

Gender Role Attitudes: Native Americans in Comparative Perspective

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Abstract

Native Americans have often been idealized as more egalitarian than other race and ethnic groups today, particularly with respect to the roles of women. Using data from the General Social Surveys 1972-1996, we test the hypothesis that Native Americans will be more egalitarian than other ethnic/racial groups on attitudinal measures of gender equality due to their cultural history of egalitarianism. Native Americans are not statistically significantly more egalitarian than whites when other variables are controlled, but Hispanics and Blacks have significantly lower scores. Interesting differences emerge from separate analyses of Native Americans and the other race and ethnic groups. For example, family income is less important for the Native Americans, while the role of keeping house appears to be more important. Age was less important for Hispanics. However, the structure of the regression equations is similar for all of the groups, with education, age, year of survey, religious intensity and sex emerging as the most important variables. Even though the Native Americans are the most egalitarian, they are influenced by these structural variables in much the same manner as the other groups.

Introduction

Native Americans are a racial minority category, with the same kind of experience base that leads scholars to analyze African Americans and Hispanic Americans as identifiable minority groups. However, much of the research on Native Americans has been anthropological or psychological rather than sociological in nature (see, for example, Allen, 1992; Bataille and Sands, 1984; Billard, 1979; James, 1992; Katz, 1997; Lewis, 1990; Moses and Wilson, 1985; Niethammer, 1977; Wall, 1993). Although early works tended to treat all Indians as a homogeneous group, much of the recent anthropological literature has stressed the heterogeneity of Native Americans based on tribal differences. The historical accuracy of such claims notwithstanding, it is likely that the commonality of Native American identity in recent times outweighs the uniqueness of tribal ancestry. Indeed, increases in the census enumeration of Native Americans may be linked to a rekindling of a common political and economic agenda (Cornell, 1988, Snipp, 1989; Nagel, 1995).¹

The Native American population² has increased dramatically in the twentieth century to nearly 2.0 million American Indian and Alaska Natives according to the 1990 U. S. Census of the Population. Demographers have suggested that a large

proportion of the dramatic increases over the past decades may be attributable to shifts in racial identity (Passel, 1976; Passel and Berman, 1986; Harris, 1994). As interpreted by Nagel (1995) this shift in identity may be associated with the concept of ethnic renewal based on a resurgence of the political, economic, and cultural activities of Native Americans in the United States. As the Native American population continues to grow and Native Americans become increasingly visible in every sector of U.S. society, the need for sociological research focusing on these cultures will grow. In this research, we will attempt to expand the current sociological knowledge of the Native American cultures by examining contemporary gender roles among Native Americans.³

While it is clear that Native Americans differ culturally from tribe to tribe, it is equally clear that relations with Europeans had similar impacts on the various cultures (Deloria and Lytle 1984; Green, 1999). It is also apparent that, regardless of different cultural backgrounds, Native Americans share similar demographic characteristics (O'Hare, 1992). In spite of cultural differences, several nativistic movements such as the Pueblo uprising, Tecumseh's alliance, Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce, Wodaiwob of the northern Paiute and the Ghost Dance of the Plains

Indians are indications of shared cultural views. These earlier movements continued into this century with peyotism and the Native American Church.⁴

During the 1960's and 1970's many social movements arose because of the failure of our society to recognize the basic rights of minorities (Vine DeLoria, 1969). These movements drew attention to the plight of various groups as they made claims for equal inclusion in the industrial marketplace. For Native Americans, many of the nativistic movements coalesced into Pan-Indianism, which transcended traditional tribal boundaries and focused instead on Native American culture as a whole. Through a variety of organizations such as at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), Pan-Indianism concentrated on unemployment, poverty, and accessibility of education including higher education, environmental protection, treaty rights, religious freedom, and cultural preservation (Nagel, 1996). One beneficial effect of the Pan Indian movement, as well as other civil rights movements, has been the resurgence of cultural pride at being Native American, whether or not tribal identity remained strong (Liebler, 1996). Furthermore, in his examination of social change and continuity in Native American societies, Champagne (1989) argues that institutional change will occur only if the preexisting social order is based on a collective solidarity, which transcends particularistic identification with specific tribes. This suggests that, while tribal identity is valued, the continuance of Native American culture in the United States may depend on maintaining an inclusive Native American identity⁵.

Within this changing context the role of native North American women was largely ignored or characterized by popular culture. Thus "squaws," were characterized as powerless servants to men, or as the romanticized "Indian princess," who rejects her own cultural traditions for the European model of morality and love (Albers, 1983: 3; Jameson, 1988: 762; Lurie, 1972: 29; Mankiller and Wallis, 1993: 19; Powers, 1986: 8-14). While early anthropological works often pre-

sented Native American women as reflecting European standards of behavior (see Leacock, 1981: 134), recent works focused on the depth and diversity of roles among women in various Native American cultures (Bataille and Sands, 1984; Blackman, 1989; Mankiller and Wallis, 1993; Foster, 1995).

Klein and Ackerman (1995: 14) in the introduction to their edited book presenting chapters on gender and power issues in eleven different Native American cultures came to the following conclusion:

A more uniform theme is that of balanced reciprocity. The authors in this volume conclude that the worlds of men and women were, and are, distinctly different but not generally perceived as hierarchical. In other words, while there are different roles expected of men and women, neither men's roles nor women's roles are considered superior; the efforts of both women and men are acknowledged as necessary for the well-being of society.

While they do not argue that the case studies in their book suggest either equality of the genders or superiority of one gender over another (except in the case of the Muskogees in the Southeast), the experiences described illustrate that stereotypically simplistic dichotomies of public/private or domestic/economic domains do not fit the experiences of many Native American women (Klein and Ackerman, 1995: 14).

Thus, in spite of cultural differences, one aspect of Native American culture which differs from other minority groups is a history of egalitarianism towards women that the other groups do not share (Fiske, 1991; 1995; Green, 1989; LaFramboise, Heyle and Ozer, 1990; Foster, 1995). It seems clear that there was a conscious effort on the part of missionaries and other agency administrators to change gender roles to fit the norm of non-Indian society (Castillo, 1994; Fiske, 1995; Klein and Ackerman, 1995: 13). It seems equally clear that these attempts met with varied success, but that, according to the contributors to Klein and Ackerman's (1995) edited volume, the role of women in most

tribes has returned to their original positions of gender equality and/or gender reciprocity (see also, Miller, 1994). As noted by LaFramboise, Heyle, and Ozer (1990), "...the current claim is not that women in all tribes shared equal status and power with men, but that the high frequency of egalitarian relationships has been greatly underrepresented."

Additionally, the resurgence in Native American identity associated with a resurgence of original cultural values may support a return to traditional views of gender balanced roles. Presumably these changes would include socialization processes which would lead to different orientations towards appropriate roles for men and women in society. Given the preponderance of literature suggesting that in general Native American women were given equal or reciprocal status, we hypothesized that on measures of gender role ideology, Native Americans would be more egalitarian than other racial/ethnic groups. We expect this relationship will be impacted by a variety of other variables. For example, respondents living in more highly populated areas may score even higher because of their increased participation outside their own culture. Decreased family size and a trend toward nuclear rather than extended family households are associated with "modern" society; therefore those with smaller families should show higher scores on measures of egalitarianism than those with larger families.

While the history of Native Americans suggests more egalitarian attitudes about the roles of men and women, in previous research Harris and Firestone (1998) documented an ubiquitous convergence toward egalitarian attitudes among White, African American and Hispanic American women in the U.S. Thus, while we expect Native Americans to score more egalitarian on the index measuring gender role attitudes, we expect the views of other race/ethnic groups in the U.S. to be converging with that of the Native Americans. In this research, we will attempt to expand the current sociological knowledge of Native American cultures by examining

contemporary gender role attitudes among Native Americans and comparing them to the attitudes of other race/ethnic groups in the United States.

Sample, Variable Construction and Method of Analysis

The General Social Survey (GSS) is an ongoing survey of social indicators. The survey was administered to 35,284 respondents between 1972 and 1996 with approximately 1500 administered each year until 1993, and then about 3000 in 1994 and 1996. Block quota sampling was used in 1972 through 1974 and for half of the 1975 and 1976 surveys. Full probability sampling was utilized for the remaining half of 1975 and 1976 as well as for the years 1977 through 1996. Weights are used to adjust for over sampling of Black respondents for the years 1982 and 1987. All respondents are English-speaking persons 18 years of age and over who were living in non-institutional settings within the United States. These surveys contain a total of 1091 individuals who self-identified as Native Americans for this period.⁶

An index of gender role ideology (**SEXIDEOL**), with an overall standardized Chronbach's alpha of 0.66,⁷ was created from attitudinal variables measuring the degree of egalitarianism present in the responses of those individuals completing the GSS survey (see Table 1). The four questions used in the index are as follows:

1. Women should take care of running their homes and leave running the country up to the men. [FEHOME]
2. Do you approve or disapprove of a married woman earning money in business or industry if she has a husband capable of supporting her? [FEWORK]
3. If your party nominated a woman for President, would you vote for her if she were qualified for the job? [FEPRES]
4. Most men are better suited emotionally for politics than are most women. [FEPOL]

The variable responses have been recoded with zero representing the less egalitarian response and one representing the more egalitarian response. Index scores range from zero to four. An index

including more variables would have allowed a greater range in index scores and picked up more subtle differences between groups. However, the four variables included in this index were the only questions asked with consistency during time frame analyzed. A total of 19,613 respondents answered the four gender role questions, and of those, 623 (3%) self-identified as Native Americans.

The independent variables used in the analysis of gender role ideology are sex of respondent, race/ethnicity, year of interview, respondent's working status, marital status, age, educational attainment, size of place in which interview was conducted, number of hours per day respondent viewed television, household size, and strength of religiosity.⁸ Means and standard deviations for all variables included in the regression model are presented in Table 2.

Dummy variables were created for the variable working status for those respondents who are in the labor force full time, part time, and keeping house (unpaid domestic labor).

Dummy variables were also created for marital status for married, never married and those either separated or divorced. Respondent age, educational attainment, year of interview, size of place of residence, number of television viewing hours, and household size, are interval/ratio variables. Additionally, family income is in-

cluded as an indicator of respondent's economic context (Ligon, 1989). Religiosity measures the strength of the respondent's religious preference. This is an ordinal variable with response categories of Strong, Somewhat Strong, and Not Very Strong and No Religious Preference. Additionally, dummy variables are created for each racial category. Upon completion of the first regression model, a separate model is initiated for each racial category. Comparing the original model to those obtained by race will highlight differences in effects and strengths of relationships.

The hypothesis being testing is that Native Americans will score higher than other ethnic/racial groups on attitudinal measures of gender equality due to their cultural history of egalitarianism. However, controlling for a variety of other variables may impact this relationship. For example, respondents living in more highly populated areas should score higher because of their increased participation outside their own culture. For example, Leibler (1996) found that living in areas with higher concentrations of Native Americans was a good predictor of a strong group identification. Most areas with higher densities of Native Americans are rural areas.⁹ Decreased family size and a trend toward nuclear rather than extended family households are associated with "modern" society; therefore those with smaller families should show higher

TABLE 1 RELIABILITY INDICATORS FOR AN INDEX OF GENDER ROLE IDEOLOGY

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Total Sample Item to Index Correlations	Native Americans Item to Index Correlations
FEHOME	0.74	0.44	0.80	0.78
FEPOL	0.62	0.48	0.76	0.75
FEWORK	0.77	0.42	0.59	0.58
FEPRES	0.84	0.37	0.66	0.65

Total cases = 19,613; Standardized Alpha = .66

Number Native Americans = 623; Standardized Alpha = 0.63

Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations for Regressed Variables

	ALL (n=16392)		NATIVE AMERICAN (n=541)		WHITE (n=13272)		BLACK (n=1688)		HISPANIC (n=596)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sex Role Ideology	3.01	1.19	3.08	1.14	3.03	1.19	2.91	1.21	2.86	1.20
Race/Ethnicity										
Native American	0.03	0.18								
Hispanic	0.04	0.19								
Black	0.10	0.30								
Asian	0.01	0.10								
Other	0.01	0.01								
Labor Context										
Full-time	0.51	0.50	0.53	0.50	0.51	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.57	0.50
Part-time	0.10	0.30	0.10	0.29	0.10	0.30	0.09	0.29	0.10	0.30
Keeping House	0.18	0.38	0.20	0.40	0.17	0.38	0.20	0.40	0.17	0.38
Family Context										
Married	0.58	0.49	0.60	0.49	0.60	0.49	0.39	0.49	0.56	0.50
Separated/Divorced	0.15	0.36	0.18	0.39	0.14	0.34	0.23	0.42	0.18	0.38
Never Married	0.18	0.38	0.16	0.37	0.17	0.37	0.26	0.44	0.22	0.42
Religious Context										
Religious Intensity	1.77	1.05	1.73	1.08	1.74	1.05	2.03	1.03	1.72	1.00
Socio-Demographic										
Sex	0.55	0.50	0.57	0.50	0.54	0.50	0.61	0.49	0.57	0.50
Family Income	30890.15	27721.23	23340.84	20297.63	32756.27	28452.32	20756.94	21208.82	23623.50	21895.63
Education	12.57	3.12	11.58	2.89	12.77	3.03	11.63	3.30	11.36	3.27
Age	44.56	17.19	39.60	14.67	45.52	17.45	42.40	16.33	36.39	12.90
Household Size	2.75	1.52	2.99	1.51	2.68	1.46	2.95	1.76	3.44	1.82
Community Size(Ln)	3.23	2.31	2.97	2.36	2.98	2.18	4.67	2.49	4.51	2.42
Miscellaneous										
TV Hours	2.95	2.23	3.35	2.46	2.80	2.08	3.91	2.87	3.23	2.47
Year	86.01	6.77	86.99	6.67	85.80	6.76	86.49	6.90	87.07	6.49

scores on measures of egalitarianism than those with larger families.

Increased education would be indicative of increased participation in modern society; therefore education should be positively related to measures of egalitarianism. Respondents who are employed outside of the home should score higher than those who are not because employment status is indicative of the degree of participation in the modernization process. Higher income levels indicate greater participation in the industrial marketplace; therefore income should be positively related to egalitarianism. Whether living in urban or rural areas, women should score higher than men on measures of egalitarianism because it is in their interest to do so to attain full equality in the industrial market place. Native Americans will score higher on measures of egalitarianism than other minority groups because of their past cultural history of egalitarianism. White respondents will score higher than all other groups by virtue of their longer participation in the industrial market place. As time increases, the number of individuals brought into the modernization process should increase. Therefore, there should be a positive relationship between year and measures of egalitarianism.

Married and widowed individuals are hypothesized to score lower on measures of egalitarianism by virtue of their participation in a traditional behavior pattern. Divorced and never married individuals are expected to score higher on egalitarianism due to their nontraditional behavior patterns. We expect egalitarian attitudes to be more prevalent for younger respondents because of their more active participation in the processes of modernization. The impacts for religion should vary depending on the respondent's race/ethnicity. Religiosity measures the intensity of one's religious feelings, but does not depend on Christian beliefs. Since religion of various forms has been such an integral part of the lives of Native Americans, those respondents who are Native Americans should show increased levels of egalitarianism as religious intensity increases. The Christian religion has

been prominent for the other racial groups in our analysis. Because Christianity has been associated with traditional gender role beliefs, religious intensity should be negatively related to egalitarian attitudes.

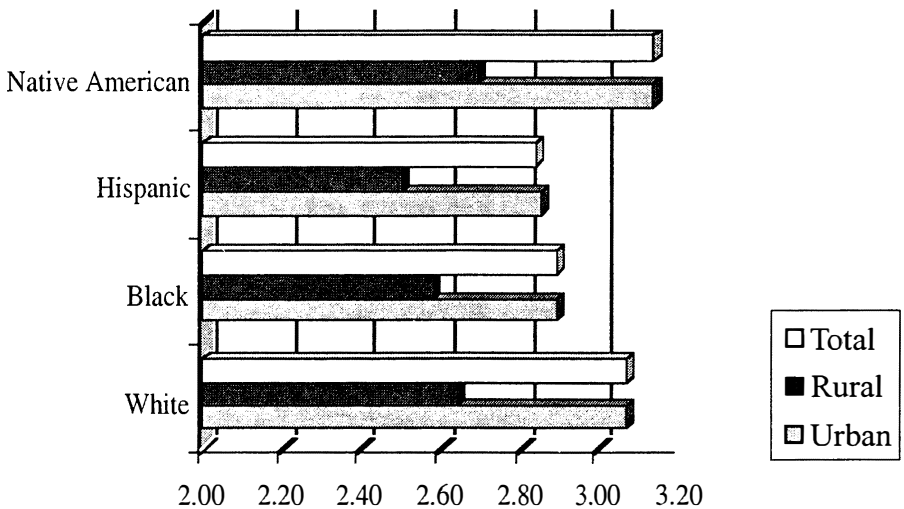
Television viewing allows individuals to become part of the modernization process even if they are not actively participating in the industrial market place. The effect of television viewing time should be interesting since longer television viewing time is usually associated with acceptance of traditional gender role stereotypes and few hours of television viewing time may not be sufficient to indoctrinate those individuals who are isolated from modern media images.

Findings

Figure 1 displays the mean values of gender role ideology for each race/ethnic group controlling for whether they lived in a rural or urban environment. Importantly, Native Americans score most egalitarian with respect to gender role ideology when compared to Whites, Blacks and Hispanics. Interestingly, those living in urban environments display the most egalitarian gender roles among all race and ethnic groups, including Native Americans.

Further analyses of the means of the variables used in the regression shows that the groups analyzed are homogenous with respect to sex of respondent, working status, and marital status (see Table 2). Educational level is lowest for Hispanics and Native Americans, with both being less likely than other groups to have completed high school. With respect to the amount of time spent viewing television, Black respondents watch television more frequently than other groups while White and Asian respondents watch less frequently than other groups. Hispanics appear to have the largest household size, but the difference from other minority group respondents is not large. White respondents have the smallest household size.

There are a few variations between the groups when correlations are examined for each group separately.¹⁰ When comparing the correlations of races or ethnicities to those of Native American respondents,

Figure 1 Mean Gender Role Scores by Race and Ethnicity*

	White	Black	Hispanic	Native American
□ Total	3.07	2.89	2.84	3.14
■ Rural	2.64	2.58	2.50	2.69
▒ Urban	3.07	2.89	2.85	3.14

* Mean differences in sex role ideology scale by race/ethnicity significant at $p < .01$ ($F=7.33$, $df = 5$, 19607). Mean differences by race and ethnicity for urban areas, statistically significant at $P < .01$ ($F=14.35$; $df = 5$, 15447). Mean differences by race and ethnicity for rural areas not statistically significant ($F = 0.83$, $df = 5$, 4155).

no significant difference exists with regard to the variables year, education, age, family income, full time work status, being never married, keeping house or vocabulary score. Respondent's sex was not significant for White, Other, or Native American respondents. Community size, household size, part-time work status, and television viewing hours were only significant for White respondents. Finally, religious intensity was not significant for Native American or Hispanic respondents.

Regression Results

The results of multiple regression equations are summarized in Table 3. In the regression model that includes all racial categories the adjusted R Square value in-

dicates 22 percent of the variability in the gender role index score is explained by the independent variables. When analyzing the effects of the independent variables for each racial category separately, the adjusted R square value varies. For White respondents, 23 percent of the variation in index score is attributable to the independent variables. Twenty-one percent of Black respondents' variation in index score is attributable to the variables in the regression equation. Over twenty percent of the variation in index score for Hispanics can be attributed to these variables. Finally, 20% of the variation in score for Native American respondents is explainable by the independent variables. Though not presented in Table 3, regressions were

TABLE 3 REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF GENDER ROLE IDEOLOGY

Race/Ethnicity	All		Native American		White		Black		Hispanic	
	B (SE)	Beta	B (SE)	Beta	B (SE)	Beta	B (SE)	Beta	B (SE)	Beta
Native American	.04 (.05)	.01								
Hispanic	-.20 (.05)	-.03**								
Black	-.03 (.03)	-.01								
Other	-.37 (.09)	-.04**								
Asian	-.50 (.08)	-.04**								
Labor Context										
Full-time	.00 (.02)	.00	-.19 (.13)	-.08	.01 (.03)	.01	-.03 (.08)	-.01	-.14 (.13)	-.06
Part-time	-.04 (.03)	-.01	-.31 (.19)	-.08	-.01 (.04)	-.00	-.13 (.11)	-.03	-.35 (.18)	-.09
Keeping House	-.27 (.03)	-.09**	-.43 (.16)	-.15**	-.28 (.03)	-.09**	-.21 (.09)	-.07*	-.24 (.17)	-.08
Family Context										
Married	.13 (.03)	.05**	-.09 (.22)	-.04	.14 (.04)	.06**	.20 (.10)	.08**	-.22 (.25)	-.09
Separated/Divorced	.18 (.04)	.05**	.06 (.23)	.02	.18 (.04)	.05**	.19 (.10)	.07	-.11 (.25)	-.03
Never Married	.08 (.04)	.03*	-.05 (.25)	-.02	.07 (.04)	.02	.15 (.12)	.06	-.41 (.27)	-.14
Religious Context										
Religious Intensity	-.12 (.01)	-.11**	-.11 (.04)	-.11*	-.12 (.01)	-.11**	-.08 (.03)	-.07**	-.10 (.05)	-.08*
Socio-Demographic										
Sex (Female=1)	.21 (.02)	.09**	.26 (.10)	.11*	.19 (.02)	.08**	.33 (.06)	.13**	.30 (.10)	.13**
Family Income	.00 (.00)	.06**	.00 (.00)	.06	.00 (.00)	.06**	.00 (.00)	.08**	.00 (.00)	.09*
Education	.09 (.00)	.23**	.08 (.02)	.19**	.09 (.00)	.23**	.06 (.01)	.15**	.08 (.02)	.23**
Age	-.01 (.00)	-.21**	-.02 (.00)	-.20**	-.01 (.00)	-.21**	-.02 (.00)	-.22**	-.01 (.00)	-.12*
Household Size	-.01 (.01)	-.02*	.01 (.03)	.01	-.02 (.01)	-.02*	-.01 (.02)	-.01	-.04 (.03)	-.05
Community Size (LN)	.00 (.00)	.00	.00 (.00)	.02	.00 (.00)	.00	-.00 (.00)	-.00	-.00 (.00)	.02
TV Hours	.01 (.00)	.02*	.02 (.02)	.04	.00 (.00)	.01	.03 (.01)	.06**	.01 (.02)	.03
Year	.03 (.00)	.17**	.03 (.01)	.18**	.03 (.00)	.16**	.03 (.00)	.18**	.04 (.01)	.23**
Adj. R-Square	.22		.20		.23		.21		.20	
Constant	.05		.33		.09		-.04		-.1.10	
N	16392		541		13272		1688		596	

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.000

also completed for those identifying as "other" racial groups and for those identifying as Asians. About 25% of the variation is explained for "Other" respondents, however this figure should be treated with caution since there were only 132 respondents in this category. About 18% of the variation is explained for Asians, however once again, these results should be treated with caution as the number of cases is only 163.

The significance level of F is less than 0.01 in all equations so there is a statistically significant relationship between the variables in our model. The values of Multiple R indicate that the relationships are substantial for all races/ethnicities separately, as well as when analyzed together.

In the equation containing all racial categories, the variable that is most strongly related to the gender ideology index is respondent's *education*. This relationship is of moderate strength and is positive indicating that as years of education increases, respondents expressed more egalitarian gender role attitudes. When the regression equation is computed for each racial category separately, the strength of the relationship with education remains positive, but varies somewhat in strength. The relationship is strongest for Whites and Hispanics (Beta = .23 for both groups) and weakest for Blacks (Beta = .15). The strength of the relationship between education and the gender role index for Native Americans falls between these values (Beta = .18). Education is the most important factor for Whites, and tied with year survey was completed as the most important factor for Hispanics. For Native Americans education was the second most important predictor of gender role attitudes, based on the Betas, and for Blacks it was the third most important

The variable *year* of survey exhibited a moderate relationship with the index. As indicated above, year tied with education as the most important predictor for Hispanics, was the second most important predictor for Blacks, tied with education as the second most important variable for Native Americans, and was the third most important predictor for Whites. Thus, in-

dependent of all other variables in the equation, those responding in more recent years exhibit more egalitarian gender role beliefs for all groups. *Sex of respondent* is the second most important variable in the regression model for Hispanics, although it drops to fourth in importance for Native Americans and Blacks, and to sixth most important for Whites. It is also fifth in the model for the total sample.

Age is significant and strong for all models although it is far less important for Hispanics (Beta = -.12) than the other groups. For Native Americans (Beta = -.19) as well as for Blacks (Beta = -.22) age is the strongest predictor of gender role attitudes. In all cases, the relationship with gender role ideology is inverse — the older the respondent, the more traditional the expressed beliefs about appropriate roles for men and women. Because this finding is counter to our expectations, we investigated further.

We compared the predicted gender role attitude scores of individuals with characteristics typically associated with very traditional views about the roles of men and women. First, we solved the regression equations for married men sixty-five years old, with a high school education who are no longer in the labor force for all race/ethnic groups included in our analysis (all other variables were set at their mean values). On average, Native Americans in this group exhibited more egalitarian gender role attitudes (predicted score, 2.65) than did White, non-Hispanics (predicted score, 2.60), Hispanics (predicted score, 2.57) or Blacks (predicted score, 2.49). This pattern is reinforced by examining the predicted scores for married 25 year olds employed full time with a high school degree (Native Americans – 3.27, Whites – 3.17, Blacks – 3.13 and Hispanics – 3.01). Thus, while the overall pattern for age may be the same (on average, older individuals have more traditional views), among comparably situated individuals, Native Americans seem to hold more egalitarian attitudes than members of the other race/ethnic groups included in the analysis.

Family income was a significant, but

weak predictor of gender role beliefs for Whites, Blacks and Hispanics, but was not significant for Native Americans. The relationship for Hispanics is strongest (Beta = .09) followed by Blacks (Beta = .08). Overall, the gender role index score had a negligible relationship with each category of Marital Status. When considering each race/ethnicity separately, being married or separated/divorced were significant for Whites, and being married was significant for Blacks and Whites.

Full-time or Part-time working status was not significant for any of the models. The relationship between being a full time homemaker and the gender role measure is significant for all groups except Hispanics, with homemakers expressing more traditional views. The relationship, however, is not significant for Hispanics. *Keeping House* has the strongest impact on Native Americans (Beta = -.15) and is ranked 3rd in importance as a predictor. The next strongest impact is for Whites (Beta = -.09), and is 5th in importance. Thus, respondents who are White, Black, or Native American and are full time homemakers have more traditional expectations about gender roles.

The Beta values for *intensity of religious beliefs* are weak, significant and negative in all models. Interestingly, religious intensity has the weakest relationship to gender role ideology for Blacks. While the relationships are negligible in strength, they are consistent with the prediction that the stronger the religious intensity a respondent espouses, the more traditional his/her gender role attitudes. This negative relationship holds up for Native Americans, contradicting the hypothesis of a positive impact of religiosity in this cultural context. This finding may result from only a small number of Native Americans in this sample practicing traditional nativistic religions.

The variable *household size* was not significant in any of the models. This finding indicates that there is little variation in gender role attitudes that can be attributed to the number of people residing in a respondent's home. The *number of hours spent viewing television* was significant

only for the overall equation and for Black respondents; however in both of the latter models the strength of the relationship is negligible. It would appear that number of hours spent watching television is not an important variable for predicting gender role attitudes among the various race/ethnic groups included.

Conclusions

We first proposed that Native Americans would score higher than other racial/ethnic groups on measures of egalitarianism, but that this relationship would be mediated by other variables. Initial evidence shows that Native Americans do indeed have the most egalitarian views about gender roles. While our primary hypothesis is supported, Native Americans are not significantly more egalitarian than Whites when other variables are controlled. Blacks and Hispanics, however, are statistically significantly less egalitarian in the regression model.

Some interesting differences emerge from separate analyses of Native Americans and the other race and ethnic groups. Family income is less important for the Native Americans, while the role of keeping house appears to be more important. Age has about the same influence as a predictor of gender role attitudes for Native Americans, Blacks and Whites, but was less important for Hispanics. However, a comparison of the specific regression equation predicted scores for older, married, high school educated men, who are not in the labor force illustrates that the older Native Americans are still predicted to be the most egalitarian. The younger Native American men employed full-time are also predicted to have the highest score. This suggests more egalitarian cultural values with respect to gender roles among most Native Americans than the other race and ethnic groups.

Even so, some of the hypotheses linked to traditional Native American culture are not supported. Those identifying themselves as most strongly religious have more traditional gender role attitudes among the Native Americans as well as the other groups. The negative coefficient

for age does not suggest that elders are promoting a tradition of egalitarian attitudes about appropriate roles for men and women. In fact, the structure of the regression equations is similar for all of the groups, with education, age, year of survey, religious intensity and sex emerging as the most important variables. Even though the Native Americans are the most egalitarian, they are influenced by these structural variables in much the same manner as the other groups.

It should be emphasized, however, that it is unlikely that many of the Native Americans in this sample are living in traditional Native American communities or on reservations. While those on reservations have a chance of being included in the sample in proportion to their representation in the population (Davis and Smith, 1996), this includes only a small number of cases and there is no variable to identify whether or not the respondents live on a reservation. Further research in such communities would be valuable in order to more clearly identify the cultural dynamics influencing the egalitarian gender role attitudes demonstrated in this analysis, and any possible variations in these attitudes among different Native American groups.

Of course it is important to remember that individual attitudes do not always reflect behaviors, nor does egalitarianism negate current problems. Native Americans today continue to suffer from high rates of alcoholism, crime, mental illness, unemployment, and poverty. Native American women "have consistently been the lowest paid, lowest ranked, most unemployed segment of the national work force (Green, R, 1992, see also Green, D.E., 1999)."

Women, regardless of racial or ethnic differences, confront many of the same issues in daily life. As Mary Crow Dog (Crow Dog and Erdoes, 1990) asserts, Native American women are victims of double jeopardy -- oppressed by race and ethnicity as well as by sex. These experiences should bind women together and make the movement toward egalitarianism a stronger and more cohesive effort. It is

obvious from this research that there has been some progress toward egalitarianism among all race and ethnic groups. On the whole, though, women still face constraints both within and outside of the home (Green, 1999; Miller, 1994; Fiske, 1995).

In 1980, Rayna Green commented that "For Indian feminists every women's issue is framed in the larger context of Native American people.... Their call is for a return to Native American forms which, they insist, involve men and women in complementary, mutual roles (p.264)." Our findings indicate that a return to traditional ways in all its forms may not be necessary to reinforce egalitarian gender role attitudes. As the contexts in which different race and ethnic groups live becomes more similar over time, attitudes among group members may also converge (Harris and Firestone, 1998). As the role of women becomes openly integrated into all aspects of society (not focused exclusively on the home) views about the appropriate roles of men and women are becoming more egalitarian and more similar regardless of race or ethnicity. Our findings suggest that beliefs about appropriate roles for men and women among most Native Americans may have come full circle back to ideas of gender reciprocity and/or gender equality. Additionally, the views of other race and ethnic groups in the United States may be catching up with the traditional views of Native Americans.

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Notes

Unfortunately, tribal affiliation is not available in the General Social Surveys to allow a clear test of this contention. Thinking that region of origin might loosely get at tribal identification, in one regression analysis for the Native Americans we included dummy variables for eight areas where the respondents were living at age 16 (REG16). Only those in the East North Central (including Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio) were statistically significantly different from the omitted category of South Atlantic and there was virtually no change in the adjusted R² (0.176 vs. 0.179). We concluded that region at age 16 did not add substantially to the analysis and for parsimony we have left the region variables out of this presentation.

Some anthropologists estimate that the indigenous population of North America totaled between 900,000 and 1.15 million prior to European contact, while other estimates are much higher (Snipp, 1992). According to Snipp (1992), the estimate of 1.15 million as proposed by Smithsonian anthropologists Mooney and Kroeber is too low; however, it is unclear by how much. Snipp notes that other research has yielded population estimates of 4.4 million (Denevan) and 18 million (Dobyns). Due to warfare, genocide, and disease, the Native American population had dropped to 250,000 by the end of the nineteenth century (Snipp, 1992).

Native American respondents to the General Social Survey experienced the same regional trends as other racial/ethnic groups in measures of liberalism and conservatism. Specifically, all racial/ethnic groups tend to be more liberal in New England, Mid-Atlantic, Mountain, and Pacific regions. Because they follow these same patterns, Native Americans will be considered as a single racial/ethnic group rather than by region, which might be a proxy for tribal affiliation.

We thank reviewer Michael Lauderdale for pointing out that these earlier move-

ments were also Pan Indian and point to a shared cultural perspective.

This does not preclude multiple identification—as Native American and as a member of a specific tribe. Liebler notes that about 90% of respondents to the 1990 census who identified themselves as American Indian also identified themselves as members of a particular tribe.

Before completing the analysis, we matched the profile of Native American respondents in the NORC/GSS to the profile of Native Americans as depicted by the U.S. Census. For both the GSS and the Census, 1980 was used as the base for which comparisons were made. A majority of Native Americans reside in urban areas, however, the percentage of urban dwellers is higher in the NORC/GSS. The 1980 census further revealed that 55.8 percent of Native Americans 25 and over were high school graduates; the GSS frequency for this group is 57.5 percent which is slightly higher. Finally, the ratio of males to females is very close for both the U.S. Census and the GSS. These comparisons seem to indicate that the Native American respondents in the GSS are representative of the Native American population.

⁷ According to Robinson, Shaver and Wrightsman (1991), a coefficient alpha of .60 - .69 describes a “moderate” level of internal consistency for an index.

⁸ Originally, number of correct responses on the vocabulary test was included in the analysis to test for language ability. However, including this variable excluded about half of the Native Americans in the analysis and did not impact the overall findings, so vocabulary score was excluded from the final analysis. Native American respondents follow White respondents in vocabulary score with a mean of 6.38. This result would seem to preclude any language barriers for Native American respondents.

Of course there are exceptions; urban areas located in states with high concentrations of Native Americans may also have equally high concentrations. Examples include Oklahoma City, OK, Sioux Falls, SD, and Milwaukee, WI.

¹⁰ Correlation matrix available from authors on request. Examination of the correlation coefficients indicated no problems with multicollinearity.

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