

## **SATURDAY NOVEMBER 15, 2008 WORKSHOP**

Present: John Daly, Lynn Heil, Linda Millet, Darlene Finnamore, Mike Penney, Phil Hureau, Brian Morse, Sandy Gibson-Quigley, Rosemarie Ward, Kelly Davila, Ed Belbin, Nora Werme, Tim Corcoran, Henry Zussman (14 in attendance)

Not Present: *Ann Weeks, Tim Gervais, Jennifer Connors (resigned),*

### **HOUSEKEEPING:**

- **SIGN IN**
- **INTRODUCTION**
- **SIGN UP FOR WSC SPRING COURSE**
- **BLOG ASSIGNMENT**

### **MORNING SESSIONS:**

*Tom began with an introduction about a number of texts available re: Native Americans and distributed examples.*

**9:10-10 Session I:** Review the Prucha readings—Overview of Federal Government Relationships with Indians

- *Tom asked how people found the Prucha readings—explaining that some of his undergraduates found it dry and ‘old fashioned’*
- *Participants responded that they found the government attitude toward Indians to be one of an adult towards children*
- *The case of Removal in particular was striking—how the Removal included not only the Cherokees but the other “civilized” tribes—how those moving to Oklahoma were robbed and attacked on their way there—how the Cherokees took 4,000 slaves with them to Oklahoma (Are their descendants part of the Cherokee nation? This has been a source of serious contention within the tribe and between the tribe and the government... the government has insisted that the descendents of the slaves be included in the nation)*
- *Tom pointed out that slaves in Indian Territory were not freed by the Emancipation Proclamation nor were they freed under the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment—there had to be special legislation to clarify the situation....*

- *The ‘factory system’: Indians were only allowed to purchase from approved agents at ‘truck-houses’ (Colonial Period); this carried on into the republic partly to discourage the distribution of alcohol and cheating of natives by whites. Natives would bring goods to the truck houses to be traded for goods. Here is a case of government relationship with Indians as a group—but in what manner? (Sovereign nation? Subjects? Almost never individually)*
- *On federally recognized Indian reservations all federal and state criminal laws apply BUT not civil laws. This is often not understood by non Indians (by individuals or by states and local governments)—this contributes to the illusion of ‘nation within the nation’. Indians pay no income tax on income earned on the reservation (state or federal), but hold US citizenship (since 20<sup>th</sup> century) and can vote in federal elections. This creates an unclear picture of their relationship with the United States and is the product of numerous, often conflicting, Indian policies over the years.*
- *Q: what was the relationship between Andrew Jackson’s role in the War of 1812 and his desire to remove the 5 Civilized Tribes? A: The idea was already there. Jackson had fought the Seminoles in the Seminole War and as a Southerner he had an investment in seeing that Indian lands were opened, but men like Jedediah Morse and Dawes were northerner and they were instrumental in the policy of removal.*

**Image: Roger Williams State Park convocation of the Algonquin Council 1920**

We were presented with an image of members of the Algonquin Council at their first convocation in 1920. Some of the observations of the participating teachers are noted below:

- *Racial mixture notable; use of western tribal regalia (not traditional eastern dress)*
- *Thomas Williams Bicknell present (in the appropriate if dated clothing of an important white man). He was instrumental in the founding of the Council. The logo was, “We Still Live”.*
- *Yet there are some things that are unclear in the document/image...it appears that the people in the front may have been put there because they “look” the most Indian (in their manner of dress) while those who were dressed in more contemporary clothing were put in the back...*
- *The Council became very important as a means of documentation for later federal recognition*
- *At this point in New England the ability to trace one’s ancestry (family bloodlines) became more important than physiognomy (racial appearance). Thus, while Chief Cisco looks very black—he can trace his bloodline from James the Printer and belongs to the Nipmuc nation.*

**BREAK**

## **10:10-11:30 Session II : Natives And New England Governments**

- Example 1: Nineteenth Century Nipmuc Experience through Enfranchisement (Briggs and Earle Reports)
- *Indian history was understood in this period (19<sup>th</sup> century) as the prehistory of Europeans— graves were looted of bones and other materials—there was a collecting mania. John Milton Earle was a great collector of Indian artifacts and human remains.*
- *Current federal laws that allow for the return of remains to Indian peoples only apply to those who have obtained recognition.... Tribal people who cannot ‘prove’ themselves have no claims on artifacts that may be traceable to their own families and communities.*
- *John Milton Earle as Indian Commissioner was appointed to compose a report that would explore whether or not to enfranchise the tribal peoples (1862). The recommendation was to enfranchise, though it would have to wait 7 years.*
- *Earle’s report only considered “Plantation Tribes”—those who had reservations recognized by the colonial government. Thus, the Indians west of the Connecticut River were not included in the report.*
- *The Appendix to the Earle Report is an enumeration but not a census—many people are left out and the enumeration is not done strictly by households. It presents a valuable, but not conclusive picture of the state of a portion of Massachusetts Indian people at the time of its publication.*
- *Also, Indians who had left the community often purposely avoided being identified as Indians (thus, legally non compos mentis); in other communities they would blend into the white or black communities and have the right to vote...etc. It was one of the few times that being black was advantageous (they already had citizens rights, could vote, make contracts, etc.). These people would not have been represented in the reports even though they may have maintained some contact with their home communities (though a good number broke all ties).*
- *A census was done by appointed census takers who went from house to house enumerating members of the household and identifying them racially. This was standard from 1850 until 1940, but the criteria kept changing and makes it difficult to determine identity (based on census data alone).*
- *The Earle Appendix relied on guardians and town clerks to answer the question “Do you have any Indians in your town?” ... This, of course, left it entirely up to the respondents to determine who was an Indian (using their own criteria) and as judge of those persons status and character...*

- *Issues of racial identity were defined by the whites—Earle arrived at the figure of almost 1500 Indians—though some had become ‘white’ through marriage. Yet, even those who were “white” or “black” received state funds as Indians . They were legally still Indians by descent, though they often didn’t “look” Indian or behave much like “noble savages”.*
- *The ‘game plan’ was to make the Indians disappear (through assimilation, enfranchisement, detribalization). To do this it had to be determined that the remnant was ‘debased....promiscuous....etc...’—racially and morally no longer Indian! The Earle Report was harsher than the Briggs in its assessment of the social/moral conditions of the “remnant”, but both reports had the same aim of de-legitimizing the Indian presence in Massachusetts.*
- *Although the enumerators claimed to have ‘visited’ the people in question there is little doubt that the authors had virtually no real contact with them (hard to imagine John Milton Earle sitting down to dinner with the ‘prostitutes’ of the ‘terrible tenement’ in Webster).*
- *The reports generally portray the Indians as poor and morally questionable, but in places they are portrayed as decent (if poor) and similar to the dominant population....the reporters—esp. Earle...took a great deal of their information from second hand sources—the town clerks, ministers, etc..... This may explain the often contradictory portrayals of people in the same report... (see above)*
- *How can these documents be used?*
- *Many participating teachers felt that the description of what work people did in the Earle Appendix would be interesting in class but that the material in the body of the reports would have to be looked at carefully and in the context of the agenda being pursued....*

### **NIPMUC COURT RECORDS (CASE #6090, WORCESTER PROBATE REGISTRY)FROM 1880’S**

- *From an 1849 report, the Indians at Webster-Dudley were the most ‘degraded’ in the state. There were 48 enumerated in the report. In 1869(?) the Earle identified 92.... Numbers kept changing... but the general consensus was that the Dudley Webster people, even if gainfully employed, were living debauched lives*
- *13 of the Indians lived on Indian land before they were moved to a tenement in town (the “terrible tenement”?)*
- *The people there received a 1/3 of the state allocation for Indians.*
- *There was a reservation of 26 acres... but the people had been moved off it to a tenement in town where they could be watched (see above).*
- *In the last year before enfranchisement \$1500 was expended on them.*

- *In the 1870's the (no longer recognized) tribe was still looking for money from the sale of its lands. In 1870 the reservation was auctioned off. It took until 1887 for the (former) members of the tribe to get permission to sue the state.... The commonwealth stated that the people weren't owed anything because they 1) had been receiving welfare for over a century and any funds had long since been used up 2) enfranchisement meant that the tribe no longer existed 3) the people weren't Indians anyhow—just degraded mixed race people with no claim to be real Indians.*
- *The Court found against the state, stating that the payments had been squandered by guardians, that membership in a tribe was up to the tribe to determine, that the process of enfranchisement/detribalization was flawed in itself...*
- *The state's final payments for land and trust basically ignored the court and paid off (at a very low rate and figuring in court costs, etc.) the 'heirs' of the Indians (who were not considered Indians themselves)...the recipients signed releases that absolved the commonwealth of all future responsibility and liability.....*

### **AFTERNOON SESSIONS :**

**1-2:30 Primary Source Document workshop**—exploration of several sets of census documents: **random (not grade level) small groups** will use the materials pertinent to their own “census” to identify the ‘race’ of a particular family. Primary Source Material: Instructions To Federal Census Enumerators and Indian Population Statistics (etc.)

- Groups will use the instructions to federal census enumerators to bring home the point of racial identification—re-presentation over time....
- Each small group will be given a different census enumerator (different year, but the same family)
- The small groups will be asked to consider how the census material they were given might be used in their own particular classroom to illustrate how people are ‘re-presented’/‘re-present’ themselves
- There will be a worksheet with specific questions for the groups to work from.

### **2:30-3:30 Grade Level Small Groups**

- Participating teachers will re-convene into **Grade Level Groups** after a brief break and will take the worksheet and make suggestions for adaptations and/or changes in format

for their particular grade level. At the end of the session each small group will report back to the whole.

- There will be a follow up assignment on the blog.

**Below are reflections from the Grade Level Small Groups (based on discussions in the random small groups with instructions to see how the material they looked at might be used in their grade level classrooms):**

*High school: give students a blank census form (from the 1850-1940 period) and have 'enumerators' determine how their teachers fit into the categories; look at pictures and determine race according to the census categories; then look at one family (Charles Doris family) and see how it actually worked out over time (Federal and local enumerations and see agreements and discrepancies in racial identity).... Also worth noting would be property values in relationship to race—generally non whites had lower property assessments—was this due to actual poverty, arbitrary devaluation based on race/location, etc.? ; Current Events: racism and identity today, discussion of the upcoming 2010 census and current racial identifiers on state and federal forms.*

*Middle School: make copies of the census information but make print larger –two sides (original script on one and print on the other)and limit to just a few examples; compare enumeration instructions over time; World History: compare these censuses with others from earlier civilizations....ask why one needs a census... how often?... Why do criteria change?...why differences between town and federal formats and identifications?... Who would be an enumerator?... Can census data erase the existence of a people?... Compare one census to another—within one family*

*Primary School: altered to meet the curriculum .... Get census reports from their own town (3 grade) and see how the old forms compare with what we had today.... Brainstorm what the important census headings would be and why.... Make as many local connections as possible... hit other content areas (data analysis and math; ELA frameworks for writing reports)...lends itself to the discussion of race and how is that significant to the people of the era and people today.... Students today wouldn't recognize terms like "yellow", "red", etc. (Students would be asked put themselves in the place of the people of the time)*