

Indigenous Americans Today - Asserting Their Sovereignty and Culture Weekly Topics and Schedule

Participants will explore and lead a discussion on one of the indicated topics, using a specific tribe(s) or case(s) suggested by the moderators. In week 8, two participants will lead a discussion of the novel *The Night Watchman*, by Louise Erdrich. In week 10, we will discuss the article “A Living Testament” on our first Native American Interior Secretary, Deb Haaland, and her agenda.

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- Week 1 **Introductions and background** (Margaret; Miriam)
- Week 2 **Sovereignty rules**
- The casino gambling game (Cahuilla Ind. Tribes, CA; Mashuntucket Pequot Tribe, CT)
 - Federal recognition (Mashpee Wampanoag, MA)
- Week 3 **Whose land is it?**
- The Black Hills, SD – Sioux land (tribal purchase; co-management possibilities)
 - Settling long-standing land claims (AK Native Corps. vs. new Inuit province in Canada)
- Week 4 **Treaty rights – handling critical natural resources**
- Protecting Native fisheries (NW Tribes, WA; Aleut Peoples, AK, innovative co-mgmt)
 - Can scarce water be shared? (Navajo Nation (AZ/NM/UT); Gila River Indian Comm., AZ)
- Week 5 **Sacred sites, remains, and objects**
- Preserving sacred places (Bears Ears NM, UT; Monagan Indian Nation, VA)
 - Return of sacred remains and objects (Saginaw Chippewa Tribe, MI)
- Week 6 **Forced assimilation**
- Healing from boarding school trauma (US Initiative & Coalition; Canadian Truth/Recon.)
 - Preserving Native language (Mashpee Wampanoag, MA; Navajo Nation; Native Language immersion Initiative)
- Week 7 **Protections for Indigenous women and children**
- Indian child welfare/adoption (Maine’s Truth/Rec. Comm; Supreme Court challenge to Indian Child Welfare Act)
 - Addressing violence against Indigenous women (new provisions in Violence Against Women Act; first alert system for missing Indigenous people, WA; NM Coalition)
- Week 8 **Discussion:** *The Night Watchman*, by Louise Erdrich
- Week 9 **Making change - political voices**
- The advocates (Nat. Congr. of Am. Inds.; Am. Ind. Movement; Native Am. Rights Fund)
 - Getting out the vote – challenges and successes (Navajo Nat; Gila Cty, AZ; MT tribes)
- Week 10 **Discussion:** “A Living Testament” (Interior Sec. Haaland) (Margaret); wrap up

Reading and Resources

Required: *The Night Watchman*, by Louise Erdrich (Pulitzer-prize winning historical fiction); and “A Living Testament,” *Sierra Club* magazine article on Secretary Haaland (on-line).

> Strongly recommended background: *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee*, by David Treuer (2019).

The moderators will share background research resources for each topic (many on-line).