An Annotated Chiricahua Apache Bibliography – Selected Books

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Beginning researchers interested in exploring and evaluating published material concerning the Chiricahua Apaches are often faced with so much information that they become dismayed, intimidated, or overwhelmed. Below is an annotated bibliography that should be a useful tool, not only for newcomers to the field but for all interested scholars. The inventory is “selected” simply because the wealth of available material is beyond the scope of any one bibliographer to document; volumes are added almost on a monthly basis. In looking over this material it is important to remember that good books by credible authors may not have been included, and that is my fault. I present here only those works with which I am familiar and have found informative, and hope the list will help researchers create their own index of books they prefer about one of America’s most famous Indian tribes.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Offers the first comprehensive account of the dispiriting effort to “civilize” Indian children. This book vividly details the day-to-day experiences of youths living in a “total institution” designed to reconstruct them, both psychologically and culturally. Based upon extensive use of government archives, Indian and teacher autobiographies, and school newspapers, this award-winning book is essential reading for anyone interested in western history.


Anderson argues that in the face of European conquest and severe droughts that had reduced their food sources, Indians in the Southwest proved remarkably adaptable and dynamic, remaining independent and even prospering. He discusses the techniques some tribes used to survive the Spanish onslaught, and how they forged new alliances, built trade networks, and incorporated remnant bands to increase their populations.


A classic work, made into a popular movie called “Broken Arrow” (which was accurate, more or less, with the exception of the romance between Jeffords and a young Chiricahua Apache woman). Austerman, Wayne R. *Sharps, Rifles, and Spanish Mules: The San Antonio—El Paso Mail, 1851–1881*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1985.


Chiricahua Apache James Kaywaykla told the author the story of the people as he recalled it. Invaluable.


Invaluable. Ball’s prizewinning books are classics in the field and should be read by everyone seeking the Chiricahua Apache “side of the story.”


Two of the earliest and still useful research tools.


Highly recommended for researchers.

Barney, James M. *Tales of Apache Warfare*. Privately printed, James M. Barney, 1933.
A classic. Geronimo’s words were translated by his nephew Asa Daklugie for Barrett. Questions may arise regarding the exactness of Geronimo’s words, but a good book nonetheless.
Basso is an expert on Western Apache history and culture.
Information recorded by surveyors is one of the areas neglected by many researchers into Chiricahua Apache history. Should not be overlooked.
As Geronimo’s nephew, Betzinez had first-person information about the Chiricahua Apaches’ many military campaigns and subsequent imprisonment. Unfortunately this book has been heavily edited by the coauthor and often presents an unrealistic picture of many events. Betzinez’s original manuscript is at the University of Oklahoma and deserves reading.
An early writer of people and events on the Spanish colonial frontier, with particular emphasis on Jesuit father Eusebio Francisco Kino, a man much admired for his many accomplishments between 1687 and 1711.


Bourke was an army officer intimately involved in the many campaigns over the years to catch Geronimo. His writings are quite descriptive and provide a good look at the situations—military and otherwise—pertaining to the capture, culture, and history of the Chiricahua Apaches.


Boyce was a descendant of Chief Victorio of the Warm Springs Chiricahua Apaches, Gayton worked with Boyer for several years to produce a sweeping history of her family, including recreated conversations based on assumptions, oral history, and oral tradition.


Buchanan, Kimberly M. Mostly a restatement of Eve Ball’s books.


Horn’s role in military campaigns against the Chiricahua Apaches has been debated for years, with no agreement in sight.


Carmony’s editing of both books has produced very readable descriptions of two men directly involved with the Chiricahua Apaches.


Howard was the U.S. general directly involved with Cochise’s surrender in 1872. His military career was exemplary, as was his faith in God. He became known as the “Christian general” during the Civil War.


Often difficult to acquire, this work is nonetheless worth the effort for those mainly interested in ethnobotany.


An English writer with opinions and perspectives on the American West. Impressively.


Written by Clum’s son (see Carmony above), this is a subjective rendering of his father’s career.


Written by an author who claims to be Chiricahua Apache.


On 30 September 1881 about half of the Chiricahua Apaches residing on the
San Carlos Reservation suddenly and unexpectedly left and headed toward Mexico. This work documents the breakout in detail – its origins, its conduct, the pursuit, and the sad result. Wonderful endnotes.


A member of the Board of Indian Commissioners in 1871, Colyer recorded many of his impressions in diary format. Letters and official U.S. documents round out this little book. Valuable background and insight.


A keen observer of the Native peoples of the borderlands of New Spain, Cortes was a member of the Spanish Royal Corps of Engineers. This report provides the most closely informed, best organized understanding of the Chiricahua Apaches available at the end of the eighteenth century. Also presents a rare glimpse of a sophisticated Spaniard’s grasp of the dangers boding the end of the Spanish empire in America.


This account, first published in 1868, unfortunately became a basic source on Apache beliefs. Has since become better understood as an ethnocentric work that often reached unsupportable conclusions.


Written by one of the best-known military officers in the history of military campaigns against the Chiricahua Apaches.


Another account by a military man. Davis writes about the campaign against Geronimo and the personalities involved.


Required reading. A classic that has endured.


Pratt was superintendent of the Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and an innovator in Indian education who used dubious techniques designed to “civilize and Christianize” Native children. His motto was “Kill the Indian, Save the Man.”


A compendium.


The only popular biography of the Franciscan priest who is still loved by most of the Catholic Mescalero, Chiricahua, and Lipan Apaches living on the Mescalero Apache Reservation in New Mexico.


A rare book and very difficult to find.


A biography of a famous rancher and law enforcer in Cochise County, Arizona. Slaughter found an Apache baby, named her “Apache Mae,” and became her adopted father.


Presents the “base metaphor,” an anthropological look at spirituality.


Author’s experiences on the Mescalero Apache Reservation.


Concerned with the military campaign’s wider historical setting and significance, and with the subsequent sorry record of betrayal of the Indians by the U.S. government.


The best descriptions and photographs.


A classic that makes use of documents from Spain and Mexico to reach important conclusions.


Most informative and important for everyone who wants to understand the Spanish colonial frontier.


Goodwin is still thought of and highly respected as a pioneer in documenting Apache culture and history.


Goodwin’s son’s poignant search for the father he never knew and, in the process, reclaiming his father’s work and building on it. A must-read by everyone interested in the Chiricahua Apaches.


Concentrates on the Apaches in the period before the United States-Mexican war. Author focuses on the experiences of the Chiricahua Apaches in southern New Mexico and northern Chihuahua at the Spanish fort and outpost of Janos. How Spaniards dealt with the Chiricahua Apaches and how these Indians adjusted to the new circumstances, learning how to ma-
nipulate the Spaniards and Mexicans while remaining true to their heritage is the heart of this book.


Very valuable in understanding Chiricahua Apache relations during the years following Mexican independence from Spain, and during Mexico’s war with the United States.


A series of contributions by authors who describe Natives’ religious changes, mainly in historical Hispanic America. Published in England.


Nine historians, three anthropologists, and one sociologist compare and contrast events that occurred in New Spain between 1500 and 1880, showing that in each region the frontier represented contested ground where different cultures and polities clashed in ways little understood.


A compendium.


Discusses Chiricahua Apache mythology, folklore, religious customs, everyday life, social mores, wars, and leadership. Broad-based examination.


A good description of the general situation along the border.


Should be required reading for all interested in the religious aspect of Indian-white relations.


An autobiography, necessarily subjective.


An early report and invaluable insofar as history and culture are concerned.


A general text.


Another subjective account.


General Howard’s book, somewhat fair and quite descriptive.


Re-creation of newspaper accounts.


The official Arizona state magazine, colorful photos, little writing.


A sophisticated demographic analysis that permits evaluation of the causes, manifestations, and regional variations of the demographic collapse of mission Indians.
The central finding is that diseases are only part of the explanation of population decline.


A classic and monumental study spanning two and a half centuries, from the earliest contacts in the 1540s to the crumbling of Spanish power in the 1790s. Vivid narrative detail.


Miles was the general to whom Geronimo surrendered in 1886. He remains controversial still today.

Jones, A. T. *Great Register of the County of Cochise, Territory of Arizona, for the Year 1882*. Cochise County Recorder’s Office, Tombstone.

———. *Great Register of the County of Cochise, Territory of Arizona, for the Year of 1884*. Cochise County Recorder’s Office, Tombstone.

———. *Great Register of the County of Cochise, Territory of Arizona, for the Year 1886*. Cochise County Recorder’s Office, Tombstone.


One of the best-liked texts describing the mission system on the Spanish-colonial frontier.


A classic and a must-read for everyone interested in the interactions between Natives and Spaniards.


The first recreation of Gatewood’s final mission, this work poignantly recalls the U.S. government’s betrayal of the Chiricahuas, Geronimo, and Gatewood at the campaign’s end. Emphasis and focus on Gatewood.


First biography of Debo and the first assessment of the significance of her life and writings. Sheds light on her family’s background, her personality, and the impact of gender discrimination on her career. Debo was well known for studies about Native groups that presented their points of view, and for her biography of Geronimo.


A small but important work describing a remarkable leader in his seventies and his failed attempt to keep his people free.


Purports to be a study of an Apache band tested in battle and in the courtroom, but is actually a history of the Indian Claims Commission.


A careful and complete dispassionate synthesis for the general reader or beginning researcher.


Selected dispatches that originally appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* during April and May 1886, written by reporter Lummis.


Edited by Dan L. Thrapp, this work contains every dispatch sent by Lummis from Ft. Bowie. This is the first time the complete record Lummis accumulated has been reproduced.


A detailed description of the battle that provides insight into Apache warfare and an opportunity to learn about battlefield archeology in Arizona.


A rare book, but well worth the effort to find.

Documents from Sonoran archives that illuminate the heart and soul of Mexican Tucson. Borderlands scholars and general readers will benefit from this work by the noted Franciscan author.


Tells why the wars occurred, who the participants were, explains the circumstances underlying battles, analyzes the significance of the events, and discusses the results. Most informative for everyone interested in this genre.


Kirker was known as a scalp-hunter during the middle 1830s.


A large, coffee table–sized book containing detailed descriptions and much information for the beginning researcher. Fine sketches and illustrations.


A rare book. Manje describes, in diary form, the expeditions he made into the Spanish colonial frontier with Father Eusebio Kino. According to Karns, the book’s first eight chapters were written in 1716 but appear to be based on notes Manje recorded during the expeditions. Contains a great deal of useful information, typically recording distances between settlements, good pasturage and agricultural lands, and population densities (including number of houses and adobe houses and churches built for future priests by Kino’s request). Details his 1697 expedition with Kino and Captain Cristobal Martin Bernal down the San Pedro River.


A classic. Should be read with the climate of the times in mind.

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Excellent presentation of testimonies from individuals affected by Chiricahua Apache raids in the middle 1800s.


More of same.


A classic. Relates how Ugarte faced the Chiricahua Apache situation and the extent to which he was able to solve it using a new Indian policy adopted by Spain in 1786.


First full account of a fortified outpost in Chiricahua Apache country. Was also a market center, sanctuary, social unit, religious outpost, and administrative seat that supported Spain’s effort in northern Mexico.


A classic and must-read to understand Indian-white relations on the Spanish colonial frontier.


More than a soldier’s story of an army post, this work is a complete and colorful tale of the conflicts and contacts of the white man and the Indian in what is now Oklahoma and Northern Texas. It is also a basic book of southern Great Plains military activities.


A must-read.


All of Opler’s works are required reading for everyone interested in the culture and history of the Chiricahua Apaches.


Ove lived among the Chiricahua Apaches from 1948 to 1950, taught their children, and the people taught him. A memoir.


A rare book.


Pelman is a Mescalero Apache with firsthand information about the most important sacred rite: the puberty ceremony.


The San Carlos Apache Reservation of Arizona provides the lens through
which Perry views reservation issues. Perry argues that the reservation system is best understood in terms of competition for resources among interest groups through time within the hegemony of the state. He asserts that full control over their resources and their lives would address many of the Apaches’ contemporary economic problems.


One interview is with Tu Moonwalker, noted Apache basketmaker.


A geographic, historical, and ethnographic description written by an eighteenth-century Jesuit who spent eleven years on the frontier as a missionary.


Excellent. A translation of the authorities that governed mission expansion in northwestern New Spain during the 1600s and 1700s, presenting a study of the requirements under which the missionaries labored. Author explores the inner workings of the mission system and discusses the more important methods of proselytizing employed by the missionaries and shows how the mission organization evolved from simple evangelization to a complex social institution.


All of Polzer’s works should be required reading for everyone who wants to understand the interactions on the Spanish colonial frontier.


A popular biography of Bourke.


Pratt was superintendent of the Carlisle Indian School. A memoir.


An excellent depiction of Indians and the U.S. government.

Addresses the tension and conflict between Protestants and Catholics over Indian schools at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries.


An excellent tool for historians of all interests and levels of experience, simple to use and concisely worded. A reference work that is utilitarian and enriching. Does not duplicate existing works.


A selection of essential documents which marked significant formulations of policy in the conduct of Indian affairs by the U.S. government.


A chronicle of cultural resiliency, colonial relations and trespassed frontiers in the borderlands of a changing Spanish empire. Anthropological history that presents multilayered meanings of culture, community, and ecology and discusses both the colonial policies to which peasant communities were subjected and the responses they developed to adapt and resist them.


A rare book and a must-read.


A nice study, but not frequently referenced by scholars.


A work about the Apaches and their country by an author who likes the people but doesn’t have any illusions about them.


Crook spent his entire military career, with the exception of the Civil War years, on the American frontier. He earned the distinction of being the lowest-ranking West Point cadet to ever rise to the rank of major general. This autobiography covers the period from his graduation in 1852 to 18 June 1876. Crook was well liked by the Chiricahua Apaches, but this work doesn’t address his relations with them.


A most interesting study of the results of excavations.


A first-person account of the life of a group of Apaches after most of their luck had run out.


Recounts the raids leading up to the massacre by Chiricahua Apaches of the McComas family during their journey on a desolate road in southwestern New Mexico territory. Author constructs the full story from long-buried fragments of history and in broader terms he sketches the cultural friction between settlers and Apaches.


An eighteen-page softcover description of a little-known moment in American history.
Reconstructed mainly from newspaper reports, this book describes a terrible time in Chiricahua Apache history.
A personal account of General Oliver O. Howard’s mission to find and make peace with Cochise in 1872. Sladen was a member of Howard’s party and this account presents a detailed description of that event.
A collection of writings about the Chiricahua Apaches. Contains articles by the author, Edwin R. Sweeney, Charles B. Gatewood, and Samuel E. Kenoi, and a list of the basic writings about the topic.
A classic.
Based on years of research, dozens of hours of interviews, and personal friendships, this work sheds light on some of the mysteries surrounding traditional and contemporary Chiricahua Apache cultures. Presents interviews with modern Chiricahua Apache women.
The only existing full account of the twenty-seven years of imprisonment and the effects of diseases on the Chiricahua Apaches.

Present a close look at women’s traditional customs.


This remarkable man was captured in 1849, as a nine-year-old, and lived for ten years among them. He later became one of the most important scouts in Arizona history.


A must-read. This biography traces Cochise’s activities in exhaustive detail in both the United States and Mexico. The work will stand as the major source for all that is yet to be written on Cochise.


A must-read biography of one of the most famous Chiricahua Apache chiefs.


A close look at one of the most important policies in American history dealing with Indian peoples.


Excellent background information.


Using a considerable amount of unpublished material, including several
eyewitness accounts, the author details the many expeditions which led to ultimate victory and Steber’s many roles in his relations with the Chiricahua Apaches.


Author describes in detail the 1883 military expedition to find the Chiricahua Apaches, retracing the route into the Sierra Madre. Also delineates the chain of events leading to the expedition.

——. Juh: An Incredible Indian. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1973. Sets the record straight about this extraordinary man who displayed leadership, imagination in battle, awareness of strategy and tactics, and had an ability to effectively employ and discipline his followers.

——. Victorio and the Mimbres Apaches. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974. A classic that provides the first comprehensive account of these Apaches from their first contacts with white people in 1849 until the tragedy of 1880. Is also the first accurate biography of Victorio, one of the greatest and most vigorous of America’s Indian leaders.


Required for all students of American frontier history.


A must-read for an understanding of the Chiricahua Apaches’ last twenty years of confinement.


All of this author’s works should be read and remembered.


A small but important, and most appreciated, photo essay.


Prizewinning definitive history of the Spanish colonial period in North America.


Welsh, Herbert. The Apache Prisoners in Fort Marion, St. Augustine, Florida. Philadelphia: Indian Rights Association, 1887.

A rare book but well worth the effort to find.
Highlights the many defensive stands and brilliant assaults the Chiricahua Apaches made on their enemies.