“Few, if any, archives of indigenous history and culture have the breadth, the depth, and the diversity that this collection wields.”

David Wilkins, University of Minnesota
American Indian Histories and Cultures is a major resource containing material from the Newberry Library’s extensive Edward E. Ayer Collection; one of the strongest archival collections on American Indian history in the world.

It presents a unique insight into interactions between American Indian Peoples and Europeans from their earliest contact, continuing through the turbulence of the American Civil War, the ongoing repercussions of government legislation, right up to the civil rights movement of the mid-twentieth century.

The resource explores the consequent political, social and cultural impact on American Indian life against the backdrop of an ever-expanding western frontier through a wealth of rare original documents.

Document types, digitized in full colour, include:
- An extensive collection of manuscripts ranging from the early 16th- to the mid-20th centuries
- A striking collection of artwork including rare American Indian ledger art
- Speeches and petitions written by Indigenous activists
- Diaries, essays, travel journals and ledger books from early European expeditions
- Correspondence, notes and minutes relating to important treaties
- Early linguistic studies and ethnographic accounts of American Indian life
- Thousands of photographs
- Historic maps and atlases
- Rare printed books
- American Indian newspapers

This rich selection of primary sources covers such important themes as:
- American Indian Peoples and the European Powers
- American Indian Nations and the US Government
- Military Encounters: Conflicts, Rebellions and Alliances
- Observation, Representation and Cultural Encounters
- Indigenous Peoples of Mexico
- First Nations of Canada
- Missionaries and Education
- Trade and Indian Economies
- Civil Rights Movement

The combination of primary documents and secondary resources provides an extensive overview of American Indian History in North America. Key periods covered include:
- Pre-colonisation – see our interactive chronology for the earliest important dates in American Indian history
- Early contact between American Indian Peoples and European settlers
- The first days of the New Republic and the emerging Federalist Era
- Relocation policy and the ensuing Indian Removal Act of 1830
- Indian Wars, the War of Independence and the American Civil War
- Turn of the century politics and the Progressive Era
- The impact of the Indian New Deal
- The Red Power Movement and the occupation of Alcatraz
- Current areas of interest in Indigenous Studies – see our online exhibitions and external links
American Indian Histories and Cultures makes available, for the first time, many rare and significant documents from the Edward E. Ayer collection, including:

- An original copy of *The Red Man’s Greeting* (1893), a booklet written on birch bark by Potawatomi Indian Simon Pokagon
- Original artwork depicting American Indian life by early artists and explorers such as Karl Bodmer, Jean-Frédéric Waldeck, George Catlin, Elbridge Ayer Burbank and Seth Eastman
- Manuscripts, portraits and printed books relating to major American Indian figures such as Red Cloud, Crazy Horse, Pontiac, Geronimo, Sitting Bull and Black Hawk
- The Black Horse ledger and Kiowa Indian ledger drawings
- Treaties between American Indian Nations and the US Government and first-hand accounts including the journal kept by John Parrish: *Book relative to Indian affairs [manuscript]: journals to treaties* (1791-1794)
- Captivity narratives, memoirs and artworks portraying life among Indigenous Peoples such as *Mary and I: forty years with the Sioux* (c.1887) by Stephen Riggs and George Catlin’s *North American Indian portfolio* (c.1844)
- Dictionaries and vocabulary books such as *A pocket vocabulary of terms alphabetically arranged* (1822) from English to Ojibwa
- Correspondence from the French and Indian wars (1755-1773)
- Modern manuscript collections including the *Bureau of Indian Affairs relocation records* (1936-1975)
- American Indian newspapers from the 1960s-1990s documenting contemporary topics such as civil rights and the Red Power movement, the occupation of Alcatraz and environmental issues
- The renowned exhibition, *Seeing Indian in Chicago*, showcasing the work of American Indian photographers

Highlights Key Features:
- Read contextual essays by notable academics in the field
- Browse our extensive Tribes and Nations list organised by culture area
- Explore a timeline of American Indian history through our interactive chronology
- Learn more about key events through our narrative maps
- Find out about notable figures through our mini biographies
- View thousands of visual sources by searching across our extensive image galleries and art features
- Discover more about major topics through online exhibitions
- Link to carefully selected websites relating to American Indian Histories and Cultures

Editorial Board Includes:
- Ned Blackhawk, Yale University
- Brenda Child, University of Minnesota
- Rebecca Horn, University of Utah
- Brian Hosmer, University of Tulsa
- Jean O’Brien, University of Minnesota
- Kathryn Shanley, University of Montana
- David Silverman, George Washington University
- Scott Stevens, D’Arcy McNickle Center at the Newberry Library
- Joyce Szabo, University of New Mexico
- William Trenttner, Smithsonian American Art Museum
- Robert Warrior, University of Illinois
- David Wilkins, University of Minnesota

“The Ayer collection contains a diversity of Plains drawings that relay visual narratives about the eras and changing circumstances in which they were made.”

Joyce Szabo, Professor of Art History at the University of New Mexico
With several complementary themes, American Indian Histories and Cultures is the ideal companion to The American West.

American Indian Histories and Cultures follows on from the success of Adam Matthew’s existing American West project sourced from the Newberry Library’s prestigious Everett D. Graff Collection of Western Americana.

Winner of Choice magazine’s “Outstanding Academic Title” award (January 2010).

The Graff Collection is a unique resource which allows scholars to explore tales of frontier life, settlers, vigilantes and outlaws. It also covers the growth of urban centres, the environmental impact of westward expansion and life in the borderlands.

Through a mixture of original manuscripts, maps, ephemeral material and rare printed sources, American West is a dynamic teaching and research resource.

Thematic Areas:
- Contact with Indigenous Peoples
- Pioneers, Hunters and Explorers
- Mining and the Gold Rush
- The Mormon Exodus
- Homesteaders, Overland Travel and Early Settlements
- Cattle Ranchers
- The Railroads, Transportation and Urban History
- Outlaws, Vigilantes and the Law
- Agricultural Development and the Environment
- The Imagined West: Wild West Shows and Fiction
- Borderlands

Key Features:
- Extensive chronology dating from the early 16th- to the mid-20th centuries
- Specially-commissioned data maps presenting information on themes such as: Physical/Environment, Political, Urban/Travel, American Indian populations
- Slideshow gallery feature exhibiting full-colour visual material
- Over 130 spectacular full-colour historical maps
- Links to a selection of websites relating to American West and its themes
- All documents digitized in colour

Material Includes:
- Bismarck Tribune containing the first complete account of the Battle of the Little Big Horn
- Original manuscript journal of John Audubon
- Manuscript correspondence from both General Custer and William (Buffalo Bill) Cody
- Original photographic portrait of Kit Carson
- History of the expedition under the command of captains Lewis and Clark

“The American West remains the most imagined region of the United States. Its history, for many, embodies the nation’s.”

Ned Blackhawk, Professor of History & American Studies, Yale University