

Abby Kelly Foster Charter Public School Teaching American History Grant
*Citizenship, Property, Identity, and Representation: the Historical Journey of Southern
New England's Native Peoples*

October 2, 2008

WORKSHOP NOTES

Participating Teachers Present: Lynn Heil, Sandra Gibson-Quigley, Phil Hureau, Brian Morse, Kelly Davila, Mike Penney, John Daly, Sarah Kaye, Nora Werme, Ed Belbin, Henry Zussman, Darelene Finnamore, Anne Weeks

Participating Teachers Not Present: Rosemarie Ward, Linda Millet, Timothy Gervais, Timothy Corcoran,

Institutional/Presenters: Tom Doughton, Jim Moran, Alice Nash

9-9:15 – Welcome and Introductions – Elmarion Room, Goddard-Daniels House, 185 Salisbury Street, Worcester, MA 01609

9:15 – 10:15– War in Indian America: from the Seven Years War through the Revolution – Tom Doughton

1. Dr. Doughton began with an overview of the Academic Year 2008-2009 workshops and the 2009 Summer Institute—a period covering mostly the 19th century
 - A number of photocopied handouts were distributed from the late 18th and 19th centuries among them: “*Shocking Murder by the Savages!*”, “*A Song called Crawford’s Defeat by the Indians*”, “*Horrid Massacre*”, “*The Romantic Story of Miss Ann Carter and the Celebrated Indian Chief, Thundersquall*” and other samples of materials that we will be using this coming year.
 - A basic overview of the year to come is included below (taken from Tom’s initial outline developed after the 2008 Summer Institute:

October 2, 2008

American Antiquarian Society

For consideration that we begin the year reviewing, filling in gaps [Natives in the Era of the American Revolution, discourse of disappearing Indians, etc.] and offering an outline or overview of the five workshops leading to the Summer Institute. Towards this end, for October 2, it may be easily possible to think in two activities blocks: the morning for presentations, with the afternoon for discussion of readings, tentative lesson plans for Columbus Day or Thanksgiving and a ‘teach-back’ session.

Saturday, November 8, 2008 Abby Kelley Foster Charter School

Proposal that our second encounter be utilized for exploring legal, political and corporate tribal relationship of New England Natives in the nineteenth century, anticipating themes and topics to be revisited in the summer institute and introducing significant key documents. The situation of three tribal groups could be outlined in our morning session, with exercises involving primary source documents in the afternoon. I would recommend that we might want to consider the Nipmuc along with one Connecticut tribe and the Narragansetts or, possibly, the Wampanoags of Martha's Vineyard or the Mashpee Wampanoags. If we choose not to pursue the Mashpee or Martha's Vineyard communities at this time, we could incorporate their nineteenth-century political, governmental experiences in the summer institute.

January 22, 2009

American Antiquarian Society

Activities proposed should provide participants with an understanding of the relationship between historiography, production of literary texts and creating works in the visual and plastic arts that create and solidify social, political, cultural and religious representations of Native Americans in the nineteenth century. Participants will be expected to accomplish two assignments at the TAH website.

A presentation on painting and New England Native Americans: landscape paintings and historical treatments as part of a more generalized depiction of Indians for the antebellum American public: documentary representation of a doomed race and the celebration of their disappearance through historical painting. According to one critic, for example, depictions of Natives in this period are related to "rhetoric of American individualism, self-reliance, providential protection, middle-class morality, and the establishment of a nation of continental dimensions," revealing "racist and imperialist subtexts." Artists producing these works were "coopted by the prevailing ideology, public policies and popular beliefs," their output recording "the racial theories and territorial imperatives" as well as the history of nation-building, individuals "enmeshed in the discourse of power," for some, providing "at least as much cause for embarrassment as for celebration." Two possible afternoon exercises: The first would be an exercise utilizing History of the Indian Tribes of North America, by Thomas L. McKenney and James L. Hall; and, the second, an exercise for small teams looking at prints, texts and 'memories' of Natives with 5 specific Northeast landscapes: Mount; Bash Bish Falls; Mt. Katadin; Schroon Lake; and, Mt. Mansfield, Vermont

March 21, 2009

American Antiquarian Society

War & Peace in Indian America, Presence & Persistence of New England Native Americans

Saturday, May 14, 2009

Fruitlands Museums

Following Reconstruction, self-representation of New England Native Americans and "collecting" and other forms of representation of New England Indians by the dominant culture

- The March 21, 2009 workshop is left intentionally open-ended pending Dr. Nancy Shoemaker's input. Nancy is our co-leader for the 2008-2009 Academic Year and for the 2009 Summer Institute
2. Discussion of the reading: *Jehovah and the Uncouth Wilderness*. The English newcomers believed that the land was given to the Europeans by God, who had removed the natives by a providential plague. This is a *canonical* presentation as to how the disappearance of the native peoples was to be explained—it would become part of the “canon” of our cultural history, the way in which we would interpret the events surrounding the initial settlement of the continent by Europeans (particularly the English) and the continuing expansion of Euro-Americans across the continent into the early years of the 20th century. Dr. Doughton noted that the Puritan vision of a “New Jerusalem”/ A “New Israel” was quite different from the Catholic vision in Latin America where souls were there to be saved (and to replace the ‘heretical’ Protestants who had left the Church). In Puritan New England the settlers understood themselves to be like the ancient Israelites moving into Canaan. They were to subdue the land and replace its “pagan” inhabitants. Hence, efforts to convert them were ambiguous. In Catholic Latin America there was certainly an emphasis on subjection, but the theme of inclusion and conversion of the natives (as new members incorporated into the Spanish or Portuguese Empires) was consciously pursued, also.
- The notion of the “Disappearing Indian” is one of the foundational myths of (English) America.
 - In the 19th century many New England historians understood whatever Indians remained were debased “gypsy-like” remnants of a once noble people (who mostly died off shortly after the Europeans arrived). That remnant hardly deserved the name: “Indians”. They were a mongrel group (contaminated by mixing with others—mostly blacks).
 - Once all the Indians had “disappeared” their land, the names they gave to places, etc. could be appropriated by the dominant culture—which became the real inheritors of the lost/disappeared people. The white Euro-Americans somehow were transformed into the legitimate *descendants* of the original native peoples.
 - The enfranchisement of Indians in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (1869) was seen by Indians as an attempt to deprive them of their identity. Detribalization meant that the legislature ceased to recognize any Indian identity and therefore allowed for the ‘legal’ appropriation of what land they had managed to retain. Many Indians opposed enfranchisement because it meant “they’ll take your land and tax you”.
 - Sovereignty was severely compromised all over Southern New England. The Marshall Court’s decision about Cherokee sovereignty was ignored/rejected by the New England legislatures and courts.
 - The rationale was that the Indians in Southern New England were not really Indians anyhow. (They were, at best, a mongrel group of vagrants wandering around pretending to be Indians). Hence a circular line of reasoning developed: If the Indians weren’t really Indians then they couldn’t appeal to treaty rights and raise issues of sovereignty since everyone knew that there were no Indians in New

England and since no Indians were left no one was there to contend the matter (!) .

- New Englanders looking at the western tribes and comparing them with the remnant peoples in their own midst had their preconceptions reinforced. (“Real” Indians were wild, uncivilized, ‘noble savages’—nothing like the poor wretches selling baskets and wandering the roadways of Southern New England).
- As early as 1861 John Earle had issued a report which contained a draft of legislation for native enfranchisement. The 1869 decision to enfranchise Indians by the General Court was part of the reconstruction mentality in which rights and citizenship was being extended to non-whites (13, 14, 15 Amendments). It was impossible for the liberals in Massachusetts (abolitionists, feminists, etc.) to see rights extended to blacks but not to Indians. In this, they were in advance of federal policies. Native Americans did not receive US citizenship until 1924.

10:15 – 10:15 – Coffee Break

10:15 – 11:00 – Native Peoples of the East from the Revolution to Removal – Tom Doughton

3. Summary passed out: *From the Seven Years War to Lexington and Concord*
 - Participating teachers reviewed the handout individually and there was a brief discussion of the contents before we moved on to look at the experience of native peoples during the American Revolution and first several decades of the republic.
4. *The War (American Revolution) in Indian America: Native People and the new Republic*
 - Most Indians sided with the British during the Revolution because the Crown had guaranteed land west of the Appalachians to the native peoples (in perpetuity). Native Americans thought they would get a better deal if the British won—and this is very likely true.
 - The war is also fought, to a large degree, on Indian territory with devastating results (example—p. 5 handout, [a] *Devastation In Cherokee Homelands*). Farms and towns were destroyed, large numbers of people were massacred or made refugees and great bitterness was left on both sides. The seeds for removal were planted during the Revolution.
5. Removal and expansion of slavery into Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek, Choctaw, and Seminole lands. There was a very clear connection between the expansion of slavery into the rich soil regions west of the Appalachians (cotton growing) and the push to remove “civilized” (those who had adopted the dominant culture’s methods—including slaveholding) Indians from their land. The elites among the Indians were often “mixed race”—Scotts-Irish/Indian mix. (Jedediah Morse was one of the chief architects of removal). However, none of these people

‘renounced’ their Indianness even after removal (to Oklahoma/Indian Territory) when tribes decided to execute those who signed the treaties.

- In census enumerations during this period non-tribal people were usually listed as ‘colored’. ‘Colored’ did not simply mean black, or having black ancestry—it meant non-white (at least until 1870 when other distinctions were created).

11:00 12:00 – Thanksgiving and Manifest Destiny – Alice Nash

6. Dr. Nash explained that Thanksgiving is as much a conceptual matter as a historical matter; it has to do with how we think/perceive/portray native peoples
 - The way we think of Thanksgiving today is as much connected to the idea of Manifest Destiny as it is to the creation of a national ‘thanksgiving’ feast during and after the Civil War
 - Alice Nash’s family on her father’s side is connected back to the first English settlers in Massachusetts. Eleven generations of her family are buried within 2 miles of where she lives in Hadley today
 - On her mother’s side she is Japanese-American (Congregationalists who were converted in Japan by a minister from Amherst!). Her mother’s family had been incarcerated in the US concentration camps during WW II.
- Interpreting Thanksgiving (and any other cultural expression) involves ways of *looking* (at indigenous peoples)—ocular and specular
- Ocular—means looking at people in the context of their own experience it is *descriptive* (and does not rely as much on comparing/contrasting what is observed with one’s own experience/culture).
- Specular—means looking at people from the context of the experience of another (usually dominant) culture—it is *comparative*. It is like looking in a mirror—others are always reflected through our own experience and preconceptions.
- Most of our historical discourse has been done from a ‘specular’ understanding of things.
- When we teach about indigenous peoples are we really trying to look at them or are we looking at them in the context of another ‘agenda’ (another ‘canon’, to use Tom Doughton’s language from the morning session)?
- The ocular method of looking at the “First Thanksgiving” describe what the people actually ate, what really happened, who was there, etc.
- The specular method(conscious or unconscious) of looking at Thanksgiving—how did we get to where we are now? What was the agenda behind creating the myth? How does it relate to *us*?

- Manifest Destiny was an intensely political idea. The theory was that Americans should dominate the continent because it was their religious/cultural/racial duty to do so. Americans in this case were understood to be white and English speaking at the very least.
- The painting entitled “American Progress” (John Gast, ca. 1872) is a visual portrayal of the theory; it shows Columbia going across the plains with Indians and buffalo fleeing before her and trains and telegraph lines following her; it is a specular image because it reveals “America” as a reflection of the dominant society’s ideals and ambitions.

7. Precursors to Manifest Destiny:

There were cultural precursors to Manifest Destiny:

- The Crusades—understood as a “just war” to reclaim Christian lands held by ‘infidels’
- The Doctrine of Discovery (ca. 1550) which held that Christian nations may claim to lands not already claimed by a Christian nation.
- Providential history—John Winthrop’s ‘Citty on a hill’ (discussed in the morning session by Tom).
- American Revolution which built on all of the above and played into the concept of Americans as a Chosen People—a concept that remains very much alive politically (and for some, religiously) today.
- This is much more related to power than to race *per se*—the advocates of Manifest Destiny (in whatever form) didn’t really think much about the status of the people already here. The idea(l) was to build a “Christian” civilization (or, after the American Revolution, a ‘democratic’ civilization)
- The period from 1850 to 1894 is crucial in terms of the transfer of land from Indians to the federal government: Alice showed a map of land transfers from the colonial period until the current period.
- There was a sense (in the mid to late 19th century) that Manifest Destiny was not only historically predetermined but morally necessary and right.
- The first national Thanksgiving Day (We were shown the November 24, 1864 Thomas Nast cartoon) had no emphasis on Pilgrims and Indians—it was all about the civil war and the nation coming back together. The actual proclamation came out of a long Anglo-American tradition of days of *fasting and prayer*—vs. *consumption and celebration of material wealth*. As it became a permanent national holiday (1869 Thomas Nast Thanksgiving cartoon was shown) the focus is on including everyone at the table. There is only one Indian in a crowd of all sorts of people and no ‘Pilgrims’. The centerpiece on the table reads “Universal Suffrage”. The theme is inclusion and common rights.

- A 1932 image of the ‘first Thanksgiving’ (JLG Ferris image “The First Thanksgiving”) is radically different. It is all about Pilgrims and Indians. It is a truly specular image. The image is all about “us”—the United States and its ‘canonical history’. *The transformation takes place in the late 19th century and seems to be part of the whole Progressive/Populist movement to create a common national identity based on common myths, language, and ‘history’.*

8. Small group exercise:

- *What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of using an ocular or specular approach to teaching about Thanksgiving? Give a specific example of how using an ocular or specular approach would impact your lesson plan.*
- Post small group discussion: “might be problematic with the younger students—5th grade—can they process”
- “Ocular is definitely more work”, but worth the effort

12:00 –1:00 – Working Lunch with small group discussions about the morning’s sessions.

1:00 – 1:30 – Worcester State Requirements for Graduate Credit – Charlotte Haller

1:30 – 3:00 – Teach Back

The “teach back” was based on lesson plan ideas that came out of the Summer Institute and are posted on the blogsite at: <http://teachingamericanhistoryakfcs.blogspot.com/>

- Participating teachers were broken down into small groups (of three or four) to brainstorm ideas for possible lesson plans.

REPORTS:

- **Group 1:** Verrazano letter (see website documents for the Summer Institute at: http://www.teachingamericanhistoryakfcs.org/summer_institute.html) for analyzing documents, note taking skills; using images: attack at mystic fort; massacre at mystic video—strong ELL population at my school—language and content components; speeches from leaders from the time period; an indentured servant’s letter his to father with info about food and illnesses (an ‘ocular’ approach great for 5th grade)—comparing and contrasting the lives of white/black indentured servants and slaves; incorporate materials selectively—read Philbrick’s, *Mayflower*, over the summer and write an essay on the impact of Europeans on native American culture; Read Wamsutta’s suppressed speech at Plymouth (1970)—what were the specific facts behind the event? How does this illustrate Indian experience; *Center For Learning* materials are a great source

for useful documents and activities; use primary source documents relating to native Americans whenever possible...

- **Group 2:** In a class with more challenged student ask about how people communicated in past; reflect on how geography contributed to relations with others (e.g.why did Martha's Vineyard Indians side with English in King Philip's war—and kept other Indians out); use the pictures we saw today re: Thanksgiving in classroom to illustrate change over time.
- **Group 3:** A *Minorities History* class had a discussion about intermarriage between blacks and Native Americans and racial identity—mostly during the late 18th and 19th centuries; Ask, *what is a minority?* It is not necessarily about numbers but whose story gets told—self identification and classification by others is very important—how were mixed black native children viewed by others (tribes, whites, blacks)—in the Southeastern US if the mother was native then the children were native; It would be important to look at classifications in the late 1800's—which classification would be most advantageous?; Historiography: how the way history is studied shapes identity; There is the case of Barre, MA library—it has native artifacts from wounded knee—the Lakota want the artifacts back—does it belong to them or to the library as an historical inheritance?; Special Ed—low readers: studying prejudice in literature; will study “the courage of Sarah Noble”—(see blog); how to learn tolerance and overcome fear; how to interpret prejudices—cultural literacy—will investigate the real Sarah Noble vs. the person portrayed in the novel; Tom interjected that it might be well to connect the issues of ‘restitution’ to other historical examples (property stolen from Jews by the Nazis; Greek marbles in British museums..etc.)
- **Group 4:** differences between perception and reality in how native Americans have been portrayed through history—Verrazano document, Thomas Morton document; images—*The Death of General Wolfe*, in which there is a visual portrayal of the *noble savage* attending the general, relief sculpture in the rotunda of the US capitol in which Daniel Boone is fighting a nameless Indian—good v evil—stereotyping; modern day use of Native American mascots; a reflection paper and or PowerPoint presentations that can be shared with other students; Roger Williams—advocating the separation between church and state; (Williams’) relationship with the Narragansetts; the idea of purchasing land at a fair and just price; Good sources at <http://www.historyteacher.net/>

3:00 – 3:30 - Evaluation and Wrap up

The above notes are not an official transcript and may be revised upon review. They are produced solely as an adjunct to the sessions. Participating scholars and teachers are welcome to contact the Project Director about revisions and corrections at:

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