

MODERN SOLUTIONS TO AGE-OLD PROBLEMS: INDIGENOUS CULTURAL INTEGRITY AND PERSEVERANCE

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Introduction

Since the colonization of the New World by European explorers, Native American groups and cultures have been subjugated or suppressed in lieu of “civilized” European practices. This left Native American Tribal and cultural history to be outright rejected or written off as simple fairy tales. However, during the late 20th century, Native American group recognition has gained traction and a new movement of Native American cultural awareness has risen. This recognition has allowed both the revival of Native American cultural acceptance as well as Native American history to be taken sincerely by anthropologists. This is evident in three specific Native American groups selected for this project: the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Pima Tribe, and Haida Nation. Each of these groups have cultural movements which have been carried to this day in fields such as university research partnerships, archaeological consultation, and cinema. This project seeks to find the effectiveness of these movements in regard to Native American cultural preservation. This project will then be a layout for a future museum exhibit with the FSU Department of Anthropology.

Methodology

- Qualitative case study of Native American Cultural Integrity Movements
- Data collected through Gale, JSTOR, as well as Tribal websites using keywords such as cinema, archaeology, oral tradition, and cultural preservation
- Further consultation was graciously given by Dr. Kristin Dowell, an Associate Professor at Florida State University (FSU) with a specialization in Indigenous cinema and contemporary art, Andrew Frank, the Director of FSU’s Native American and Indigenous Studies Center, and Bill Locascio, the Seminole Tribe of Florida’s Tribal Historic Preservation Office Research Manager
- Cross-examination began to find trends of successful cultural preservation over the decades
- Final product resulted in an annotated bibliography to aid the creation of a future museum exhibit

Results

Through the case study analysis of the three Tribes, the results found that by the early 21st century, the general acceptance and appreciation of these diverse cultures increased dramatically from rates in the 20th century. This is not to say that these Tribes still suffer from discrimination or exclusion in the 21st century but simply that a stepping stone has been accomplished towards this goal of cultural embracing. While all of these Tribes have had a similar outcome by the 21st century, each have dealt with different obstacles along the way.

The Seminole Tribe of Florida

- 18th century origin, founded from the culmination of Floridian Tribes
- Original perspective of Seminole Tribe featured a double standard due to outcome of Second Seminole War (1835-1842)
- Partnership with FSU in 1947; however, controversy over depictions of the Seminole people arose
- Persistent collaboration helped to foster respect and gratitude towards the Seminole Tribe of Florida, including the Native American and Indigenous Studies Center at FSU

The Pima Tribe

- Located in Southwest Arizona along the Gila and Salt Rivers
- Archaeological intrusions in the early 20th century violated Pima sovereignty and their historic ownership over these lands
- By the 1940s, legal battles helped to recognize Tribal sovereignty and land rights
- In the 21st century, the Pima Tribe partnership with Arizona State University’s Archaeological Field School assists ASU instructors in teaching the next generation of archaeologists about the legal and ethical requirements when uncovering Indigenous historic sites.

The Haida Tribe

- Located along the Northwest Coast of Alaska and Canada
- During the early 20th century, Haida culture and tradition was under threat due to “Europeanization” of folklore and oral tradition
- To fight back against assimilation, Haida Tribe writers, playwrights, and directors started creating accurate Tribal history derived media
- In the 21st century, this has evolved into an award winning Haida industry producing pictures and films, such as *Now is the Time*.



Now is the Time movie poster, Photo Credit: NFB of Canada



Dedication of New NAIS Center at FSU, Photo Credit: FSU’s NAIS Center



Excavation and survey site of Archaeological Field School, Photo Credit: ASU

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to showcase the incredible resilience shown by all three of these Indigenous groups to resist the lasting pressures of colonization and maintain their sovereign cultural identity. While the pressures of colonization and harmful sentiments towards the Seminole, Pima, and Haida Tribes have greatly reduced in the 21st century, this does not mean that it is over. Continued efforts to grow a respectful relationship with Indigenous cultures is needed in order to ensure the century long victories of the mentioned cultural integrity movements. By the conclusion of this project, a museum exhibit housed in FSU’s Anthropology Department will display these feats of continuous resilience in the hopes that it will inspire the FSU community and general public to learn about the culture of these Indigenous groups or support the next generation of cultural integrity movements to ensure a respectful and thoughtful future.

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Works Cited

