

# Cash, Color, and Colonialism: The Politics of Tribal Acknowledgment

Renee Ann Cramer

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Within the context of U.S.-Indian law, federal acknowledgment establishes a trust relationship between an Indian tribe and the U.S. government. As a result of that trust, the tribe receives significant benefits, including tax-exempt status, reclamation rights, and—of perhaps greatest modern-day interest to the American public—the right to administer and profit from its own casinos.

Some tribes, however, have not been federally acknowledged, or, in more common language, "recognized." In Cash, Color, and Colonialism, Renée Ann Cramer offers a comprehensive analysis of the federal acknowledgment process, placing it in historical, legal, and social context.

Exploring the formal and informal struggles over acknowledgment, Cramer argues that we cannot fully understand the process until we understand three contexts within which it operates: the growth of casino interests since 1988, the prevalence of racial attitudes concerning Indian identity, and the colonial legacy of U.S.-Indian law.



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