humanities. In some ways it is the science of humanity. It aims to make sense of human beings by looking at them holistically — from biological, mental, social, cultural, historical and other perspectives. It listens to the sometimes cryptic voices of human nature — hearing the patterns of hidden tones in human life — to understand the meanings of the human animal.

At its best anthropology is analogous to looking at the world through both eyes instead of with one eye. Just as the use of both eyes affords a measure of depth perception much greater than does the use of only one eye, so should the study of human beings from various angles afford a kind of depth perception — an important part of context. This depth perception in the study of human beings should permit a more profound understanding of human history and culture than could the study of the same subject matter from any single perspective or using any single realm of evidence. Thus anthropology must be concerned with pulling together context from various sources.

Conventionally, anthropology as a discipline has approached the study of human beings from four main subfields: archaeology or prehistory; physical or biological anthropology; cultural anthropology; and linguistics. When anthropology began, this division of the task made a kind of sense as a way to martial the many students and scholars of anthropology and the many studies of the many aspects of the many peoples of the

world. Somewhere along the line there was supposed to be a synthesis of information gathered in these four subfields, and the result was going to be a spectacular revelation of the nature of human beings as a whole. But the ideal often does not match well with the real. In many cases, as Lance Hogben said, anthropology has studied man one cell at a time and made nothing of him.

Neither has anthropology always been successful in its attempts to understand Native Americans in particular. Thus in many Native American communities, "the anthros" are seen at best as a nuisance, and at worst as cultural pirates. Floyd Westerman's great song "Here Come The Anthros" is an apt summary of the perspective of many Native Americans. That view is not without foundation, since all too often anthropologists (and other researchers) have spent too little time with too few members of Native American communities, coming away with a superficial appreciation of the subtleties of history and culture. The fact that most anthropology of Native America has been done by non-Native people has not made things any better.

Part of anthropology's paradox is that while it aims to study everything about human beings — their broadest possible context — it is faced with the virtual impossibility of collecting all the human evidence into one place. Thus for all its ambitious goals, anthropology is confronted with the limiting reality that the topic in hand is huge. So, certain limitations corresponding to available time and energy have to be set on any anthropological study of human culture and history. What results is clearly not a view of everything. What results instead is a partial view from as many directions as can be managed.

Study of the Lumbee in context must be limited as well. Material from various realms of evidence can be examined: prehistory; history; contemporary culture and issues;

health; governmental relations and so on. Sometimes the evidence cuts across or overlaps from one realm to another, or implies evidence from yet other realms (i.e., epidemiology, historiography, etc.). But some realms of evidence have to be left out.

One part of the hypothetical total analysis which can be excluded concerns the genetics of the Lumbee. This does not seem to me to be a major shortcoming in an analysis of the history and culture of a people, since genes do not a culture make. Franz Boas, the father of American anthropology, told us that cultural things must have cultural explanations. A French infant taken at birth from France to Ireland would always have the genes of her French ancestors. But if she were raised and embraced exclusively by Irish parents in an entirely Irish culture, in every other way (language, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, etc.) she would be culturally Irish when she became an adult. Similarly, details of the genetics of the Lumbee are less important to an understanding of their context than is the evidence relating to historical and cultural realms.

The role of anthropology in an attempt to situate the Lumbee in context is only to serve as a guiding principle. Wherever evidence from diverse sources can be synthesized, it ought to be. Wherever the Lumbee can be viewed holistically, they ought to be. Wherever the methods of science and the humanities can fruitfully be merged in the analysis, they ought to be. And wherever an interpretation at the level of understanding can be reached, by stepping from bits of knowledge to patterns of wisdom and beyond, it ought to be.

In the attempt to see the Lumbee in context, understanding is the goal. For more information, visit the Native American Resource Center in historic Old Main Building, on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Former Leader of Indian Housing Asks for Unification of Tribe

Dear Editor:

I sent the following Memorandum to the Lumbee Tribal Council and to Lumbee Regional Development Association. As a member of the Lumbee Tribe, I also wish to share my thoughts with the readers of the Carolina Indian Voice.

I just recently returned from the Annual Lumbee Homecoming which was sponsored by LRDA. Seeing so many fellow Tribal Members coming together to celebrate our heritage, culture and spiritual blessings was extremely pleasing. My happiness and spirit of celebration, however, was constantly dampened by the knowledge that we as a Tribe are far from being unified. In fact, we are more divided now than I have ever seen in my many years of living on Mother Earth. You, ladies and gentlemen, are in a position to do something about this division that seems to dominate our present existence. To disregard our heritage and culture by taking a Tribal dispute outside the Tribe and into a foreign court represents a total lack of respect for Tribal traditions, and for our hopes for restoration of Tribal Culture, and is an outrageous disrespect of our ancestors.

The good news that for the first time in contemporary history the Lumbee as a Tribe was included in a federal law for an appropriation of funds, with little discussion of recog-

ognition. The fact is, the Lumbee Tribe is missing out on a lot of funds on an annual basis which would support Education, Health, Social Services, Transportation, Housing and many other areas of need due to the fact that we are in a stalled position on the most important issue that we should be focused on, that is Federal Recognition! To be treated the same as all other Native Americans is my only hope before I pass on to the Great Spirit. Ladies and gentlemen you control that possibility! But as long as you keep up our fight for selfish control rather than focusing on the most important issue, I can not hope to see Federal Recognition in my life time. Please be assured that this angers me very much!

The fact that Lumbee (and the other three Tribes who come under the umbrella under the N.C. State Indian Housing Authority) was grandfathered in the Native American Housing and Self Determination and Assistance Act of 1996 sends a clear message that Lumbees are Native Americans.

If you want to fight an issue in a foreign court, why not fight the issue of the Bureau of Indian Affairs discriminating against many Tribal Members while providing selective services to only a few of our Tribal Members. Lumbee would never have been included in the NAHASHAG

had the Indian Commission not insisted the Charlie Rose fight the battle for the approval of N.C. State Indian Housing Authority. The resistance argued that we have Pembroke and Robeson County Housing Authorities, therefore there was no need for N.C. State. They failed to see that it was a sovereignty issue and the results now speak for themselves. I had the pleasure of approving NC. State Indian Housing Authority for which I will always be grateful.

I am hereby pleading with you, ladies and gentlemen to stop the internal fighting and create a united force and let's hit Jesse Helms and the Congress of the United States head on. With the support of the Governor and the President how can we not win a victory that will serve us all very well. Senator Faircloth says he will support Federal Recognition for the Lumbee Tribe, now is the time to test his statement. You already know Congressman McIntyre support is solid.

We area strong Tribe with many great attributes, yet we fail to demand those important and essential entitlements such as Tribal sovereignty, self determination, government to government relation and reservation status. For the sake of us all, please hear our plea, let's unify.

Leon Jacobs

The American Buffalo

When the American Buffalo, properly known as bison, roamed this country, the Indian took only what he could eat and used every part including the hair and bones.

Buffalo have been recorded as roaming as far East as Central North Carolina. In the 1800's, the white man discovered the dependency the American Indian had on the buffalo; after which, began the terrible slaughter of the bison by the white man. The white man and the military believed that by destroying the buffalo, they could eradicate the American Indian. Over 60 million buffalo were slaughtered, leaving only a few hundred remaining.

Without the buffalo, the self-supporting lifestyle of the Indian could no longer be maintained. It is said that the destruction of the buffalo and the associated devastation to the Indians disrupted the self-sufficient lifestyle of Indian People more than all other federal policies to date.

In recent years, efforts have been made by both native and non-native Americans to re-establish the bison population.

In 1990, the "Inter-tribal Bison Cooperative" (ITBC), a non-profit 501(C)(3) tribal organization was formed and committed to the re-establishment of buffalo herds on Indian lands. This effort would provide economic development, cultural

enhancement, ecological restoration, and spiritual revitalization. Currently, there are 42 tribes participating in the ITBC Program. The ITBC is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of one tribal representative from each member tribe.

The role of the ITBC is to act as a facilitator in coordinating training programs, marketing strategies, and the transfer of surplus buffalo from national parks to tribal lands, as well as, provide technical assistance that would enhance a successful and self-sufficient operation.

Buffalo farming is a profitable business. There is a strong demand for buffalo meat and its by-products with prices considerably higher than that of cattle. Bison meat has a sweeter and richer flavor than beef. Nutritionally, there is far more protein and nutrients with fewer calories and less fat.

Another organization dedicated to the American buffalo is the "National Bison Association" (NBA). Membership to the "National Bison Association" and/or bison recipes may be obtained by contacting the National Bison Association, 4701 Marion Street, Suite 100, Denver, Colorado 80216.

In my home town, Rocky Mount, North Carolina, a local business man recently purchases a small herd of 50 buffalo strictly for purpose of breed-

ing. I went out to view the buffalo and they were absolutely breath-taking and beautiful. While standing there, I couldn't help but think how those who have passed on must have felt about this vital and magnificent creature. For some unexplainable reason, I was filled with a spirit of awe, reverence, and respect.

Today, there are now more than 150,000 bison in public and private herds in the United States and Canada.

As a tribal community, we should consider the benefits of buffalo farming. Perhaps someone in the Pembroke area has the pasture land which could be used for this purpose. Raising buffalo would provide additional jobs for local Lumbee, while providing a source of income for the tribe, LRDA, and the Cultural Center.

I am encouraging the leaders in our community to seriously consider a unified effort in this proposal.

Individuals or organizations interested in supporting ITBC may become a member for an annual fee. For additional information in getting started in buffalo farming, contact "Inter-Tribal Bison Cooperative", Post Office Box 8105, Rapid City, SO 57709-8105; (605) 394-9730; Fax: (605) 394-7742; E-Mail: itbc@encis.net

AHO!
by John "Tall Bird" Marshall

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PEDIATRIC POINTERS

by Dr. Joseph T. Bell
Pediatrician with Robeson Health Care

If you read the early history of North and South Carolina, you find how devastating European settlement was to the Native people of the area. The Europeans carried diseases that these Natives had never been exposed to and had no immunity against. These diseases, especially small pox, killed many Natives during those early years.

Today we have ways of preparing a child's immune system to help fight off infections. One important way is by immunizations (or vaccinations). Immunizations are products of the germs given as shots or by mouth. These germ products stimulate the child's immune system against that particular infection. This allows the body's immune system to fight off the infection if it ever comes in contact with that germ again.

Vaccines are very safe and are rarely associated with major side effects. The minor side effects, such as fever or swelling, are uncommon and usually are only seen with the DTP vaccine. I usually tell parents to give

some Tylenol or Motrin before vaccinations to help with pain or fever.

The following is the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended schedule for immunizations in the U.S. Birth-first Hepatitis B. Two months of age-second Hepatitis B, first Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTP), first Hib, and first Polio Virus (OPV). Four months-second DTP, second Hib, and second polio. Six months-third Hepatitis B, third DTP, and fourth Hib and first Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR). Pre-school age (4-6)- fifth DTP, fourth OPV and second MMR. In some areas of the country the last MMR is given at 11 or 12 years of age.

As parents we should try our best to make sure our children are current on their vaccinations. Remember, it will not only help keep your own child safe from infections, but will also help prevent the spread of infections through schools of communities. If you have any questions about immunizations, please feel free to write me at PO Box 3010, Pembroke, NC 28372.

Where are you?

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