Chapter 5

From 1900 to 2000: What a difference a century makes

More people—a lot more!

In 1900, about half a million people (500,000) were counted in the census in Washington. (A census is a count of how many people live here, conducted by the U.S. government once every 10 years.)

In the 2010 census, nearly seven million people were counted (6,897,012 people, to be exact). That's a lot of people—and a lot of change for our state.

In 1850, most of Washington's population was Native American. Then the population of White settlers became the overwhelming majority, and the Indian populations shrank.

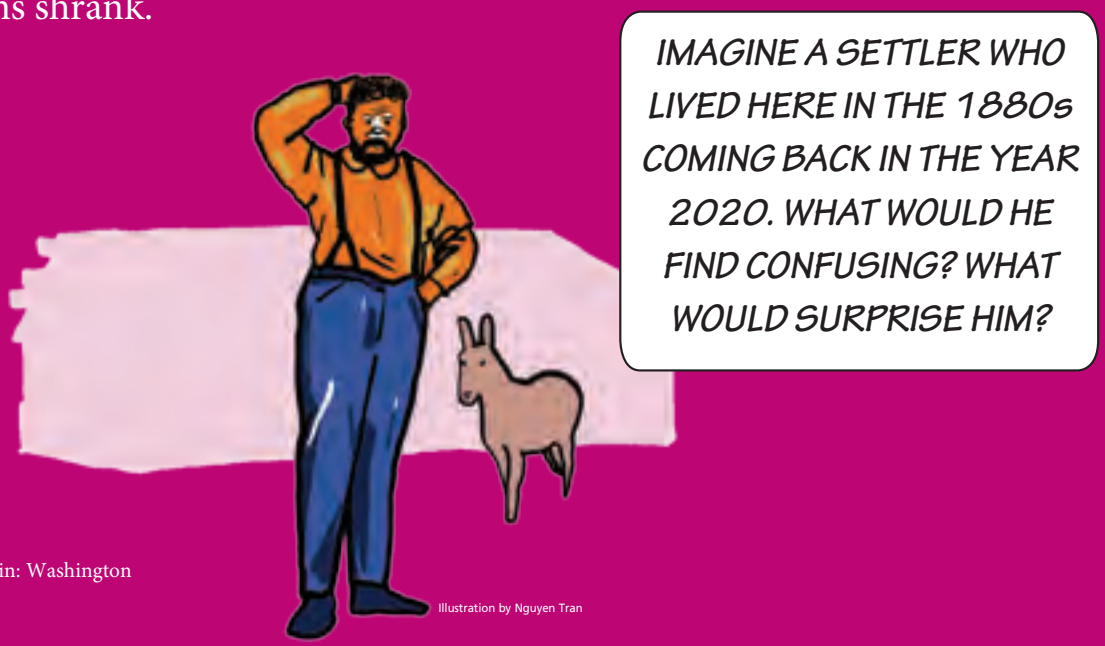


Illustration by Nguyen Tran

Over the years, waves of immigrants came from other states and from many countries—mostly Europe, but some from China, Japan, the Philippines, Mexico, and other countries.

Who came to Washington depended in part on who was allowed to come into the United States. Our nation's laws about immigration started in 1790, when Congress passed the Naturalization Act. This allowed only free White people "of good character" who had lived in this country for at least two years to become citizens. People who weren't citizens could come to the U.S., but they couldn't own land or vote.

In 1882, a law barred Chinese people from even coming to the United States, and other laws restricted immigration from non-European countries. In 1965, a law was passed that ended favoring Europeans.

From horses to cars to airplanes

Imagine what it was like to live in Washington in the year 1900: People walked or rode horses. Or they rode in wagons pulled by horses, or traveled on trains or boats. Cars were a new invention and still very rare. Airplanes hadn't been invented yet.

Image courtesy MOHAI, shs18953

Butterworth & Sons funeral wagon, Seattle, about 1905

© The Boeing Company

Boeing jet, Everett, about 2017

Who came when, and where did they come from?

Before 1846, when the Oregon Territory officially became part of the United States, the only non-Native people who came here were fur trappers, people who worked for the trading companies that bought and sold furs, and a few missionaries. Nearly all were single men.

The first settlers started coming to Washington in the 1840s. Most came from the American Midwest or the Northeast. Their migration to Oregon and Washington started as a trickle, but grew larger with every passing year—especially after 1846, when the border between the United States and Canada was established. Even more came after 1862, when the Homestead Act offered free land to settlers.

Image courtesy Tacoma Public Library

When the railroad finally reached Washington in 1887, it cut the time to travel across the country from four to six months to six days. Then the population grew fast. Americans from the East and Midwest moved here, and so did people from other countries.

catalog # WPA_42.2

The number of **African American** settlers was very small until the railroads reached Washington. The African American population grew a lot during World War II (1939-1945), when many came to work at Boeing, Hanford, and in other wartime jobs. In 1880, there were 180 African Americans in Washington; in 1890, there were just over 1,000; in 1940, there were 7,000. In 1950, after World War II, there were 30,000.

catalog # 2004.0.976

Scandinavians (people from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland) began to immigrate to Washington in the 1880s, and their numbers increased rapidly for the next 25 years. In 1910, the population of Kitsap County was 25 percent Scandinavian immigrants. Some Scandinavians settled in the Puget Sound area because it reminded them of home and they could find jobs fishing, or cutting down trees and making lumber.


catalog # c1948.64.76.2

Chinese workers came to build the railroads during the 1870s. But in the 1880s, White workers blamed the Chinese workers for high unemployment, and anti-Chinese riots and killings drove many Chinese out of the state.

Until 1882, anyone could come to the United States. Then Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which forbade Chinese laborers from coming to the U.S. In the 1920s, immigration laws based mostly on race were passed. They limited immigration of Eastern and Southern Europeans, and excluded people from Asia and the Pacific Islands. This didn't change until the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which allows people to immigrate if they have family members already here, or if they have skills that U.S. employers need.


photo courtesy of the Lopez family

Mexicans were among the earliest people to come to Washington. The crews on Spanish ships that came here in the 1770s were mostly Mexican. One Mexican drew pictures of the Olympic Peninsula. Before the railroads came, Mexicans ran "mule trains" to miners, fur traders, settlers, and merchants.

During World War II, more Mexicans and other Latinos came, mostly as farm workers. Many settled in the Yakima Valley, but they soon spread to other farming areas, such as the Skagit Valley. Today, Latinos (including Mexicans, people from other Latin American countries, and Latinos from Texas, California, and other states) are the fastest-growing and largest minority in Washington.

Italians, Greeks, Croatians, Basques, Irish, Germans, Dutch, and people from many other European countries settled here in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Even now, small towns celebrate their immigrant history. For instance, the town of Lynden is known for its Dutch roots, and Leavenworth is famous for its German-themed Christmas celebration. In Eastern Washington, Odessa and Endicott are known for their Russian/German heritage.


catalog # 2010.0.81


catalog # 1957.64.B1093

Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, and **Korean** immigrants were recruited here for jobs when their labor was needed to build railroads or to work in mines, canneries, farms, or logging camps. But Asian and Pacific Island immigrants were not allowed to become citizens or to own land until after World War II. After the Vietnam War, many refugees and immigrants from Southeast Asia came to Washington.

More recently, Washington has become home to people from countries all over the world. Some have come to escape war and hardship; others have come to work in high-tech and other industries. According to the state Transitional Bilingual Education Program, in 2015 students in Washington schools spoke more than 220 different languages.

photo courtesy Washington State Archives

Fishing was a major industry in Washington for much of the 20th century.

Electricity was new, and not many people had it in their homes, so kids did their homework by candlelight. Most people only went to school through the 8th grade.

When kids got out of school, many worked on their family's farm. Boys got jobs logging forests, milling lumber, mining coal, or working on a fishing boat or in a fish-processing plant. Some helped build fast-growing cities and towns or started new businesses.

Washing dirty diapers

There weren't many jobs for women. And taking care of kids, washing clothes, growing and cooking food, and all the work of keeping house was much harder. There were no washing machines, no dishwashers, and very little packaged food. It was rare to have running water or electricity in the house. Women had to wash dirty diapers and everything else by hand and hang them up outside to dry. Many women also raised chickens for eggs and meat, grew vegetable gardens, and canned food to eat in the winter.

image courtesy MOHAI, shs16534

In 1906, Laura Denny and her family had a farm at what is now North 92nd Street and Corliss Avenue, in today's Northgate neighborhood in Seattle. The I-5 freeway runs about a block east of this spot.

In this photo, she is mixing lye from wood ashes with animal fat to make soap. This was hot and messy work. She had to move that big, heavy cast-iron kettle and build the fire under it.

image courtesy University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, neg DKinsey99

Trees this big were common in the early years of the logging industry. Many trees were a thousand years old—and some were even older. In today's forests, trees are usually cut down when they are about 40 years old.

Can you imagine how hard it would be, and how long it would take, to do what these two men are doing?

Cutting down trees this big was dangerous. If the tree fell the wrong way, it could kill men like these.

Then there was the work of cutting it up and hauling it out of the forest to a sawmill where it would be cut into lumber.

Hard, dangerous jobs

Most people worked long hours with little time off. And jobs in the woods, mines, lumber mills, and the fishing industry were dangerous. Many men were hurt or killed.

Early in the 20th century, Washington workers began organizing unions to try to get better pay and working conditions. Unions are groups of workers who band together to bargain with their employers to win better pay and working conditions. If they can't come to an agreement, sometimes the workers go on strike—which means they all refuse to work. Sometimes that results in workers getting more of what they asked for; sometimes the employer just replaces all of them, and the strikers lose their jobs. Going on strike means taking big risks.

Over many years, unions helped improve the lives of working people by winning the eight-hour day, weekends off, and better safety standards. By the end of the 20th century, however, union membership was going down, and fewer and fewer workers were union members.

The decline of unions happened in part because many of the rights they won became standard, even for workers who weren't unionized. But there are many other reasons, too: Some laws that made it harder to organize unions were passed; more people started working in the "gig economy," which means they are small, one-person businesses; and more employers found new ways to discourage their workers from joining unions. When unions grew, some of them also became corrupt, and others became less democratic. Many union members started taking them for granted and didn't show up for union meetings or even vote in elections for union officers.

A Boeing model 247D flies over New York in the late 1930s. This model was the first modern passenger airplane.

Boeing takes flight

In 1916, the Boeing Company started building airplanes in Seattle. For much of the 20th century, Washington was best known as the place where the Boeing Company built sleek, fast airplanes. People came from all over to work at Boeing.

Boeing grew fast. In 1917, the United States entered World War I—the first war in which airplanes were used. For the next two years, Boeing produced warplanes.

In 1941, when the United States entered World War II, Boeing surged again, and thousands of new workers were needed. Many were African Americans who came to Seattle to work at Boeing and to escape the extreme racism of the southern states, where their ancestors had been enslaved before the Civil War in the 1860s.

Japanese incarceration

In the 1940s, when the U.S. was at war with Japan, 14,400 people of Japanese descent lived in Washington. Some were immigrants; about two-thirds were American-born children or grandchildren of immigrants.

Some people feared that the Japanese Americans might be secretly supporting the Japanese government. There was no evidence of this.

There was also worry about German and Italian immigrants, because the U.S. was at war with those countries too. But not all immigrants from those countries were arrested; only those suspected of supporting those enemy governments were locked up. At that time, German and Italian immigrants were allowed to become citizens, but Japanese immigrants were not.

President Roosevelt signed an executive order that required all Japanese immigrants and their families in West Coast states to be sent to internment camps until the war was over.

Many people who were sent to the camps lost their homes, farms, and jobs. And they suffered from the trauma and shame of being locked up in spite of their loyalty to the United States.

Decades later, the Japanese American Citizens League won passage of the federal Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which recognized the injustice the Japanese immigrants and their children and grandchildren suffered. U.S. President Ronald Reagan apologized to those who had been locked up, and the federal government sent them checks for $20,000 as a token of regret.

For the full story, you can go to: https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/japanese-relocation.

photo at top courtesy MOHAI, Seattle Post-Intelligencer Collection, pi28050; photo at right courtesy MOHAI, Seattle Post-Intelligencer Collection, pi28084

Technology changes our way of life

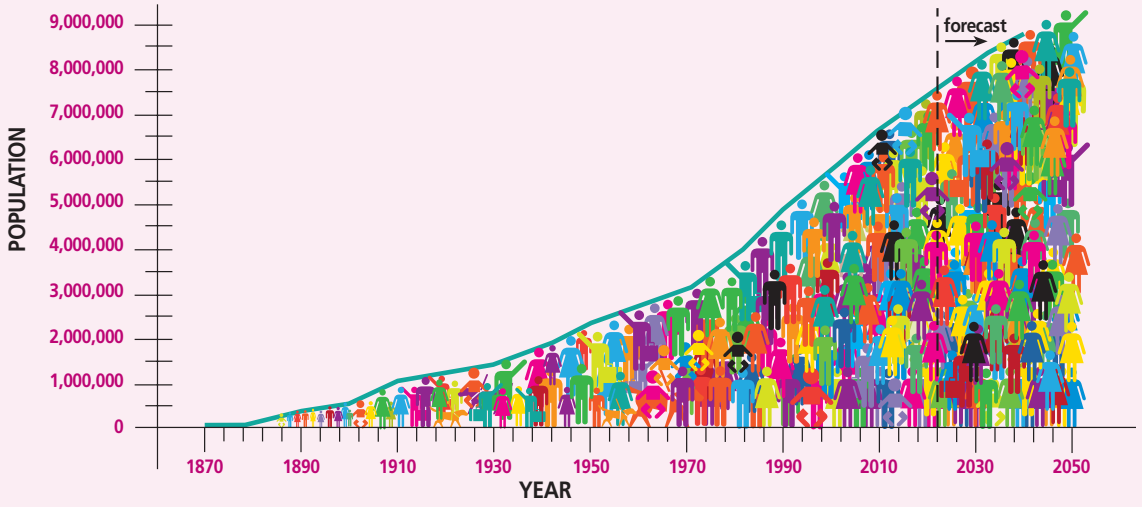
The pace of change got faster and faster with every passing decade. Soon wheat farmers had huge new machines to harvest wheat. Lumber mills had new equipment, which meant it took fewer workers to saw logs into lumber.

In 1975, Microsoft was founded, and soon computers were everywhere. In the 1990s, the internet started to become part of most American workplaces, and Seattle had a new claim to fame as the birthplace of Bill Gates. He was the

Washington's changing population

A century and a half ago, Washington's population was almost all Native American. Then the population of White settlers became the overwhelming majority, and Indian tribes dwindled. Over the years, waves of immigrants came from other states and countries—mostly Europe, but some from China, Japan, the Philippines, Mexico, and elsewhere.

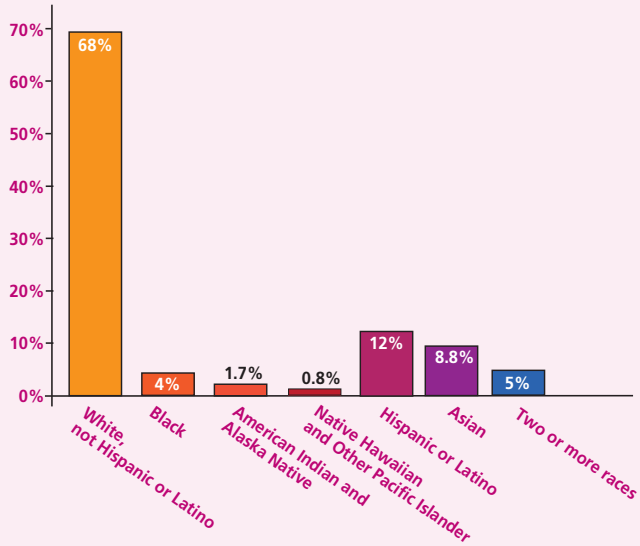
Today, Washington's population is still changing and growing. The Hispanic population is growing fastest, and in some counties, Hispanics are, or will soon be, in the majority. Indian tribes and other populations of people of color are also growing, so that by the end of this century, no single group is likely to make up a majority of Washington's people.



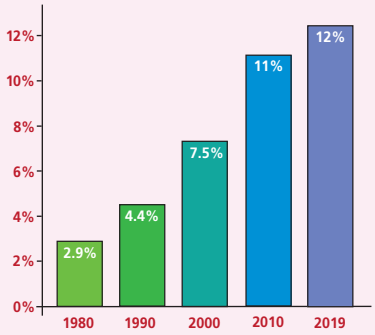
Washington state shows strong historical population growth

The population of Washington State by race/ethnicity

2019 total population: 7,546,400



Hispanic population as a percentage of total population



Source: Office of Financial Management. Approximately 1% respondents did not indicate race.

co-founder of Microsoft, and he and his wife, Melinda, now use their vast wealth to improve health care all over the world.

The kinds of jobs people held changed. There were more jobs in health care, government, education, and computer technology. There were fewer jobs in fishing, mining, logging, and farming.

photo with Surface Pro used with permission from Microsoft

Computers have changed classrooms a lot. And the internet has changed learning even more.

Now people need more education

At the beginning of the 20th century, an eighth-grade education seemed like enough for most people. But by the end of the 20th century, even a high school diploma wasn't usually enough to get a good job. The majority of kids went on to college, vocational or technical training, or an apprenticeship. Many adults also went back to school to learn new job skills. Young people from rural areas and small towns often had to move to the cities to find good jobs.

A growing divide between rich and poor or near-poor

All the changes of the 20th century brought new prosperity to many, but by the end of the century, there was a growing gap between rich and poor, not just in Washington, but all over the U.S. Rising rents and home prices were a growing problem. And fewer and fewer jobs provided pension benefits for people to live on when they were too old to work anymore.

Don’t wait! The world needs your help right now.

You don’t have to wait until you are old enough to vote to make the world a better place. In fact, it makes sense to start when you’re younger. There are two reasons for this.

First, the world needs your help right now. There are lots of urgent problems: hunger, poverty, discrimination, disease, climate change, and wildlife (like Orca whales) in danger. There are also things we need to protect, like clean air and water, that are threatened by pollution.

Second, when you pitch in and help with any issue, you will learn a lot about how the world works, and what special interests or skills you have that can make the most difference.

photo by Jim Avery, 2017, Forest Park, Everett, WA. Courtesy Forterra and the Green Everett Partnership

These students are planting trees as part of Green Everett Day. Trees provide homes for birds and other wildlife, as well as shade and beauty for humans to enjoy. Trees also absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen that we all need to breathe. This is very important work!

photo courtesy Jamie Clausen

Fourth-grade students in Seattle marched to alert other people about climate change and urge them to take actions to reduce its impact. Students all over the world held similar marches on the same day in September 2019.

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Kids can raise money to help food banks, fund cancer research, and help other causes by selling lemonade, artwork, or homegrown flowers or vegetables. Maybe you can think of other things you could sell too.

photo courtesy Jamie Clausen

Everyone in America can protest when we think something is unfair. These kids have joined the Black Lives Matter movement, which aims to prevent more police shootings of unarmed Black people and help our country overcome racism.

A century of change in Washington's natural resources

photo courtesy Leslie Hoge Design

This highway is filled with bumper-to-bumper traffic during rush hour every day.

How cars changed our world

The invention of the automobile had a huge impact on our natural world. Cars cause a lot of pollution:

- Air pollution from car exhaust
- Water pollution from the oil and other fluids that leak from cars
- More water pollution from the materials in tires and brakes that wear off on roads and get washed into streams

Who made your shoes?

One out of three jobs in our state depends on trade with other countries. Our airplanes, computer software, wheat, apples, cherries, medical technology, lumber, and other products are exported to many other countries.

Washington also imports goods from other countries. A lot of the imports come on huge ships to our ports. They are taken off those ships, loaded onto trucks or trains, and transported all over Washington and the United States.

If you look at the labels on your clothing, your shoes, and even the pots and pans in your kitchen, you will get an idea of just how much we import.

Washington has always been a place where people traded far and wide. Indian nations traded with each other for thousands of years. When European explorers showed up, the fur trade soon became a big part of our state's economy.

Illustration by Nguyen Tran

Today, the ports of Tacoma and Seattle together are the third largest in the country. They are actually closer to Asian ports than the ports in California.

The Washington State Department of Commerce helps Washington businesses learn how to export their products. There are lots of rules and paperwork involved. It organizes trade missions so that local business and government leaders can go to other countries and meet people they might want to do business with. No matter how much people work online, it's still important for people to meet in person and get to know each other.

Cars also require a lot of pavement for roads, freeways, and parking lots. And where there is pavement, rain can't soak into the ground. Instead, all that rainwater runs into drains, which often gush into lakes or streams, carrying pollutants and disrupting the natural flow of water. The more people moved to our state—and the more we drove—the bigger these problems became.

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A few years ago, this was a forest that was home to wildlife. And as the state's population grows, more houses like this are built farther away from jobs, so people drive more.

Bigger houses, suburban sprawl

With every passing decade, people used more electricity and gas, and lived in bigger houses that took more lumber to build. People also created more and more garbage. And there were more and more of us. Urban areas sprawled outward, eating up more land, and needing more stores, parking lots, and roads.

Citizens who cared about these problems tried to find solutions. Starting in the 1960s, they helped educate people about the problems. Important new laws were passed to reduce the amount of pollution industries could create and to clean up the most polluted areas.

But it was hard to make enough progress, as our population kept growing. More people meant more industry, more cars, more parking lots, and bigger freeways.

Dams changed many of our rivers

In the first half of the 20th century, huge dams were built on our rivers to produce electricity and to provide irrigation (water) for farms. This made farming a lot more of the land in Eastern Washington possible. But many of these dams blocked salmon from completing their journey from the ocean back to their home

photo courtesy USACE Digital Visual Library

Chief Joseph Dam on the Columbia River near Bridgeport.

streams to lay eggs. The new lakes behind the dams also flooded many traditional fishing places that Indians had used for thousands of years.

Wild salmon in danger

For thousands of years salmon have lived in Washington's waters. But now they have completely disappeared from many rivers and creeks, and there are far fewer of them in other rivers and streams.

Wild salmon are in trouble for many reasons. Some people blame the problem on too much fishing, but dams, pollution, and damage to streams from logging are big problems too.

photo courtesy Bureau of Land Management

These salmon are on their way to the streams where they started their lives, and will lay eggs there for the next generation of fish.

Logging too many trees

In the 19th century and the early years of the 20th century, Washington's forests seemed so vast that it was hard to imagine that one day they would all be cut. But by the end of the 20th century, scarcely any of Washington's virgin (original) forests were left.

By then, foresters had learned to replant the areas they cut. But the replanted areas were not the same as the forests that grew there before because foresters planted only the trees that were most valuable for timber—not all the other plants and trees that had been part of the original forest. Harvesting trees also disrupted many rivers and streams, which did more harm to salmon.

The top photo shows a logged-off hill in Western Washington sometime between 1900 and 1920. At that time, a lot of companies did "cut and run" logging and didn't replant new trees.

image 2010.0.202 courtesy Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma, WA

photo courtesy Washington State Department of Natural Resources

In this state-owned forest in Eastern Washington, trees have been spaced out so they will grow faster.

All the children at the Tulalip Indian boarding schools spent half of each day working. The boys worked in the fields, growing all the vegetables, and also tended cows that provided milk.

Indian boarding schools

Of all the ways Indians suffered in the century after they signed treaties, none was more painful than ***Indian*** *boarding schools.*

For many years, Indian children were separated from their families and required to live in these schools, where they were expected to adopt the culture, language, and values of White society. Many children didn't have enough to eat, and many got sick and died. Even now, the memory of families being ripped apart by these experiences is a source of deep anger and sorrow.

Harriette Shelton Dover, a Snohomish tribal member who lived from 1904 to 1991, wrote a book about her life called Tulalip, From My Heart. *She describes the years (1912–1922) she was required to live at a boarding school for 10 months a year:*

"We took off our shoes and stockings in the basement playrooms at night, and we marched up two stairways to go to bed. In case we tried to run away, we were separated from our shoes. I consider that like a life in a penitentiary.

I was given a whipping for speaking our own language in school when I was nine years old . . . the matron strapped us from the back of our necks all the way to our ankles for talking our own language. . . . Believe me, we never talked 'Indian' at the school again."

She also wrote about constant hunger, fear, cold, and military-style discipline. But the worst trauma was the number of children who didn't survive. Harriette's sister got sick with tuberculosis at the school and was sent home to die. Harriette writes::

"I stayed home all the time my sister was sick and dying. The superintendent-agent didn't make me go back to the Tulalip Indian School after my sister died. My father took me to a doctor in Everett. I was all they had then. I was the youngest, and my brother was gone in the army. I was thirteen years old and thin because I came out of Tulalip School. The only reason I lived was my sister dying, because then I got to come home."

The Tulalip boarding school closed in 1932, but some boarding schools continued for much longer. Eventually, tribes won more control of them and encouraged students to speak their own languages and practice their own culture. Also, more Native kids were allowed to attend public schools. Today, some tribes operate their own schools and their own colleges.

The girls and their teachers baked bread; girls also cooked, cleaned, washed dishes, and sewed.

upper right photo courtesy MOHAI, Ferdinand Brady Collection, 1988.11.7;
lower right courtesy MOHAI, Ferdinand Brady Collection, 1988.11.16

Learning to pay attention to the natural world

Even early in the 1900s, some people noticed that Washington's industries were damaging fish and streams as well as polluting the water and air. Abundant runs of salmon had already started to shrink. But it took a long time for people to face up to these problems.

Eventually, laws were passed that required industries to stop dumping wastes into the air and water. But it wasn't until the last decade of the century, when the runs of wild salmon in some rivers were in danger of extinction, that an all-out effort to save them finally began.

Relationship changes between tribal governments and federal and state governments

The idea that Indians could or should assimilate—that is, become part of the dominant society and let go of their Indian ways—didn't go away until 1975.

In 1900, because of the Dawes Act, Indian reservations had become checkerboards of land owned by Indians and settlers. (See page 56 for more information about how the Dawes Act sold off land to settlers.)

The Bureau of Indian Affairs

For the first 75 years of the 20th century, the federal and state governments' policies took many twists and turns. A few made life a little better for Indians, but many others made it much worse.

drawing courtesy Governor's Mansion Foundation

Territorial governor Isaac Stevens and Washington tribes signing treaties in the 1900s that required Indians to move to reservations.

photo courtesy Debbie Preston,
Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

When Indians wear special clothes for dancing or ceremonies, their outfits are called *regalia*, not *costumes*. They have special meaning. Clothing or feathers like these should not be worn by non-Indians.

During this time, it was very hard for Indians to maintain their traditional ways or even their own languages. The federal government ran the reservations through an agency called the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

For many years, BIA agents ordered Indian children to live in boarding schools—often far away from their home reservations. They were not allowed to speak their own languages. The purpose of the schools was to prepare Indian children to fit into White society.

The BIA also had the power to lease Indian lands to mining companies, to dissolve tribal governments, and to decide if and when Indians could sell their land.

Making tribes govern by majority rule

In 1934, the U.S. Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act. This law encouraged stronger tribal governments, ended the Dawes Act, and restored the tribes' right to hold land in common.

Many tribes thought this was an important step in the right direction. But there were some big problems with the act. Tribes had to write constitutions based on governing by majority rule rather than governing in their traditional ways.

photo courtesy Washington State Archives, #AR-07809001-ph003417

In some ways, the tribal governments created under this law were more for the convenience of the federal government than for the benefit of the tribes. Federal agencies wanted to deal with tribal governments that were more like their own. They

A leader who brought people together

"I don't believe in magic. I believe in the sun and the stars, the water, the tides, the floods, the owls, the hawks flying, the river running, the wind talking. They're measurements. They tell us how healthy things are. How healthy we are. Because we and they are the same. That's what I believe in."
~ Billy Frank

BILLY FRANK GREW UP ON THE NISQUALLY RESERVATION, near Olympia. His dad, who lived to be 104, told him many stories he heard from his parents about "treaty times," before and after the Treaty of Medicine Creek was signed in 1854.

Billy was 14 when he was first arrested by state game wardens for fishing. The treaty said that Indians held the right to fish in their "usual and accustomed places," but the state was violating the treaty by arresting them when they did.

As a young man in the 1960s, he was a leader of the Indian fishing rights movement. He led "fish-in" protests in the Nisqually River that won the support of many people. They led to the Boldt Decision, the court case that declared that the state had to respect their treaty rights. This included an order that the tribes become "co-managers" with the state in caring for salmon.


photo courtesy Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

In 1975, Billy Frank helped create the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. It "speaks for the salmon" in dealings with the state government. That includes working to restore many rivers and streams so they are healthy enough for more salmon to thrive.

It was hard for the state and the tribes to change from being enemies to being partners in caring for salmon. Billy Frank's leadership was a big part of what made that change possible. He was humble, warm, and single-minded in his lifelong work to care for people and salmon alike.

He received many awards and honors, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, our country's highest civilian honor. He died in 2014, but he remains a hero to Native peoples all over the world.

photo courtesy Denny Sparr Hurtado, Skokomish

"The Annual Lummi Stommish Water Festival takes place in mid-June each year in honor of our veterans.

In 1946, when World War II Lummi veterans were coming home, the people wanted to celebrate their safe return, and that is how the Stommish began.

This is an opportunity to experience the Lummi culture with the 11 men and women war canoe races, traditional dancing, the sla-hal bone games and the delicious barbecued salmon.

The community is invited to attend this annual cultural event.

The boy in this photo is Ethan Cagey Solomon, and he is part of the, 'Swan Clan' group from Lummi."

–Lyn Dennis, Lummi/Tahltan

wanted tribal governments to meet federal deadlines. They had no patience for tribes taking the time for everyone to come to agreement on something.

In traditional Indian societies, spiritual practices were woven into the way people governed themselves. Spiritual and hereditary leaders were very important. But these traditions were also pushed aside by the new constitutions.

There was an even bigger problem, too: to know who could vote, tribes had to define who was a tribal member. Before settlers came, this wasn't an issue because people were part of the tribe they lived in. People married across tribes, so it was common for kids to have parents who came from different tribes. But now people had to formally enroll in one tribe, and one tribe only. This is still a problem today.

Terminate: to bring to an end

In 1953, the U.S. Congress adopted the "Termination Policy." The aim of this policy was "to make Indians . . . subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as . . . other citizens of the United States, and to end their status as wards of the United States." This action would cancel the treaties and dissolve the Indian nations that signed them.

This idea had been around for a long time. The BIA had become corrupt in many places, and not very good at doing its job of providing health care and other services to tribes. Some people thought Indians would be better off if they didn't have to deal with the BIA.

photo courtesy Washington State Archives, #AR-07809001-ph003413

This photo of four Yakama girls was taken in 1954.

This was the most extreme form of the idea that Indians should stop being Indians and melt into the larger society. This time, instead of encouraging Indians to become farmers, Indians were encouraged to move into cities and towns.

A lot of people were against this policy, and most tribes managed to avoid being terminated. The policy had almost stopped by about 1958, but it didn't completely end until 1970.

Self-determination: the ability to control your own life or your own government

In 1975, a new law called the Indian Self-Determination Act was passed. It gave tribes much more power to govern themselves. Finally, tribes were able to run some of their own health care, education, housing, and social services programs, and to make more decisions in tribal courts.

This law was inspired in part by the civil rights movement of the 1960s, when African Americans, Indians, other people of color, and women all pushed for greater equality. Indian tribes had been pushing for respect for their rights as nations within a nation for over 100 years. Now, because of the civil rights movement, more people's eyes were opened to the injustices Indians had suffered. And a new generation of young Indians was fighting for their rights even harder, and winning more support.

"A treaty is not a grant of rights to the Indians, but a grant of rights from them."

Federal District Court Judge Edward Rafeedie, December 1994

images courtesy the Kalispel Tribe

The Camas Center for Community Wellness on the Kalispel Reservation includes a medical and dental clinic, a child care center, a fitness center, a gym, swimming pools, a rock climbing wall, business offices and meeting rooms, and a deli.

The Boldt Decision

When Indian nations signed treaties with the federal government, they gave up a lot of land, but they kept the right to hunt, fish, and gather in their "usual and accustomed places," many of which were not on the reservations.

But when the state's population grew larger, and non-Indians created a huge fishing industry, conflicts came up.

Soon Washington State agents started preventing Indians from fishing in places where they had fished for thousands of years. When Indians fished off their reservations, state agents arrested them and took away their boats and fishing gear.

In the 1960s, Indians started to protest. Many people—including some big celebrities—came to support them. News about the protests brought the issue to public attention. Finally the U.S. government sued the state of Washington to get state agents to stop violating the Indians' treaty rights.

In 1974, federal judge George Boldt ruled that the treaties said Indians had a right to fish "in common with" everyone else. He looked up that phrase in an 1828 dictionary to see exactly what the signers of the treaties would have meant. He concluded they meant that Indians should be able to harvest half of all the fish that were caught.

He also ruled that Indian tribes should be equal partners with state government in managing and protecting fish. Today, both the state and tribal governments have a lot of people working to restore streams and rivers that were damaged by pollution, dams, and other changes that were harmful to fish. Together, they also make decisions about how many fish can be caught each year without harming future fish runs.

The Boldt Decision was a huge victory for tribes. It inspired Native people all over the United States and in other countries to insist on their rights and helped make Indians proud of their culture, their bravery, and their heritage.

photo courtesy Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

Salmon ceremony, Tulalip Tribe

The right to fish in the "usual and accustomed places"

During the 1960s and 1970s, a long struggle over Indian fishing rights pitted Indians against the Washington State government. State game wardens arrested Indians who tried to fish in their "usual and accustomed places," which was a right that was written in the treaties.

Indians got lawyers and went to court. In 1974, a federal judge, George Boldt, noted that Indians had the treaty right to fish "in common with" settlers. And he ruled that "in common with" meant Indians should get half of all the fish. That was a huge victory for Indians. In 1979, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld that decision.

The Indian Self-Determination Act and the Boldt decision were important turning points. The federal government finally recognized that Indians were not going to stop being Indians.

In spite of all the broken treaty promises and other injustices, Indians had managed to keep the core of their own cultures, spiritual beliefs, and identity. Indian tribes and their governments are now recognized as a permanent part of the United States.

David Sohappy, a Yakama Nation tribal member, repairs fish nets used in the mid-Columbia River salmon catch. The Treaty of 1855 guaranteed his right to fish, but hydroelectric dams reduced the numbers of fish. Sohappy, one of the "River People" who live in their homeland away from the Yakama Reservation, is an important figure in treaty rights struggles and was imprisoned for his beliefs. Federal court case *U.S. v Oregon* protected the sovereignty of Columbia River tribes.

–Jacqueline Moreau

photo courtesy Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

Suquamish tribal members harvest clams on the tidelands for elders in Dyes Inlet near Silverdale, WA.

Sovereignty: the right to self-government

Even though many problems related to treaty rights still exist, it's now clear that the treaties that the U.S. government signed with tribes are the law of the land.

Since the 1970s, both the federal and state governments have begun to create "government to government" relationships with tribes. This is a return to the idea in the treaties that Indian tribes are nations within a nation. They have a right to govern themselves as they choose, and to protect and preserve their culture and traditions. This is called sovereignty.

The changing challenges of government

During the 20th century, our state went from being a remote, wild place to being a leader in life sciences, technology, agriculture, and international trade. Our governments grew and changed along with our population.

image 2016.11.38 courtesy Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma, WA

image EDE17776-155D-3E76992F56EAF4 courtesy National Park Service

These two photos show camping in 1911 compared to 2018. In the one on the left, you can see that camping was not much of a vacation for women, who still had to hand-wash the clothes and diapers and hang them up, cook, and take care of the kids. In 2018, camping was streamlined and the food was freeze-dried.

There was more for governments to do—and more costs for taxpayers to pay. For example, at the beginning of the century, we only had to pay for educating a few thousand kids through the 8th grade. Only a few of these students went to college.

By the end of the century, state and local governments needed money to pay for schools for nearly a million students in kindergarten through high school—and over half of them went on to community and technical colleges or four-year universities.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Washington State government's annual budget was about $30 million in today's dollars; by the end of the century, it was about $11 billion a year.

These circles compare the sizes of Washington's annual budgets in 1900 and in 2000.