

**Title of Session:** AIS - Native American Heritage Month

**Moderator:** Christine Rose

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Room: American Indian Studies Group

**RaymondG:** I just finished reading House Made of Dawn by N. Scott Momoday and it deals with a lot of the issues

**BJB2:** do you subscribe to Debbie Reese's blog?

**RaymondG:** no. I'm new to the Tapped In thing so I still don't know a lot about the organization

**BJB2:** <http://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/>

**BJB2:** Debbie isn't a member of Tapped In, but she has some really excellent information about Native Americans in literature

**BJB2:** if you scroll down on the screen above this chat to featured items you'll see a folder with some good resources listed. Debbie's literature blog is listed

**RaymondG:** very interesting and informative page

**RaymondG:** I can't believe the majority of the books she read had no Native American references

**ChristinR2** joined the room.

**BJB2** waves hi to Christine. Christine is the discussion leader, Raymond

**RaymondG:** good evening, Christine

**BJB2:** here's an interesting post to Lynne Wolter's blog [http://cuonline.blog-city.com/equity\\_index.htm](http://cuonline.blog-city.com/equity_index.htm)

**BJB2:** <http://equity.4teachers.org/index.php>

**ChristinR2:** Meanwhile, Hello Raymond. Do you belong to AI Studies group?

**RaymondG:** not yet. I'm new to Tapped In

**BJB2:** you're in the right place

**ChristinR2:** Aha. BJ brings me all the newbies. :-)

**BJB2:** Raymond came all by himself, Christine!

**ChristinR2:** Well, that's very nice of her. Where are you from?

**ChristinR2:** LOL Just teasing!

**RaymondG:** I'm from Texas and I'm an English Major studying at Texas A and M Kingsville

**ChristinR2:** No kidding! Are you anywhere near Houston?

**RaymondG:** no, just south of Corpus Christi

**ChristinR2:** We had a lovely lady from Houston who was doing her student teaching in Houston.

**ChristinR2:** I don't know Texas very well. I have always been interested in it. Texas has quite an extensive history with Am. Indians.

**ChristinR2:** Do you have any background in Native Studies....and are you Native yourself?

**ChristinR2:** Asking questions in order to decide what to offer you this evening.

**BJB2** waits patiently for Raymond to respond

**RaymondG:** I really don't have a background in it, for the exception of reading a few Native authors. And no I'm not Native

**ChristinR2:** Alexie?

**ChristinR2:** Its okay, no right or wrong answers to anything.

**RaymondG:** no the last author I read was Momaday

**ChristinR2:** Have you been through Debbie Reeses blog on the Am In in Children's Literature?

**ChristinR2:** Do you intend to become a teacher?

**RaymondG:** I went to one site on Children's Lit BJ recommended and yes

**BJB2:** I showed Raymond Debbie's blog

**ChristinR2:** okay, then, let the guided tour begin. BJ, you have been on this one with me many times, but there are some new stops along the way.

**BJB2:** btw, I also added the url you posted today from the yahoo group

**ChristinR2:** That's one of our stops tonight but first lets go to [www.racismagainstindians.org](http://www.racismagainstindians.org)

**ChristinR2:** Let me know when you are there.

**RaymondG:** oh I'm there

**ChristinR2:** Okay, lets go to Understanding the Am In Mascot Issue

**ChristinR2:** Raymond, do you have an opinion on mascots?

**RaymondG:** actually, I never considered it until I opened that page.

**ChristinR2:** Goody. This is always fun for me. :-)

**ChristinR2:** Ok, open the first heading on the left side of the page re: Indian Dancing

**RaymondG:** now that's interesting

**ChristinR2:** Now, go back to the first page and click on the next heading Religious freedom

**ChristinR2:** Did you know that up until 1978 it was against the law for Indians to practice their religion? Many were incarcerated for breaking the law!

**RaymondG:** Well the US does have a history for treating some people as second class citizens

**ChristinR2:** After you finish reading that, please take some time or bookmark the first page of Understanding the Indian Team names and mascots

**BJB2** . o O ( I always feel so guilty when I participate in these discussions, Christine! Even though I don't think I've ever demonstrated racism. :-()

**ChristinR2:** That's for sure!

**ChristinR2:** BJ, that is an excellent thing to bring up!!!!!!!

**ChristinR2:** It's so VERYVERY important to NOT feel guilty.

**ChristinR2:** YOU DID NOT DO THESE THINGS AND YOU ARE WORKING FOR

CHANGE!

**BJB2** nods.

**ChristinR2**: That is one of the first things I tell teachers when I do workshops.

**BJB2**: thanks.

**ChristinR2**: If I let them sit there and feel guilty it is impossible for them to absorb the truth of the past.

**ChristinR2**: We are here to find what needs to be brought into the open, so as to not let it happen ...not only again, but anymore!

**RaymondG**: I think I understand now.

**ChristinR2**: On that note, let's see what DOES go on these days. I will post the next URL

**RaymondG**: The mascots of Native Americans are as demeaning as that African American 1920s character who was nothing more than stereotypes

**ChristinR2**: Well done, Raymond! EXACTLY!

**RaymondG**: it is implanting the idea that they are equal to animals, which are the usual mascots

**ChristinR2**: Raymond, you have a talent for this!

**RaymondG**: thank you :)

**ChristinR2**: <http://www.racismagainstindians.org/SDBurning/index.htm> Lets look here now.

**ChristinR2**: Click on the link headings the first four...BJ I think these may be new for you.

**BJB2**: did you read the book 1491, New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus ?

**ChristinR2**: no...there are a lot of great resources...if only people would read them! :-)

**BJB2**: fascinating book

**BJB2** looks at the 4 new resources

**RaymondG**: I'm not finding that page. I keep getting errors.

**ChristinR2:** <http://www.racismagainstindians.org/SDBurning/Schools.htm>

**RaymondG:** ok I got it

**ChristinR2:** try this. I am on it, it should work.

**ChristinR2:** <http://www.racismagainstindians.org/SDBurning/Violence.htm> This one next

**RaymondG:** that is just disgusting. I honestly cannot understand why someone would commit these crimes

**ChristinR2:** Just browse for now. there is always so much to cover.

**ChristinR2:** Raymond, I do Civil Rights work mostly with Am In families, but also other minorities as well. It is shocking what goes on and does not get covered by the press.

**ChristinR2:** Okay, let's lighten up things a little bit.

**AnthonyE** joined the room.

**ChristinR2:** <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/studentsandteachersagainstracism>

**ChristinR2:** Hello Anthony! Welcome.

**ChristinR2:** Ok, let's start with this new page.

**ChristinR2:** Raymond, the info you have been given so far is shocking but true.

**ChristinR2:** The reason I started with that is to impress upon people that stereotypes breed disrespect and disrespect leads to violations of Civil Rights and sometimes out right violence.

**ChristinR2:** If children are taught to be respectful of Indians at home and in the classroom, these horrors will disappear eventually...but certainly not overnight.

**ChristinR2:** Are we all on the new page?

**RaymondG:** yes

**ChristinR2:** Okay, these links have been sent to me and selected by educators, most of whom are tribal members of various tribes.

**ChristinR2:** As a teacher, it is so important to read the blogs like Debbie Reeses, which is really the foremost, but also to seek out information that does not perpetuate

stereotypes

**ChristinR2:** It is very hard for non-natives to represent Native cultures accurately.

**ChristinR2:** What I like about many of these links is that they encourage research.

**ChristinR2:** They do not define anyone.

**ChristinR2:** When teaching about Indians, it is important to bring in Native speakers and let them make those definitions.

**BJB2** likes the idea of Native speakers

**RaymondG:** I agree

**ChristinR2:** I have been working in Indian Country for the last six years, and all I know is that I learn everyday how much I need to learn!

**ChristinR2:** I have also learned it's up to me how much I want to, but I am faced with challenges all the time. LOL

**ChristinR2:** So Anthony, tell us about yourself, where are you from?

**AnthonyE:** Houston, Texas

**ChristinR2:** Wow! The Texas constituency is terrific!

**AnthonyE:** Art Education-K-5th-----working on my masters in IT

**ChristinR2:** Oooooooooooooo, art. That's a challenge.

**ChristinR2:** I say that because it is so tempting to emulate the art of other cultures when learning about them.

**BJB2** nods

**AnthonyE:** yes that's true

**RaymondG:** she focuses on SW Literature

**ChristinR2:** And it is important to check with tribes about what is and is not considered sacred. It's a problem I see often, and we discussed at length last week.

**ChristinR2:** Well, are there specific kinds of things you are looking for?

**AnthonyE:** honestly I am new to TappedIn and I'm just trying to accommodate.....This is

really neat though....it's a lot of information in one.

**ChristinR2:** Tapped In is amazing!

**AnthonyE:** yes I agree

**BJB2:** Anthony, you might want to look at the resources in the featured items folder later

**AnthonyE:** I didn't mean to interrupt

**BJB2:** I think Christine brought up an important point about art

**AnthonyE:** Okay

**AnthonyE:** Yes she did

**BJB2 .** o O ( important and valid )

**AnthonyE:** Right now were actually talking about the Aztec's and it's a challenge

**ChristinR2:** Oh boy, BJ, its hard to go over it all. :-) Are the transcripts posted to the group? If so, I might retrieve something.

**AnthonyE:** But they are loving it

**BJB2:** transcripts are at [www.tappedin.org/transcripts](http://www.tappedin.org/transcripts)

**ChristinR2:** Anthony, will you be teaching about Native American Heritage Month at all? Will there be anything done in the school you teach in, s far as you know?

**AnthonyE:** Honestly I havent planned anything but you guys just gave me an idea

**ChristinR2:** Kids LOVE to learn about Native cultures. I have had parents tell me it's the only class they come home and talk about.

**AnthonyE:** I agree

**ChristinR2:** Okay, well, lets revisit this one topic then. BRB

**BJB2** waits patiently

**ChristinR2:** “Cultural property includes not only land and other tangible property, but ideas, traditions, and other non-tangibles. Cultural property belongs to the cultural group, rather than to an individual. As an individual has the right to control use of his/her property, the cultural group has the right to control the use of its property. Not all people recognize cultural property. As a result some individuals will use another group's cultural

properties without permission; often that use is offensive to the cultural group, because their property is used in a way that distorts or is disrespectful to the group's beliefs.”

**ChristinR2:** I welcome comments and questions.

**ChristinR2:** Any thoughts? Like, is it okay to make headdresses at Thanksgiving?

**ChristinR2:** Is it okay to make up Indian names?

**ChristinR2:** Answer to both, nope.

**AnthonyE:** I'm sorry Christine

**BJB2:** why would it be offensive to make headdresses?

**AnthonyE:** I am new to this and it overwhelming

**BJB2:** . o O ( we make Pilgrim hats and that's ok? )

**ChristinR2:** For fabulous art projects, invite someone from a local tribe to come in and teach the kids how to make clay pots or baskets or whatever their tribe is known for.

**RaymondG:** I can sympathize Anthony

**AnthonyE:** Okay I see your drift

**AnthonyE:** Um

**ChristinR2:** Headdresses are earned and are a HUGE honor, and the feathers signify their religious practices

**RaymondG:** in the realm of education I agree completely, outside of education I'm not sure

**AnthonyE:** Okay, what are the most common native American left these days

**AnthonyE:** in your area

**RaymondG:** I mean I remember when someone did a painting of Mary, mother of Jesus using elephant dung

**AnthonyE:** or should I say that still practice their beliefs

**ChristinR2:** Using feathers in a culturally inappropriate way could be insulting, and is to many tribes, but not all.

**ChristinR2:** It's tricky.

**RaymondG:** it was however a free expression of art

**ChristinR2:** AHA!

**ChristinR2:** Oh, let's have a class on that alone!

**AnthonyE:** True

**ChristinR2:** Our country was based on freedom of many things...but those freedoms frequently resulted in the appropriation of land, religious rights, and many other things held sacred to people.

**ChristinR2:** Indians have had a lot taken from them.

**ChristinR2:** Before you arrived we went over the rules that Indians had to follow if they danced

**ChristinR2:** or if they practiced their religion before 1978!

**AnthonyE:** Okay

**ChristinR2:** Freedom in this country has meant OUR freedom to take what we want regardless of how anyone feels about it.

**ChristinR2:** Our imposing our right to freedom has resulted in oppression to other peoples.

**AnthonyE:** I see

**ChristinR2:** I can get quite worked up. :-)

**ChristinR2:** I don't mean to sound harsh.

**AnthonyE:** keep going its relevant

**ChristinR2:** Our country has viewed history one way

**ChristinR2:** there is another side of the coin.

**AnthonyE:** Ur right though

**AnthonyE:** So can you help me implement an event to my elementary students

**ChristinR2:** Okay, then, I will have to ask you to visit [racismagainstindians.org](http://racismagainstindians.org) again'

**BJB2:** as educators we have a responsibility to authentically respect all cultures

**AnthonyE:** I C

**ChristinR2:** Okay, now go to Understanding the Indian Perspective

**RaymondG:** I think one problem is that people use the term Native American too freely. They are condensing many tribes and cultures under a single name

**RaymondG:** which are distinct

**ChristinR2:** Raymond, you are hired.

**ChristinR2:** If I were hiring, you'd have the job!

**RaymondG** smiles

**RaymondG:** which is very funny

**RaymondG:** because most people can name all the countries in Europe

**RaymondG:** but they cant name all the Native tribes in the US

**AnthonyE:** Great link

**ChristinR2:** Okay, I hate to do this but I must end the class. PLEASE peruse this section and discover a lot of interesting things that you will absolutely be able to use in your classrooms. Anthony, feel free to contact me and I will find you someone who can help you with art projects.

**AnthonyE:** Okay thanks Christine

**AnthonyE:** sounds good

**ChristinR2:** Heck, I bet Am. Indians can't name all the tribes...there's 600 of them!

**RaymondG:** Thanks Christine This was an eye-opening discussion

**AnthonyE:** thank you

**RaymondG:** and thank you BJ for your hospitality

**ChristinR2:** Best of luck to you both. Come back next week, and if we can get a lot of people we can go deeper into other topics .

**RaymondG:** have a great week, folks.

**BJB2** hugs Christine goodnight

**AnthonyE:** later

**ChristinR2:** Good night all. Thanks so much for coming. I appreciate your interest and sticking around to learn about this aspect of history that has gone unreported.