

# Native American & Indigenous Studies



At left, IU's Dr. Ray DeMallie, Department of Anthropology, presents at the conference. Above, IU faculty and students enjoy the IU sponsored Ethnohistory Conference reception at the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art (photos courtesy of Cortney Smith).

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The First Nations Educational and Cultural Center's new home

## American Society for Ethnohistory Conference

### Reflections on the 2014 Indianapolis Conference

The annual meeting of the American Society for Ethnohistory was held Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> in Indianapolis. This year's conference was co-hosted by Indiana University and the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first publication of the Society's journal, *Ethnohistory*.

There were many IU students and faculty who participated in the conference, including Chris Clements, a History PhD student, who won the Helen

Hornbeck Tanner Paper Award for the best graduate student paper. Clements' paper, "Theorizing a Politics of Mohawk Refusal at Akwesasne, 1940-1980," used an anecdote about a Mohawk man being arrested at the U.S.-Canada border in 1941 as a means to talk more broadly about historical methodology within Native Studies. When reflecting on his experience at the conference, Clements stated, "I left feeling excited

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Dr. April Sievert, Anthropology, presents at the ASE Conference (photo courtesy of Cortney Smith).

# Native Americans and the Healthcare Experience



On Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, Dr. LaDonna BlueEye, Assistant Professor in the School of Public Health, presented a talk titled “Still Not Ethical: The Native American Experience of Healthcare” as part of the Poynter Center’s Ethics Speaker Series. Dr. BlueEye addressed the ethical issues related uniquely to

Native Americans that exist in the current health care system.

Dr. BlueEye began her session by detailing the extent to which American Indians suffer health disparities at much greater rates than any other population in the United States. These health disparities include: lower life expectancy (nearly four years), higher suicidal rates among Native American youth, higher injury-related death rates, and significantly greater vision and hearing impairments than for any other racial group.

Although the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service provides healthcare through the Indian Health Service (originally an entity of the U.S. War Department to manage prisoners), American Indian populations continue to experience basic challenges such as access to health care providers/facilities, appropriate care, and language and cultural barriers with health care providers. Dr. BlueEye detailed two specific reasons for these continued health disparities within Native American communities: 1) government provided health care often does not address cultural concerns of Native communities, and 2) due to a history of broken treaties and mistreatment, there is a continued mistrust of

governmental agencies by American Indians.

Dr. BlueEye believes that Indian Health Services not only needs to educate its providers about Native culture for cultural understanding, but also needs to emphasize the importance of communication in regards to building trust, mutual respect, and patience. For example, Dr. BlueEye detailed her own experience with addressing the health concern of tobacco use in Native communities. Many tribes use tobacco for sacred, traditional, cultural, and/or healing practices. Instead of dismissing these sacred adoptions of tobacco as health ignorance, Dr. BlueEye advocates a cultural understanding that shifts the paradigm from “No Smoking” to “Traditional Use, Not Abuse”— a phrase created by BlueEye now being implemented within Native communities. By utilizing approaches that recognize Native culture, there exists an opportunity to improve American Indian health.



Above, a Pima woman on an Arizona Reservation is examined by an Indian Health Service Physician, c. 1980s. At right, a young Native American woman experiences rehabilitation after an injury (images from the Indian Health Service).





## FNECC gets a New Home



At left, the entrance of FNECC's new home at 712 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Above, FNECC visitors participate in Craft Night with a lesson on beading (photographs courtesy of Mary Connors).

On August 22, the First Nations Educational and Cultural Center (FNECC) opened the doors of its new center at 712 East 8<sup>th</sup> Street. The Open House was a huge success with over 300 guests attending (six times as many guests as last year's open house). Since its opening, FNECC has had more visitors, in just a few months, than it had all last year at its previous location. FNECC members attribute the increase in visitors to the visibility of the new center with its strategic location on campus. Davina Two Bears, an Anthropology PhD student and member of FNECC, said, "We are definitely getting more visitors here. It's a more central location and it is such a nice space."

According to FNECC members, the new location is attracting many more IU students to organizational events than in previous years. "A lot of students didn't know we existed before now," noted Two Bears. Terri Miles, a Criminal Justice PhD student and FNECC member, added, "Now that we have this space where they (students) know where we are located, a lot more students are coming to events."

For many FNECC members, their experience with the new center is a powerful one and marks a new phase for the organization with endless possibilities. Commenting on her first impressions of the new center, Miles said, "When I first got to come here and visit the center, I walked in and I almost cried. I couldn't believe how beautiful it was inside, how much space, how perfect the location is. It is absolutely a dream come true." Heather Williams, an IU graduate and FNECC member, commented on the transformation, "To see where it was in its old location and where it is now is amazing."

In addition to classes that are being taught in the Center's classroom, FNECC is hosting a number of events in the new space, including a speaker series on Native American issues. From its beautiful, new space, FNECC continues to educate the IU community about Native American and Indigenous cultures, concerns, and issues.



The FNECC 2014 Open House Picnic at their new home on East 8<sup>th</sup> Street (photo courtesy of Mary Connors).



At left, IU students and faculty at the American Society of Ethnohistory Conference.

From left to right: Davina Two Bears, Chris Clements, Alexis Smith, Dr. Christina Snyder, Alaina Roberts, Heather Williams, and Terri Miles (photograph courtesy of Christina Snyder).

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and energized to continue pursuing my own work. It reinforced the invaluable contribution that ethnohistory and Native Studies has made and continues to make to disciplines like history, anthropology, and American Studies.”

A fellow IU representative and presenter was Nicky Belle, an Anthropology PhD student. Belle’s paper “The Rocks at Joliet, Montana” was part of a panel entirely composed of either IU faculty or students. Belle, who was attending his fourth Ethnohistory conference, was impressed with the array of approaches to Native Studies on display at the conference. “I find the papers very interesting and represent varying, yet related approaches to Native Studies. Many of the people represent branches off the same genealogical academic tree, so I find it interesting to see how theories and approaches have developed from one point or another and how similarities are evident within these genealogies.”

Clements, who was also the Conference’s volunteer coordinator, expressed the success of IU faculty and staff at the conference. “I think it was an exciting opportunity for IU to showcase the great work its Native Studies students and faculty are doing and was a successful collaboration between its two co-sponsors.”

As indicated by Clements, Belle, and the American Society of Ethnography website, the organization continues to promote “the interdisciplinary investigation of the histories of Native Peoples in the Americas.”



This year’s ASE Conference was co-hosted by IU and the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma (image from the American Society of Ethnohistory).



## ***Upcoming Events & Conferences***

- ❖ **Pre-Powwow Public Lecture. Mathers Museum of World Cultures, October 30, 2014, 4:15-5:15.** “Narrating Relations: Indigenous and Scientific Ways of Knowing,” Dr. Jessica Bardill, Department of English, East Carolina University.  
[www.indiana.edu/~fnecc/](http://www.indiana.edu/~fnecc/)
- ❖ **Indiana University’s Fourth Traditional Powwow. Indiana Memorial Union, November 1-2, 2014.** Public Lecture: Friday, Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> — Dr. Clyde Ellis, Department of History and Geography, Elon University. [www.indiana.edu/~fnecc/](http://www.indiana.edu/~fnecc/)
- ❖ **Ed Kaboutie, artist and musician, visits IU campus.** Lecture: Friday, Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> at the Mathers Museum of World Cultures; Concert: Saturday, Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> at the Fine Arts Building. [www.indiana.edu/~fnecc/](http://www.indiana.edu/~fnecc/)
- ❖ **Visit Indiana University’s** Native American and Indigenous Studies program on [facebook](#) for updates on upcoming talks, workshops, events, and more!

## ***links***

- ❖ [IU First Nations Educational and Cultural Center](#)
- ❖ [Past NAIS Newsletters](#)
- ❖ [The American Indian Studies Research Institute](#)
- ❖ [Mathers Museum of World Cultures](#)
- ❖ [The Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology](#)