

**MEDICAL CENTER ARCHIVES
OF
NEWYORK-PRESBYTERIAN/WEILL CORNELL**

**1300 York Avenue # 34
New York, NY 10065**

Finding Aid To

**THE RECORDS OF THE NAVAJO CORNELL FIELD HEALTH PROJECT
CORNELL UNIVERSITY MEDICAL COLLEGE**

**Dates of Records:
1922-1997**

**10 Linear Inches
(2 Boxes)**

**Finding Aid Prepared By:
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Associate Archivist
June 2011**

PROVENANCE:

Provenance is unknown.

ADMINISTRATIVE/BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

The Navajo Cornell Field Health Research Project was co-sponsored by the Division of Indian Health of the U.S. Public Health Service, Cornell University Medical College, and the Navajo Tribal Council. According to the 1957 Navajo Yearbook, the two initial goals were "to define the proper concerns of a health program among a people such as the Navajo and second to attempt to devise practicable means for the delivery of the necessary health services in a form acceptable to the people." In an 1972 article entitled: "Health Care Experiment at Many Farms," Walsh McDermott stated four goals for the project: "to develop effective methods for the delivery of modern medical services to the Navajo people; to see to what extent these methods could be applied to other people in similar socioeconomic circumstances; to study discrete diseases, particularly in the light of their possible shaping by Navajo culture; and to find out whether the sudden apposition of modern biomedical sciences and technology and the disease pattern of a nontechnological society could provide valuable knowledge in the attack on contemporary problems." Many Farms-Rough Rock area of the Navajo Reservation in Arizona was the site of the project. From July 1955 to May 1956, the project was organized including building the central clinic facilities and organizing and training the staff and volunteers. The official opening ceremony of the central clinic on May 8, 1956 included two medicine men.

Sixteen people staffed the clinic. Three physicians, two public health nurses, and a social anthropologist were the professional staff. Ten Navajos assisted the project as health visitors, interpreters, drivers, and laboratory technicians. Students from Cornell University Medical College and Cornell University-New York Hospital School of Nursing took field courses there.

According to the 1957 Navajo Yearbook, as well as offering health services to the Navajo at the clinic, they initially investigated three major studies: a survey in depth of the health status of the community, Navajo Health Visitor Program, and a study on the impact of the project on the community. The survey in depth involved diagnostic studies of both Navajo patients and healthy persons. The Navajo Health Visitors Program trained Navajos in basic medical training so they could aid nurses in visiting the Navajo people. Some of the Navajo health visitors also served as interpreters. The third study on the impact of the community focused on the role of medicine men and changes in Navajo acceptance of modern medicine. Later additional studies focused on specific diseases such as diarrhea and tuberculosis or medical health issues facing the Navajo people.

The project ended in July 1962.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

The collection consists of reports and miscellaneous publications about the Navajo Cornell Field Health Project at Many Farms and Navajo health in general.

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS:

The collection is open to researchers

RELATED MATERIAL:

Walsh McDermott, MD (1909-1981) Papers

BOX AND FOLDER LIST:
Box 1:

Folder:	Description:
1	Adair, John, Obit, 1997
2	"Medical Records in Cross Cultural Practice," by Donald Rieder and Bernice Loughlin, 1958
3	"The Medicine Men Accept Our Healing," <u>New York World Telegram & Sun</u> , January 22, 1955
4	Miscellaneous Articles and Publications, 1957-1972
5	"The Navajo," by Evon Vogt, 1956
6	"Navajo Cornell Field Health Research Project, Progress Report," April 1, 1957-March 1, 1959
7	"Navajo Cornell Field Health Research Project at Many Farms," June 30, 1958
8	Navajo Council, Minutes, 1953
9	"Navajo Tribal Council Resolutions," 1922-1951

Box 2:

Folder:	Description:
1	"Navajo Yearbook," Fiscal Year, 1957
2	"Preliminary Report of Anemia in Navajo Children," by G. Saroukhanian, MD
3	"Report on Research of the Resident Anthropologist," by Cara Richards Dobyns, December 19, 1959
4	"A Study of the Needs of the Pregnant Woman in a Selected Group of Navajo Women," by Bernice Loughton, June 1962

- 5 "A Syllabus for Teachers in Navajo Health," by Navajo Tribal Council, 1960