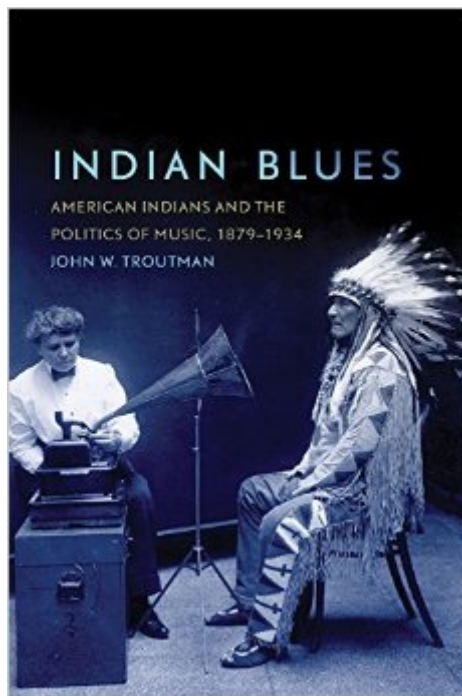


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# Indian Blues: American Indians And The Politics Of Music, 1879&#150;1934 (New Directions In Native American Studies Series)



## Synopsis

From the late nineteenth century through the 1920s, the U.S. government sought to control practices of music on reservations and in Indian boarding schools. At the same time, Native singers, dancers, and musicians created new opportunities through musical performance to resist and manipulate those same policy initiatives. Why did the practice of music generate fear among government officials and opportunity for Native peoples? In this innovative study, John W. Troutman explores the politics of music at the turn of the twentieth century in three spheres: reservations, off-reservation boarding schools, and public venues such as concert halls and Chautauqua circuits. On their reservations, the Lakotas manipulated concepts of U.S. citizenship and patriotism to reinvigorate and adapt social dances, even while the federal government stepped up efforts to suppress them. At Carlisle Indian School, teachers and bandmasters taught music in hopes of imposing their "civilization" agenda, but students made their own meaning of their music. Finally, many former students, armed with saxophones, violins, or operatic vocal training, formed their own "all-Indian" and tribal bands and quartets and traversed the country, engaging the market economy and federal Indian policy initiatives on their own terms. While recent scholarship has offered new insights into the experiences of "show Indians" and evolving powwow traditions, *Indian Blues* is the first book to explore the polyphony of Native musical practices and their relationship to federal Indian policy in this important period of American Indian history.

## Book Information

Series: New Directions in Native American Studies series (Book 3)

Paperback: 344 pages

Publisher: University of Oklahoma Press; Reprint edition (January 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0806142693

ISBN-13: 978-0806142692

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.8 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (2 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

INDIAN BLUES: AMERICAN INDIANS AND THE POLITICS OF MUSIC, 1879-1934 tells of how the U.S. government tried to control music on reservations through the 1920s, sparking a resistance on the parts of Native singers and dancers who decided to manipulate these policies. Both music history libraries and those at the college level specializing in Native history will find this an impressive exploration of the politics of music and Native American issues.

A very original and innovative contribution to Native American Studies, ethnomusicology, and American music history. Troutman writes vividly and very clearly. This book is fine for undergraduate classes, yet exceptional scholarship on a fascinating subject about which almost no one else has written in anywhere near this depth. Bravo, read it!

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