



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2019 Volume II: Teaching about Race and Racism Across the Disciplines

Incorporating Native American History and Settler Colonialism in the AP United States History Course

Guide for Curriculum Unit 19.02.04
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AP United States History is one of the more popular courses among high school scholars, but the established curriculum often reproduces an ideology of racial colorblindness and legitimized racism. Many students are never exposed to a narrative that challenges the ideas of settler colonialism within the College Board's AP curriculum.

In this seminar unit, I augment the AP U.S. History course with crucial concepts in Native American studies. Multiple perspectives and primary and secondary source documents are the foundation of historical insight, truth and fact. The resources provide firsthand descriptions, opinions, and accounts, which elucidates the past while allowing students to better understand the present. Native American voices provide a much-needed counter narrative to the colonial settler paradigm and historical documents bring to life new perspectives and insights into the past.

This curriculum unit examines the Sioux and Coeur d'Alene in film as secondary sources of Native American cultures, two modern writers (Joy Harjo and Sherman Alexie) to divulge Native American voices and a primary source by the American Indian Movement (*The Trail of Broken Treaties: A 20-point Position Paper*) to rewrite the colonial settler narrative. How does *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* and *Smoke Signals* challenge colorblindness in the AP curriculum? How do Harjo and Alexie compose a new account that punctures legitimized racism in modern America? How does the American Indian Movement provide a counter narrative to the settler colonial ideas embedded in the current curriculum? At the end of the unit, students will clearly be able to counter the colonial settler narrative and legitimized racism in the AP U.S. History curriculum.

(Developed for A.P. U. S. History, grades 11-12; recommended for U. S. History, grades 10-11)

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