

The History and Present of the Wampanoag Nation

NEH Multi-Modal Text Set

EMILY MARTLAND JUL 20, 2023 10:05PM UTC

Guiding Questions

How is the history of the Wampanoag Nation and relations between the Wampanoag Nation and early colonizers from Europe depicted? In what ways are those depictions helpful, and in what ways are they limiting or fully inaccurate?

How are members of different Wampanoag tribes today continuing to thrive and continuing to work towards language and land reclamation?

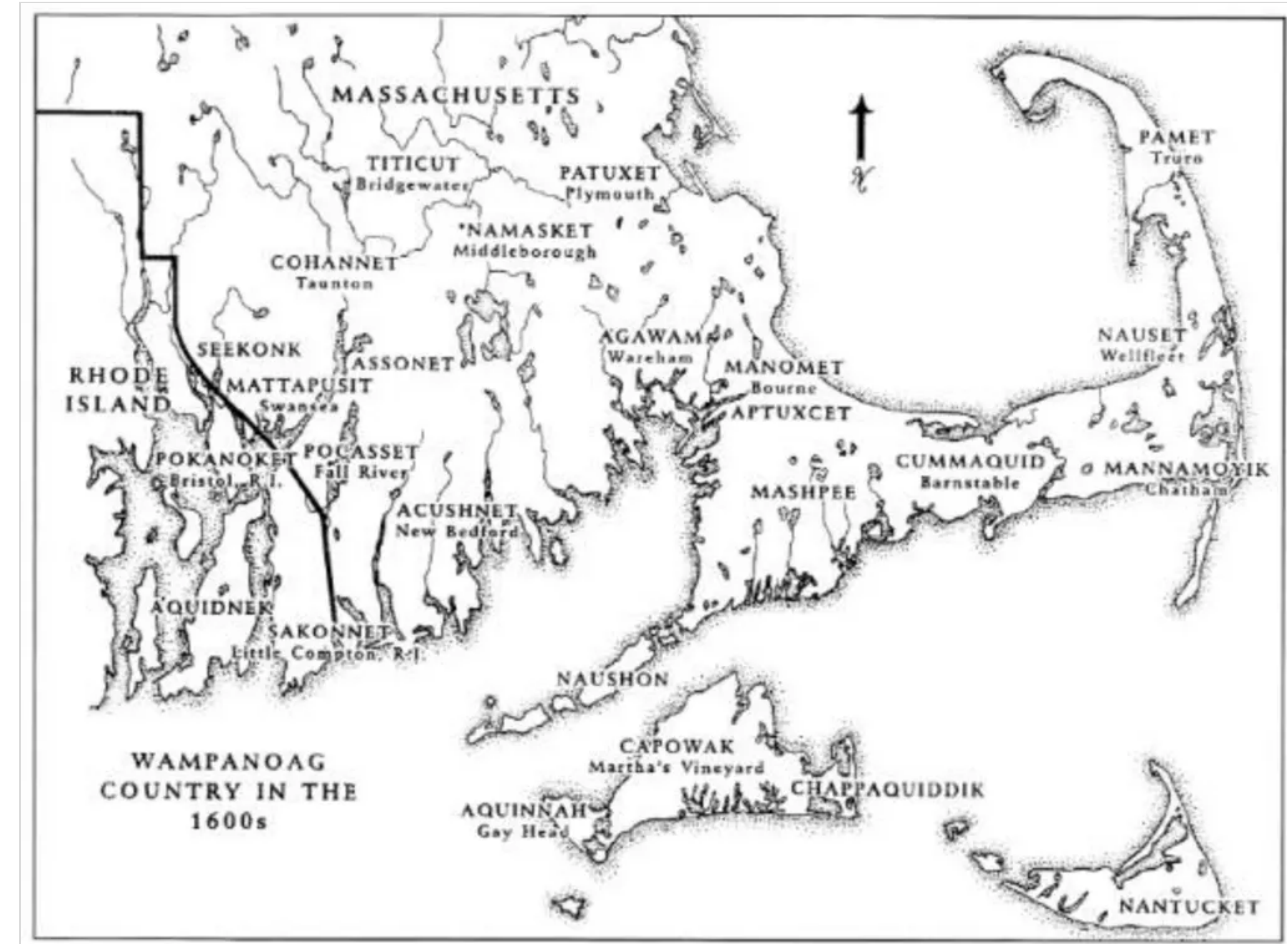
Synopsis

This text set focuses specifically on the Wampanoag Nation. It begins with a collection of counterstories of the “first Thanksgiving” and early colonization, challenging the interpretation of relations between European settlers and the Wampanoag Nation that is often taught in New England schools, before moving forward to texts that relate to the Wampanoag Nation today, focusing specifically on language reclamation, debates over land and naming, and oral histories and ceremonies. As a whole, the text set aims to challenge the myth of the “vanishing Indian” and illustrate the many ways that the Wampanoag Nation continues to survive in New England today.

Maps

Sacred Sites and Wampanoag Land in the 1600s

This is a website provided by the Pocasset Wampanoag Tribe of the Pokanoket Nation. The site includes a map of Wampanoag territory around 1600, with Wampanoag names for villages alongside English names. The site also provides names, images, and brief descriptions of sacred sites on Wampanoag territory.



Territory of the Wampanoag, c. 1620

This map shows the territory of the Wampanoag nation around the year 1620, which was the year when English settlers first created a settlement on Wampanoag land at a location the Europeans named Plymouth. The land of

the Wampanoag Nation encompassed much of present-day southeastern Massachusetts and eastern Rhode Island. Within the Wampanoag Nation in 1620, there were at least 67 distinct tribal communities.



This section provides counterstories of the 1621 event that would later become known as the "first Thanksgiving" alongside other moments from Wampanoag history of the seventeenth century.

Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War

This is a history of King Philip's War and the early colonization of the United States that emphasizes the people and communities of Native New England, especially the Nipmuc and Wampanoag Nations and the Wabanaki Confederacy. Excerpts from the "Introduction" could be especially useful for helping students think about counterstories to what they may have previously learned about New England in the seventeenth century.

Federal- and State-Recognized Native Land Today

This map shows federally recognized and state recognized reservation areas in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Currently, there are only two federally recognized tribes in Massachusetts: the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and the Wampanoag Aquinnah Tribe. There are at least four other visible tribal communities within the Wampanoag Nation in Massachusetts who are not currently federally recognized.

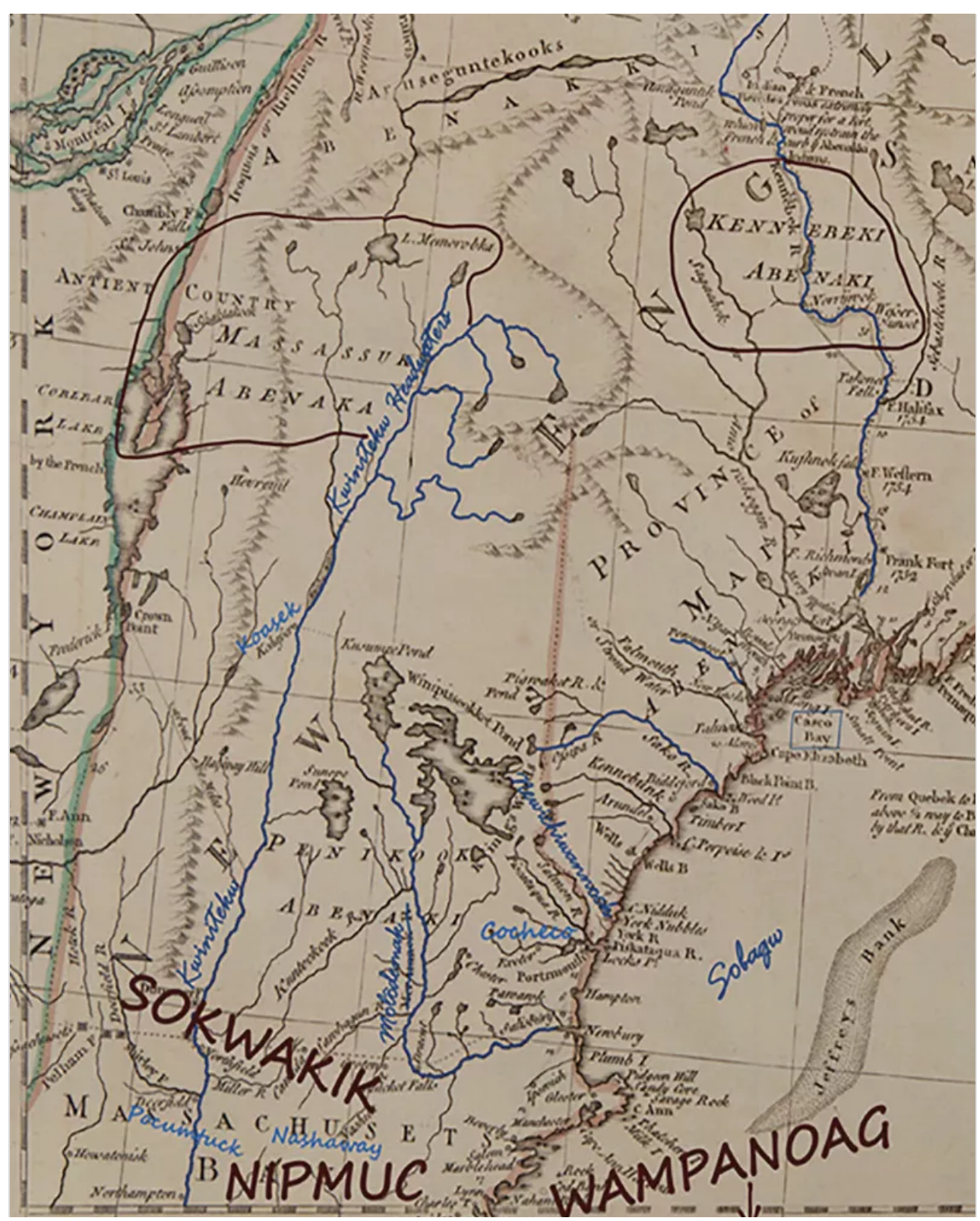
Official US Native Land Area Representations - Native Land Information System

This maps displays US Native lands as Represented by the US Census Bureau, US Bureau of Indian Affairs, and 1978 India Claims Commission.

NATIVE LAND INFORMATION SYSTEM

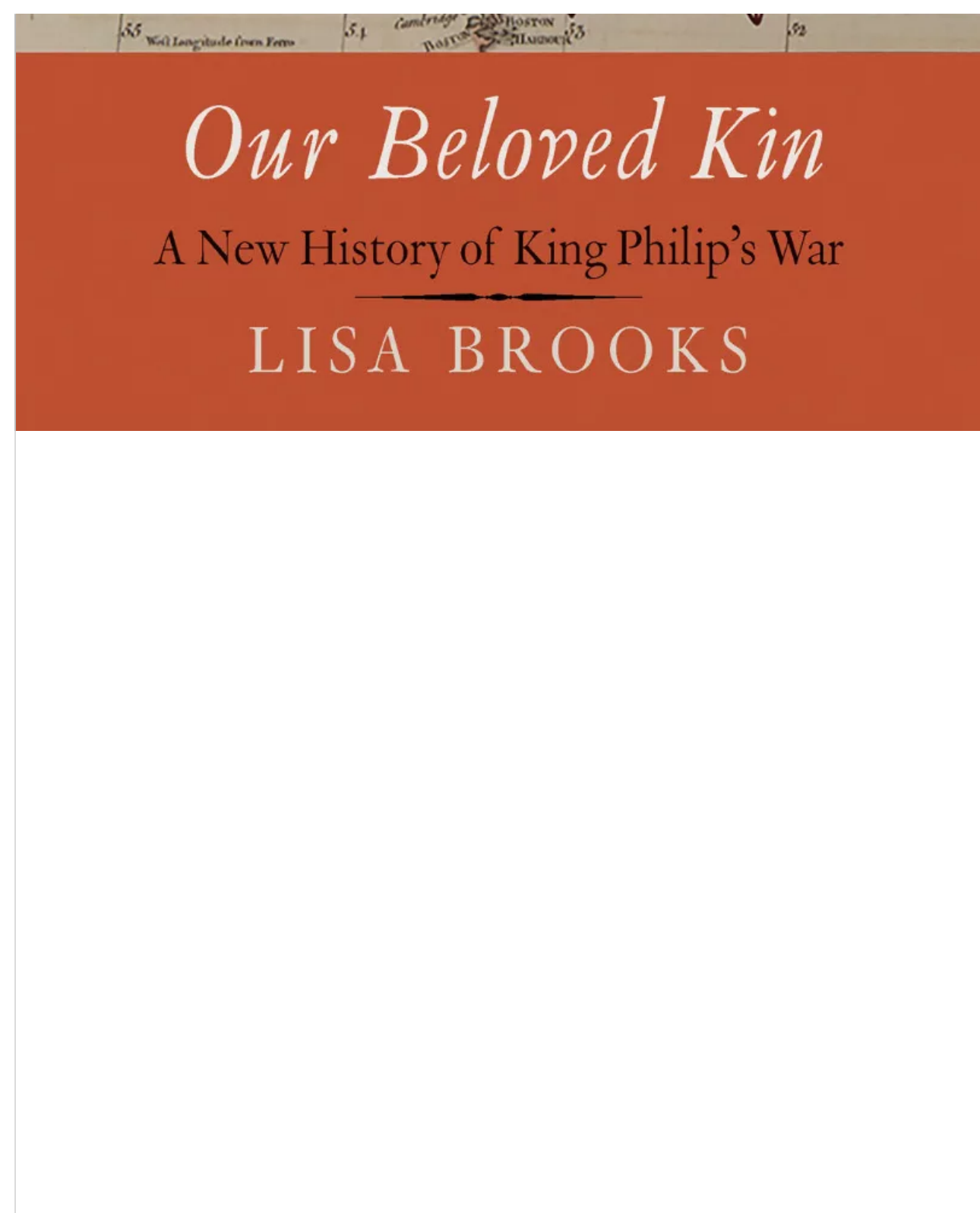


Counterstories



An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People

This book provides an Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States and can help frame the events of the 1600s and beyond in the wider context of settler colonialism.

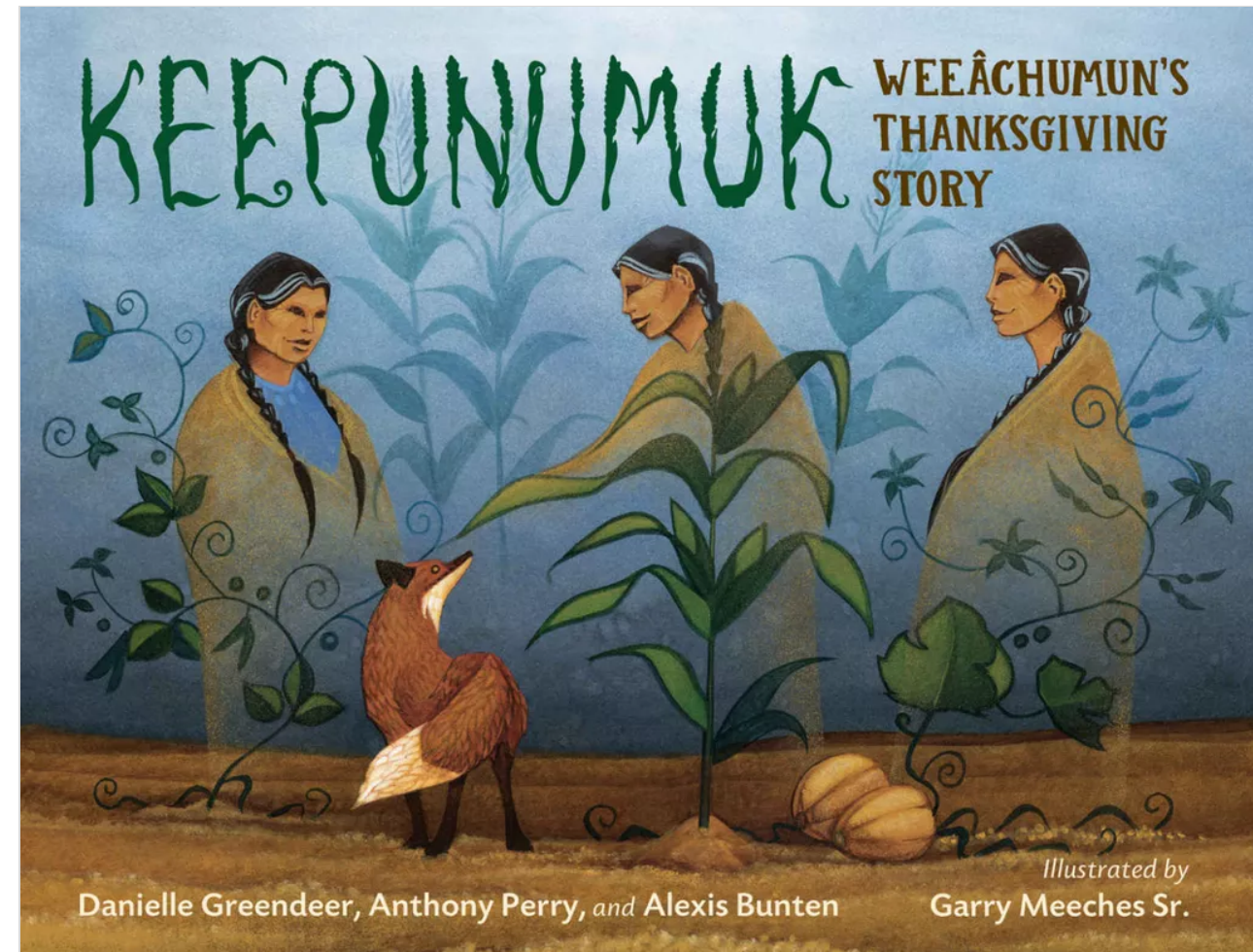


AN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Keepunumuk: Weeâchumun's Thanksgiving Story

This picture book tells the story of the 1621 harvest feast that would later be called the first Thanksgiving. It aims to help readers understand a more full picture of Keepunumuk, centering the role of the Wampanoag people. Danielle Greendeer, one of the authors of the picture book, is herself a member of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe.



More information about Keepunumuk

This article provides some background for *Keepunumuk: Weeâchumun's Thanksgiving Story* and provides more historical context about the years after Keepunumuk.

Rethinking Thanksgiving - Keepunumuk: Wee'achumun's Thanksgiving Story

Many Americans see Thanksgiving as a holiday rooted in our nation's birth, celebrating a harvest feast. They imagine tables laden with turkey and its accompaniments, surrounded by brave Pilgrims and their newfound "Indian" friends. These ideas are reinforced every year in America's classrooms, on televisions and at annual parades as the big day arrives.

KEEPUNUMUK: WEE'ACHUMUN'S THANKSGIVING STORY

ADAPTED BY JEAN MENDOZA AND DEBBIE REESE

Colonization and the Wampanoag Story

While this book has not yet been published, it will be a nonfiction account of American colonization from an Indigenous perspective. It is a middle grade book written by Linda Coombs, who is an historian and member of the Wampanoag Tribe of Aquinnah.

RACE TO THE TRUTH

COLONIZATION AND THE WAMPANOAG STORY



The Suppressed Speech of Wamsutta (Frank) James, 1970

In 1970, Frank James or Wamsutta was invited by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to speak at a state dinner commemorating the 350th anniversary of the first Thanksgiving. Prior to the actual event, the event organizers asked for a copy of his speech. When they read the speech he intended to deliver, his invitation to speak was rescinded because his remarks were “too inflammatory.” The speech linked here is the speech that Wamsutta originally wrote, which describes the choice of Massasoit, the Sachem of the Wampanoag, to welcome and help the English settlers as “perhaps our biggest mistake.”

Suppressed Speech

ABOUT THE DOCUMENT: Three hundred fifty years after the Pilgrims began their invasion of the land of the Wampanoag, their “American” descendants planned an anniversary celebration. Still clinging to the white schoolbook myth of friendly relations between their forefathers and the Wampanoag, the anniversary planners thought it would be nice to have an Indian make an appreciative and complimentary speech at their state dinner.

UAINE



National Day of Mourning

After the event organizers refused to let Wamsutta deliver his intended speech, they provided another speech he could deliver instead. Wamsutta refused to deliver the second speech and instead held a separate event on Cole’s Hill above Plymouth Rock. He delivered his initial speech and declared Thanksgiving to be a National Day of Mourning. The video linked above provides more information about the National Day of Mourning and contextualizes it within a broader Native American Civil Rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s.



National Day Of Mourning

by Mayflower 400 UK

YOUTUBE



We Are Still Here: Four hundred years of Wampanoag history

by Mayflower 400 UK

YOUTUBE

"We Are Still Here"

This video provides a brief overview of 400 years of Wampanoag history, from the landing of the Mayflower in 1620 to the year 2020, when the video was created. The video emphasizes the continued presence of Wampanoag people.

1911 Image of Metacomet (King Philip)

In 1675, a Wampanoag Sachem named Metacomet (called King Philip by the English) led an armed rebellion against the colonists. Metacomet was the son of Massasoit, who had been generous to the pilgrims, but by the time Metacomet became sachem, Metacomet had seen the continual intrusion of the pilgrims onto Wampanoag land. He was also unhappy with continued efforts on the part of the settlers to convert the Wampanoag people to Christianity. This print depicts a treaty negotiation between Metacomet and the settlers in 1676, but the war eventually ended with Metacomet's death that same year.

[King (Metacomet) Philip, Sachem of the Wampanoags, d. 1676, full length, standing at treaty table with white men]

1 item.

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Language Revitalization

This section provides sources related to the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project, founded by Jessie Little Doe Baird in the 1990s.

The Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project

In 1994, Jessie Little Doe Baird, a member of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe began having recurring dreams that featured people addressing her in a language she did not recognize. After Jessie Little Doe Baird realized that the language she was hearing was Wampanoag, which had been out of use for over a century, she embarked on an effort to reclaim the Wampanoag language through existing documents and linguistics. Jessie Little Doe Baird's daughter Mae will grow up as a native speaker of the Wampanoag language. This is the official website of the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project founded by Jessie Little Doe Baird.

Home | Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project

Bringing back our language one student at a time This sacred message was given to Jessie 'little doe' Baird in Wôpanâôt8âôk (Wampanoag language) during the same dream for three nights in a row. During the dream she saw the same circle of faces...faces of her ancestors.

WLRP



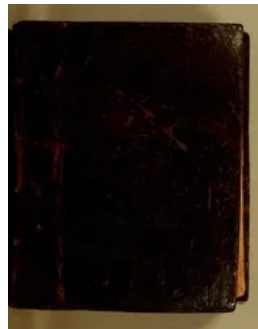
The Eliot Bible

One of the sources Jessie Little Doe Baird used to recreate the Wampanoag language was a bible created by John Eliot in 1685. The bible was written in Wampanoag and was part of a European effort to convert members of the Wampanoag Nation to Christianity. This link includes a virtual version of the Eliot Bible.

Mamusse wunneetupanatamwe Up-Biblum God naneeswe Nukkone Testament kah wonk Wusku Testament. : Eliot, John, 1604-1690 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

The second edition of Eliot's Indian Bible, revised by Eliot and John Cotton

INTERNET ARCHIVE



Language Immersion School

As part of the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project, the project created a full-day language immersion preschool to foster the Wampanoag language. The school opened in the 2016-2017 school year, but was temporarily paused after the 2017-2018 school year, due to uncertainty over the federal status of the Mashpee

Wampanoag Reservation under the Trump administration. The school then reopened under the control of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe. This PDF linked here details the curriculum and goals of Mukayuhsak Weekuw, or The Children's House.

Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project



WEEKUW (THE CHILDREN'S HOUSE) LANGUAGE NEST: IMMERSION MONTESSORI PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN

Beyond-Standing-Rock.pdf

PDF document

COMMUNITYACTIONWORKS.ORG

We Still Live Here – Âs Nutayuneân

This documentary covers Jessie Little Doe Baird's work and the process by which the Wampanoag language was recreated. It discusses both the linguistic work necessary to recreate a language with no living speakers and discusses the effects of language reclamation on the community as a whole.

We Still Live Here

Âs Nutayuneân

a film by Anne Makepeace

*"There is nothing I know of
that's anything like the
Wampanoag case."*

- Noam Chomsky



Produced, Written and Directed by ANNE MAKEPEACE
Edited by MARY LAMPSON & ANNE MAKEPEACE
Animation by RUTH LINGFORD
Assistant Producer JENNIFER WESTON

Weetumuw School

This website on the Mashpee Wampanoag tribal website provides initial information about the language immersion school created by the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project (WLRP). While initially created by the WLRP, the school is now under the control of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe.

Immersion School Planning – Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe are the people of the first light. They have lived in southeastern Massachusetts for over 12,000 years. Today, the majority of the citizens of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe continue to live and work in their ancestral homelands.

MASHPEEWAMPANOAGTRIBE-NSN.GOV



Q&A: Jessie Little Doe Baird

In this interview, Jessie Little Doe Baird (a member of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and the founder of the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project) discusses the federal government's efforts to remove trust status from Wampanoag land and other issues affecting Native people as a whole and the Wampanoag Nation specifically.

Q&A: jessie little doe baird

Mashpee Wampanoag Indian Tribal Council Vice-Chairwoman jessie little doe baird discusses issues facing the Wampanoag and other Native Americans.

UU WORLD MAGAZINE



WBUR Coverage

This article is an example of local land coverage of the language immersion school created by the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe.

Mashpee Wampanoag School Looks To Revive Teachings Of Native Language

A school that opened last year and is hoping to expand this fall is immersing children from the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe in the tribal language.

WBUR



Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2016

This link leads to a federal government law that provides for the revitalization of Native American languages through language immersion programs.

WWW.CONGRESS.GOV

www.MakepeaceProductions.com

Land Reclamation

This section provides information related to Wampanoag land reclamation, especially the efforts by the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe to have the land trust status of their land recognized by the federal government.

Letter to Brian Weeden, Chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

This letter to the Chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe details the United States' 2021 decision to recognize the land trust status of Mashpee Wampanoag land. While the Mashpee Wampanoag Reservation was initially created in 2015, recognition of the land trust status was later rescinded by the Trump administration. The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe challenged the Trump Administration's decision in court and was eventually successful in getting their land trust status recognized.

Chairman, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
483 Great Neck Road South
Mashpee, Massachusetts 02649

Dear Chairman Weeden:

On June 5, 2012, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe¹ (Mashpee Tribe or Tribe) submitted an amended application to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) requesting that the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) acquire approximately 170 acres in the Town of Mashpee, Massachusetts and approximately 151 acres in the City of Taunton, Massachusetts (collectively Parcels) in trust for the Tribe's benefit (Application).²

On September 18, 2015, the Department of the Interior (Department) issued a Record of Decision (2015 ROD) to acquire the Parcels in trust for the Tribe.³ The BIA accepted title to the Parcels in trust for the benefit of the Tribe on November 10, 2015, and proclaimed them the Tribe's initial reservation on December 30, 2015.⁴ The Parcels have remained in trust from the time BIA accepted title.

For the reasons set forth below, and based on my review of the record compiled in this matter and the matters that have been the subject of litigation, I find that statutory authority for acquiring the Parcels exists under Section 5 of the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA); the 2015 decision to acquire such Parcels in trust first made by then Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn should be

¹ In 2007, the Department formally acknowledged the Tribe pursuant to the administrative procedures set forth at 25 C.F.R. Part 83, *see* Final Determination for Federal Acknowledgement of the Mashpee Wampanoag Indian Tribal Council, Inc. of Massachusetts, 72 Fed. Reg. 8007 (Feb. 22, 2007). The Tribe has appeared on the list of federally recognized tribes every year since. *E.g.*, Indian Entities Recognized by and Eligible To Receive Services From the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs, 86 Fed. Reg. 7556 (Jan. 29, 2021).

² On August 30, 2007, the Tribe submitted an application requesting that 539 acres in Middleborough, Massachusetts, and 140 acres in Mashpee, Massachusetts, be acquired in trust. On July 13, 2010, the Tribe submitted an amendment requesting that the Department no longer acquire land in Middleborough and instead acquire a 300-acre parcel in Fall River,

IA11147+Mashpee+Wampanoag+Tribe+Land+into+Trust+Decision+FINAL+ASIA+12.22.21.pdf

PDF document

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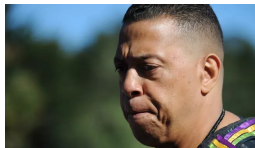
The Cape Cod Times, 1 August 2020

Local news coverage of the legal battle between the federal government and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe over the status of the Mashpee Wampanoag land.

Interior Department appeals June ruling over Wampanoag land

WASHINGTON - The Department of the Interior is appealing a federal judge's ruling that the...

CAPE COD TIMES



The Cape Cod Times, 22 December 2021

Local news coverage of the legal battle between the federal government and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe over the status of the Mashpee Wampanoag land.

'This news is so welcome': Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe can retain reservation land

U.S. Department of Interior reverses a Trump administration order rescinding the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe's right to 321 acres of reservation land.

CAPE COD TIMES



Support Congressional Bill H.R. 312 Flier

Flier garnering support for Congressional Bill H.R. 312 and publicizing the effects of the uncertain land trust status on the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe.



SUPPORT

CONGRESSIONAL BILL

H.R. 312

The Mashpee Reservation Reaffirmation Act

bill-support-flyer-8.5x11-v2.pdf.%20Accessed%2019%20July%202023

PDF document

SQUARESPACE

Place Names and Renaming

This section provides information about the renaming of places in Massachusetts, focusing especially on the town of Aquinnah and the Plimoth Patuxet Museums. In the case of Aquinnah, the town was renamed Gay Head in 1870 over the opposition of the Wampanoag Aquinnah Tribe, whose land the town sits on. The town was eventually renamed Aquinnah in 1997. In the case of Plimoth Patuxet, the museum that was previously called Plimoth Plantation was renamed the Plimoth Patuxet Museums in 2020 as part of a broader effort to reconsider the museum's approach to Wampanoag history.

The Vineyard Gazette, 17 May 2018

In 1870, the town of Gay Head was incorporated on Wampanoag land, over the unanimous objections of members of the Wampanoag Aquinnah Tribe. In 1997, the town voted to change the town name to Aquinnah, in order to recognize the town's Native American heritage. This article discusses the name change about twenty years after the fact.

Aquinnah Officially Turns 20, But Gay Head Name Endures

Just over 20 years ago this week, the Island's smallest town voted to rebrand itself from Gay Head to Aquinnah, the area's original Native American name.

THE VINEYARD GAZETTE - MARTHA'S VINEYARD NEWS



Tribal Website and History – Wampanoag Aquinnah Tribe

This website provides an overview of Wampanoag history written by the Wampanoag Aquinnah Tribe, which includes reference to the renaming of the area previously called “Gay Head,” back to “Aquinnah,” which is the Wampanoag name for the area.

Wampanoag History - Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)

The last great North American glacier began its retreat some 10,000 years ago, leaving behind the accumulation of boulders, sand, and clay that is now known as Martha's Vineyard. There, it is said, a benevolent being named Moshup roamed the land. One day, Moshup was making his way across the mainland to the headlands of the Aquinnah Cliffs.

WAMPANOAG TRIBE OF GAY HEAD (AQUINNAH)



Smithsonian Magazine, 16 July 2020

This article provides news coverage of the 2020 decision by the Plimoth Patuxet Museums to change its name from the former name, Plimoth Plantation.

Massachusetts' Plimoth Plantation Will Change Its Name

The new moniker will incorporate the Mashpee Wampanoag name for the region: Patuxet

SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE



The Boston Globe, 19 November 2020

News coverage of the name change at the Plimoth Patuxet Museums, questioning whether just changing the museum's name is enough.

More than name change may be needed at former Plimoth Plantation - The Boston Globe

The name Plimoth Patuxet reflects a long commitment to Wampanoag history, but the exhibits themselves are still due for a refresh.

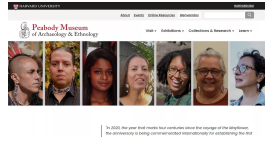
BOSTONGLOBE.COM



Listening to Wampanoag Voices: Beyond 1620

In acknowledgment of this early history, the Peabody Museum has asked Wampanoag tribal members to reflect on collections spanning the seventeenth to twentieth centuries and stewarded by the Peabody Museum. Listen in as they share memories, thoughts, and reflections about collection items made by their ancestors and relatives and learn how Wampanoag life and culture continues to flourish today.

HARVARD



Oral Histories and Other Resources

Listening to Wampanoag Voices: Beyond 1620

This website includes a collection of recordings of Wampanoag people discussing objects that are culturally significant to the Wampanoag Nation. Some of the objects discussed include an anchor, an eel trap, and different types of baskets.

Powwows held by the Pocasset Wampanoag Tribe of the Pokanoket Nation

This website provides a selection of videos of different Powwows recorded by the Pocasset Wampanoag Tribe of the Pokanoket Nation.

Videos – THE POCASSET WAMPANOAG TRIBE OF THE POKANOKET NATION

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