Positives and Negatives:

Shaping Native American Identity

Through the Photography of Edward S. Curtis

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Individual Documentary

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I grew up with Edward Curtis’s pictures in my home, but it was not until I watched a lecture on him that I decided to look at the different perspectives of his prodigious work for this year’s National History Day competition. The lecture was given by Mr. Christopher Cardozo, a leading Curtis expert and photography collector. His presentation deeply moved and challenged me, resulting in my decision to make this the subject of my documentary.

I interviewed Mr. Cardozo twice and he explained to me the changes in perspectives toward Curtis over the past 40 years. However, it wasn’t until I did my own research that I started to really understand quite how important and controversial Curtis’s legacy is. Mr. Cardozo sent me a vast amount of primary material on Curtis, and following my teacher’s advice on reading books, essays and articles, I gradually built up enough knowledge to write the first versions of my voice over script. I also interviewed Ms. Anne Makepeace, a non-native who spent nine years making a documentary on Curtis after she had lived on a Hopi reservation for almost a year. However, I was set on primarily including Native voices on Curtis’s impact in my documentary, so I was thrilled to find “Looking at Edward Curtis”, a series of contemporary interviews answering my central question: how do Native Americans feel today about the photographs of Curtis? I reached out to Ms.
Marie Clements to get her permission to use her interviews in my project, which she gave me, however, she refused to give me an interview. Living in Singapore, I was left with sending random emails to Native American artists, whenever I found an article online pertaining to Curtis’s legacy, asking them how they felt Curtis’s photographs have impacted Native American identity. I got many email opinions, and many refusals to be interviewed. I started to get somewhat discouraged, fearing that mentioning Curtis in Native communities and asking for interviews resulted in outright refusal. It wasn’t until my teacher recommended a new line of inquiry regarding the repatriation of stolen artifacts, that I found Irene Dundas, Repatriation manager of the Cape Fox Corp, that I managed not only to conduct an interview but also to get a whole new perspective on Curtis’s pictures having contributed to cultural revival.

I knew from the beginning I wanted to make a documentary as the artistry of Curtis’s images speak for themselves and must be seen.

My documentary relates to the theme of triumph and tragedy on many levels. The treatment of Native Americans during Curtis’ lifetime introduces tragedy, while Curtis’ unparalleled achievement of conducting ethnographic research establishes the triumph. Viewed through a contemporary lens, however, this triumph is tainted due to the highly
racialized era that Curtis lived in. As a result, in my documentary, I include contrasting contemporary Native American perspectives when it comes to evaluating the Curtis legacy on Native American identity today. Additionally, Curtis’ own life is a tale of triumph and tragedy.
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Annotated Bibliography

This was a very useful source for me to learn more about The Carlisle Indian School. I also found digitized versions of the school newspaper, The Red Man. In one of them, I read an article titled “How Education is Solving the Indian Problem”, about the difference between the “savage bad Indian”, and the “good civilized Indian”. In my documentary, I included two pictures that were meant to visualise this message.


This website, a collection of primary sources of historical documents was very useful to me, as I found a Senate report from 1865 about the “Indian problem”. US military officials were asked to explain the reasons why the Indians were diminishing in numbers. I was very shocked to read that Social Darwinism was used as a reason by comparing Native Americans to “lower animals”, I used this quote in my documentary. My teacher recommended this website to me.
In the 1832 case of Worcester vs Georgia, the Supreme Court ruled that the State of Georgia didn’t have any jurisdiction over the Cherokee land, as only the Federal Government had the right to deal with sovereign Indian nations. It was helpful to my understanding of the historical context of land disputes between states, the Federal Government and Native Americans.


In 1925, Curtis sold the copyrights of volumes and portfolios I-XIII to the North American Indian Corporation owned by the Morgans. By this time a chronic debtor, Curtis sold and lost everything he owned, and despite mental and physical problems and a lack of public interest in anything pertaining to Native Americans, he finished all the 20 volumes. I used this contract in my documentary.


This is one example of many documents from the Morgan Library, that proves just how much administrative work Curtis was forced to do in order to publish The North American Indian.
Curtis, Edward S., Lantern Slides, between 1906 and 1914, 1906.

This is a collection of hand-colored and tinted lantern slides, most of Pacific Northwest Indian scenes with a few Navajo and California Indian images, that Curtis would have used for his slide lectures and his critically acclaimed, albeit financially unsuccessful Curtis Picture Musicale that debuted in Carnegie Hall, New York in 1911. Both the lectures and the Picture Musicale were Curtis’ relentless, yet fruitless attempts to finance The North American Indian.


This is an advertisement for a Curtis lecture with music and lantern slides, as part of a vast marketing effort by Curtis to stay in the public eye and ensure funding for The North American Indian.

"General Winfield Scott's General Order No. 25, 1838 | Records Of Rights."


The Treaty of New Echota ensured that the US military could use force to remove the Cherokee who refused to leave their homeland for the new Indian Territory in Oklahoma. During the forced removal, the military was ordered to treat the Cherokee humanely, however, many Cherokee died from exhaustion and starvation on the long journey, that eventually became to be known as the “Trail of Tears”.


This act helped me further understand the changing Federal-tribal relations. This act ended the practice of making treaties with tribes acting as sovereign nations. It was fascinating to see how it was referred to as an ‘appropriations’ act. Such negative consequences lasted for nearly a century, until the policy shifted again, encouraging Native Americans to use self-governance over tribal matters.


This source was especially helpful to my topic as it is the original Indian Removal Act of 1830. It was an important part of my research to understand the various steps taken by the Federal Government to gain ownership of the territories that had been originally inhabited by indigenous tribes for centuries. I found this source on the Record of Rights website, along with many other policies and acts from the era.


The idea of the Indian Removal Act was not a new one when President Jackson enforced it, as it actually came from President Jefferson. The act gave Jackson the ability to negotiate removal treaties with tribes that lived east of Mississippi. Many tribes resisted leaving their homelands, forcing the US to ultimately use the military to move Native Americans to Indian territory in Oklahoma.
This is a letter written to President Cleveland by generals of the US military, and it argues that peace with the Apache will never be possible unless the Apache are removed from their reservation in Arizona. This letter helped me see the difficulties of coexistence between Euro-Americans and Native Americans from the perspective of US generals. The letter also made me see how Indians were described in a language that is completely unacceptable today.

Leupp, Francis. ‘Open Letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs”, Cardozo Fine Art, 1906.

I found this letter interesting, because it shows how Curtis needed the support of the Bureau Of Indian Affairs in order to work on Indian reservations. Leupp, who later became Superintendent at the Carlisle Indian School, praises Curtis for his ability to befriend Native Americans in this letter.

This source was very interesting. I originally thought that everyone, apart from the tribes being removed, must have supported the Indian Removal Act. In this source, I learned that there were actually non-native groups that protested the act. For example, the Ladies of Steubenville were one. There were many other petitions against the act from other
non-Indian groups that flooded Congress, calling the treatment towards Native Americans inhumane and dishonorable.


This source displays the Memorial of the Cherokee. Members of the Cherokee Nation argued in this very petition to Congress how they had not given up their right to their ancestral lands. They urged the Government to maintain what had been written in the treaties and stop plans for their removal. I found this document on the same website that included many other original documents of Native American rights.


In the 1868 Treaty of Laramie the United States promised the Sioux their sacred Black Hills and all the land west of the Missouri River in the Dakota Territory. I chose this particular event as the starting point in the historical context of my documentary, because Edward Curtis was born in 1868, and in 1905 he photographed Red Cloud, one of the signatories of the Treaty of Laramie.


This source was very useful as it gave me more of Curtis' wax cylinders. Now instead of just having one song from one tribe, I have many more. This collection was founded in
1936 at Columbia University which then moved to the University of Indiana in 1948. This source contains recordings of 22 of Curtis’ wax cylinders. I found this source as it was linked with a previous source.


In this original copy of President Roosevelt’s Foreword from the Morgan Library, he writes: “Mr. Curtis in publishing this book is rendering a real and great service;...to the world of scholarship everywhere.”

"The Dawes Act, 1887 | Records Of Rights." Recordsofrights.Org, 1887,

http://recordsofrights.org/records/52/the-dawes-act/0.

The Dawes Act was very important to my understanding of Native American history. I mentioned it in my documentary, as this act was an essential step in the forced assimilation of native tribes into white American society because it divided communally owned reservation land into individual lots. This policy was meant to separate Native Americans, turn them into farmers and take away their land.

"Treaty Of New Echota, 1835 | Records Of Rights." Recordsofrights.Org, 1835,


This source explains the removal of the Cherokee by the Federal Government, and also how there was a division between the Cherokee Nation itself, and it helped me understand the complexity of internal tribal relationships.
"Treaty With The Chickasaw, 1801 | Records Of Rights." Recordsofrights.Org, 1801, 

The source was helpful for me to see a treaty from the early 1800s between the Chickasaw and the Federal Government. It was interesting to see that early on the government made a treaty with the Chickasaw Nation solely about a wagon route, while less than a century later the Native Americans lost their sovereignty, all their ancestral lands, their culture, freedom, and way of life.

"Treaty With The Delaware, 1778 | Records Of Rights." Recordsofrights.Org, 1778, 

This source was very helpful because it helped me understand the relationship between the Native American tribes and a very young US government in the 18th century. It was fascinating to see how the United States actually seemed to be very respectful towards the Native Americans at this point, stating that if either party is engaged in a war with any other nation, they would assist each other.


This source was very important and useful to me as it allowed me to listen to one of Curtis' wax cylinder recordings. Curtis used these wax cylinders to record music, language, tribal lore, and histories of over 80 tribes. Even though there were originally over 10,000 wax cylinders that were known to have been made, only 276 are known to
have survived. This is, of course, important as I could listen to original Native American songs from a century ago. I found this source on the website of the University of Indiana.

**Correspondence**

**Curtis, Edward S. Received by Belle da Costa Greene, Morgan Library, 13 Apr. 1907, New York, New York.**

This is one of many letters written by Curtis to J. P. Morgan’s librarian, Ms. Greene. Reading through these letters helped me understand how much administrative work Curtis had to do in order to fund his project. He traveled to the East Coast 175 times to meet with potential subscribers, give lectures, exhibitions when he wasn't in the field doing research in the West.

**Curtis, Edward S. Received by Belle da Costa Greene, Morgan Library, 20Apr. 1932, New York, New York.**

This letter was in such contrast to Curtis’s letters from over 20 years ago. Here Curtis sends a friendly note to Ms. Greene, telling her about his mental breakdown. The letter remained unanswered.


What I have learned from this letter written by Curtis at the age of 80 to Ms. Harriet Leitch, a retired librarian, was that looking back at his life, he was most proud of having
conducted extended ethnographic research and having written about the Nez Perce war from a native perspective, after having interviewed Yellow Tail among others. “My account of that affair will differ radically from the white man’s version,” he wrote.


Ms. Harriet Leitch was a retired librarian at the Seattle Public Library, who initiated a 3-year correspondence with Edward Curtis between August 1948- August 1951. She encouraged Curtis to write the story of his life. Sadly, despite his extraordinary life and immense body of work, Curtis didn’t think his life was worth writing about, because the public had no interest in Native American topics.


“Following the Indians form of naming men, I should be The Man Who Never Took Time to Play”, wrote Curtis referring to the unbelievable amount of time he devoted to compiling The North American Indian. I often came across this quote in Curtis biographies, so I was quite happy when I found the original letter it was written in.


What I understood from this letter is how Curtis managed to gain the confidence of the thousands of Native Americans he had met. In his own words, “I worked with them and
not at them”, meaning that he considered Native Americans to be the “co-creators” of The North American Indian.


This letter was interesting to read because here Curtis describes how he first photographed Princess Angeline and paid her for it, something the Princess was very happy about. The fact that Curtis paid Native Americans for taking their pictures is still controversial in Native communities today.


It was very interesting to read Curtis recounting what made him decide to write The North American Indian in this letter, how Mr. Morgan made him responsible for “research, promotion, and sales of published volumes”, or the fact that he never drew a salary. What was surprising to me, that in all these letters Curtis barely spoke about his photography.


This is the first of a series of letters written by Edward Curtis to J. P. Morgan. In this letter, Curtis outlines his dream to compile The North American Indian and asks Mr. Morgan for funding. “I have the ability, strength, and determination to finish this work,”
he wrote. “To further safeguard the patron of the work, I could insure my life”, Curtis concluded his letter. I used this quote in my documentary.

**Curtis, Edward S. Received by Theodore Roosevelt, Cardozo Fine Art, 15 Dec. 1905.**

Curtis “befriended” the President after having photographed his family, and Roosevelt became Curtis’s mentor until his death in 1919. In this letter, Curtis asks the president to introduce him to someone who could fund his project.

**De Costa Greene, Belle. Received by K.L. Williams, Morgan Library, 18 May. 1932.**

I found this letter interesting because it shows how insignificant Curtis became by the 1930s. Ms. Greene not only didn’t reply to Curtis but also warned others not to answer Curtis’s letters as he might be asking for money.

**Lauriat, Charles E. Received by Henry S. Morgan, Morgan Library, 17 May. 1935.**

This is a letter acknowledging that in 1935 the Morgans sold all their copies of The North American Indian to the Boston based bookseller Lauriat Co, for $1,000. The Morgans contributed over $400,000 to the making of the books, but in the 1930s, with no public interest in Native American affairs, Curtis’ books were deemed worthless.

**Roosevelt, Theodore. Received by Edward S. Curtis, Morgan Library, 16 Dec. 1905, New York, New York.**

This was a very interesting letter to read, to understand just how much support Curtis had at the height of his career, or that even the president of the country was certain that
Native Americans were vanishing. President Roosevelt wrote this endorsement letter to Curtis to aid him with securing funding for The North American Indian, saying: “I regard the work that you have done as one of the most valuable works which any American could now do”.

Books


This source from our school library was, not only central to my documentary but also to my research as well. Besides the amazing photography, there is a vast amount of information with specific details about all the tribes, such as the secret of the sacred Mandan turtles, or a photograph of the medical chart of an Apache medicine man, all information that no other anthropologists managed to lay eyes on, let alone photograph before Curtis.

Curtis, Edward S. *Indian Days of the Long Ago*. Hardpress Publishing,

Curtis originally published this book in 1914. It is a short description of Native American way of life. It sold relatively well, and decades later, in his correspondence to Harriet Leitch, he mentioned, that he had been receiving royalties for this book even in 1950.


This book, originally published in 1914, is about The Wanamaker Expeditions about Native American life. I learned from the introduction, written by Joe D. Horse Capture
(A’aninin), Associate Curator at the National Museum of the American Indian, that he is highly critical about Curtis’ effect on Native Americans today: “It can be argued that many non-Native people judge contemporary Native Americans against Curtis’ images.”


I found this whole book online, with the original Curtis photographs depicting the deserted Tlingit villages with the totem poles, that were taken during the expedition. I used an image in my documentary.

Newspaper Articles


This article gave me a sense of how significant Curtis was in 1908, that even a prestigious newspaper such as The New York Times published articles about his adventures. It also proves, that in the early 1900s, the public was fascinated by stories of Native Americans. The article is very positive towards Curtis, praising his dedication, saying he put ‘marvelous amounts of care and labor’ into his photographs. The article’s subheading is ‘A Marvel Pictorial Record’.

I found this article very interesting as it showcases Curtis as the ultimate adventurer and scientist, who managed to take pictures of the Navajo Jabachi dance, something the “esteemed” scientists from the Smithsonian Institution thought impossible to do.


I found this article on the website from Northwestern University. Edward Curtis wrote 4 articles for Scribner Magazine in the early 1900s. This article perfectly demonstrates how the stereotype of the ‘vanishing Indian” was the conventional wisdom of this era when everyone believed that Native Americans, due to Social Darwinism, were a ‘less civil and developed race’, who were bound for extinction. I inserted this article in my documentary.


“Mr. Gilbert’s music was of the most impressive nature. These compositions are far from being mere adaptations of Indian melodies.”, said the reviewer of Mr. Gilbert’s original score accompanying Curtis’s picture opera.


This is the last article in the New York Times in which Curtis is celebrated as an authority on Native American life. Although the US has not entered WWI yet, public interest in Native Americans was rapidly decreasing. It became impossible for Curtis to
secure new subscribers, and with his financial and marital problems, he stopped working on The North American Indian for 6 years.


This was a very interesting, very favorable review of Curtis’s documentary. However, like with all his other projects, Curtis couldn’t translate rave reviews into financial success. He got into a lawsuit with the distributor and the movie was only showing for one week.

Kobbe, Gustave. “Stalking the Indian with Camera and Photograph.” The San Francisco Sunday Call, 20 Aug. 1911.

This is another full page article chronicling Curtis’s upcoming field trip to the Aleuthian Islands. Among others the article mentions that Curtis travels with a library of 200 books so that he is well prepared before he meets the various tribes.


Having secured J. P. Morgan’s backing, Curtis was regularly appearing in newspapers nationwide, giving interviews about his adventures in Indian Country.


This was an interesting source for me to see as it proves how Edward Curtis was known nationwide as an authority on Indians, not only in the Seattle area. The article is titled: “A Page of Indian Maidens of North American Aboriginal Stock”, in a language completely acceptable in 1908 but considered highly inappropriate today.


This short article talks about an upcoming Curtis lecture, saying “Seattle is justly proud of the man who looked forward and worked thereto until success crowned his efforts richly”.


This article was written by Edmond S. Meany, who was Curtis’s friend and a professor of history at Washington University. Meany, who himself spent many months among Natives, admired Curtis’ rapport living on ‘intimate terms with many different tribes of the mountains and plains’. There were also quotes from Roosevelt which praised Curtis how well he knew the Native Americans.

“Wife Sues Ed S. Curtis For Divorce.” Seattle Sun, 6 Oct. 1916.

This article was interesting to read because after World War I, the public had gradually lost interest in Native American related topics, and Curtis only made the headlines because of his divorce. From this article I learned about the tragic aspects of Curtis’
personal life, and how his wife sued him for not paying alimony and that he broke down in court when he revealed that he was penniless.

Photograph Collections

"Curtis (Edward S.) Collection." The Library Of Congress, 1899-1930

https://www.loc.gov/collections/edward-s-curtis/.

This source was, of course, very crucial to the making of my documentary. Many of the photographs that I am showing in my project are from the Library of Congress collection. I also used several other images from this online catalog, such as those from Indian boarding schools. I used this source a lot to create my documentary.

"Ephemera Selection." Edward Curtis

This essential collection included photos taken of Curtis, or by Curtis, his postcards, advertisements for his photo studio in Seattle, slides from his picture opera, invitations to his various exhibitions, a list of pictures that Curtis exhibited or even original scripts from his lectures. This collection provided me with a substantial amount of primary sources that prove the huge scope and immensity of the task he undertook. I received this collection from Mr. Christopher Cardozo of Cardozo Fine Arts.

"Harriman Alaska Expedition of 1899” Content.Lib.Washington.Edu,

This site was very helpful in my research because it provided me with the Curtis photographs from the 1899 Harriman Expedition, as well as other Curtis photographs, his correspondence, and some primary newspaper articles. I used many images from here in my documentary. I found this source through my teacher and it tied in with my interview with Irene Dundas.

“Image Gallery.” *A Place of Reading: Revolutionary Taverns*, 2007,


This source of primary photographs was important to me as it provided me with many images on Native Americans, not taken by Curtis. I used a few of these to show some contrast between the reality and Curtis’ romanticised images.

"Indians Farming On Fort Peck Reservation." *The Library Of Congress*, 1908,

[https://www.loc.gov/item/2014704363/](https://www.loc.gov/item/2014704363/).

I used this image in my documentary, depicting Sioux Natives farming. This is important because I mentioned in my documentary how the Treaty of Laramie included provisions to build missionary schools on Indian reservations, while it also encouraged the Sioux to take up farming. This was done to encourage assimilation of Native Americans into white Christian society, even though they had traditionally been hunter-gatherers, not farmers.
"Tribal Delegation At The White House, Ca. 1865 | Records Of Rights."


This is an important source because it depicts a tribal delegation at the White House in 1865. During both the 19th and 20th century, Native American leaders defended their tribal interests against pressure from the ever-expanding United States in Washington, DC. I used this image in my documentary.


This online collection was very interesting for me to learn about the work of Curtis’s contemporary, William Henry Jackson. Jackson’s photos are less staged, show more modern influence in Native American everyday life.

Video


This movie was very essential for my final project. Edward Curtis was a true Renaissance man and documented the way of life of Native Americans in a multimedia format. “In the Land of the Headhunters” was the first feature-length documentary featuring an all
Native American cast. It is a silent film, a fictional love story among the Kwakiutl in British Columbia.

Secondary Sources

Books


I heard about this publication when I interviewed Ms. Irene Dundas, Tribal President of the Ketchikan Indian Community, earlier Repatriation Manager/Cultural Specialist for the Cape Fox Heritage Foundation, who was given this book in 1994 to start her research into the repatriation of stolen goods during the Harriman Alaska Expedition from museums across the United States.


What I found most interesting in this book are the various essays, most notably the one from George Horse Capture (A’aninin), anthropologist, professor, author, Curtis had photographed his ancestor. George Horse Capture remained highly favorable towards Curtis’ legacy throughout his life, I included an interview with him conducted by Anne Makepeace in “Coming to Light” in my documentary. I also learned about pictorialism from this book.

This source was helpful to me as it is a reference edition of the most well known Curtis pictures. I have this book at home, and it helped me choose which pictures I should include in my documentary.


This is a reference book written on the history of the Native American peoples from their own perspective, chronicling their struggle for sovereignty and human rights. I read about The Treaty of Laramie in this book.


This source was highly informative biography written on Edward Curtis. It taught me about how Curtis originally got his funding for his project, or how Curtis, the son of a poor minister with a sixth-grade education made so many influential friends, helping me understand Curtis' personality, his perseverance, his grit, his stamina, and his incredible charisma.

Mick Gidley, the author of the book, is a professor of American literature and culture at the University of Leeds in the UK. He has been researching the North American Indian for decades and is considered to be an expert on Edward Curtis and his work. I found this source particularly useful in helping to determine the significance and present-day impact of Curtis’ work. The book was balanced between praise and criticism, providing me with a deeper understanding of the subject.


This book was written by Curtis’ daughter, Florence Curtis Graybill. I found this source to be incredibly helpful because Curtis took all of his children to do the fieldwork when they were little. Therefore, it was very interesting to see a daughter’s perspective on her father’s legacy.

**Hausman, Gerald. *Prayer to the Great Mystery: The Uncollected Writings and Photography of Edward S. Curtis*. Edited by Bob Kapoun, St Martin's Press, 1995.**

This book is one of the first publications to showcase Curtis’ lesser-known pictures. Curtis took over 40,000 images in his life; however, only 2,200 were published in the North American Indian. When looking at Curtis’ lesser-known images, one can see that Curtis did not stage all of his pictures and took several photographs in a natural setting.

This source was useful to my topic because it showed me the work of another photographer of Native Americans, Edward H. Latham, who was Curtis’s contemporary. The Oregon Sunday Journal called Latham’s work the ‘finest collection of Indian photographs in the Northwest’, so I assume that Latham too, was recognised for his photographs during his lifetime.


This source was useful as it gave me a summary of Curtis' life and gave a response to some of the big controversies surrounding his work. For example, Curtis has been criticized for having paid his Indian subjects when he took their pictures. According to Ms. Lawlor, Curtis actually deeply respected Native Americans, and while most people only look at his photos, she claims that in his writing, Curtis explained Native American culture in unparalleled detail.


I came across this book as it was referenced in a number of other sources. Mr. Lyman takes a very critical look at Curtis’ work and considers it to be a highly racialized and romanticized version of Native American history. By looking at his photographs, one isn’t able to understand the background struggle of the Native Americans. A similar perspective is echoed by Mr. Leonard Forsman, Chairman of the Squamish Nation in my documentary.

This was a very useful history reference book for me as I learned more about the time period in which Curtis lived. I found this source from my teacher in his classroom.


This source taught me about the different tribes Curtis visited, including stories from Curtis' personal experiences with a particular tribe and how he got along with them. This helped me understand how each tribe was different, and what their traditions or rituals were. I found this source in my school classroom.


This book was a critical analysis of Curtis' work. It was recommended to me by Mr. Cardozo. The main argument of this book is that one has to view Curtis’ images as though his work had been co-authored by the approximately 10000 Native Americans he came in contact with.

Email Correspondence

This was a series of correspondence between Mr. Bernardy and me, who was kind enough to send me a vast amount of images, and primary documents pertaining to Curtis’s life from the Cardozo Fine Art Collection, which I used in my documentary.


Among many things, Mr. Cardozo has introduced me to Anne Makepeace, maker of the Curtis documentary “Coming to Light”.


In this email, I asked Mr. Cardozo to send me copies of comment books that visitors had signed at his Curtis exhibitions. I ended up using several quotes from the Cargill Gallery.


Mr. Cardozo has been invaluable with my research, providing me with many different sources and information that I have used throughout my project. He is a leading Curtis expert and collector and is very knowledgeable about Curtis' life and work and helped me understand the value of Curtis’ legacy.

My correspondence to Ms. Clements is very important because I needed to ask her to grant me permission to use some of the interviews from her documentary “Looking at Edward Curtis”.


Mr. Jarrod Da is the Educational Manager of the Snoqualmie tribe in Washington state. Jarrod helped me understand the perspective of why people may not like Curtis, that his images are stereotypes of a Vanishing Race, and don’t show the true Native American history. I found Jarrod’s contact information through the Seattle Museum of Art: Double Exposure Exhibition.


Ms. Dundas was very helpful with my research into the repatriation of the Cape Fox totem poles and was happy to give me an interview. In this email exchange, Ms. Dundas sent me experts from the book A Time Remembered by John Grainger, which was written for the Cape Fox Corporation. This was the book with Curtis images that Ms. Dundas used to establish provenance in order to repatriate artifacts from museums.

Anne Makepeace made the documentary “Coming to Light”. I knew this was something I wanted to include in my project, so I reached out to her to set up an interview. Ms. Makepeace is an expert on Curtis, as a non-Native, she has lived on a Hopi reservation and spent nine years making “Coming to Light”. Ms. Makepeace also helped me reach out to Matika Wilbur from Project 562.


Lydia Sigo is the Suquamish Museum Archivist/Curator. According to Lydia, “because Curtis lived during the early 1900s, he wasn’t able to fully understand his racist views, even though he sought to show respect for the Native cultures. However, he portrays Natives as “noble savages”, not understanding the impact of the treaties and how the wealth of natural resources and land was stolen from the tribes, contributing to their lack of rights and poverty”. She declined to be interviewed.


Asia Tail is an artist, curator, and arts administrator based in Tacoma, Washington, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. One interesting point from her email I included in my project: that she hopes “in 100 years Curtis’ photos will become a distant
memory, and will be replaced with new visions of the indigenous identity created within native communities”. She declined to be interviewed.


I reached out to Ms. Wilbur because she has set out to photograph all Native American tribes in 2012. She declined to be interviewed, but still sent me a link to her blog. “People call me a modern day Curtis,” she wrote, “every time I hear that, I want to throw up.”

Interviews


This interview was very useful to my project because Mr. Cardozo has been exhibiting Curtis’ work and giving lectures on The North American Indian for about forty years. Just recently he has finished republishing The North American Indian, a project that took him three years to complete.


I included parts of my interview with Ms. Dundas, Repatriation Manager for Cape Fox Corp. in my documentary. Ms. Dundas had a very positive take on Curtis and explained to me how Curtis’s photographs have led to a cultural revival within the Cape Fox Community.

I very much enjoyed speaking to Anne, as she had lived on a Hopi reservation in the 1990s and it took her 9 years to make the movie “Coming to Light” about Curtis. She told me that among the Hopi, almost everyone had a very favorable opinion of Curtis’s pictures.

Music


This music is so evocative of the struggles of the emerging American nation in the late 19th century and contrasts with the Native theme which I used earlier because it implies the triumph of the western culture and the success of Christian missionaries in crushing Native American culture and identity.


The New World Symphony was written by Antonín Dvořák for the 1893 Chicago World Fair, in order to celebrate the New World’s 400 years of triumphant progress. This triumph, however, was a tragedy from the perspective of the Native Americans.

I really enjoyed the original soundtrack from the documentary “The West” by Ken Burns, especially the Native American themed music. That is why I chose the song “Death Runs Riot” as the main theme in my documentary.


This music was included from the soundtrack of the movie Ragtime, released in 1981. One of the prime themes of the movie was centered around the hostage-taking of the Morgan Library. It was set in the first decade of the 20th century, precisely when Curtis actually met J. Pierpont Morgan.

Video/Documentary


This source was very important to me because it was the first time that I learned any specifics about the life and work of Edward Curtis. I was very touched by the beauty of his photographs and the tragic struggles of Native Americans, and even Edward Curtis’ both triumphant and tragic life.


This source helped me understand Native perspectives of Curtis and also provided me with a very good interview to use. It was very favorable toward Curtis, but I did learn
about some of the controversies surrounding his work. For example, even though Curtis was the first person ever that the Navajo allowed to film the Sundance, they performed the dance backward, as well as keeping the most sacred parts to themselves.

"Deconstructing Curtis: Romanticism Vs. Reality." Vimeo, 2018,


This source helped me understand the differences between the romanticised photographs Curtis took, recreating life before the 1830 Indian Removal Act, as opposed to the actual treatment of Native Americans by the federal government.


I especially enjoyed watching this documentary, since it had so many current Native American perspectives on Curtis’ work. I found that there was a good balance between opinions that were positive towards Curtis’ photographs, and the ones that were critical of them. This was an important step in creating my project since I used some of these interviews in my documentary.

“Smiling Indians.” Ryan Red Corn, 21 Feb. 2011, youtu.be/ga98brEf1AU.

I included segments of this video, yet another response to Curtis by contemporary Native artists, in my documentary.

This source helped my understanding of the history of Westward Expansion and more of the background history of Native Americans.

**Websites**


This article informed me about an upcoming auction of a complete set of The North American Indian by Swann Auction Galleries in New York in 2018. The estimated price was $1,500,000. The Morgans sold 17 complete sets for $1000 to a Boston bookstore in 1935 after they had backed Curtis with over $400000.


This was another hugely important source for me as I was researching Edward Curtis’ impact in native communities today. In her TEDx talk, Swinomish/Tulalip native Matika Wilbur said: “How can we be seen as modern, successful people if we are continually represented as the leathered and feathered vanishing race?”

In 2001, because of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act in 1990, the 26-foot totem pole located at the Chicago Field Museum was returned back to its original owners in Cape Fox, Alaska at the Tlingit Nation. The pole was taken from a deserted Native American village during the Harriman Expedition of 1899.


Indian Country Today is an online news portal dealing with Native American current issues. This article was very helpful in my understanding of the tragedy and long-lasting impacts of the compulsory Indian boarding school system. I used the story of Little Chief in my documentary.


This article helped me understand the importance of world fairs in general, and why they were popular at the turn of the 20th century. It provided a detailed account of how Native Americans needed to be seen by the public as “primitive savages” frozen in time, to juxtapose their lack of development with the triumphant advances of white America.

This source enabled me to see how contemporary Native American artists respond to Edward Curtis in an exhibition by the Seattle Art Museum. It was useful towards my project because it gave me several Native American contacts to ask how they feel Curtis impacted Native American Identity.


According to this source, everything Curtis did was in order to preserve a culture, one that wasn’t even his own. This source is very favorable towards Curtis, and the legacy he left behind. I found this website myself as I was looking for a reference edition for Curtis' images online.


I found this to be a very useful source, as it gave me a simple timeline about Edward Curtis' life. I found that it highlighted some key moments in Curtis' life and pivotal moments in his career.

This was yet another example of modern and contemporary responses to Curtis' photographs, which helped me understand how controversial he is.


This was an interesting online exhibit about Curtis with many primary opinions about his work. I also learned that his gold tone prints were critically acclaimed, and these tones today are referred to as ‘Curt- tones’.


This source was very useful because it taught me about government laws and policies during the 1800 and 1900s, teaching me more about the legislative, judicial, and executive branches in the United States at that point. I found this source on a recommended website from my teacher.

Here I learned a lot about my historical context, for example about the Religious Crimes Code of 1883, in which superintendents of the Indian Bureau were given authority to punish native people who were doing their traditional dances, if the Bureau officials felt it was subversive or troublemaking.


This article helped me understand the racialized perspectives on Native Americans through the Columbian World Fair in Chicago in 1893: Buffalo Bill’s Wild West shows portrayed the Indians as heroic warriors of the past, museums showed them as an earlier stage of evolution, and the Indian Bureau built model missionary schools.

"**Newsela | Edward Curtis' Photos Helped To Preserve Native American Way Of Life .**"  

This source highlighted the events that made Curtis write *The North American Indian*. Having rescued the anthropologist George Bird Grinnell from Mt Rainier, the Harriman
Alaska Expedition of 1899, and his 1900 visit of the Blackfeet Indians performing the Sundance, were pivotal moments for Curtis.


This source about the culture of the Plateau Indians was useful to me at the beginning of my research and helped me understand the Plateau culture, such as the food they ate (the most popular one being fish) or religion (one being animism, believing that spirits live in everything).


In 2003 Northwestern University published all the 20 volumes of The North American Indian online. The website also has an online exhibition on Edward Curtis and the process of making the books. The pictures don’t have a good resolution so I couldn’t use them in my documentary, however, this is a fantastic reference website.

https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/ryan-red-corn-explains-smiling-indians-0L_cZCMWX0GMpBgShjCymw/.

This source is yet another contemporary response to Curtis. The creator, Ryan Red Corn, criticized Curtis’s work for always depicting Natives in a serious manner. Ryan Red Corn created a short video of Native Americans smiling, writing at the end: “if you remember nothing else about me, remember that I smiled.”


This source is an online exhibition on Edward Curtis and The North American Indian. As early as 1903, Curtis was trying to get the backing of the Smithsonian Institution to help him fund The North American Indian. Curtis never gave up, and in 1908 the Smithsonian eventually bought a subscription.


The author of this article takes a critical look at Curtis, challenging him with photographs from the 1870s with Native Americans wearing denim, as opposed to Curtis' photographs in which people do everyday tasks half nude.

I included this contemporary response to Curtis by high schoolers in an earlier version of my documentary, but had to cut it later. Still, the fact that there are so many various responses to Curtis only proves how controversial and influential he is today..


This source was important because it taught me the impact of westward expansion on the Native Americans. The building of railroads spread Christian culture to the Native lands, and much of their traditions and rituals were lost and were relegated to reservations.


Swinomish/Tulalip native photographer Matika Wilbur started Project 562 in 2012, in order to rectify the stereotypical images of Native Americans, that in her opinion don’t offer positive role models for young Native American children, and misrepresent Native American identity in general.