Native Americans Past and Present

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by

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A thesis or project submitted to the
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Native Americans Past and Present

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Introduction

When broaching the topic of Native Americans in the Revolutionary War, Colin Calloway put it best when he wrote, “With few exceptions, revolutionary revisionism and recognition of the far-reaching nature of the American Revolution has not yet embraced American Indians.”1 He then goes on to discuss the nature of Revolutionary historians to be greatly interested in roles of African Americans, women, local communities, the British perspective, as well as the American rebels. However, the issue of Native American roles seems to be nonexistent in historians’ minds. As startling a revelation as that was, if one is to take the challenge of researching this topic, one would only be able to verify Calloway’s findings. Most historians, reference books, and writings that I researched (from the few that were obtainable) seem quite inadequate about summarizing Native American involvement. The majority quite simply states that most Native Americans chose to side with the British, the British lost, and Native Americans were left in a new country with the Americans, who would later take over their way of life as well as their land.2

I have embarked on the rather frustrating journey of exploring various Native American tribal roles during the Revolutionary War up to present day as well as the issues that Native Americans face as a result of their role in early America. Although sources were few and often repetitive, a small number of reliable books have concentrated on this issue and paid it sufficient respect. The issues that seemed to be

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focused on in relation to early Native American role in U.S. history concentrate on southern Native American tribes, with a special emphasis on the highly involved Cherokee. The various Iroquois tribes are also highlighted frequently in these sources. The famous Iroquois leader, Joseph Brant, receives specific attention in many instances as well as his choice to aid the British during this time. The infamous Sullivan’s Campaign is yet another of the few topics on Native Americans that historians focus on for this time period. The destruction and ruin of Native Americans’ homes, villages and people was one of the major low points for Native Americans, and yet similar to all the other topics concerning these people, it was barely touched upon in most historians’ literature. After examining the small amount of literature available, should one conclude that as Calloway suggested, Native Americans “chose the wrong side and they lost,” which therefore makes it a topic that is inconsequential.

This startling revelation led me to pursue the role of Native Americans in present day society. Unsurprisingly, many of the struggles and issues that Native American tribes face today are derived from their earlier roles and encounters with the white settlers of America. Today, in the 21st century, Native Americans are struggling to regain some of their lost culture, and much of their pursuit has centered on what they hold dearest to them, their land. As historian Nancy Shoemaker states, “the greatest meaning land may hold for its inhabitants is in its history... government officials and Americans in general had little regard for the emotional pangs removal would bring for Indians’ loss of landscape that was evocative of their collective past

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3 Calloway, 12.
and the repository of the graves of their ancestors.”  

Land claim cases are still occurring all over the country. A number of these cases are going on locally in New York State, where Native Americans are fighting to reclaim not only the land that they feel was wrongfully taken from them, but also the culture, traditions, and sovereignty that was lost throughout American history.

The final component that I chose to add to my thesis is meant to be a project that illustrates the changing roles and culture of Native Americans over the course of history in the United States. Since this is an issue that is often times overlooked in the history books, it could only be assumed that the topic of Indian roles and struggles would be ignored in educational systems as well. Therefore, I have created a unit plan, that intends to teach students about Native American contributions, struggles, roles, and culture from the time of early European exploration through the colonial era, to present day difficulties in the United States.

The goal throughout this paper is to inform, enrich, and educate young and old alike about a topic that is historically overlooked. Native Americans have played a significant role in United States history, and continue to do so today, which is why it is important to give this topic the proper recognition and respect it so richly deserves.

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Chapter One: Native American Roles in Early America

At the onset of the Revolutionary War, both the American and British forces held an attitude of distain and superiority towards the Native Americans. Yet, both sides had to take Natives into account since there were at least a reported 35,000 Natives east of the Mississippi River at this time. Native Americans were seen as "savages" whose fighting style was barbaric and unconventional to both the Americans and the British. At the start of the war, policies of neutrality were often enforced by all sides. For a very brief while, this stance seemed to work, and many Native American tribes were quite happy to remain neutral in what they thought of as a white man's war. Both the British and the Americans established "Indian departments" in order to maintain relations with surrounding Native American tribes. In one account, the American head of their Indian department met with Native tribes from New York, Ohio, and the region of South Virginia. In order to try and maintain their neutrality, he stressed the fact that this war was a "family quarrel between them [us] and Old England. You Indians are not concerned in it."6

Neutrality seemed to be the best scenario for Americas to pursue at the time since historically their relationship with Native Americans was quite stressed. Battles over land claims caused great friction within many American-tribe relationships, especially within the frontier. It was no hidden fact that Americans living along or on

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the frontier thought of Indian life as having "absolutely no value."\textsuperscript{7} Another historian went as far as to suggest within the white frontier settlers’ minds, a “philosophy of genocide towards the Indians” was taken, and the Revolution was just an opportunity to try and carry this agenda out.\textsuperscript{8} Often times historians write about the fact that frontiersmen treated the Natives harshly and cruelly. The exchange between white settlers and Indian raids were both brutal and violent. It is often reported that within both sides’ acts of striking down “woman, children, and prisoners alike”\textsuperscript{9} was accepted. The white settlers that have been portrayed as innocent bystanders of native raids are the same people who are reported to have frequently murder envoys and peace delegates in retaliation. Due to this preexisting relationship, trying to maintain neutrality was America’s best position concerning the roles of Natives at the beginning of the war. As historian R.S. Cotterhill put it, “neutrality was the most favorable attitude the Americans could expect from people whom they had consistently wronged.”\textsuperscript{10}

Even after the war had begun, American attitudes stunted many possible alliances with Native Americans. One account that exemplifies the often traitor like attitudes of Americans towards Indians can be seen with an early Continental Congress alliance with a Delaware chieftain. Captain White Eyes was guiding a

\textsuperscript{7} Don Rickey Jr., \textit{The Old Northwest in the American Revolution} (Wisconsin: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1977), 153.


\textsuperscript{9} VanEvery 58.

group of American patriots through the wilderness towards unfriendly Indian towns, when he was murdered. Instead of the truth, Americans made up a story of how he was killed by smallpox so that others would not turn away from the patriot cause. Although an ally to the Americans, and the first one to sign a treaty between the Continental Congress and an Indian nation, he was not treated with respect or dignity, even in his death, which was a direct result of his alliance with the Americans.  

Once again, historians quite frequently agree that this prejudiced attitude was prevalent and made it much harder for Americans to gain the support of the various tribes, which is why one almost exclusively hears of Natives aiding the British so heavily during this war.

The relationship between the British and the Indians' choice of alliance is usually simplified by historians. Quite simply, all over the colonies natives often viewed the British as the "lesser of two evils", and the British used this mentality to capitalize off of as much as they could. From the very onset of the war the "Indian Superintendents" for the British urged the use of Natives for their benefit. Their preexisting relationships had for the most part been amicable, and Indians were usually inclined to believe they had a chance at driving Americans from their land if the British won. The competition for Indian support began to grow fierce shortly after the onset of the war, and both sides engaged in a campaign of promises and slander in order to win tribal alliances. The Iroquois confederacy, which was neutral to begin with, was bombarded by the British with "pledges of support and future

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11 O'Donnald, 160.
12 Calloway, 28.
This was very appealing to numerous tribes. In many accounts the British warned the Indians not to trust the Americans who would only go back on their word and betray them in the end. To many Natives, the ability to survive depended on choosing a side that they thought would benefit them the most in the immediate and long run. Economically, they were dependant on trade with white settlers and were being cut off with policies of neutrality. When the fighting took place on their land, they could not stand there and watch. It is generally agreed upon that in the end, the obvious choice was to become allies with the British as a way to maintain their homes, families, and communities.

Southern tribes, most notably the Cherokees, Creeks, and Chickasaws, are usually seen as a focal point for classic case studies on the participation and roles of Native Americans during the war. At first, they too tried to remain neutral; however this was to be a short-lived decision for some of the tribes. Chickasaws were traditionally allies and had developed a friendship before the onset of the Revolutionary war. Few did have loyalties to American traders that they had developed relationships with, but for the most part a majority of members in this tribe were quite content to side with the British. The Creek Indians were also easily persuaded to join the British by the promise of continued trade with when it came down to having to choose sides. It is unanimously agreed upon that the greatest issue of involvement concerning the Southern Indians came from the Cherokee tribe. 


\[14^\text{Calloway, 29.}\]

\[15^\text{Cotterhill, 39.}\]
Prior to the onset of the war, and during its beginning years many American colonies began to engage in heavy conflict with the Cherokee over their land which led to massive attacks on Cherokee nations. Many historical accounts recall a joint South Carolina and Virginian attack on large section of Cherokee land. The American colonists decimated the people and the land alike. Indian scalp rewards were offered at 75 pounds a scalp. As one historian reported, “every house was burned, every cornfield destroyed, every garden uprooted, orchard cut down, and the homeless Cherokee driven in flight into the farthest recesses of their mountains.”\footnote{VanEvery, 70.}

Rebuttal attacks on borders of Georgia, North and South Carolina, and Virginia began to become a common occurrence among many Cherokee. Older head tribal leaders for the Cherokee were against war, and instead urged peace. However, many “outspoken members of war factions”\footnote{Mahon, 144.} did not agree. One member in particular who was very outspoken in aiding the British and going to war against the Americans was a man named Dragging Canoe. However, it is generally agreed upon that his as well as others who insisted on war was not because of a deep devotion to the British or any issue that was connected to the Revolutionary war. Rather their “anti-Americanism” was due to the American intrusion on Cherokee land. Eventually other factions within the Cherokee tribe would join Dragging Canoe and launch a full out campaign against the Americans where they would aid the British as well.

This decision was also come to with some prompting from a traveling group of Northern Indian delegates which included the Iroquois, Shawnee, Delaware, and...
This group urged the Cherokee factions in a "united war" against the Americans. Not only did the Cherokee deeply respect these tribes that had been known for their wisdom in warring matters throughout the Native American community, these words struck very deeply for many of the Cherokee due to the fact that they were very recently and heavily mistreated by the Americans. Once again, it has been illustrated how American relations just prior to and at the onset of the Revolution cost them an ally, and instead gained them a very bitter enemy.

Dragging Canoe is a character in this story that is often focused on by historians due to the fact that he maintains his hatred for Americans and is one of the biggest advocates for joining the war. Historian Dale VanEvery described him as "the violently aggressive Dragging Canoe." However, his hatred for the white settlers often led to him and his forces attacking both loyalists and patriots alike. Often there was no distinction between the two sides, only the fact that they lived in the colonies and were all white. When Canoe started to attack the colonies a divide in the Cherokee occurred, and a new group was formed which was called the Chickamaugas. With Canoe as their leader, the Chickamaugas waged war and wreaked havoc on American settlements. However, they too paid a heavy toll for their fighting. Colonial militia in South Carolina offered 50 pounds per scalp and 100 pounds for live prisoners. The minutemen forces obliterated numerous towns and

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18 Cotterhill, 39.
19 VanEvery, 67.
20 Cotterhill, 45.
villages and all provisions were destroyed. VanEvery described the Cherokee devastation as “every house was burned, every cornfield destroyed, every garden uprooted, every orchard cut down, and the homeless Cherokee driven in flight into the farthest recesses of their mountains.”

Americans demanded that Dragging Canoe be surrendered, and when this failed to happen more Cherokee villages were burned down and overrun. By the end of 1776, those Cherokee that wished to end the fighting and the devastation of their homes signed a peace treaty with Americans, which would force the Cherokee to agree to a land cession. Those Cherokees and the Chicamaungas (who wanted to continue the fighting) were displaced to Florida where they would become refugees to live with other tribes that allied themselves with the British. Their hatred for Americans would go on well after the war for many Cherokee Natives.

The situation with the Cherokee and Dragging Canoe is often used by historians to illustrate one of the major outcomes of the Revolutionary War on Native Americans due to the choices and roles they engaged in. Many tribes were split apart and divided. Displacement from their original ties and homes occurred for many groups as well. The other major outcome was the loss of land not only by the Cherokee, but other native groups all over the United States as well. Historians use Dragging Canoe and the Cherokee Indians as the major example of how Native groups were not engaging in this was because of any kind of allegiance to either side.

21 Mahon, 144.
22 VanEvery, 72.
23 Cotterhill, 44-46.
They were not there to fight on behalf of their American neighbors, nor were they there to support the king and his troops. Many native groups were forced to choose a side, and often times the sour relationship between the Americans and Indians over land disputes caused Indian tribes to side with the British, and perhaps gain the claim back to what they felt had been unjustly taken from them. The conclusion reached by those who study this rather tragic story is that although the natives believed they were making decisions that would help them preserve their land, many ended up losing it before the war was even over\textsuperscript{24}.

It is generally agreed upon that one of the most intense regions of competition for alliance at the beginning of the war was within New York State. The major competition was for the alliance of the League of the Iroquois, or the Six Nations. As with many other tribes of the time, the Iroquois tried to remain neutral at the outbreak of the war. Historically, the League had pledged their allegiance to each other or as Calloway stated had, “managed to maintain a pivotal position in North American affairs by preserving formal neutrality and essential unity of action in previous conflicts.”\textsuperscript{25} Sadly, this traditional stance would not be taken in this war, and the Iroquois would be split into factions that would be supporting various sides. As Francis Jennings stated in the History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy, “the American Revolution was the greatest crisis ever to confront the Iroquois League, and the league broke under the strain.”\textsuperscript{26} After the Revolutionary War, the Seneca,

\textsuperscript{24} Cotterhill, 46.

\textsuperscript{25} Calloway, 33.

\textsuperscript{26} The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1985), 57.
Cayuga, Onondagas, Oneida, Mohawk, and Tuscaroras tribes would no longer be a united front.

Before the onset of the war, there was a long history between the British and most Iroquois tribes of mutual trust. After the French and Indian War the British left various “Indian Superintendents” to maintain their relationship in the colonies. One of these officials, Guy Johnson, worked in the colonies amongst the Iroquois to try and enforce the Proclamation of 1763, which would prohibit the American colonial settlers from settling west of the Appalachian Mountains and into Indian Territory. His successor and nephew, Sir William Johnson, and, Guy Johnson (also a commissioner) would go on to form close relationships with the Mohawk leader, Joseph Brant. One historian pointed out the fact that when it came time to chose sides, Brant would think back on how “the crown had consistently intervened on behalf of the Indians, in the face of the colonists’ westward movement."27 The Iroquois respected these acts, which they saw as respect, and would therefore form relationships with the British early on which would come into account when choosing sides later during the Revolution.28

This is not to say that there was an immediate reaction to join the British upon the start of the war. Choosing sides took the different Iroquois tribes quite a long time, with the exception of the Mohawks who were led by Joseph Brant, a man who had many previous ties to the British. Americans held meeting after meeting in 1776

27 Donald A. Grinde Jr. Iroquois and the Founding of the American Nation (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press Inc., 1977), 81.

28 Grinde, Jr., 62.
in order to try and persuade the Iroquois to join their side in the fighting. British
delegates would waste no time in refuting the American promises of allegiance. They
would consistently tell the Iroquois leaders that the Americans were “deceiving them,
and meant to cheat them” as their intent was to ultimately “take all Indian land from
them.” Still for months it was reported that the Iroquois would vote to remain
neutral in the matter. Yet, as the months went on, the Iroquois would come to the
realization that they would have no other choice than to break their neutrality.

The Onondaga were convinced in 1777 to join the British in a “bloody
ambush” of Americans at Oriskany, New York. Although fighting in this battle had
not been their original intention, by doing so they would be among the first of the
league to go against their united stance and engage in a form of their own civil war. As their involvement in the war grew, the league, which had been so powerfully
united, turned even farther from each other. In many cases with the Iroquois it turned
into “brother killing brother”. One example of this could be seen when those Iroquois
that supported the British burned down their brother tribe, the Oneidas, crops and
houses due to the fact the Oneidas were helping Americans. Oneidas would strike
back by attacking the British supporting Mohawk home and villages. The Oneidas
themselves were split in their decisions and would split into their own sub-factions of
those who would fight with the British, and those who would ally the Americans.
Tuskaroras would decide to fight with the rebel patriot forces, and Cayugas would

29 Grinde Jr., 78.
eventually decide to join England. Historians are apt to agree that the once very strong and admirable Iroquois Confederacy would be broken and split apart by a war in which they had not wanted to participate in to start with.

Historians tend to focus on those Iroquois tribes that would align themselves with the British at this time, the Seneca, Cayuga, and Mohawk. The most emphasis would be placed upon the Mohawk tribe because of their dedication to the British almost from the start, as well as their infamous leader Joseph Brant. Brant is usually described as a man who was well respected, highly intelligent, and brave. One historian summed up his usual description as “a man of exceptional ability, high character, and strong convictions.” Other historians have gone as far as to say there have been many “remarkable Indians, but none as remarkable as Joseph Brant.”

From the beginning, Brant had been predisposed to aligning himself with the British. Starting from his childhood, Brant’s paternity was questioned. Some believed that Sir William Johnson Senior a British man was his father; while others thought Nickus Brant was his true father. As a child, it was reported that Brant “wanted to impress white people” and began to study white people at an early age. He was continually impressed with what he viewed as eloquence and sophisticated educations. Their language and the technology they possessed, such as gunpowder impressed him.

31 Calloway, 34.
32 Barbara Graymont, The Iroquois in the American Revolution (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 53.
33 VanEvery, 26.
At first he was taught by British missionaries, and later was eventually sent to school in Connecticut by Sir William, where his reverence for white people only grew. When his sister Mary married Sir William Johnson, his connection to the British was solidified.\textsuperscript{35} One historian reported that this occupation with whites even became an "obsession". However, at the beginning of the war, Brant started to view both the Americans and the British as insincere, and his "obsession" gave way for concern of his people and the recovery of the land they lost in the Mohawk Valley.\textsuperscript{36} Brant's loyalty would always reflect what was best for his people. He is continuously described a Mohawk first and foremost, and he was said to have "little sympathy" for American settlers who had already taken much of his people's land, and were "bent on taking more."\textsuperscript{37} It seems as though most historians agree that although Brant's prior connection throughout his life to the British aided him in his decision on whom to aid, the ultimate decision to aid the British was the hope that if they won, the Natives would get their land back. As historian Barbara Graymont put it, "his [Brant's] devotion to what he considered to be the best interests of his Indian people were factors that would make him a valuable ally for the British in the years ahead."\textsuperscript{38}

Once the fighting had begun, Brant's role in aiding the British became even more important and emphasized. Brant and his men would fight in numerous battles on behalf of the British forces. In the Battle of Long Island Brant's fighting was

\textsuperscript{35} Encyclopedia of North American Indians, 83.

\textsuperscript{36} Chalmers, 6.

\textsuperscript{37} VanEvery, 60.

\textsuperscript{38} Graymont, 53.
described as heroic. His ability as a skilled soldier is often noted. Once his alliance had been made, many historians note that he was as dedicated to the war as any British man was, if not more.

Another important campaign that Brant and his men would become involved in was the attempt by the British to overtake New York. British Generals William Howe and John Burgoyne would be the main leaders of this attempt. Brant and his men assisted the generals in their attempt to take over New York, which is noted as a campaign of great importance to the Iroquois since that was their home territory. Burgoyne was noted to have traveled with “thousands” of Native troops, especially from the Iroquois tribes, which would help him greatly, although in the end he ultimately would not be successful in his campaign.

However, Howe was successful in his goal of taking New York City. After, it was Brant that did not want to take pause for the winter while there was still “work to be done in his own country.” It was then that he began to campaign heavily for all Iroquois and other Native tribes to join on behalf of the British. All historians agree that the Mohawk influence upon other tribes was quite heavy. The infamously warlike Mohawks coerced many of the Southern tribes into joining their campaign against the British. Various historians who have studied the Southern Native Americans involvement make a careful note of how tribes such as the Cherokee who were unsure of what path to follow at the onset, and who had tried to remain neutral were influenced greatly. As one historian notes, “the peace party among the

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40 Graymont, 108.
Cherokee probably have prevailed but for the arrival of a delegation of Northern Indians [Iroquois as well as others that had joined the cause.] 41 Another account described this Northern delegation as “painted black and bringing belts of black wampum”. The Northern delegation had come to the Cherokee country “preaching war” and reporting the wrong doings of the patriots. 42 Brant had taken it upon himself to not only fight in this war, but to enlist others in his cause. It is often written of how he would remind these other tribes of the consequences of an American victory, and of their pledged alliance with the king.

Yet once again, one is always reminded by the author of the fact that Brant “was following a course which he felt would, in the long run, be best for his own people.” 43 It is consistently reported that the Native Americans of other tribes thought of Brant as a hero, and generally listened when he spoke. Reportedly Brant called those who would argue against him cowards, and the fact that neutrality would only result in “disaster”. His words greatly influenced one of his fellow tribes, the Seneca, who were predisposed to remaining neutral. They were “stung” by Brant’s words and could not take being referred to as cowards. 44 Historians use this to illustrate one of the many ways Brant and the Mohawk tribe would provide an invaluable role in their assistance with the British throughout the war.

41 Cotterill, 39.


43 Graymont, 109.

44 Grinde, 85.
It is important to note one of the rare exceptions to the traditional (and often stereotypical) historical approach of characterizing tribal alliances. It is commonly assumed that those tribes that did not get along with the Americans previous to the Revolutionary War would immediately align themselves with the British during the fighting. However, one tribe that did not follow this general and widely accepted assumption can be seen with the Shawnee Indians. Historian Colin G. Calloway goes out of his way in his writing to make the distinction of this tribe and how they do not fit the “classical” historians’ viewpoint on this topic. He goes as far as to claim that the idea of not just illustrating the Shawnee warriors “stalking frontier cabins proved too tempting for most of later historians to abandon.”

Calloway reflects on how it is common knowledge that those American settlers who lived on the frontier [Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, and Kentucky specifically] hated the Shawnee and consistently tried to take their lands, which was around the Ohio River, from them. Coupled with the infamous Shawnee capture of American hero, Daniel Boone, and their extreme resentment of colonial expansion, one would “think it was clear” who this tribe would have sided.

Calloway reflects on the fact that this tribe could easily have made the same decisions that other tribes who had a negative relationship with the Americans did, which would be to fight alongside of the British. However, O’Donnell points out that this common assumption would be a misconception in this case, one that many historians would jump to incorrectly. If one looks further at this case, they would

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45 Calloway, 158.

46 Calloway, 159.
discover that the Shawnees initially saw the Revolution as an issue that did not concern them and their people. Despite the opportunity to be able to attack Americans, a group that they did not traditionally coexist peacefully with, they were more inclined to stay out of the war as long as it did not affect them. Due to this decision, the Shawnee received threats by those tribes that had aligned themselves with the British. Despite the fact that they were putting their own families and homes at risk, as well as giving up the opportunity to seek revenge on a group of people that they had an immense hatred for, the Shawnee opted to try and “maintain some kind of middle ground as militants on both sides”\textsuperscript{47} which would end up creating a world of chaos and war between their own people as well as the enemy. Due to the fact that the decision of the Shawnee to maintain relative neutrality throughout the war would be a decision that not many other tribes who traditionally dislike the Americans would make, Calloway uses this case point out how easy it is for historians to overlook this tribe’s story.

It is at the point when historians start to recall the actual battles of the war that the role natives played begins to change from confused bystanders that were for the most part dragged unwillingly into the war, into that of a brutal and often harsh group of people. Destruction of enemy villages was a war tactic that would be used by both the Americans and the British. “Beatings, burnings, looting, rioting abound”\textsuperscript{48} is an accurate description used by many historians to describe both sides. Despite the fact that both sides engaged in these vicious war tactics historians often focus in on Native

\textsuperscript{47} Calloway, 160.

\textsuperscript{48} VanEvery, 56.
Americans as playing a role that was much more violent and “barbaric” than their white counterparts. When recalling native roles, one historian referred to Natives as creating a “bloody fashion[ed] war” as well as people who had a “love of slaughter and loot.”

One may read numerous accounts “out of control” natives who went against British orders and did not heed their warnings to be as nonviolent as possible. In one account, Joseph Brant and the Iroquois that were aiding the British were described as “unpredictable” and agitating to work with due to this. Historian Allan Eckert retells many of the accounts of Brant and his men, and all attacks are extreme and ruthless in nature. In one account the British forces aided by Brant invade a “pleasant little town” called Andrustown. Men, woman, and children alike are brutally killed by the Natives. Scalping was done as sport, plundering occurred in mass amounts, killing livestock, and homes being set ablaze with people stilled trapped inside were all taking place without hesitation. In one instance “the warrior picked up a large rock nearby and slammed it down on the back of Bell’s [a colonist who had lived in the town] head, crushing his skull and killing him.”

Brant and his men are reported to have even committed these atrocities against tribes that they were once committed to protecting. When Brant came across the Oneidas who were aiding the Americans, the plundering was not lessened. When the Americans and their Indian allies retaliated on their villages, “desire” for revenge was fueled within the Iroquois ranks.


51 Eckert, 229
Historian James H. O’Donnell reported similar actions taken by the British aiding Cherokee whose “stories of resulting pillage and death sent a thrill of alarm along the entire frontier in the South.” All throughout the frontier Indian parties reportedly ran about destroying property, taking livestock, supplies, and prisoners, and killing. When preparing for native attacks, Americans are described as waiting for the “onslaught”. In another historians account, Native Americans that were aiding the British are accused of having lost control of their actions, and began to kill all whites, “Patriot and Tory alike.”

The most commonly used example of Native American brutality by historians may be seen with the attack at the Wyoming and Cherry Valleys. Brant and his men, as well as their British counterparts carried out this attack that is often characterized by its brutality and mass deaths. In command of the British forces was Captain Walter N. Butler, who would be described as a general who lost control of his “savage” troops, although he had warned them prior to the attack to not “engage in excessive barbarity.” Yet upon arrival, Native American troops would run amuck inflicting death and destruction upon many innocent bystanders of the area, such as woman and children. In one example of the extreme brutality of Native Americans, a Seneca Indian named Little Beard ambushed an innocent young woman named Eleanor, who was working in her front yard upon the start of the attack. Little Beard is described to almost mockingly have chased her into the woods, where she begins to

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52 O’Donnell, 43.
53 Mahon, 146.
54 Eckert, 251.
beg for her life and the opportunity to be spared. It is at this point that she takes notice that one of the Tory soldiers is a young man who had once worked for her father. She begs him to help her escape from Little Beard, and he agrees. Smith goes as far as to claim that the girl was his sister and should be spared for this reason especially. Little Beard’s reaction was to have his “lips curl in a sneer” and “with one hand he would thrust Smith backwards out of the way, and with the other buried his tomahawk in Eleanor’s temple.”

One historian even points out the fact that the usually revered Brant is as “barbaric” as his counterparts in these attacks. At one point it is described how he had been friends with a very affluent Patriot family before the war from this area. When they call upon him for help, he makes the decision to ignore their pleas. At another point, Brant is described to have walked up to the dying body of a Patriot Officer, only to pull the tomahawk out of his head as he then proceeds to scalp the officer and “with hardly a backward glance” walks away.

Most historians make sure to emphasize the indisputable fact that Brant was a loyal ally to the British, and the description of his actions above would not usually be described as surprising or uncharacteristic for his role in the war. Unsurprisingly, when describing Cherry Valley, like most others who study this topic, historian Dale VanEvery does agree with the account of the brutal attacks carried out at this town by the British and the Native Americans. However, when it comes to Brant and his actions in this scene, he does not describe him as a vicious, war hungry leader, but

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55 Eckert, 259.

56 Eckert, 260.
rather as someone who was quite tired with the campaigning and fighting and was "more than ready for retirement to winter quarters." VanEvery also goes on to report how Brant had been "reluctant" to serve for the British officer in command, Butler, and had "disapproved of Butler's intention to attack Cherry Valley". This outlook and description of Brant seems to directly oppose the previous historian's assertion about his demeanor and war actions. If one were to read the two descriptions, it would seem as though they were reading about two different people. Interestingly, this account does seem to correlate somewhat more cohesively with previous historians' descriptions of Brant and his intelligent, rational demeanor when growing up. Whether Eckert or VanEvery is correct, it is important to note the discrepancy between the descriptions of Brant's actions, as he is one of the most historical figures to represent Native American roles in the Revolutionary War, and how he is perceived and described has far reaching consequences to opinion of Native Americans at this time.

After the attacks on the Wyoming and Cherry Valleys, nearly all historians focus in on one of the most widespread, decimating counter-attacks of the war, which was to be carried out by the American forces. It was later to be called Sullivan's Campaign, after the main American General, John Sullivan, who carried out the series of planned attacks. It is reported that historians who focus in on the military aspects of the war often deem this campaign as one of the "first examples of modern strategies of total war." This attack was formulated at order out by the lead Patriot

57 VanEvery, 163.
58 Grinde, 111.
General George Washington. It was reported that upon hearing the destruction of Cherry Valley, Washington was convinced he must “break the power of the Iroquois.”

It is at this point that there comes some disagreement between historians concerning the role of the Native Americans. Some argue that this was a total destruction of the Iroquois land, villages, and people, which was excessive and brutal in nature. Others agree that the “suffered cruelty” that had been inflicted on Americans by the British and their Native American allies should be returned in a rebuttal campaign. These historians tend to see the destruction and killings of Sullivan’s Campaign as minimal or even deserving at this point.

In the year 1779, Sullivan’s Campaign was not only carried out by head General John Sullivan, but was a war campaign that was to have three American Generals attacking various Native American villages throughout New York and Pennsylvania, with a heavy emphasis on the Iroquois land and people. Sullivan was to start up the Susquehanna River and ascend into the “heart of the Iroquois country.” General James Clinton marched in New York with many troops as well with the goal of joining Sullivan. Meanwhile, Colonel Daniel Brodhead was to march up from Pennsylvania and at some point met Sullivan in western New York in the Seneca Region. Historian Donald A. Grindle points makes it a point to illustrate how “anxious [Americans were] to retaliate” against the Native Americans, and how

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59 Mahon, 146.

60 Mahon, 146.

61 A.C. Flick, The Sullivan-Clinton Campaign (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1929), 10-12
the mentality of "evening the score" was prevalent. He goes on to discuss how Washington, the man who ordered this campaign, realized that Iroquois had been doing great damage to the American cause and needed to be stopped. When Grindle describes Sullivan's Campaign, he makes sure to point out the various brutalities of the Americans, which a reader gets the sense is excessive in nature. It was reported that at one point Clinton has to make a speech to his men about not "violating the chastity of any woman, [and their] prisoners". It is also pointed out that this statement by Clinton "was a startling realization for many American officers" that Native American people often treated prisoners "more humanly than the rough hewn militiamen and regulars in the Continental Army." Grindle was also reportedly guilty of attacking and plundering many Onondaga villages in the spring and summer of 1779, which would not have been characterized as so bad had many of the Onondaga villages not taken the standpoint of neutrality at this point. Both Mahon and Grindle describe Sullivan's Campaign as an event where it was essential to "not just overrun, but destroy." Both historians report the great atrocities that befell the Indian villages because of this campaign which would include the Americans burning all houses down, as well as all outlaying buildings, cutting down and burning all orchards and crops, and taking as many prisoners as possible. The ruin of Native American crops would be one of the greatest and calculated moves of all for the Americans who had destroyed their crops at the end of the growing season, as to insure that there was no way for them to be able to plant more crops for the

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63 Mahon, 146.
approaching winter. This not only destroyed the Iroquois people's homes, families, and villages in the long run, but also ensured long-term suffering in the months to come. One historian reported on the extremely harsh winter that did inevitable follow, and how virtually all the Iroquois had no food to get them through. The extreme hunger drove them to Fort Niagara where they many “suffered greatly and many died of hunger and exposure.” In another account Washington is said to have gained the nickname, “Town Destroyer” among the Iroquois for his role in this devastating event. It is said that this name was still used in the 1970’s for the president, who when his name is heard, “woman look behind them and turn pale and children cling close to the necks of their mother.”

It is here within these accounts that one many see historians who are in agreement that the role of the Native Americans changes from that of savage warriors, to the victims of an exceptionally cruel and devastating revenge. Washington reported “total destruction and devastation of the Indian settlements” and capture of as many Natives as possible is just another example of the brutality gone too far. As one historian described it, the Americans were going to put an end to the Native American threat, by “wiping out” as many of the Native American homes and people as possible, and turning the once powerful British allies into

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65 Grindle, 112.

66 Mahon, 146.

67 Sproule, 359.
nothing more than a charity case who would be left a broken group with nothing left to them.

Conversely, this is not the only view that is taken by historians concerning Sullivan's Campaign. Some historians present the information to tell a story of an American general who was fulfilling one of his many hero duties for the American people by subduing the enemy, which in this case happened to be the Natives, with as little harm inflicted as possible. R.W.G. Vail reports that Washington came to the realization that the only way to stop a "serious menace" and protect his people essentially from the British was to carry out this campaign. However, Sullivan's Campaign is not presented as being done out of spite or revenge as other historian may have claimed, but rather for the protection of the American people by a president who had good foresight. Washington is also said to have embarked on this campaign for the fruitful land that would come with the destruction of the Iroquois, which could then be added on to American soil and used by frontiersmen.⁶⁸

The story of Thomas Boyd, a scout for the Americans who around this time was brutally tortured and killed is also used by many historians to justify the continuance of Sullivan's Campaign. His torture by a Native American named Little Beard was said to be "most inhumane and revolting" account that the Americans had seen at the time. Although this was a ruthless attempt by a group of Natives to get information on the Americans campaign, it was an isolated few who carried this episode out. However, instead of looking at the mass destruction that has been inflicted upon the Native Americans at the time, Historians like Mary Cheney Elwood

⁶⁸ The Western Campaign of 1779, 4.
chose to describe this incident as the “most tragic episode of the Sullivan Campaign.”\textsuperscript{69} The retaliation made by the Americans, which included the burning of 128 houses and all food provisions, was never mentioned in her account.\textsuperscript{70}

Another account of this event describes the Iroquois as being “terribly punished”, however, the result of actions taken by the Americans would lead to them to feeling “secure”, and having more land opportunities.\textsuperscript{71} Within this Historians interpretation, it has even been reported that the “barbarity and wanton destruction of homes, gardens, and orchards, of the Indians” had little validity, as there was “little manifestation of cruelty against the Indians by Patriot soldiers.”\textsuperscript{72} This historical reference suggests the American soldiers went out of their way to protect the Native Americans during this campaign, and keep them safe. It is also suggested within this reading that “American soldiers revealed remarkable self-restraint” during this time with the amount of destruction they carried out.\textsuperscript{73} This interpretation of Sullivan’s Campaign seems to directly contradict many historical accounts, and is important to think about when looking at this issue.

At the beginning of this paper the question of whether or not the subject of Native Americans roles in the Revolutionary War was a topic that is inconsequential

\textsuperscript{69} Mary Cheney Elwood, \textit{An Episode of the Sullivan Campaign and its Sequel} (Rochester: The Rochester Historical Society, 1904), 10.

\textsuperscript{70} \textit{The Western Campaign of 1779}, 9.

\textsuperscript{71} Flick, 16.

\textsuperscript{72}Flick, 16.

\textsuperscript{73} Flick, 16.
was posed. Although there was not a plethora of historians that have covered this topic, what information there is available does seem to give a good interpretation of the roles of Native Americans during the Revolutionary War. It can generally be agreed upon by almost all historians that the war was an issue that Native Americans did not want to get involved in within the first place, and were unwillingly dragged into. However, once they became involved the roles that the different tribes played would vary somewhat. For the Cherokee the decision of whether or not to join was one that would split them apart, and cause massive displacement from their homes. The Iroquois faced the breakup of their once powerful alliance, as well as the loss of the land that they fought so hard to preserve. Individuals such as Joseph Brant (whose actions were taken with the intention of helping his people were carried out in vain for his people and his land) would never be the same after the destruction they had faced. Some historians argue that Native Americans were brutal savages, while other argued they were reluctant by standards that did what was necessary to preserve their own way of life. From the various historical viewpoints available, I do not agree with the Native American role as being able to be summed up as, as Calloway suggested earlier simply as, they chose the wrong side, and they lost. Historical perspectives and evidence suggests their role in the war was anything but inconsequential, but rather played a significant part with both the American and British sides, as well as a significant part in their future as a community, and defined people.
Chapter Two: Native American Struggles Today

During the Revolutionary War, Native American tribes were placed in the position of having to choose to aid the American colonists and their pursuit of self-rule, or the British and their quest to keep the colonies of which they claimed control. Both options forced Native Americans to fight on behalf of people who had come from distant lands and infringed upon a substantial amount of land that had previously been home to various tribes. When faced with this dilemma, most Native American tribes chose to side with the British. It was assumed that a victory on behalf of the British would keep the colonists from encroaching and settling on more Native American land. Unfortunately, the Natives chose to support the wrong side, and were saddled with the burden of having to forge relations with a newly created country and its citizens. After years of unfair treatment and differing cultural viewpoints and attitudes, Native Americans emerged as a race whose way of life had been altered dramatically to survive the policies and standards set by those in positions of power within the United States. One of the major results of Native involvement with Americans over the centuries has been their forced engagement in legal battles for their land, an aspect of their culture which they consider to be integral to their way of life and traditions.

Land issues were present between Native Americans and Americans from the start of colonization in the late 1400’s. White colonists often held the misconception that Native Americans had little to no concept of property. It was commonly believed

that in contrast to European attitudes on property at this time, Natives did not view land as private or individually owned, and that land boundaries existed only formally in their culture. Yet as Shoemaker points out, “…that Indians and Europeans both conceptualized land as sovereign territory is well-known but frequently overlooked or forgotten.” Property was seen as owned not necessarily by individual, but rather by the groups of people in their tribe. Natives also had boundaries for their individual tribal lands, which were usually set by natural landmarks such as rivers or mountains, and hunting grounds. Examples of tribes exerting their ownership over pieces of land can be seen in the 18th century with the Iroquois.

In one case, the Cayugas made their tribal property known when they declared the land of the Susquehanna Valley, as their “chief hunting country.” The Seneca claimed jurisdiction over the land around the Niagara River. In these as well as other instances, other tribes respected the land claims of these groups and did not infringe on the declared boundaries. Hence, although land was never officially divided between the various Native American tribes, ownership of land was established and recognized throughout the Native American community from the beginning. The Europeans (in their haste to gain land to settle on) failed to see those land boundaries and ownership distinctions that had been determined and respected for years before their arrival.

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75 Shoemaker, 15.
76 Shoemaker, 15.
77 Shoemaker, 17.
In contrast to most Native Americans at this time, European land ownership was synonymous with individual, private property. There as a need for land to be scientifically measured out in individual plots. Survey map creations were common practice. Native Americans based their ideals of land on communal property, while "the primary goal of white government was the protection of private individual landholdings." Land did not have the personal meaning to the European settlers as it had to the Natives. Natives did not view the purpose of land to be individually parceled out, but rather they attached significance to the land that they claimed belonged to their tribe.

The Iroquois tribes exemplify this concept of attaching meaning to land perfectly. Doug George-Kanentiio, a current member of the Mohawk Nation and an activist for Native American land claim rights explained that still today there are many places in New York State that hold great significance to the Iroquois. George-Kanentiio writes in his commentary that these sites "are not known to most people and are rarely marked by plaques, yet to this day, the informed Iroquois will stop for a few moments to reflect and remember." Among these lands of significance are the Cohoes waterfalls just north of Albany, a spot where the Iroquois believe the prophet Peacemaker preformed some of his miracles about eight hundred years ago. All along the Mohawk River are ancient village sites, and south of Canandaigua Lake is a

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79 Shoemaker, 24.

hill that the Seneca dubbed “the Great Hill” due to the fact that they believe that they “sprang from the earth at this magical place.”

As George-Kanentiio, a Native American himself makes clear: land was, and continues to be more than something to be owned. It plays the significant role of the telling the story of how their people came into existence and lived their lives.

Due to this difference in views on the ownership of land, in the years following the Revolutionary War, the earliest land treaties had to be made between Europeans and tribes only when there was consent to sell land by the whole community. However, as time went on, it became clear that “from a practical and obvious point of view, the United States could not expand unless it did so by taking American Indian lands.”

Therefore, the pursuit and aggressiveness of land acquisition by the colonist (who were now American citizens) would increase dramatically in the years following their victory in the Revolutionary War. The Iroquois had opposed the Revolutionary War from the beginning, seeing it as a “white man’s” war that they had nothing to do with. For as long as it was possible, many of the tribes remained neutral. Ironically, many of these initially neutral tribes lost not only casualties during the war, but their lands and ways of life as well. With expansion as the main goal of Americans at this time, corrupt deals began to emerge between Native American tribal leaders, state governments and in many cases with individual American entrepreneurs. Land sales were occurring when the whole tribe was not in

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81 George-Kanentiio, 30.
82 Venables, 113.
agreement and Native families were being displaced from the land that had previously been a part of their culture and history for hundreds of years before. As human rights and Indian tribal government advocate Sharon O’Brian emphasized, land held numerous important roles for native tribes, “for most indigenous societies the land is a unifying force-the land represents a home, a livelihood, a religion...safety against an encroaching and alien culture.”

In the 1784 Treaty of Fort Stanwix, the Iroquois were forced to give up their land claims in Pennsylvania and Ohio. Also in 1784 as part of a treaty in Albany, the Cayugas were coerced to sell all of their land except for a 100 square mile reservation around the north end of Cayuga Lake. In 1797 during the Treaty of Big Tree, near Geneseo, New York, the Seneca Natives sold must of the land they owned to the Holland Land Company for $100,000. Iroquois morale dramatically decreased due to the loss of their lands in deals that had been made without their majority consent. Many of the Natives believed that their tribal leaders (whom they had placed their traditional unwavering trust in) had “sold them out for personal advantage.” Even the well-known Joseph Brant, a main Native American figure during the Revolutionary War, who was greatly respected by not only his own people and the British, was said to be involved in land sales corruption. In Ontario, Brant

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*Snow, 154-155.

*Snow, 156.*
sold and leased large tracts of land to non-Indian tenants. The cost to his fellow Natives was 350,000 acres of their once traditionally sacred land to people outside of their race. The man who had been revered in the Native American community as a leader now receives everlasting scorn within the Iroquois community today.87

In 1787, the highly prominent businessman, John Livingston, who had formed a company to lease Iroquois land, approached the Seneca, Cayuga, and Onondaga chiefs. The idea of “leasing” their land sounded much safer to many of the Natives, as they were still cautious of losing their land permanently to ever-expanding American boundaries.88 Upon approaching the chiefs, Livingston and his associates (many whom held high state offices at the time) presented themselves under false pretenses, claiming they represented the state. This would be the first of many deceptions used in his “land leasing deals” with the Iroquois nation. Livingston not only evaded New York State’s constitutional ban on private land transactions with the Natives, but he also managed to successfully mislead the tribes with the conditions of his deal. The Iroquois signed a 999-year term for the leasing of their land, consequently surrendering most of the Iroquois land, a deal which became known as the “long lease.” An estimated 13 million acres was leased to non-Natives in exchange for the fee of $20,000 plus the annual payment of $2,000 for each subsequent year. Taylor argues that the chief agreed to such a deal due to their fear of the state coming in and taking their land “with little or no compensation and without

87 Snow, 164.
providing for the long-term annual income coveted by the Iroquois.” They were not wrong in assuming this, since in previous years this had occurred with such tribes as the Oneida. In 1785 at Fort Herkimer, the Oneida lost land through governor-coerced land secession.

Later in the 1800s with the encroachment of settlers on once-exclusive Native land, tribes such as the Oneidas lost their ability to engage in the practices that their traditional economies were based on such as farming, hunting, fishing, and gathering. The Americans’ practice of creating dams and mills, overfishing, depletion of wild game, clearing forests for farms, and roaming livestock all infringed on the traditional methods these tribal members used to make their livings. The hungry, dependant tribes began to need money greatly, which led to them being “in no position to resist pressures from the state to make new land cessions that promised an immediate infusion of cash.” Tribes like the Oneida not only lost their traditional ways of life due to the settlement patterns of the American settlers, but also became dependent on them in the process, which would all more corrupt land claim deals to occur. Many Native American tribes in New York as well as other states in America would continue to be displaced as the United States grew in size and power.

Once the United States had formed a national government, starting with the authors of the Articles of Confederation, advocates for protection of Native American tribal sovereignty and fair land deals would be expressed. Historian and Native American advocate, Robert W. Venables even asserted that the American government

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89 Taylor, 171.

90 Taylor, 390.
under the Articles of Confederation was very much based on the "decentralized" government model of the Iroquois, and its failure was due to the colonist inability to correctly execute "American Indian philosophical models." However, even the American national government would try to take advantage of Native Americans in the beginning. The enactment of numerous acts, programs, and agency creations, by the U.S. government were, and continue to be, inconsistent in their effort to aid the minority group that they claim to protect. Early in American history, the United States government was guilty of trying to force the succession of Native American homelands. At first, Congress tried to gain control of Native land with the hopes that they would not have to give any form of payment which held real substantial value in return. To try to convince Natives to part with their land after the War, they used the argument of "atonement." This was the idea that Natives needed to do penance for the great injuries that had been inflicted to Americans by those who chose to fight on the side of the British during the war. They informed Native tribes that when the British lost, they had ceded their land to the Untied States in the Treaty of Paris, which gave them jurisdiction over the land from the Atlantic to the Mississippi River, making the Natives dependant to the U.S.

In 1784, Congress tired to improve their relationship with the Native tribes, which were not willing to give their land or sovereignty up as easily as the U.S. government had hoped. In the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, the Iroquois Confederacy

91 Venables, 116.


93 Berkley, 204.
agreed to terms of peaceful relations with the United States. In exchange for the
surrender of a portion of their land, the U.S. government agreed to protect the
territories against all "encroachments, seizure, or any other violation." However,
this agreement would be poorly kept by the government, who would waiver in its
enforcement, allowing states such as New York the ability to make corrupt land deals
with the various tribes, and individuals like Livingston to make personal self-
interested deals with tribal leaders.

When the Constitution of the United States was formally adopted in 1787, it
continued to stress the policy of only the national government dealing with and make
agreements concerning the Native American tribes that fell within the U.S. borders.
However, this theory was promptly tested and largely ignored by the states. One
example of this may be seen in the 1788 when New York State directly violated the
Federal government’s mandate with the ratification of their State Constitution. They
included a provision, which would allow for the state to have the right to control
Indian land purchases. New York State was said to be extremely ruthless in their
pursuit to acquire Indian lands, and would continually disregard the national policies
that Congress tried to install throughout the country. Another example of states’
contempt and disregard for this law can be seen in the south, which was said to be
equally, if not more, "ruthless” than their northern counterparts. In 1789, the state of
Georgia tried to sell the land of the Choctaw and Chickasaw to three private
companies. North Carolina extended territorial claims into Native land based on

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94 Berkley, 205.
“royal charters.” 95 As the years continued, various other states would take Native American land affairs and deals into their own hands, causing the word of the law to fall on deaf ears. Nevertheless, the federal government continued to try and maintain positive relations with their Native American neighbors in recognizing the sovereignty and independence of their nations. As one historian and Native American advocate states, “the historic loss of Indian land and sovereignty under federal law has no basis whatever in the intention of the framers.” 96

The great “transportation revolution” (which would occur early in our country’s history) would lead to the creation of massive turnpikes, the Erie Canal, and railroads. This too would play a role in the displacement of Native Americans from their homes. Historian Laurence M. Hauptman devoted an entire book to the topic of the Erie Canal, illustrating that although it was a great achievement for the state of New York, in many ways making it what it is today, it systematically “led to the undoing of the Iroquois” 97 in the process. In the 1790’s, the first massive endeavor at building a turnpike was embarked upon. The turnpike would go from Albany to Buffalo, and have numerous names such as the Seneca Trial, the Genesee Turnpike, the Seneca Turnpike, or the Great Western Turnpike. New York State granted the land needed, disregarding the fact that the great road would go directly through Oneida lands. From 1785 to 1815, the Oneida lands would be seriously disrupted by the transportation revolution that was taking place and a “periodic extinguishment of

95 Berkley, 206.
96 Berkley, 225.
97 Laurence M. Hauptman, Conspiracy of Interests: The Iroquois Disposition and the Rise of New York State (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 3.
Indian land rights along this great turnpike.” The Erie Canal would also do its fair share of displacement of native tribes during its construction as well. Benjamin Wright, the chief engineer for the Erie Canal wrote in his journal about how the “State property now owned and that owned by the Indians which will soon become state property will be trebled in value.”98 Individuals such as prominent politician De Witt Clinton often headed take control of Tribal lands, claiming that transportation projects “required the Iroquois to lose their lands as “sacrifice areas” for the state’s and nations progress.”99

The Iroquois tribe that would be most affected by the transportation revolution and the “progress” the state was making was the Oneida, who started in 1784 with more than five million acres of land. In 1829, under the authority of the governor Martin Van Buren, New York State obtained Oneida lands for the purpose of the canal through an illegal agreement with the Oneida’s First Christian Party. This agreement knowingly violated the Trade and Intercourse Acts that the federal government had set up, which required federal approval or the presence of a federal commissioner to supervise the proceeding. Other land deals occurred where the state “purchased land” through “treaties” from Oneidas for fifty cents per acre, which would then be sold for seven to ten times its original purchase price.100 By the end of the Canal project, the Oneida would lose most of their homelands through New York State’s opened defiance of Congress and dealings of illegal proceedings.

98 Hauptman, 7.
99 Hauptman, 18.
100 Hauptman, 64.
The canal that was completed in 1825 would also result in Seneca Tribe’s loss of Buffalo and Genesee lands by the 1830’s. Land baron and prominent local figure, Robert Morris sent his son, Thomas Morris, to make negotiations with the Seneca Tribe at Big Tree near Geneseo, New York. His strategy was said to include “outright bribery, the use of alcohol, and further factionalism among the Senecas, all which proved effective in the spectacular’s goals.” In the end, the Seneca ceded their right to most of their land west of the Genesee River, which included millions of acres of land. All of these land treaties were made and agreed to illegally, and due to this fact, would be questioned in later centuries during various land claim cases.

The national government would soon try to develop various policies and agencies that were intended to deal with continued Native American issues. Among the first of the federal policies attempting to “help” relations with the Natives was the establishment of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Originally created in 1824 by Secretary of War John C. Calhoun without the approval of Congress, this federal agency was originally intended to be part of the Department of War. In 1849, it was transferred to the Department of the Interior where its role became administering and managing Indian relations and land as well as distributing aid to natives in need. Yet, by the 1860’s, some felt that the agency was already neglecting the responsibilities it was supposed to be responsible for. Agents working for this department were said to have “increased misery on reservations and generated

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101 Hauptman, 91.

In the 1880’s when there was a big push for Native American assimilation, the BIA became responsible for managing school funding, supply funding, and allotment and leasing issues. This agency is still in existence today in our federal government, however, as the years continue, the BIA’s role and helpfulness has remained questionable and highly debated. Its mission statement reads that its:

Responsibility is the administration and management of 55.7 million acres of land held in trust by the United States for American Indians, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives. There are 561 federal recognized tribal governments in the United States. Developing forestlands, leasing assets on these lands, directing agricultural programs, protecting water and land rights, developing and maintaining infrastructure and economic development are all part of the agency’s responsibility. In addition, the Bureau of Indian Affairs provides education services to approximately 48,000 Indian students. 1

It is currently involved in a class action suit brought on by Native Americans, who have accused the department of incorrectly accounting for Indian trust assets, which belonged to individual Native Americans, but instead have gone unaccounted for in the Department of the Interior. The approximately 500,000 Native American beneficiaries who are participating in the suite claim that billions (the defendants claim that the monetary value is more likely in the “millions”) of dollars which belonged to them and their heirs (and were supposedly being held in trust since the

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The late 19th century) have never been allotted to them as it should have over the years. The goal of the named plaintiff in the case, a member of the Blackfoot tribe in Montana, is to force the government to account for the missing money, and to bring “permanent reform” to the agency that many Natives see as a corrupt and untrustworthy.

The General Allotment Act, also known as the Dawes Act of 1887 was the next attempt by the federal government to “help” Native Americans after the creation of the BIA. Native American land was surveyed and divided and transferred to private ownership for allotment to individual Indians. Those who lobbied for this act believed that, “the tribal ideology of collectivism was the basic reason for the general misery of American Indians.”

Ironically, lobbyists for this act included private land speculators, railway and mining companies, the timber industry, and large cattle ranchers. These groups believed that the large tribal land reserves that had existed were not being used “properly,” and hope that this act would grant them the opportunity to acquire the Natives’ land. Eventually these companies would get their wish when these “public lands” were handed to them by the government, allowing these white owned and controlled corporations access to use Native land to make massive profits. This act was also intended by some to help “civilize” Native

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106 Klaus Frantz, Indian Reservations in the United States: Territory, Sovereignty, and Socioeconomic Change (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 23.

Americans and introduce them to the lifestyle and traditional methods of white American citizens. Although white Americans should see its act as a success, for the Native American community, the result was the loss of their culture, traditional ways of life, and their land. In less than fifty years, tribes in America list nearly sixty percent of whatever territory they had managed to hold onto throughout earlier years. The BIA was supposedly responsible for choosing the land, and after allotments had been made, the United States government purchased all the surplus land from the tribes, and offering it to white buyers. Wishing to please these prospective white buyers, the BIA allotted the best land for agriculture and grazing, and the best forests to be the "surplus," leaving the Native Americans the lesser valuable and resource depleted land.\textsuperscript{108}

As the years went by in the United States, many more federal policies and acts would be created in order to manage Indian issues and affairs. In the 1930's, a government survey of social and economic conditions on reservations was given. The results indicated that poverty, high child mortality rates, poor health, bad living conditions, and inadequate levels of education were all present in the Native American culture.\textsuperscript{109} This should not have come as a shock to the government since in the preceding years, little had been done to help protect tribal sovereignty, culture, and land. In many cases, white Americans and settlers did the exact opposite to the Natives. With this report information and the approach of the "Roosevelt Era," the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) was established. It was created with the intention of

\textsuperscript{108} Frantz, 25.
\textsuperscript{109} Frantz, 31.
ending the allotment policy and implementing reforms, which would give Native Americans more “political, economic, and cultural independence.”\textsuperscript{110} The idea was for tribes to be able to keep their cultural and historical ways of life, while receiving aid from the U.S. government and integrating those American values and traditions that they liked. On some reservations, this idea of blending their traditional way of life with their newly adopted American ways worked. However, on other tribal reservations, this idea was not well received and was only partially accepted. This would lead in some cases to internal tribal conflicts as well as conflict between various tribes themselves, many which still exist today.\textsuperscript{111}

In 1946, another major commission was established, the Indian Claims Commission (ICC), whose purpose was to allow Indian tribes to appeal with claims for reparations for land that had been taken from them illegally. This was an important act for the Native American community, since it would allow them the opportunity to get back some of the land that was taken from them in previous years through corrupt or unfair land deals. Lawsuits brought before the commission also involved issues such as water, fishing, and hunting violations and rights, and improper BIA conduct and management. Unfortunately, this commission was only in effect for about thirty years in the United States, in which time it heard 670 cases, ruling in favor of Natives about 60 percent of the time.\textsuperscript{112} However, tribes did not receive measures of full justice within these cases due to the fact that “only in the

\textsuperscript{110} Frantz, 31.
\textsuperscript{111} Frantz, 31.
\textsuperscript{112} Frantz, 32.
most exceptional cases did the verdict of the ICC result in the restitution of land, however, and financial compensation was the general rule."\(^{113}\) This "money for land" deal that the commission favored denied the tribes the ability to get back from them property which was deemed rightfully theirs. They were unable to reclaim the land that held the stories and traditions of their past generations descendants, which in many cases had been their goal. Another fault of the Commission was the fact that the monetary compensation that tribes were given was estimated on the value of the Indian lands' worth at the time period in which they were ceded, not on their current value. Adding insult to injury, if the tribe accepted the compensation payment from the courts, it would have to "renounce all future claims of any kind to tribal lands,"\(^{114}\) and for this reason, many of the tribes did not accept their compensation payments.

The 1960s would once again call for a federal focus on dismal Native American conditions and ways of life when numerous Indiana leaders protested the social and economic state of the reservations that they lived on. The BIA was called on to join with local tribal leaders to help fight the "war" on Native American poverty, and presidential campaigns of the 60's on both the democratic and republican platforms made mention of economic, social, and cultural developmental assistance for Indian tribes.\(^{115}\) From the start of our nation's inception, the intention of the founding fathers of this county was not for the pursuit of this historic loss of Native American land, culture, and sovereignty. Yet it has been well documented

\(^{113}\) Frantz, 33.

\(^{114}\) Franz, 33.

how throughout the past, federal laws and policies have failed from the beginning of this nation's conception to present day in truly protecting the Natives. In many cases, the government has even added to the current troubling conditions and issues the Native American race faces today.

Presently, renewed interests and pursuits in regaining tribal sovereignty and traditional prosperous ways of life have been embarked on in Indian nations. Many efforts to combat the various desolate conditions such as poverty, crime, low education rates and poor reservation environments for the Native American race are now underway.\textsuperscript{116} However, one of the largest tribal endeavors today include the pursuit of reclaiming the land that had been taken from them in the past, and which have currently been made unrecognizable to its original trial owners by those who currently use the land. Originally, total landholdings of the local Iroquois tribes amounted to around 25 million acres. Today, their total landholding include approximately 86,716 acres, which is only one-third of what they once possessed.\textsuperscript{117} Land that had once been considered sacred tribal lands where ceremonies were held and tribes connected to the earth on a spiritual level have been replaced with public works, big corporations and resorts, and homes for those of non-native descent.

George-Kanentiio writes about how his people, the Mohawk Tribe had once used the St. Lawrence River to help their community flourish. They used the waters to fish and farm, always striving to keep the water as clean, clear, and oxygen-rich as it had been for years, the way "earth mother" had intended for it to be. However, as

\textsuperscript{116} Noble Savage Media, http://www.indianz.com/.

\textsuperscript{117} George-Kanentiio, 166.
time went on, land along the St. Lawrence that no longer belonged to the Mohawk was being used by huge factories that had been “built to take advantage of the cheap hydroelectric power and large pool or unskilled workers in the region.” Powerful, arrogant, flushed with cash, companies such as Reynolds Aluminum, The Aluminum Company of American, Domtar, Courtaulds Textiles, and General Motors built new factories or expanded old ones on the Saint Lawrence.”

He goes on to describe how the environmental changes brought on by these began to alter and “disrupt the indigenous economy and culture,” and how the water which had been so useful and beautiful to his people was now so unclean they could no longer drink, fish, or clean their clothes with it. As George-Kanentiio described the situation for his tribe, “…the Mohawks were being pulled from the land, divorced from the Earth Mother. The air, water, and land were closing in on them. The very elements they had come to know and love were now blind to the smoke of their tobacco fires and deaf to the prayers of a confused people.”

By the late 1980’s the economic and cultural way of life for the Mohawks as well as various other tribes in the United Stats had changed radically, becoming unrecognizable from what it once was, before their land, their sovereignty, and their way of life had been forced to change. Traditional agricultural economies on most reservation systems have been replaced with unregulated casino gambling, and smuggling of alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes.

Much of the land that was once was used for traditional Indian religious rituals is now land that the national government is holding in trust for the Natives due

118 George-Kanentiio, 187.
119 George-Kanentiio, 188.
to past historical policies and deals. Author John F. Petoskey, a Native American rights activist who was once a staff attorney for the National Indian Youth Council, Inc., describes the national government as having an especially high insensitivity to Indian religious beliefs, which had led to court cases over land use disputes in recent years. Petoskey asserts that a number of lower federal court case decisions in the 80’s may have “hastened the demise of Indian religions.”\textsuperscript{120} The Cherokee, Navajo, Cheyenne, Lakota, Inupiat, and the Hopi all filed legal suites in the federal courts during the 1980’s which revolved around their efforts to protect Native American religious sites that were under federal ownership. In the Cherokee case, the Tennessee Valley authority flooded sacred Cherokee land sites; in the Navajo case, the Glen Canyon Dam flooded Rainbow Bridge and put in a floating marina bar for tourists to use. The Navajo argued that this action destroyed the environment and atmosphere necessary to conduct Navajo religious ceremonies. The Lakota and Cheyenne both sued the state of South Dakota who made a tourist attraction out of Bear Butte, destroying at once “pristine quality” of the tribe ceremonial sites. Various other cases during this time involved issues of off shore oil development, and the construction of ski resorts, dams, roads, and parking lots, actions which would all infringe on sacred tribal lands, and as well as the various tribes abilities to perform traditional and sacred ceremonies. Unfortunately, almost all of these suits were lost

by the tribes who filed them, making their land loss a cultural and traditional loss as well.\textsuperscript{121}

Popular Native American publication \textit{Indian Country Today} published an editorial in March 2000, which started with the assertion that with the start of the twenty-first century, the United States of America has a “unique” opportunity to reverse the “debt” it has accumulated in past years to the American Indian nations. It is stated that the U.S. has historically committed numerous atrocities and wrong doings to concerning their land, resources, sovereignty, and traditional way of life, and should now concert every effort to make amends.\textsuperscript{122} The Native American authors go on to express their opinion that although the U.S. has caused irreparable damages and repression to the American Indian people, they will not “vanish,” but rather their survival and endurance throughout the years have prepared the Natives for a current time of re-strengthening, re-growth, and rebuilding their indigenous cultures and nations.

Many other American Indians have followed this ideology of trying to rebuild their culture and regain what was once theirs through the regaining of their land. In the \textit{Indian Country Today} article published in 2003 entitled “Land Rich and Dirt Poor, the story of Native Assets,” author Rebecca Adamson discusses how judicial rulings have historically committed the most wrongdoing Native American Tribes, and continue to do so today. She talks of the Supreme Court’s ruling in March 2003

\textsuperscript{121} Deloria, Jr., 225-238.

\textsuperscript{122} \textit{America is Indian Country: Opinions and Perspectives From Indian Today} ed. Jose Barreiro and Tim Johnson (Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 2005), 2.
that determined "without specific statutory language in place, tribes cannot hold trustees accountable for its clear and knowing participation in the miscarriage of justice for tribes." Adamson goes on to display her disgust at what she believes is a lack of federal court protection now to American Indians, asserting that even when the courts do find enough evidence of wrongdoings to Natives to satisfy them, (which she claims should not be a difficult task to do, and yet seems to be for the government) loss of interest, earnings, and lost revenue are never fully paid back. Adamson does not have much faith that tribes still can count on Congress to create a “dollar-to-dollar” restitution for losses, or for a correction of the laws that created these losses. She predicts that the government would never risk putting the country in a position of becoming bankrupt just to undo the crimes and corruptions that have gone on in the past to the Native American race.

In an October 2001 editorial of Indian Country Today, the distrust and disgust, many of the Native American have today for the federal government was reinforced. Its writer begins by describing how the historical wrongdoings of the past to indigenous peoples have more recently become apparent to the Native American population today. It is argued that outrage has boiled up over the prohibiting of Native Tribes to be able to govern themselves, to create their own political identity, to hold the legal title of “lands corruptly taken,” and the exhibited unjust actions by agencies such as the BIA, have all lead to the violent protests we see today in Native American communities. The author assets this is why Native American protestors

123 America is Indian Country: Opinions and Perspectives from Indian Country Today, 47.
124 America is Indian Country: Opinions and Perspectives from Indian Country Today, 48.
have gotten a bad reputation, although with the conditions that drove them to the violence, one cannot blame them totally. The judicial system of today is also once again under attack, and the author of this editorial believes that an air of “despair” should now be connected to the Supreme Court today, and the Native leaders should wonder “if it is at all possible to turn to the High Courts for any kind of justice.”

Various Native American Tribes have been taking their pursuit of regaining their land to the next level in recent years; by bring their claims to the federal courts. Court cases have reached as high as the Supreme Court, and have been taking place all over the country. In 1997, the Yankton Sioux Tribe used the state of South Dakota on a “land theft claim,” contesting the state took land what was their and protected under agreed treaty terms during the 1890’s. The state of South Dakota argued that their taking of the treaty-protected land had been justified, as well as legal, because their actions were based on an 1894 Act of Congress. This act had stated that the un-allotted land of the Yankton (land that was not given to them during the 1887 Dawls Act) was opened to white settlement, and therefore the Yankton ceded those lands. Native Americans remember the events of 1889 much differently. They view the years of the 1890s as those in which illegal and corrupt arguments took place, both at the state and national levels. They remember the state continuing to impress on the boundaries in possession of the tribe even after treaty agreements had been made.

In 1998, the Supreme Court delivered a unanimous opinion upholding the 1894

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125 America is Indian Country: Opinions and Perspectives From Indian Country Today, 57.
126 Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Anti-Indianism in Modern America: A Voice From Tatekeya’s Earth (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 100.
statute. In declared that the “operative language and the circumstances surrounding its passage demonstrate that Congress intended to diminish the Yankton Reservation and as a result the un-allotted lands ceded did not retain reservation status. Consequently, South Dakota has primary jurisdiction over the lands.”

Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, who delivered the opinion, wrote “we must give effect to Congress’s intent in passing the 1894 Act. Here…we believe that Congress spoke clearly, and although some might wish [it] had spoken differently…we cannot remake history.”

Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, a current member of the Crow Sioux tribe, remains one of those people. Cook-Lynn argued that the twentieth century courts were only perpetuating the legal diminishment of the Sioux Tribe, and continuing the U.S. governmental policy of “extermination or disestablishment- in legal terms towards the Yanktons without recourse.” She also asserts that the treatment of Native American groups by the United States government is comparable to that of the Nazis and their treatment of the Jewish in Germany. She writes, “there has been no avenue of escape from political oppression and massacre, and discrimination for American Indians.”

In 2005 New York Times, writer Walter Olson published “This Land is My Land” where he reflected on the land claim cases of the Oneida, Cayuga, and Shinnecocks. However, his sentiments on the cases would oppose most Native


\[129\] Cook-Lynn, 101.

\[130\] Cook-Lynn, 101.
American views at the time, as he expressed a sense of aggravation with the continuous land claim cases. Olson emphasized the fact that land claims have “wrought havoc” across the Northeast “for decades,”\(^{131}\) as he focused on the land claim case of the Shinnecocks which was taking place at the time over land in the Hamptons. He talks of how the Shinnecocks claimed to not want to displace or “eject” the current homeowners, “soothing words” that were used by both the Oneida and the Cayuga tribes, who then “changed their tune.”\(^{132}\) He also goes on to criticize Congress and the governor at the time, George E. Pataki, for not protecting homeowners who could potentially be displaced by tribal land claims. Olson ends his article by urging those who live in the Hamptons, the land which was under question with the Shinnecock suit, to try and help the landowners’ cause. He also urged the public to put Indian land claim litigation under “the national scrutiny it deserves.”\(^{133}\)

Olsen is not the only dissenting voice to be heard concerning the topic on Native land claims. In 2005, *Indian Nation* wrote about the group of people in the United States who were the “die-hard-anti-Indian folks” who have threatened and cajoled their way “into the public limelight as a dominant voice.”\(^{134}\) It speaks of the fact that there are anti-Indian rallies that are held in the 21st century, as well as anti-Indian newsletters, and even death threats to the Native American community. Many publications also focus on the lack of federal support and level of trustworthiness


\(^{132}\) Olson, “This Land is My Land.”

\(^{133}\) Olson, “This Land is My Land.”

Native Americans are receiving from governors, congressmen, and policy makers today. In 2002, *The Wall Street Journal* criticized then Governor George Pataki, whom they dubbed "Chief Pataki," for approving land claim "swaps" for the ability to negotiate gambling compacts with Indian tribes.\(^{135}\) Pataki was then again criticized in 2005 for his relationship with Native Americans in *Indian Country*. He backed out of numerous casino deals and settlement legislations after various land claim cases that had been heard in court and were ruled not in the favor of the tribes. It was stated "Governor George Pataki failed his recent exams in the quest for an honorary Indian policy Ph.D."\(^{136}\) In 2006, Senator Brain Kolb was criticized by the members of the Native American community for his comments on the Cayuga land claim case. Kolb was quoted as writing about how for several years the homeowners and businessmen who were part of the land claim cases were in jeopardy of losing their "hard-earned" "privately owned" land to the Cayuga Tribe. Tom Wanamaker, reporter for the *Indian Country Today* calls this completely untrue. He also goes on the battle with Kolb's assertions that the tribes have no constitutional argument in their cases. Wanamaker points out that there are in fact constitutional and rational justifications for Native American Tribes to get back "a small piece of what was wrongfully taken."\(^{137}\) Just last year in November of 2006, Doug George-Kanentiio expressed numerous concerns about our current New York State Governor, Elliot Spitzer. He expressed the hope that Spitzer could bring the much-needed aid that the Iroquois


needed in their current legal endeavors, which had been denied them in the past by
the former Governor Pataki. He criticized Pataki for having had the opportunity to
"forge an alliance" with the confederacy, which he chose to forego in order to
facilitate profit creating endeavors, no matter the cost to the Iroquois Nations.
George-Kanentiio makes the claim that Spitzer could change all this by appointing
advisors who have backgrounds in Native issues, take time to meet with Iroquois
leaders, and form a committee composed of Natives to help create policies which will
affect the Native American population. He believes that by taking the time out to
meet and negotiating directly with the Confederacy, Spitzer could end land claim
litigations, as well as "demonstrate his sincerity in abiding by our treaties and
dropping the land-for-casinos scheme."138

Despite different viewpoints that have been expressed over tribal and claim
cases, many more suits would be brought forth as the years continued. The Oneida
Indian Nation of New York have brought numerous suits against the state throughout
the 20th and 21st centuries. Strong feelings about the history of land claim cases can
be seen quite often in traditional Native American publications. Danielle
Shenandoah-Patterson wrote in the traditional Native American newspaper, Country
Road Chronicles, about how her grandmother Mary Winder Cornelius and her sister
were the matriarchs of the Oneida land claim. Shenandoah-Patterson retells the story
of how her grandmother’s goal with the land claim had been to regain her
“homeland,” for the Oneida people to return to, which would foster their

138 Doug George-Kanentiio, "Spitzer Must Listen to Native Americans Seeking Justice," Indian
reunification. She spoke of how New York officials systematically stole their land, and how the Oneida should continue to hold strong to the dream to unify and regain the land that was taken from them in illegal land foreclosures. Whether the Oneida know what was in store for them or not, land issues would only continue to persist in the years ahead.

In 2005, the case of *Sherrill v. the Oneida Indian Nation of New York* was brought before the Supreme Court regarding claim issues. In the 1700’s, Congress set aside much of the land of the Oneida in New York State as a reservation, and later the tribe sold their land off during the years of the United States expansion. It may be seen that many of the land deals in New York were corrupt and unfair to the Tribes who made them. In the 1990’s, the tribes began their pursuit to buy back their previously owned land. The Oneida claimed that the reacquired land was part of their reservation, and therefore exempt from state and municipal taxes. The City of Sherrill (who included some of the tribe’s property) argued that the land was not in fact tax-exempt. The Oneidas sued Sherrill and claimed the land was recognized by the Treaty of Canandaigua in 1794, as part of their historic reservation. The Oneidas argued that the 1790 Non-Intercourse Act required federal consent for Indian land to lose its reservation status, which it had not. In return, Sherrill argued the land lost its reservation status after leaving the Oneidas’ ownership originally. The case went through numerous lower courts until it reached the Supreme Court in 2005, where it


was ruled that the Oneidas were not in fact exempt from taxes, and that "regulatory authority over the land had been exercised by state and local government for 200 years. By giving up the land in the early 19th century, the Oneidas had relinquished governmental reins and could not regain them through open-market purchases from current titleholders."141

In the Indian Country Today article "Will the Indian Dream of the Land Endure," the Oneida case is reflected upon. The residents of the city of Sherrill are described in less than favorable terms, with their attempt to continue to enforce the property tax on the Oneida described as an action to join "a wide array of forces antagonistic to Indian sovereignty over Indian-titled lands."142 The article discusses the presence of the anti-Indian groups which have formed in New York State such as the organization, Upstate Citizens for Equality, and how they have organized "unrelentingly" against the Oneida Nation and presence in Central New York. Unsurprisingly, these organizations have rallied around the people of Sherrill in an endeavor to help them win the suit. The residents of Sherrill argue that this case are quoted as expressing how this case has been a "nightmare" for them and the government, inciting "chaos in its backyard."143 Justice Antonin Scalia was quoted as questioning the possible consequences of the case if the Oneida Nation in fact succeeded stating, "what you’re asking the court to do is sanction a very odd checkerboard system of jurisdiction...it would just create a chaotic situation in New


143 "Will the Indian Dream of the Land Endure," Indian Country Today.
York State if we say you have jurisdiction over any piece of land your buy." 144

However, the author of the article argues that the Oneida’s attempt to regain their land, and bring it back under tribal governance is not the “chaotic” situation. Rather, the source of the “chaos” originated from the U.S. government as it historically permitted a fractured Indian policy to exist which allowed for the Oneida lands and resources to be stolen and the “wanton” destruction of their tribal lives to ensue. 145

The author ends his writing with the assertion that the Indian “dream of the land” will not die. He goes on the say that “the identity in the land and the roots that persist in the living memory. Neither does the constant impulse to persist and achieve the restoration of our cultures and values and properties and the material well being of our future generations.” 146

This case would have later negative implications for a land claims lawsuit that had been field by the Cayuga Tribe against New York State, which has gone on for the last 26 years. In 2006, the Supreme Court refused to hear the Cayuga land claim case which has gone through 18 lower court rulings and has raised a monetary award to nearly 248 million dollars. The Cayuga were fighting to gain possession of 64,000 acres in upstate New York in addition to the 248 million dollars, an earlier court had ruled should go to the tribe for damages. In his 2005 article, Odawi Porter Robert, a reporter for *Indian Country Today* expressed the feelings of many of the Native Americans about land claim suits when he stated that while monetary rewards in the

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144 "Will the Indian Dream of the Land Endure,” *Indian Country Today.*

145 "Will the Indian Dream of the Land Endure,” *Indian Country Today.*

146 "Will the Indian Dream of the Land Endure,” *Indian Country Today.*
millions were “significant,” they were not comparable to receiving the actual title to
the land. The last lower court ruling was handed down by Judge Jose Cabranes of
the 2nd circuit court who used the precedent of the 2005 Oneida case to rule against
the Cayuga tribe’s claim to their former New York tribal lands, and threw their
lawsuit against the state and landholders. When the tribe then appealed to the
Supreme Court to hear their case, the courts rejected the appeal, which is said to have
possible detrimental effects for other Native American land claim cases that are
currently going on in the United States.

Jim Adams, a reporter for the newspaper Indian Country Today reflects the
sentiments of many of the Native Americans in his article. He argues that Judge Jose
Cabranes ruling against the Cayuga Tribe was “sweeping and, according to some
critics, so filled with “legal errors” that it seemed a strong candidate for the rarely
granted Supreme Court review.” He quotes Richard Guest, attorney with the
Native American Rights Fund, who expressed his belief that the courts have become
“result driven” and has actually resorted to “bending” rules so that Indian land claim
cases can be dismissed. The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Chief James W. Ransom is
quoted as expressing his view that by refusing to hear the Cayuga appeal, the
Supreme Court “has established itself as the most anti-Indian court in the history of


the United States.” The St. Regis Tribal Chief Lorraine M. White was referenced as stating how amazed she was at the bias the courts are in the United States against the Native American population. She goes on to state that the Supreme Court’s rejection of the Mohawk case should be a warning to all tribes that “it’s open hunting season on them in the judicial system and that Indian issues have no chance in being fairly resolved if they are taken into the courts.” The Onondaga Nation Council of Chiefs issued a statement expressing their views (including the Mohawk issue), stating: “ignoring these historic wrongs and injustices is just another chapter in this shameful history of the genocide against Native peoples in this county.” The Mohawk Tribal leader Clint Halftown made his own statement about the court’s rejection of his tribe’s case, which reflected his great disappointment and sadness as well as that of his tribe. He was quoted as saying “our history has taught us to expect little and today’s decision confirms what we always suspected – that we can’t and should never have trusted this process.” His sentiments, as well as the other Iroquois tribal leaders and Native American lawyers who have followed and fought for the Mohawk victory in this issue seem to mirror the attitudes, beliefs, and opinions of the majority of the Native American population today concerning their positions and treatment by the United States. However, Adams reports that the opinions and feelings that were expressed by U.S. politician were anything but upset

with the Supreme Court. In fact, Adams goes as far as to describe the feelings expressed by New York State politicians and activists as “jubilation.” According to Adams these men have “fought bitterly against the revival of the nations of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy. Some called for an end to all land claims negotiations with state’s Indians and an immediate effort by the state to dismiss the half-dozen other ongoing suits.”154

The Onondaga Nation brought one of the most recent land claim cases forward in 2007. The tribe has tried to gain the title to about 4,000 square miles of land that they claim the state obtained when they signed several treaties with people who were not authorized to represent their nation.155 The effect of the deals the corrupt tribal leader of the past had made were now coming back decades later to cause questions about territory ownership. About 857,000 people currently live on this land; however, the Onondaga claim that they have no intention to displace those who currently live there as was done to them years ago. They also assert that they have no intention to gain monetary reimbursement, they do not want to build a casino, or try to start a land leasing endeavor. The only intention they claim to have is to obtain a financial settlement and land that would be “sufficient to achieve economic self-sufficiency, including a quality education system, affordable health care, and adequate housing.”156

The state had field a motion to dismiss the land-rights case,


156 Matthews, “Court Hears Argument in Indian Land-Claim Case.”
despite the fact that the Onondaga Tribes does not appear to be making large demands.

While the battle over the land and rights continues, various opinions are being expressed as time continues from people all over the county Native and Non-Native alike. However, some Native Americans worry that the issue of land claims is wreaking havoc where it should not: internally within and between the Indian tribes. Mohawk Indian member, and author Doug George-Kanentiio has repeatedly expressed his concern over land claim cases and their effects on the Iroquois Nations is his writings. In 2005, he expressed his concerned sentiments in the publication *Indian Country*, about the difference in opinion occurring among some of the tribes. One example that he focuses on was with the Oneida Indian Nation of New York, whom in 2005 in its pursuit to secure its money making position with the five casinos then Governor George Pataki planned for the Catskills turned against any “out of state tribes” that wished to become involved in the deal as well.157 The Oneida Indian Nation CEO claimed that they were not trying to be “greedy,” but that obtaining the Catskills casino with “exclusivity” meant that the western tribes would unfortunately have to be left out of the deal. The issue of casinos in general is a spot of contention for many of the Iroquois tribes. Brain Patterson, a member of the Oneida men’s Council expressed the notion that challenging issues for the Iroquois “appear to go in cycles.”158 Patterson spoke of the fact that the Mohawk, Oneida, and Seneca nations

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all condoned and operated gaming facilities, while their brother tribes, the Onondaga and Tuscarora do not. The Cayuga are internally split on the issue. He urged that all tribes take their own paths, and respect the decisions of the other. However, this is a hard ideal for many of the tribes to agree with who see casinos as the gateway to the crime and corruption on tribal reservations and within the Native American Community.\textsuperscript{159}

In another article by George-Kanentio, he expresses his vast disappointment in the way the tribes of today have concerning the land claims. He claims that the Native American Community is fighting a losing battle with the land claim issues, and that their ancestors never would have continued to persist in fighting a battle that they clearly were not going to win. He asserts that “if nothing else is obvious this one fact is: the U.S. courts will not hold New York State accountable for the theft of our lands.”\textsuperscript{160} He argues that the biggest mistake that the tribes have made in their pursuit to gain back their lands was then they decided to work as individual Iroquois Communities, when they decided to pursue the claims as separate entities rather than fighting as a whole. He ends this particular piece with the suggestion that the Iroquois Tribes need to immediately revise their strategies and start to work together as a whole. That they form a joint committee made up of delegates from all nations to plan and coordinate their land reclaiming pursuits, for if not this will be a problem

\textsuperscript{159} Wanamaker, “Haundenosaunee Gatter to Talker About Problems and Solutions.”

that will continue for future generations, who "could do no worse" than the present Iroquois tribes.\footnote{Doug George-Kanentiio, "Suspend all New York Land Claims Actions Now."}

Reporter Odawi Porter Robert reflected the opinions of most Native Tribes best back in 2005 when he stated "when it comes to defending the inherent, treaty-protected rights of Native peoples, the law and legal institutions of the United States look more like a house of cards then a foundation of liberty." If we do not take the time out today to teach about and reflect back upon the injustices that have been done in the past to minority groups such as Native Americas, then the future is doomed to repeat the same mistakes. The current land claim cases reflect the position that the United State government put many of the Native American Tribes in with their failure to protect them. Many Native Americans view gaining back their original tribal lands as a way to regain their customs, their sovereignty, and their traditional ways of life.

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Conclusion:

An understanding of Native American roles and culture throughout American history should be an integral part of our educational system in New York. Being aware of history from different points of view and perspectives is essential to creating an informed future generation, who can make decisions that are fair to all races, ethnicities, and groups of people living in the United States to come. Native Americans have and continue to play important roles in the United States. From their involvement in the Revolutionary War, to their cultural struggles today, recognizing their significance in the United States is integral to creating a society which is empathetic to their current cultural perspectives and struggles.
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Chapter Three: Teaching Applications

*Native Americans Roles and Issues in the United States: Past and Present*

Tiffany A. DiDuro

*Complete Unit Plan*

Lessons 1-5

For years, the minority group of Native Americans and their changing role in our society throughout time has been overlooked in Social Studies classrooms in the United States. This unit was created with the intention of illustrating the cultural impact that Native Americans have had over the years, as well as how they have been treated in return. The first lesson in this unit plan introduces students to this idea and focuses on original encounters early European explorers had with the discovery of land in North and South America. Students at a middle school age will be able to explore themes such as first impressions, ethnocentrism, and stereotyping. The second lesson takes students to the Revolutionary War era, where they will explore the role Native Americans played in the War classically known as the “war for freedom.” It is ironic that while colonists were fighting to gain their independence, Native Americans were conflicted with choosing to support the side that would take away as little of their freedom as possible. The unit ends with a look at Native American issues and roles today, with a special emphasis on the prevalent issue of land claims, which relates back to their early encounters with explorers in the 1400s. Students will be able to work with primary sources, analyzing them and applying what they learn to a cumulative project.

In order to teach about a subject, both the student and teacher should strive to obtain as much knowledge on the topic which is available. However, the resources about Native American roles in the U.S. throughout history are few in number. Therefore, included in this unit plan are lessons, materials, and resources which were all created with the intention of boosting knowledge and information of a topic which is classically overlooked by historians and researchers.

This unit plan was also created for the purpose of allowing students to engage with materials which they will work best with. As all teachers know, best practices such as Piaget and Gardner emphasize the importance of recognizing different learning styles, and incorporating them into our lessons. Embracing this idea led to the creation of lessons which suit all types of learners in the classroom. Students will have the opportunity to work with primary sources, watch videos, examine photographs, and create songs, art work, as well as writing pieces which allow them to gain knowledge, analyze information, and apply what they have learned to create projects which illustrate their new knowledge.
The five lessons that follow illustrate both the Thematic Strands and National Standards of the NCSS, as well as New York State’s Core Curriculum. They are meant to enrich both teacher and student understanding of a topic which has historically been overlooked and forgotten, yet is still vastly prevalent in our nation today. This unit was created primarily for the middle school age levels, and accommodates various styles of learning throughout its lessons. Each lesson is also structured in a way which allows modifications and adaptation to be made.

See the following attached lessons and materials for the unit plan described above.
LESSON ONE: EARLY NATIVE AMERICAN ENCOUNTERS WITH EUROPEAN EXPLORERS

National Standards-This lesson plan is created to help students master the following national standards:

A. Thematic Standards:

1. Culture and Cultural Diversity
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
4. Individual Development and Identity
5. Global Connections

B. Disciplinary Standards
Standard 1: History of the United States and New York
Standard 2: World History

New York State Curriculum-This lesson plan is created to help students master the following New York State Curriculum:

UNIT ONE: The Global Heritage of the American People Prior to 1500
UNIT TWO: European Exploration and Colonization of the Americas
UNIT THREE: A Nation is Created

Time:
One 40-minute class period.

Student Objectives:

1. To gain knowledge on the first experiences Native Americans had with Europeans during the age of exploration.
2. To gain an understanding of the differing perspective of both the Native Americans and Europeans during these first encounters.
3. To define and recognize stereotyping and ethnocentrism and how they are formed.
4. To evaluate how ethnocentrism played a larger global role in the relationships that formed between Europeans and Native Americans.
5. To predict how this relationship between the different cultures progressed during the growing years of the newly emerging United States.

Background and Preparation:

This lesson plan is meant to be the introductory lesson to a unit, which chronicles the development of relationships between Americans and Native Americans. It starts off with early European explorers in order to introduce students to the original and first encounters that Native Americans had with a group of people whom they would eventually become more involved with as time progressed.

Teachers will be prepared if they read the book *Encounter* by Jane Yolen (1996), and familiarize
themselves with the attached power-point and picture.

Procedure:

(1) To start the lesson, students view the attached power-point which illustrates pictures of different groups of people from around the globe practicing their various wedding cultural traditions. Students record their first impressions of these pictures and what activity they think the people are engaging in for each [see attached worksheet.] Save the picture of the American wedding tradition for last as to not give away the theme of the pictures.

(2) Students accumulate a class list of their different first impressions. After, go through and share what activity each slide is truly illustrating and the culture, which participates in that custom. Ask students to share first with a partner, then out loud with the class (if they wish to) if they were accurate with the assumed observations. Most students will be surprised to find out they are all illustrating various ethnic wedding traditions.

(3) Introduce (or in many cases reintroduce) students to the vocabulary words stereotype and ethnocentrism, and have them record their definitions. Discuss whether they feel they have ever prejudged someone, or a group of people due to the fact they were different then themselves. Use this as a segway into the next part of the lesson.

(4) Introduce students to the book *Encounter* by Jane Yolen, explaining that many first impressions between Native Americans and Europeans in the early 1400s were not accurate due to unfamiliarity with cultures other than their own. Ask them to predict what could/did happen as a result of these wrong conclusions, and how this affected future relations between the two groups.

(5) Proceed to read the book while students fill out the worksheet, which was made for this reading. This worksheet covers main questions and points which students should be aware of as they listen to the story [see worksheet in attached materials.]

(6) After, student read a supplementary text on their own which described more of the wrongdoings that Europeans will commit over the next several years towards Native Americans in their pursuit of land and power acquisition. As they read, have them record any instances of stereotyping and ethnocentrism that they come across.

(6) To wrap up the lesson, students complete an exit ticket, which asks them to define the words stereotype and ethnocentrism, and give example of each from today's
lesson. Also, have students predict what relations will be like when three hundred years later when Europeans are now British Colonists who are fighting for their independence. Have them predict who Natives will choose to side with, and why. Who would they choose to fight for, and why do they feel this way? This will lead into the following day’s lesson.

🔍 There will be no homework for this lesson.

**Teaching Resources:**


**Suggested Further Readings:**

LESSON TWO: NATIVE AMERICANS AND COLONIAL RELATIONS DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

National Standards-This lesson plan is created to help students master the following national standards:

A. Thematic Standards:

1. Culture and Cultural Diversity
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
4. Individual Development and Identity

B. Disciplinary Standards

Standard 1: History of the United States and New York

New York State Curriculum-This lesson plan is created to help students master the following New York State Curriculum:

UNIT THREE: A Nation is Created

Time:
Two 40-minute class periods.

Student Objectives:

1. To gain knowledge about the various Native American tribes and leaders during the Revolutionary War, who they primarily chose to side with and why.
2. To be able to compare and contrast the different leaders and tribes who participated in the Revolutionary War identifying their similarities as well as differences.
3. To evaluate their newly gained information, and use it to be able to take the perspective of a Native American leader during this time period, in order to create a letter as it would look from their viewpoint.
4. To gain an understanding of one of the most destructive military campaigns concerning Native Americans that occurred in New York State, and to be able to use this newly acquired knowledge to design and create a mini-project which exemplifies this new information.

Background and Preparation:

This lesson plan is meant to familiarize students with the choices and decisions Native Americans had when faced with choosing sides during the Revolutionary War. They will focus on a few of the most well known Native American leaders of the time, including Joseph Brant, and Dragging Canoe, and Nancy Ward. They will also have the opportunity to discover the minority group of tribes that chose to side with the Americans, such as the Shawnee Native Americans. The lesson concludes with students gaining basic knowledge on one of the most
controversial and destructive military campaigns of this time, Sullivan's Campaign. Teachers will be able to connect local history to this topic, by having students study a military strategy that was carried out in New York State against the well-known Iroquois Native Americans of the area.

Teachers will be prepared if they familiarize themselves with book which provide necessary background information for the lesson. These readings include: *The Smithsonian Institution’s Handbook of North American Indians* (1988), *The Encyclopedia of North American Indians* (1996) and Colin Calloway’s *The American Revolution in Indian Country* (1995). For the second part of the lesson, additional reading will be needed from Allen Eckert’s *The Wilderness War* (1978) and from *The Western Campaign of 1779*, which was written about in The New York Historical Society Quarterly. All of the above readings are widely available in the history section of most local libraries. Supplementary textbook readings may also be used to enhance the resources available during this lesson.

hazi Procedure:

1. Day one of the lessons should start with students thinking about what they know/have learned about relationships between Native Americans and the white settlers of North and South America. Start by splitting students into groups of three, assigning each the role of a prominent Native American tribe at this time. Have roles created for each student, including recorder, speaker, and timekeeper. Using the created worksheet for this lesson [see attached lesson materials] have students decide which side during the Revolutionary War would they have chose to align themselves with and why as a Native American living at this time. Have them brainstorm the positives and negatives of supporting both sides, and weigh their evidence/ previous knowledge gained carefully. Be sure to have groups include at least 2-3 details to support their decision. Create a class list which would highlight all the pros and cons of helping Americans vs. the British, and decide as a class which decision seems to have benefited most of the tribes in the class overall.

2. This will lead into the main part of the lesson where each tribe will then receive readings on major Native American leaders/ tribes of the era, Joseph Brant, Dragging Canoe and his cousin the well known Cherokee Native American Nancy Ward, as well as the Shawnee Indians and their leaders. They will read about whom they chose to side with, and what their tribes were like. Students should
create a group list of how each of the leaders/tribes was different, and how they were similar to each other in their actions and opinion [see attached worksheet.] They should be able to conclude from this information which side most Native Americans chose to side with during this struggle, and why.

(3) Following this activity, students will receive a reading about Sullivan’s Campaign. This reading will describe the destructive events of this military campaign from a historian’s point of view. They will also be shown a brief film short that was created by a Native American activist group, which shows the events of Sullivan’s Campaign but directly from the Native American point of view: [see attached link below and/or the sources section of the lesson for more detail]

(http://sullivanclinton.com/audiovisual/lores.php)

Students will also receive the reading describing the events of the campaign, which was also created by this Native American group. After viewing and examining these sources and readings on this topic, students will answer key questions based on the knowledge they have gained. They will also be assigned the task of creating a 5-10 sentence poem, song, or rap that describes the events that took place. They may choose to take the perspective of a Native American, or that of an American soldier.

(4) To wrap up day one of the lesson, students will complete an exit ticket, which has them create a 5-10 question quiz that another student could take based on the information from today’s lesson. They will hand this in on their way out the door.

**Day Two/Part Two:**

(1) To start day two of the lesson off, students will each receive a quiz that their fellow peers had created in as their exit ticket in the previous day’s lesson. After they take the mini-quiz, have them connect with the creator to go over the answers and make corrections to any questions that they may have gotten wrong.

(2) Students will then move onto the main portion of the lesson for today. Using the previous day’s resources, notes, readings, and discussions, student will take their newly gained information to create a R.A.F.T activity. This differentiated instruction activity allows students to choose the perspective of the Native American leader they most associated with, as well as illustrate the knowledge that they have gained with an activity of their choosing.
Students will take the role of Joseph Brant, Dragging Canoe, Nancy Ward, or a Shawnee Indian tribal leader. They will be writing to the audience of their choosing. The format this activity should take is that of a letter or speech, in which the topic students will write about focuses on their particular Native Americans feelings on the War, how it affects their tribe and who they wish to support, as well as how they predict the outcome of the war is going to affect Native American culture in the future.

To wrap up this section of the lesson, students collaborate with their neighbor and share the progress that they have done thus far. They will explain to their partners why they chose the role and perspective they did and after hearing their partner's argument, they will discuss if given the opportunity would they change their role. Any work left over should be assigned as homework to be due at a later date of the teachers choosing.

Homework for this lesson will be for students to finish their R.A.F.T activity, including both a rough draft and final copy.

Teaching Resources:


Suggested Further Readings:

- Encyclopedia of North American Indians. Frederick E.

LESSON THREE: NATIVE AMERICAN ISSUES TODAY; HOW THE PAST AFFECTS THE FUTURE

National Standards-This lesson plan is created to help students master the following national standards:

A. Thematic Standards:

1. Culture and Cultural Diversity
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
4. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
5. Individual Development and Identity

B. Disciplinary Standards
Standard 1: History of the United States and New York

New York State Curriculum-This lesson plan is created to help students master the following New York State Curriculum:

UNIT ELEVEN: The Changing Nature of the American People From World War II to the Present

 )); Time:
Two 40-minute class periods.

Student Objectives:

1. To gain and collect a basic understanding of the issues that faces many Native Americans today, with a focus on land loss.

2. To be able to identify how past event that they have studied in this unit effect Native Americans today.

3. To analyze primary sources that will help students gain a better understanding and appreciation on Native American struggles today.

4. To apply what the knowledge they learn and collect from their observations in order to create an argument that expresses their opinion on current Native American issues.

Background and Preparation:

This lesson was designed to illustrate how past events in New York State history concerning Native Americans has affected them in today’s society. It focuses how many current tribes have taken legal action to get back land they claim was traditionally theirs. This lesson presents various sources including current primary sources that illustrate their argument that their land was taken from them by past agreements made from corrupt leaders during the colonial era and after. This lesson encompasses both good use of primary sources, as well as a rich understanding of how cause and effect in history is occurring today.

Teachers will be prepared if they familiarize themselves with articles from popular the Native American news source Indian Country Today as well as with many of the current legal battles which have occurred or are occurring in or around New York State within the last few years. Teachers should also familiarize themselves
with the film documentary *The War Against Indians* (1998) that first aired on the discovery channel. The movie runs long, and it is suggested that only a few clips be used in this lesson.

**Procedure:**

(1) To start the lesson, students will be shown a clip from the documentary *The War Against Indians* (1998). This movie chronicles Native American struggles from their first European encounters to issues they deal with today. It will be left up to the teacher’s judgment to choose two clips; one which recaps the struggles Native Americans had in the early colonial era as well as a clip which illustrates struggles they have today. Since that is the main topic of this lesson is struggles of today, the second clip should be shown for a longer duration.

(2) Students will then move on to the web-quest portion of the lesson. A number of reputable online Native American news publication sites have been chosen for this activity. These websites will have them investigating various Native American tribes today through some of their most popular news sources today. Teachers may do this as group work or individual work, however, it is suggested that students break into groups of three in order to assist each other through the web-quest and exploration of the articles and illustrations. This activity allows for students to view how Native American culture has changed to current day. They will be able to investigate key issues that Indians face today, as well as current cultural practices they embrace.

To reflect this educational goal, the web-quest worksheet has students looking for three main goals for each website. [See attached web-quest worksheet] First, they are to find an article, which gives them information on one aspect of Native American culture today. They will then find an article that has to do with legal/cultural struggles that Natives deal with in today’s society. They will finish by finding an article of their choosing which catches their interest.

(3) Students will then collaboratively work together to fulfill two of the 4 options that they will have for this activity. The first two options will be to create either a play or story book about Native American struggles, which highlights at least 2 challenges, which Native Americans face today. They may look back to the story that was read in the beginning of the unit, *Encounter* By Jane Yolen in order to gain ideas on how narratives are structured. The third choice
students have is to create their own news editorial, which expresses their options on issues facing the Native American culture and communities today. The final choice students will have is to create a bumper sticker either supporting Native Americans and their land claim issues today, or one, which supports state and government arguments. They should be given all but the last five minutes to work together on their projects. Instruct students that there will be additional time with tomorrow's less to complete their projects; however their homework will be to continue to work on this assignment tonight.

(4) To conclude this portion of the lesson, have students place themselves in the role of a Native American. Have them describe one of the struggles of Native Americans today using their five senses. This will be handed in as they exit the classroom.

★ This lesson has the potential to run long, depending on the amount of time it takes to complete the website portion, as well as the packet examination. If needed, the section where students begin their hands-on project may be delayed for the following day.

Homework is to continue to work on student projects.

Day Two/Part Two:

(1) Students will start day two of this lesson off with students pairing up with their neighbors in order to share the progress they made the night before on their projects. They will complete a brief peer revising worksheet for each other, which will offer constructive criticism for students to consider and perhaps use as they continue to work on their projects again today.

(2) Students will then have a majority of the class period to finish their projects. Upon completion of their projects, students will hang their work on classroom bulletin boards, which have been set up for display. How student work is displayed on the bulletin board is up to the discretion of the individual teacher, some suggestions are:

✓ Dividing the writing pieces up opposite the art work choice

✓ Creating a “news” bulletin as well as a creative corner

(3) To wrap up the lesson, students will be asked to observe the work of their peers as seen on the classroom bulletin boards. They will write down five facts they learned about Native American culture through their classmates work.
Extra time for project and bulletin board completion may be given if the teacher deems it necessary.

There is no homework for this lesson.

Teaching Resources:


Suggested Further Readings:

LESSON FOUR: NATIVE AMERICANS TODAY; THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

National Standards—This lesson plan is created to help students master the following national standards:

A. Thematic Standards:
   1. Culture and Cultural Diversity
   2. Time, Continuity, and Change
   3. People, Places, and Environments
   4. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
   5. Individual Development and Identity

B. Disciplinary Standards
   Standard 1: History of the United States and New York

New York State Curriculum—This lesson plan is created to help students master the following New York State Curriculum:

UNIT ELEVEN: The Changing Nature of the American People From World War II to the Present

◎ Time:
Three 40-minute class periods.

Student Objectives:

① To gain and collect a basic understanding of the issues that faces many Native Americans today, still focusing on land loss.

② To be able to identify how past event that they have studied in this unit still have effects on the Native Americans culture today.

③ To research and analyze sources that will help students gain a better understanding and appreciation on Native American struggles today.

④ To apply what the knowledge they learned about and collected throughout this unit in order to create an argument that expresses their opinion on current Native American issues.

Background and Preparation:

This lesson was designed to be the culminating lesson for this unit. It should run about three days in length and should have students using the information that they learned as well as new information they gain on their own to help illustrate their understanding of Native Americans, and their culture, past and present. Students will be engaging in creating and executing a project which they use class work and materials they already have as sources as well as original research which they should be given time to do in the library and computer lab classrooms. Having both of these resources available is mandatory for preparation to the lesson.

In order to be prepared for this lesson, teachers should book in advance or have access to multiple computers, as well as a library. Teachers should also familiarize themselves with the popular Native American activist and author Doug George-Kanentiio, who has put out many informative works on
the struggles of Native Americans today, and speaks about his own tribal struggles, which have occurred. More information on his works may be found at:

http://www.ipl.org/div/natam/bin/browse.pl/A264

Procedure:

(1) To begin the lesson, students will each be shown pictures of Native Americans signs and protest marches which various tribes have engaged in within the United States over the last few years. They will be asked to examine and study the picture and draw conclusions about what they could mean, and how they are connected to today's lesson. This warm-up activity may be modified to be a partner activity if the teacher wishes.

(2) Students should then be shown the link to the Native American activist and author Doug George-Kanentiio. Teachers should give a bit of background on his life as well as what kind of activist he is and why. It is suggested that one of his most recent book Iroquois Culture and Commentary (2000) be passed around for students to look through. After, have students plan a letter or e-mail that they could send to Mr. Kanentiio, which includes at least 4 interview questions about his life and/or work as a Native American activist. This letter may actually be sent out to Doug George-Kanentiio via e-mail. He usually responds and is very cooperative with his reply to questions.

(3) Students will then be asked to think about all that they have learned about Native Americans and their culture and struggles from their first encounters with European settlers, to their roles during the Revolutionary War, as well as Native American current cultural struggles and situations. They should record as many of the key facts/people/vocabulary/events as they can recall in the graphic organizer they will be provided [see attached materials.]

(4) They will then pair up with a partner and share what they have brainstormed. Students should then be told about the project that they will engage in within the next couple days. They are going to have a day in the computer lab and library to gain research about Native Americans today, gaining more material on any issues and struggles they currently face. They are then going to compile the information that they obtained on their own with the information and resources that they have collected in class over the last few days. The first task they will be assigned will
be to create a brief written essay that illustrates what they learn about Native Americans throughout the main eras that we studied. They should be sure to include key people, events, facts, and dates in their paper. The second part of their project will be a newscast that they create and perform on Native Americans today. They will have to take on the role of a news anchorman/woman and report on three “breaking news stories” which they create on a Native American topic of their choice. Their performance should be taped upon their final product completion. [Note: this lesson may be modified to allow for students to have a choice what they would like their final project to be. One highly recommended suggestion would be having them create a u-tube public service announcement. This project would follow the same guidelines and have the same requirements as the newscast.] 

(5) This lesson may be extended a day if needed depending on class sizes as well as the time students need to complete their original research. However, at the conclusion of the unit, have students view each other’s taped newscasts and record at least one new fact that they learn from each.

Homework will consist of student project completion throughout the week.

Teaching Resources:


Suggested Further Readings:


Chapter Four:

Unit Plan

Materials/Worksheets
**African**

*Jumping the Broom* is a custom that originated as the symbolic jumping the doorway, or threshold from a carefree single life into the responsibilities of domestic life and a future together.

*Tying the Knot* means that the couple is actually bound together at the wrists during the ceremony, linking them together symbolically.

**Indian**

The Indian bride, after a ceremonial cleansing, is painted with henna patterns on her hands and feet. After the ceremony, the brothers of the groom toss flower petals to ward off evil from the Newlyweds.

**Jewish**

The wedding ceremony usually takes place under a *huppah*, or wedding canopy. This tradition began in the Middle Ages when a couple would wed outdoors so that the marriage could be blessed with as many children as there are stars in the heavens.

The end of the ceremony is signaled by the groom breaking a napkin-wrapped wineglass underfoot, in remembrance of the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, and other Tragedies that have befallen the Jewish Faith. After the ceremony, shouts of "good luck"or "Mazel Tov!" can be heard from the joyous celebrants.

The *hora*, is a traditional dance of celebration, and is performed at the reception.

**American Indian**

The traditional colors woven into the brides dress point to the four corners of the earth, White for east, Blue for south, Yellow for west and Black for north.

The bride and groom wash their hands to symbolically rid themselves of evil and loves from their past.

To symbolize their bonding, the couple will share during their ceremony, a meal of corn mush, made of both white and yellow corn. The white represents male and yellow female, joined together.
Chinese

The invitations sent to the guest are wrapped in red gift-wrap, as the traditional colors of happiness and wealth are red and gold. Any gifts of money to the newlyweds are presented in red envelopes for the same reason. Gold jewelry-filled purses are also presented to the bride by women relatives and close friends to portray her new status. During the ceremony both bride and groom pay homage and respect to their parents and elders for the guidance and wisdom they have bestowed upon them.

{All of the above information was taken from the website http://members.aol.com/Mjkarl/ethnic.htm#Arabic on 8/1/08}

*Modern Chinese Wedding Tea Ceremony*

For many brides, incorporating cultural traditions on their wedding day is a way for them to honor their ancestors as well as preserve their heritage.

Traditionally, the tea ceremony takes place early in the morning on the day of the wedding. Elders from both families gather at the home of the groom's parents where the bride serves them tea. Today it is rare for both families to live in the same town, so to accommodate families that travel to the wedding, modern tea ceremonies sometimes take place shortly after the wedding ceremony. This way everyone who needs to attend can be there.

{http://www.beau-coup.com/blog/ceremony/modern-chinese-wedding-tea-ceremony}
**What in the World are you Doing?**

**Directions:** While you observe the following slides record what your first impression is and what activity you believe they are involved in.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Impression...</th>
<th>What Are They Doing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slide One:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Slide Two:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Slide Three:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Slide Five:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slide Six:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First Impressions....

Directions: Answer the following questions as honestly as you can, they are for your eyes only! You will not have to share them unless you chose to.

1. What do I base my first impressions on when I meet someone?

2. Have I ever judged someone because they dressed/looked different then me?

3. Have I ever prejudged someone or a group of people because they acted in a way that was different than me or because they believed something different than I?

4. Was I ever really wrong about a first impression?

What do you think a **stereotype** is?

What I think it is:

Class example brainstormed:

Definition:

What do you think **ethnocentrism** is?

What I think it is:

Class example brainstormed:

Definition:
Directions: As you listen to the book Encounter record your answers to the following questions.

When Columbus and his men encountered the Taino Natives...

1. What did they notice about them?

2. How did they treat them?

3. What did they want from them?

When the Taino people encountered Columbus and his men...

1. What did they think about the way they looked?

2. How did they treat them?
Exit Ticket.

Complete the following questions on the back and hand in your ticket on your way out the door!

★ Define Stereotype and give an example from class today.

★ Define Ethnocentrism and give an example from class today.

★ Predict what relations will be like when three hundred years later when Europeans are now British Colonists who are fighting for their independence.

★ Who do you think Natives Americans will chose to fight with? Why? Who would you chose to fight for? Why do they feel this way?
GROUP NAME: ____________________       Warm Up Activity

library.genesee.edu/~kdhoffman/RYSAG/DIG.htm

GROUP ONE: Seneca
GROUP TWO: Cayuga
GROUP THREE: Onondaga
GROUP FOUR: Oneida
GROUP FIVE: Mohawk

**TASK:** Your group has been assigned the role of one of the above Iroquois tribes that flourished during the colonial period. Record your answers to the following questions below:

**Roles:**

**Recorder:**

**Speaker:**

**Time Keeper:**

**Imagining you are a Native American in the tribe your group was assigned during the Revolutionary War era. Which side would you chose to align yourself with, the British or the Americans?**

**Alliance:**

**Why?**

+ **Positives for an Americans alliance:**

- **Negatives for an American Alliance:**

+ **Positives for a British alliance:**

- **Negatives for a British Alliance:**
Thayendanegea... Also known as Joseph, Brant

Joseph Brant was a prominent leader of the Mohawk Indians in the American Revolution and the years shortly after. Joseph Brant was born in 1742 along the Ohio River. He was a member of the Mohawk Indians. His parents lived in New York but were in the Ohio Country on a hunting trip when Brant was born. His Indian name was Thayendanegea. He attended Moor's Charity School for Indians in Lebanon, Connecticut, while still a boy. Brant learned English and white customs as a student there. His brother-in-law, British General Sir William Johnson, financed [paid for] Brant's education. Johnson hoped Brant would provide him with assistance in negotiating with the Indians residing [living] in the northeastern English colonies. The French and Indian War interrupted his education. Johnson withdrew the thirteen-year-old Brant from school to assist him against the French and their native allies. Upon graduating from school, Brant served as an interpreter.

As the American Revolution loomed closer, British military officials appointed Brant as a captain in the English Army. They hoped that this appointment would convince the Mohawks to side with England in the hostilities [fighting]. English officials in America also sent Brant to England to confer with the king. Brant met King George III on two separate occasions. The British government promised Brant that the Mohawks would have all land returned to them seized by English colonists before the conflict if the Indians remained loyal to England. During the Revolution, Brant served in the English military. He participated in the capture of New York City in 1776. He also led attacks against American settlements and outposts in New York and Pennsylvania.

With England's defeat in the American Revolution and the relinquishment [having to give up] of all land south of Canada, north of Florida, and east of the Mississippi River in the Treaty of Paris (1783), Brant now had to deal directly with the Americans, who claimed the land of his people. He eventually settled his followers in Canada but spent the remainder of his life encouraging Indians in New York to work together to stop further American seizure [taking without permission] of the natives' lands. He called for the Indians to unite together as one in negotiating with the whites. His message was a precursor of Tecumseh's Confederation, which was formed in the early 1800s. Brant died in Canada on August 24, 1807.


Dragging Canoe's focus in the early 1780's was to build alliances with anyone who would support his desire to drive the white settlers from the Cherokee hunting grounds on the Cumberland River...where he had warned the settlers would find the settlement to be "dark and bloody." The Chickasaws, Creeks, several northern tribes joined the Chickamauga and the Spanish, French, and English encouraged him at every opportunity against the settlers.

*Dragging Canoe, Cherokee War Chief* D. Ray Smith, August 1, 2008.
http://members.tripod.com/~SmithDRay/draggingcanoe-index-9.html#allia

Nancy Ward

Nancy Ward (1738–1822), a mixed-blood Cherokee woman who lived during the eighteenth century, was the Cherokee nation's last "Beloved Woman." At a time that the Cherokee nation was frequently at battle with American troops and white settlers who had occupied their traditional lands, Ward made repeated attempts to establish peace between the various parties.

In the early 1760s, the Cherokee nation was committed to helping the American colonists in the French and Indian War in exchange for protection for their families from hostile Creeks and Choctaws. But, colonial assistance also brought interference with Cherokee affairs in the form of frontier posts and military. The frontier posts were soon accompanied by settlers hungry for Cherokee land.

An incident in West Virginia in which some Virginia frontiersmen robbed and killed a group of Cherokees on their way back from helping the British take Fort Duquesne resulted in the revenge killing of more than 20 settlers by the Native Americans. This was the beginning of a conflict that would last more than two years.
During the Revolutionary War, the Cherokees were divided on the issues of helping the British and whether force should be used to expel American settlers on Cherokee land. Nancy's cousin, Dragging Canoe, the son of Attakullaculla, wanted to side with the British against the white settlers. Ward, however, spoke up in favor of supporting the American settlers.

In May 1775, a delegation of Shawnee, Delaware, and Mohawk emissaries traveled south to help the British win the support of the Cherokees and other tribes. That July, the Chickamauga Cherokee band of the Tennessee River Valley led by Dragging Canoe began attacking white settlements and forts in the Appalachians and in isolated areas of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. In retaliation, state militias destroyed Cherokee villages and crops. By 1777, the militias would force the Cherokee to give up some of their land.

Meanwhile, Dragging Canoe and his band continued to attack American settlements with arms supplied by the British. Finally, in 1778, Colonel Evan Shelby and 600 men invaded Dragging Canoe's territory.

In 1780, Ward provided American soldiers with advanced warning of another Cherokee attack. According to Felton, Ward even arranged to have a herd of her own cattle sent to the hungry militia. Nevertheless, the North Carolina militia would again invade Cherokee territory, destroying villages and demanding further land cessions. In the ensuing battle, which Ward had tried in vain to stop, she and her family were captured by the Americans; she was eventually released and allowed to return to her home in Chota.

In 1785, Ward attempted to promote mutual friendship between the whites and the Cherokees. She argued for the adoption of farming and dairy production by the Cherokees and became the first Cherokee dairy farmer. Much later, she urged her tribe not to sell tribal land to the whites, but she failed to exert influence on this score.
In the years following Ward's death, the state of Georgia, with the support of President Andrew Jackson, began taking Cherokee lands for extremely low compensation and promises of land in the west. Cherokee property was also taken by greedy settlers.

Shawnee Native Americans

The Shawnee Indians were living in the Ohio Valley as early as the late 1600s. The Iroquois Indians were unwilling to share these rich hunting grounds and drove the Shawnees away. Some went to Illinois; others went to Pennsylvania, Maryland or Georgia. As the power of the Iroquois weakened, the Shawnee moved back into Ohio from the south and the east. Scioto River valley.

The Shawnee Indians were allies of the French until Ohio Country circa 1740. The French pushed the British traders moved into the Ohio Country until the French again until the British victory in the French and Indian War. As French forts, the Ohio Indians, including the Shawnees, fought the British and their colonists. A Shawnee leader named Cornstalk led the Shawnees against British colonists during Lord Dunmore's War in 1774. During the American Revolution, the Shawnees fought alongside the British against the Americans. The Shawnees believed that England would prevent the colonists from encroaching further upon the natives' land. After the war the Indians continued to fight the Americans. The Shawnees were fierce warriors. They were among the more feared and respected of Ohio's Indians.

General Anthony Wayne defeated the Shawnees and other Ohio Indians at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. The Shawnees surrendered most of their lands in Ohio with the signing of the Treaty of Greeneville.

Part One: First read about each of the main Native American groups/individuals with the handouts you receive in class. Part Two: Complete the following questions below.

Joseph Brant

About his life:

Who he chose to side with during the Revolutionary War and why:

Dragging Canoe

About his life:

Who he chose to side with during the Revolutionary War and why:

Nancy Ward

About her life:

Who she chose to side with during the Revolutionary War and why:
Who she chose to side with during the Revolutionary War and why:


Shawnee Tribe

About their tribe:

Who they chose to side with during the Revolutionary War and why:


Part Three:

Think about it...complete the chart below based on your critical thinking skills and the new knowledge you have gained today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How were these Native Americans tribes/people alike? How were they different?</th>
<th>Which side do you believe most Native Americans chose to side with during the Revolutionary War, why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Clinton Sullivan Campaign

The American Revolution — that white man’s "family quarrel" — engulfed and finally tore apart the centuries-old Iroquois Confederacy, known as the Six Nations. Their people (whose descendents live in New York today) call themselves the Haudenosaunee, or, "People Building a Longhouse." Under relentless pressure to take sides, those who joined with England — most Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga and Mohawk — would finally fight their brothers and sisters — the Oneida and (most of) the Tuscarora — who, in turn, joined the Yankee cause.

In 1779, as the War of Independence raged on, George Washington boldly ordered two Generals, John Sullivan and James Clinton, to clear-cut the Seneca, Cayuga and Onondaga nations from their ancestral homelands in western New York. These countries should "not merely be overrun," Washington insisted, "but destroyed." He envisioned an inland empire to replace both English rule and Iroquois sovereignty.

The English Empire, for its part, was happy to recruit and to partly sustain its allied Iroquois fighters, especially in frontier raids against Yankee settlements. However, England would not and/or could not send enough soldiers to defend its allies' homelands against the Sullivan-Clinton juggernaut [campaign].

The Sullivan-Clinton Campaign intended and carried out a scorched earth policy. It transformed Iroquois Country from one of Earth's most fertile regions into fields of fire and ash. Exceeding 6,200 soldiers — roughly 25% of the rebel army —, it was the largest military operation launched (to that date) against native North Americans. (It ranks as the 2nd largest in US history.) The year 2004 marks its 225th Anniversary.

In 1779, Gen. Sullivan reported back to Congress that the Campaign burned 40 towns and their surrounding fields: consuming at least 160,000 bushels of corn and "vast quantity of vegetables of every kind." More recently, Anthony Wallace’s study (1969) tallied a total of 500 dwellings and nearly 1 million bushels of corn destroyed. Allan Eckert’s study (1978) estimated that 50 towns and nearly 1,200 houses were burned. While these figures may vary, every account shows an earth-shaking defeat for America's native peoples that cannot truly be expressed in numbers.

All this happened before the coming "Winter of Hunger," the worst in recorded memory. It is largely untold how over 5,000 Iroquois refugees fled, northwest, to England's overtaxed Ft. Niagara, and its woeful supply of food and shelter. Few know how over eight miles of makeshift shelters harbored rampant outbreaks of scurvy, hundreds of starving, and mass burial pits routinely filled in with lime by work crews from the fort. Remnants of that winter's dead are reported to still surface during road work to this very day.

"Sullivan/Clinton Campaign then and now" Bob Spiegelman, August 1, 2008,
http://sullivanclinton.com/education/
Task: Using your knowledge of the Sullivan-Clinton Campaign, create either a:

a. poem
b. rap
c. song

Each activity should include at least 5 lines and accurate facts about the event being described! Place your rough draft below before you can receive your final copy paper.
Name: __________________________
Date: ______________

Directions: Using your knowledge of the Sullivan Clinton Campaign complete the following R.A.F.T. task below, following each step one at a time in sequential order.

**Step One:** Chose a ROLE from the below choices...

- Choice One: Joseph Brant
- Choice Two: Dragging Canoe
- Choice Three: Nancy Ward
- Choice Four: A Shawnee Tribal Leader

**Step Two:** Decide which AUDIENCE you would be addressing if you were this individual who wanted to spread their opinion on the Revolutionary War. For example, Joseph Brant would probably chose to address Mohawk Indians, the tribe he belonged to, or the British the side that he fought for.

**Step Three:** Chose which FORMAT you would like to address your audience with. You may either:

a. write a letter  
b. write a speech

**Step Four:** Complete the TASK of your choosing below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice One:</th>
<th>Choice Two:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write a letter as the character you chose above expressing your feelings on the Revolutionary War. How does it affect your tribe? Who have you decided to support? How do you think the outcome of the war is going to change Native American culture in general?</td>
<td>Write a speech as the character you chose above expressing your feelings on the Revolutionary War. How does it affect your tribe? Who have you decided to support? How do you think the outcome of the war is going to change Native American culture in general?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Directions: Explore the following websites and complete the chart. Choose one article from each site which will illustrate Native American culture, legal struggles, and a fact you found interesting. Describe each on the chart, using the back for extra writing space. Be sure to print each article out!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
<th>One Article About Native American Culture</th>
<th>One Article About Native American Legal Battles OR Cultural Struggles</th>
<th>One interesting fact I learned about Native Americans Through This Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.millelacsojibwe.org/herosample.asp">http://www.millelacsojibwe.org/herosample.asp</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This site looks at Native American culture through a comic book point of view.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.nativetimes.com/">http://www.nativetimes.com/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Native American Times: Today's Independent Indian News</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.indiancountry.com/">http://www.indiancountry.com/</a></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Indian Country Today: The Nations' Leading Native American Indian News Source</em></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.cherokeeobserver.org/onlineissues.htm">http://www.cherokeeobserver.org/onlineissues.htm</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Cherokee Observer Online</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.indiancountrynews.com/">http://www.indiancountrynews.com/</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News From Indian Country</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Task: Have your group choose two of the following four activities to complete. Be sure to create a rough draft first!

Choice One: Write a book about Native American struggles today. Use the information you gained from the previous lesson and be sure to include at least two challenges!

Choice Two: Write a book about Native American struggles today. Use the information you gained from the previous lesson and be sure to include at least two challenges!

Choice Three: Create a bumper sticker advocating for the support of Native Americans and their difficulties today. Be sure to include a snappy slogan!

Choice Four: Write your own news editorial which expresses your opinion on Native American cultures and communities today. Include at least 10 facts!
First study the pictures below...

Now think about it...what do you think these pictures each mean? How do you think they are connected to today's lesson?

journals.aol.com/.../430
www.reznetnews.org/.../oklahoma-land-steal%3F
www.auburnpub.com/.../2004/05/25/news/news01.txt
www.reznetnews.org/.../oklahoma-land-steal%3F
Meet the author and Native American Activist...

Doug George-Kanentiio

What are FOUR questions I would ask Mr. Kanentiio if I was given the opportunity?

1.
2.
3.
4.

Now, using the four questions you formulated above, write a rough draft below of an e-mail you will send to him to get your answers. Do not forget to use proper letter form and include an introduction and conclusion.
What do I know about Native Americans?

{Think:
  facts/people/vocabulary/events}
This is your final task for our Native American unit this year. Your group has been assigned the job of creating and performing a newscast. You will need to:

a. Come up with three “breaking news story” on Native American culture today.

b. Decide on the topics your newscast is going to cover. The topics are your choice; however, make sure they are about issues we discussed in class. Some suggestions are:

- Land claims/legal battles
- Cultural traditions, past and present
- Cultural hardships
- Past events in Native American history

c. Create roles and an original script for your newscast and have both typed up.

d. Perform your newscast, and have it taped by the teacher! (Don’t forget to show those pearly whites!)

★ This assignment is due:

Important Questions I Have?
★
★
Planning Page

Roles Assigned: ________________________________

_____________________________________

_____________________________________

Topics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story One:</th>
<th>Story Two:</th>
<th>Story Three:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Script Rough Draft [you should use extra loose leaf paper as well]:

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________