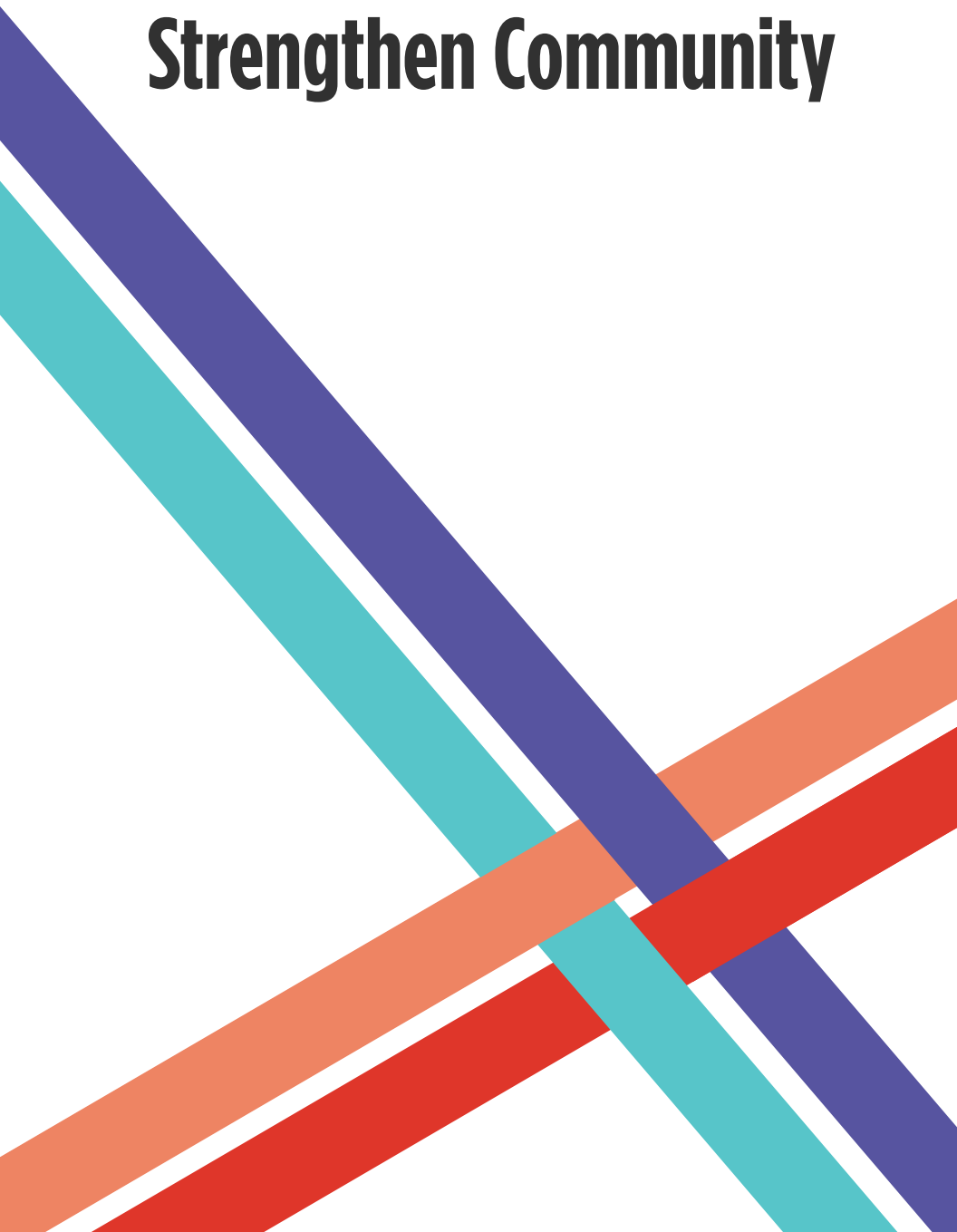


Celebrate Diversity, Strengthen Community



Celebrate Diversity: Strengthen Community—Questioning Stereotypes is an introduction to the biases and stereotypes about Native people and other individuals that affect our ability to build a community of mutual respect and tolerance. This interactive booklet was designed to be used by teachers, families, home school, and youth groups as they navigate the complex, and often confusing, issues of stereotyping.

This project is a modest contribution to the wealth of excellent resources on the subject. With Native people at the center of this particular exploration, we hope to introduce the danger and limitations of such distorted generalizations. These same types of misconceptions are directed toward to a wide array of groups in America today. It is our hope that the information and activities that follow will begin a conversation that will gain momentum beyond the limitations of the printed page.

The idea for this project grew out of ***Tonto, Teepees, and Totem Poles: Native American Stereotypes in the 21st Century***, a 2018 exhibit at the Iroquois Museum. Funds for the development of this booklet were graciously provided by Jack & Louise Daniels Peace Award from the Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School. The Peace Award was created in 2007. Many thanks to Sue Spivack for nominating the IIM for this opportunity and to Superintendent Carl Mummenthey for supporting and encouraging its completion.

Celebrate Diversity: Strengthen Community—Questioning Stereotypes is also available as a downloadable pdf from the Museum's website www.IroquoisMuseum.org.

What is a STEREOTYPE?

A STEREOTYPE is a simplified and fixed idea about a group of people. Sometimes these ideas are partially true (for some of the individuals in the group) but often these ideas are exaggerated and downright inaccurate. For example: A common stereotype about girls is that they love to shop. Do all girls love to shop? Do you know any girls who think shopping is boring and/or a waste of time? The idea that all girls love to shop is a stereotype and is not true for everyone.

Another example might be that all kids would rather play videogames than listen to music, ride their bikes, or do something creative. While this may be true for some kids, it's certainly not true for everyone! Many different types of stereotypes can be found on the internet, on television, in the movies, in cartoons, and in advertisements. Often, toys, video games, school logos, and team mascots also use stereotypes.

Examples of stereotypes:

All Native Americans lived in teepees....

Only the Plains tribes lived in teepees. There were many other kinds of Native American homes depending on climate, life style, and the kinds of building materials that were available. Today, most Native people live in homes that look just like yours.



All Native people have dark skin and long, black, straight hair...

Some do and some don't. Native people can be tall, short, have straight or curly hair. Native people have different hair, skin, and eye colors. Each Native American person has his or her own look.

All Native people have the same traditions and language...There are hundreds of different Native American tribes and nations. Each has its own history, songs, dances, stories, language, beliefs, culture, and traditions.

WORD SEARCH: Find 10 words that describe things that are usually only worn by Iroquois for special occasions or not at all.

H V P N S B O W D T U M S G B U N O F S
S N L E G D J L Q V X C S R A B K S V Q
V N G T E N N O B R A W E A F R R W B L
S G I R Q M J G B T B E R T D E T F A J
E O M S O X S I F S C B D B H B Y E W V
M V G A A F D Y G H U S D T Q R G T R C
O D F M N C K L C G L W A H S A F R W S
J U G J S V C L K M Q E E D H I M Z K W
Y D M G G L O O L B F U H U N D M X R M
Z Q E F R T H N M K Y V U H C S L Z Q J
U W T G H X L K N Z P P I J G R J Q N W
C X T L R M J I O V Y N X J S E D O U D
Z C Y P E D F O X A O S K U Q L R B W C
A F X J D E O E A A G C L I V F Y Q T B
P H K R G F E Z V H U U U S B S W Q S T
H G M N S Y S J B R R H A T S J G V J G
P Z N B O H J K B M D T O U D Z D J L F
W A R P A I N T H P E Z I U S I T F O R
H F Y K M T K C K A P V V M M P G Z U L
Q H P G C T D E V F C I L I Y L O Y M A

BRAIDS
BREECHCLOTH
FEATHERS
GARTERS
HEADDRESS
KNIFE
MOCCASINS
SHAWL
WARBONNET
WARPAINT

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Sometimes stereotypes can be more than just inaccurate, they can be insulting and hurtful.

Assuming that all tall kids will be good at basketball or that all Native American people know how to do Native dances is a stereotype. Another example might be that all boys are rambunctious troublemakers who lack self control. If a teacher needed to ask a student to take something to the school office or hand out materials, how might that stereotype impact his or her decision about who to ask?

When we expect people to behave and think in a certain way because that's how they are portrayed in movies or video games does not take into account their individual differences. Often we expect people to act or think like the stereotypes we see because they are different from ourselves, and we've never actually met anyone who looks or speaks like them. This kind of thinking does not take into account their individual differences and may lead to misunderstandings, hurt feelings, or even anger.

Stereotypes are based on assumptions and/or prejudices. Native American people are often the targets of stereotyping but they are not the only ones. People who belong to particular religious groups, people with disabilities, students who like heavy metal music, and many, many other groups experience stereotyping. Stereotypes are also present in figures of speech. These expressions are very often used incorrectly, are insulting, or just wrong.



What is DISCRIMINATION?

Discrimination is when a group of people is treated unequally to those around them. This may mean not having access to the same opportunities or rights as other groups or being treated as less valuable than other groups of people.

Examples of discrimination: Starting in the late 1800's, many Native children were taken away from their families and communities and put into residential schools where they were not permitted to speak their languages or practice their cultural traditions. Their names were changed, their hair was cut and their traditional clothing was replaced with uniforms and non-Native clothing. This was done in an effort to re-make Native American children into non-Natives. At that time, it was believed by some that Native traditions were inferior and of little value. Today, many people around the world show great respect for Native American teachings and traditions.

AT THE MUSEUM: Find the artwork that shows an example of this particular type of discrimination. Can you find examples of things in the artwork that show Iroquois ideas or ways that are respected today? What are they?

A second example of discrimination is when Europeans came to North America and established the United States. In the years that followed, many Native Americans were removed from their ancestral homelands. They were forced to live in places that no one else wanted to inhabit and that were far from the newly established non-Native communities. For an example, read about the Trail of Tears <https://www.nps.gov/trte/index.htm> . In this example of discrimination, 16,000 Cherokees were ordered by President Andrew Jackson to leave their possessions behind and travel (mostly on foot) hundreds of miles in the dead of winter. Over 1000 Cherokee died on the way and several thousand perished later as a consequence of their forced relocation.

Here are a number of actual signs from different years.



1940'S



2014



1912



2010



2016

When you think of a Native American person who do you picture?

A person with dark skin and a feather in their long hair?
Someone sending smoke signals and wearing deerskin?

Who they think we are.



Who we really are.



Sometimes we have certain expectations about people based on what we **think** they are like.

On page 7 are photographs of Native individuals who have jobs and interests that may surprise you. Try matching the jobs with the correct individuals. Answers on Page 17.

Did some of the answers surprise you? Why?



A. _____



B. _____



C. _____



D. _____



E. _____



F. _____



G. _____



H. _____



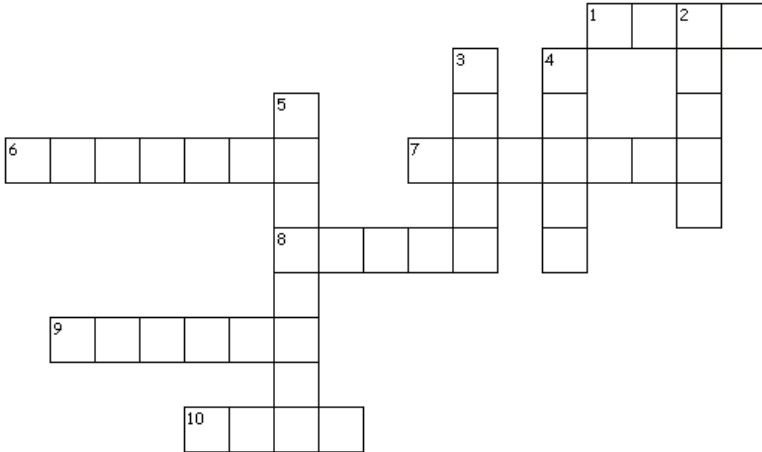
I. _____

- 1. ASTRONAUT
- 2. IRONWORKER
- 3. BALLET DANCER
- 4. ACTOR
- 5. FIRE FIGHTER

- 6. PRO GOLFER
- 7. OLYMPIC RUNNER
- 8. FEDERAL JUDGE
- 9. MOLECULAR BIOLOGIST

ANSWERS ON PAGE 17

Fill in 10 words that are often used incorrectly to refer to **ALL Native people but should not be.**



Across

- 1. Four legged animal (not a man)
- 6. Defender of a tribe or nation
- 7. Narragansett word for baby
- 8. Person with high status
- 9. Very violent person
- 10. Person with good judgment

Down

- 2. Leader or ruler
- 3. Courageous
- 4. Very serious person
- 5. Native American girl

Answers: 1. buck; 2. chief; 3. brave; 4. stoic; 5. princess; 6. warrior; 7. papoose; 8. noble; 9. savage; 10. wise

STEREOTYPES IN SPEECH

Below are a few examples of stereotypical figures of speech. Imagine yourself in the position of a Native person. How might these words be hurtful or misleading?

My students are acting like a bunch of wild Indians...

This statement makes people think Native people do not know how to behave in a civilized way. Native Americans behave in a variety of ways depending on the situation, just like everyone else. This is a disrespectful figure of speech.

Redskin...Native people do not have bright red skin as pictured in some cartoons and comics. The term may have come from the use of reddish colored natural paints used by some Native Americans as seen by the Europeans who first came to the Americas. Today, most people (Native and non-Native) consider the term offensive.

Indian Brave...This term has been used to describe Native American men. It sounds as though it might be flattering and that it means Native men have courage. Like people all over the world, some Native men ARE courageous and others have other types of gifts. Firefighters, rescue workers, and police officers of both sexes often act with heroism and we don't refer to them as "braves." It is much more respectful to refer to Native men as "men," to Native women as "women."

Warrior...This term is sometimes used to refer to all Native men and tends to make people think that Native American men are warlike and aggressive. It is true that some Native American men and women have fought in wars. Some have not. Some Native Americans stand up for the rights of their people by speaking, writing, or through artistic expression.


Chief...This term has been used incorrectly to describe all Native American men. Only certain men are chosen to be chiefs. A Haudenosaunee traditional chief is appointed by the women and has clearly defined responsibilities. His job is important and he must listen to the people in order to do his job well.

The term "How" used as a greeting...This is an example of an idea that has been promoted through Hollywood movies. Each Native American nation or tribe has their own language and their own way of greeting one another. Not one of them greet each other by saying "how!" To greet a Native person by saying "How" sounds as though you are poking fun at the fact that they are Native.

THESE ARE COMMENTS WRITTEN BY MUSEUM VISITORS AFTER VIEWING OUR NATIVE AMERICAN STEREOTYPES EXHIBIT. THE LAST NOTE IS LEFT BLANK FOR YOU TO ADD YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE.



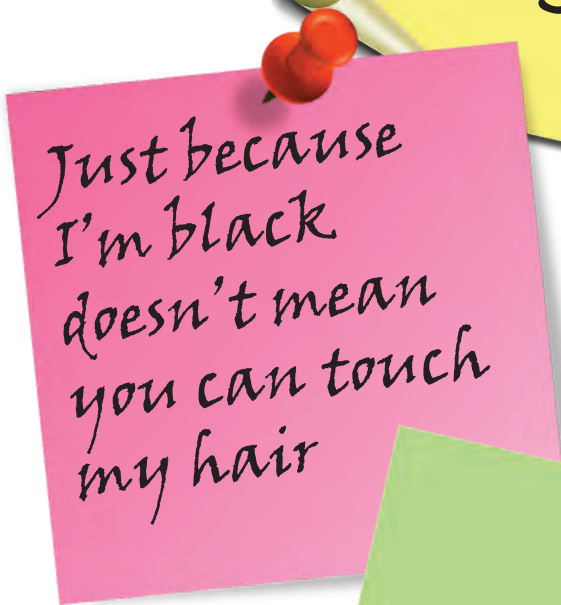
Some lesbians
wear makeup
and dresses



Not all
Irish are
drunks



NOT all
CONSERVATIVE
CHRISTIANS
ARE bigOTS



Just because
I'm black
doesn't mean
you can touch
my hair

Do you have
something to
add?

What is an ASSUMPTION?

An assumption is an idea or opinion that is believed to be true, but is without proof. Assumptions sound logical, but are not necessarily true. They may be based on limited or incorrect information.

We often make assumptions about a person or a group of people. You might have some assumptions about Native American people that are incorrect. Test your Native “know how” by answering True or False to the questions. Check your answers below.

1. I assume all Native Americans have forgotten their traditions because they drive cars and wear the same kind of clothing as everyone else. T or F
2. I assume that all Native Americans who know how to speak English do not want to speak their tribal languages. T or F
3. I assume all Native Americans know how to make beaded jewelry and weave baskets. T or F

Answers:

1: Actually, many Native people still follow their traditional teachings even though they might live in an apartment building and dress in a business suit or jeans and a sweatshirt.

2: More and more Native people are working hard to learn and teach their own Native languages while still speaking English outside of their communities.
3: Some do and some don't. Beadwork and baskets are art forms that Native people may use to express their creativity. Others create with clay, paint, photography, and film and some Native people don't do artwork at all.



Have you made an assumption about a person or group of people that may be inaccurate? What is that assumption?



What is PREJUDICE?

Prejudice is having a negative opinion of a person or group of people without reason, without knowing all the facts, or from fear of the unfamiliar. Prejudice can be contagious. It is very often based on stereotypes and assumptions that are learned from other people or from the media. Prejudice grows from fear, mistrust, and anger. Like stereotypes and unfair assumptions, prejudice can be hurtful.

Examples of prejudicial remarks:

The only good Indian is a dead Indian.

Native Americans are savages, pagans, and sneaky.

Native Americans are unreliable and untrustworthy.

Native Americans never contributed anything worthwhile to the world.

Native Americans are primitive.

Native Americans are warlike and should be feared.

Native Americans are less than human.



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SYNDICATE



A nun can be covered from head to toe in order to devote herself to God, right?

But, then if a muslim girl does the same, why is she oppressed?



**STEREOTYPES IN ADVERTISING
DO ANY OF THESE LOGOS BOTHER YOU?
WHY?**



ANSWERS FROM PAGE 6



A. (4) Actress - Alex Rice (Mohawk Nation) has had leading roles in numerous films and guest spots on several television shows. Alex performed in the Twilight Saga Series.



B.(1) Astronaut – John Bennett Harrington (Chickasaw Nation) was the first Native American to walk in space in 2002.



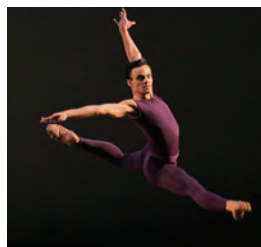
C.(5) Firefighter - Dakota Brant (Mohawk Nation) is a Volunteer Firefighter with Six Nations Fire & Emergency Services.



D. (7) Olympic gold medal runner - Billy Mills (Oglala Lakota) is the only American to ever have won Olympic gold in the 10,000 meter race.



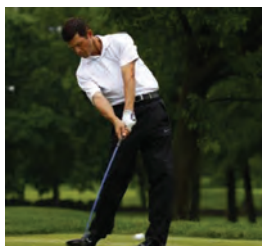
E (8) Federal Judge - Diane Humetewa (Hopi Nation) is the first Native American woman ever to serve as a US Federal judge.



F. (3) Ballet Dancer - Jock Soto (Navajo). At age 20 Jock became the youngest principal dancer in the history of the NY City Ballet.



G. (9) Molecular Biologist - Charlotte Logan (Mohawk Nation) has been working in Molecular Biology research for over 10 years,



H. (6) Golf Pro - Jesse Smith (Mohawk Nation) is known worldwide for playing in the 2013 US Open and the RBC Canadian Open.



I. (2) Ironworker/Welder - LuAnn Styres (Mohawk Nation). Unlike most ironworkers, Styres is a woman and started ironworking at age 42.

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