The Original Nations Building Nations…
Aboriginal Peoples at
WORK
On Turtle Island

The Study Guide

A resource guide to support
THE TRIPLE TRUTH!

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Fragment from Dedication Poem for Oche Watt Te Ou / Reflection

INDIANS
all around you now,
Some, right beside you in the spirit world.
Some, right beside you on the bus.
Some tending your gardens,
some growing your food
some cleaning your houses,
some – with really good jobs working at middle-management.
All crying for expression – wanting you to see them,
hear them –
listen!
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ALL OUR RELATIONS
It’s a **RED** World
*After All!*

**RE-ADDRESSING THE MYTHS**

From long-houses to towers in the skies, from popcorn to Polaris, from concrete to constitutional reforms, the influence of the Aboriginal peoples in the areas of trade, agriculture, diplomacy, architecture, art, music, science, technology, food, and medicines has been so profound as to impact upon and TRANSFORM European culture. Welcome to a General Introduction to the Creative Genius, Ingenuity and Achievements of the Aboriginal peoples who built America.

“Great warriors do not always fight, but with wisdom, are peacemakers” (Tribal Law, 103, Eastern Algonquin)

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*Complex methods of agriculture included irrigation, fertilization, terracing, and hybridization. Architectural designs from the ancient Americas are not only still standing but also still inhabited today. Sustainable development of resources was not only a necessity but a way of life.*

*The artists celebrated and honored the beauty of life before all creation. The hunters and trappers and fishers and growers provided. The healers healed. The diplomats formed alliances with other nations to ensure trade and commerce. All of this is WORK.*

*Aboriginal peoples have been very good at adapting traditional skills into salable skills as our economies were disrupted and our land base eroded. Indian cowboys work and ride the rodeo circuit on the plains, where remarkable horsemanship has always been a way of life.*

*Coastal peoples, for whom the Ocean is mother, developed fisheries. Forest people continue to defend their right to log and the Haudenosaunee (‘they build longhouses’) have transferred their architectural and construction skills to the high steel.*
Persistent Myths vs. Enduring Realities

**Myth:** Aboriginal people are all alike.
**Reality:** Within Canada there are three distinct Aboriginal groups – Inuit, Metis and First Nations. There are many First Nations throughout Canada; and among these there are more than 50 distinctive linguistic groups. There are, also, several dialects within Inuksuit; and the Metis peoples speak a variety of First Nations languages such as Cree, Ojibwa, Chipewyan or Michif (a “nation language”, which has evolved out of their mixed ancestry). Each of these groups/nations follows a distinct lifeway, in which Creation Stories, Song, Dance, Works of Art, tradition, medicines, and modes of governance (along with language) reflect distinct tribal histories and identities.

**Myth:** The Aboriginal peoples of North America were conquered because they were inferior.
**Reality:** The First Nations Peoples of Canada were NEVER “conquered”. We were never engaged in WAR with the colonizers; rather, we were engaged in partnerships, without which the newcomers would never have survived. We facilitated the survival of the Europeans; we facilitated their economic development within the fur trade, the fishing industry, and in the development of labor (and life) – saving devices to facilitate the transportation of men, goods, and supplies across seemingly impassable land and waterways. The Native peoples of this land welcomed the newcomers as guests and treated them as equal partners. The newcomers, however, brought diseases (such as smallpox), against which our peoples had no immunity, guns, with which they decimated the buffalo, and dishonest negotiators, who entered into fraudulent treaties with our peoples, which were not honored.

**Myth:** The Native Americans arrived in this hemisphere via the Siberian land bridge.
**Reality:** The Creation Stories of every First Nation across the United States and Canada attest to the fact that our peoples were created from the very earth of the traditional tribal lands.

**Myth:** The Original peoples of North America had no civilization until the Europeans brought it to them.
**Reality:** Our Original Nations were highly civilized, boasting sophisticated forms of governance and democratic principles, from which the Constitution of the United States borrowed heavily; intricate systems of irrigation (in the South west) rivaling those of classical Greece and Rome; structurally and aesthetically complex forms of architecture, art, music, agriculture, medicine, philosophy, and spiritual dogma and practice.

**Myth:** Native Americans were warlike and treacherous.
**Reality:** American Indians fought fiercely against the atrocities of European Invaders. They fought to defend their lands, lives, sovereignty, freedom, and lifeways from these invaders. Alternatively, some nations joined forces with their European partners with whom strong ties in trade and/or marriage had been forged; and they fought against the European foes of their European allies with courage and loyalty.

**Myth:** Native Americans have contributed nothing to Europeans or to the growth of North America.
**Reality:** The contributions of American Indians have changed and enriched the world. The Constitution of the United States of America has been influenced not only by European thinkers and writers but also by the powerful, well-organized Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), who had lived by their own Constitution – the Kaianerekow (Great Law of Peace) – for centuries. Certain aspects of the Iroquois Confederacy were adopted in the construction of the American Federal system. These aspects include impeachment, equal representation of nations, checks and balances, and the concepts of freedom, peace, and democracy.

**Myth:** Tribal Nations did not value or empower women.
**Reality:** Native American women often wielded considerable power within their tribes. They chose and advised tribal leaders; in agricultural societies, they retained ownership over homes and properties, and this ownership was passed from mother to daughter; and both genders bore
separate but equally vital responsibilities for the maintenance and survival of their communities. Western literature, narrative, and media has imaged the Indigenous female as either a “squaw” (dirty, slovenly, promiscuous, and ugly) or as an exotic “princess”, the beautiful daughter of a Chief, who was generally willing to abandon her people to marry a dashing European.

**Myth:** The Aboriginal people of North America are a vanished (or rapidly vanishing) race.

**Reality:** There are 2.1 million United States Indians today; and in 1996 *The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* cited the total population of Inuit, Metis, and First Nations peoples as 811,400. The Commission has projected that by 2006 our numbers will reach 959,000 (RCAP, Vol. 1, 21).

**Myth:** Most Aboriginal peoples in North America are confined to reservations; they live in tipis, wear braids, and ride horses.

**Reality:** Aboriginal peoples are not restricted to their reservations; many live in urban areas, attend post-secondary institutions, and work in all areas of professional endeavor from law to medicine to entertainment, politics, engineering, teaching, etc. Few wear braids and ride horses. Fewer still own tipis.

**Myth:** First Nations peoples get a “free ride” from the Government.

**Reality:** The benefits that First Nations peoples receive from the Government constitute the repayment of a considerable debt owed to the Original peoples to compensate us for the surrender of some or all of our invaluable lands.

**Myth:** Native Americans have a genetic predisposition towards alcoholism.

**Reality:** Native Americans are not any more predisposed to this unfortunate condition than members of any other ethnic group.

**Myth:** Most Native Americans know the histories, languages and cultural aspects of their own Nations and of other First Nations.

**Reality:** While there is a strong resurgence in reclaiming language, cultural knowledge, and tradition among Native peoples today, the generational impact of residential schools, the ‘sixties scoop’, and the history of enforced suppression of language and ritual practices, has cut many of our peoples off from their families, communities, and history, language, and cultures. Few Native Americans know all cultural aspects of their own Nation, much less those of other Nations.
Native American Gifts to the World

A  avocado, amaranth, asphalt
B  buffalo, beaver pelts, Brazilian dye
C  canoe, corn, caucasus, chocolate, cocoa, cassava, chicle, cotton, cashews, chayote, catfish, chilis, cayenne, cranberries, concrete (Mayan – 300BC – 300AD)
D  democracy, diuretics, dyes, dog-sleds, dry farming
E  ear-ache remedies, ecology, eye-wash (from white oak or mesquite)
F  fertilizer, food preservation, (metal) fish-hooks, fishnet lures (olfactory), fish-traps, fish decoys
G  gum, guano deposits, grits
H  hammock, hominy, hickory nut
I  impeachment, ipecac, irrigation systems
J  jerky, Jerusalem artichoke
K  kidney beans, kayaks
L  libraries, long pants, llamas
M  milpa, moccasins, manioc, medicines, maple syrup
N  nuts, names (place-names in Canada and USA)
O  Oklahoma (and) Oklahoma!
P  potatoes, parrots, pumpkins, peanuts, popcorn, pineapple, passenger pigeon, pear, cactus, passion fruit, papaya, pecan, paprika, peyote, potato chips
Q  quinine, quinoa
R  rubber, red river carts (Metis/fur-trade)
S  squash, silver, sisal, sunflowers, sweet potatoes, succotash, snow-shoes, snow goggles, set-lines (multiple fish-hooks on a single line)
T  turkey, tapioca pudding, tomatoes, tortillas, tobacco, tar, toboggan, Thanksgiving
U  United States Constitution (influenced by the Iroquois)
V  vanilla
W  wild rice, witch hazel, words (several thousand in English and Spanish)
X  xylophone (the marimba of both African and Amerindian origin)
Y  yams, yucca, York boats (Metis/fur-trade)
Z  zero, zucchini

1 In the Americas the Mayans mixed sand or gravel with lime and water to create concrete, which was more durable than adobe. They used this in the construction of roads and in buildings as mortar to adhere blocks to each other. The Mayans used and developed concrete independently of the Egyptians and the Romans.
2 Archeologists have unearthed what is probably the first metal fish-hook in the entire world. Developed by the ancient Paleo-Indians in the Southern Great Lakes region, this fish-hook is made of copper.
3 “Ontario” is derived from the Iroquois word, “Kanadario”, which means “sparkling water”. “Toronto” is derived from the Iroquois word for “gathering place”.
4 In the summer of 1853, a Mohawk chef at the Moon Lake Lodge Diner in Saratoga Springs (NY) became frustrated when railroad baron, Cornelius Vanderbilt, repeatedly sent back his french-fries because they were “too thick”. After Vanderbilt’s third complaint, chef, George Crum, sliced the potatoes with his peeler and fried them until they were too crisp to be eaten with a fork. Vanderbilt loved them; and soon they became the most popular item on the diner’s menu. Before long they were being packaged and sold as “Saratoga chips” throughout New England. Crum later opened his own restaurant and HIS chips were the house specialty.
Stomp Song

Call Respond

Wind helps us the clean the wool work, work, we work
Wool of the white dog, wool of the goat work, work, we work
Sun dries it, bleaches it white frost at night, bleaches it white
Spin hemp and cat-tail fluff work, work, we work
From sunrise work, work, we work
’Til sundown work, work, we work
Weaving cedar bark work, work, we work
Weaving blankets work, work, we work
Weaving baskets work, work, we work
Knitting reeds and feathers and grass wool, reeds, and feathers and grass

TWO

Tie the knots to make the fishnets work, work, we work
Lure the fish with sweet, sweet medicine work, work, we work
Dive for lobster, dig for clams deep in the ocean, deep in the sand
Build a weir to trap the herring work, work, we work
From sunrise work, work, we work
’Til sundown work, work, we work
Spearing salmon work, work, we work
Smoking salmon work, work, we work
Drying salmon work, work, we work
We make oolagan, oolagan, oolagan oil oolagan, oolagan, oolagan oil

THREE

Gather up a mound of sweet earth work, work, we work
Corn and beans we plant together work, work, we work
See the bean climb up the cornstalk curling, winding up the cornstalk
Work, work, we work

From sunrise work, work, we work
’Til sundown work, work, we work
Making harvest work, work, we work
Braiding cornhusks work, work, we work
Shelling beans work, work, we work
Tending corn and beans and p’taters and squash corn, beans and p’taters and squash

FOUR

Track the moose and make a moose call work, work, we work
Listen for the partridge drumming work, work, we work
Hide in the marshes; wait in the reeds Daybreak brings the ducks and geese
Work, work, we work
'Til sundown
Hunting caribou
Hunting buffalo
On the trapline
Food and shelter and clothing and trade
Work, work, we work

Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief
Doctor, lawyer, Indian chief
Work, work we work

Healers
printers
Tailors
carvers
Sailors
loggers
Teachers
preachers
Pickers
dancers
Miners
cowboys
Nurses
astronomers
Singers
soldiers
Navigators
astronauts
Social workers
artists
Chefs and
clowns and
Pilots
diplomats
Canners
journalists
Poets
ironworkers
Clanmothers
cops and
Bankers
astrophysicists

Work, work, we work
Work, work, we work
Work, work, we work

OH HEEH
HI YAH
The Fur-Trade

As the population of newcomers expanded and as more and more people became actively involved in the acquisition and sale of pelts, more and more food was required to sustain the hunters and traders. Metis trappers, guides, interpreters, and “country wives” directly served the fur-trader; meanwhile Metis Buffalo hunters were acquiring and producing the pemmican to sustain the ‘players’. During the 18th and 19th centuries, Pemmican became the largest gross national product, topping anything in either Canada or the USA. And to move this product, Metis entrepreneurs developed “The Red River Cart”, which proved to be an indispensable vehicle to the fur-trade. Adapted from the peasant carts of France, this cart had huge wheels, the hubs of which were slotted into place. Therefore they could carry extremely heavy loads of furs and goods over great distances across rough terrain. When the carts reached a river bank, they could be dismantled, turned into floating barges, and reassembled on the opposite shore to continue their journey. Most trade routes and future roads of the USA and Canada have been laid down on Metis Red River Cart trails.

For more information, students should visit:
http://www.geocities.com/Soho/Atrium/4832/metis/cartpic.jpg
http://www.geocities.com/Soho/Atrium/4832/metis/york.gif
http://www.geocities.com/Soho/Atrium/4832/metis/furtrade.jpg
Time Line: The Fur-Trade

Beginning almost immediately on the heels of contact, the fur-trade flourished for 250 years, and can be divided (roughly) into three eras according to the entrepreneurial dominance of particular national groups: The “French Era” lasted from 1600-1760; the “British Era” lasted from 1760-1816; and the “American Era” lasted from 1816-1850. By 1850, the fur-trade had for all intents and purposes ‘run its course’; the European passion for Beaver hats had been replaced by a passion for silk; Native Americans no longer controlled their former lands; diseases brought by the newcomers had decimated tribal populations; many bands had been relegated to reserves, where their lifeway was heavily controlled; and many former Native trappers had adopted the agricultural lifestyle recommended by the missionaries. Furs had become hard to find; and more importantly, Native trappers had become equally scarce. As the fur-trade collapsed, many former traders moved their skills and capital into real estate, the lumber and mining industries, or into the railroads.

The French Era 1600-1760

During the 1500’s, as the newcomers explored the east coast of mainland North America, they traded with the Native peoples they encountered. Native trappers brought furs and meat from the interior to the St. Lawrence River and traded there for manufactured European goods, such as iron tools, wool blankets, cloth, beads, and guns. It has become a generally accepted theory that Native peoples were somehow ‘corrupted’ by these goods – that their traditional ways were somehow undermined by an increased dependency upon these goods. While it is true that over time, some of the traditional skills were lost and resultant hardships did occur, it is important to note that the new items acquired by Native peoples actually reinforced traditional values. The Western trader accumulated money and goods in order to consume and reinvest. In Aboriginal societies, accumulation was/is the prelude to re-distribution. For instance, goods for which Native peoples had traded were not used personally, nor were they traded for profit to others; rather, they might be interred in elaborate funerary rites (Feast of the Dead) or they might be given away in Potlatch Ceremonies (Miller, 47).

1608: Samuel Champlain infiltrates the interior of the continent; he sends Etienne Brule to live among the Huron Indians to learn their language and trade routes. Champlain also was the first newcomer to recognize the benefits posed by the birch bark canoe for trade.

1618: Etienne Brule’s quest for a route (the North West Passage) to the Far East brings him to the eastern end of Lake Superior.

1634: Jean Nicolet travels through the Great Lakes to Green Bay (on what is now Lake Michigan). Nicolet claims all lands in this area for France.

By the 1630’s the Huron and Ottawa tribes are supplying furs to the newcomers for export to Europe. In Wisconsin, the Winnebago tribes block the fur-trade routes; they are attacked and defeated by the Ottawa and the Huron; meanwhile, the Sauk, Fox, Potawatomi, and Ojibwe begin to move into this area.

1659: Radisson and Grosselliers make an unlicensed trip into the interior. They build a trading post at Chequamagon Bay (Lake Superior) and claim to have discovered a portage into the west; this is possibly “Grand Portage”.

1670: The Hudson’s Bay Company is chartered. The company lays claim to all lands that drain into the Hudson’s Bay for hunting and trading.

By this time the Huron and Ottawa are being driven out of the western Great Lakes region by the Dakota Sioux. Now, increased numbers of French move into the area and begin to trade directly with the Indians.

1673: Marquette and Joliet traverse the Fox and Wisconsin rivers; they reach the Mississippi. From this time, the Fox and the Wisconsin become major transportation routes to the western trading regions.

1679: Seiur Du Luth uses the Savannah Portage to reach the interior of Minnesota and Mille Lac. He claims all lands for France, before returning to Lake Superior, where he builds a post on the Kaministikquai River (on the northwest shore).

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The Ojibwe move from the eastern shore of Lake Superior to Chequamegon Bay. They take the place of the departed Huron and Ottawa, allying themselves with the Dakota Sioux, with whom they establish trade relations.

1682: La Salle travels through the Great Lakes and down to the Mississippi Delta. He claims all lands draining into the Mississippi and its tributaries for France.

1689: War erupts between France and England; in the ‘colonies’, alliances are forged and broken; and trade is disrupted.

1690: This period begins what is characterized by some historians as the “optimum” period for the Cree Nation, who had dominated the plains and the forests south of Great Bear Lake and the Athabascan region, for 100 years. Trade with the British newcomers had enhanced their lifestyle; but the Cree lifeway had not yet been disrupted. But as settlers began to encroach on their lands and as small-pox began to decimate their numbers, the Cree were forced to press northward into the Chipewyan-controlled Barrens; and tensions between the two nations escalated into skirmishes and warfare.

1696: New France closes all its western fur posts. Officially, trade is abandoned for 20 years; however, illegal (French) traders maintain business as usual.

1712: The Fox Nation closes off the trading route of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers. Trade throughout the upper Mississippi region is disrupted. The French attack the Fox Nation.

1714: James Knight is the Governor of the English Post, York Factory. Thanadelthur, a Chipewyan woman, captured by the Cree, escapes her captors and seeks aid from the English to return to her people. Knight is excited by the possibilities of trading with the Chipewyans; he purchases her from Thanadelthur from her Cree captor, and engineers an embassy of peace between the two peoples. In 1715, Thanadelthur with an escort of British and Cree soldiers and traders embarks upon this embassy of peace. The mission is almost abandoned when the group discovers a tent with nine murdered Chipewyan; however, Thanadelthur persists, and single-handedly effects reconciliation between the two First Nations and commercial ties between the Chipewyan, Cree, and English. Because of these peaceful relations, the fur-trade moves quickly north and west. In February of 1717 Thanadelthur, the “woman in red” dies of fever at York Factory.

1730: The Fox are all but completely eradicated by the French. The war has ended. And the Fox/Wisconsin river-routes have re-opened. Indian middle-men are no longer employed; and goods are carried west by licensed traders and brought directly to the Native trappers.

1754: The French-Indian War begins; trade is interrupted when licensed traders and their voyageurs are called east to fight the British.

**The British Era (1760-1816)**

1760: New France is conquered by the British. All trading rights and privileges are now held by the British. Furs are sent to London (instead of Paris); and most trading goods are supplied through London agencies.

1762: France cedes all of its land-claims west of the Mississippi to Spain.

1767: Trade regulations are returned to the colonies; and exclusive licenses are abolished. Once trade is de-regularized, the use of liquor in the fur-trade increases. British traders now begin to establish winter posts amongst the Indians. At Grand Portage, construction begins on permanent structures.

1774: The Quebec Act becomes law. The western Great Lakes and all land north of the Ohio river becomes part of Quebec; Green Bay and Prairie du Chein become interior trading centres. The American revolution causes some traders to avoid areas south and east of the Great Lakes; these traders move north and west. The Hudson’s Bay Company builds a post on the Saskatchewan river.

1782: A smallpox epidemic wipes out thousands of Dakota Sioux throughout the Northwest. They no longer inhabit any villages north of St. Anthony Falls.
1783: The Treaty of Versailles ends the American Revolution.

1784: In January the North West Company is formed. It is the first joint stock company in Canada. Total shares for the company are 16; and of these Simon McTavish and the Frobisher brothers hold 6. Grand Portage is the company’s rendezvous point for the next 20 years.

1789: Alexander Mackenzie searches for the North West Passage. Instead he reaches the Arctic Ocean.

1795: Alexander Mackenzie breaks away from the North West Company because of disagreements with Simon McTavish. Subsequently, the XY Company is formed from several existing companies. And Mackenzie joins this company in 1799. McTavish orders his departments to undersell the XY Company traders. This increases the use of rum, tobacco, and blue or red-laced braided coats. The practice of initiating drinking bouts before beginning to trade also increases. By 1800, the North West Company is operating 117 trading posts.

1803: The Americans purchase Louisiana territory from the French; and Lewis and Clark begin their expedition to find passage to the Pacific Coast.

1812: War between England and the United States disrupts all trade across the continent. By 1816 the USA reclaims lands that had been occupied by the British. ‘Foreign’ traders are disallowed on American soil. The North West Company is forced to withdraw.

**The American Era (1816-1850)**

1821: The North West Company merges with the Hudson’s Bay Company.

1836: Missionaries arrive at Lake Pokegama.

1837: The Ojibwe sign a treaty giving the Folle Avoine to the United States. Some Ojibwe move to Crow Wing River; others remain in the St. Croix Valley; and assist in the birthing of a lumbering industry in that area.

1838: The Hudson’s Bay Company was paying annuities to the American Fur Company (which had abandoned its posts along the border in exchange for this annuity) and to the Ojibwe. Of the $4700.00 dedicated annually to the Ojibwe, the American Fur Company received $3500.00.

1840: Four years after the arrival of the missionaries, the Post at Lake Pokegama is sold to a government sponsored farmer. The Ojibwe community is divided; some retain traditional lifestyles and some adopt the agricultural lifestyle recommended by the missionaries.

1842: The American Fur Company is bankrupt. In the St. Croix Valley, more and more white settlers are moving in. Trade companies begin to invest in lumbering, banking, general merchandising, steamboats, and land speculation.

1850: The Beaver Hat is out of style in Europe. Silk hats are now favored by the public.

1854: The Lake Superior Ojibwe sign a treaty, which relegates them to reservations in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

1858: Minnesota becomes a State of the United States of America.

1867: Canadian Confederation.
French era, British era, American era … where’s the INDIAN era in all of this?

**Thanadelthur**

*Father Emile Petiot, 1883 (originally published in English)*

*As told to him by Alexis Enna-Aze (Fort Chipewyan)*

This is the oldest printed version of Thanadelthur’s story in the oral tradition; and it resembles other oral accounts in its structure of four episodes – her capture, her escape, her meeting with the HBC officer, and her journey to find her people. Like other accounts, this story also concludes with a brief epilogue.

The Indians using the Algonquin tongue… carried on a pitiless war against the Athabasca Tinney or Slaves … a Chipewyan woman names Tha-narelther (Falling Sable) was carried off by a Savanois (Cree from the Hudson’s Bay region) war-party, and taken in captivity to the shore-region of Hudson’s Bay. She saw with astonishment in the tents of her captors domestic utensils and arms entirely new to her, and as she at first believed them to be of native manufacture, she admired the intellectual superiority of the Killini (Cree), and determined to remain with a people so superior to herself in intelligence and cleverness. But she did not live among them long before detecting from their ways and ceaseless wanderings that they obtained these things from strangers in exchange for peltry and provisions. This traffic puzzled the captive, but as she imagined that the original possessors of the riches bestowed upon the Savanois must be their relations or allies, she never thought of taking refuge with them and begging their protection. Only after some years of harsh captivity, did she discover that the Agayasieu (The Cree name for the English – also: ‘Akayasiw’), who supplied the Crees and Savanois, belonged to an entirely strange race, good-natured and generous, friendly with all the aborigines, and coming from the far east to trade with them. Her mind was soon made up. She succeeded in reaching Fort Churchill alone, and as she had understood enough of the Algonquin dialect to make herself understood by the interpreters of the fort, she was enabled to let the HBC officers know that she belonged to the great nation of “Men” (Tinney), living far off in the west, and professing honesty and fair-behavior like the English. She expressed her determination of returning to her own people, and begged for assistance on the way home, promising to establish friendly relations between her countrymen and the officers of the company, who, glad of the opportunity of extending the sphere of their commercial transaction, gave her a sledge and dogs, with various presents, and a safe conduct through the land of the Killini. Attracted by these presents, the Chipeweyans at once understood the long voyage from the Peace River to the mouth of the Churchill, calling the fort “The-ye” (stone house), and its inhabitants “The-ye Ottine” (men of the stone house), a name by which the English are still known among the Tinney (Petitot 1883: 650-51).

You, who are wise, must know that different Nations have different Conceptions of things and you will therefore not take it amiss, if our Ideas of this kind of Education happen not to be the same as yours (Canassatego, Tribal Leader, Six Nations, Lancaster Pennsylvania, 1744)

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6 Dene Geophysicist, Joseph Desjarlais, visited Turtle Gals in rehearsals to share stories from his community; he informed us that “Thanadelthur” in his dialect means “Come from a Long Way”, which indicates that she may have received this name when she returned to the Chipewyan people on her mission of diplomacy: At the time of her return, she would have traversed a distance of over 3000 miles on foot.

Several of our young people were formerly brought up at the colleges of the Northern Provinces; they were instructed in all your science; but when they came back to us, they were bad runners; ignorant of every means of living in the woods; unable to bear either cold or hunger; knew neither how to build a cabin, take a deer, or kill an enemy; spoke our language imperfectly; were therefore neither fit for hunters, warriors, or counselors; they were totally good for nothing. We are, however, not the less obligated by your kind offer, though we decline accepting it; and to show our grateful sense of it, if the gentlemen of Virginia will send us a dozen of their sons, we will take great care of their education, instruct them in all we know, and make men of them (Tribal Leaders of the Iroquois Confederacy, 1744).8

Building and Carlisle Indian School was born. The school stayed open for 39 years; and over 10,000 Indian American Indian Prisoners of War. The first students of his experimental educational institution attended a school for African American students; but the Government and the local populace expressed fears in allowing Native Americans and African Americans to mix freely. In 1878, Pratt obtained a separate building and Carlisle Indian School was born. The school stayed open for 39 years; and over 10,000 Indian students graduated from it.

In 1857, the Canadian Government implemented the “Gradual Civilization Act” (precursor to the “Indian Act” of 1876), to define, identify, and catalogue Indian individuals as a preliminary step to ‘de-indianizing’ them through a process of forced assimilation. On reserves, communal ties were broken down as children were coaxed, cajoled, or dragged kicking and screaming away from their families to Industrial/Residential schools. The ‘lion’ opened his jaws; and for over a century, six generations of Native children grew up in the belly of the beast.10

While conditions at the BIA Indian schools of the USA are generally believed to have been somewhat more tolerable than those of their Canadian counterparts, there is much testimony to the atrocities borne by Native children on both sides of the border at the hands of their educators and caretakers – kidnappings, beatings, excessive corporeal punishment, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, slow-starvation diets, bondage, confinement, electric shock, forced labor ... and so much more.

The curricula of these schools were designed to fulfill the mandates of assimilation and servitude. Instruction was simple and brutal: Native children were taught the English language and forced to speak it at all times; penalties for one overheard conversing in his/her Indigenous tongue included beatings, having one’s mouth washed out with soap, being forced to walk for hours in a circle bearing an excessively heavy load, having a needle pushed through one’s tongue, having one’s hair ripped away from one’s scalp, etc. Rudimentary reading, writing, and arithmetic were taught along with strict religious training, designed to wean the students away from the belief systems and ritual practices of their parents. Canadian schools quickly adopted the policy of the American Indian School system and the residential schools began to function as ‘training sites’ and ‘career centres’. ‘Classroom instruction’ devoted itself, for the most part, to the training and placing of semi-skilled laborers (who would work for low wages) in private households or in the fields.

In 1913, Canadian Poet, Duncan Campbell Scott, became the Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs. He held this post until 1932; and he stated his mandate thus: “I want to get rid of the Indian problem.... Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question and no Indian department....”

By 1930, 8000 Native children were enrolled in seventy-six Residential Schools across Canada. 75% of these were in grades one to three, and only 3% of these were ever allowed to progress past grade six. In the 1940's school administrators would be severely admonished if they encouraged Native children to attend grade nine. Native children were, in the main, NOT encouraged to aspire to a post-secondary education. (In fact, under the Indian Act, a Native student in Canada, who wished to attend university, had to give up his/her Status and treaty benefits. This policy was in effect until 1985!)

Graduates of both American and Canadian Residential Schools often tried to apply the skills they had learned in mainstream society only to encounter racist attitudes, from those who would not hire Indians or rent them places to live. Alternatively, they returned to their homes only to be treated as outsiders – they had lost their language, cut their hair, adopted new modes of dress, new names, and new cosmologies, and lacked the skills and traditional knowledge to benefit their communities. Some were able to forget their “training” and re-integrate into their communities; others, sadly, could find no place of belonging anywhere: rage, despair, alienation, and alcoholism immobilized them. Un-parented, they were unable to parent their own children; and the forces that had immobilized these survivors became an insidious legacy that was passed down through the generations.

Despite the scars borne by so many survivors, however, it is important to remember that at the end of the day, these schools have FAILED. Native peoples are reclaiming their languages, traditions, cultural practices, and lands. Native peoples have and ARE attending post-secondary institutions and excelling in

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9 Captain Pratt began Carlisle school in 1875 as an institution of containment and assimilation for American Indian Prisoners of War. The first students of his experimental educational institution attended a school for African American students; but the Government and the local populace expressed fears in allowing Native Americans and African Americans to mix freely. In 1878, Pratt obtained a separate building and Carlisle Indian School was born. The school stayed open for 39 years; and over 10,000 Indian students graduated from it.

10 The last federally operated Residential School, Akaitcho Hall in Yellowknife, closed in 1990.
every endeavor of contemporary life: We are architects, aerospace engineers, artisans, artists, athletes, chefs, computer programmers, construction workers, doctors, educators, environmentalists, entrepreneurs, fishers, foster parents, growers, healers, lawyers, linguists, inventors, journalists, mathematicians, musicians, parents, philosophers, policy makers, politicians, scientists, social workers, writers, etc. We are addressing our histories, fighting for re-dress, reclaiming traditional ways of knowing, and developing strategies to heal ourselves and our communities.

Some Brief Guidelines on the Maintenance of an Effective Residential School

Quarantine the children from their parents (even in Reserve Schools).

“There should be a board fence 12 feet high, enclosing a space 200 by 300 yards around the school buildings. There is now only a wire fence around the school yard, which is not over 50 feet from the front of the school buildings. Every Indian from the camp (parent from the reserve community) who wishes to, can converse with the pupils, and it cannot be prevented. The scenes of camp life, which are weekly presented to their view, are very detrimental to the pupils, and the camp gossip, which can now be shut out, is a serious evil to them. With such a (board) fence they can be separated almost entirely from the demoralizing influences of the camp (their community), and their progress towards civilization will be correspondingly accelerated.” (From the Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, 1887, 219).

Instill these “Ten Commandments” in your Charges

1. Let Jesus save you
2. Come out of your blanket, cut your hair and dress like a white man
3. Have a Christian family with one wife for life only
4. Live in a house like your white brother. Work hard and wash often
5. Learn the value of a hard-earned dollar. Do not waste your money on giveaways. Be punctual.
6. Believe that property and wealth are signs of divine approval
7. Keep away from saloons and strong spirits
8. Speak the language of your white brother. Send your children to school to do likewise
9. Go to church often and regularly
10. Do not go to Indian dances or to the medicine men.

(this poster was issued to each child to hang near his/her bed at the mission school in St. Francis).\(^{11}\)

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\(^{11}\) Mary Crow Dog found this poster among her grandfather’s effects. Cited in “Civilize them with a Stick” by Mary Crow Dog. “Native American Voices: A Reader”, 242.
Instructions to Teachers on Residential School Registers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language: Every effort must be made to induce pupils to speak English and to teach them to understand it. Insist on English during even the supervised play. Failure in this means wasted efforts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading: Pupils must be taught to read distinctly. Inspectors report that Indian children either mumble inaudibly or shout their words in a spasmodic fashion. It will be considered a proof of the incompetency of a teacher if pupils are found to read “parrot fashion”, i.e. without an understanding of what they read. Pupils should understand as they read. The sentence is a unit of thought. Bend every effort to obtain intelligible reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calisthenics: Exercises, frequently accompanied by singing, to afford variation during work and to improve physique. Lay stress on physical activities that will strengthen the chest and neck. Special emphasis on outdoor group games and supervised play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal music: Simple songs and hymns. The themes of the former to be interesting and patriotic. The tunes bright and cheerful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Instruction: Scriptural reading, the Ten Commandments, The Lord’s Prayer, The Life of Christ, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics: In the primary grades, instill the qualities of obedience, respect, order, neatness, and cleanliness. Differentiate between right and wrong, cultivate truthful habits and a spirit of fair play. As the pupils become more advanced, inculcate as near as possible in the order mentioned, independence, self-respect, industry, honesty, thrift, self-maintenance, citizenship and patriotism. Discuss charity, pauperism, Indian and white life, the evils of Indian isolation, enfranchisement. Explain the relationship of the sexes to labor, home and public duties, and labor as the law of existence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation: Great care must be exercised by the teacher to see that the schoolroom is kept thoroughly clean. The floors should be swept daily and scrubbed frequently. Ventilation should receive earnest attention. The air in the schoolroom should be completely changed during recess and at the noon hour, even in the coldest weather, by opening of windows and doors. Spitting on the floor, or inside the school building, should not be allowed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General: Instruction is to be direct, the voice and black-board the principal agents. The unnecessary use of text-books is to be avoided. Do not classify students in advance of their ability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LETTERS TO THE SEVENTH GENERATION
THAT WE MIGHT REMEMBER....

I remember when Georgina Charles caught her hand in the dough mixer. I was working in the refectory when I heard this loud screaming. My God, it was an awful scream – like someone in terrible pain. We all ran down to see what happened and Georgina’s hand was all crushed! It was bleeding and everything and it was terrible to see. The poor soul was suffering so much and she was rushed to the hospital. They operated on her hand and she was confined to the infirmary. She had lost the use of her index and third finger but eventually, she regained the partial use of her hand and was able to knit like the rest of us....

The following day Father Mackey came into the classroom looking for Barbara and when she went to the front of the class, he asked her if she had said the word “sow”, and she answered, “Yes”. She explained that it was an accident and that she was sorry and promised not to say it again. Then he hauled off and smashed her in the face, not with an open hand but with a fist. She fell down and he told her to get up. She got up again and he smashed her again with both fists this time. She went down again and he ordered her up again. He even pushed some of the desks

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back to get at her. I think she tried to crawl away, but her nose and mouth were bleeding and he smashed her again and she went down again but didn’t get up. She tried to sit up half way. He looked at her and walked out. And it frightened every kid in the school. I was looking at the windows and thinking about jumping out to get away. The class room was grade five and every kid was screaming and crying while the Sister just stood there with her arms folded.\textsuperscript{14}

I was doing alright until I reached grade four but to get promoted to the other class, you had to have the size. Your education didn’t mean a damned thing. In the first year, I had fairly good marks... but I didn’t have the size so I spent three years in grade four....\textsuperscript{15}

A nun was sponge bathing me and she proceeded to go a little too far with her sponge bathing. So I pushed her hand away. She held my legs apart while she strapped the inside of my thighs. I never stopped her again.\textsuperscript{16}

After a lifetime of beatings, going hungry, standing in a corridor on one leg, and walking in the snow with no shoes on for speaking Inuvialuktun, and having a heavy, stinging paste rubbed on my face, which they did to stop us from expressing our Eskimo custom of raising our eyebrows for “yes” and wrinkling our noses for “no”, I soon lost the ability to speak my mother tongue. When a language dies, the world it was generated from is broken down too.\textsuperscript{17}

Your son who calls himself Rafael has lived with the white men. He has been far away.... He has not...learned the things that Indian boys should learn. He has no hair.... He cannot even speak our language. He is not one of us.\textsuperscript{18}

Over the years, the nuns would drop some hints about languages but would never explain fully. Skite’kmuj said, “Latin is a dead language and never changes so that if you should go to Rome to attend Mass it will be the same as it is here in Canada and you will feel like home. The language is dead because it is not spoken anymore”. “Aha”, I thought, “if we are not allowed to speak Mi’kmaw, it will die. So I’m juggling three languages here. I think in Mi’kmaw, talk and learn in English and pray in Latin”.\textsuperscript{19}

They were a sad lot, this little crowd of babies; they seldom laughed or smiled and often cried and whimpered during the day and at night.... They were hunched in their wretchedness and misery in a corner of the recreation hall, their outsized boots dangling several inches above the asphalt floor. And though Paul Migwanabe and Joe Thompson and other carvers made toys for them, the babies didn’t play with their cars and boats; they just held on to them, hugged them and took them to bed at night, for that was all they had in the world when the lights went out, and they dared not let it go.\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid. (90) \\
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid (51). \\
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid (93) \\
\textsuperscript{17} Mary Carpenter cited in “Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples”, volume 1 (372). \\
\textsuperscript{18} Taos Pueblo Elders speaking to the parents of Sun Elk upon his return home from the Carlisle Indian School. Cited by Debra Barker in her essay “Cultural Genocide and the Boarding School” in “American Indian Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Contemporary Issues”. (63). \\
\textsuperscript{19} Knockwood, Isabelle. “Out of the Depths. (54) \\
\textsuperscript{20} Johnston, Basil. “Indian School Days”. (60). \\
\end{flushright}
Excerpt from
THE TRIPLE TRUTH

Chief Sophie Pierre: What was officially designated industrial training at the St. Eugene Mission School was, in fact, unpaid labour to run the school. Today we celebrate the transformation of BC’s longest running residential school into the Delta St. Eugene Mission Resort. I used to go to this school. The room, where I used to sleep with 20 other girls, now has one king-sized bed, a gas fireplace and a phone.

Lilli: you can call downstairs and they will bring you food

Sister of Mercy: The true Christian makes the best man, and therefore the Canadian government in its care for its Indian protégés, has taken care to see that the Indians of the Kootenai tribe will have every opportunity of becoming good Christians. Strict discipline is necessary to change them into decent human beings.

Lilli: the old school stripped to its bones wire springs from discarded cots rust in the rain the dust of the decomposed bones of unwanted babies children of the priests buried in the walls are mixed with new soil for the lush green award winning golf course that now replaces the farmers field where my mother worked the summers she was 14 it was usually boys work, the fields, but the priests made the pregnant girls do hard labour as a hopeful form of abortion
today there is a party

Chief Sophie Pierre: all has been transformed
Lilli: except for the attic and belfry, which I share with the Long-eared Townsend bats; they are on the blue list

Chief Sophie Pierre: Endangered

Lilli: but we are not alone

Chief Sophie Pierre: A camera has been placed in the belfry so that wildlife researchers can monitor the bats activities, while delta guests can watch via closed-circuit television

Lilli: the bats fly when ghosts travel: while people sleep

Chief Sophie Pierre: One of our elders, Mary Paul, said in 1994, “It was within the St. Eugene Mission that the culture of the Kootenai Indian was taken away, and it should be within that building that it's returned.” As we worked to finalize this project, we were continually guided by this vision.

Lilli (singing) it's such a sad old feeling
the fields are soft and green
it's memories that I'm stealing
but you're innocent when you dream
when you dream
you're innocent when you dream
when you dream
you're innocent when you dream
SKYWALKERS
The Iroquois Iron-Workers who Built These Cities...

Hodinso: ni (“they build long houses”) is the name by which the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy (of which the Mohawk Nation is one member-nation) identifies itself. This term describes both traditional architectural constructs of the Iroquois peoples and traditional governance. In the Longhouse, as in its political structure, if one piece is removed the structure cannot stand.
Excerpt from
THE TRIPLE TRUTH

All: When the towers fell. We were there. Skywalkers

Ironworker 2: At Ground Zero

Ironworker 3: For the dig out and recovery.

Ironworker 1: There was no one to rescue.

Ironworker 2: Our torches melted through the mountains of twisted metal.

Ironworker 3: And we prayed.

Ironworker 2: At Ground Zero,

Ironworker 3: we burn tobacco to free trapped spirits,

Ironworker 1: cleanse ourselves in tobacco water

Ironworker 2: wash the tears from the eyes of their families,

Ironworker 3: bathe the dust from their ears,

Ironworker 1: soothe the lump in their throats.

All: Each one of us now carries a piece of those who died here inside us.

Ironworker 3: We breathed them in with the dust.

All: When the towers fell. They fell on Indian land.

Ironworker 1: This is something we know. We lost a lot of people too, in the wars against our nations.

Ironworker 3: And this is how it feels...

Ironworker 2: to suffer great loss...

Ironworker 3: to witness devastation.

All: And this is how it feels...

Ironworker 1: to go on.
Fearless Wonders
A Proud History

“A lot of people think that Mohawks aren’t afraid of heights; that’s not true. We have as much fear as the next guy. The difference is we deal with it better. We also have the experience of the old-timers to follow and the responsibility to lead the younger guys. There’s pride in walking iron.” (Kyle Karonhiatatie Beauvais, Mohawk, Kahnawake, March 2002)21

In 1850, the Grand Trunk Railway commissioned the Dominion Bridge Company to begin construction on a bridge that would span the St. Lawrence River, connecting Montreal to the Kahnawake Reserve (The Victoria Bridge). Because the Mohawk had allowed the Railroad to run through their territory, the Railway Company ensured that Mohawk laborers would be employed on this project.

Mohawk men were employed as unskilled laborers, carrying the heavy stone for the large piers that would support the bridge. But management soon noticed that these laborers seemed to display no fear of heights. Indeed, they would walk out on the bridge when their shifts had ended to observe the other workers as construction progressed. Twelve young tribal members were trained in riveting and welding and promoted to the position of ironworkers. These twelve were known as “The Fearless Wonders”: as they balanced on narrow beams, hundreds of feet above the raging waters below, their gait was easy and casual; and any fear they might have felt was completely unapparent to those who observed them in action. As they mastered the ‘high steel’, they began to train other men from Kahnawake.

After The Victoria Bridge had been completed, Mohawk ironworkers began “booming out” to seek new work in urban areas. In 1907, many of the 70 skilled ironworkers from Kahnawake had been hired to set iron on the Quebec Bridge (soon to be the largest cantilevered bridge in the world). On August 29, a flaw in the bridge’s design caused the structure to fail; it collapsed into the river below; and 33 Mohawk laborers were killed. In the wake of this tragedy, the women of Kahnawake gathered and declared that their men should not work in large groups on any single project; it became standard practice, then, for the Mohawk ironworkers to branch out and disperse their labors among many projects across North America.

As Keepers of the Eastern Door of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Mohawks had once controlled all lands in the Hudson River Valley, on the Island of Manhattan, and across most of Long Island; and over the 150 years, six generations of these Keepers of the Eastern Door would shape the skyline of urban America from coast to coast. In 1916, they traveled to New York City to lend their considerable skills to the construction of the Hell Gate Bridge. Next came the George Washington Bridge, the Woolworth Building, the Empire State Building, the Waldorf Astoria, the Rockefeller Centre, the RCA Building (now the GE Building), the United Nations, the Chase Manhattan Bank, the Columbia Center, the Triborough Bridge, the Henry Hudson Parkway and the World Trade Centre; in San Francisco, Mohawk ‘Skywalkers’ worked on the Golden Gate Bridge; and in Chicago, they constructed the Sears Tower.

In September 2001, Seventh Generation Mohawk Skywalkers, returned to the site of the blasted Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre to assist in the rescue efforts and to dismantle what the handiwork of their forefathers. While most ironworkers were attempting to sever ten-inch thick steel columns with lance rods (which was extremely laborious and slow), the Mohawk workers were able to cut the same columns in 20 minutes with welding torches. Soon, the Mohawk workers were asked to give direction in this technique, which was ultimately adopted by all. Almost 100 Mohawk volunteers remained with the rescue effort for months after the attack, working 12 hour shifts, 7 days a week. The work was dangerous, physically excruciating, and emotionally debilitating: “You would stop the machine, call the rescue unit to come over

21 http://www.conexus.si.edu/booming/indexfla.htm
with the dogs. Dogs would claw and scratch in the areas and find the bodies. It was a good day when they found bodies whole” (Randy Mitchell, Local 440).

In the North Tower near Citibank, the NYPD and the FBI had stored their weapons and artillery: “We’re cutting steel that is so thick, it’s literally leaving lava. Molten steel was dripping, falling down with sparks on everything. This 45 caliber round exploded. We knew the caliber because the casing lodged in Paul’s cheek” (Randy Mitchell, Local 440).

In Canada, National Chief Matthew Coon Come made this statement to the Members of Canada’s Parliament: “I want to convey to you the sense of seriousness that First Nations peoples hold for the September 11, 2001 events. This is our homeland. Our Elders refer to the land as ‘Mother Earth’, and when anyone harms our Mother, be it through the destruction of the environment, or by the taking of human life that was put here, it hurts us all.”

On April 21, 2002, the Mohawk peoples were invited to host a Healing Ceremony for the victims, their families, and the scorched earth of the 9/11 disaster. Across Turtle Island\(^2\) the Drum began to beat; and as word spread, Native peoples began sending prayers and millions of dollars in donations for the bereaved.

The Keepers of the Eastern Door continue to walk the skies, to build in a good way, to mourn hurtful assaults on Mother Earth and all her children, and to resist those acts of destruction with their own acts of healing and creation ... acts born of a knowledge of the Spirit, and the faith that knowledge brings.

\(^2\) The Americas
"Christopher Columbus is a symbol, not of a man, but of imperialism.... Imperialism and colonialism are not something that happened decades ago or generations ago, but they are still happening now with the exploitation of people.... The kind of thing that took place long ago in which people were dispossessed from their land and forced out of subsistence economies and into market economies – those processes are still happening today" (John Mohawk, Seneca, 1992)\textsuperscript{23}

"Gold is most excellent; gold constitutes treasure; and he who has it does all he wants in the world, and can even lift souls up to Paradise" (Christopher Columbus)\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{23} \url{http://www.indians.org/welker/columbu1.htm}
Excerpt from
The Triple Truth

BARKER: Can any of you guess what took place in what is now called, Quebec, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida and parts in between? Can you guess? Oh, just take a guess, a gander... go ahead, throw caution to the wind. Think outside the box.

Any takers? Any givers? No? alrighty then, well sit tight, strap yourselves in and don't let the bed bugs bite cause it's gonna be a bumpy road. That's right...

Well, did you know that as the French, English, Spanish and Dutch stumbled upon this great continent, land we call Turtle Island – course most of them were lost and just didn't bother to ask for directions... They encountered People!!! That's right folks: Arawak, Taino, Carib,

MONIQUE: Kuna, Maya, Aztec,

JANI: Seminole, Miscosuke, Saponi,

MONIQUE: Tuscarora, Cherokee, Powhatan,

JANI: Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, Wampanoag,

MONIQUE: Pequot, M'ikmaq, Huron,

JANI: Coree, Meherrin, Canarsee,

MONIQUE: Lakota, Ojibway, Cree,

BARKER: First, that dude with the bad hair cut – Christopher Columbus ran into a whole bunch of Arawaks down in what is now called Haiti, and do you know what he did? Well, he rounded up Arawak men, women and children and read aloud a decree –

JANI: a declaration –

MONIQUE: a proclamation –

BARKER: Actually, it was called “The Requirement.”

JANI: (a la Sopranos)
I implore you to recognize the Church as a lady and in the name of the Pope, take the King as lord of this land, and obey us as your master. If you do not, I will, with the help of God, make war and we shall take your wives and children and sell and dispose of them and make them slaves.

MONIQUE: If you do not obey us, we shall do all the harm and damage we can and the deaths and injuries that you receive from here on will be your own fault!

BARKER: Unfortunately, they read it in Spanish, so what we heard was:
BARKER:
So, ol’ Chris put them to work. Not a fair wage for a fair days work kind of work. But with weapons drawn, families separated and women used as bait, Columbus turned Arawaks into the first forced labour in the Americas. That’s right folks – you heard me – Indian Slavery! And what they really wanted was…

MONIQUE:  
GOLD! Where’s the gold? Where’s the gold?

JANI:  
Yoo hoo, gold, where are you?

BARKER:  
Gold? What gold?

MONIQUE:  
Ooh, that’s a lovely bracelet

JANI:  
Nice yellow necklace!

(Keystone cops chase sequence)

BARKER:  
So Chris Columbus and his cronies secured a foothold in the so-called New World. For Aboriginal Peoples, this is the Old World. Our world. Smash, bang, crash ‘em up… all three collide…The economies of the world transformed – coffee, sugar, tobacco – and that was the beginning of…

JANI:  
Civilization!

BARKER:  
No! Globalization! And it soon spread to South, Central and North America —for hundreds of years —Indian slavery was the law. Without this forced labour – the formation of North America would not have been possible…Mexico, America and Canada… So put that in your pipe and smoke it!

**The Spanish “Requirement”**

“...I implore you to recognize the Church as a lady and in the name of the Pope take the King as lord of this land and obey his mandates. If you do not do it, I tell you that with the help of God, I will enter powerfully against you all. I will make war everywhere and every way that I can. I will subject you to the yoke and obedience to the Church and to his majesty. I will take your women and children and make them slaves… The deaths and injuries that you will receive from here on will be your own fault and not that of his majesty nor of the gentlemen that accompany me.”

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Decree\textsuperscript{26}  

\textit{Issued with Respect to Negroes and the Savages Known as Panis}  

Issued by Intendant Jacques Raudot  

Quebec City, 1709

We are well aware of the benefits that this Colony would derive if the inhabitants could, without risk, purchase and import the Savages known as Panis\textsuperscript{27}, whose nation is very far from this country. The Panis can be obtained only through Savages who go and capture them in their own territory and most often trade them with the English of Carolina. These Savages have also, on occasion, sold Panis to the people of this country, who often lose considerable amounts of money because those who have not bought slaves instill in the Panis a desire for freedom. Consequently, they almost always leave their Masters, claiming that there are no slaves in France, which is not always the case, since there are Colonies that depend on slavery. For example, on the islands of this continent, any Negro bought by an inhabitant is always regarded as a slave. All Colonies must be treated equally, and the inhabitants of this country need the Panis nation to do agricultural and other types of work as much as the inhabitants of the Islands need the Negroes. Furthermore, these types of contracts are very important to this Colony, since those who have bought slaves and who will buy them in the future must be guaranteed ownership of their slaves. Hence, in accordance with the wishes of His Majesty, we order that those who have bought or who will hereafter buy any Panis or Negro are to be granted complete ownership of that slave; that these Panis or Negroes are to be forbidden from leaving their Masters; and that a fifty-pound fine is to be levied on anyone who incites slaves to leave their Masters. This decree shall be read and published in the usual locations in Quebec City, Trois-Rivieres and Montreal and shall be filed with the Clerk of the Court of each of these rovostships [sic] at the request of our sub delegates. Completed and filed in the town hall of Quebec on April 13, 1709.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{26}http://www.gouv.qc.ca/mpages/unit1/u1p5.htm

\textsuperscript{27}The term, Panis, refers to all slaves of Amerindian descent; however, it evolved from “Pawnee Indians”, who were enslaved and traded in large numbers in the French colony of Louisiana.

\textsuperscript{28}NB. This is a free translation.
European Entrepreneurs:
A Short History of the Flesh-Peddlers

In fourteen-hundred & ninety-two, Columbus sails the ocean blue, gets lost, "discovers" Haiti and kidnap 25 Arawak males to show & sell in Europe. Perhaps 7 of those abducted survive the journey. None will ever be seen by their people again.

In fourteen-hundred & ninety-three, Columbus returns to Haiti, demanding food, gold, spun cotton, and women. He disciplines any resistor by amputating the offenders’ ears and noses.

In June, 1497, Giovanni Caboto (John Cabot) lands on the shores of Newfoundland. He, then, travels west to Cape Breton, NS. When he returns to England in August of the same year, he takes with him three kidnapped Mi’kmaq, and thus introduces slavery into British North America. In 1498, hopeful investors (Lloyd's of London and Barclays Bank) finance a return voyage, and outfit him with five ships. Cabot and four of the ships disappear.

In 1500, Caspar de Corte-Real, a Portuguese slave-trader, captures several Mi’kmaq; and by 1823 only 1800 Mi’kmaq remain from an estimated 20,000 in 1497.

In 1500, there are **72 million** Indigenous peoples living in North, Central, and South America.

In 1500, **25 million** Indigenous people live in Mexico.

In 1534, the European invasion of the Maritimes and Quebec is heralded by the arrival of Jacques Cartier. He also abducts Native prisoners and transports them to France.

In 1537, Bartolome de la Casas petitions Pope Paul III to protest the inhumane treatment and enslavement of Native peoples in the Americas. In response, Pope Paul III writes Sublimis Deus, in which he asserts that Native Americans are, indeed true human beings, possessing souls, who cannot lawfully be made slaves. Furthermore, he asserts that we have the right to hold governmental offices. His pronouncements are ignored by Spanish adventurers and settlers in the “New World”.

In 1588, the Spanish Armada is defeated off the coast of England; “Britannia rules the waves”; and the slave trade begins in earnest with Britain as a major player. During the 1600’s labour, in the form of kidnapped Africans is transported to the Americas. Over the next 270 years, 15 million African people will be uprooted from their homes and taken to the Americas; these are the people who survive the voyage. The number of those who will die en route will exceed 40 million. As African peoples are being transported to America to produce rum, cotton, molasses, sugar, silver, tobacco, gold, tar and timber, which are taken to England, Native peoples of the Americas are being shipped to the West Indies in exchange for Black slaves. This strategy is employed to prevent their escape.

By 1600, there are less than **10 million** Indigenous people living in North, Central and South America.

By 1600, Mexico’s Indigenous population has been reduced to **1 million**.
In 1639, the Jesuit missionary, Ruiz de Montoya, living among the besieged Guarani writes The Spiritual Conquest, in which he documents the brutal crimes against humanity carried out by the slave-traders, raiders, and settlers of Sao Paulo:

The inhabitants of the town are Castilians, Portuguese, Italians, and people of other nationalities gathered there by a desire to live as they like in freedom, without constraints of the law. Their way of life is the destruction of the human race: they kill all those who flee from them to escape the wretched slavery they inflict upon them. They go out for two or three years at a stretch hunting human beings like animals.... These people, worse than brigands, invaded our reductions; they seized captives, killed and pillaged altars.... [The slave traders] entered the two reductions of San Antonio and San Miguel, striking down Indians with their cutlasses. The poor Indians took refuge in the church, where they were slain like cattle in a slaughterhouse.29

By 1708, South Carolina is the centre of the Native American slave-trade. Census records for this year document 3980 free whites, 4100 African slaves, and 1400 Indian slaves in this centre of trade in human flesh.

Between 1708 and 1709 over 10,000 Native Americans are shipped in chains to the West Indies.

In 1709, the Quebec Intendant, Jacques Raudot issues a decree, which asserts that all slaves of African descent and all Panis30 (Amerindian slaves) who had already been purchased and those who would be purchased would thereafter belong fully to the purchaser.

On October 4, 1739, the following notice appears in The Boston Weekly Newsletter:

Ran away from his Master Nathaniel Holbrook of Sherburn on Wednesday the 19th of September last and Indian lad of about 18 years, named John Pittorone. He is pretty well sett and of a guilty countenance and has short Hair: He had on a grey Coat with Pewter Buttons, Leather Breeches, and old tow Shirt, grey Stockings, good Shoes, and a felt Hat.

Whoever shall take up the said servant, and convey him to his master in Sherburn, shall have Forty Shillings Reward and all necessary charges paid. We hear the said servant intended to change his Name and his clothes...31

In 1749, three-quarters of the Mi’kmaq population has been decimated by typhus (introduced by the French). Colonel Edward Cornwallis offers 10 pounds for every Mi’kmaq living or dead, and dispatches 100 men to hunt down and exterminate them. In 1750, he raises the bounty from 10 to 50 pounds per scalp.

In 1763 the Treaty of Paris ends the Seven Years War. France surrenders New France to Britain in exchange for Guadeloupe. However, all slaves of African and Native American descent continue to be enslaved under British governance.

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30 By this time, so many members of the Pawnee nation had been enslaved, that the name by which they had been known (Panis) became the general label for all Native Americans who had been enslaved.
The Original Nations Building Nations…
Aboriginal Peoples at
WORK
On Turtle Island

THE TRIPLE TRUTH

Resource & Activity Suggestions

“Know that to be a leader and a chief you must be the servant of the least of your people” (Tribal Law No. 33, Eastern Algonquin)
## Section One
Re-Addressing the MYTHS

### Activity One: Private Investigations

Students, working either in groups or individually will be assigned to search out and discover the connections between two subjects: For instance, Ira Hamilton Hayes (1923-1955) is a Pima Indian and a decorated World War II hero. In fact, he is the subject of one of the most inspiring photographs ever taken (Iwo Jima) and the famous bronze monument in Washington D.C. that commemorates this battle is based upon his image. The instructor should offer the student investigator only his name “Ira Hamilton Hayes” and “Iwo Jima” or “Monument of Iwo Jima”. From there, the student should carry out the research needed so that (s) he can identify Hayes’ heritage, his acts of valor, and the connection between him and Iwo Jima. The student may then write one-two paragraphs based upon his/her research and present them orally or submit them as a written assignment. Individual or multiple “investigations” may be assigned. Below, we offer subjects for investigation in bold. The explanatory paragraphs beneath are not to be shared in advance of the exercise with the students; these are simply for the instructor’s edification.

### John Kim Bell // Toronto Symphony

John Kim Bell (Mohawk) was born in 1953; he is the first Native American to become a symphony conductor. He founded the Canadian Native Arts Foundation (1984) – now the Aboriginal Achievement Foundation – and he has facilitated the provision of scholarships to provide training to thousands of aspiring Native performers/artists across Canada.

### Douglas Joseph Cardinal // Canadian Museum of Civilization

Cardinal, born, in 1934 is a Metis architect. Pioneering the use of computer-enhanced electronic drawings, he designed St. Mary’s Church in Red Deer, AB. It is considered by many to be an “architectural triumph. In 1983, he was commissioned to design the Canadian Museum of Civilization, which stands opposite the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, Ontario. He has also designed the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, NM.

### Charles Curtis// Herbert Hoover

Charles Curtis (1860-1936), was a mixed-blood of Kaw and Osage descent. He became a lawyer in 1881 and served as a United States Senator 1907-1913 and 1915-1929. In 1929, he ran with Herbert Hoover and served as Hoover’s Vice President until 1933.

### Milly Francis//Congressional Medal of Honor

Milly Francis (1802-1848), was the daughter of a Creek tribal leader. In 1817, her band captured Captain Duncan McRimmon of the Georgia militia, and prepared to execute him. Francis intervened and his life was spared. He, later, proposed marriage to her, which she declined, stating that she had done no more for him than she would have done for any “white captive”. Milly was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor (with an annual annuity) for her courage and compassion in 1844. However, she died of tuberculosis and in dire poverty without having ever actually received her medal or the annuity.

### James Gladstone // Canadian Senate

Gladstone (1887-1971) was Canada’s first Aboriginal Senator. Born on the Blood Reserve in Alberta, he worked as a typesetter for the Calgary Herald and then as an interpreter for the Royal Northwest Mounted Police on his Reserve. During WWI Gladstone worked tirelessly to increase agricultural yields for national consumption, and excelled at farming. He was the first Aboriginal farmer to utilize electricity and to own a tractor. In 1958, he was appointed to the Canadian Senate, where he worked tirelessly for the rights of First Nations peoples. He was co-chairman of the joint Senate/House of Commons Committee that afforded treaty Indians the right to vote in national elections (1960).

### Elijah Harper // Canadian Constitution

Elijah Harper (Cree) was born in 1949 at Red Sucker Lake, MB, where he served his community as Chief from 1977-1981. In 1981, he was elected to the Manitoba legislature; and in 1997, he became the Minister of Northern Affairs. In June, 1990, Harper blocked the passage of the Meech Lake Accord in the Manitoba Legislature. His active resistance brought about the accord’s demise, which led to a heightened awareness of the demands of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Ultimately, it became evident that constitutional reforms were needed; talks around these proposed reforms placed Aboriginal issues at the top of the agenda.

### King Hendrick // International Diplomacy (or) The Constitution of the U.S. (or) “The Noble Savage”

Hendrick (1690-1755) was born in Mohican territory (now Connecticut); he was adopted by the Mohawk and became an important leader of this Iroquois nation. In 1710, having served as an intermediary between his adopted people and the British settlers, he was issued the FIRST royal invitation to visit England. His visit generated much publicity and he was seen as an ambassador of his people. When he returned, he became a spokesman for the Iroquois League and he was a key ally to the English in their war against the French. In 1754, he was invited to Albany as a consultant to the
colonists on their plans for unification. His poise, diplomacy, and leadership inspired the colonial leaders, with whom he dealt, to model the U.S. constitution and governmental structure upon the Great Law of Peace and the structure of the Iroquois League. After his death, many British literary works glorified Hendrick as an example of the “noble savage”.

William Kennedy // Cartography (or) Postal Service
Kennedy (1814-1890) was a Metis man who was chosen to lead an expedition to search for explorer, John Franklin, who had disappeared somewhere between the Hudson Strait and the Pacific Ocean while searching for a Northwest passage. Kennedy and his crew did not succeed in locating Franklin; but Kennedy was able to identify and map vast Northern areas upon his return. Later, while working in Manitoba, he worked to establish a direct transport and mail route between Fort Garry and Toronto.

Francis La Flesche // Anthropology
La Flesche (Omaha) was the first American Indian to become a professional anthropologist in the 19th century. Amongst his many professional and scholarly accomplishments, La Flesche also wrote a Dictionary of the Osage Language in 1932.

Moselyne Larkin // Ballet Russe
Larkin (Shawnee/Peoria) was born in 1925; at the age of 15, she joined the Original Ballet Russe becoming first a soloist and then a ballerina. Described by London critics as “the first ray of sunshine after World War II”, she toured the world and later founded the Tulsa Civic Ballet/Tulsa Ballet Theatre; she has won many prestigious awards including the prestigious Dance Magazine Award – an honor she shares with Baryshnikov, Nureyev, and Fred Astaire.

Matonabbee // Northwest Passage (or) The Hudson’s Bay Company (or) Samuel Hearne
Matonabbee, a Chipewyan guide and translator, lived from 1736-82. During the 18th century, he was a valuable liaison between the European traders and explorers and the First Nations peoples in the Hudson’s Bay region of Northern Canada. Matonabbee saved the lives of Samuel Hearne and his company of explorers during their second expedition to find a Northwest Passage. The two became friends; and in 1771 they planned a third expedition. In 1772, this expedition reached the Arctic Ocean; but no passage had been discovered.

Billy Mills // Tokyo (or) “Running Brave”
On October 14, 1964, this Ogalal Sioux athlete defied overwhelming odds and became the first American runner to win a distance race in the Olympic Games. He won the 10,000 meter run at the Tokyo Olympics; and he set a world record that day. “Running Brave” is a Hollywood film, based on his inspiring life-story and stunning victory.

Ely S. Parker // Ulysses S. Grant
Ely S. Parker (1828-95) was a Seneca tribal leader and the first American Indian to hold the post of Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the U.S. Parker had studied to become a lawyer in New York State; but he was denied entry to the bar because of his race. He then studied engineering and tried to enlist in the Army Corps when the Civil War broke out. Initially, his race barred him from the army; but he eventually received a commission as captain of Engineers. In 1865, serving under U.S. Grant, Parker penned the final copy of the Confederate Army’s surrender terms; and in 1868, when Grant became President, he appointed Parker to his post as Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Al Qoyawayma // star tracking devices (or) Salt River Project (or) ceramics
Qoyawayma is a Hopi engineer, who was born in 1938. Interestingly, he is also a well-recognized potter. He uses traditional Hopi methods in the collection of his clays and pigments for his ceramics; and he applies his engineering talents in molding and stretching the shapes of his works. In 1961, he began work for Litton Systems Inc. and developed many high tech. systems and products including inertial guidance systems and airborne star tracking devices. In 1971, he managed environmental services for the Salt River Project in central Arizona.

William Penn Adair Rogers // “The Cherokee Kid”
Will Rogers (1879-1935) was a Cherokee cowboy, writer, actor, entertainer, and humorist. He became a household name during the Great Depression in the 30’s when he lightened the hearts of Americans with his witty and humorous written and broadcast commentaries. He made 15 movies, participated in lecture tours and radio broadcasts, wrote over 1000 newspaper articles and over 3000 “daily telegrams”. Some of his books include The Peace Conference and Rogerisms—the Cowboy Philosopher on Prohibition (1919) and Illiterate Digest (1924).

Mary Ross // Polaris
Ross (born 1908) was an important aeronautical engineer, philanthropist and philologist of Cherokee descent. In the late 1950’s and 1960’s, her skills as an engineer and research specialist were employed to boost every Apollo mission, the Polaris re-entry vehicle, and systems for manned space flights. She garnered many awards for her achievements in engineering; and she was a respected historian of Cherokee legacy.

Maria Tallchief // Ballet Russe (or) Paris Opera Ballet
Tallchief (Osage) was born in 1925; she joined the Ballet Russe to become George Balanchine’s protégé and wife. Touring the world, she became the first American to dance with the Paris Opera Ballet at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. She also became the first American ballet dancer to achieve the title of PRIMA BALLERINA.

James Francis Thorpe // American Professional Football Association
Jim Thorpe (1888-1953), a Sac and Fox athlete, and gold medal winner of the 1912 Stockholm Olympics, was described by King Gustav of Sweden as “the greatest athlete in the world”. He was stripped of his medals when it was revealed that he had played semi-professional baseball prior to his participation in the Olympics. From 1913-1919, he played professional baseball; and after retiring from this sport, went on to play professional football. He was the FIRST President of the American Professional Football Association.

Laura Weber // hazardous waste
Laura Weber (born in 1961) is an environmental engineer of Mohawk descent. She has combined her expertise in chemistry and environmental engineering with traditional respect for our Earth and founded PM Earth Inc. (Preserve Mother Earth, Inc.). This company provides consulting on recycling, source reduction, and waste recycling programs. It also evaluates existing waste programs and suggests workable strategies for their improvement; as well, PM Earth Inc. assists in hazardous waste disposal and advises on the marketing of waste materials.

These names and achievements represent just a fraction of Native American contributors to North America and the world. We recommend that student “investigators” access *The Native North American Almanac: A Reference Work on Native North Americans in the United States and Canada*. Edited by Duane Champagne. Detroit: Gale Research Inc. 1994. This excellent text will provide an excellent starting-point for each investigation!


Activity Two: Political Forum
Students working in small groups (according to the instructor’s discretion) should read and research “The Great Law of Peace of the Haudenosaunee” and the American Constitution, looking for points of intersection between the two models. They should examine syntax, policy, and the structure of each document. After research is complete, each group should present their findings to the class, arguing for or against the idea that the American Constitution is largely based upon “The Great Law of Peace”. “The Great Law of Peace” may be accessed on the internet at: http://www.iroquoisdemocracy.pdx.edu/html/greatlaw.html

Activity Three: Narrative Construction / Storytelling
The class should be divided into two groups. One group will research various European and American constructions of the Pocahontas narrative (including the Disney version). The second group will research Native interpretations and constructions of her history (i.e. “Pocahontas”, by Paula Gunn Allen and “Princess Pocahontas and the Bluespots” by Monique Mojica). Each group will then construct a theatrical presentation or narrative based upon their research, remaining true to the images that have been engendered by the various ‘chroniclers’. 

http://www.iroquoisdemocracy.pdx.edu/html/greatlaw.html
Section Two
The Fur-Trade
Suggested Resources


“HBC Tales:” http://www.hbc.com/hbc/e_hi/tales/thanedelthur.htm


National Film Board: Ikwe (From the Daughters of the Country series)
http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/exploreers/h24-1501-e.html
http://www.whiteoak.org/learning/timeline.htm

Timeline http://www.whiteoak.org/learning/timeline.htm

Activity One: Constructing First Person Narratives.

Students may choose from three areas of research, (1) Thanadelthur accounts in the Native oral tradition (we highly recommend McCormack’s article as a starting point here) (2) Thanadelthur accounts rendered by non-Native historians and on government websites (3) The accounts of Thanadelthur as offered up by James Knight or his assistant, Alexander Apthorp. After extrapolating the ‘facts’ as noted by the informants and answering the foundational questions – who, where, what, when, why (objectives of informants), and how – each student should then construct a FIRST PERSON narrative (speaking as either Thanadelthur, Knight, or Apthorp) relating his/her story, actions, reactions, impressions of other people and surroundings, and objectives. In this phase of the assignment, students should ‘fill in the gaps’ by means of inductive reasoning and educated guess-work to ‘flesh out’ the stories and add life and character. Ultimately, the images of the protagonists will change subtly in accordance with the sources accessed. After one week of research and preparation, students should then orally present their narratives. The instructor may choose to group these presentations by soliciting all stories from ONE area of research, then the next, and finally the third; or the instructor may choose to alternate the narratives – (1), (2), (3), (1), (2), (3)… etc. Through this exercise students will conduct specific research, accompanied by critical reading and interpretation via inductive reasoning. They will personally align themselves with historical happenings and personages, the impact of which will be heightened for them, through their own creative endeavors and expression. As well, upon viewing all representations of the research areas, students will develop a heightened awareness of the differences in perspective that continue to subvert the relationships between the First Nations peoples and their Canadian counterparts.

Activity Two: Forum Theatre

Basing their research on Sylvia Van Kirk’s Many Tender Ties, students will be divided into groups of four. Each student will then research one of four specific topics covered by Van Kirk in this text: These are (a) Native women in the fur-trade, (b) mixed-blood women in the fur-trade, (c) white women in the fur-trade, (d) the children of country marriages. After conducting their research and identifying the particular challenges and contributions of the members of each of these groups, the group will then construct a dramatic presentation that illustrates one particular challenge or conflict that most interests them. For instance, students might choose to offer a dramatic re-construction of a ‘cast off’ country wife in confrontation with her fur-trader spouse and his new European wife, complicated by the fear and confusion of their mixed-blood children. Alternatively, they may wish to re-create a day-in-the-life of a newly arrived European bride and her reaction to the unfamiliarity of land, customs, and the daily hardships of her new role. The students may choose to present one or
more solutions to the challenges/conflicts they have presented; they may choose to present a single historically documented ‘resolution’; or they may choose to conclude their presentation without any resolution. The other members of the class should then be encouraged to step into the presentation, and, without altering the preceding story-line and actions, to continue the story and present possible solutions based upon their own knowledge around the subject.

For middle-school students (grades 7, 8, 9), the instructor should take it upon him/herself to divide Van Kirk’s book into condensed sections and present each group with readings, which span 4-5 single-spaced typed pages in length.

Activity Three: Interviews

This activity is based on the NFB film, *Ikwe* (58 minutes) from the “Daughters of the Country” series. The students should view the film as if they were journalists, asking and answering “who”, “where”, “what”, “when”, “where”, “why”, and “how”? After they have constructed a biography for Ikwe, each student will be partnered with one another; and the pair will construct an “interview” with Ikwe complete with answers and modeled upon facts from the film and historical imagination (the film does fill in some gaps). When completed, the interviews may either be presented orally or by videotape.
Residential School

Suggested Resources for Research into
Canadian Residential Schools and American Indian Boarding Schools


http://www.shannonthuderbird.com/residential_schools.htm (Canadian)
http://home.epix.net/~landis/histry.html (Carlisle School, Pennsylvania)

Suggested Activities
Activity One: First Person Narrative & Public Forum

Each student will choose a Native survivor of Residential Schools to research. Basil Johnston, Tomson Highway, Mary Crow Dog, Zitkala-Sa, Dr. Charles Eastman, Luther Standing Bear, and Mourning Dove are just a few of the survivors, who have documented their experiences.

Each student will then construct a factual biography based upon the testimony of his/her subject. From which nation does this person come? What is his/her first language? At what age did he/she enter residential school? Was the child forcibly taken from his/her parents? How many years did this child remain at the school? Did he/she develop good ties with either teachers or other students? Did he/she have contact with siblings while at school? Did he/she retain his/her first language? Were there incidents of cruelty exercised upon this student? What happened afterwards?

When the factual biography has been completed, the student will then suppose that s/he is about to address a group of residential school survivors. The student’s objective with this address should be to inspire this group with hope, to suggest coping strategies, and to pass on survival skills. The student will therefore construct a first-person narrative; and, speaking as the actual subject s/he has researched, should use the facts therein (good, bad and ugly) to fulfill this objective.

Activity Two: Curriculum Design

The class will be divided into groups of four or five. Each group will then be assigned a tribal group from either Canada or the United States to research. As well, each group will examine the policies and recommendations of administrators and residential school officials of either the United States or Canada.

Using the Residential/Industrial school as a model, student groups will design a curriculum, with which to instruct newcomers lifeways of their chosen nation - Ojibwe, Cree, Lakota, Pueblo, etc: Their objective will be to assimilate the prospective “students” into this nation, to force them to adopt the nation’s language, cosmology, clothing, habits, diet, etc. As well, the objective will be to, as quickly as possible, train their students to become useful and productive members of the ‘adopted’ community: Is this an agricultural community? Does it rely on dry-farming? Is this a hunter/gatherer society? Is this a fishing society? What skills are required to serve the community’s needs? Weaving? Pottery? Basket-making? Carving? Etc. What punishments will be meted out if the ‘students’ fail to conform? What punishments will be meted out if the ‘students’ are caught speaking their first language? How much instructional time will be spent upon each subject? Which areas of the curriculum will receive the most focus?
Skywalkers

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

http://www.firstnationsdrum.com/Aug02/HisMohawk.htm
http://sonicmemorial.org/sonic/public/mohawk/mohawk.html
http://www.npr.org/about/press/020619.mohawk.html
http://www.conexus.si.edu/booming/indexfla.htm
http://www.geocities.com/mohawkroadskywalkers/MohawkIronworkers.html

Hill, Richard. Skywalkers: A History of Indian Ironworkers
Woodland Indian Cultural Education Centre. Brantford: 1987

ACTIVITIES

Activity One:

For 120 years, Mohawk Skywalkers have been journeying far from home to seek employment; they spend long periods away from their communities and families. But one tradition amongst these iron-willed ironworkers that has helped them to retain their language and culture as they walk the high steel has been to always speak Mohawk to each other. Often, the older workers, teach the language to the younger as they work together; and there are also many non-Native workers, who have learned the language from their Mohawk partners. As well, a complex system of hand-signals is used, which can be particularly useful (necessary, in fact) in high winds or to communicate through the noise of heavy machinery.

In groups of four, students should be directed to the ‘sonic memorial site’ cited above to research these hand-signals. After learning the signals and practicing them within the group, the students should then choose a particular area of research that deals with Mohawk activity in high steel and ironworking (i.e. the 1907 collapse of the Quebec Bridge, the rescue and clean-up endeavors after 9/11, the Iron Workers working only 10 blocks away from the Twin Towers on the morning of September 11, 2001, etc. After research is complete, the group will then construct a vignette that places itself in the contextual space of their research. All communication should take place via the hand-signals they have learned. Afterwards, the students will discuss their research-area with the class and demonstrate how their vignette illustrates (or encapsulates) the research.

Activity Two: Ironworkers and Warriors

Working individually, each student should be asked to investigate the links between the tradition of Mohawk High Steel Workers and the re-establishment of the Warrior Society in 1972. (A great place to begin is with Wright’s Stolen Continents, which can point each student to other related sources). Assignments might include first person narratives constructed out of the histories of Mohawk individuals, who have worked both as Skywalkers and as members of the Warrior Society. Students should be encouraged to explore the philosophy of the contemporary Warrior; the circumstances that made the re-establishment of the Society necessary; female influence and
involvement and contribution to the High Steel worker and the Warrior; the Oka crisis, etc. Alternatively, these assignments could take the form of oral presentations or written reports.

Activity Three: Storyboarding

After researching the general history and contemporary stories of Mohawk Ironworkers, students should then access the Smithsonian photo-archive, http://www.conexus.si.edu/booming/indexfla.htm. Students should examine and consider each picture as it appears in light of what they have learned about the Mohawk Ironworkers, their history and accomplishments. Supposing that this photographic archive is a “storyboard”, students should construct a story (which is in accordance with both the pictures and their research), which they may present in written form or orally – as the instructor prefers. Students should be encouraged to restructure the storyboard (by re-arranging the order of the pictures); however, while creativity (based on inductive reasoning) is encouraged, students should not take liberty with the facts as they have been documented or presented by the ironworkers themselves.

Section Five
Native Enslavement
Suggested Resources


http://www.qesn.meq.gouv.qc.ca/mpages/unit 1/u1p5/.htm
http://mrc.uccb.ns.ca/timeline.html
http://www.indians.org/welker/columbu1.htm

Suggested Activities

Activity One
Decolonizing Methodologies

Slavery has historically been an institution that has manifested itself globally since time immemorial. Among the surviving writings of Aristotle, his Politics contains a justification of slavery and an assertion that certain races are comprised of “natural” rulers, while others are comprised of “natural” slaves. It was this doctrine, which the early Spanish settlers cited to justify their enslavement of the Indigenous peoples of the Americas.

As well, the biological categorization of human beings, through the analysis of phonological characteristics (especially skin color), was developed in the 19th century; and this provided a “scientific” justification for the enslavement of the Indigenous peoples of the “new world”.

We propose that students be encouraged to research and pinpoint the intersection between slavery and the philosophohical, dogmatic, or “scientific” justifications that engendered and strengthened the Eurocentric (and racist) ideologies, under the shadow of which we continue to live today. The resources suggested above offer a “starting point” for students to begin their investigations. Only one area, development, or period need be examined by each student (or group) – Aristotle’s Politics, religious justifications, social Darwinism, and behaviorism utilized as ideological tools by the Spanish, the English, the French, or the Dutch to rationalize their crimes against humanity. Again, we stress that the above resources provide a starting point, from which students will have to branch out into specific research areas to conduct each investigation.

When research has been completed, each student (or group) should write a formal letter of protest to the European leaders and policy makers of the period and nation(s) they have researched. They should address and question the “scientific” findings, their underlying ideology, and ethics (social, scientific, or religious). They should pinpoint and identify faulty logic, which either bases itself in or alternatively leads to a uniform (universal) racist ideology. And they should provide a powerful and convincing opposition to the propaganda of the flesh-peddlers.