



Sharing Culture & The History of Trauma in Indian Country

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IT'S IMPORTANT TO DISCUSS HISTORY

Prior to European Contact

20-45 million Native peoples lived on this continent

Thousands of sovereign Nations, each with their own language and culture

By 1900, only 250,000 Native people survived due to starvation, disease, murder, wars.



EARLY CONTACT QUOTE

“The Indian have no altercations, and in ten years I have not heard any angry expressions nor seen any degree of passion. They treat their women with respect, even tenderness, They used no ardent spirits. They settled differences amicably.”

-Ephraim Webster, (1786) Fur trader that lived with the Onondaga and Oneida for years and eventually adopted by the people.

Sovereignty



- ▶ As sovereign nations, Tribal governments have the right to hold elections, determine their own citizenship (enrollment), and to consult directly with the U.S. government on policy, regulations, legislation, and funding.

Sovereignty



Respect is to honor our traditional roots and teachings. Honor our families, others and ourselves.

Don't hurt anything or anyone,
on the outside or the inside.

- ▶ Tribal governments can create and enforce laws that are stricter or more lenient than State laws, but they are not subservient to State law. State laws cannot be applied where they interfere with the right of a tribe to make its own laws protecting the health and welfare of its citizens, or where it would interfere with any Federal interest.
- ▶ Criminal legal jurisdiction issues are very complex, depend on a variety of factors, and must be assessed based on the specific law as applied to a specific tribe. In general, the Federal law applies.

INDIAN TRIBES/CULTURE

“What is an Indian?”

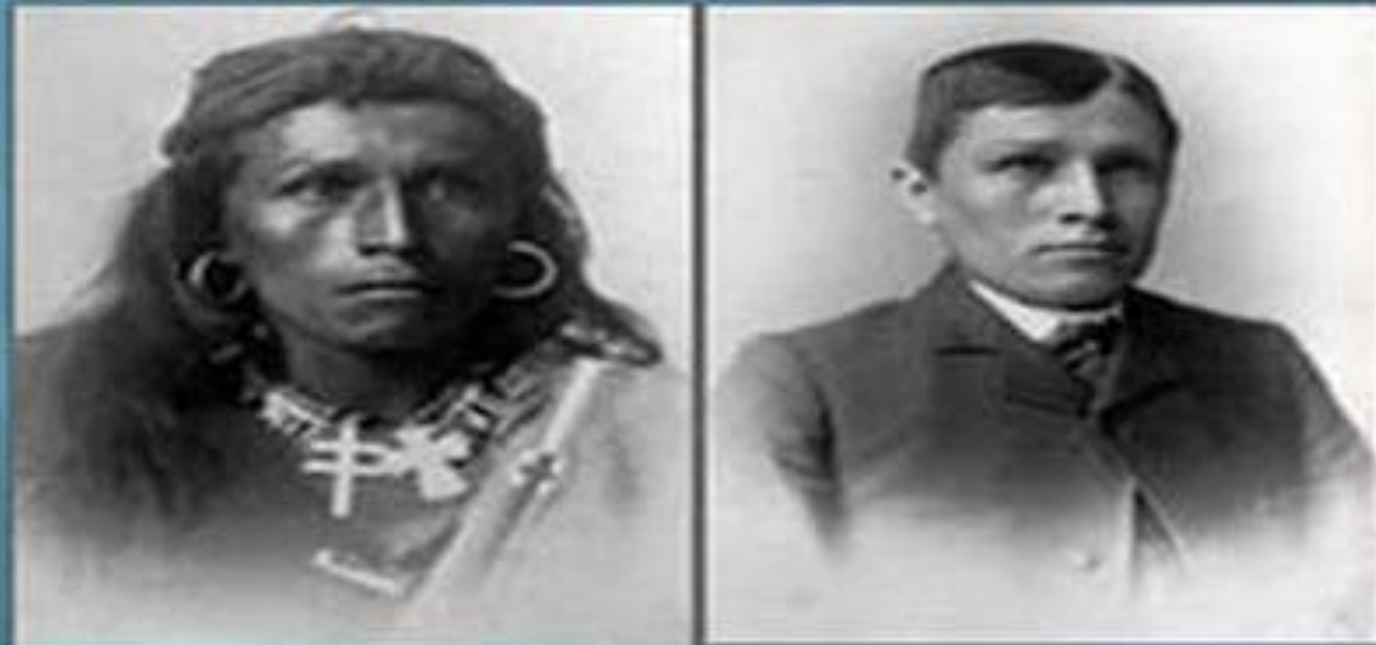
Part of the answer is understanding that all Native people are not the same. We speak totally different languages, have different forms of governance and government, different stories of origin and we even look different—physically.





The Goal Was Cultural eradication.

Children were punished for speaking their native language, banned from acting in any way representative of traditional or cultural practices, stripped of traditional clothing, hair and all things and behaviors reflective of their culture.



Tulalip Indian School, ca. 1912





“Objective simple and clear cut: To extinguish tribal sovereignty, erase reservation boundaries, and force the assimilation of Indians into the society at large.” - Supreme Court

Boarding Schools

- ▶ Imagine the Impact this had on families???
- ▶ Parents were not able to parent their own children.
- ▶ Children were brought up without a family unit.
- ▶ Stripped of your family and all of the culture you knew.
- ▶ These children soon grew up and become our fathers and mothers. Children that became parents that never experienced family parenting.

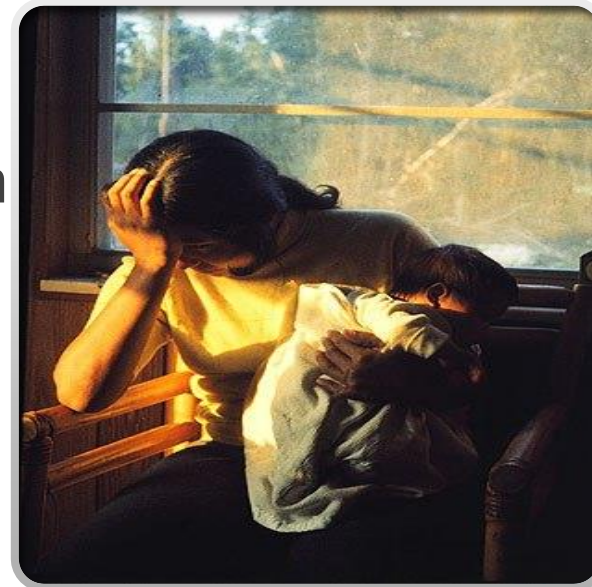
HISTORICAL DATES

- ▶ Removal Era – 1830-1849
- ▶ Reservation Era – 1850-1886
- ▶ 1885 - Major Crimes Act . The law places certain crimes under federal jurisdiction if they are committed by a [Native American](#) in [Native territory](#).
- ▶ 1879 - Creation of Boarding Schools
- ▶ Assimilation and Allotment Era – 1887-1933
- ▶ Indian Reorganization Act Era – 1934-1945
- ▶ Termination & Relocation Era – 1945-1961
- ▶ 1953 - Public Law 280. The Act mandated a transfer of federal law enforcement authority within certain [tribal](#) nations to state governments in six states: [California](#), [Minnesota](#) (except the [Red Lake Nation](#)), [Nebraska](#), [Oregon](#) (except the [Warm Springs Reservation](#)), [Wisconsin](#) (except later the [Menominee Indian Reservation](#)) and, upon its statehood, [Alaska](#).
- ▶ Self-determination Era – 1960's – present
- ▶ 1978 - Indian Child Welfare Act
- ▶ 1978 – Indian Religious Freedom Act
- ▶ 1994 – Violence Against Women Act

What is Historical Trauma?

According to Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, historical trauma is the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over one's lifetime and from generation to generation following loss of lives, land and vital aspects of culture.

Traumatic impacts can be conscious and unconscious.



Quotes

“Dad, How did you end up in the City? How did you meet Mom?”

“Why do you always hold your left hand. Is something wrong with your hand?”

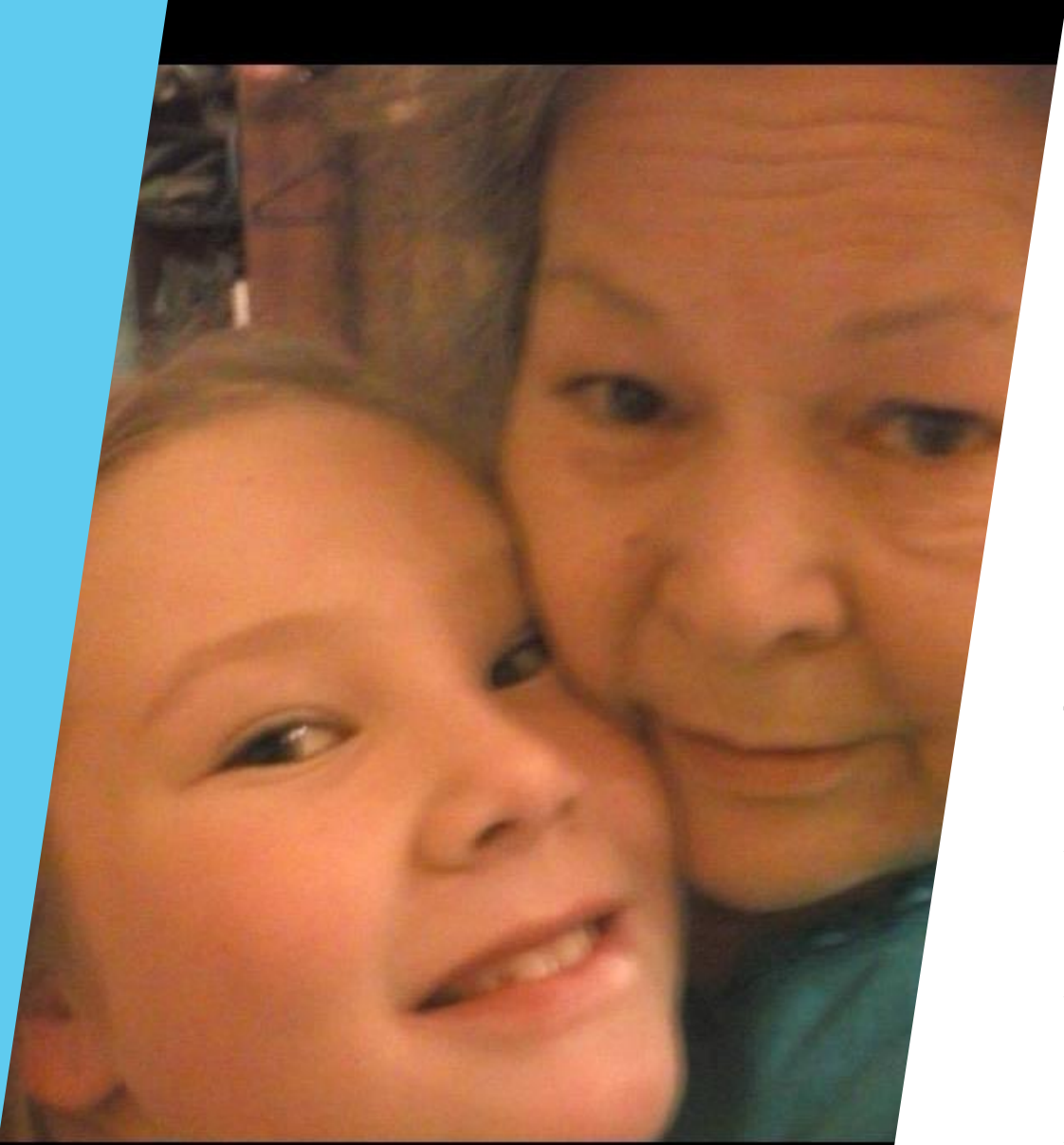
“I remember my Dad was arrested and thrown in jail when I was young.”

My Story

Dad's Response:

“My family moved to the city because my dad could not find any work and we were starving. Not many Natives were hired in town and once our fishing and hunting rights were taken our entire family was forced to relocate so my dad could find work. That's how we ended up in the city and your mother lived in my neighborhood.”





My Story

Maryann Basina's Sister-In-Law's Quote:

"No my hand is not hurt. I guess I don't even realize that I do that anymore. I guess I've held my hand my whole life. I was left handed growing up and the nuns wanted me to write with my right hand. So they whacked my hands with a ruler until I learned how to write with my right hand."

My Story

Antone Basina- My Spouse's Quote

“My Dad was one of the last trappers in the community and we would hunt and fish daily when I was growing up. My mother would bake daily and my father would hunt and I remember that he got arrested for hunting a number of times when I was young.”

Some Quoted Reactions to Historical Trauma

“All of that happened in the past so get over it.”

“I am not responsible for what my ancestors did to your people.”

“I wasn’t even alive when all that happened.”



The background of the slide features a close-up, slightly blurred image of several old, leather-bound books standing on a shelf. The spines of the books are visible, showing signs of age and wear. Overlaid on the right side of the image are several translucent blue geometric shapes, including triangles and polygons, creating a modern, abstract design. The overall color palette is dominated by the dark browns of the book spines and the various shades of blue from the overlays.

Historical Trauma

It's doesn't mean
old or in the
past.

Wisconsin Led US In American Indian Incarceration Rate In 2013



Is Public Law 280 a Factor?

- ▶ The incarceration rate may indicate that local and state officials should further examine the impacts of Public Law 280 on Wisconsin native communities and reservations, according to Richard Monette, professor of law at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and faculty director of the Great Lakes Indigenous Law Center.

MMIW-Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women

Newspaper Headline

Native American Women
Disappearing at an
Alarming Rate and Police
are Completely Ignoring
It?



MMIW

- ▶ Tribes are unable to account for how many are missing in the U.S.
- ▶ Data is Unknown
- ▶ Jurisdictional Issues
- ▶ Resources
- ▶ We do know that Native American Women are going missing at alarming and epidemic rates!!!



Sexual Assault in Indian Country

- ▶ American Indian have the highest rates of rape by ethnic groups outside of their race.
- ▶ 1/3 American Indian women will experience sexual abuse in their lifetime.
- ▶ In 2003, only 54 cases of sexual assault against American Indian women were prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office (personal communication, Assistant U.S. Attorney Leslie Hagen, December 10, 2004).
- ▶ In 2017, the U.S. Department of Justice declined to prosecute more than a third of cases referred to them in Indian Country. That's business as usual according to a new report by the department.



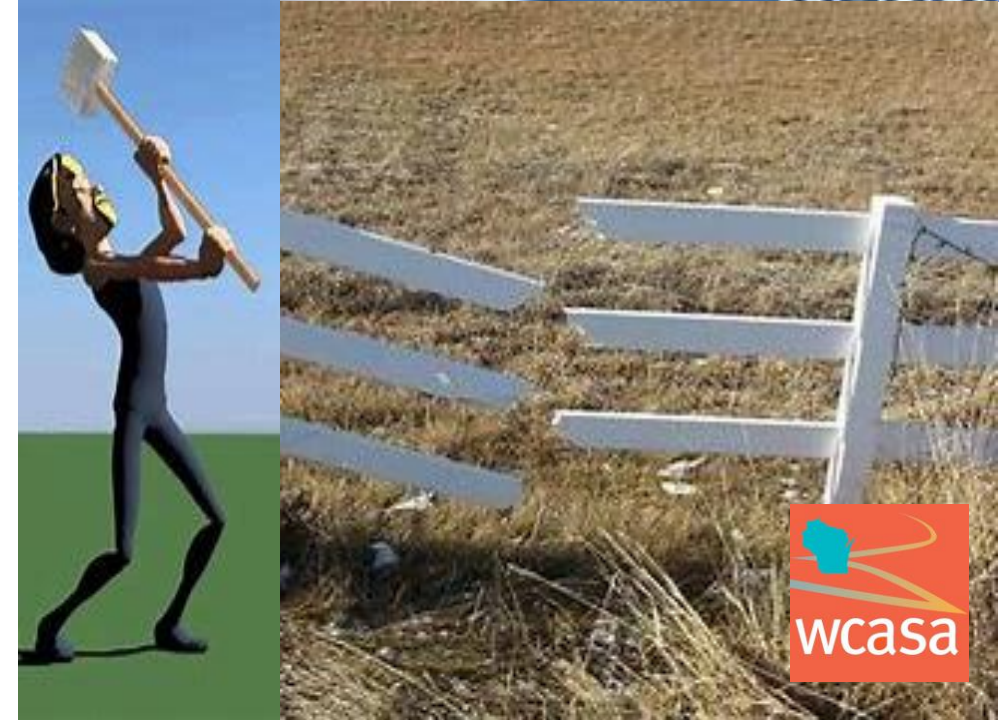
Violence In Indian Country

- ▶ According to a [study](#) from the National Institute of Justice, some 84 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their lifetime.
- ▶ While 35 percent of women (and 33 percent of men) experienced violence at the hands of a Native American perpetrator, a whopping 97 percent of women (and 90 percent of men) experienced violence committed by non-Native individuals.



When working in Tribal Communities

- ▶ Build True Partnerships
- ▶ Respect Tribes
 - ▶ They are their own experts.
 - ▶ Trust that they know what their community needs are.
 - ▶ Be inclusive not exclusive
 - ▶ Break down the Reservation Boundary
- ▶ Become a part of the community
- ▶ Learn about the Culture and History
- ▶ Intent is really important.



Questions!