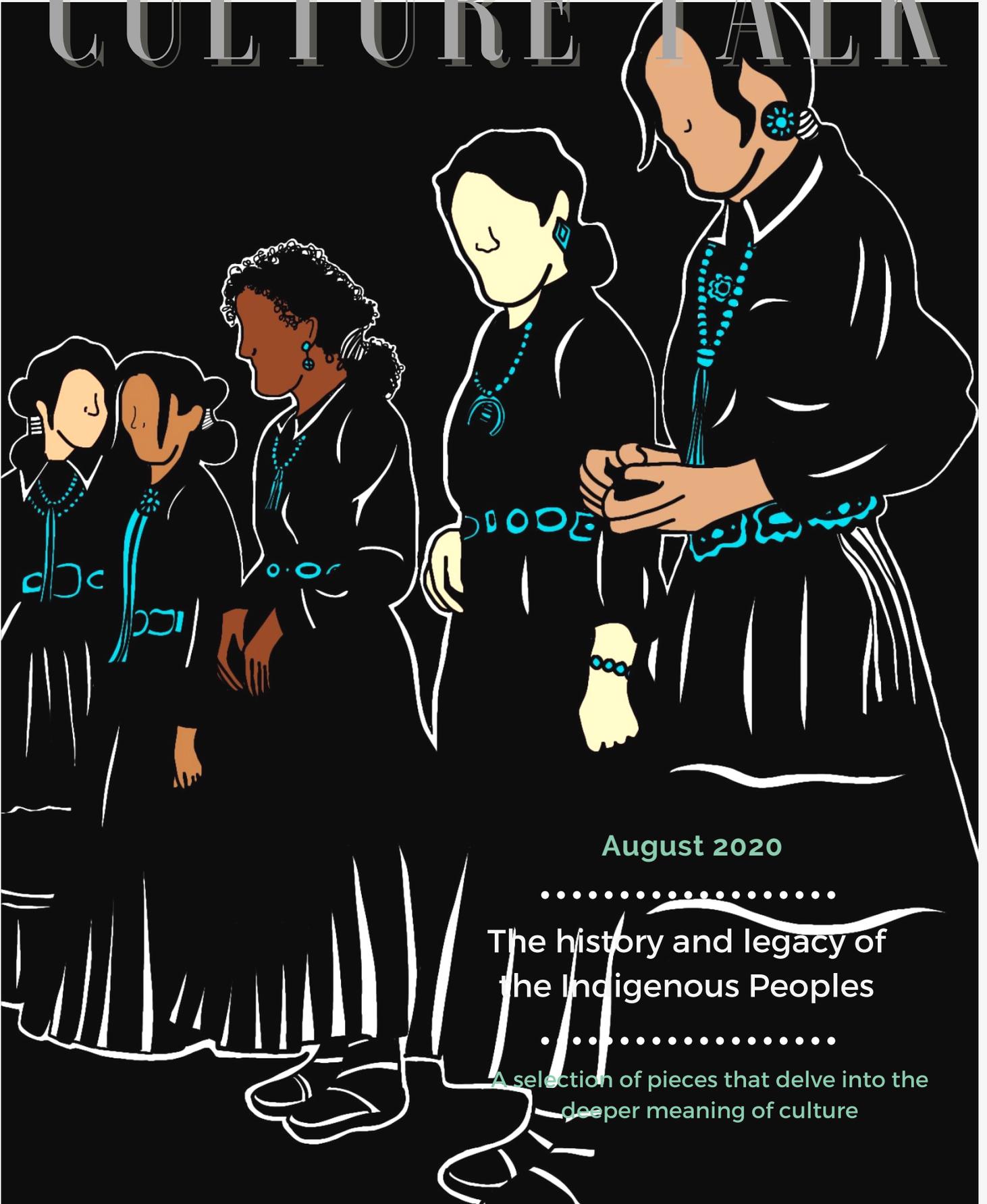


CULTURE TALK



August 2020

.....
The history and legacy of
the Indigenous Peoples
.....

A selection of pieces that delve into the
deeper meaning of culture

VOLUME 1:
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

COVER ARTIST: SELINA MULLEN



FIND HER ART AT:
[@SKIDSKUNX](https://www.instagram.com/skidskunjx) ON INSTAGRAM

Yá'át'ééh! (Hello in Navajo)

My name is **Selina Mullen**. I'm a 20 year old indigenous artist that resides in Salt Lake City, Utah although my home roots are on the **Navajo Nation in Lukachukai, Arizona**. My clans are **Kinłichíí'nii (Red House Clan) and Dził'tahnii (Mountain Cove Clan)** on my mother's side and French Vietnamese on my father's. I create art to represent the indigenous community. I like to combine traditional native culture from all tribes into modern day hobbies. I struggled finding someone like me in things I enjoyed such as the makeup or skate crowd or even being a mixed ethnicity. I couldn't find enough indigenous people in hobbies I enjoyed. So I decided to take it into my hands and create things that others could relate to. The main thing that I want people to know is that indigenous people are still here. The love in the community along with good medicine and protection keep us strong, empowered and resilient.

Here are a few of my favorite indigenous creators you should check out & support on Instagram:

@rezinbabe & **@moongrrl666** - Both create one of a kind medicine resin earrings

@nightvolfchesh - Diné photographer who captures the beauty in nature and indigenous people

@antonio_studioarts - Creates indigenous art with his own distinct style

@_autumnmariie - Indigenous makeup artist & vlogger

@thjnavajojewelry - Navajo silversmith who crafts stunning turquoise jewelry

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Generalization is a shroud that is all too often imposed over cultural minorities, and a shroud that Culture Talk seeks to undermine for one group with each issue.

In an interview with us, Sareya Taylor of the White Mountain Apache and Navajo tribes speaks on the erasure that comes with “generalizing [Native Americans] as a homogeneous entity.” Beyond America too, being Indigenous entails even more diversity, cultures, voices, and conflicts felt.

In this second issue of Culture Talk, we highlight that diversity and examine the nuances of historical and current Indigenous experiences through our six pillars—heritage, trends, government, history, geography, and law.

Selina Mullen's cover art shows at once the individuality and the connection between indigenous people and tribes—in a style that melds history and heritage with modernity and relevancy.

Consider the capability of education to oppress through Anusha Natarajan and Divya Natarajan's examination of the dark history of Canadian residential schools.

Among writers you check out should be Phoenix Youth Poet Laureate Sareya Taylor, who talked with Katherine Chou in an interview about identity, poetry, and advocacy.

Find amazing Indigenous authors to read in Maryssa Orta's piece on literary representation of Native authors in schools.

In Milla Nguyen's piece, see the traditional role of clothing in the Inuit tribe, and its use in luxury fashion as a commodity.

Then, read of colonization around the world as Aishu Senthil examines the effect of dominant cultures on indigenous communities

Learn about consciously decolonizing our language with Yuna Jeon's analysis of linguistics, and what words mean as a first step towards real change.

Support the current legislation that Stormy Light write of along with her exploration of the history of laws in the United States that have harmed Native Americans,

Finally, Quincy Lee demonstrates through the Oglala Lakota tribe how modern medicine draws from Indigenous philosophies.

Whether you are looking to learn or looking to educate, we are here to guide you in your journey around the world and throughout time!

--- Katherine Chou, Anusha Natarajan, & Milla Nguyen



THE HIDDEN SECRET OF CANADA'S RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

BY: ANUSHA AND DIVYA NATARAJAN



What are Residential Schools?"

As we celebrate Indigenous cultures and communities, we also acknowledge the oppression and discrimination Indigenous peoples have experienced for centuries. Canada cannot move forward if Indigenous peoples continue to be held back."

As Prime Minister Trudeau explained in his 2018 speech for National Indigenous Peoples Day, Canada has had a complex history with the Indigenous populations. Indigenous Peoples in Canada usually consist of the First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Aboriginal. Residential schools are one example of the complex history of Canada. Children were forced by the Canadian

government to leave their families and attend these schools. These schools were built in the 1831 to help make Indigenous people "more civilized."

Similar types of schools were also established around the world, especially with countries with an Indigenous population, such as Australia, Sweden, and the United States. The first school was opened in Brantford, Ontario. It was a dual partnership between the churches and government to convert the Native population into Christianity and teach them how to be more Western, such as speaking English and wearing more Western clothing. There were no schools present in Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick.

History of Residential Schools

This was one of the modes for assimilation to force Indigenous peoples to be more "Canadian". Residential schools also served as missionaries in New France in the 1600s. However, not many Native Canadians took part in it because the French couldn't force them to join these missionaries.

In 1883, the first federal residential school system was established through the creation of the 1876 Indian Act. Although the schools were managed by the government and church, they were poorly funded and not maintained properly.

These government-funded schools were first established to convert the indigenous youth to help them assimilate to Canadian culture. These schools and their eccentric and perilous methods soon wreaked havoc on Canada, and the last residential school was closed in 1996 as a result. About 150,000 children between ages 4-16 attended these schools, and an estimated amount of 6,000 students had passed away due to the harsh conditions.

Impact Today

Residential schools were not only known for their harsh assimilation policies, but they were also known for physically and sexually abusing Indigenous Peoples in those schools. Many of the experiences that were written and taken note of were vicious. From personal accounts taken by The Guardian's reporter Ilse Paquin, a student attending the school recounted times where "she was forced to eat rotten vegetables and was forbidden to speak her native language Cree." (Ilse Paquin). As a result of these practices, this led to about 3,200 deaths of students, according to the Washington Post.

About 150,000 children between ages 4-16 attended these schools, and an estimated amount of 6,000 students had passed away due to the harsh conditions. When residential schools finally ended in the late 1990s, the government began to take action in 2005 to attempt to compensate for the trauma and loss that former residential school students faced. The "Common Experience Payments was made available to residential schools students who were alive as of May 30, 2005." (CBC News). As a result, former residential school students are eligible to receive up to \$10,000 from this compensation for the first year. Later on, former students could earn up to \$3,000 per year.

In 2008, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper made an official apology about the horrid acts of the residential schools.

"Two primary objectives of the residential school system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These objectives were based on the assumption Aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal. Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, "to kill the Indian in the child." Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country."

----Prime Minister Stephen Harper, official apology, June 11, 2008

To remember the residential schools of the past, there is a stained glass window in Canada's Parliament that commemorates the residential schools in 2012. This is one of the steps that Canada is taking to apologize for its actions in the past. According to the former Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan, he hoped that this tribute will serve as a "window to a future founded on reconciliation and respect." The stained glass window was designed by Christi Belcourt, a member of the Métis nation, to illustrate the history of residential schools and honor the survivors.

These schools are known for their radical methods of teachings and will always serve as a part of the darker side of history. One important takeaway of the aftermath of these schools is that all humans deserve to be treated equally and have good living standards. We must educate future generations about Indigenous People's history and legacy in the world and learn about the years of struggle and oppression that it took for them to fight for their rights and justice. It is important to acknowledge where they came from, how they united, and how they will continue to fight for their justice.

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INTERVIEW WITH SAREYA TAYLOR

BY: KATHERINE CHOU

Sareya Taylor is a 18 year old member of the White Mountain Apache and Navajo tribes. Sareya's pronouns are she/her/they/them. Sareya enjoys writing poetry and being a youth advocate for under-represented groups. The rededication of the true history of Indigenous people and educating others about current issues within Indian Country is extremely important to her as she expresses her passion through poetry. She currently serves as Youth Poet Laureate of Phoenix, Arizona and a Unity 25 under 25 youth. She plans to go to college and get a degree in Early Childhood Education and Special Education with a minor in Indigenous Studies and Creative Writing.

I noticed we were at the same creative justice symposium this morning! I'll start with a question they posed: how does your culture or ancestry influence your view of silent power and powerlessness?

For me, it's taught in our culture that you're not supposed to ask 'why' or you're not supposed to "talk back" in a sense. And that was really hard for me because I took that as, "ok, well I'm never supposed to talk or ask about anything". And obviously, being the Youth Poet Laureate and talking about different things - for a while, I thought that I was doing something wrong by talking about things. But now that I've learned more and talked to different activists, I realize that silence is actually really harmful, and it comes from a lot of forms like when you have





I was going to ask how identity shapes your poetry, but I guess in that same sense, do you also think your poetry has shaped your identity?

Yes! I was a very, very nervous and very, very quiet person. And honestly, what I wrote, I didn't know was poetry, so when I won [Phoenix Youth Poet Laureate], I was very surprised, and it really has helped me: Without both my poetry and involvement with the Council for Native Youth working together, I'm not sure I would be the same person today. If you look at my Instagram now, I'm very outspoken about different topics. But without my poetry and all the people I've met through it, I think I'd be very boring, to be honest. I think I would always let things just happen, like I did before. I went to high school that's very white, very conservative—and a lot of times when things happened, I didn't do anything about it. I remember a lot of boys had a tendency to say things to me or do things to other people of color, but I never said anything about it, I just left it alone. But when I became more vocal about things, I started to talk back, I started to say things. I really don't think that would have happened without poetry, without learning that my voice actually matters and it actually means something.

Some of your poetry has pointed out misrepresentations and stereotypes of Native people in our society - what do people get wrong about Native Americans?

I think the most common thing is the conception that we are all just one. I'm White Mountain Apache and Navajo. Some people are Cherokee, and there are so many different tribes, but people always categorize it all as just one big group. That's frustrating because then it's hard to talk about certain issues because some issues only affect specific tribes. For example, with COVID-19 right now, we're all different tribes. It's all over the



That feeds into my next question about the media: you're telling stories through your writing —what role do you think mass media or the education system has in preserving those stories and teaching these histories?

Firstly, I think mass media needs to have more facts. When you push false information, it seriously hurts people; when you use imprecise words like, "Indian" to talk about "Native Americans", it hurts both identities. Especially in schools, we're taught about Native Americans almost as a thing of the past, like, "oh this happened back in colonial days; they're not around anymore." With COVID-19 right now, we're in the media a lot more. The other day, I watched FOX News (I don't know why I did that), and they were talking about high rates of Covid in the Navajo nation. And I don't know if they meant for it to sound this way, but they were putting the blame on Natives, rather than looking at the situation as a whole—Navajo Nation is huge, there's only a couple gas stations and grocery stores, you have to travel so far just to get water, and these are things you have to do, even if it's not optimal during a pandemic. If the news reports as if getting water and feeding horses isn't something you have to do, people will have the conception that Natives are doing it to themselves. In parts of Navajo Nation, there's no electricity, there's no running water; if you don't talk about those factors, people don't see the full story and the actual facts.

How has COVID impacted your life and your community?

I mostly go home to White Mountain, which is one of my tribes. I believe it's the second-highest number of cases, After Navajo Nation, which is my other tribe. I can't go home to either which is hard,



because I'm really close to my family - we go home a lot, and now I can't. Hearing about what happens back home is frustrating because I can't do much. Sure, I can raise money and send supplies and make Amazon wishlists, but you can't go see them, you can't be there to help. I lost one of my medicine men, which was harmful for the community because he was one of the last medicine men who knew everything about our cultures and our traditional ways. Yeah, he was teaching, but he was still in the process of teaching; he was really young - only 59.

What's in your future now and how like how do you see the future (of your people) after the pandemic?

That's a really good question. In the very close future, I see myself going home and finally seeing my grandparents. I think the whole pandemic will change how people look at each other. People are becoming more aware of their own ignorance and realizing that they need to educate themselves. Especially things like the Black Lives Matter movement and changing the mascot, have really helped people open their eyes to the way the world works. And I think they'll begin to realize that what we do affects one another - it could be good, it could be bad. This is a good time for change and healing. I really think that all of us, regardless of ethnicity or the community you belong to, we'll all start getting to know each other better and understand each other more to help one another and lift each other up.



INDIGENOUS STORIES NOW

BY: MARYSSA ORTA

Indigenous people's stories should be read and understood.

"The Great Gatsby," "Frankenstein," and all those other titles really are phenomenal and are classics for a reason, but had anyone been required to read stories by Indigenous people? I'm not talking about the reading that you possibly did in your free time, but did anyone ever have to analyze a poem by Joy Harjo? Did anyone ever have to write an essay on a Sherman Alexie novel? It's not your fault if you haven't. Diverse stories are limited when it comes to a high schooler's English curriculum and it can take a bit of a push to read something outside the usual.

Why though? Is it because as of 2016, 80% of public school teachers were white? There is a disconnect between the race of a majority of teachers and the race of an Indigenous community.

Yet, that shouldn't stop anyone from reading Indigenous stories, if anything reading more would open eyes, minds, and hearts. By reading stories that aren't your own, a bridge of understanding begins to build.

As you read the poem below make sure to take your time, read with the grammar and not the lines, and read out aloud to hear the words and message better.

Here is Joy Harjo's "Eagle Poem"

**To pray you open your whole self
To sky, to earth, to sun, to moon
To one whole voice that is you.
And know there is more
That you can't see, can't hear;
Can't know except in moments
Steadily growing, and in languages
That aren't always sound but other
Circles of motion.**

"

**Like eagle that Sunday morning,
 Over Salt River. Circled in blue sky
 In the wind, swept our hearts clean
 With sacred wings.
 We see you, see ourselves and know
 That we must take the utmost care
 And kindness in all things.
 Breathe in, knowing we are made of
 All this, and breathe, knowing
 We are truly blessed because we
 Were born, and die soon within a
 True circle of motion,
 Like eagle rounding out the morning
 Inside us.
 In beauty.
 In beauty.**

JOY HARJO, "EAGLE POEM" FROM IN MAD LOVE AND WAR. COPYRIGHT © 1990 BY
 JOY HARJO. WWW.WESLEYAN.EDU/WESPRESS. SOURCE: IN MAD LOVE AND WAR
 (WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1990)

Why this poem? Well the first answer is that it is simply beautiful. Each word evokes an image inside the brain and there is an emotion there that feels universal. The second answer is the message: life moves in cycles and should be appreciated. Life is like the eagle flying in motion and instead of anticipating the next cycle to come or dreading the end of this one, we should sit back and watch. Though the poem has an air of spirituality, even those who aren't spiritual can resonate with the message. Even if this message has been done before, it has not been said in this way. The great thing about this poem is that this is only my interpretation of it. There are so many more out there. I didn't even know who Joy Harjo was until I looked up "Indigenous Poets" a while ago and the fact that I could have missed out on such a beautifully worded

poem with a brand new perspective to an old message is upsetting to say the least.

So why exactly should we read Indigenous stories, especially in schools? Well, exactly for the reasons stated above: when we read stories about experiences outside our own we become more empathetic to others. If you aren't an Indigenous person then you learn about an experience outside your own. If you are, then your voice, your words become heard and understood by many others.

Want to read more Indigenous books and don't know where to start? Here are a few to push anyone into the journey of more diverse reading:

Poets:

1. Joy Harjo
2. Jim Northrup
3. Lee Maracle

Authors:

1. Sherman Alexie
2. Leslie Marmon Silko
3. N. Scott Momaday

Books:

1. "An Indigenous Peoples' History of the U.S. by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz
2. "Eyes Bottle Dark with a Mouthful of Flowers" by Jake Sheets
3. "The Breadworkers" by Beth Piatote

Learn about lives, learn about histories, and lives leak into stories. Even the most out-there fiction can offer a new perspective and insight, teaching us moral lessons through the art of writing.



AN INSIDE LOOK AT

INDIGENOUS INUIT FASHION

BY: MILLA NGUYEN

PHOTOGRAPHS:

*upper: The KTZ design, right, closely resembles the traditional Inuit garment. (Kieran Oudshoorn/CBC (from book Northern Voices) /Tristan Fewings/Getty Images)

*middle: The KTZ Fall 2015 menswear show in London, January 2015. Getty Images

lower: "How dare you use this garment design that was envisioned by my great grandfather," said Salome Awa (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC NEWS)



The Inuits: the trailblazers of arctic culture, and inhabitants of Canada, Alaska, and Greenland. Specifically in Canadian regions, they reside within the Nunavut and Nunavik territories. The Inuit people were a semi-nomadic group who relied on hunting and fishing- their diet consisting of the bow head whale, seals, polar bears, and available berries/ vegetation that they could consume. During the 18th century, many of the Inuit had fallen ill due to the diseases that were brought by colonists which highly increased the mortality rate of the tribe. Though, they adapted by isolating themselves in the deeper regions of ice- taking shelter in what the Europeans called a "hostile hinterland". In order to survive, they did decide to participate in a mutual agreement of trade with Hudson's Bay Company where they would provide whale products and bear furs for the Europeans in exchange for supplies.

As for the garments that the Inuit wore, prominent materials include the thick fur layer of caribou as well as seal skin blubber.

As these animals were ones that the Inuit tribe hunted, caribou skin served as a thick insulator because it could entrap body heat. This would come in handy during the winter-time, the Inuit had their own version of a parka. Practically, all the men, women, and young children wore warm clothing, furs outlining their hoods to keep them secure from the cold. Even the processing of the caribou hides were deeply-rooted in their culture as well. The women in the family would order the men to cut open the hides, skinning the membrane and meat off the interior with a sharp knife. Then, they would rework the texture of the material by softening it with water and stretching/ folding it until it covered a larger surface area. Because the skin wasn't manufactured in a factory or product plant, the ability to rot and deteriorate was much higher. The women had a responsibility to clean off their family's clothing by washing it with ice and then stamping it down so that it was not stiff.

The specific and integral way in which clothing allows the Inuit to survive in such blustering, harsh conditions is no easy feat. Historically, the elders of the Inuit tribe would even have grinded gums and teeth due to the fact they would chew on the animal skins to soften them if they didn't have heeled boots or tools. In today's world, it's much easier to replicate the appearance of Inuit designs without understanding the culture associated with it.

KOKONTOZAI is a London based fashion brand that was opened under Marjan Pejovski and Sasko Bezovski as it was a concept based around the idea of making a hybrid fashion/music flagship store. In the fall 2015 collection, Twitter users had compared an obsidian-colored sweater that was adorned with two white hands outstretched on the shoulders. Salome Awa, a CBS producer, registered as an official resident of Nunavut and Inuit felt taken advantage of because KOKONTOZAI's design seemed to be a replica of a familiar design that her great-grandfather (an Inuit shaman) created from a vision he had before he drowned. As a response to Awa's call to action and the support of many social media users, the brand issued an immediate apology as well as rescindment of said product in their stores/online site.

Part of the reason why Awa and many Inuit members felt disparaged was because of the hardships that the Inuit had to endure over time. Before the Nunavut territory was even acknowledged as Inuit-owned, there were many negotiations until the indigenous community was able to obtain aboriginal rights constitutionally. Then, they were able to gain power under the Canadian government as long as they abided by their ethical rules. Even so, many of the community had inadequate healthcare because they were poor and could only be accessed by aircraft.

Doing it the right way.

Though, there have been several victories for the community. A Canadian outerwear brand called Canada Goose has received massive praise for their creative direction with "Project Atigi". The word itself translates to "parka" in English, referring to a thick coat that's hemmed with various fur fibers. The brand had hired 18 Inuit designers to collaborate on a ethnic collection that would represent this indigenous community. Not only did the company pay the designers as they promised but also lent their teams of designers to offer expertise. The profits made off the collection would be sent to Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami which is an organization that serves to uphold the status of the Inuit community and offer medicinal resources for the impoverished. Rather than hiring industry professionals who hadn't truly experienced the Inuit traditions/ culture, Canada Goose took it upon themselves to hire Inuit women who honed in their craftsmanship spanning over many generations.

Ultimately, as time and generations go by, people become more progressive. They adapt to the idea of being tied to community values and connections they never knew possible. For example, Jean Malaurie, a French anthropologist and geographer worked his whole life to study the ways of the Inuit. He lived in igloos among them, ate what they hunted with their spears, and wrote about the importance of preserving the Arctic.

There are many truths in his words as the Inuit believed in the spiritual connection between the land, animals, and the spirits of nature. He explained that modern day citizens might not pay attention to the Arctic, assuming it to be an icy wasteland, we must instead understand that the Inuit contribute to culture circulation through Earth as a standing body. With the rapidity of climate change and global warming and sake of our cultural education, protection of these dying communities is imperative and necessary.

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WHAT HAVE DOMINANT CULTURES DONE TO INDIGENOUS CULTURES

BY: AISHU SENTHIL

“I hope in God.....He will make us authors of His holy will in converting them to our true Christian faith by His own inspiring grace and knowledge of His deity”.

This statement was taken from the diary of an English settler in North America in 1607. This settler explicitly reveals his wish to turn the Native Americans into Christians like him. This wish was not his alone, but shared by most colonizers; the Spanish sent expeditions during the Age of Exploration mainly to spread Christianity to the newfound lands they conquered. But what effect did this wish have on the Indigenous people of those lands? They were overshadowed by colonists who threatened their culture, health, and long-standing traditions.



As evidenced by the quote above, many Europeans believed it was God's bidding to assimilate the Native American tribes into Christian religion. Christian missionaries took this as an opportunity to spread their beliefs to these tribes.

However, this did not receive the welcome response that the European colonists had anticipated. Relationships became rocky- both religiously and politically. The tribes of the eastern coast were the initial groups to experience this firsthand. The Europeans, who initially settled at the coast, were often at war with the Indigenous tribes. One major problem stood in the way of the tribes: their political structure was weaker compared to that of the Europeans.

Their internal battles, as well as comparatively minuscule army, led to their disadvantageous downfall in combat.

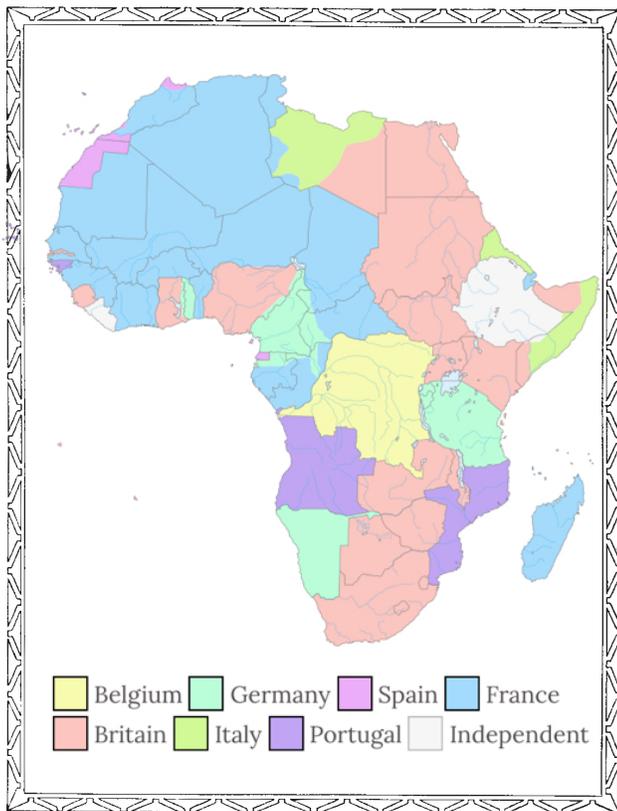


This phenomenon spread inland, affecting all tribes in central North America. The tribes of the north, however, had a better relationship with the Europeans, and traded their valuable furs with them. Nonetheless, when they signed 'peace' treaties -- that favored the Europeans greatly -- the northern tribes lost their tribal status, and with it, the freedom to practice their culture.

Just like that, the many diverse cultures of the 900,000 Native Americans that existed before European colonization, were significantly diminished[3]. Despite recent attempts to revive the lost native cultures, we can never truly bring back the rich culture that existed before this time.

The trend of dominant cultures engulfing Indigenous cultures is not just seen in North America. 97% of Africa was under European rule by the mid-19th century, and African culture suffered greatly at the hands of colonizers. The deterioration of Indigenous African culture began with the introduction of slave trade in the 15th century. The Transatlantic slave trade moved the native people to North and South America against their will, and forced them to work on plantations. This distribution of people- who were responsible for upholding traditions and maintaining culture- meant that the culture began to fade away slowly. To make matters worse, when the Europeans discovered the vast amounts of valuable resources that Africa had to offer, They

decided to take over Africa itself (an event known as the 'Scramble for Africa'). In 1884, the countries of Europe divided Africa amongst themselves at the Berlin Conference. The Europeans split the colonies based on latitudes and longitudes with complete disregard for the ethnic and linguistic point of view.



As a result, many cultural groups were split, and this led to the destruction of the unity between them and the cause of great opposition against one another. This adversary created a great number of wars, and as African cultures depended on one another, the cultures were damaged. The unruly division still has a profound scar on African society today. The Europeans, upon creating colonies in Africa, forced Western culture onto Africans. Due to this fact, the Africans lost grasp of their sense of deep-rooted religion, lifestyle, and group identity. The Europeans have been responsible for almost all the colonies in the history of colonization. One of their most beneficial conquests was their colonization of Asian countries. Europeans colonized

Asia from as early as 1511, and this tactic provided them with better control over the spice trade and better access to the exotic goods of Asian cultures have managed to stand the test of time better than other cultures, but that is not to say that colonization has not had an impact on Asian culture. To understand the cultural impact of this colonization, we must first understand how Europe colonized the largest continent on the planet. Some European countries enforced direct colonial rule, wherein a centralized foreign authority run by colonial officials was set up in the conquered territory. These territories received heavier assimilation of western culture, since this method of rule demanded greater control of the country. On the other hand, some territories were governed by indirect colonial rule, which allowed native leaders to operate their own country while reporting to the European powers as their higher leader. This gave colonized Asian countries more freedom to practice their culture. This difference in the colonial rules, as well as the huge population of Asia, resulted in Asian cultures being diluted with western culture, but not being as diminished as African or Native American cultures.

However, Asian cultures are affected by a rather recent phenomenon we have termed as 'globalization'. A phenomenon that has brought us ever closer, for the better and for the worse. Globalization has made acculturation of western tradition much easier and much more needed, for people have created the need to fit in culturally in order to strive further in today's world. And so, Asian cultures continue to change by following the trends of globalization, but also maintain their traditions in terms of music, foods, dress, religion, etc. All over the world, many volunteers/ organizations such as **Native Planet** help to retain indigenous cultures and their unique heritage through their humanitarian efforts.

It is a righteous gesture, and all we need to do to support them by educating ourselves upon indigenous roots and their cultures. However, one may argue that solely maintaining our native cultures like our ancestors prevents progress into the future. Hence, I believe the best solution to this problem is to embrace both dominant and indigenous cultures equally on a universal scale. This way, Indigenous and dominant cultures can manifest side-by-side simultaneously. However, this must be a united effort done on a global level. Only if everyone sheds importance on this matter will it really make a difference.

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WATCH YOUR WORDS: THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC NUANCES OF “INDIGENOUS”



BY YUNA JEON

The modern media diet often consists of investigative and informative content across news and social media platforms. With social movements and vigorous activism as present forces behind the curation and circulation of such content, I've noticed an increased awareness of and contemplation on identity verbiage. I spotlight sociolinguistic implications that must be digested and distinguished from one another when engaging in conversations regarding the Indigenous identity and experience.

Respect the “I”

According to Christine Weeber, an editor at the digital anthropology publication SAPIENS, the word “indigenous” with a lowercase “i” and the word “Indigenous” with a capitalized “I” have different connotations.

Per the Merriam-Webster dictionary definition, using “indigenous” means to be “produced, growing, living, or occurring natively or naturally in a particular region or environment.” It also means to be “innate” or “inborn.”

This connotes an expected sameness across all living and nonliving things, and even more so across all peoples, so long as they are of a land. This doesn’t acknowledge, let alone respect, the identity and experiences of Indigenous peoples throughout generations of colonization, institutional dismissal, and oppression across cultural, socioeconomic, and geopolitical sectors. For example, using “indigenous” as a catch-all term wrongly equates the experiences of an “Indigenous person” of Arizona to those of a person “indigenous” to Arizona. To further illustrate this, the concept is retained in conflating the experiences of a “Native person” of Arizona and those of a “native” Arizonan.

Meanwhile, using “Indigenous” actually speaks to the Indigenous people. Just as “Black” is distinctive from the more general term “black,” “Indigenous” warrants an implicit recognition of Indigenous history and cultural development. Weeber says that since the 1970s, when Indigenous rights movements allowed for the term to take on this new meaning, it has “offered a way to describe contemporary realities and an orientation for fights for self-representation, recognition, and rights.”

Further Agency in Language

There are a couple more sociolinguistic nuances to take into account when using “Indigenous.”

One is to avoid using phrases that imply possession of the Indigenous peoples, such as “Africa’s Indigenous peoples” or “our Indigenous peoples.” This dehumanizes Indigenous peoples by discounting their self-agency and efforts for recognition and imposing a largely unrepresentative label upon them. In this way, using possessive phrases perpetuates colonialist ideologies.

Another is to avoid using the phrase “Indigenous peoples” when the name of the tribe, nation, or community is already known. When we use this phrase, we are recognizing the diverse and

autonomous nature of the communities subject to colonization and other forms of systemic oppression. In order to advance discourse concerning the Indigenous identity and experience, we must turn to sociolinguistic disaggregation. We must use the name that tribes, nations, and communities use to identify themselves.

Notice the direct relationship between the degree of linguistic specificity and the level of awareness of a group's uniqueness: There is a difference between using "Indigenous peoples" and using "Native Americans," and in using "Native Americans" as opposed to the "Navajo Nation." This same thought process can be applied to distinguishing between "Alaska Natives" and the "Iñupiat," between "Pacific Islanders" and "Polynesians," and between "Polynesians" and "Tongans." By honing our language, we can more fluidly implement changes and resolutions to issues, whether it be socioeconomic or geopolitical, by specifically identifying the affected group and tailoring such solutions to the needs of that particular group.

So What?

When we decolonize and disaggregate our language, we are placing more of an emphasis on the diverse nature of a particular tribe, nation, or community. In the context of understanding the nuances and even the limits of the "Indigenous" label, we are respecting their navigation of a system that was not made for them, as well as their unapologetic fight for their rights in the wake of systemic oppression.

As we continue to spread awareness about marginalization and oppression, we must make our efforts intersectional. This includes recognizing and being thoughtful of the language we use when engaging in discourse about identity. By understanding why we capitalize certain letters and why we use certain words over others, we can promote individual and ultimately collective change.

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THE NATIVE AMERICAN VOTE: VOTING SUPPRESSION AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

BY STORMY LIGHT

Voting is one of the greatest civic responsibilities that we have to voice our opinions about issues that matter to us and affect various communities. Voter suppression has affected various demographics in the past and continues to affect them today. As a native Arizonian, I grew up surrounded by Native American tribes and decided to investigate the history of Native American voter suppression in the United States and in Arizona.

For centuries, government officials in the United States believed that Native Americans needed to be assimilated into mainstream culture that ultimately benefited the group of European settlers that colonized America. This period of assimilation led to the suppression of traditional customs and beliefs that included outlawing the practice of traditional religious services. Another effort of Americanization included implementing Native American boarding schools where Native American students were forced to speak English, attend church, and disregard their own customs.

It wasn't until 1924 with the passing of the Snyder Act that Native Americans were even considered United States citizens. Even then, it took decades before all fifty states allowed Native Americans to vote. Unfortunately, tactics enforced by the government such as poll taxes, literacy tests, and intimidation prevented Native Americans from freely exercising their right to vote in elections.

I discovered that in Arizona, Native Americans were prevented from voting until 1970, when the Supreme Court ruled that literacy tests could not be implemented as a

method of intimidation against Native American communities. With this history of voter suppression tactics, Native Americans are now part of a demographic with a low voting turnout. The Native American Voting Rights Coalition conducted a study that determined a few factors contributing to this low turnout: lack of information about voter registration, lack of trust in the government, language obstacles, and varying levels of internet access.



One of the barriers that Native Americans encounter living in a rural community setting or a reservation is their address which can contribute to incorrect voter ID registration and problems with the vote-by-mail system. Many campaigns do not send canvassers to these reservations because they are often in remote locations. Without outreach or communication from canvassers, Native Americans are left with insufficient information about upcoming ballot initiatives and candidates. Also, as the Corona-virus has affected public health, polling locations on reservations have closed leaving limited options for accessible voting. Fourteen democratic senators are calling Attorney General William Barr to work more closely with tribal leaders to come up with solutions to this issue and encourage Native Americans to vote in the upcoming election. By bringing this issue to the Justice Department and requesting new initiatives such as more in-person voting options, representatives are demonstrating the importance of accurately representing and serving all of their constituents.

As the election nears, it is more important than ever to advocate for communities that have been disenfranchised in the past and empower them to use their voice to create change. There are a few ways to advocate for the voting rights of Native Americans and ensure that their voice is represented in November. Writing letters to representatives in Arizona will put pressure on politicians to devise solutions that will allow Native Americans to safely vote. As citizens, we can use social media to bring attention to social justice issues and disperse crucial information about election dates, petitions, and voting information. There are currently 5.1 million Native Americans living in the United States; each vote is incredibly important, especially in swing states. As a collective, we have the resources at our disposal to increase Native American voter turnout and help ensure that every American feels represented at the polls.

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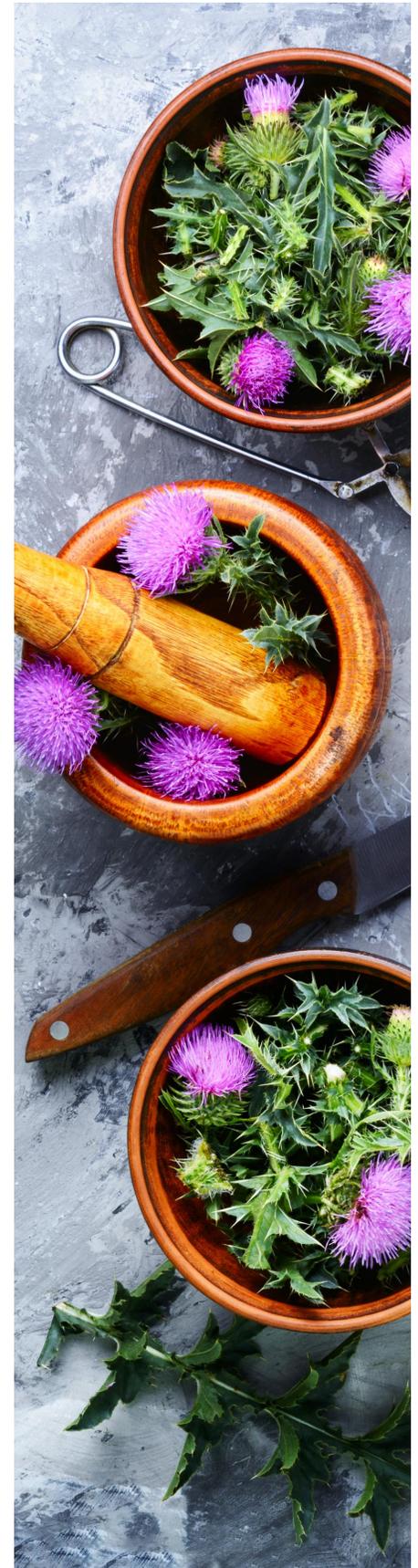
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THE OGLALA LAKOTA TRIBE: INDIGENOUS PHILOSOPHIES IN MODERN MEDICINE

BY: QUINCY LEE

Centuries ago, the midwestern lands of the United States were rich and wild with buffalo that roamed in millions and skies that were unpolluted. Indigenous people of vibrant cultural heritage lived in harmony with nature —remaining untouched by the greed of colonizers. One of these such indigenous groups was the Oglala Lakota tribe. The Oglala Lakota tribe is one of the seven tribes of the Lakota peoples, members of the Great Sioux Nation, and to many the Oglala Lakota tribe is a forgotten name and a forgotten culture. Though, for members of the medical community it is a tribe that should be revered for its long-standing medical philosophies that have helped revolutionize modern medicine.

In the Oglala Lakota tribe, the sick and injured are treated by the tribe's designated "**wičháša wakǵán**" or '**medicine man**,' respected members of the community who assume responsibilities similar to those of modern day doctors. The title of 'medicine man' is often passed down through generations, with each practitioner believed to possess different gifts and visions that allow them to better serve their tribe. These healers do not practice conventional medicine but instead combine their knowledge of herbal treatments with spiritual rituals, believing that medicines must be welcomed into the body in order for the healing process to begin. A combination of song, dance, and herbal tinctures are used by these medicine men to make a person healthy from the inside-



-out as they attempt to heal the spirit and the body simultaneously. The healers even carry medicine wheels which are sacred symbols that represent hope and spirituality — important beliefs for those seeking to be healed. Indeed, the **Oceti Wakan** —which translates to, the “Sacred Fireplace”— is a book written by Peter Catches (an Oglala Lakota medicine man) that describes the fundamentals of the tribe’s philosophy on health and well-being. That is to say that rather than treating the body singularly, the Oglala Lakota philosophy strives to improve a patient’s mental and environmental state as well. Indeed, the usage of spiritual healing may not be a concept modern medicine requires, but the holistic approach the Oglala Lakota tribe incorporates into their healing practices is an idea that has become increasingly more important to the medical world.

Perhaps the concept is best explained in Lewis Mehl-Madrona’s book “Coyote Medicine: Lessons from Native American Healing.” Being of Cherokee heritage, Mehl describes his experience in the medical field, comparing the ideas of Native American healing to the experiences he faces as a medical doctor. He explains that contemporary physicians view their patients as “biological matter” so that they can treat them more objectively while, in contrast, Native American medicine focuses on the soul of it’s patients, creating a more intimate and empathetic healing experience.

Mental health is a concern that has just recently been adopted into medical examinations and treatments, yet the technique was essentially pioneered by healers like those of the Oglala Lakota tribe, who endeavored to treat emotional and psychological issues under the pretense of spiritual healing. Ultimately, the Native American healing culture and the belief of looking beyond physical ailments is a lesson that the doctors today’s world should take note of.

In a similar sense, the Oglala Lakota tribe also draws more attention to community (tribal) health with certain rehabilitations working to heal the spirit of the tribe as a whole. That is, while Western medicine focuses on biological healing, the Oglala Lakota peoples uphold the tradition of supporting a healthy community, instilling order and sustained well-being to the entire tribe; a concept we now refer to as public health. By looking beyond the individual, this philosophy of public health examines environmental factors such as availability of clean water and the quality of a community’s food source. Translated into modern medicine, this approach also allows healthcare professionals and workers to focus efforts on eradicating endemic issues such as poverty and substance abuse as they observe health on a more comprehensive scale.

Medicine is one of the most multicultural concepts in the modern world, a culmination of treatments, philosophies, and techniques from every corner of the earth. As a university student aspiring to enter the medical field, I find that it is important to acknowledge the origin of modern medicine and pay homage to the many different people who have contributed to the development of a healthier tomorrow. Indeed, the Oglala Lakota tribe is one of the many pioneers of the modern medical approach and --along with all the other people who have carved the path of medicine-- they should not be forgotten.

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TREASURING THE INDIGENOUS

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THANK YOU.

BY: MILLA NGUYEN

Hi there, you've made it to the ending chapter of Culture Talk's August edition, issue 02: Indigenous Peoples. For old readers and new, we welcome you with open arms as Culture Talk is a network/ student-led initiative that represents the cherishing of cultural diversity and promotion of global self-awareness. In the month of August, we have decided to concentrate on the rich history that the Indigenous Peoples have protected as a whole. We discuss their struggles and how they've overcome those obstacles, as well as what we can do in the future to ally ourselves to the community. As global citizens, it is important to recognize that people come from all over the world. Each group is defined by it's own language, foods, music, dress, and many more characteristics.

The Indigenous Peoples stem from the roots of nature and the spiritual state of mind, upholding virtues of honor, unity, and courage by their tribal traditions. They have carved their own stories over time and throughout history-- something that's akin to a flame that stays resilient. They stay true to who they are, doing their best to educate and support each other on a local/ international level. It shows that no matter where you come from, remembering your origins is essential to the people around you-- including yourself. Everyone has something that someone else can learn from and value.

The members of Culture Talk would like to thank our once again, talented writers, editors, cover artist, readers, and special guests. We hope that you've been able to take away from this issue and that you'll continue on your educational journey with us!

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CULTURE TALK

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