

Native American History

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Who is Native American?

- ◇ 16th century: answer obvious.
- ◇ Race = social construct.
- ◇ Intermarriage and assimilation.
- ◇ Tribe standards for membership.
- ◇ What about others w/native ancestry?

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Citizenship

- ◇ 1924: All Native Americans became citizens.
- ◇ Some had become citizens through treaties as early as 1817.

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Population

- ✧ About 1500 A.D.: 2 to 4 million indigenous population.
- ✧ 1890: down to about 240,000.
- ✧ 2000: 300+ tribes, and 2.5 million people identified as Native American
 - ✦ 50% lack tribal membership
 - ✦ 1% of U.S. population.
 - ✦ 33% live on reservations.

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Origin of People in Western Hemisphere

- ✧ Origin of *Homo sapiens sapiens* in Africa.
- ✧ Path of migration: likely Bering Land Bridge, 25,000 to 11,000 years ago.
 - ✦ Big game hunters: woolly mammoth, giant bison.
- ✧ Physical evidence:
 - ✦ Teeth: Asian pattern
 - ✦ Blood type similarities
 - ✦ DNA

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Archaeological Evidence

- ✧ 13,500 years ago: Yukon (Bluefish caves)
- ✧ 11,200 years ago: central Alaska
- ✧ 10,500 years ago: Folsom, New Mexico

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Paleo-Indians

- ◇ Big game hunters: woolly mammoth, giant bison
- ◇ Very large spear points
 - ✦ Clovis, Folsom
- ◇ End of ice age changed environment
- ◇ Extinction of megafauna forced life changes.

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Archaic Period

- ◇ Diversification in ways of life based on ecological zones.
- ◇ Desert west:
 - ✦ Hunting small animals – deer, rabbits.
 - ✦ Gathering plant foods.
 - ✦ Lived in caves, then in pithouses.

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Archaic period: Plains

- ◇ Hunt changed to modern bison species.
- ◇ Gathered plant foods.
- ◇ Continued nomadic pattern, following herds.

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Archaic period: Arctic

- ✧ Inuit focused on caribou inland, and sea mammals and salmon along waterways.
- ✧ Subarctic: caribou hunting and salmon fishing were predominant subsistence strategies.

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Archaic period: Northwest Coast

- ✧ Rich sea resources permitted abundance in this area.
- ✧ Sea mammals (seal, otter) and salmon fishing.
- ✧ Abundant plant resources.
- ✧ Area of development of complex hunter-gatherer cultures – unusual.

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Archaic period: East

- ✧ Hunting small animals, gathering plant foods.
- ✧ Local resources highly variable.
- ✧ Coastal areas: shellfish were important resources.
- ✧ Communities developed along rivers, for resources and trade.

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Farming

- ✧ Gathering plant foods led to next step: planting seeds in convenient places for harvest.
- ✧ Maize first cultivated in Mesoamerica in 4,000 B.C.
- ✧ By 1,000 B.C., maize grown in American Southwest.

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Social Changes and Framing

- ✧ Sedentary communities formed.
- ✧ Population increase.
- ✧ Formation of complex social systems.
- ✧ More developed religious systems.
- ✧ Gradual development of complex political systems.

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Farming in East

- ✧ Sunflower cultivation began in 2,000 B.C.
- ✧ Maize grown as Northern Flint in 100 A.D. – result of hybridization for shorter growing season in the north.

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Native American Languages

- ✧ More than 300 languages at time of European arrival.
- ✧ Most mutually unintelligible.
- ✧ Europeans forced conversion to English.
- ✧ Today: fewer than 150 languages still survive, and many spoken only by a few people.

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European Arrival

- ✧ Time of arrival very different in different regions.
- ✧ All regions had one common effect: spread of European diseases, through direct contact and in case of smallpox, in advance of contact through blankets.

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Spanish Policies: American SW

- ✧ Great debate: were Native Americans human? Did they have souls?
 - ✦ Army & government: preferred to think not, so could justify seizing valuables.
 - ✦ Church: preferred to think they did have souls, so could convert them.
 - ✦ Church prevailed, missions established.

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Spanish Missions

- ✧ American SW and California still bear traces of Spanish missions.
- ✧ Indian groups relocated around missions, especially along Rio Grande.
- ✧ Spanish approach: somewhat collaborative.
- ✧ Anglo arrival: great contrast w/Spanish.

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English, French, and Russian influences

- ✧ Policy variables: farmers pushed to acquire land and displace - - but fur traders developed a mutually beneficial relationship, at least temporarily.
- ✧ Adverse consequence of fur trade: alcohol, socially undesirable behavior, and disruption of men's roles in own societies.

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Treaties

- ✧ Before early 1800s: treaties viewed as agreements between sovereign governments.
- ✧ As land pressures grew, treaties increasingly became tool for manipulation.
 - ✦ Alcohol, misrepresentation, threats.

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Treaty Abrogation

- ✧ In 1800s, policy changed: treaties now viewed as federal statutes, subject to amendment and repeal without consent of Indians.
- ✧ Rationale: European settlers used land more “efficiently” than Indians, so it should be freed for their use.
- ✧ Underlying idea: manifest destiny.

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Indian Removal Act of 1830

- ✧ Ultimate in treaty abrogation; called for removal of all Indians to lands west of the Mississippi River.
- ✧ Later: to Oklahoma, then to reservations in Oklahoma.
- ✧ Many tribes involved; Cherokee call it their “Trail of Tears.”

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Dawes Act of 1887

- ✧ Removal resulted in Indian possession of reservation lands.
- ✧ Viewed as “excessive” for Indian needs.
- ✧ Dawes Act called for allotment of 160 acres to each adult male tribal member.
- ✧ “Excess” land to be sold to Europeans.

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Dawes Act Impact

- ✧ Effect was to disrupt Indian social and political systems.
- ✧ Land formerly held in communal ownership.
- ✧ Some tribes refused, but those that did lost much land.
- ✧ Before Dawes: 138 million acres in reservation land. Sold under Dawes: 90 million acres. 50% of remaining reservation land = desert.

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White Earth Reservation

- ✧ Example of influence of Dawes Act: White Earth.
- ✧ Reservation became “checker boarded” with European ownership as land was sold.
- ✧ White Earth Land Reclamation Project, Winona LaDuke: attempting to buy back lands lost through Dawes Act.

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Indian Reorganization Act of 1934

- ✧ John Collier
 - ✦ Strong sense of social justice
 - ✦ Sought to restore Indian communities.
- ✧ Idea was to grant self-government to tribes and promote communal economic development.

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Termination – 1953

- ✧ All federal aid to tribes terminated in 1953.
- ✧ Some reservations also terminated:
Klamath, Menominee.
 - ✦ Timber reserves in these areas.
- ✧ Mandate to assimilate.

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More Policy Changes

- ✧ Great Society programs, 1960s: Federal assistance restored to Indians and tribes, once again.
- ✧ Indian Self Determination Act, 1975: officially reversed Termination doctrine and restored local self-government powers.

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Policy Changes

- ✧ American Indian Religious Freedom Act, 1978: Protects right to possess sacred objects, visit sacred sites as part of traditional religious activities.
- ✧ Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, 1990: Tribes may request return of human remains, grave goods, and items of cultural patrimony.

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Pan-Indian Identity

- ✧ Before Europeans, Indian people had strong local group identity, but no overall sense of identity as “Native Americans.”
- ✧ With demise of tribe, clan identity, Pan-Indian identity has been created.

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Ghost Dance

- ✧ One pan-Indian belief arose out of conflict: Ghost Dance.
- ✧ Developed by Wovoka (Jack Wilson), Paiute, in 1890.
- ✧ Idea: dance would cause whites to disappear, Indian dead would reappear, and land restored.
- ✧ Massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890 punishment for Ghost Dance observance.

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Boarding School

- ✧ Development of Indian boarding schools broke down tribal identity, created pan-Indian identity.
- ✧ Children removed from tribes and families, sent to military-style schools
 - ✦ E.g. Carlisle Indian School, Pennsylvania.
 - ✦ Richard Pratt: “Kill the Indian, save the man.”
- ✧ Social consequences severe: disrupted family, group identity.

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New Traditions

- ✧ Another pan-Indian belief system is the Native American Church, a substitute for traditional religions now lost.
- ✧ NA Church not popular in areas that still have strong traditional religious observances in place (e.g. Pueblos).
- ✧ Powwow: replaced traditional ceremonies, especially influenced by Plains Indian concepts.

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Contemporary Image of Indians

- ✧ Concepts of Indian life: living in tipis, wearing feather headdresses, and chasing buffalo on horses.
- ✧ These images based on Plains tribes, the Indians who became best known in 19th Century.
- ✧ Reality quite varied.

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Indian Gaming

- ✧ Has become controversial subject, especially in states where profitable.
- ✧ 1982: U.S. Supreme Court: reservation Indians can sponsor bingo and other games of chance.
- ✧ 1988: Indian Gaming Regulatory Act
- ✧ Controversy: federal tax OK, state tax precluded.

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Viewpoints on other Cultures

- ✧ Ethnocentrism: Belief that one's own way of life is right and proper.
- ✧ Cultural Relativism: View behavior from within a culture, not judge by external standards.

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Core Values

- ✧ Power & participation
- ✧ Enlightenment - access to info.
- ✧ Wealth - access to goods & services
- ✧ Well-being - health & safety
- ✧ Skill - proficiency
- ✧ Affection - love & friendship
- ✧ Respect - recognition by others
- ✧ Rectitude - sense of ethical behavior

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