Chat Log from Tribal Nations at Your Library webinar with Naomi Bishop 05.13.21

**Links**:

* Webinar Slides <https://www.masslibsystem.org/wp-content/uploads/The-American-Indian-Youth-Literature-Awards-in-your-Library-1.pdf>
* AILA awards webinar here <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity/continuing-education/webinars>
* AILA Brochure <https://www.masslibsystem.org/wp-content/uploads/2020-AILA-YLA-brochure.pdf>
* Tribal Nations and the United States link <https://www.ncai.org/about-tribes>
* Read Native 2021 challenge for youth and adults <https://ailanet.org/readnative21/>
* Feedback survey: <https://masslibsystem.libwizard.com/f/Native_Nations>

**Land Acknowledgements:**

Reference librarians have been RAVING over <https://native-land.ca/> It's fabulous!

I am an uninvited guest on Wapanaki, Nipmuc, and Pawtucket land.

Dakota and Anishinabe

Wampanoag

Ancestral lands of the Massachusett Tribe

Abenaki, Maliseet, Massa-adchu-es-et, Micmac, Pawtucket, Passamaquoddy, Penacook, and Penobscot tribes

Nipmuc and Pawtucket

Stockbridge-Munsee

Wampanoag

Wampanoag

Wampanoag

Pocumtuc and Nipmuc

Boston

Nonotuck and Nipmuc

I work and live on Pawtucket land. Massaadchueset

from Portland, OR: Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Chinook, Tualatin Kalapuya, Molalla and many other tribes and bands

Hassanamisco and Nipmuc

Wapanaki, Nipmuc, and Pawtucket landPocumtuc & Nipmuc

**Questions**:

1. Are there any lists/bibliographies of books that we can use to weed our collections of items that strongly misrepresent indigenous people?

* Debbie Reese’s American Indians in Children’s Literature has some really helpful lists! <https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/>
* Upstander Project: <https://upstanderproject.org/>

1. I’d love some guidance on how to explain to my staff why books like “Arthur’s Thanksgiving” aren’t appropriate for the collection any more (not that they ever were really but you know what I mean). I’ve tried to explaining that they perpetuate harmful misconceptions and provided the guidance list from Debbie Reese on collection review but NOSTALGIA has been a real sticking point. “I read those books to my kids, they’re classics, and they’re not racist against Native Americans”. I try to say explain that yes I read these books as a kid too but we know more now and can do better but it’s been a struggle.

* (this was addressed in the webinar)

1. April- what was the 'public portal' you were referring to?

* <https://ailanet.org/public-library-resources/>

1. Reclassifying books (this was also discussed during the webinar)

* yes, we should look at reclassification!
* Is this something we can do as a state? It's hard to change dewey but we could agree as a state
* It's a system. WE BUILT it!" That's my quote for the day!
* Library of congress should take a leadership role on this
* The Brian Deer Classification System is one example of a cataloging system designed to reflect local indigenous communities: <https://guides.library.ubc.ca/Indiglibrarianship/briandeer>
* It's meant for specialized collections but maybe there are elements that can be incorporated into LoC and Dewey

**Reflections**:

* I grew up in the 70's and 80's. I don't want to admit what I "learned" about Native Americans. It's shameful.
* I had a lot of cognitive dissonance around Native Americans as a child. Books implied that Indigenous people were gone. But, I lived near tribal land and knew people who are Native American.
* Growing up, I only learned about Native Americans from my Osage grandfather. I did not learn anything about us in academia, except with regard to the white version of Thanksgiving.
* I was in high school in the 70's and learned more from my own reading than from public education. My grandfather was an anthropologist in the early 1900's and lived for awhile with the Blackfeet Nation. I learned so much from his writings.
* Growing up in traditional Nipmuc territory, the Nipmucs were seen as something from the distant past and appropriated for trinkets and t-shirts. We learned more about the "Plains Indians" than those from our own hometown.
* I lived for many years in Canada and it's quite different there - the indigenous people are more visible.
* I grew up knowing some existed - I grew up in Mohawk territory and near Joseph Bruchac who came to my elementary school - but I thought they were mostly gone
* I taught movement to preschoolers in Scottsdale. I asked about what they knew about Native people. "They live in tepees...they bang on their mouths" etc. No, they lived 2 blocks from you on a reservation of block homes and cotton fields.
* I grew up Grafton where there is a Hassanamisco reservation. Many people appeared to greatly respect these residents.

**Resources Shared**:

* If anyone's interested in Brayboy's work: <https://isearch.asu.edu/profile/1148916>
* <https://www.routledge.com/Trauma-and-Resilience-in-the-Lives-of-Contemporary-Native-Americans-Reclaiming/Weaver/p/book/9781138088290>
* For MA folks, there is a 3rd grade unit in the History’s Mysteries curriculum that focuses on Native sovereignty. <https://sites.google.com/view/historys-mysteries/3rd-grade?authuser=0>
* Highly recommend the documentary “We Still Live Here – Âs Nutayuneân” about the Wampanoag
* Also: This Land Is Their Land: The Wampanoag Indians, Plymouth Colony, and the Troubled History of Thanksgiving by David Silverman
* I learned from "Braiding Sweetgrass" by Robin Wall Kimmerer that I can learn from plants, that plants can share stories with me that are powerful and educational.
* From April- that is the book I was talking about with Naomi before the webinar, I highly recommend it to all, especially the audio!
* Elizabeth Cousins: Boston Public Library librarians have connected with the Massachusetts tribe to collaborate on a Land Acknowledgement statement. I share this before all my programs. email me & I will share the statement, but know that it applies to Boston, which is Massachusett Tribal land. email is [ecousins@bpl.org](mailto:ecousins@bpl.org)
* There’s work toward getting a MA law to ban Native mascots in schools: <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/indigenous-legislative-agenda-co-sponsorship-drive?source=direct_link>
* MA Center for Native American Awareness has resources, ways to get involved, and programs. Claudia Fox Tree is on the board and she’s an awesome educator: <https://www.mcnaa.org/>
* <http://www.oyate.org/index.php/resources/41-resources/how-to-tell-the-difference>
* Traci Sorell <https://www.tracisorell.com/we-are-still-here>
* One of my favorite illustrators is Julie Flett, she is Cree-Metis and Canadian <https://www.julieflett.com/>

**Stereotypes, Tropes, and Misappropriation:**

Slow, drawling patterns of speech

Sports mascots

Totem poles

Definitely sports mascots

Cowboy & Indian movies

sage, long suffering, wise, obsolete

feathered headbands

People saying "The sloth is my spirit animal" (I used to say that. )

dream catchers

Sports and College mascots

I just saw a teepee as a toy house on a home decorating show yesterday!

A stereotype I heard a lot in CA was that Native Americans got lots of money from casinos and everyone was rich (which was SO not the experience I knew from my friends)

Redface (I think that's the term for white folks playing Native people?)

Western movies & TV, mid-20th century kids playing "Cowboys and Indians"

Our town name, Nahant, was appropriated from Native language, and people argue over what it means.

appropriation: teepee and feather head dress

I grew up right outside the Oneida Indian Reservation in Upstate NY, it’s amazing how little we actually learned about their history and culture even though they were neighbors.

My high school mascot is still the Indians. We played the Pioneers in the big Thanksgiving football game. The language at the pep rallies, even then, was cringe worthy

movies depict "laziness"

Halloween costumes

Team names, street names, park names, camp groups, oy!

Museums not returning Native American sacred items when requested

The YMCA used to have a program called "Indian Princesses" which was definitely discontinued finally because it was racist! My sister and I were enrolled with my dad when we were little.

Scouts

This is obvious, but a lot of youth media—Peter Pan, Little House, Oregon Trail (like mentioned), Tintin…

People using saying “My Spirit Animal is …”

I lived in Acton, Ma for several years in the neighborhood called locally "Indian VIllage" - many of the streets are called: Agawam, Seneca, Quaboag, Mohawk, Wampanoag, etc.

calling people "Pocahontas"

Also often town logos have stereotypical imagery of indigenous folks (I work in Watertown, MA and cringe at our seal)

My grade school mascot was the Savages.

Yeah, I grew up notoriously, brutally stolen “Nez Perce” land, the name is a colonizer name too, not from the people.

If anyone drives route one by the Square One mall, you'll probably notice the new Saugus high school building showcasing their mascot, the Sachems. I cringe every time we drive past it.