Where Do I Belong in the United States Public School System?

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WHERE DO I BELONG IN THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM?

By

Christiana Becker

B.A. University of Maine, 2018

B.F.A University of Maine, 2018

A THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Fine Arts

(in Intermedia)

The Graduate School
The University of Maine
August 2022

Advisory Committee:

Susan Smith, Director of Intermedia MFA Program, Advisor

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WHERE DO I BELONG IN THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM?

By Christiana Becker

Thesis Advisor: Susan Smith

An Abstract of the Thesis Presented
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Fine Arts
(in Intermedia)
August 2022

I seek to inquire about the world as it relates to my identity as a first generation descent of the Penobscot tribe living in the United States by utilizing four methodologies in my research: life histories/autobiographies, narrative inquiry, a/r/tography and practice-based and practice-led. Through coupling my artistic practice with those four methodologies I am able to creatively show the information I have unearthed in hopes that others will benefit from a fresh and augmented understanding of what it historically and culturally means to be a part of a community that makes up a very small percentage of the United States demographic: the Native Americans, or what I prefer to call the Indigenous peoples/Indigenous peoples of North America.

This thesis explores the intersections between growing up within Western European and North American Indigenous culture and education. By analyzing how a person determines their identity through their experiences with home environment, society, and the education system, this thesis document will examine the challenges that come from expressing and understanding race and identity as a North American Indigenous person. In this document, I am looking to scholars in the fields of indigenous studies, anthropology, sociology, and other disciplines of the
humanities. I am looking to cross-examine the content that the United States education system provides surrounding the history and portrayal of Native Nations. There are currently more and more discrepancies being brought to light by indigenous studies scholars, and Native Nations documenting their true histories that are not mentioned in textbooks that are handed out to students in United States public schools.

It is the exploration of the interconnections of being a woman, artist, educator, and native person that drives the research and creation of my art practice. Through creating art related to societal problems I hope to promote awareness where we can learn from our past mistakes and facilitate a dialogue where people can talk about what we can do to improve society for future generations.
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CHAPTER ONE

METHODOLOGY

Four methodologies that are used in my art practice are: a/r/tography, practice-based and practice-led research, life histories/autobiographies and narrative inquiry research.

1.1 A/R/TOGRAPHY

A/r/tography is an arts and education practice-based methodology that recognizes that practices of artists and educators are often reflective, repetitive, and responsive acts of living inquiry. In the article A/r/tography as Living Inquiry Through Art and Text, by Stephanie Springgay, Rita L. Irwin and Sylvia Wilson Kind, they outline a/r/tography as an “arts-based research” that is established through “living inquiry” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.897). Springgay, Irwin and Kind state that “to be engaged in the practice of a/r/tography means to inquire in the world through a process of art making and writing. It is a process of double imaging that includes the creation of art and words that are not separate or illustrative of each other but instead, are interconnected and woven through each other to create additional meanings” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.899). They also portray that work created through a/r/tographical means centers on a condition of inquiry that is envisioned as an “embodiment” of the artist's understandings of being “engaged with the world” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.899). Springgay, Irwin and Kind hold regard that artist
researchers engaged in a/r/tography are “living lives of inquiry: Lives full of curiosity punctuated by questions searching for deeper understandings while interrogating assumptions” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.901).

A/r/tography desires to make sense and create meaning from difficult questions that arise from daily life. A/r/tography asks us to invite others in a shared participation of opening up so that we can consider relational “issues of reciprocity, exploring what it is to be bound together with the words and lives of others” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.906). Springgay, Irwin and Kind state that, “such research is situated as a conversation for understanding, as an act of negotiating meaning, and as an ongoing exchange between Self and Other, and between texts and images. Therefore, the intention of the imagine/writing is not to inform – as in to give information – but to open up to conversations and relationships as a researcher conducts research with, through, and in the company of others. Threading together the exchange between a/r/tographer and viewer/reader, the image/text becomes an active space, echoing and reverberating in communion” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.906).

An inquiry into daily life may pay attention to questions of identity, autobiography, reflection, story telling, interpretation, representation, and more. Springgay, Irwin and Kind characterize a/r/tography as having “visual, written, and performative processes” that are “enacted as a living practice of art making, researching, and teaching” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.902). The authors also connect similarities between aspects of a/r/tography and what the authors Dennis J. Sumara and Terrance R. Carson discuss in *Reconceptualizing Action Research as a Living Practice*, the “understanding of action research
as a living practice” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.902). Springgay, Irwin and Kind continue their comparison of a/r/tography and action reseach and deduce that neither are “merely activities to one's life but also the processes by which one's life is lived so that who one is becomes completely caught up in what one knows and does” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.902). The authors futher argue that “living inquiry is an embodied encounter constituted through visual and textual understandings and experiences rather than mere visual and textual representations. One cannot separate, through abstract means, visual and textual interpretations of lived experiences” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.902). Instead, the authors agree that “entering into a/r/tography arises out of a desire and daily life to make sense and create meaning out of difficult and complex questions that cannot be answered in straightforward or linear tellings” (Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., & Kind, S. W. 2005, p.902).

A/r/tography is a process that requires the participant to open texts and to seek understanding by continuing to delve deeper into one's questions and to self reflect back to one's understanding and interpretation of the world. Through utilizing a/r/tography as a methodology it allows me to interpret questions that arise in my daily life and to pursue answers. The practice of a/r/tography allows me to inquire about the world through art making and through writing that are interconnected to create additional and/or enhanced meanings. I align a lot of my art making with a/r/tography because my art making often focuses on my own inquiries of the world and then the art I produce embodies my understanding of what I have learned through my research. The intention behind my artwork and the intention of a/r/tography are akin to each other in that
the intention for my research, writing and art making are to offer information to others and to gain a deeper understanding of my own questions and life experiences.

1.2 PRACTICE-BASED & PRACTICE-LED

Practice-based and practice-led research allows the research that one pursues to be incorporated into one's creative art practice. Edith Cowan University describes many different research methodologies for the creative arts and humanities on their university library website. In their description of, *Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities: Practice-based & practice-led research*, they quote the authors Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean from the text, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*. Smith and Dean, note that practice-led research arises out of two related ideas. First, “that creative work in itself is a form of research and generates detectable research outputs” (*Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities. 2022*). In *Practice-based & practice-led research*, it describes the product of this “creative work” as being able to contribute to “the outcomes of a research process” and “the answer of a research question” (*Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities. 2022*). Secondly, “creative practice – the training and specialized knowledge that creative practitioners have and the processes they engage in when they are making art – can lead to specialized research insights which can then be generalized and written up as research” (*Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities. 2022*). The text of *Practice-based & practice-led research* goes further and states that it is common for a practice-led research project to incorporate two components: “a creative output and a text component, commonly
referred to as an exegesis”. The online library resources at Edith Cowan University describes an exegesis as a “multifaceted document that is intended to show your understanding of previous material in the relevant field of inquiry or creative arts genre, a through understanding of the conceptual, theoretical and/or cultural context of the discipline, and how the research is a substantial and original contribution to knowledge” (Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities. 2022).

The Edith Cowan University library database on practice-based research expresses that the “two components”, a creative output and a text component, “aren't independent, but interact and work together to address the research question” (Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities. 2022). In Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts, by Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean, they conceive that “practice as research can best be interpreted in terms of a broader view of creative practice which includes not only the artwork but also the surrounding theorisation and documentation” (Smith, H., & Dean, R. T. 2009, p.5). In Practice Based Research: A Guide, by Linda Candy, she describes what the role of the artifact is in reporting research results. She states that “the artifact is not an explanation in itself: it requires linguistic description that relates the development and nature of the artifact to understandings about creative process, and the text describes the innovation embodied in the artifact but cannot be fully understood without reference to and observation of the artifact” (Candy, L. 2006, p.9). Practice-based and practice-led research is crucial for me when I'm making work that requires a written component to understand the message and research that went into my artwork or the story that I read that inspired me to illustrate the narrative. For my own art practice I see my art as a creative form that embodies the research that I've done and through
incorporating an exegesis in my methods I record the research and information that I've learned and is present within the artwork.

1.3 LIFE HISTORIES/AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Engaging in methodologies of life histories and autobiographies allows me to inquire and research into others and my own lived experiences through approaches of autobiography, biography, auto-ethnography, life history, and oral history. Edith Cowan University's library database describes “life histories” or “life stories” as a form of narrative-based inquiry that spans across many fields of scholarly study such as “anthropology, education, gerontology, history, law, medicine, psychology, sociology, and women's studies” (Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities. 2022). The database further states that despite all the varying methods of inquiry related to lived experience “the common purpose of these methods is to inquire into lived experience and to re-present that experience in a narrative form that provides rich detail and context about the life (or lives) in question” (Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities. 2022).

In Research Methods: Auto/biography and Life Histories, the authors Geoff and Judy Payne express that “life histories are records of individuals' personal experiences and the connections between them and past social events, while auto/biography treats these accounts not as established facts but as social constructions requiring further investigation and re-interpretation” (Payne, Geoff & Judy. 2004, p.23). Learning about others' lived experience and reflecting about my own helps me to discover a narrative that I can represent in my own artwork. My work often incorporates storytelling and I can not do this without utilizing methodologies of life history and narrative. Life histories are records of individuals' personal experiences and the
connections between that person or person's and past events. Stories of one's life show us glimpses into one's daily life and society as well as the past and present. Life history research can be used to study history and culture; both are central things that I am interested in. Life history and writing about one's life is concerned with power relationships as well as ethics, with the hope for advocacy and empowerment. I see my work as a way for me to gain more understanding of my culture, our history, and myself. When I show my work it is an offering for others to glean the research and information that I have discovered and to encourage others to dive deeper into understanding their own topics of interest and to discover something new to themselves.

1.4 NARRATIVE INQUIRY

Narrative inquiry is the process of gathering information for the purpose of research through storytelling. In, *An Introduction to the Arts and Narrative Research: Art as Inquiry*, the author Arthur P. Bochner and Carolyn Ellis discuss that they believe “that imagination is as important as rigor, meanings as important as facts, and the heart as important as the mind” (Bochner, A. P., & Ellis, C. 2003, p.506). They also write that artists in graduate programs that focus on narrative methods have the “burden of demonstrating the legitimacy of art as a basis for inquiry – a means of producing knowledge and contributing to human understanding” (Bochner, A. P., & Ellis, C. 2003, p.506). The goal they state for artist researchers is to “foreground art as a mode of narrative inquiry, as a way of transgressing conventions, and as a method for understanding one's own life, producing multicultural knowledge, evoking self-understanding, and representing research findings” (Bochner, A. P., & Ellis, C. 2003, p.506).
Through studying narrative, the researcher critically looks at how humans experience the world. To do this the researcher may utilize field notes, journals, letters, autobiographies, and oral stories. Based on the information on Edith Cowan University's library website, it describes narrative inquiry research as “any study that uses or analyzes narrative materials” (Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities. 2022). Edith Cowan University's library database on narrative research states that “by focusing on narrative we are able to investigate not just how stories are structured and the ways in which they work, but also who produces them and by what means, the mechanisms by which they are consumed; and how they are silenced, contested or accepted” (Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities. 2022).

Narrative inquiry research methodology and life histories/autobiographies methodology go hand in hand in that they are both related to history, culture and storytelling. Narrative inquiry can be used to understand one's own life, to produce multicultural knowledge, to evoke self-understanding, and to represent one's research findings. All of these usage for narrative inquiry are present within my own artwork and are reasons why I create artwork. I use narrative inquiry research to structure my artwork as a narrative so that the viewer can see the findings of my research through what I embody and represent in my artwork.

Through incorporating all four of these methodologies I am able to utilize questions and experiences from my daily life and bring them into my research and artwork through a/r/tography. Through practice-based and practice-led research I start to direct my questions towards texts and the Internet so that it can help answer my question and generate information that pulls me further into topics that I am interested in. While researching I keep a detailed
written document, or exegesis, that records the information that I am learning and that pushes me to learn more and research more. While researching I often look at recordings of people's lives and histories. Through this methodology of life histories/autobiography I am able to look into other's lived experiences and to reflect about my own. This leads to me thinking about narrative and how to offer my research and discoveries as if I was telling a story to others. Through narrative inquiry everything comes together as I look at my research insights and analyze it in order to help me understand and organize my thoughts and information from where I started to where I ended, so that I can cohesively embody the important parts of my research into my artwork and written document.
Materials: Fabric, clothes pin, hemp, ink

This image shows three out of the four sacred medicines. From the far left onward shows: tobacco, sweetgrass and sage. Sacred Medicines, also features Mt. Katahdin in the background.

Sacred medicines are used during offerings, ceremonies, prayer, and for other cultural purposes. Elders say that the spirits like the aroma that arises from the plants when they are burned.

Tobacco was given as a gift from the Creator. Three other plants were also given: sage, cedar, and sweetgrass. Tobacco was given to us so that we can communicate with the spirit world.

When you make an offering with tobacco, you communicate your thoughts and feelings through the tobacco while you pray for yourself, your family, relatives, and others. We also express our gratitude for the help the spirits give us through offering tobacco. Sage is used for cleansing in order to prepare people for ceremonies and teachings. It is used to release what is troubling the mind and to remove negative energy. Sweetgrass is often braided, dried, and burned. The burning of sweetgrass is meant to attract positive energies. Cedar is used to purify the home and as a form of protection. The four sacred medicines also correlate with the four directions. Tobacco sits in the east, sweetgrass the south, sage in the west, and cedar in the north.
The two prints, *May-May's Aid* and *Mark of True Friendship*, go together to tell the story of the battle between the monster serpent and Klose-kur-beh. The beginning of the battle is illustrated in *May-May's Aid*. It highlights May-May's or woodpecker’s advice in the story, *The Sea Voyage*, from the book, *The Life and Traditions of the Red Man*, by Joseph Nicolar. In the story, May-May tells Klose-kur-beh to aim for the smallest part of the serpent's body. After the first arrow rebounded, May-May told Klose-kur-beh to aim nearer the tail. Klose-kur-beh
listened and followed May-May's advice. On the seventh arrow, May-May flew in advance of the arrow and on the seventh arrow Klose-kur-beh hit his mark and the monster serpent died. The seven arrows are embroidered on the printed fabric.

![Image of embroidered fabric]

**Figure 2 - May-May's Aid, 2020**

**Mark of True Friendship, 2020**

Materials: Fabric, thread, ink

The second piece, *Mark of True Friendship*, depicts the end of the battle. The monster snake writhes in defeat, while Klose-kur-beh bestows upon May-May's head a mark of true
friendship, through using the blood of the monster serpent to alter the color of May-May’s head to red.

Figure 3 - *Mark of True Friendship*, 2020

*Four Sacred Medicines*, 2021

Materials: Paper, marker, ink, glue, linoleum print

This book shows the four sacred medicines which also correlate with the four directions of the medicine wheel. The four sacred medicines are: cedar, tobacco, sweetgrass and sage. The drawn border on the text pages coincides with the direction of the medicine wheel that the sacred plant matches. The “title” at the top of the page is the Penobscot word for each plant and
underneath is my attempt to phonetically translate the Penobscot words. Each text page describes the ceremonial usages of each plant. Cedar is used to purify the home. It is also used during fasting and sweat lodge ceremonies as a form of protection. Tobacco is used to communicate with the spirits as an expression of one's gratitude for their help. Tobacco is considered an honored offering. Sweetgrass is used during prayer, smudging and purifying ceremonies. Sweetgrass is usually braided, dried and burned. It is also used at the beginning of prayer or ceremony to attract positive energies. Sage or herb medicine is used to prepare and cleanse the mind and body for teachings and ceremonies. Sage is also used to release what is troubling the mind and to remove negative energies.

Figure 4 - *Four Sacred Medicines*, 2021
Figure 5 - detail of unfolded pages
Little Hunter, 2020

Materials: Paper, acrylic paint, wheat paste, glue, chalk pastel

*Little Hunter* illustrates the things that foxes eat throughout the year, without using text.
Figure 7 -
cover of *Little Hunter*

Figure 8 -
detail of inside page
Materials: Felt, thread, beads, magnets

These photographs show a series of beadings that I finished during the beginning of my first semester in the Intermedia Program at the University of Maine. There are twenty-three beadings, one for every state that has a BIE, or Bureau of Indian Education school, per the BIE website. The amount of beads used in the beading is roughly the amount of Native American students that go to BIE schools in that state. In order to find the population of students that go to every specific BIE school, I looked up the school's website to see if they mentioned their student population. If the website didn't mention their student numbers, I would look up sites that rate schools, which allowed me to find the school's student population. The range of different colors I used in the beadings represents how many BIE schools are in that state. For the design of the beadings, I researched to see if I could find a design that is specific to a tribe in that state. Some of the designs I used came from tribal flags.
Figure 10 - details of four out of the twenty-three state beadings, top left: Wisconsin, top right: Michigan, bottom left: Maine, and bottom right: Oklahoma

Wahlemahtusgil: How the Sweet Grass Came to be, 2020

Materials: Felt, embroidery hoop, beads, thread
This beading illustrates the origin story of sweetgrass, as described from the book, *Katahdin: Wigwam's Tales of the Abanaki Tribe*, by Molly Spotted Elk. This folklore story is called, *Wahlemahtusgil; How the Sweet Grass Came to be*.

Figure 11 - *Wahlemahtusgil; How the Sweet Grass Came to be*, 2020
Sacred Medicine Vessels, 2020

Materials: Thread, solvy, fabric, sweetgrass, tobacco, sage, cedar, hair

*Sacred Medicine Vessels* embody a medicine wheel through the choice of fabric color and plant material used. The four sacred plants, tobacco, sage, sweetgrass, and cedar were used to create their own vessel. The vessels are placed in their corresponding cardinal direction. The fifth vessel in the center represents myself through the usage of my hair to create the vessel. Medicine wheels have been used for health and healing.

Figure 12 - Sacred Medicine Vessels, 2020
Figure 13 - a second view of Sacred Medicine Vessels, 2020, bottom left vessel: yellow felt & tobacco, top left: red felt & sweetgrass, middle: artist’s hair, top right: black felt & sage, and bottom right: white felt & cedar
Mosquito Dance, 2019

Materials: Sheer fabric, paint, and varies colored thread

*Mosquito Dance* is an intertribal dance that you do with a partner. My friend, Paul Behrends and I, recorded the dance on sheer fabric by placing our feet in paint while we danced so that our footprints would be documented afterwards. Following the performance, I embroidered the life cycle of a mosquito, their predators, and what repels and attracts them.
Figure 15 - detail of embroidered mosquito from Mosquito Dance, 2019
Figure 16 - detail of embroidered dragonfly, a predator of mosquitoes, from *Mosquito Dance*, 2019
Maine Foliage, 2021

Materials: Fabric

I used hand-me-down fabric and vegetation from the surrounding area of my hometown, Hermon, Maine to create a textile thumbprint of the foliage.

Figure 17 - view of Maine Foliage, 2021
Figure 18 - detail view of *Maine Foliage*, 2021
Figure 19 - second detail view of Maine Foliage, 2021

Venturing Place Name Cyanotypes, 2021

Materials: Fabric, transparencies
This series of cyanotype photographs were taken during the summer of 2021 when I hiked various trails in Maine. The hikes were chosen based on their proximity to multiple place names from the Penobscot story, The First Moose Hunt. The trails that were hiked are: Turtle Head Preserve, Lily Guest, Wadsworth Cove Beach, Dyce Head Lighthouse, Lookout Rock, Goose Falls, Big Spencer Mountain, Mt. Kineo Indian and Bridle trail. This project was inspired after I read *The First Moose Hunt*, on the Abbe Museum's website and was struck by all the place names that the story listed. I decided to come up with a project that would allow me to go to all of these places in memory of the story. My idea sprouted from the observation that most of the place names involved hiking so I came up with a plan to find trails in the area to hike and document each location.

Figure 20 - detail of cyanotype from Goose Falls trail, from *Venturing Place Name Cyanotypes*, 2021
Figure 21 - detail of cyanotype, left: Dyce Head Lighthouse, right: Lookout Rock trail, from *Venturing Place Name Cyanotypes*, 2021

*Venturing Place Names*, 2021


*Venturing Place Names* is a quilt made out of eco-printed fabric from the *Maine Foliage* series, to embody the Maine landscape, and cyanotype fabric from the *Venturing Place Name Cyanotypes*, to represent place names from the Penobscot story, *The First Moose Hunt*. This story is posted on the Abbe Museum website and can be found at: https://www.vamonde.com/posts/kloskpe-and-the-first-moose-hunt/9114/. The place names
mentioned in *The First Moose Hunt* are: Katahdin, Basin Ponds area, Millinocket, Moosehead Lake, Mt. Kineo, Big Spencer Mountain, Dice Head, Castine, Cape Rosier, Goose Falls, and Islesboro. If you would like to see all the images from the place name journeying search venturing.place.names on Instagram.

Figure 22 - *Venturing Place Names, 2021*
Figure 23 - detail of *Venturing Place Names*, 2021
CHAPTER THREE

WHERE DO I BELONG IN THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

In, *A Therapeutic Moment? Identity, Self, and Culture in the Anthropology of Education*, the author, Diane Hoffman assesses that, “to speak of education in the 1990s is inevitably to speak of identity” (Hoffman, Diane. 1998, p.324). The author Guoping Zhao quotes Hoffman as well in her article, *Identity Discourse and Education* (Zhao, G. 2003). In the article Zhao speaks about the importance of the topic of identity as it relates to the study of minority and immigrant students' experience in the United States school system (Zhao, G. 2003). She states that, “within the world of racial, ethnic, and cultural pluralism existing within a white European culture, the issue of identity creates tensions within minority and immigrant student communities facing the decision of where they belong and with whom they identify” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.73). Zhao believes that this tension in schools of ‘where do I belong’ often dictates how student groups behave and perform in schools (Zhao, G. 2003). She affirms that, “it is a common belief among educators that to promote more effective education and to provide these students with a more protective and supportive educational environment, it is crucial to recognize the close link between their identity and school performance” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.73).

Currently the dominant perspective on identity stresses the importance of adopting practices of understanding, respecting and celebrating diversity (Zhao, G. 2003). Zhao critiques the present-day educational outlook on minority students’ identities while crediting efforts made and peoples’ good intentions of trying to avoid committing acts of discrimination (Zhao, G.
2003). However, she also states that, “despite past efforts and good intentions, the underachievement problem that has plagued some immigrant/minority groups does not seem to improve” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.73). She isn't the only one that is concerned about the ‘underachievement problem’. In the last twenty plus years, more research has been orchestrated to understand how this issue of minority/immigrant underachievement started and if there is a correlation between underachievement and minority/immigrant groups being influenced by the perception of their identity (Zhao, G. 2003).

3.1 SCHOLARS OF MINORITY & IMMIGRANT EDUCATION

One researcher of minority education is John U. Ogbu. He has been studying minority education in the U.S. and other areas of the world for roughly twenty-eight years (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998.). He maintains that “during the first 15 years he concentrated on the differences in school performance between minority – and dominant-group students” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.155). Ogbu argues that in order to “understand why minority groups differ among themselves in school performance we have to know two things: the first is their own responses to their history of incorporation into U.S. society and their subsequent treatment or mistreatment by white Americans. The second is how their responses to that history and treatment affect their perceptions of and responses to schooling” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.158). He also insists that 'minorities are not helpless victims' because he advocates that “minorities are also autonomous human beings who actively interpret and respond to their situation” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.158).
Ogbu describes his stance on minority school performance as 'cultural-ecological theory' (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998.). He illustrates that cultural-ecological theory “considers the broad societal and school factors as well as the dynamics within the minority communities. Ecology is the 'setting', 'environment', or 'world' of peoples (minorities), and 'cultural', broadly, refers to the way people (in this care the minorities) see their world and behave in it” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.158). Ogbu falls deeper into his discription of cultural-ecological theory as having two parts (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998.). He describes that the first part is about “the way the minorities are treated or mistreated in education in terms of educational policies, pedagogy, and returns for their investment or school credentials” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.158). He names this first part 'the system' (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998.). In contrast to the second part, which, is about “the way the minorities perceive and respond to schooling as a consequence of their treatment” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.158). Ogbu also insists that depending on how and why the group became a minority will affect the outcome of their responses to how they 'perceive and respond to schooling' (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998.). This second part Ogbu names as 'community forces' (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998.). Ogbu alleges that to be able to understand “how the system affects minority school performance calls for an examination of the overall white treatment of minorities” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.158). He accounts a few 'treatments' that minorities have had to face, such as: “instrumental discrimination (in employment and wages), relational discrimination (such as social and residential segregations), and symbolic discrimination (denigration of the minority culture and language)” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.158).
Ogbu believes that there are three types of minorities: autonomous, voluntary, and involuntary (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998.). He describes voluntary minorities as immigrants and involuntary minorities as ‘nonimmigrant minorities’ (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998.). In, Voluntary and Involuntary Minorities: A Cultural-Ecological Theory of School Performance with Some Implications for Education, by John U. Ogbu and Herbert D. Simons they state that the “classification of minorities into voluntary and involuntary groups is determined mainly by (1) the nature of white American involvement with their becoming minorities and (2) the reasons they came or were brought to the United States” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.164). However autonomous minorities the authors categorize as “people who belong to groups that are small in number and may be different in race, ethnicity, religion, or language from the dominant group” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.164). Examples that Ogbu and Simons give of autonomous minorities from the United States are ‘the Amish, Jews, and Mormons' (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998).

The authors explain that 'voluntary (immigrant) minorities' are peoples that have “willingly moved to the United States because they expect better opportunities (better jobs, more political or religious freedom) than they had in their homelands or places of origin” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.164). However, the authors argue that “refugees who were forced to come to the United States because of civil war or other crises in their places of origin are not immigrants or voluntary minorities” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.164). This is because refugees “did not freely choose or plan to come to settle in the United States to improve their status” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.164). Ogbu and Simons assert that there are two differentiating factors of ‘volunteer minorities'. First, that the people in this category “voluntarily
chose to move to U.S. society in the hope of a better future”, and second, “they do not interpret their presence in the United States as forced upon them by the U.S. government or by white Americans” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.164). The authors offer some examples of volunteer minorities in the U.S. They are, “immigrants from Africa, Cuba, China, India, Japan, Korea, Central and South America, the Caribbean (Jamaica, Trinidad, the Dominican Republic), and Mexico” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.164).

The authors also write about the minority status for descendants of later generations of voluntary minorities. They believe that descendants of volunteer minorities “are voluntary minorities like their foreign-born parents” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.166). The authors claim that, “it does not matter that it was their forebears rather than themselves who made the decision to come to settle in the United States” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.166). Ogbu writes that he “has found that the education of the descendants of immigrants continues to be influenced by the community forces of their forebears” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.166). However, the authors mention one exception to the rule that descendants of volunteer minorities 'are voluntary minorities' (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998). The exception is when the descendants are also a part of “groups who share affinity with nonimmigrant minorities” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.166).

'Involuntary (nonimmigrant) minorities', Ogbu and Simons proclaim are “people who have been conquered, colonized, or enslaved. Unlike immigrant minorities, the nonimmigrants have been made to be a part of the U.S. society permanently against their will” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.165). The authors also profess that there are two characterizing factors that distinguish involuntary minorities (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998). First, the authors
state that “they did not choose but were forced against their will to become a part of the United States'', and second, “they themselves usually interpret their presence in the United States as forced on them by white people” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.165). Ogbu and Simons also affirm that “involuntary minorities are less economically successful than voluntary minorities, usually experience greater and more persistent cultural and language difficulties, and do less well in school” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.166). The authors maintain that involuntary minorities in the U.S. are “American Indians and Alaska Natives, the original owners of the land, who were conquered; early Mexican Americans in the Southwest who were also conquered; Native Hawaiians who were colonized; Puerto Ricans who consider themselves a colonized people; and black Americans who were brought to the United States as slaves” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.166).

The authors also stress that the classification of the three different types of minorities that they define, autonomous, voluntary, and involuntary, are not determined by race (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998.). Instead, Ogbru and Simons stress that “it is a part of a general framework that explains the beliefs and behaviors of different minorities, regardless of race or ethnicity, and how these beliefs and behaviors contribute to school success or failure” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.167). They further proclaim that the distinction between involuntary and voluntary status is not based on race or ethnicity, but rather a “group's history – how and why a group became a minority and the role of the dominant group in society in their acquisition of minority status” that determines the minority naming between voluntary and involuntary (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.167). An example of this difference Ogbru and Simons write is that, “Chinese Americans are voluntary minorities because of the ways and reasons they came to the
United States, not because of their Chinese ethnicity”, however, “Black Americans are involuntary minorities in the United States because they were brought her as slaves against their will, not because they are black” (Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. 1998, p.167). What I find engaging about Ogbu's definitions of autonomous, involuntary, and voluntary minorities is that it frames what author Sonia Nieto proclaims in her book, Language, Culture, and Teaching: Critical Perspectives for a New Century, what it means to 'become American' (Nieto, Sonia. 2002). She explains in her chapter, On Becoming American: An Exploratory Essay, that for students that constantly feel marginalized and isolated often accredit, “‘becoming American’ very often means abandoning their families and forgetting their past” (Nieto, Sonia. 2002). But the author believes that the 'either-or' response of adopting the dominant culture of U.S. society or rejecting it “can be limiting and destructive, not just for the young people involved but for our society in general” (Nieto, Sonia. 2002).

Zhao also references Ogbu's theory of volunteer and involunteer minorities in her article, Identity Discourse and Education. Zhao claims that “Ogbu's (1990) theory of volunteer and involunteer minority reveals how the perceived/constructed identity becomes an obstacle that prevents involunteer minority students from excelling in school” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.74). Zhao breaks down Ogbu's theory further and summarizes that, “these students are under constant pressure. Exerted both by themselves and others to behave in accordance to their ‘identities’” (Zhao, G. 2003). This means that the unfortunate scholarly reality for these students is that it is arduous for a single student to act differently from the norm of their school crew. Oftentimes the composed identity of minority/immigrant students expresses specific group beliefs and behaviors that is the standard for their school setting (Zhao, G. 2003). In Sonia Nieto's essay, On Becoming
American, she asks educators to brainstorm another, more humane way to bring all folks, even ‘newcomers’ together as an intrinsic community (Nieto, Sonia. 2002). Zhao also supports Nieto's essay of ‘becoming American’ and states that as a result of minority/immigrant students’ struggles, “they often become unattached to their new environment and the dominant culture. By making this choice, they may demonstrate certain kinds of behaviors, such as indifference” (Zhao, G. 2003).

3.2 DEFINING IDENTITY

Zhao ponders why students see themselves in such grim footing in ‘the land of opportunity’ (Zhao, G. 2003, p.74). She asks the question, “what makes it so difficult for them to act independently and still feel at ease with themselves” and she believes that the answer to this question can be deduced when we examine the current discourse of identity (Zhao, G. 2003, p.74). First we need to understand that there isn't just one definition of identity. Zhao points out that currently the word identity has two meanings that conveys, “both an individual's enduring sense of self and his/her environment and social location” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.74). This dual meaning can create a lot of confusion when addressing identity with minority and immigrant students because it's not only the student's cultural heritage that determines ‘who’ they are but also from where their ancestors are from. Zhao states that, “it comes as no surprise therefore, that minority and immigrant students, to maintain their identity, that is, to have a sense of who they are, appeal to their cultural, ethical, racial or regional locations and behave accordingly” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.74). She makes clear that to truly understand how both definitions of the word
identity influences minority and immigrants student's academic life that we need to fathom the implication of both meanings of the word identity, as well as the theoretical and historical trajectory that has created the multi-face definition (Zhao, G. 2003).

In Zhao's argument about the dual meaning of the word identity she acknowledges its multiple definitions (Zhao, G. 2003). The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines identity as: “the distinguishing character or personality of an individual, the relation established by psychological identification, the condition of being the same with something described or asserted, sameness of essential or generic character in different instances, sameness in all the constitutes the objective reality of a thing” (Merriam-Webster. n.d.). Zhao determines that one of the first scholars to label the term identity is the philosopher John Lock. He advocates in his text, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, that, “the identity of the same man consists in nothing but a participation of the same continued life, by constantly fleeting particles of matter, in succession vitally united to the same organized body” (Locke, John and Winkler, K. P. 1689/1996, p.137). Zhao specifies what is notable in Locke's statement is his phrase, “the same continued life united to the same organized body” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.75). This phrase in Locke's statement catches her ear because it reveals that identity is who a person is (Zhao, G. 2003). What Zhao mentions is important to understanding Locke's philosophy of identity is that at this point in time the definition for identity didn't include the impression that location determines identity (Zhao, G. 2003). These traditional meanings for the word identity have made it very common that, in America, when we think about identity the first thing that comes to mind is ‘who we are’.

However, in the 1950s when Erik Erikson was studying “the experience of emigration, immigration, and Americanization”, he expanded the meaning of the word identity to also,
“emphasize the connection between the psychological nature of a person's inner self and society and culture” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.75). Erikson saw that the definition of identity also needed to include the complexity of social influences in its usage. Since Erikson's influence on the translation of identity, the word has been redefined (Zhao, G. 2003). Even though the meaning of the word identity has new added meaning, consequently the duality of identity isn't always noted, but instead the original connotation of identity is often inherent when communicating (Zhao, G. 2003). Zhao brings up all of these scholars, Erikson, Nieto and Locke, to establish that when we talk about the meaning of identity we are, “conveying both the meaning of an enduring self and the meaning of social location, it implies a much closer connection between the self and its social environment” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.76). By revealing to readers the numerous translations of identity, Zhao is reminding us that, “an individual is less an inwardly achieved self than a culturally constructed social member” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.76). In Zhao's article, *Identity Discourse and Education*, she questions why the differing definitions of identity creates a striking change (Zhao, G. 2003). She writes about the theoretical and historical reasons for the various interpretations of the word identity, while asking what sort of consequences that the change in definition means for educators (Zhao, G. 2003).

3.3 HOW THE FIELDS OF ANTHROPOLOGY & SOCIOLOGY HELPED ADAPT WESTERN MINDSETS

During the late 19th century, when anthropology and sociology first developed as research disciplines was a very important time because they emerged at the same time period
when “Westerners encountered the ‘others’, the time of exploration and imperialism” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.76). Since then, these subjects have adapted narrow Western definitions (Zhao, G. 2003). Zhao believes that it is not a coincidence that the field of sociology and anthropology appeared at the same time as the meaning of the word identity adapted to mean both an 'individual's enduring sense of self' and their 'environment and social location'.(Zhao, G. 2003, p.74). The arrival of the subject matter of anthropology was established to study the mentality of the ‘others’ or ‘primitives’ (Zhao, G. 2003, p.77). Zhao writes that the ‘others’ were viewed as, “intellectually inferior and controlled/constrained by their conditions” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.77). Luckily anthropologists and sociologists formulated different mindsets than the Western world. They believed in the idea of a ‘collective mind’ and viewed Westerners as ‘exceptions to the rule’ because Western philosophers and scholars in the humanities retained the ‘idea of an inner self’ (Zhao, G. 2003, p.77).

One of the foundational scholars of sociology was Emile Durkheim. He supported the idea that ‘primitive people’ are unable to have a sense of individuality (Zhao, G. 2003, p.77). Zhao writes that Durkheim's impression of ‘others’ is that they don't have a concept for individual selfhood, “because their self-identity is tied to their groups and cultures” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.77). Durkheim argues that, “Westerners are different because of their social labor division” and that when you take away that practice he contends that “primitive people are only the product of their location, lacking individuality even in their appearances” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.77). This view of ‘primitive people’ was also prevalent in the beginning of the anthropology field (Zhao, G. 2003, p.77). Anthropologists were initially so appalled by the contrasting lifestyles that they encountered from around the world that they deduced that “only Westerners
were ‘The True Ones’, ‘The Good Ones’, or just ‘The Human Beings’ and that the ‘others’ were just ‘louse eggs’ or ‘not, or not fully human’” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.77). Zhao indicates that this was the early stage of ‘Western arrogance’ and believes that the fall of imperialism helped change Western mentality (Zhao, G. 2003). She writes that, “with the fall of imperialism, and the sense of guilt carried in Westerners' consciousness/subconsciousness, the trend has reversed. Rather than assuming the ‘others’ to be not fully human, or assuming that Westerners represent the universally human, Westerners attempt to believe that ‘we’ are the same as the ‘others’, and if they are confined by their conditions, so are ‘we’” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.77). Zhao concludes that the new view about individual self is that “all humans, including Westerners, are products of our cultures and conditions. She affirms that, “while formerly we held the notion that selfhood was bounded and separated, now, knowing that many cultures believe that selfhood is shifting, groundless, artifactual/artificial, we have changed our view of selfhood accordingly” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.78). This profound development brought about a change in the way we express the word identity to imply “both what is within us and what is outside of us: our social and cultural locations” (Zhao, G. 2003, p.78).
4.1 DEFINING EDUCATION

Education is and has been so vital to society that people have fought and continue to fight for it. In the article, *American Indian/Native American Studies and the American Indian Education Experience*, the authors Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox and John W. Tippeconnic III write about how they define education (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). They define education in a broad sense as, “the process of acquiring knowledge and life skills, including values and attitudes to prepare individuals to be valued members of societies” (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.30). They also state that, “education is about the transmission of culture from one generation to the next” (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.30). They also talk about the difference between formal and informal education. They explain that formal education is, “what takes place in school or institutions with a defined curriculum and pedagogy based on policy that historically has reflected Western ideologies” versus informal education which is “learning that takes place outside of school” (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.30).

In the United States there has been the praised saying of it being a ‘melting pot’ that welcomes all people. However, there are moments that phrase seems like a backhanded comment, especially when efforts throughout history have tried to ‘Americanize’ people who seemed ‘other’ so that they may ‘blend in’ (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.13). For instance, oftentimes
people defined as ‘other’ would downgrade their culture, language, and traditions in order to fit the American mold. But America is in a unique position where it could build curriculums and teach subjects for and about all the cultures and the many works of art that are a part of their history. As Barbra Wardle says from her article, Native American Symbolism in the Classroom, “as educators, we can and should encourage the understanding and valuing of images and art works from such cultures by their inclusion within school curricula” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.13).

### 4.2 EDUCATION'S DESTRUCTIVE PAST TO NATIVE NATIONS

Education in the United States also has a destructive past. The Tippeconnics outline that since contact between Native Americans and settlers, that settlers have allowed schooling in classrooms to be used as a primary tool of assimilation of Native Nations (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). One of those tools was using formal education as a way to colonize indigenous peoples by ensuring it as a place where they would eliminate the students native culture and language (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). This formal education school system for Native Americans was called residential boarding schools. These schools used the motto, ‘kill the Indian and save the man’ as their approach towards their practices and policies for Native Americans in their school system (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.31).

The Tippeconnics write that, “in spite of the difficult past and current challenges in Indian education, formal education is viewed as the path to improving the well-being of individuals and communities” (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017,
They go further and talk about how valuable education is to comprehending, ‘the past, present, and future of Native peoples’ (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.31). For example, tribally controlled schools and tribal colleges have been making initiatives to revitalize Native culture and language (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). The first tribally controlled college was Navajo Community College, or Dine College in 1968 which was instituted to serve the Navajo community in their pursuit for higher education (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017).

4.3 THE CURRENT ‘NATIVE AMERICAN’ SCHOLARLY EXPERIENCE

Olivia Hoeft argues in the chapter, *Walking in Two Worlds: The Native American College Experience*, in the text *The Great Vanishing Act: Blood Quantum and the Future of Native Nations*, by Kathleen Ratteree and Norbert Hill, that because the information provided to high school students about the history of Native Nations ‘stops after Thanksgiving’, “the majority of the peers you meet at college will not have much, if any, knowledge of modern Native American tribes, their history with residential education, their status and rights as sovereign nations, the diversity of the many tribes in the United States, and the implications of the constant misrepresentation Native Americans face in mainstream media” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35). She then brings up typical images, ‘mascot’, 'cartoon', or a 'historical figure' that students see in public school and that the idea of how a Native American person should look is 'hard to change' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35). She acknowledges that “the narratives that Native Americans are found in today are static and almost always based in the past. They are supporting characters in the pilgrims'
lofty fight for freedom, helpful guides one another's journey in a story that happened a long time ago” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35).

Hoeft admits that this persistent narrative from the past can be 'hard to shake, in others and in yourself' and that it is difficult for people to notice that 'Native Americans exist in the present' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35). She stresses in her writing: “we are still here and we are here now. I wear jeans like the next person, but that doesn't mean I stop being Native. I'm not only Native when I wear my regalia or when I practice our traditions. The doubt that we are real and that we are here now can put us in a box, but we have to fight for our right to grow and develop” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35). I greatly agree with Hoeft in that it is hard to shake the narrative that makes up the dominant portrayal of Native Nations. Repeating Hoeft's words, 'I am not only Native when', 'I am not only Native when’ I practice my Penobscot traditions or when I attend Indigenous Peoples' events (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35).

Hoeft points out that “unlike other minorities, Native Americans have to fight for the acknowledgement that we are even real, let alone for understanding of our complex histories. We face many stereotypes and prejudices as a people, but the most damaging one is that we are extinct” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35-36). Native American students are also uniquely affected by the educational school system in that the “boarding school system left a complicated and painful scar on many tribal communities' memories by associating residential education and higher learning with the loss of tribal identities and traditions” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.36). The boarding school system was a program dedicated to eradicating “entire generations of cultural heritage, traditions, and languages from being passed down, and not only affect those who went to the schools, but their children and grandchildren as well” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.36-37). Hoeft brings to light that this
troubling “history with residential education may contribute to the fact that Native American students have the lowest rates of minorities both pursuing and graduating from institutions of higher education” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.37).

Hoeft also points out a second reason why Indigenous communities struggle with higher education. She states that “going away to college can feel like choosing education over cultural and community involvement” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p. 37). This struggle, Hoeft states, comes from the fact that “Native American are historically place-based cultures, which means that tribal identities are closely tied with residence on tribal land” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.37). Hoeft asserts that currently, “many tribal traditions and education of tribal culture and language only take place on tribal land” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.37). She also cautions that some Native students may face discrimination when they return home from college. Hoeft recounts a story she heard from another Indigenous student at Stanford. The story goes that while the student was enrolled in her four year program, she started to grow apart from her friends back on home and when she would return back to her roots she would often be told that 'she had stopped being Native, and started being white' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.37). This creates a very distressing environment for Native students when they are put in a situation where they feel that they have to choose between belonging within their community or pursuing their higher education dreams.

Hoeft also provides some hope for Indigenous Peoples' pursuing education in her argument that “many Native communities on college campuses offer workshops for students or visiting tribal members to demonstrate their crafts, skills, or knowledge of tribal histories to other students. These campus communities can provide vital spaces of cultural involvement that can help students learn about other tribes or even more about their own” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.37).
Hoeft attempts to boost other Indigenous Peoples' confidence in seeking a scholarly degree with her affirmation that, “Native American students are assured to be the least represented at their school of choice and thus, should be confident that their presence is a triumph for both themselves and the Native American community at large” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.38). As an Indigenous person that has completed her bachelor's degree and is in the midst of finishing her master's degree I can say that Indigenous inspired workshops, and Indigenous student groups are present on college campuses and in my experience are very welcoming, however, without assuring that there is an Indigenous presence or community at the particular campus one is surveying, the college experience will be drastically different.

Hoeft ends her recounting of her college experience by referencing what she has heard in Indian Country, 'the idea of the 'two worlds' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.38). She quotes an Oneida leader, Purcell Powless, and his statements that, “as Native Americans we have to walk in two worlds and succeed in both” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.38). Hoeft interprets Powless words to mean that the two worlds are the “mainstream, modern culture and one that acknowledges our Native identities” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.38). In her opinion, this feels like a tall request for young people who are 'struggling to find their own identity' and then adding two more to the mix (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.38). However, she believes that it is possible 'to balance these identities at once, that they are not mutually exclusive' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.38). *Identity Belt* is a recreation or physical rendition of this idea: finding balance with all of one's identities and figuring out what encompasses your definition of self. Hoeft I believe has achieved this. At the end of her chapter in the book *The Great Vanishing Act: Blood Quantum and the Future of Native Nations*, she writes, “through my time at college, I learned I didn't have to compartmentalize my identity, I learned what being Native
American meant to me and how to bring my whole self into every situation. I am Native American, I am Oneida, and I am Olivia (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.38). I hope not only for myself, but also for other Indigenous Peoples', that we are able to find balance and peace in exploring how to define and discuss our views about our North American Indigenous identity.

4.4 EMERGENCE OF AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES/NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES (AIS/NAS) PROGRAMS

American Indian and Native American Studies programs started to emerge in the late 1960s and early 1970s with its roots in scholarly and political activism (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). Today, there are over 120 undergraduate Native American studies programs in the United States and roughly 30 have master's degrees (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). This focus of study has an interdisciplinary nature in that the topic expands across many disciplines in higher education, such as history, sociology, philosophy, law, education, anthropology, religion, and other subjects (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). The Tippeconnics describe AIS/NAS programs as a discipline that, “engages in intellectual debates and research that enrich the field and go beyond challenging stereotypes to issues of identity, relationships with the federal government as sovereign entities, ethical standards for research, and other items of contemporary American Indian life” (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.33). However, they also point out an issue about Native American education. The problem they state is, “that the Native experience and viewpoint are often left out, not valued, or marginalized by
public educational institutions to the point where students know little about the history and contemporary status of Indian education”, which is why the authors support making a change so that Native American studies programs become a foundational subject area of school curriculums that educates students about the policies, practices, histories and culture of Native Nations (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.31).

4.5 POSITIVES OF AIS/NAS PROGRAMS

The Tippeconnic's address the positive initiatives that tribally controlled schools are making towards indigenous education by stating that, “educational sovereignty manifested in tribally controlled education gives inherent power to tribal nations to address education from Native perspectives. American Indian studies, Native American studies (AIS/NAS), and other Indigenous studies programs are places where the Indian education experience from a Native perspective can be told in authentic and meaningful ways” (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.31). The authors state that educational sovereignty, “incorporates the basic principles of sovereignty and challenges the history of assimilation and the colonization of Native peoples by past and current policies” (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.32). They promote that, “educational sovereignty provides a framework to promote change from a Native viewpoint” and will allow for traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples of North America to be taught and valued (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.32).
One quote that Zhao references, greatly speaks to the power and need for indigenous voices to be heard. The quote comes from Gregory Cajete, in his book, *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education*. In the text he exclaims that, “it is time for Indian people to define Indian Education in their own voices and their own terms. It is time for Indian people to enable themselves to explore and express the richness of their collective history in education” (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.30). As the quote from Gregory Cajete states, we need to include indigenous voices into the pedagogy of education (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). The authors believe that the best first way to do this is to include AIS or NAS as a course of study in the education system (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). The main recommendation from the authors is that given the challenging, “number of tribes and their cultural, language, and historical differences and commonalities” it is best to, “conduct research and write articles from American Indian perspectives” in order to successfully incorporate the broad amount of information that is Native American Studies (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017, p.44).

When I imagine a current Native American Studies curriculum incorporated into United States public schools I imagine it would portray what author Olivia Hoeft describes as both the 'general' and the 'specific' quality of Native Nations of North America. Hoeft explains that the 'general' and 'specific' character of Indigenous Peoples' is that the meaning of the term 'pan-Indian' is that the 'pan' identity of 'Native Americans' is often used to encompass 'all tribes', which is the 'specific', however, the 'general' is the name of the person's tribe, such as Penobscot, Oneida, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, Mi'kmaq and hundreds more (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.34-35). By using Hoeft's description of the 'general' term, 'Native American', versus the 'specific', name of
the Native Nation, I envision a curriculum that teaches about the 'general' collective history of Indigenous Peoples' of North America prior to contact with settlers, all the way to current modern times. The curriculum would cover such information as, being acculturated and assimilated by residential boarding school systems, how many federally and state recognized tribes there are, what locations of North America did Nation Nations originally reside, why, and where Nation Nations were relocated, if applicable, to explaining why the current density of Native Nations live on reservations, and much more. However, there would also be chapters on the 'specific', meaning these chapters would focus on the history, culture, and modern life of Native Nations nearby the surrounding area the school resides. This would be done by focusing on the 'specific' of Indigenous Peoples' in the state the school is located and the states bordering it.

By centering on both the 'general' and the 'specific' of Native Nations, the Native American studies curriculum would be focusing on acknowledging that Indigenous Peoples' of North America have a collective, and a singular group history that is distinct depending on the Nation. Indigenous Peoples' collective and specific history also resonates with author Guoping Zhao's dual meaning of the term identity, which claims that an individual's 'sense of self', their 'environment and social location', is all expressed when using the word identity. Hence, in order to encapsulate the overarching history, culture and modern life of Native Nations the information in the Native American Studies curriculum needs to publish material that covers in detail the 'general' and 'specific' lived experience and history of Indigenous Peoples' of North America.
CHAPTER FIVE

ART EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

5.1 CALL FOR CHANGE IN ART EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

There has been change and growth in art education classrooms to teach art in a broad sense, which means to teach skills from multiple areas of fine art such as, art history, art criticism, aesthetics, and the production of art (Wardle, B. L. 1990). As a graduate in a Master's of Fine Arts program, art education is very important to me and a profession I am hoping to pursue. Today, educators have many concerns when it comes to their curriculum, for instance, “what to teach, how to teach it, and how to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.13). In regards to figures in art history, most of the education is taught about Western European artists such as Rembrandt, Monet, and Michelangelo or Modern American artists such as Hopper, Homer, and Wyeth (Wardle, B. L. 1990). However art and artists from other cultures such as Native American, African, Japanese, Columbian, and so much more is seldom brought into a standard art curriculum (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Even though the curriculum in art education classrooms has mostly stayed the same for years, the student body in public school systems in the United States has become more and more diverse with cultural backgrounds (Wardle, B. L. 1990).
5.2 CONSIDERATIONS FOR ART EDUCATORS WHEN INCORPORATING & DISCUSSING EXAMPLES OF INDIGENOUS ARTWORK IN PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

Wardle points out some important advice for educators. She states that, “when using Native American symbols as shown in art works, it is important for students to understand the processes of creation used, the attitudes and beliefs of the artist, and especially that such objects often have a ceremonial or religious significance or meaning to their culture” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.21).

She suggests three methods to use in art classrooms when discussing Native American art works (Wardle, B. L. 1990). She talks about how telling stories about the use of the object and how the symbol developed will be helpful in involving students in their examination of the object or symbol they are studying (Wardle, B. L. 1990). A second method that Wardle writes about is to track symbols throughout history and to have an understanding of those symbols place in time in order to gain meaning from the symbols used (Wardle, B. L. 1990). The third method she talks about is to exhibit the multiple ways that symbols are used in different Native American nations and the various materials that tribes use to embody the meaning behind their symbols (Wardle, B. L. 1990).

In all of Wardle's suggestions and methods she supports developing strategies for discussion and questioning of aesthetic skills (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Wardle points to the reading, Aesthetics: Questioning Strategies for All Grade Levels, by Silverman, R.H. for recommendations on questioning strategies that when asked will help students gain importance
from artworks (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Such questions she mentions are: “if an artist makes something, does that make it art? Must the object be recognizable? Can a useful object be a work of art? Is there a set of criteria that is shared by all works of art? If so, what are the criteria? Can we tell what the artist was trying to say? Is it important that we understand the message of the artist, or can we develop our own interpretation or meaning?” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.21). Wardle praises these questions, stating that, “such questions lead teachers and students into aesthetic discussions that deal with fundamental questions about art. By discussing the attitudes and beliefs of multicultural artists, a teacher can lead into a discussion of the students' beliefs, feelings, traditions, and symbols from their own lives. Specific questions about specific symbols or art modes can be useful in helping students gain meaning from such symbols” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.21). For example, “the study of Native American arts can assist students in gaining meaning from the art works. Discussions of basic issues about art can be raised from art activities derived from valid Native American art works and artists' attitudes and methods of creating art” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p. 14).

Wardle also poses a way to develop questions towards artists and their work. She suggests choosing one artist to examine their work for symbolism (Wardle, B. L. 1990). One Native American artist in particular that she suggests researching is Lucy Lewis (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Lucy was born in Acoma Pueblo, or Sky City, which is built on a high mesa in south New Mexico (Wardle, B. L. 1990). As a young girl she started making pottery (Wardle, B. L. 1990). She did so traditionally, she would dig and prepare her own clay, and then make and fire the pots she made (Wardle, B. L. 1990). She would then carry her pots down to the bottom of the mesa and sell her pots at a stand near the highway (Wardle, B. L. 1990). While she was creating her
pots she would study the designs on ancient pots and shards in her hometown and from other areas such as Chaco Canyon, to inspire her pattern-work after her ancestors (Wardle, B. L. 1990).

Lucy's artwork mainly uses two types of design, animal with a heart line and black fine lines on a white design (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Black fine lines on a white design are often used to create geometric patterns that usually have lightning or zig-zag patterns that when finished tend to look like optical illusions (Wardle, B. L. 1990). By taking Lucy Lewis' work and framing it with the questioning of Silverman, R.H., Wardle has posted some great questions that we can ask ourselves about Lucy's work (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Such as: “how important is the white border around the heart line or arrow? Would the design be less effective without this? Is the design an accurate rendering of a real deer or a symbol that represents a deer? Clay pots can be meant to be useful objects, for storing seeds, food, etc.; they can have religious significance, or can be art objects. Without knowing the origin and techniques of their creation, would they be classified as primitive art? Contemporary art? Does knowledge of the meaning and history of the design make the pot more interesting?” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.24). These questions are really important when talking about and framing artwork from other cultures.

5.3 BENEFITS OF STUDYING ART FROM OTHER CULTURES

Wardle also writes about the benefits that students and teachers gain from learning about other cultures' artwork. She states, “as teachers and students become more aware of the art works, methods, and derivation, there can be an enriched awareness of the culture and people involved as well” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.24). In order to connect these lessons to students' own
lives, Wardle also suggests encouraging students to, “develop their own symbols that have
meaning from their lives for use in their art work” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.24). Those symbols can
then be compared with the students' cultural environment, heritage, attitudes, and beliefs
(Wardle, B. L. 1990). Wardle also poses some questions that can be utilized to get students
thinking back towards their own work. Such questions Wardle mentions are: “if students were
asked to create designs from their own cultural heritage, what kinds of designs would they make?
What type of art was important to their ancestors? What symbol could they design to reflect their
own lives and culture today? If future archaeologists found art from our time, what information
would the artwork give them about our lives?” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.24).

Some suggestions that Wardle gives for incorporating Indigenous history and culture into
the school setting is to, “study the tribes nearby, learn of their culture, invite artists to visit, ask
students to bring their own cultures into the classroom, invite parents or other relatives to share
traditions and symbols with your students” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.24). She goes further and
acknowledges the responsibilities of educators with her statement, “as educators, we can provide
students with images and information of cultures such as Native American to increase their
awareness of the value and beauty of customs, artifacts, and symbols from those societies. In
addition, we can encourage students to explore various cultures, traditions, and symbols of their
own to share with other students and to enrich their own lives” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.24).
CHAPTER SIX

NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS CRAFT

During colonial times, Native American artwork was viewed as less sophisticated or primitive compared to European works (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Then in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was growing curiosity with the ‘Indian’ works of art such as basketry, jewelry, pottery, etc. that they started to be collected, however, they were not treated as precious cultural objects that needed to be preserved (Wardle, B. L. 1990).

6.1 NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS SYMBOLISM IN ARTWORK

Today, Native American art and artifacts are becoming more respected (Wardle, B. L. 1990). There is expression in the symbolism of current and previous Native American artists that conveys emotion and meaning. Wardle mentions three types of graphic symbolism that Native American art uses (Wardle, B. L. 1990). They are symbols, such as corn, animals, water, whirling log, people, spirits, and more, color, every color has a specific meaning, and use of natural materials, such as bone, feather, clay, leather, wool and stone (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Even though there are symbols in Native American art that represent meanings, the symbols aren't universal from tribe to tribe and there are many different variations of similar symbols (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Plus, Wardle mentions that, “it is also the relationship of artist to culture versus the relationship of viewer to culture that can give rich aesthetic experience. Exposure to Native American artists' attitudes toward materials, environment, and self-expression is one of the rewards for discussion of Native American art and artists” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.14).
There are many symbols in Native American art that have strong meanings which can be about ceremony, medicine, spiritual or religious reasons, power, or are personal to the artist. Some common symbols in Southwest Native American tribes are the sun, corn, whirling log, water, animal with a heart line, lightning or zig-zag line, and spirits, however, every region of America has Indigenous cultures with their own traditions, artifacts, and symbols (Wardle, B. L. 1990). One of the most powerful symbols is the sun (Wardle, B. L. 1990). It is a masculine symbol for warmth, life, rebirth and reawakening, and the bringer of life (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Below is an excerpt from a poem used by the Pawnee during their Hako Ceremony that highlights the importance of the sun:

“Awake, O Mother, from slumber!
In the east comes dawn where all new life begins.
The Mother awakens from sleep;
She rises, for the night is over;
And the dawn comes
In the east where comes new life.
Daylight has come! Day is here!
Now see, the ray of our father Sun come upon us.
It comes over all the land, passing into the
lodge to touch us and to give us strength” (Wardle, B. L. 1990).

The whirling log symbol has been around for many centuries and its meanings include prosperity and immortality (Wardle, B. L. 1990). There are various symbols for water which can
be used to mean sustenance, peace, endurance, and giver of life and are often used to decorate borders (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Wardle goes further and talks about how important water is, because it is “considered a gift from the spirits and is received by sacrifice, ceremony, or by gifts being offered” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.16). She also highlights how important water is by sharing a tradition from the Hopi tribe: “The Hopi have a tradition of the magic water jar that was carried with them on their various journeys. The water jar was buried in the ground to insure a good water supply as long as the clan remained on that site. The jar was the last possession removed when the clan left the area” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.16). Animals with a white or red heart line that runs from the mouth to the heart of the animal are used in most Plains, Pueblo, and Navajo artwork (Wardle, B. L. 1990). This is considered a very powerful symbol because it is often given to wish a person well during their hunt or other undertakings (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Meanings conveyed when using the animal with a heart line symbol can be to wish for a successful hunt from the spirits, an apology to the animal, the request for a swift death with little to no suffering, hope for accuracy of their arrow shot, and a vow that everything from the animal, the meat, hide, etc. will be used fully and wisely (Wardle, B. L. 1990). The lightning or zig-zag pattern is sometimes used to reference the power of the spirits (Wardle, B. L. 1990). As a future educator I hope to show others how important of a responsibility it is for all educators to be conscious of what we teach in our classrooms and to teach students to respect symbols and understand that art can have its own special significance.
6.2 IMPORTANCE OF THE USAGE OF COLOR & NATURAL MATERIALS IN NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS ARTWORK

Colors also have group and individual symbolic meaning. Some group color meanings are the difference between masculine and feminine colors. Masculine colors relate to the realm above the earth, which we call Father Sky (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Masculine colors are sky colors which include, purple, grey, black, yellow, and blue (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Feminine colors are associated with the earth and everything that is grown in her soil (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Colors that are considered feminine are earth tones such as, brown, red, orange, tan, and white (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Choosing the colors for a design is really important because they convey what Wardle describes as, “differing amounts of power to the user or wearer of the artifact” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.20).

For example, designs with both feminine and masculine colors are considered the most powerful (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Although meanings for individual colors do vary from tribe to tribe, generally overall meanings are the same (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Red can be used as a symbol of blood, bravery, anger, courage, wealth, beauty, and love (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Orange is used to reference fire, pride, earth, heat, and the evening (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Yellow is a sign of bravery, love, warmth, and source of plenty (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Green is used for a depiction of new life, growth, eternity, and a spiritual nature (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Blue is used to portray purity, loyalty, sorrow, and water (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Brown is a sign of strength, rest, warmth, earth, and welcoming (Wardle, B. L. 1990). The color black can be used as a symbol for night, death, strength, and power (Wardle, B. L. 1990). And the last color that Wardle references is white which can be used as a sign of purity, sacredness, and new birth (Wardle, B. L. 1990).
The inclusion of natural materials is just as important as the symbols and colors used in the design. Wardle states that, “in most cases, the use of the material carries with it all of the characteristics of the animal it represents” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.21). Wardle also gives examples of meanings that can be attached to common natural materials. She claims that, “the use of eagle feathers conveys the superior eyesight, strength, and power of the eagle to the user and that bear claws or a small carving of a bear gives the user the strength, power, and ferocity of the bear” (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.21). Every animal has distinguishable characteristics that may be desirable for the maker of an art piece, and thus may be used as a representation of the powers or abilities wanted (Wardle, B. L. 1990).

The methods used with the natural materials also have importance to the piece and the maker. Wardle mentions that, “most is not all authentic Native American art works are handcrafted, using traditional methods indigenous to the particular tribe or culture of the artist’ (Wardle, B. L. 1990, p.21). Because traditional methods require a different set of skills it takes a lot more of a time commitment to create the art work (Wardle, B. L. 1990). Using traditional methods also results in creating different forms compared to when you use a machine to assist your productivity. Some Native American objects are also dated by the materials the creator used, this is because the availability of materials changes over time (Wardle, B. L. 1990). For instance, glass beads weren't available until traders and fur trappers came over in 1823 (Wardle, B. L. 1990). During that time glass beads were often traded for food, furs, and other goods (Wardle, B. L. 1990).
CHAPTER SEVEN

NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS BEADING HISTORY, CULTURE & TECHNIQUES

7.1 BEADING HISTORY

There is a history to Native American beadwork that dates back prior to the arrival of European settlers. Before settlers, indigenous people in North America would make their own beads (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). Prior to European contact with indigenous peoples in North America, indigenous peoples had no metal tools so creating your own beads out of natural materials took a considerable amount of time (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The tools that indigenous bands or tribes had at the time were made out of wood and stone and they would use sand as an abrasive (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). Beads made back then were much larger than beads we are used to seeing today. The Kansas Historical Society writes about the history of beadwork in, *Native American Beadwork* (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The text states that, “most of the beads made by Native Americans were relatively large and were constructed to be worn strung on necklaces or things. It was not until the arrival of trade beads from Europe that the Indians could obtain small beads in sufficient quantities to make the beaded designs we know today” (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). One of the first goods that settlers traded with Native Americans were beads, hence the title ‘trade beads’ (Kansas Historical Society. 2019).

The Kansas Society speaks about the history of bead trading and says that, “ultimately all beads came from trading posts, but the Indians soon spread trade beads far and wide through their own exchange networks until they could be found in the most remote parts of the United
States” (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The addition of trade beads which were smaller and had a wider color palette than hand-made beads offered Native Americans more possibilities for the things they were creating (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). Many utilitarian goods during that time had beadwork added to them, such as dwellings, clothing, utensils, and more (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). What gets adorned with beadwork has changed during the decades of years but to this day beadwork still flourishes.

In, *History, Cultural Values of Beads*, written by Paula Giese, she writes about the importance beads have had for archaeological studies that have been conducted to determine what life was like prior to European contact (Giese, Paula. 1996). Beads have been really important for archaeological work because beads outlast thousands of years (Giese, Paula. 1996). Giese talks about the archaeological importance of finding beads throughout the United States. She states that, “seashell beads are important because ancient shell beads are found thousands of miles from seacoasts, indicating trade contacts among ancient peoples. How beads are made helps show the level of technology of the ancient people who made them. Since beads are not tools, their use and production means a tribe had enough food and shelter to spend time or trade goods on ornaments unnecessary for physical survival. This means a more complex culture” (Giese, Paula. 1996). Trade beads were so popular in the 17th and 18th centuries, as they were exchanged for fur pelts and other goods (Giese, Paula. 1996). Beads were also favored by Europeans as a trading good between indigenous peoples because they were cheap and easy to carry (Giese, Paula. 1996).

There were two types of trade beads that became popular and are still used today (Giese, Paula. 1996). They are pony beads and tiny seed beads. The pony beads are often larger than the
seed beads. Giese describes the pony beads as, “about a quarter to half an inch in diameter, with large holes for thongs" and are made out of ceramic (Giese, Paula. 1996). Pony beads are often used on parts of dancer’s regalia such as chokers and breastplates (Giese, Paula. 1996). The second beads, tiny seed beads are the most popular and are widely used amongst beaders today (Giese, Paula. 1996). While seed beads were being introduced to Native Nations, native women were finding new ways to use them (Giese, Paula. 1996). The two techniques native women came up with are applique embroidery and loom beading (Giese, Paula. 1996). Giese supports this in her writing, stating that, “loom-beading and a form of single-needle weaving (peyote beading) are not adaptations of techniques known to European or other cultures; they are native inventions” (Giese, Paula. 1996). Today, most commercial high quality seed beads are manufactured in the Czech Republic and Japan and are bought at department craft stores like Michaels and Joann Fabrics.

The most recent historical change for Native American crafters is the, Native American Arts and Crafts Act, that was passed in 1990 (Giese, Paula. 1996). This act made it a federal felony to sell imitation indigenous products and claim that they are Native American made (Giese, Paula. 1996). This act came at a good time because in the mid-80's a U.S. General Accounting Office conducted a study that inspected Native American art and artifacts for counterfeits (Giese, Paula. 1996). The study found that over an eight year period there were roughly tens of millions of dollars accumulated as forgeries (Giese, Paula. 1996).
7.2 BEADING CULTURE

Beading anything with seed beads takes a lot of time, because seed beads are generally tiny, but it takes even more time to bead a dancer's regalia. Giese writes about this and says, “to fully bead the yoke and upper sleeves of a fine Plains buckskin dance dress takes twenty pounds of number twelve see beads and about a year of work. As much time is required to prepare a set of Wood-land-style mens' dance regalia: beaded leggings, cuffs, vest, breechclout-apron, strips and medallions to attach to head roach, bustle, and dance-sticks” (Giese, Paula. 1996). Other ceremonial beaded items besides regalia, such as a medicine pouch or a pipe bag are made by the owner of the item or by family (Giese, Paula. 1996). Beaded items for religious purposes are rarely ever bought or sold (Giese, Paula. 1996). Giese speaks about the importance of ceremonial beaded items and says, “beadwork on such items often reminds the owner of a personal vision or sign or the meaning of a personal name, it is not only to make them beautiful. However, making sacred objects beautiful, especially by taking a lot of time and care, shows honor and respect to the spiritual powers, not only through words and feelings, but through artistry and work. This reality – the work done as itself a prayer or vow – underlies and strengthens ceremonial activities" (Giese, Paula. 1996). One of the many places you can see the importance that beads have to indigenous tribes in North America is from the Anishinaabe word for seed beads which is manido-min-esag, meaning “little spirit seeds, gift of the Manido" (Giese, Paula. 1996). Giese writes that beads were held so highly that they were seen as ‘a gift of beauty from the spirits’” (Giese, Paula. 1996).

The Kansas Historical Society believes that today, beadwork is a symbol of Native American heritage (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The Kansas society gives some examples
of where we currently see beadwork, such as, beaded headbands, beaded bolo ties, beaded belts, beaded jewelry, and beaded regalia worn at powwows (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). A powwow is a place where Native American culture is celebrated through music, dance, food, and other ceremonial activities. It takes extensive time to bead regalia for a powwow. Just about every article of clothing the indigenous dancer is wearing is usually beaded such as, their moccasins, arm bands, cuffs, suspenders, belt, and choker (Kansas Historical Society. 2019).

### 7.3 BEADING TECHNIQUES

Creating beads out of natural materials is an old, time consuming craft. Before modern technology made beads, they were hand crafted out of stone, such as turquoise and other semi-precious stones, bones, and shells (Giese, Paula. 1996). Giese writes in *History, Cultural Values of Beads* about some traditional ways to make your own beads out of natural materials (Giese, Paula. 1996). She says, “sea shell, the commonest material for handmade beads, have been important native regional trade items for thousands of years. Beads were carved and shaped of animal horn, turtle shell, and deer hooves, often for dangling dance tinklers or rattlers. Wooden beads, sometimes dyed, were carved and drilled. Hard seeds were steamed to soften them for awl piercing and stringing. Small animal bones were polished and shaped into tapered cylinders (called hairpipe bone) for neck chokers and large dance regalia breastplates” (Giese, Paula. 1996). As Giese mentions, sea shells are the most common material for home-making beads. These beads are made out of fresh-water clamshells to create purple and white shell beads called wampum (Giese, Paula. 1996). These clamshells were often used by the Iroquois
Confederacy and neighboring tribes (Giese, Paula. 1996). Giese talks about the sacredness of wampum and says, “these chains or belts were treated with great respect, and highly valued by their keepers. Agreements were generally recorded this way. The result was that Europeans believed wampum belts or chains were money, and the word ‘wampum’ even became a sort of slang for money. Actually, they were more like important original documents” (Giese, Paula. 1996). This confusion of defining words may be why trade beads became so popular at trading posts to the point that exchanging beads for goods became akin to currency.

Giese talks about another long ago technique of making beads by the Pueblo people and Navajo Nation (Giese, Paula. 1996). These beads are called heishii and they can be made out of shells like olive shell, turquoise and other semi-precious stones (Giese, Paula. 1996). The process involves breaking the shell or stone material into tiny pieces and then using a hand-pump drill to make a hole through everything (Giese, Paula. 1996). Once the beads are strung on sinew or thread, the final step involves the string being, “rolled on a piece of fine sandstone until they are smoothed into uniform cylinders around the string-hole” (Giese, Paula. 1996). There are also similarities between wampum beads and heishi beads in that they are both used to tell a story (Giese, Paula. 1996). Giese describes that during the bead making process that the beads are, “drilled and strung between groups of ‘rocky’ or shaped turquoise, silver, or heishi shell beads to make ‘story’ necklaces, where the storyteller can show children each character as she tells the story” (Giese, Paula. 1996).

There are a number of varying beading techniques for attaching beads to a surface in the United States. The two main stitching techniques typically used are the overlaid and lazy stitch, and variations of the two (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The overlaid stitch can also be called
the spot stitch. You first start out with beads strung on thread and then add a second strand of bare thread that you use to secure the string of beads on the material (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). This second strand of string is threaded through every two or three beads (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The Kansas Historical Society writes that, “in most cases the outlines for a design are made with a single strand of beads and the remainder is filled in afterwards with beadwork. This method is essential for producing the curvilinear, floral design favored by the tribes of the eastern woodlands” (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The second stitch, lazy stitch, main difference is that there is no second string being threaded through the beads to bind them to a surface (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). However, it starts off the same with beads strung on a thread and then having that needle and thread go through the material (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The Kansas Society describes that this technique turns out looking like, ‘a series of small rows’ laying next to one another which gives it a ‘ribbed appearance’ (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). This stitching pattern is generally used by tribes that live on the western side of the United States (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). There is also a variation of the lazy stitch that has been used in the northeastern U. S. called the raised or couched stitch (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The authors write about this technique variation and say that this stitch allows for a 3-D effect because the beads don't lie flat (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). They state that, “with this technique more beads are strung on a thread than can be sewn flat on the material” (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). Hence, “when the thread is drawn tight, the beads form a small arch” (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). Then, “a series of these arcs are sewn side by side so that they support each other” (Kansas Historical Society. 2019).
However, sewing beads to a background isn't the only way to create work with beads, beads can also be woven with or without a loom to create a beaded design (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). In order to weave you have warp and weft threads. The warp threads are often pulled tightly while they create vertical lines that guide the horizontal weft threads over and under to create a woven design. There are many different looms that can be used for beading, such as the full looms which were often used centuries ago, and the box loom which is more common today (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). One loom technique that was used by the Micmac, Winnebago, Menomini, Chippewa, and the Sac and Fox tribe required the use of a heddle loom (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The Kansas Historical Society describes the process of using this loom and says that, “the heddle is made of wood or back and is employed to hold the threads of the warp. Every other thread of the warp is fixed in place, while the others can be moved up and down to provide a space for the weft threads, which are strung with beads, to be passed through. Between each pass of the weft, the warp threads are raised or lowered to fix the beads in place” (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). Although it has been recognized that in America indigenous people have weaved without a loom, today, this approach is very time consuming and nowadays weaving without a common box loom isn't executed as frequently (Kansas Historical Society. 2019).

Just like the innovation of the loom, which made weaving easier for the weaver, other alterations with tools and materials used for beadwork have bettered the capabilities of the beadworkers (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). The Kansas Historical Society writes about the highlights of this change and state that, “at first beadworkers would punch holes in buckskin with bone awls and then push the sinews through to string the beads. As contact with European
Americans increased, they began to use iron awls made of discarded nails. Eventually this gave way to the use of needles. Sinew was replaced with cotton or silk thread. Recently, single ply nylon has become a favored material because of its great strength and resistance to rot" (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). These aren't the only changes that have happened for Native American beadworkers. In recent years, there has been growing interest in Native American beadwork (Kansas Historical Society. 2019). To the point that there has been increased incentive to invent ways to traditionally bead new items such as fashion shoes (Kansas Historical Society. 2019).
In, *The Great Vanishing Act: Blood Quantum and the Future of Native Nations*, by Kathleen Ratteree and Norbert Hill their foreward, done by Dr. Henrietta Mann, highlights why the book is an important read in order to understand the importance of blood as it relates to Indigenous identity for Native Nations. Mann starts by talking about identity and states, “for as long as one can remember, the first peoples of this land have had strong identities, as well as remarkable knowledge of their bloodlines. Just as their histories held great significance, so did the family, which expanded outward to embrace the extended family and nation, reaching out even further into the cosmos. *Ma’e*, blood, is essential for life” (Mann, H. 2017, p.ix). Mann also talks about the importance of language and declares, “the first peoples have their own names for themselves, but are now known collectively in the English language as American Indians or Native Americans” (Mann, H. 2017, p.ix). She sets the tone for how today’s generation of Indigenous peoples of North America is wrought with “native cultural disintegration, erosion of tribal languages, loss and continual destruction of the land, and severe earth changes thought to be brought about by the numerous strangers from the east and their descendants” (Mann, H. 2017, p.ix).

Mann also references what the past was like for Native Nations. She narrates, “when the strangers arrived, they quickly assumed positions of power and dominance by establishing their government and organizations and instituting their laws. The seeds of colonization were planted and took root on Turtle Island. At that time, our ancestors had an entire continent that stretched
from ocean to ocean, and the strangers coveted the land that lay between. Initially, transfer of lands was effected through treaties between sovereign nations. Huge land cessions were exchanged for certain services and annuities. When treaty-making ended, devastating anti-Indian land policies such as the General Allotment Act of 1887 were enacted by the federal government. Through that piece of legislation alone, Native Americans lost 90 million acres of land. Land loss was and is particularly devastating, since most if not all natives have a strong, spiritual attachment to the land, which is like a mother or grandmother to them” (Mann, H. 2017, p.ix-x).

Almost fifty years later another shattering legislative act hit Native Nations, the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 or the (IRA) (Mann, H. 2017). The IRA defined who 'Indians' were. Mann brings to light that during this point of time is when the racial identity of 'Indian' started to be defined by that “‘Indians' were members of federally recognized tribes; they and their descendants must have resided on reservations on June 1, 1934; and 'Indians' were also defined as all other persons of one-half or more Indian blood” (Mann, H. 2017, p.x). She talks about her own experience with blood quantum and recounts: “I am about one month older than the IRA, and I am affected by it. My so-called Membership Identification Card (CDIB) states that my total blood is 4/4 in the Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes. (I once heard an esteemed Montana spiritual leader in Rome, Italy, refer to his CDIB card as a “pedigree card”.) Actually, I am Cheyenne. I do not need a card to tell me that" (Mann, H. 2017, p.x). She goes further into her personal life and says, “my husband was 7/8 Cheyenne and Arapaho, making our children 15/16. The mathematics gets a little complicated, but suffice it to say that unless my grandchildren marry an enrolled Cheyenne and Arapaho, the family line will become extinct with them” (Mann, H. 2017, p.x). This is a fear that I too have. What happens when there is no longer a Native person in the
Nation that meets the one-fourth blood quantum percentage, like my tribe, the Penobscots? Can the tribe easily do away with blood quantum paradigms, lessen the blood quantum enrollment, or does the federal recognition of the tribe become lost, extinct? How is accepting a blood quantum restriction on tribal citizenship not an acceptance of erasure of the Nation, or assimilation?

Mann answers a few of my fearful questions of the future for Native Nations that have a blood quantum membership. She outlines that even though the “IRA began the fractionating of the blood of tribal members, John Collier, BIA Commissioner for FDR from 1933 to 1945, also gave tribal governments the power to establish their own membership requirements, including blood quantum measurements. So tribal nations hold a very fragile tomorrow in their hands. They can choose to either increase or decrease tribal blood quantum – fraction enrollment requirements. They can choose to institute lineal descent. Or they can combine a person's different tribal blood quantum to total enough for enrollment in one nation” (Mann, H. 2017, p.x). Mann believes it is important for tribal leaders to ask themselves the following questions when questioning how to handle blood quantum models that exist for Native Nations. The following questions are: “is it important that a citizen of the nation speak the mother tongue? Is it important that a citizen of the nation participate in tribal ceremonies? Is it important that a citizen of the nation be involved in the life of the community? Is it important that a citizen of the nation integrates and lives it values?” (Mann, H. 2017, p.xi). She concludes that, “tribal leaders are the ones who will ensure that in future times our languages will still be spoken, our values will still be practiced, our ceremonies will still be spoken, our values will still be practiced, our ceremonies will still be observed, our families will still be strong, and tribal governments will still be self-reliant. Tribal citizens must become informed of where we are and where we are
going on the explosive issue of blood quantum. Arguably, using blood quantum as a measurement for tribal membership could continue to dilute our *ma'e*, our blood, until the tribes cease to exist. A matter of life or death”. (Mann, H. 2017, p.xi).

The authors of, *The Great Vanishing Act: Blood Quantum and the Future of Native Nations*, by Kathleen Ratteree and Norbert Hill agree with Mann's outlook on the troublesome matter of blood quantum. Ratteree and Hill recount that, “blood quantum, imposed from within and without, has shaped Native identity and has been the primary determinant of deciding “*who is an Indian*” for more than a century” (Ratteree, K, Hill, N. 2017, p.xiii). This book was born out of a need to take action, “to educate Oneida citizens about their population realities” (Ratteree, K, Hill, N. 2017). The Oneida Trust and Enrollment Committee or (OTEC) recognized this need when they realized somethings distressing: “the number of Oneida citizens who meet the ¼ blood quantum requirement to enroll in the Oneida Nation was declining but detailed discussions were not happening” (Ratteree, K, Hill, N. 2017, p.xiv). “In 2008, the committee took action to engage the Oneida Nation because unless blood quantum requirements were changed, there would be no eligible Oneida left to enroll” (Ratteree, K, Hill, N. 2017, p.xiv). Ratteree and Hill point out that the “Oneida are not unique in this respect; this scenario is occurring all across Indian Country” (Ratteree, K, Hill, N. 2017, p.xv).

The authors go further, explaining that the 'vanishing Indian' was an idea from the 19th century, when, at the time most Native Nations had been 'contained on reservations' (Ratteree, K, Hill, N. 2017, p.xv). During this period of time, Native Nations “were facing very physical threats of removal, genocide, forced assimilation, and boarding schools. In the 21st century, this myth has shaped-shifted into more subtle and insidious forms. Blood quantum, the concept that
being Native requires a quantifiable attribute – in other word, blood – has become the new 'vanishing Indian'. Drop below a certain arbitrary fraction and – poof! - the Indian has disappeared” (Ratteree, K, Hill, N. 2017, p.xv). To summarize the complicated nature that blood quantum has on Indigenous identity, Ratteree and Hill quote, John C. Mohawk, Seneca Nation. John C. Mohawk declares that “identity is important. The colonists were very successful 'radicalizing' Indigenous identities such that people talk about being 25 percent of this or 40 percent of that, but one does not belong to a nation based on one's blood quantum. Belonging to an Indigenous nation is a way of being in the world. Holding a membership card is not a way of being and money can't buy it” (Ratteree, K, Hill, N. 2017, p.xviii).

To put into context the current demographic of Indigenous peoples of North America the United States Census Bureau categorizes the population into two groups, the 'in combination population' and 'alone population'. The 'American Indian' and 'Alaska Native' 'alone' or 'in combination population' is 9.7 million, and the 'Native Hawaiian' and 'Other Pacific Islander' 'alone' or 'in combination population' is 1.6 million according to the authors of the article, 2020 Census Illuminates Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Country, by Nicholas Jones, Rachel Marks, Roberto Ramirez, Merarys Rios-Vargas, on the Unites States Census Bureau website, census.gov (Jones, N., Marks, R., Ramirez, R., Rios-Vargar, M. 2021. Based on 2020 census data the 'American Indian' and 'Alaska Native' 'in combination population' increased by one hundred sixty percent in the last ten years. The U.S. Census Bureau acknowledges that “an additional 5.9 million people identified as 'American Indian' and 'Alaska Native' and another race group in 2020, such as White or Black or African American. Together, the 'American Indian' and 'Alaska Native' along or 'in combination population' comprised 9.7 million peoples (2.9% of the total
The 'in combination population' of 'American Indians' was not the only 'American Indian' demographic to increase. The United States Census Bureau also reveals in 2020 that the “'American Indian' and 'Alaska Native' 'alone population' (3.7 million) accounted for 1.1% of all people living in the United States, compared with 0.9% (2.9 million) in 2010” (Jones, N., Marks, R., Ramirez, R., Rios-Vargar, M. 2021). When combining the 'in combination population' and 'alone population' of 'American Indians', the total population of Indigenous Peoples of North American is four percent.

The changes in population that were revealed by the 2020 United States census was brought about by updating the census data to ask two separate questions based on origin and race in order to “collect the races and ethnicities of the U.S. population – following the standards set by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget in 1997” (Jones, N., Marks, R., Ramirez, R., Rios-Vargar, M. 2021). The United States Census Bureau admits that the changes the 'two separate questions' brought about “enabled a more thorough and accurate depiction of how people self-identify, yielding a more accurate portrait of how people report origin and race within the context of a two-question format” (Jones, N., Marks, R., Ramirez, R., Rios-Vargar, M. 2021). The authors that write about the findings from the 2020 census are Nicholas Jones, Rachel Marks, Roberto Ramirez, and Merarys Rios-Vargas. They affirm that the “changes reveal that the U.S. population is much more multicultural and more diverse than what we measured in the past” (Jones, N., Marks, R., Ramirez, R., Rios-Vargar, M. 2021). To realize the magnitude of this change, Nicholas Jones, Rachel Marks, Roberto Ramirez, and Merarys Rios-Vargas disclose that the 'Multiracial population' “was measured at 9 million peoples in 2010 and is now 33.8 million
people in 2020, a 276% increase” (Jones, N., Marks, R., Ramirez, R., Rios-Vargar, M. 2021). Even though the findings of the article, *2020 Census Illuminates Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Country*, show that the 'White' population is still the largest racial group of the United States, sitting at an overall 235.4 million people, I wonder how the structure of education and the curriculum will transform as the population of 'Multiracial' populations increases (Jones, N., Marks, R., Ramirez, R., Rios-Vargar, M. 2021).

In the chapter, *Walking in Two Worlds: The Native American College Experience*, by Olivia Hoeft, she narrates how life changes for an Indigenous person once you venture off to college (Hoeft, O. 2017). Her story reminds me of my own college experience, and daily lived experience about discussing and defining my identity. Hoeft starts her chapter with, “as a teenager, I was fascinated with ways to identify myself. Personality quizzes, what genre of music I listened to, the ones I didn't, the brands I wore, the movies I liked, and all of the things that made me different from everyone else were vital clues to one of life's first and biggest questions: 'who are you?'” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.33). Hoeft then compares how this search for identity in her teenage years progressed in her college years (Hoeft, O. 2017). She professes that college admissions ask the same question, 'who are you' and that she felt excited to discover who she was ‘away from everything that had defined’ her ‘up until that point’ (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.33). Hoeft advocates that going off to college is meant to be about exploring what constitutes one's identity (Hoeft, O. 2017). However she discloses that at the same time she went to college she was also starting to search for her “identity as a Native American and the idea of belonging to something that felt so much bigger than” herself and her 'individual identity' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.33). She reveals that she 'wasn't sure' if she felt like a 'Native American' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.33).
Hoeft proclaims further and declares: “I already knew who I was as an Oneida from Wisconsin, the tribe where I grew up, but away at school, no one would know what an Oneida was. I would have to say I was Native American at new student orientation and during the countless introductions to follow, but I just felt like an Oneida. Although no matter what your background is as a young Native student entering college, whether you grew up near your tribal heritage or far, your identity as a Native American student will be part of your experience both before and during college” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.33).

In many ways I agree with Hoeft and have had a similar experience with my Indigenous identity. In 2013, the fourth year out of my eighth year of my undergraduate study experience, I started to explore my Indigenous culture and history with my artwork. I also grew up hearing that it was common to say 'I'm Native' or 'Native American' when talking about identity. It wasn't until before my mid-20's that I heard folk starting to replace Native American with Indigenous or Aboriginal, and it was during that time that switching to the word Indigenous felt more appropriate and appreciated by other Native communities that I talked with. One of the core reasons why Indigenous is more respected than the term Native American is because that name, 'Native American' was given by European settlers, along with many languages and words being taken or misinterpreted. Therefore by using the word Indigenous, Native Nations are redefining the moniker of Native American, and are taking back how as a people they are defined. The word Indigenous is synonymous with the words: native, aboriginal, original, earliest, first, initial, local, and primordial. All of these words summarize how Native Nations speak about belonging to the land, to place, in that Indigenous peoples are the first peoples of North American.
However, the numerous definitions for Indigenous peoples of North America can be very confusing. The National Museum of the American Indian has written advice on their website about appropriate terminology when talking about Indigenous Peoples' (Am I Using the Right Word? 2022). They begin by illuminating that the “term Native is often used officially or unofficially to describe indigenous peoples from the United States (Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, Alaska Natives), but it can also serve as a specific descriptor (Native peoples, Native lands, Native traditions, etc)” (Am I Using the Right Word? 2022). The text then states that “American Indian, Indian, Native American, or Native are acceptable and often used interchangeably in the United States; however, Native Peoples often have individual preferences on how they would like to be addressed” (Am I Using the Right Word? 2022).

I agree with this statement, however, I use a few different parameters when it comes to my discretion of using: 'American Indian', 'Indian', 'Native American', or 'Native'. I only use the words 'Indian' and 'American Indian' when I am quoting someone's exact words or if it is in the name of an already designated department, business, law, etc. Versus the title, 'Native American' and 'Native' I use more often because it is the language I used growing up, and today 'Native/Native American' are more widely known without being offensive, unlike the word 'Indian'. In the future I believe that the phrase Indigenous will become more common, to the point that it will overtake the term 'Indian' and 'Native American'. Indigenous is not only a great fit because of the meaning and duality of the definition, but also because it would be an easy transition to rename Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Education, and the like to: Bureau of Indigenous Affairs, and the department can keep the acronym, BIA.
Olivia Hoeft also speaks about her feelings about the terminology of ‘pan-identity’ for Native Americans (Hoeft, O. 2017). Hoeft informs that there “are over 500 federally recognized Native American tribes in the United States” and with that amount there “isn't enough room on a college application form for over 500 tribes to each have their own box to check” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.34). She advocates that “we are united by the ‘pan’ – Native American identity we share, which is broad enough to denote all tribes, yet none specifically” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.34). The meaning of the phrase 'pan' signifies including the whole of something which is why Hoeft uses it in her description of Native American identity to comprise 'all tribes' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.34). Hoeft dives further into her experience with the term Native American and recounts, “when I was in Oneida, I was Oneida, but the moments I stepped on my college campus, I started being Native American and for the first time I started to understand what that meant” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.34). She acknowledges that through her lived experience she has learned that, “because “Native American” refers to all tribes, as a Native American you are tasked with being a representative for all tribes, but that doesn't mean you are representative of all tribes” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.34).

She advocates that there are “a variety of different ways to look and be Native American”, however for her, and myself, “the most common reaction that I've had to identifying as Native is, first and foremost surprise, quickly followed by doubt. 'You're really Native American? How much are you?' is an almost guaranteed response” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.34). I too have had this experience many times and agree with Hoeft's statement that the question 'how much are you?' is a 'breach of social etiquette' that 'is jarring every time' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.34). Hoeft makes a beautiful comparison of why this question feels like an inappropriate question.
She proclaims that when you meet someone for the first time, “you normally aren't asked to share intimate family details, the relationship of your parents, your upbringing, or why you look the way you do, but somehow identifying as Native American is seen as an invitation into your autobiography” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.34).

Hoeft then dives into what the experience of having another person question the authenticity of your identity feels like. She reveals that at first she would quickly stand up to her defense, 'counting the ways that made me real' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35). Hoeft explains that she promptly “got tired of treating my ethnic identity like an application for belief, especially when I was still exploring what it meant” to her personally (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35). She encompasses that doubt over one's identity “can seep into our own interactions with other Natives too, creating a competitive culture that measures how much Native you are against someone else's definition. Today, I don't feel an inclination to prove how Native I am during every introduction” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35). Currently, Hoeft believes “that being Native American cannot be summed up by a percentage or quantifiable factor, and that it is something I have found to define for myself” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35). Hoeft returns to the college question, 'who are you?' and embraces that Indigenous Peoples' 'are both the general and specific' (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35). She also writes her stance on her identity and declares, “I am Native American, I am Oneida, and I am Olivia all at the same time, although I didn't necessarily figure out all of those identities at once” (Hoeft, O. 2017, p.35). Repeating Hoeft's words: ‘I am’ Native American, ‘I am’ an Indigenous person, ‘I am’ Penobscot, ‘I am’ Christiana Becker ‘all at the same time’ and I am still figuring out those identities separately and as a whole.
Four notable Indigenous artists from the article, *Tuft Life: Stitching Sovereignty in Contemporary Indigenous Art*, are: Nadia Myre, Ruth Cuthand, Shan Goshorn and Ursula Johnson. Nadia Myre is an Algonquin artist whose work uses elements of installation, sculpture, film and beads (Racette, S. F. 2017). Myre states that “beading is political, whether it's simply the personal contribution to an age-old continuum or consciously reworking loaded imagery. I really do see beading as an act of silent resistance” (Racette, S. F. 2017, p.115). In one of her earlier pieces she organized volunteers from all over the country in order to create a creative collective of overlaying the text of Canada's Indian Act with rows or beads (Racette, S. F. 2017). She managed to captivate over two hundred people to stitch beads over the words of the document (Racette, S. F. 2017). With fifty-six pages of Canada's Indian Act, some are fully covered, while others are moderately beaded and still show remnants of the text (Racette, S. F. 2017). In 2008-09 she made another piece called, *Journey of the Seventh Fire* where she beaded large logos belonging to corporations that threaten water, land and Indigenous territorial rights (Racette, S. F. 2017).
Figure 24 - *Indian Act*, 2002. Retrieved from https://collections.mnbaq.org/fr/oeuvre/600029490


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The second Indigenous artist, Ruth Cuthand, is also a beader. Cuthand beads pathogens, “to bring attention to grim historical and contemporary health conditions in First Nations communities” (Racette, S. F. 2017, p.115). In 2009 Cuthand beaded multiple representations of numerous pathogens that throughout history have had a destructive impact on Indigenous communities (Racette, S. F. 2017). Some of these pathogens include: cholera, diphtheria, tuberculosis and smallpox (Racette, S. F. 2017). The collection of pathogen beadings were shown in two series. One in 2009 called Trading, and another in 2010 called Dis-ease (Racette, S. F. 2017). In 2015 she started making small, three-dimensional pieces that embody salmonella, listeria, and other current bacteria (Racette, S. F. 2017). The culmination of beadings she made in that year of 2015 were then shown in an installation titled, Don't Breathe, Don't Drink, in 2016 (Racette, S. F. 2017). Racette talks about the marvel of Cuthand's Don't Breathe, Don't Drink installation and describes it as, “political activism and controversial reports from newspaper headlines and the evening news, and made them visible in the gallery” (Racette, S. F. 2017, p.121). The installation was constructed in a single room in order to represent the housing and clean-water crisis on First Nations reservations (Racette, S. F. 2017). This piece shows beaded bacteria that is suspended in resin-filled glasses and baby bottles to speak for the quality of drinking water (Racette, S. F. 2017).
Figure 26 - *Trading* series, 2009. Retrieved from https://www.ruthcuthand.ca/trading-series/
Figure 27 - Don't Breathe, Don't Drink, 2016. Retrieved from
https://www.ruthcuthand.ca/dont-breathe-dont-drink/
The third artist, Shan Goshorn, utilized techniques from photography and painting before she incorporated double-woven basketry into her work (Racette, S. F. 2017). In order to make her double-woven baskets she cuts photographs and documents into thin strips and then weaves them to create the form she wants (Racette, S. F. 2017). Racette describes Goshorn's baskets as, “visual calls to action, as she deftly waves images and text to expose and commemorate critical histories” (Racette, S. F. 2017, p.115). In her piece, *Educational Genocide: The Legacy of the Carlisle Indian Boarding School* (2011) she used photographs taken from 1912 that showed faces and names of thousands of students while Carlisle Indian Boarding School was open (Racette, S. F. 2017). Racette describes this piece as having a poignant impact. She says, “it is those faces, woven into a deep border around the lid of the basket, and the inside that deliver the emotional punch” (Racette, S. F. 2017, p.121). Goshorn's recent work has been focusing on creating baskets that respond to archival accumulations to which she has been invited (Racette, S. F. 2017). The invitations she receives asks her to act in response to specific collections and historic sites that are shared with her (Racette, S. F. 2017). In 2016 she reached out to the Carlisle Indian Boarding School for assistance with a future visit where she hoped to commemorate the many children that lost their lives there (Racette, S. F. 2017). On social media she posted photos of her process of placing offerings of tobacco ties by each headstone to honor them and, “as an expression of her support for the repatriation movement to return the children's remains to their home communities” (Racette, S. F. 2017, p.122). Below are photos of her basketry work from her website: http://www.shangoshorn.net/baskets
Figure 28 - (Left) Prayers For Our Children, 2015, (Right) This River Runs Red, 2018. Retrieved from http://www.shangoshorn.net/baskets

Figure 29 - Educational Suicide, 2011. Retrieved from http://www.shangoshorn.net/baskets
The fourth Indigenous artist, Ursula Johnson, also incorporates basketry into her work. Racette writes about Ursula's work and says, “basketry requires artists to tether and restrain the energy of resistant plant fibers. Responding to that energy, Ursula Johnson (Mi'kmaq) merges her basketry with elements of performance” (Racette, S. F. 2017, p.119). She has an ongoing portrait series titled, L'nuwelti’k (We Are Indian) that employs techniques of basketry by weaving around the heads or bodies of sitters (Racette, S. F. 2017). The craft of weaving around volunteers is part of the performance of Johnson's work and the woven forms are displayed afterwards, like sculptures (Racette, S. F. 2017). In 2015 she had an exhibition called, Mi'kwite'tmn (Do you Remember?) (Racette, S. F. 2017). The intent of the exhibition was to draw focus on the void spaces of display boxes that previously were holding her great-grandmother's baskets, but instead were etched with drawings of said basket(s) (Racette, S. F. 2017). Racette writes about Johnson's work and says, “the installation documents Johnson's cultural research/recovery process in museum collections, but also her growing alarm at the enormity of what could be lost” (Racette, S. F. 2017, p.119). The exhibition is also accompanied by processes and concepts related to basketry, and Mi'kmaq words, all of which “starkly brings home the urgency of endangered knowledge” (Racette, S. F. 2017, p.119).
Figure 30 - L'nuwelti’k (We Are Indian), (n.d.). Retrieved from https://ursulajohnson.ca/portfolio/2012-ongoing-lnuweltik-we-are-indian/
Figure 31 - *Mi’kwite’mn (Do You Remember)*, 2013-15. Retrieved from

https://canadianart.ca/reviews/ursula-johnson-mikwitetmn-do-you-remember/ &
The four artists talked about above use their artwork to shine a spotlight on Indigenous history, culture, and the atrocities Native Nations have faced. There are also Indigenous poets and other artists that use text to share their feelings and experiences that they and their community have and continue to live through. One of the books that published some of the many voices of Indigenous women is the anthology #NotYourPrincess: Voices of Native American Women. While reading this compelling and memory-inducing book I marked the artists and poets whose experience resonated the most with me. Below is an image of one of those provoking poems written by Nathalie Bertin. Her biography in the contributors section of #NotYourPrincess states that she is, “a Franco-Metis artist and educator from Toronto, Ontario. Bertin's Indigenous ancestry and her relationship with the environment play a central role in her life and work. She shares their teachings and worldview to empower others and to help bridge the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people” (Leatherdale, M. B, & Charleyboy, L. 2017, p.55).
A second inspiring poem is shown below and was written by Tanaya Winder. Winder is a writer, artist, poet and educator who was raised on the Southern Ute reservation in Ignacio,
Colorado (Winder, T. 2018). She is an enrolled member of the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe (Winder, T. 2018). On her website, she describes herself as being inspired by teaching and writing about “different expressions of love (self love, intimate love, social love, community love, and universal love)” (Winder, T. 2018). She believes in the “importance of ‘heartwork’ and using your gifts to serve your passions and create your own definition of success” (Winder, T. 2018).

Figure 33 - Second poem, 2017. In #NotYourPrincess: Voices of Native American Women.
The third text artist I find relatable is Shelby Lisk. Lisk is a journalist, photographer and filmmaker who has ties with the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory in Ontario (Lisk, S. n.d.). Her website profile expresses that she, “is interested in exploring complicated contemporary issues enmeshed in Indigenous and mixed-race identity by pointing her camera inward as an artist and outward as a journalist (Lisk, S. n.d.). She works to capture people's connection to culture, land (place), and one other – especially through stories of Indigenous people in Canada” (Lisk, S. n.d.). Below is her piece that is included in the book #NotYourPrincess. The work is titled The Invisible Indians.

Figure 34 - The Invisible Indians, 2017. In #NotYourPrincess: Voices of Native American Women.
It’s strange to me how people always want me to be an “authentic Indian.” When I say I’m Haudenosaunee, they want me to look a certain way. Act a certain way. They’re disappointed when what they get is . . . just me. White-faced, red-haired. They spent hundreds of years trying to assimilate my ancestors, trying to create Indians who could blend in like me. But now they don’t want me either. I’m not Indian enough. They can’t make up their minds.

They want buckskin and war paint, drumming, songs in languages they can’t understand recorded for them, but with English subtitles of course. They want educated, well-spoken, but not too smart. Christian, well-behaved, never questioning. They want to learn the history of the people, but not the ones who are here now, waving signs in their faces, asking them for clean drinking water, asking them why their women are going missing, asking them why their land is being ruined. They want fantastical stories of the Indians that used to roam this land. They want my culture behind glass in a museum. But they don’t want me. I’m not Indian enough.
The last writer/artist I want to mention from #NotYourPrincess is Francine Cunningham. Cunningham's website details her many accomplishments. Not only is she an ‘award-winning Indigenous writer, artist, and educator’, currently her first published poetry book called, ON/me “has been nominated for a 2020 BC & Yukon Book Prize, a 2020 Indigenous Voices Award, and The 2021 City of Vancouver Book Award” (Cunningham, F. n.d.). Currently, her website depicts her as spending her “time traveling across Canada to different First Nations reserves working with Indigenous youth teaching writing and visual art workshops with an aim of getting students to create art that is inspired by their lives and the natural beauty around them” (Cunningham, F. n.d.). Images from Cunningham's entry are added below, and the illustration was done by Jarlene Harvey.

Figure 36 - A Conversation with a Massage Therapist, 2017. In #NotYourPrincess:Voices of Native American Women.
Figure 37 - *A Conversation with a Massage Therapist* [Text], 2017. In *#NotYourPrincess: Voices of Native American Women.*
CHAPTER TEN

THESIS SHOW: THIS PLACE, THIS TIME

In 2019 I created a series titled *BIE Beadings*, where I created a beading for every state that has a BIE, or Bureau of Indian Education school, per the BIE website (https://www.bie.edu/). There were many design elements I needed to take on when I decided to create this piece. I needed to creatively problem solve how I was going to show the value of these uncommon schools. I made the decision that I needed to find a way to show that these schools exist and in doing so I wanted to show where BIE schools are in the United States, how many BIE schools are in each state, and how many Native American students are enrolled in each BIE school. Once I resolved what I wanted my piece to stand for, I went to work researching answers and thinking of ways to show the data I wanted in the piece through aesthetics and principles of design. It took me a year to finish the piece and through the decision making process I determined: that the range of colors used in the beadings will act as a legend on a map, each color represents one BIE school in that state, and that the total amount of beads used in each beading is approximately the amount of Native American students that go to BIE schools in that state. In order to calculate the number of enrolled students at every school, I looked up the school's website first to see if they disclose their student population. If the school website didn't declare their student numbers, I would look up websites that rate schools, which allowed me to find the school's student population.

After finishing *BIE Beadings*, I set out to design a 'sister piece' that would focus on the number of Native American students that go to public school and do not receive the same
amount of care when it comes to cultural education. This ‘sister piece’ became, *Identity Belt.*

During the process of creating *BIE Beadings,* I learned that it wasn't always called the Bureau of Indian Education but was originally named the Office of Indian Education Programs (*Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).* n.d.). The department wasn't renamed until August 29, 2006 in order to “reflect the parallel purpose and organizational structure BIE has in relation to other programs within the Office of the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs. The BIE is headed by a Director, who is responsible for the line direction and management of all education functions, including the formation of policies and procedures, the supervision of all program activities and the approval of the expenditure of funds appropriated for education functions” (*Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).* n.d.).

*The Bureau of Indian Education* lists three key legislative actions that occurred after the 1920s that morphed how the Bureau of Indian Affairs regarded educating Native Americans. The first was in 1934, the Indian Reorganization Act, which “introduced the teaching of Indian history and culture in BIA schools (until then it had been Federal policy to acculturate and assimilate Indian people by eradicating their tribal cultures through a boarding school system)” (*Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).* n.d.). The second act happened in 1975, the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act (P.L. 93-638), which allowed federally recognized tribes “to contract with the BIA for the operation of Bureau-funded schools and to determine education programs suitable for their children” (*Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).* n.d.). Soon after, more amendments towards education arose, such as the Education Amendments Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-561), and other amendments (P.L. 98-511, 99-99, and 100-297) which “provided funds directly to tribally operated schools, empowered Native school boards, and permitted local hiring
of teachers and staff” (Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). n.d.). Lastly, The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110) led to additional requirements to the BIE schools “by holding them accountable for improving their students' academic performance with the U.S. Department of Education supplemental program funds they receive through the Bureau" (Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). n.d.).

I also learned that the Bureau of Indian Education's mission is to “provide quality education opportunities from early childhood through life in accordance with a tribe's needs for cultural and economic well-being, in keeping with the wide diversity of Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages as distinct cultural and governmental entities. Further, the BIE is to manifest consideration of the whole person by taking into account the spiritual, mental, physical, and cultural aspects of the individual within his or her family and tribal or village context” (Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). n.d.). Based on data from 2007-08, the Bureau of Indian Education funded 183 elementary and secondary schools established on sixty-four reservations in twenty-three states (Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). n.d.). The U.S. Department of the Interior: Indian Affairs states that a federal Indian reservation is “an area of land reserved for a tribe or tribes under treaty or other agreement with the United States, executive order, or federal statute or administrative action as permanent tribal homelands, and where the federal government holds title to the land in trust on behalf of the tribe” (Migration, D. 2017). Indian Affairs further states that, “approximately 56.2 million acres are held in trust by the United States for various Indian tribes and individuals”, however, “not every federally recognized tribe has a reservation” (Migration, D. 2017). The department also acknowledges that “some reservations are the remnants of a tribe's original land base”, while, “others were created by the federal
government for the resettling of Indian people forcibly relocated from their homelands” (Migration, D. 2017). Fifty-eight of the one hundred eighty-three Bureau-funded schools are BIE-operated and one hundred twenty-five are tribally-operated through BIE grants and contracts (Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). n.d.). The BIE also assists Native American and Alaska Native post secondary students pursue higher education through scholarships and they help to fund tribal colleges and universities (Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). n.d.). In the year that this data was collected, approximately 42,000 Native students were enrolled in Bureau-funded schools (Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). n.d.).

The design of Identity Belt was sparked after I read the poetry book, Nisnol Siboal/TwoRivers, by Joseph and Jesse Bruchac. The design on the cover of the book is of a wampum belt called the Two Row Belt (Bruchac, Joseph & Jesse. 2011). This Two Row Belt is a treaty belt that symbolizes, “the agreed-upon relationship between the Native peoples and the British colonies that became the United States. It stands for the parallel paths of the two cultures, neither blocking the other’s way, like two canoes going down river” (Bruchac, Joseph & Jesse. 2011). Below is a photo of the cover.

Figure 38 - Cover of Siboal/TwoRivers, by Joseph and Jesse Bruchac.
In the beginning of the book there is the introduction, Two Rivers Flowing Through One Land, that sets the tone for the book. It states that, “Two Rivers is a collaboration that reflects not only our two generations of father and son, but also the flow of language from two different yet deeply connected cultures. The relationship between the European newcomers to the northeast and the Algonquin-speaking first peoples began at least five centuries ago. The cover design of this book reflects that relationship” (Bruchac, Joseph & Jesse. 2011).

The authors go on to describe a more current interpretation of the Two Row Belt and say, “it is not easy to jump from one canoe to another. You risk looking foolish, overturning one canoe or both, or falling into the deep water between and drowning. But many of us have no choice, for the rivers of more than one ancestry flow in our blood and we are the children of two cultures, born with our feet in two canoes” (Bruchac, Joseph & Jesse. 2011). This feeling of navigating one's identity and oftentimes struggling with one's ownership of identity is a feeling that myself, a first generation descendant of the Penobscot tribe, as well as other Indigenous peoples and communities have mutually felt. It is very painful, and creates uncertainty and self-doubt when your identity is questioned and threatened by blood quantum laws that define if you are a member of your tribe.

Joseph and Jesse Bruchac, the two authors of Nisnol Siboal/Two River, go further in their talk about the Two Row Belt and describe a way that venturing between the two canoes of one's identity may be traversed safely. The book mentions that if a “platform is placed between two canoes, you create a catamaran, a boat with twin hulls. And, with care, you may place yourself in equilibrium between those two crafts and even carefully move back and forth without losing balance” (Bruchac, Joseph & Jesse. 2011).
In order to show a pattern of internal conflict, I have altered the design from the cover of Nisnol Siboal/Two River to represent the struggle between navigating one's self identity between two canoes during the course of your life, hence I will be using the colors of the medicine wheel in my beading project to represent the four stages of one's life: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and the elderhood. The color of the water will stay consistent and remain the color white which symbols the time of the elderly and our ancestors. In my culture we see our ancestors as always around us, guiding our path and offering us hidden wisdom, which is why I have chosen it to be the color of the water that the canoes flow through their journey of discovery. However the path to self discovery isn't always easy and well lit with certainty. Amidst the journey of understanding yourself there is also uncertainty. The idea of navigating one's self identity will be represented by the white beads trickling into the two canoes and starting to submerge and flood one's identity with external factors of doubt and criticism, while also offering hidden guidance into the next stage of one's life. Below are graph drawings I initially started in September of 2021 in order to plan out the pattern of white ‘water’ beads that continue to flow in and out of the two ‘canoes’.
Figure 39 - Beading design on graph paper.
Figure 40 - Second & third beading design on graph paper.
Figure 41 - Fourth beading design on graph paper.
The number of beads represented in this piece will also be represented by the number of Native American students that go to public school. There are approximately 594,348 Indigenous students that go to public schools in the United States. This decision comes from a project I made at the start of my first year in the Intermedia Masters of Fine Arts Program. In 2019, I made a beading for every state that has a BIE, or Bureau of Indian Education School. These schools are only in twenty-three states and they offer certain positives to Indigenous communities because the structure of education is decided upon the discretion of the Tribal Council. So the tribe can offer classes such Native American Studies, Indigenous language, and more. Unlike public schools which don't often offer much representation for Indigenous tribes in the United States. While the number of beads shows statistical importance, not all of them will be incorporated into the beading design, but will be shown off to the side, indicating that self-discovery is an ongoing journey.

Below are photos taken by photographer Jim Walters of Identity Belt from the thesis show, This Place, This Time, as well as my artist statement that was presented with the artwork.
Figure 43 - Close up of *Identity Belt.*
Figure 44 - Second close up of *Identity Belt*.
Figure 45 - Third close up of *Identity Belt*.
Artist Statement:

The design of Identity Belt mirrors a two row belt design from the cover of a book called, Nisnol Siboal/Two Rivers, by Joseph and Jesse Bruchac. I have altered the original design to represent the struggle between navigating one's self-identity between two canoes during one’s life. The four colors used in Identity Belt are colors of the medicine wheel which have many representations, one of them being the four stages of one's life: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and elderly.

The white beads represent the time of the elderly and our ancestors. I grew up on the Penobscot Reservation and in my culture we see our ancestors as always around us, guiding our path and offering us hidden wisdom. This is symbolized by white being the color of the water that the canoes flow through their journey of discovery. The path to self discovery isn't always easy and lit with certainty. The idea of navigating one's self identity will be represented by the white beads trickling into the two canoes and starting to submerge and flood one's identity with external factors of doubt and criticism, while also offering hidden guidance into the next stage of one's life. The canoes are represented by the yellow beads for childhood, red beads for adolescence, and black beads for adulthood. The number of beads that are included in, Identity Belt will represent the number of Indigenous students that go to public school in the United States. There are approximately 594,348 Indigenous students that go to public schools in North America. While the number of beads shows statistical importance, not all of them will be incorporated into the two row belt design, but will be shown off to the side, signifying that self-discovery is an ongoing journey. If you would like to learn more, take a listen to the audio recording for more information.
Similar to the journalist/photographer, Shelby Lisk, I too have felt the struggle on what it means to be an ‘authentic Indian’, why these parameters exist and if judgements about ‘Indian-ness’ should be broken. In her text entry, The Invisible Indians, in the book #NotYourPrincess, Lisk writes: “It's strange to me how people always want me to be an ‘authentic Indian’. When I say I'm Haudenosaunee, they want me to look a certain way. Act a certain way. They're disappointed when what they get is . . . just me. They spent hundreds of years trying to assimilate my ancestors, trying to create Indians who could blend in like me. But now they don't want me either. I'm not Indian enough. They can't make up their minds. They want buckskin and war paint, drumming, songs in languages they can't understand recorded for them, but with English subtitles of course. They want educated, well-spoken, but not too smart. They want to learn the history of the people, but not the ones who are here now, waving signs in their faces, asking them for clean drinking water, asking them why their women are going missing, asking them why their land is being ruined. They want fantastical stories of the Indians that used to roam this land” (Leatherdale, M. B, & Charleyboy, L. 2017, p.64).

For the most part, when I tell others I'm Native American I am usually met with shock and skepticism. I've heard such phrases as: ‘no you're not, really?’, ‘how Native are you?’, and ‘you don't look Native American’. These phrases always struck me as odd. Why does it matter, ‘how Native I am’? Does this person realize that when they ask how native I am that they are
asking about my native blood quantum, which is a pedigree system that the federal government placed onto tribes in an effort to limit their citizenship. My tribe, the Penobscot, is one of the many hundreds that require one-quarter or more of Native blood in order to be an enrolled member of the tribe. As a member you can vote for tribal chief, live on the reservation, hunt on tribal land with a hunting permit, and more. My father, along with his siblings, is the last enrolled member in my family. I am called a first generation descendant. I cannot become an enrolled member of my family's tribe, the Penobscot, because my blood quantum is only eighteen percent. Even though I grew up on the reservation and went to Indian Island's K-8 school where I learned about my tribe's culture, art, history, dance, and culture I cannot call myself a member of the Penobscot tribe or receive the same privileges as my member enrolled community.

Only three things record blood pedigree in the United States. They are dogs, horses and Native Americans. Native Americans are the only race in the United States that records membership by blood, which unfortunately creates a pureblood mindset. Not only are Native Americans questioned about their identity by outsiders of their Native community, but depending on their blood quantum they may be seen as someone who does not belong within their Native Nation, because their blood quantum is lesser and sometimes so meager that they cannot enroll into their affiliated tribe. This creates an obscure environment for descendants where sometimes, as a descendant of the Penobscot tribe, I am unsure where I belong, how to identify myself, and how to explain my identity to others.

In regards to my outward appearance of looking Native American, I have always looked this way: dark brown curly hair, brown eyes, high cheekbones, glasses since fifth grade, and what I would describe as medium light-hued skin (it's light, but I do not burn in the sun easily
and I'm not so white that I would call myself fair or pale). Looking back at my childhood, I'm grateful that I was able to go to Indian Island School and learn about my Penobscot heritage. Similar to the artist's poem by Nathalie Bertin in #NotYourPrincess where she says, “we never learned about Indigenous communities in school. My mom never told us about our Indigenous roots. I spent the first twenty-five years of my life feeling incomplete. Now, almost twenty-five years later, I still can't help but feel ripped off and angry that my culture was kept from me. It feels like someone stole a piece of my soul – and I've been working ever since to get it back” (Leatherdale, M. B, & Charleyboy, L. 2017, p.55). If it wasn't for the opportunities I had growing up to learn about my culture, language and history I wouldn't be making the type of art I am today. Due to the repressing actions put forth by residential schools, most North American Indigenous families cannot pass on traditions and language because they no longer know it. This includes my family. I remember coming home from school and sharing with my parents the Penobscot words I learned and my father, from whom my Penobscot descendancy comes from, was always eager to listen because he was never given the opportunity to learn it. This moment from my life history shows that without opportunities to learn about non-Western European culture and history through the public education system that anyone who is from a minority culture will have their identity become isolated and lose sense of who they are.

When I set out to create a ‘sister piece’ to BIE Beadings it was in order to shine a spotlight on the amount of Native American students that aren't receiving the same cultural education as Native American students that go to BIE schools, the positives in having a Native American Studies program, and incorporating Indigenous voices into general education classrooms. Repeating Gregory Cajete’s statement in his book, Look to the Mountain: An
Ecology of Indigenous Education, “it is time for Indian people to define Indian Education in their own voices and their own terms. It is time for Indian people to enable themselves to explore and express the richness of their collective history in education” (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). I agree with Cajete’s words, ‘it is time’ (Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, & John W. Tippeconnic III. 2017). ‘It is time’ for the melting pot of the United States to update its educational curriculum to include cultural diversity in its teachings especially when it relates to the original people of this country, the Indigenous peoples of North America.
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https://www.shelbyliskphoto.com/about


BIOGRAPHY OF AUTHOR

Maine based intermedial artist, Christiana Becker, is a first generation descendant of the Penobscot tribe. The research that shapes the creation of her art practice explores the history, culture, language and folklore of North American Indigenous identity, and then translates that discovery into art. Some places Becker's work has been exhibited at are Lord Hall Gallery, Healdsburg Center for the Arts, Phoenix Art Museum, and Harlow Gallery. During the year of Becker's undergraduate Studio Capstone show, *Ghosts of Carnegie Hall*, she was interviewed by multiple people about the cultural meanings and ideas that go into her artwork. These interviews were published by Bangor Daily News, written by Julia Bayly, the Maine Journal and Dawnland Voices Issue 3, written by Virginia McLaurin. Christiana received a Bachelors of Fine Arts degree in Studio Art with a concentration in printmaking from The University of Maine as well as a Bachelors of Arts degree in Art Education. Christiana is a candidate for the Master of Fine Arts degree in Intermedia from the University of Maine in August 2022.