

Blood on Alcatraz: Red Power and the American Indian Civil Rights Movement

A. Description of Course:

This course will examine three general periods in the American Indian Civil Rights Movement. Starting in 1950, the Termination period was devastating to the political power that had been fostered during the Collier-New Deal Era of the previous fifteen years. The ending of Federal recognition though did increase the visibility of Indians throughout the US as many moved off the rez and into the cities. The animosity of an entire generation of Indians boiled over in the next period, the Counter-Cultural movements of the Sixties. From the co-opting of Indian traditions by Hippies to the diverse organization of political activists, Indians were ever present within the social chaos of this period. The anxieties and activism of the Sixties reached a fevered pitch at the dawn of the Seventies with the standoffs at Alcatraz and then Wounded Knee. The Red Power period was a period of violence at home and abroad as urban riots and Viet Nam engulfed the US. Indian communities were extremely diverse and divided in ways that we can still see today. The students will examine each of the major events of this period through readings, discussions, and guest lectures from local Indians with firsthand knowledge of the period.

B. Purpose/Intended Goals:

1. Examine the role of Native Americans in period events.
2. Examine the effects of Federal policies of individual Indian lives.
3. Investigate diverse historical documents to support claims about the past.
4. Practice appropriate research methods using 21st Century technology.

C. Final Project: You will explore contemporary photographs, recordings, written documents and artwork to develop a photo essay Powerpoint presentation.

D. Schedule

7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Pre-test What is an Indian? 1900-1950	Census Project Urban vs. Rural Indians	Termination 1950-60 Korea & Indians Natural Resources	Rebuilding 1960-68	Library Work	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	AIM Vietnam	Alcatraz Protest Movements Poster Project		BIA and Gordon Discussion Poster Project (cont.)	Maps Project Broken Treaties Wounded Knee	Library Work
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	News Readings Indians in the Courts	Activism or Not? Readings	Indian Rez Politics What comes after	Library/Recording What is a modern Indian?	Presentations Post-test Closing Comments	Setup Closing Ceremonies Posters

Final Project

Using contemporary photographs, recordings, written documents and artwork develop a biographic powerpoint. Pick an individual from the list. This is designed to showcase the diversity of Indian lives in the Twentieth century. Some questions to consider include:

How did the individual represent their tribal communities?

If they were politically active, what did they do?

If entertainers or sports stars, were they activists for Native Americans and how?

How did each interact with the Federal Government?

Where did they live?

People:

Ada Deer, Menominee

Anna Mae Pictou, Mi'kmaq

D'Arcy McNickle

Dennis Banks, Ojibwe

Fritz Scholder, Luiseno

Gladys Bissonette

Hank Adams

Helen Peterson, Sioux

Ignatia Broker (Night Flying Woman)

Jay Silverheels, Mohawk

John Trudell, Sioux

Ladonna Harris, Comanche

Lanada Boyer, Shoshone-Bannock

Leonard Peltier, Ojibwe

Leslie Marmon Silko, Laguna Pueblo

Lorelai DeCora, Lakota

N. Scott Momaday, Jemez Pueblo

Richard Oakes, Mohawk

Richard Wilson, Sioux

Russell Means

Ruth Muskrat Bronson, Cherokee

Sarah Bad Heart Bull

Vine Deloria, Jr.

Wilma Mankiller, Cherokee

Indian Civil Rights Propaganda Poster Assignment

Create a propaganda/public service announcement (PSA) poster concerning a modern serious issue facing American Indian groups today. Pick an Indian issue, such as educational reform or alcoholism on the rez. Research the topic and its possible solutions, active governmental agencies and tribal organizations. Using the Civil Rights era posters, brainstorm images that support this group's position. The poster must use the organization's name and a slogan or appeal to citizens to act in a certain way. Refer to the Elements of Propaganda on the back of this sheet and the poster images for designing the message.

Materials:

- 1 Poster Board
- Color pencils or Markers
- Pencils or pens

BASIC ELEMENTS OF PROPAGANDA

This web site is devoted to operationally defining the various techniques of modern propaganda. Propaganda is generally defined as the dissemination of information, but more specifically, it connotes the dissemination of information for the purposes of persuasion and advocating an agenda.

Repetition - owing to the infantile limitations of collective memory, a message must be continuously propagated in order to take hold within the collective consciousness.

Simplicity - The message must be designed in such a way that it appeals to or is quickly understood by the lowest common intellectual denominator of the collective. This is not only true because of the vast ignorance of the masses, but also because the collective attention span is virtually nonexistent. We now live in a world of sound-bite discourse. The simple lie always conquers the complex truth.

Imagery - The most powerful propaganda is embedded within appealing imagery. This imagery could be pictorial or descriptive. This is why movies and music are such potent forms of propaganda.

Sentiment - The message must contain as little detail as possible, and instead be designed in such a way that it appeals to some strong emotion or sentiment—such as sex or sympathy.

The exclusion of detail allows for the quicker processing of the message, while the underlying sentiment reinforces it. The message need not be logically or factually based, this only clouds the affective force of the message. If any logic or fact is included, it must be very simple and plain, requiring virtually no processing time — the use of cliches and platitudes is quite effective.

A practical examination of the media, by which sentiments are seeded within the minds of men, leads one unequivocally to the conclusion that the primary means of modern propaganda are the audio-visual media—television and film. Secondary, of course, is print. Tertiary and upcoming media include interactive media such as talk radio and the internet. These tertiary media are positive trends in one respect, they are interactive—information exchange is two-way.

Still though, the internet and its inevitable future probably will not break the grip of the television and film industries, as these industries will ultimately employ these new media to their advantage. It almost goes without saying that the one-way audio-visual communication pumped into millions of households around the globe is the most effective means of propagating a message.