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STANDING TRADITION ON ITS HEAD

ROLE REVERSAL AMONG BLOOD INDIAN COUPLES

JANET MANCINI BILLSON

*The woman is the foundation on which
nations are built.
She is the heart of her nation.
If that heart is weak the people are weak.
If her heart is strong and her mind is clear
then the nation is strong and knows its pur-
pose.
The woman is the centre of everything.*

*But equally, women must honour men;
If not, then everything is out of balance
and we can have nothing but chaos and pain.
These are the first elements that must be
put back together
or nothing, but nothing
can come right again.¹*

Originally from southern Ontario, Janet Mancini Billson is professor of sociology and women's studies at Rhode Island College, Providence. The author of many books and articles, she is now finishing a book on shifting gender roles among women in several Canadian cultural groups, including Blood, Iroquois, and Inuit.

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Traditional gender roles among the Blood Indians (Kainai) of Alberta emphasized the man as provider, the woman as sustainer, although clearly both males and females were at times producers, processors, and consumers as survival needs and circumstances varied. Males typically hunted large game and spent long periods away from home; females processed food, tanned buffalo hides, made clothing, maintained order and culture in the males' absence, and cared for the children and elderly.²

The Bloods (Kainai) are part of the Blackfoot Confederacy, which also includes Peigan (Pikuni) and Blackfoot (Siksika) Indians in Alberta and the Blackfeet in Montana. Many studies of the Blackfoot groupings have emphasized the Peigan or the Blackfeet, both neighbors and probably originally relatives of the Bloods, but the Bloods have evolved distinctly from their Blackfoot cousins in some important ways.³ As with other Plains Indians, the traditional division of labor among the Bloods was fundamentally transformed by the move from nomadic existence on the land characterized by a subsistence/bartering economy to reserve life dominated by early government efforts to create an agricultural economy. Now, in a wage/welfare economy, Blood women are increasingly

taking on the role of chief provider for the family; men are increasingly taking primary responsibility for child care, cooking, and cleaning. This reversal of roles is not total, nor is it without complications. Loss of balance between the genders is reported by Blood women and men to be a critical source of frustration and an important contributor to domestic violence.

The intensive interviews and field work with the Blood Indians that I conducted between 1986 and 1988 provide data to illustrate the trend toward role reversal and its impact on male/female relations. Although this process has occurred in other cultural groups, most notably the African-American, the pattern emerging among the Bloods is distinctive in that the percentage of households in which the female is employed and the male is present but unemployed or traditionally employed is higher than in other groups. Also, the transition is occurring contemporarily for Canadian Indian couples and can be documented as it happens rather than retrospectively or historically. This case study of the Bloods will help elucidate the sources of role reversal, as well as the stresses and strains created by loss of balance in male/female relations.

Blood women and men served as informants and helped arrange for interviews. All interviews were open-ended and tape-recorded. Initial contacts explicating the purpose and method of the study were made by letter to the Chief and Council members, who discussed the project and referred me to appropriate community leaders, most female, some male. Leaders in turn referred me to women of various age, marital, educational, and employment status who were willing to take part in the interviews. I interviewed more than forty women individually and in small groups about traditional and contemporary gender roles and problems facing women on the reserve. As I formulated generalizations and hypotheses, I tested them with subsequent interviewees until a commonly agreed upon analysis was achieved. I also interviewed several males in social service roles who confirmed the perspectives of women re-

garding role reversal and problems with alcoholism and battering. In addition I acquired informal data through four weeks of living on the reserve (over two years) and participating in daily activities with a medicine woman and economic development worker.

It is important to note how Blood women differ from other Native women, many of whom historically were active food procurers. In British Columbia, for example, Carrier women probably contributed equally to the food supply; but I have found no evidence for the Bloods in particular and the Canadian Blackfoot groups in general either that women "procured" food at an equal rate to men or that women were horticulturalists. Blood women did accompany men on the buffalo hunt in very early "dog days," but their role was a supportive one. Their forte appears to have been not so much the procurement but the processing of food, at which they were highly skilled. Pool's work on Wichita women,⁴ also Plains Indians, provides some parallels with the Blood traditional socio-economic base, but comparisons should be drawn with caution: like tribes such as the Cherokees and Kiowas, the Canadian-side Bloods (unlike the Wichitas) were never serious horticulturalists. There is some evidence that one hundred or two hundred years ago a little tobacco was grown by men for spiritual or medicinal purposes, but the Wichita women were "direct producers" in a way that Blood women never were. Thus, the status and role of Blood women was quite different. In any event, it is difficult to apprehend the "truth" regarding gender roles and division of labor prior to the reservation period, as all pasts come to us through the prisms of not only recollection but the subjectivity of those involved.

My purpose here is to present the views of contemporary Blood women rather than to conduct a literature-based analysis, especially as most of the literature based on field experience with the Blackfeet emphasizes the Montana and/or Peigan bands, which had in many ways quite different experiences from the Alberta Bloods because of differing U.S./Canadian policies regarding Native people. My purpose is to shed



FIG. 1. Two women take a lunch break in the cafeteria of the reserve's administration and social services center, *Shot-through-Both-Sides Building*. Photo by J. Billson.

light on the contemporary situation; the pre-reservation era is painted in broad strokes.

In the first section I present a brief overview of the traditional role division as described by Blood men and women and in the literature. Then I explore the trend toward role reversal among many contemporary Blood couples. The persistence of women's domestic roles (in addition to their new public roles) appears to have provided some insulation against the social pathologies that typically erupt with rapid social change and that have marked men's experience of the move to reserve life. Finally, I examine the impact of education in role reversal. In all sections, interview data form the core of information.

THE TRADITIONAL SOCIAL ORDER: BALANCED ROLES

Prior to contact with European settlers, the Bloods traveled freely between what are now known as southern Alberta and northern Montana. Men were warriors and buffalo hunters, both public sphere activities. Warfare was a central part of male identity, as men protected the camps from traditional enemies, Cree and Assiniboine Indians. Male self-esteem derived from courage and skill as a warrior; boys serving as apprentices began to accompany the older men on skirmishes at the age of twelve or thirteen. Equally, a male's self-esteem derived from his ability to provide for his family through par-

ticipation in pony raids or buffalo hunting parties. Bands moved and camped together.⁵

Blood women were not horticulturalists like other, more southerly Plains women because of the short summers and early frosts of the northern Plains. They gathered berries or hunted small local game, and occasionally in earlier times they accompanied men on buffalo hunts in order to help regulate herd movements and to be present for initial processing of hides and other animal products. Occasionally women were directly involved in the hunt. A Blood elder quoted by Ewers describes a typical method of hunting buffalo during the "dog days" prior to acquisition of horses around 1730: After the men had located the buffalo, women built a semicircular fence with their travois. Shouting women and barking dogs kept the herd back while running men circled it until the hunters could rush in and kill the buffalo. Women used the travois to haul meat and hides back to the encampment. Buffalo hunting was usually the male preserve, however, as indicated by Grinnell's report that "the man who was to call the buffalo arose very early, and told his wives that they must not leave the lodge, nor even look out, until he returned."⁶ The women's duty was to pray for a successful hunt and to dress the meat after the kill.

Women were responsible for making tipis, taking them down, and reconstructing them with each move. Women were also responsible for moving camp using dog, and later, horse travois. In the "dog days," women reportedly led a particularly hard life. In addition to the duties mentioned above, they were also known to have carried heavy loads on their own backs. As women became stooped and stiff with age, they were sometimes abandoned to face death alone.⁷ Women contributed importantly to the security of the camp in the men's absence. They were experts at drying and preserving berries, buffalo meat and hides, and small game or fish. Women sewed clothing and made utensils, cared for children, the elderly, and pack dogs, and managed the practical details of everyday life. Female self-esteem was centered in domestic duties: "Women generally did not take part in tribal affairs, but were a valuable and integral part of

Blood society."⁸

During the height of the horse-hunted buffalo period in the late 1870s, women's hide-dressing and saddle-making skills brought considerable wealth to the band. Blood women produced literally thousands of buffalo robes during this period. Tanning hides became a critical and demanding role for Blood women, one by which "her worth and virtue were estimated," according to Wissler. The Blood women's role in tanning buffalo hides made a crucial economic contribution, as noted by Lewis and Haines: "[Women] never had enough time to care for all the meat from the kills, and the piles of untanned hides by the tipis grew and grew although the women worked steadily on their tanning chores every spare moment." Even when the primary source of sustenance was provided by males, women's skills and knowledge were equally important to the survival of the band. In fact Ewers argues that dressing buffalo hides was more important to the fur trade and more difficult than killing buffalo. One hunter could keep several wives supplied; one woman could dress twenty-five to thirty hides per winter. Lewis points out that this role increased women's economic importance. But, as Medicine argues, because the buffalo hide trade was in the hands of men (both Native and Anglo-European), women's position actually became more dependent during this period and their status declined.⁹

In contrast to other groups, such as the Iroquois, in which women traditionally enjoyed substantial political power (choosing chiefs and council members who served at the pleasure of the women), in traditional Blood culture, although male and female roles were complementary and mutually respected, the male was defined as the major "provider" and "boss." This is the perception of most women interviewed, and is reported also in the literature: "Men were the undisputed lords of their households"; "The man had absolute power over his wife"; "Father was the decision maker. . . ." ¹⁰ All note that certain women designated as "sits-beside-me-wife" had more power and status than other wives.

One of the problems emanating from "ret-

rospective" interviewing is that no women alive today are old enough to remember "traditional" roles prior to the reserve period. Even elders were children during the early reserve period (late 1890s to early 1920s). Thus their memories of gender roles are based on a period during which the government was systematically and openly attempting to impose Anglo-European, gender-segregated, male-dominant values on Native people. Even so, Blood women believe that "a long time ago" the men still had a slight edge in authority over women. The difference is that in traditional Native male dominance, females were respected and valued for their contributions; in white, male, nineteenth-century patriarchy, women were either placed on a pedestal or systematically devalued.

The Blood woman's role as subordinate originated in a traditional patriarchal and patrilineal social order in which men had the final say in major decisions, an order that was reinforced by contact with whites. But Blood women observe that while it was true historically that the male was dominant, the woman still had considerable influence and power. For example, women could own property, receive and exercise medicine power, and give names.¹¹ Relationships "balanced out."

Even though these broad task delineations were typical, Schneider, in her detailed comparison of male/female roles among various Plains Indian tribes, cautions against overdrawing gender role task differentiation. When men were away from camp for long periods, they may have worked on clothing, for example, and women would have taken up some of the "male" tasks. Furthermore, Plains women may have played a more significant role in arts and crafts than previously thought. Medicine discusses role alternatives for Blackfoot women, including the warrior and "manly-hearted woman" roles among the Peigan of Alberta. She does not mention the Blood women in this context except by implication. Goldfrank, however, claims that nine women on the Blood reserve were "manly-hearted"—women who were ambitious, bold, accorded special privileges, and respected. She also argues that female independence and aggressiveness among the Blood may have miti-

gated the need for specially designating some women as manly-hearted. Women also played a major role in Blood religion, which centered on the annual Sun Dance, a ceremony that was held in fulfillment of a holy woman's vow and centered on the virtue of women as well as the transformation of men into warriors.¹² Religious power was passed through the women to the men. They were considered to be "excellent workers" and valuable wives.

Social and military societies were complex organizations that created a strong tribal identity among the Blood people. Many of these societies, some of them secret, persist today. Core values were respect, caring, sharing, and strength. Polygamy was not uncommon because of the excess of women in the sex ratio, since many men were killed in warfare. At times women outnumbered men by two or three to one; multiple wives became a status symbol and, because of their centrality in hide production, an indication of male economic success. Children were not physically punished, but infidelity was cause for cutting off a woman's nose or ear, or even her death, as male jealousy was pronounced.¹³

BALANCE THREATENED: CONTACT WITH WHITES

The Bloods went from a nomadic hunting and gathering society to a reserve-based agricultural society in one generation. For the next decades, as agriculture failed for various reasons, they became heavily welfare-dependent and moved into the post-industrial, techtronic stage of civilization.¹⁴

Economic circumstances changed drastically with the coming of white people. Population declined as Bloods were hit with the whiskey trade and such "white" diseases as smallpox.¹⁵ At the same time, buffalo were almost exterminated by over hunting. A Blood lamented in 1878, "This was the year the buffalo went out of sight." The government ignored reports that game was running out; by the time it was willing to start implementing farming provisions of the treaty, starvation was imminent.¹⁶

With settlers encroaching on traditional

Blackfoot lands, the Canadian government and the Bloods signed Treaty Number Seven in 1877. Five Blackfoot tribes controlled 50,000 square miles; the Treaty reserved a total of 1433 square miles for the Indians, less than 3 percent of the land ceded. Each family received 2.56 square kilometers of land; they were also given money, seeds, and tools with which to begin farming.¹⁷ Several attempts were subsequently made to take some of the reserve land back for white settlers and other government purposes, but tribal leaders consistently refused to diminish their holdings. Later many wealthier Blood men traded ponies for cattle; in the 1890s, Parliament voted to issue cattle to the Bloods under a loan system.

According to R. N. Wilson, who was the Indian agent from 1898-1911 at the main Blood reserve, the Bloods initially resisted the constraints of reserve life. Despite a short growing season and droughts, they eventually adapted well to the loss of lands and to the shift from hunting and gathering to ranching and agriculture, in spite of traditional objections to turning Mother Earth "wrong side up." Traditional gender roles stood in the way of farming, since authorities thought men should perform the manual labor (the preserve of Blood women), and leave women to do lighter housework chores. This is a good example of the impact of white culture on Native culture. Wilson reports that, in spite of two disastrous winters in 1910 and 1911, the Bloods were "in the lead of all Canadian Indians engaged in cattle raising," holding more than 4000 head of the "finest beef cattle in the west." Horses were also bred at a rapid pace, with more than 3600 in 1918. Blood wheat and oats production was second of all reserves in the country. During this period, men derived self-esteem and prestige from the heavy outdoor work of farming, ranching, and breeding. Women continued with their familiar roles as caretakers and processors of the food provided by men. Their role in farming was generally limited, a reflection of white values. As Weist points out, women lost not only their central economic role as buffalo hide preparers but also experienced declines in their ceremonial roles

in the Sun Dance because of missionary pressures.¹⁸

As of 1918, with changes in the leadership of the Indian Affairs Department in Ottawa, Blood prosperity was threatened by dogged government attempts to take back some reserve land. Wilson documented the steady destruction of Blood farming and ranching over the next few years. The conflict between a central government's agents and indigenous people is a classic case of racial oppression.¹⁹ It also had a shattering impact on male role and identity and so deserves special attention here. Blood leaders resisted surrendering land. The government pressed its argument, denying them expansion of new farms until the Bloods sold part of the reserve. Even during wartime, when prairie farmers were being urged to increase production, the Bloods "were not permitted to respond to the greater production appeal, though they had the land, machinery, horses, plenty of willing men and the necessary capital to operate their traction breaking plow outfits."²⁰ Amidst charges of fraud and trickery, 6000 acres were finally leased to white farmers, in the name of "patriotism." This resulted in a shortage of hay for Blood herds the following year. Immediately after this agreement, which was instituted through threats and strong arm methods, the Indian Affairs Department suddenly dispossessed the Bloods of 90,000 acres as a "war measure," leasing it to white men for stock grazing. Many Indians were ordered to vacate their homes; hay lands were lost. Overstocking depleted the grass and threatened Blood livestock.

During the winter of 1919, because of extreme weather and various government errors, thousands of Blood cattle died, the herd decreasing from 17,000 in 1917 to 3742 in 1919 and to 1200 in 1920. Horses also starved to death. Many farmers lost all of their work teams. Wilson concludes: "Thus, the Indian Department . . . sanctioned the destruction of a creditable industry that had been painstakingly fostered by" the Bloods. The Great Depression of the 1930s finished the destruction the Indian Department had started.²¹

ANOMIE AND THE ESCALATION OF SOCIAL PATHOLOGY

The Bloods found themselves by World War II in a state of economic instability and anomie, experiencing the loss of norms and meaning that has typified reserve Indians in North America. Three structural elements have contributed to this anomie: residual values and organizational elements that persist from hunting and gathering society have, in tandem with limited acceptance of mainstream, Anglo-European values created marginality; a veneer of "disparate ideological, technological and organizational elements" borrowed from or imposed by post-industrial dominant, white society have not always bonded with traditional elements; and the location of meaningful political authority and decision-making power in the hands of central government bureaucrats has contributed to the political as well as economic emasculation of Native men.²²

Goldfrank maintains that the stripping away of old values and replacing them with new ones was a conscious program instigated by the Canadian government, which "had no compunctions about destroying any part of the old Blood culture which conflicted with its own administrative aims or ethical standards."²³ As Zentner argues, the negative consequences of contact with whites did not become manifest until the 1950s when exceptionally high rates of social pathology began to be recorded on reserves in the form of suicide, alcoholism, drug abuse, fatal accidents, divorce, desertion, spousal assault, and murder. During a period of affluence and upward mobility for mainstream, white society, Indians—restricted by discrimination and prejudice—were experiencing a downward spiral of social and economic woes.²⁴ The Bloods were no exception to this pattern.

Anomie affects males and females alike. For the Blood male, confidence in his ability to make a major contribution to his family's well-being, as traditional values dictate, was undercut. For the female, having to rely solely or primarily on herself for provision of food and shelter for her family created added responsibilities and dissonance.

THE STRUGGLE FOR AUTONOMY

"From a wandering and independent existence in pre-reservation times to a dependency on government largess and a sedentary life, the Blood Indian needed the time to make the adjustment before he would make his next move."²⁵ The Bloods consider that that move began in the late 1960s with their efforts toward self-government and economic development. In the 1970s they established the townsite at Standoff, expanded Blood Band Farms, and discovered oil in one corner of the reserve. Without irrigation, however, Blood farms have yielded disappointing crops and operated at a loss. Proceeds from the oil sale were distributed on a per capita basis instead of being used for future economic development. Most of the land is leased to whites. Kainai Industries (Fig. 2), a reserve-based enterprise that produces modular homes for export to other reserves and communities, employs only forty to one hundred men annually, as contracts require; few women are hired. Economic underdevelopment, in spite of Blood efforts to stimulate new enterprises, has plagued this as well as other reserves.²⁶

SHIFTING MALE ROLES: TOWARD DEPENDENCY

Historically, then, a Blood man relied on game and nature to provide sustenance for his family. Now he has to depend on twentieth-century means of earning a livelihood through wage employment. His success as a provider rests not on his cunning, strength, and knowledge of terrain and animals, but on his ability to adapt to a nine-to-five job in which he is expected to follow rules and operate within a knowledge base devised by someone from another culture. Many men secure only seasonal wage employment and find it difficult to hold down steady jobs that pay enough to provide for their families. The unemployment rate on the Blood reserve is 60 to 70 percent; welfare and other social assistance payments run in the 80 percent range, according to social service workers.

As it is for other Native communities that

are relatively distant from urban centers, economic viability is a complex and frustrating matter. Better education and training cannot guarantee jobs on the reserve. Those who leave for the cities, especially men, become depressed and miss their families; many lack an adequate support network. Kinship ties are very important and create a dilemma: If men go for the job, they lose touch with their families; if they stay on the reserve, they lose job opportunities. Institutionalized racism and open discrimina-

tion still are significant forces in determining job opportunities in urban areas. This dilemma results in many well-qualified people not utilizing their fullest potential. As Lithman points out, Indians return to reserves because Canadian, like American, society offers few meaningful economic or social alternatives; conversely, transfer payments continue to support them on the reserves.²⁷

The traditional division of labor reinforced the balance of power between men and women.



FIG. 2. Two men outside the Blood band's Kainai Industries production center. Photo by J. Billson.

Since the failure of agriculture and the shift to service jobs and welfare dependency, the man's work has all but disappeared—but the woman's work remains.

SHIFTING FEMALE ROLES: TOWARD A DOUBLE BURDEN

In the early twentieth century, Blood women began to leave the home for wage-earning jobs like stooking hay and working in canneries. These were seasonal jobs that required their husbands' assent. Gradually, as the male roles of hunter, warrior, pony raider, and breeder, farmer, and rancher have one by one dissipated, women have found themselves in positions of increasing responsibility. In spite of discriminatory practices favoring male power during the earlier reserve period, women—who have always had more consistent attendance and performance records in school—are moving into roles in the public sphere.

Many Blood women have completed university educations and have developed professional careers off the reserve. Many return as professionals: most teachers and health clinic workers are women; most social work and clerical jobs are held by women, as is true in the wider society. Lurie argues that many Native American women are receiving increasing recognition because "girls were educated in teaching, nursing and office work, and the work experience of Indian women in cities exposed them to the managerial side of white life. . . . [T]hey brought home skills that could be put to real use on the reservation to help them cope as an Indian community in a larger, white-dominated society."²⁸ These roles are needed on the reserve.

Women also hold some administrative positions, although discrimination has placed them in a politically and economically inferior position:

We were discriminated against in the sense that we can't own land unless we are legally married to a man and he dies, then that is your land. It is slowly starting to change. We

have a little group, our Native women movement. They have changed quite a bit on the reserves, but I think in a sense we are still being discriminated against.

Others agree that the situation is changing: "It is not as bad as it used to be back in the old days." Now many are working and have career goals, "where before it was just all men. Like in the band office, the only women that you would see in there were secretaries; all the men would have the high positions, the directorship."

Adds a homemaker: "Before it used to be just male Council members. You would never see a woman in there, but for the last fifteen, twenty years, there have been women in the Council. Before, you just never heard of it." In fact, there have been women Council members and directors of departments for about thirty years. This is partly because all positions are filled by members of the Blood band, which of course heats up the competition between genders. A social service department worker notes: "Our director is a woman; our computer trainer is a woman. The only thing we haven't had is a chief lady, and there is a lady who is willing to take it."

With increasing opportunity, however, Blood women have not necessarily moved away from their traditional domestic role, which creates a double burden for them.

THE EXTENT OF ROLE REVERSAL

During the agricultural and ranching period, occasionally a Blood man would help his wife, but mainly he was too busy to tend the children or the house. Now when a Blood woman works her mother is likely to take care of the children, but increasingly her male partner will take significant responsibility for household and child care. It is difficult to find exact statistics on the extent of this role reversal because of considerable part-time, seasonal, and sporadic employment for both genders. But both men and women perceive the reversal as a persistent and growing phenomenon. When I asked the question, "Who is more likely to be the major pro-



FIG. 3. *A young father and his son at Indian Village, Calgary Stampede.* Photo by J. Billson.

vider in the home?" most men and women replied: "The woman." She is more likely to be educated, and, as one Blood woman hypothesizes, "it seems like more men are alcoholic." The trend toward role reversal makes men feel "mad" and "insecure," the women believe. Some men cannot seem to break out of alcohol and drug abuse to get themselves into a position where they could be competitive.

A Blood social worker in Calgary notes that role reversal happens both on the reserve and in the city, especially when the woman has more education than her husband: "Some of the married women who move to the city with their spouses, I find their spouses more willing to help at home. If they can't find a job in the city and their wife is going to school, they will take care of the children and the household, just so at least one of them will get ahead." Eventually the husband might upgrade his skills or his grade level so that he can go to university. When both members of the couple are in school,

there is some equal sharing of domestic work, she observes.

A medicine woman cites the case of her own daughter, Ellen, twenty-two, as an example of role reversal. When Ellen married at sixteen, her mother was concerned about whether she was developing appropriate attitudes toward children and child-rearing. Ellen's husband was doing poorly at the university and although Ellen was very happy, she did not seem to take very good care of their baby or the house and she wasn't a good cook or attentive to her husband. Her worried mother felt Ellen's "maternal instinct had something wrong with it." When her husband dropped out of university, Ellen began taking classes and was often the best in the class. Her husband takes care of the house, though he doesn't cook, and takes care of the baby. He is "very happy—he likes doing it. He is more loving and attentive to the baby than my daughter ever was." The medicine woman sees this as an increasingly frequent occurrence, especially among young couples:

The men are unemployed and more apt to be the alcoholics, although women drink, too. Then it may be that their role will be to mind the children. They definitely resist putting them in day care, although there is a day care center on the reserve. It's not very good and there is a crying need for more and better ones, so that's similar to mainstream society for sure.

MALE REACTIONS TO THE DOMESTIC ROLE

Those males who participate significantly in the domestic sphere react with everything from gratification to resentment. One Blood woman explains:

My husband is watching my daughter because he is on unemployment. He likes it. He is teaching her a lot of Blackfoot. They're very close. When I go home and she falls, she will run to her dad. But he's getting tired of it. He doesn't like to stay at home. He is getting really grouchy.

Her husband started drinking and realized he had better find a job. Soon he will go back to school for his diploma. His willingness to tend house is limited: "He will thaw something for supper. He will vacuum if I come home and start doing dishes and making the bed. He will take out the garbage if he sees me doing it." She holds a full-time job, participates in a training program after work, and runs her house at the end of the day. She believes she is typical. The men will take care of the children because they love them, she says, but most dislike the housework.

Another woman tells of her sister, whose husband is "rare" in that he actually likes the role reversal: "My sister's husband is partially disabled, so he stays home and babysits. She went to school for her certification and teaches here on the reserve. He cleans the house. When she comes home, supper is waiting. He's a really good cook too."

Some men like the domestic role—"it's fine until some of the other men on the reserve find out." If a Blood man embraces the househusband role, other men may tease him, as a married artist relates: "If an Indian man does that for his wife—stays home, cleans house and takes care of the children—then the other men start humiliating him and calling him 'Mr. Mom' or 'henpecked.'" Adds another woman:

As soon as they find out there is a lot of teasing and put-downs. They put them down for having things ready for when the wife comes home. So the man says, "Well, I don't need this." He will quit doing that. Women will say, "My husband used to help me at home until the other men found out."

Chances are that most Blood men will try to find a way to drop the role in response to male peer pressure: "He can't enjoy it anymore." Men want to feel responsible for taking care of their children and home, but are penalized for it. The constraints of the traditional role are only very slowly being released.

Conversely, two health workers say that it is difficult for men to adjust to a new female role: "It seems like the men think that women

should just stay home and take care of the house and the family. Not even have a career or work." Men seem to be "jealous" of women working outside the home: "Indian men are really insecure when it comes to that, and then that's where the problem starts, marital problems—there are a lot of marital problems." This echoes the traditional valuation of female fidelity and male jealousy.

The comments of a band clerical worker are typical: "That is how my husband was raised—to have the wife stay at home. He saw his mom stay at home, but that is not the way I was raised." She and her family had to leave the reserve because her father was an alcoholic and her mother had to clean hotel rooms: "We saw her do that." At fifteen she held her first summer job. After marriage, with a limited budget from her husband's poorly paid job, she offered to get a job: "I wanted to go and get a job as a salesperson in a store or whatever, but my husband didn't allow it until we found ourselves getting nowhere. We wanted things, so finally he allowed me to go to work; it was his permission, essentially."

THE IMPACT OF ROLE REVERSAL

The impact of role reversal, like its sources, differs for men and women, generating both positive and negative consequences. For both women and men, the reversal actually involves an expansion of role repertoires. For example, many men engage in farming and small game hunting on a part-time basis while adding the responsibilities of home and child care; many women continue to sew and prepare traditional food while holding down a full-time wage-earning job. Specific impacts on women include the following:

1) *Increased Power and Authority.* Wages give Blood women more power and authority, or so they believe. Yet, because Native peoples traditionally shared whatever wealth and resources fell to bands and families, there is still an ethos that argues against increased power based on mere earnings. If a woman brings money home, it still belongs to the whole household and may be controlled by her husband.

Like women in many Native communities, Blood women are taking on major responsibilities in governance in addition to power that emanates from wage production.

2) *Confidence*. Women who complete their education and find rewarding extra-household jobs or professions experience a boost to their self-concept, confidence, and sense of accomplishment. Many of the women I interviewed expressed feelings of pride and self-satisfaction in being able to function in the workplace and help their families. A woman who has combined raising her children alone with working as a laboratory aide in a health clinic comments on how going back to school improved her self-confidence:

For me I think going back to school was the most significant thing in my life. It really helped me out because I got married at sixteen, separated at twenty, and then I was home with my kids. I tried going back to school, but then I couldn't because my kids were too young. I didn't want to leave them. Now they're all older, I've gone back to school. I feel like I am accomplishing a lot more than I was before.

3) *Stress*. An obvious concomitant result for women is increased stress and anxiety about their future. They have heard about the superwoman complex and feel that it applies to them. Many worry about making enough money to provide for their families; young girls worry about finding a career that will enable them to play the role of provider. In other words, they share the stresses that males historically have had in cultures in which they were defined as primary breadwinners.

The impacts on men are also complex:

1) *Closer Relationship with Children*. The most positive impact of role reversal for men is that they have an opportunity to gain a special closeness with their children, who may also benefit from learning traditional male knowledge and skills. Some Blood men say they have a better appreciation of the responsibilities facing women.

2) *Lowered Self-Esteem*. A counselor hypothesizes that role reversal may hurt the self-esteem of men whose wives are taking on the major provider role: "Maybe he feels that he's not a whole man because he's not able to provide for his family." A Blood nurse concurs:

I strongly believe that Indian men are really insecure, and I think that is where the main problems all start. There is a lot of jealousy over anything. Everything that projects to men when they are growing up is that the man has to be strong, support the family. You never see a man cry. That's kind of sad. They have to just have a front—they are always putting up a front and that is where their insecurity comes in.

3) *Domestic Violence*. Role reversal may constitute the central, underlying reason for the alarming rates of domestic violence that plague Native communities. Men feel threatened by their loss of status and identity, which is counterfoiled by the increased power and status of women. Abuse is one way a man can exert power when he perceives his woman as the dominant one, several divorced women explain. When their husbands are not working and the women are, the men seem threatened about even "little things." Says a social worker: "I find that a lot of the men will abuse their wives because of lack of self-esteem or lack of self-confidence that they can't make it, but there goes my wife going out to work and doing better than I am."

ALCOHOL ABUSE, ASSAULT, AND ROLE REVERSAL

Because of the blow to men's pride and self-esteem, rates of alcohol and drug abuse have risen, affecting family life in a generally negative way. Native women frequently complain that domestic violence and verbal abuse are the products of male dissatisfaction. Interviewees agree that the trio of alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and broken marriages is often the direct result of role reversal and, in turn, can

propel women into the primary breadwinning role as single parent. A social worker describes an all too familiar situation: "Husbands beat up their wives because the wives seem to have gained the higher position—she is the working person and he probably can't find a job." A Blood mental health worker observes the connection between alcohol and assault: "There is a real bad alcoholic problem on the reserve. I think it is due mainly to lack of employment for the males, so they are idle. That is the main problem I would think." Rates of domestic violence among Native people vary from community to community, depending on size, relative economic prosperity, and the availability of alcohol. Larger, "wet" communities with high levels of unemployment suffer from higher rates of spousal assault. Smaller, tighter communities, especially those that prohibit the sale and/or consumption of alcohol, are less likely to have severe problems in this area. Employment is not an antidote to assault, however; many cases involve employed males.²⁹

There are several AA chapters on the Blood reserve, and an alcohol and drug treatment center, but I heard nothing that indicated that serious substance abuse problems are changing significantly. A young Blood woman is dismayed by the effects of alcohol on her marriage. She is seriously contemplating divorce as the only method of stopping the downward cycle of their relationship. When asked who the most significant person in her life is, she replied:

I guess my son. Considering right now there are problems between my husband and I. Right now he is on my black list. It's alcohol. I don't know if I can live with it, and it has been happening a lot. It seems like every forty days he will go out on a real good binge. It's getting longer and longer. I see him as an alcoholic. It's not my problem, and it's not my fault.

After broken promises that her husband would cut down or stop drinking, she is ready to be on her own: "I feel like I could take care of myself and my son. I have been doing it the

past two years anyway, supporting my own family."

Usually when a family separates, the children go with the mother. They are rarely taken by the father because of the alcohol or substance abuse that has likely broken the family up in the first place. The father is perceived as less capable of taking care of the family. A Blood homemaker expresses the feeling pervasive in her community: "It is always the woman's responsibility." As it was traditionally, even today the woman is expected to be responsible for food, her children, and spiritual life. "So the women are more aggressive. They are not too proud to go to welfare, where a man won't." She explains this through the example of her brother, who does seasonal construction work. During the winter, when his income dries up, he refuses to go to the welfare office: "He is too proud." But his wife will go, because the family must eat. She makes contacts through the social service agencies and might end up with a job: "That's why the woman is more aggressive than the Indian man."

In a close community there is substantial support for women going it alone. All of the single parents expressed gratitude for being able to talk to family members and other single mothers. Women cite their own mothers—many of whom were also single parents—as pillars of strength; they respect their mothers and want to be like them, as a Blood craftswoman, whose father was a heavy drinker, explains: "We went through a lot of hard times. She didn't really break down, while we were all really upset and everything. She could really handle the situation, keep calm. That really helped a lot." Her mother always worked outside the home so her six children would not be sent to foster homes: "We could have got taken away. She tried real hard when she was away from my dad, and she felt safe. That's what I really think of her. That she kept us all together and tried hard."

A colleague adds: "I think my story is about the same as hers. My father was an alcoholic and my mother left him and she went through about the same thing. She supported us until we got old enough to get our own jobs and support ourselves."

ADAPTABILITY: THE MALE/FEMALE DIFFERENTIAL

Blood women, on the whole, seem to have adapted more easily and quickly to rapid social change created by cultural contact with the dominant culture and by being brought from the land to reservations. Zentner reports this finding for the Blood reserve: "girls are somewhat more mobile than boys. They more readily and frequently leave the reservation to live elsewhere than do boys for a number of reasons, not least of which is the greater ease and facility in adjustment to non-Indian behavioral standards associated with the female role." The Spindlers found that Blood women are more homogeneous, more aspiration-oriented, less "reality-centered," and more ready to move into white society than are men.³⁰

Other evidence for this more successful adjustment lies in rates of social pathology as well as interview data. Native women have lower rates of alcohol and drug abuse; lower rates of death by suicide, accident, firearms, and murder; lower rates of school dropout and involuntary unemployment. Beyond these objective indicators are the subjective reports of women and men interviewed for this study. When asked, "Which gender is stronger?" most argue that it is the woman—emotionally, socially, psychologically. Men are perceived as being stronger in one way only: physically. Blood women are described as being tougher and having more persistence and adaptability in the face of rapid social change. This is not to deny that many men adapt well and many women suffer from problems similar to the men's.

THE INSULATING VALUE OF WOMEN'S DOUBLE ROLE

Perhaps the most interesting question at the heart of role reversal is why women have adapted more easily to the leap from a traditional hunting and gathering economy to a post-industrial society than have men. Both genders experience the multiple low statuses of race and class. Both have suffered the indignities of patriarchal, white domination. On the reserve, some

status distinctions have also emerged. A partial explanation may lie in Louise Spindler's hypothesis that the persistence of the "manly-hearted woman" image makes it easier for Blood women to take part in public roles.³¹ Another major factor, I believe, is the insulating value of the domestic role. In addition to wage-earning jobs on the reserve, women work in the domestic sphere at their traditional duties. Like women in other groups, Blood women also continue to carry major responsibility for home-making and child care: "You know, the house still has to be run. The children still have to be cared for . . . when we go away during the day to work outside the home, for most of us we still have to do the inside work too when we come home." Ironically, this double role and double burden may be significant in preserving female identity and insulating women from the ravages of dramatic change that have created such havoc among men.

For instance, one woman worked at nearby Cardston Hospital for many years. Then she took a teacher's aide course and worked at the kindergarten level. She explains how she manages her time:

We still have to do our work at home. Sometimes I didn't go to bed until eleven when they were small, just to get my work done. Now, I put a wash in as soon as I get home, and run upstairs and do the supper. Of course they helped when they got old enough. But there was still all those things we had to do. It was difficult, but I was too busy to be depressed about my divorce.

As Powers observes of the Lakota Sioux, "women's participation in what are regarded as Euramerican occupations in no way impinges on or detracts from their traditional roles, since in Lakota culture maternal and managerial roles are not regarded as antithetical."³² Like the Blood males, Oglala men have lost out on traditional and contemporary roles that have been usurped by government officials. Lurie agrees that "Indian women seemed to have held up better under the stresses of reservation life than men and are often in the forefront" of tribal

affairs. Men have in some ways suffered “greater identity dislocation” than women. Warriors, shamans, and hunters are obsolete, but mothering and domestic tasks remain.³³

The role of woman as heart of the family persists, whereas the role of man as provider is dissipating. The differential impact of domestic and public roles creates a paradigm. Even when women engaged in extra-domestic activities in traditional culture, their primary role was domestic and their primary sense of identity derived from it; for men domesticity was always, at best, a secondary source of identity or prestige. The domestic sphere has remained consistent for women. Even if she works outside the home, a woman can still gain pleasure and prestige from being a good mother, wife, and homemaker. On the other hand, the major part of men’s role identity, the public sphere, has changed entirely and rapidly. For a woman, engaging in paid extra-household work implies a liberating role-expansion. She leaves the home, she begins to draw a paycheck, which gives her more power and authority at home, and she expands her social network. For the man who can no longer compete in the public sphere, however, intra-household work implies a restrictive role-contraction. He is more confined to the home, he loses his paycheck, which usually means he must defer to his wage-earning partner, and his social network diminishes to include traditionally lower status members of his community—other unemployed men, house-bound women, and children.

EDUCATION AS LEVERAGE AND CATALYST

Increasingly women try to support their families, and they see education, both high school and university, as the best way for them to get into the job market and to make a substantial income. Once they get that education and a secure or well-paying position, “they are less willing to put up with the drunkenness, beatings, and lack of affection dished out by unhappy men. They walk out.” In order to improve their chances of securing employment on the reserve, with its limited number of positions, women have been willing to go to Calgary or

Lethbridge. They eventually enroll in school or university to improve the odds in their favor.³⁴

They know that if they go back home without sufficient education they will always get menial jobs or no jobs at all. This way, if they can reach a Bachelor of Education or Social Welfare, they feel they are more competitive.

Several women name education as the most significant experience in their lives. Others reported that Blood men are realizing that the women are outpacing them and becoming more aggressive. The women are not sitting back anymore and letting the men dominate in class. They are speaking up for themselves, letting the men and their teachers know that they are aware of the issues involved in politics and economics. For the men, “everybody was trained more or less in the same area when they left school, so there is really no expansion in anything else.” This restricts the jobs they can obtain. A Blood employment counselor explains the root of male frustration:

A woman could find a job as a secretary if there is nothing else available; she can always find something that she could do with her skills. She may have gotten skills from high school typing, or secretarial classes, so she could fit in right away. Men have only carpentry or menial skills that don’t get them jobs right away. There are jobs there, but they are all filled. So there is no place for them to go unless someone is fired or quits, then maybe they will be next in line.

Now schools are training people in different areas so they can compete more effectively. For the men, that means training as electricians, plumbers, welders, and bricklayers. Nonetheless, economic development and job training workers point to a high population of unemployed males who are looking for ways to become employable.

When I asked Blood women what they would like for their daughters, the answer was, invariably and first, a good education. Education will

provide them with independence; they will be able to support themselves and their families. Many also want their children to learn Blackfoot and to learn the ways of the traditional culture. They do not want their daughters to share the fate their generation experienced: married at sixteen or seventeen, often to abusive men whom they eventually left. As their children grew older they decided to go back to finish their high school, became interested in university, then work. They want their daughters to do it the other way around and perhaps avoid the pain and suffering of raising their children alone and without adequate skills, jobs, or income.

Blood males have for many years dropped out of high school at higher rates than females. The female surge toward university is possible, of course, because of their higher rate of high school completion. In addition, women seem to see educational achievement as a challenge:

One woman will see another woman going back to school. If she can do it, I can do it. So I am going to give it a try and see what happens to me. The men may be just a little bit too proud to go back to school. They think it's just a lot of young kids, or they seek the labor jobs. But there is no employment here unless you have an education. It seems like anything you go apply for, even if it is dishwashing, they'll ask what grade you come out of.

Finally, Native women are seen as superior to men for trying to complete their educations; this is a major source of respect for them, even from the men:

When I was staying at home I was just Jeanie. Now I am trying hard, and I get a lot of respect from everybody, my uncles, my grandmother, my family, my friends. I have a lot of them in the doldrums, because I am working and they are not. They just stay home all day.

Education is seen as a way out of unemployment and welfare dependency; in fact, as one

Blood woman argues, "It's the only way out." A Native person with a good high school record is eligible for a university scholarship covering tuition costs plus an allowance for living expenses: "Everything is paid for—we are lucky that way!"

Good fortune does not necessarily extend to acquisition of a secure position, however. Many of those who go through university study teaching, social work, nursing, and counseling, but when they return to the reserve, they find few appropriate openings because isolated communities with small populations have a limited need for professional workers and because of favoritism: "Probably you have to know the right people to get into places you want to go."

Women in their late teens reflect the concern of their generation: Will they be able to complete the education and training suitable for obtaining the kinds of jobs they need to support their families? This pressure, which historically has been on males, is shifting increasingly to women. Although they say they want their relationships to be "equal" when and if they have them, they know this may not be the case. Many of the women they know, including mothers and aunts, support their families. Younger women worry about whether they will be able to get the kind of education and job opportunities necessary for giving their own children a better life.

There is some evidence that the younger generation is beginning to take steps to restore gender balance. Males seem to be showing more interest in post-high school training programs and in completing their diplomas. At the University of Calgary, where many Bloods attend, a Blood administrator observed that 1986 was the first year in which an equal number of males and females enrolled. In prior years females were going to school but only a "handful of males."

Now we are wondering if the males are realizing that they need to get a higher education so that they can compete, because the women are coming back with Master's degrees and they are no longer satisfied with Bachelor's. They are now reaching one step higher, so for the men to gain back their

prestige or power that they once held, they have to get a degree of some kind.

A university counselor points out that whereas in the past reserve jobs were usually open to men, because "men provided the income, provided the security," that is changing as women return with superior qualifications. "It just didn't seem right because there are a lot of single women who are parents and raising their children who couldn't get jobs."

CONCLUSION

Blood Indians of southern Alberta experienced successive waves of rapid social and economic change after formal contact with white institutions and the inception of reserve life in 1877. Women seemed to adapt more easily to the new life. Today they are increasingly likely, compared to men, to complete their high school educations and to obtain and hold jobs—and less likely to develop problems with alcohol, drugs, and crime. The persistence of female participation in the domestic sphere has provided an insulation against the ravages of change.

The roles in a wage employment, consumer economy are often reversed and the women, especially younger women, are more likely to be the major providers for their families. Many men have lost their status and prestige, and therefore their power, in the community. The women seem to be achieving higher educational and career goals. In turn, they are increasingly less willing to tolerate alcoholism and assault. Men are searching for new sources of self-esteem and pride through education and economic development.

NOTES

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been completed; and to Kyra Mancini, Martha Stapleton, Joyce Turner, and Frances Taylor for painstaking transcription of interviews. A full explication of the research design and methodology can be found in Billson, "The Progressive Verification Method: Toward A Feminist Methodology for Studying Women Cross-Culturally," *Women's Studies International Forum* (forthcoming 1991). In keeping with this methodology, I have not identified individual informants.

1. Art Solomon, Ojibway Elder, "The Woman's Part," *a voice of many nations* (Ottawa: Native Women's Association of Canada, n.d.), n.p.

2. Although his work focuses mainly on the Blackfeet of Montana, John C. Ewers provides a detailed account of Blackfoot life in general. See especially his description of the woman's role in *The Blackfeet: Raiders on the Northwestern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), pp. 16-17, 102.

3. Douglas R. Parks, Margot Liberty, and Andrea Ferenci, "Peoples of the Plains," in W. Raymond Wood and Margot Liberty, eds., *Anthropology of the Great Plains* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980), p. 286. See also Hana Samek, *The Blackfoot Confederacy, 1880-1920* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987), p. 11.

4. Carolyn Garrett Pool, "Reservation Policy and the Economic Position of Wichita Women," *Great Plains Quarterly* 8 (Summer 1988): 158-71.

5. Lois Frank, ed., *Niitsitapi: "The Real People"*—*A Look at the Bloods* (Standoff, Alberta: Ninastako Cultural Centre, Blood Indian Reserve, 1984). For a full discussion of the distinction between domestic and public spheres, see Michelle Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, eds., *Women, Culture, and Society* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1974).

6. Ewers, *The Blackfeet* (note 2 above), pp. 11-12; George Bird Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales: The Story of A Prairie People* (1892; rpt. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1962), p. 229.

7. Ewers, *The Blackfeet* (note 2 above), p. 17.

8. Frank, *Niitsitapi* (note 5 above).

9. Ewers, *The Blackfeet* (note 2 above), pp. 63, 75, 109; Oscar Lewis, *The Effects of White Culture Upon Blackfoot Culture with Special Reference to the Role of the Fur Trade*, Monographs of the American Ethnological Society, A. Irving Hallowell, ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1942), pp. 38-39; Clark Wissler, *North American Indians of the Plains* (1934; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin Reprints, Lenox Hill, 1974), p. 58; Francis Haines, *The Plains Indians* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976), p. 143; Beatrice Medicine, "Warrior Women—Sex Role Alternatives for Plains Indian Women," in Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, eds., *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983), pp. 269-70.

10. Ewers, *The Blackfeet* (note 2 above), p. 100;

Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales* (note 6 above), p. 216; Malcolm McFee, *Modern Blackfeet: Montanans on A Reservation* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1972), p. 41.

11. DeMallie's review of ethnographic reports on another Plains group, the Lakota, indicates that the division of labor was based on gender (and upheld more by the women than the men), but that women had considerable power beyond the domestic circle. They were important participants in religious ceremonies. Raymond J. DeMallie, "Male and Female in Traditional Lakota Culture," in Albers and Medicine, eds., *The Hidden Half* (note 9 above), pp. 237-65.

12. Mary Jane Schneider, "Women's Work: An Examination of Women's Roles in Plains Indian Arts and Crafts," in Albers and Medicine, eds., *The Hidden Half* (note 9 above), pp. 101-21; Medicine, "Warrior Women" (note 9 above), pp. 267-80; Esther S. Goldfrank, *Changing Configurations in the Social Organization of A Blackfoot Tribe during the Reserve Period (The Blood of Alberta, Canada)*, Monographs of the American Ethnological Society, No. 8, A. Irving Hallowell, ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1945), p. 48ff. See also Adolf Hungry Wolf, *The Blood People: A Division of the Blackfoot Confederacy (An Illustrated Interpretation of the Old Ways)* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977) and Beverly Hungry Wolf, *The Ways of My Grandmothers* (New York: William Morrow, 1980). Sun Dance was outlawed in the late 1800s as a pagan ritual, but the Bloods defied the law and continued to engage in their summer activities, as they do to this day.

13. Frank, *Niitsitapi* (note 5 above); Clark Wisler, "Material Culture of the Blackfoot Indians," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History* 5 (1910); Ewers, *The Blackfeet* (note 2 above), pp. 99-100.

14. A similar process has been detailed for the Inuit in Billson, "Social Change, Social Problems, and the Search for Identity: Canada's Northern Native Peoples in Transition," *The American Review of Canadian Studies* 18 (Autumn 1988): 295-316, and Billson, "Opportunity or Tragedy: The Impact of Canadian Resettlement Policy on Inuit Families," *The American Review of Canadian Studies* 20 (Summer 1990): 187-218.

15. Hugh A. Dempsey, *Charcoal's World* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1978). See also Ewers, *The Blackfeet* (note 2 above), p. 36, and Haines, *The Plains Indians* (note 9 above), pp. 108, 146.

16. Goldfrank, *Changing Configurations* (note 12 above), p. 12; J. L. Tobias, "Indian Reserves in Western Canada: Indian Homelands or Devices for Assimilation," in Bruce Alden Cox, ed., *Native People, Native Lands* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988), pp. 148-57. Tobias notes that the buffalo

herds began declining seriously in 1850 and had disappeared from the Canadian prairies by 1879, "Canada's Subjugation of the Plains Cree, 1879-1885," in Robin Fisher and Kenneth Coates, eds., *Out of the Background: Readings on Canadian Native History* (Toronto: Copp, Clark, Pitman, 1988), pp. 190-218. See also Samek, *The Blackfoot Confederacy* (note 3 above), pp. 37-39.

17. In 1877 the population of the newly created reserve was about 1500 (Goldfrank, *Changing Configurations* [note 12 above], p. 13). As of 1986 (according to a sign at the entrance to the reserve), it was 5781. Of 353,600 acres, Blood band farms occupy 6400 acres; leased land farms, 32,000 acres; Blood band ranch, 30,000 acres; irrigated land, 4500 acres; and timber limits land, 3840 acres. It is the largest reserve in Canada in terms of area. See R. N. Wilson, *Our Betrayed Wards* (Ottawa: n.p., April, 1921).

18. Wilson, *Our Betrayed Wards* (note 17 above), pp. 36-37; Goldfrank, *Changing Configurations* (note 12 above), pp. 14-15; Samek, *The Blackfoot Confederacy* (note 3 above), pp. 57, 128; Katherine M. Weist, "Plains Indian Women: An Assessment," in Wood and Liberty, eds., *Anthropology on the Great Plains* (note 3 above), pp. 255-71.

19. For other examples in the Canadian context see B. Singh Bolaria and Peter S. Li, eds., *Racial Oppression in Canada*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Garamond, 1988).

20. Wilson, *Our Betrayed Wards* (note 17 above), p. 38.

21. Wilson, *Our Betrayed Wards* (note 17 above), p. 47; Goldfrank, *Changing Configurations* (note 12 above).

22. Anthony D. Fisher concluded that the values of young Blood Indians in Alberta showed continuity with traditional values in a study conducted in the 1960s, "The Perception of Instrumental Values among the Young Bloods of Alberta," *Dissertation Abstracts* (27: 2231B UM 66-14, 660); Henry Zentner, *The Indian Identity Crisis* (Calgary: Strayer, 1973), p. 1.

23. Goldfrank, *Changing Configurations* (note 12 above), p. 13.

24. Zentner, *The Indian Identity Crisis* (note 22 above). Explorers Henry and Thompson, however, noted addiction to alcohol among the Piegans and Crees in the early 1880s. See Elliott Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest. The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson, 1799-1814* (New York: n.p., 1897).

25. Frank, *Niitsitapi* (note 5 above), p. 42.

26. George D. Spindler and Louise S. Spindler, "Identity, Militancy, and Cultural Congruence: The Menominee and Kainai," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 436 (March 1978): 73-85; Yngve Georg Lithman, *The Community Apart: A Case Study of a Canadian Indian Reserve*

Community (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1984).

27. Gail Grant, *The Concrete Reserve: Corporate Programs for Indians in the Urban Work Place* (Halifax: Research on Public Policy Communication Services, 1985). As early as 1911, the Blood Pupils Association "complained to Ottawa that after having been taught the value of education and work they could find no employment on the reserves" (Samek, *The Blackfoot Confederacy* [note 3 above], p. 147); Lithman, *The Community Apart* (note 26 above). See also Lithman's *The Practice of Underdevelopment and the Theory of Development: The Canadian Indian Case* (Stockholm: University of Stockholm, 1985); and Billson, "Opportunity or Tragedy" (note 14 above).

28. Nancy Oestreich Lurie, "Indian Women: A Legacy of Freedom," in Charles Jones, ed., *Look to the Mountain Top* (San Jose: Gousha, 1972), p. 34.

29. See Billson, "Social Change, Social Problems" (note 14 above), and Billson, "New Choices for A New Era (Inuit women)" in Mary Crnkovich, ed., *Gossip: A Spoken History of Women in the North* (Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, 1990), pp. 43-59; Ewers, *The Blackfeet* (note 2 above), p. 34.

30. Zentner, *The Indian Identity Crisis* (note 22 above), p. 43; George Spindler and Louise S. Spindler, "Researching the Perception of Cultural Alternatives: The Instrumental Activities Inventory," in Melford Spiro, ed., *Context and Meaning in Cultural Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1965), pp. 312-37.

31. Louise S. Spindler, *Culture Change and Modernization* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977), pp. 107-8.

32. Marla N. Powers, *Oglala Women: Myth, Ritual, and Reality* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 2-3.

33. Lurie, "Indian Women" (note 28 above), pp. 29-36.

34. Native Women Publication Advisory Board, *Speaking Together: Canada's Native Women* (Ottawa: Secretary of State, n.d.). Loretta Fowler reports that the Gros Ventres have been "remarkably successful in taking advantage of educational and other new opportunities" compared to other Plains Indians, but does not comment on female versus male achievement. See *Shared Symbols, Contested Meanings: Gros Ventre Culture and History, 1778-1984* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 118.