



AN INTRODUCTION TO UTAH'S INDIAN HISTORY

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS? BEING INDIAN IN UTAH

TEACHER BACKGROUND

Utah's tribal nations hold a sovereign status that is independent of the state of Utah. As a result, Utah's American Indians are citizens of their native nations, of the state of Utah, and of the United States. Affiliation with multiple political bodies has complicated political and cultural implications. In addition to membership in their tribes, Utah's Indians are both Utahns and Americans, but their relationship to the state and nation is marked by a legacy of maltreatment that began with white expansion into their tribes' sovereign territories. (For more on the history of settlement and its relationship to Indian sovereignty, see the "Rethinking Manifest Destiny" lesson plan and Appendix B.)

This lesson plan illuminates some of the challenges contemporary native people face in navigating their ties to sovereign Indian nations, the state, and the U.S., a situation often called "living in two worlds," although the reality for most is more complex than the bifurcation this term suggests.

OBJECTIVE

The student will be able to perceive the challenges of navigating multiple cultures faced by contemporary Indians.

TEACHER MATERIALS

At a Glance: Sovereignty, Tribal Culture, and "Living in Two Worlds"

We Shall Remain: The Paiute (7:43–10:10; 20:50–23:18; 24:30–26:10)

We Shall Remain: The Ute (15:00–17:30; 23:30–25:28)

We Shall Remain: The Goshute (4:40–17:00; 22:03–25:18)

We Shall Remain: The Navajo (9:40–10:30; 24:00–25:30)

We Shall Remain: The Northwestern Shoshone (13:06–18:15; 21:30–23:30)

STUDENT MATERIALS

Venita Taveapont Interview,
We Shall Remain: The Ute

Ella Cantrell and Candace Bear Interviews,
We Shall Remain: The Goshute

Patty Timbimboo-Madsen Interview,
We Shall Remain: The Northwestern Shoshone

Jennifer Denetdale and Joe Shirley Interviews,
We Shall Remain: The Navajo

Travis Parashonts Interview,
We Shall Remain: The Paiute

TIME FRAME

One or two class periods with homework



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PROCEDURE

Allow the class to watch the clips that address the issues of “living in two worlds” in the Paiute, Ute, Northwestern Shoshone, Navajo and Goshute *We Shall Remain* films.

Discuss the clips to reinforce the human element of this political and cultural situation. How does navigating multiple cultures impact the individuals shown in the films?

Have students search the internet to find articles that suggest how Indians have grappled with “living in two worlds.” Instruct them to pay close attention to the issues of Indian tribal sovereignty and self-governance and the way these issues relate to the political, cultural, social, and economic challenges that come with “living in two worlds.” If possible, you should require a number of articles about a number of different tribes; samples from tribal newspapers or websites, such as www.indianz.com and www.indiancountrytoday.com; and coverage that compares Utah-based issues to those in other western states or other regions, which can be found at websites like www.hcn.org.

Have students develop a product to report on their findings—this could be an essay, a PowerPoint presentation, a debate, a chart or bulletin board, or a zine. You may choose to have this product submitted as graded homework or presented in the following class (thereby extending the time requirement for this lesson); or, if the product is focused on Utah tribes, you may use it to frame subsequent classes on the sovereignty issues of the Skull Valley Goshutes, Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, Paiutes, Northwestern Shoshones, Navajos, Utes, and Ute Mountain Utes.

ASSESSMENT/PRODUCTS

Article choice and number

Chosen product

VARIATIONS/EXTENSIONS

Split students into five groups and have each group read one of the supplied interview excerpts. Have them make an argument about what it means to “live in two worlds” based on that source.

Invite a guest speaker to address issues not covered by student research.

Have students use chosen products to teach this issue to a seventh grade class learning Utah history.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

McCool, Daniel, Susan M. Olson, and Jennifer L. Robinson. *Native Vote: American Indians, the Voting Rights Act, and the Right to Vote*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Child, Brenda. *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900–1940*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.

Cuch, Forrest S., ed. *A History of Utah's American Indians*. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2000.



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STANDARDS ADDRESSED

State Standards

High School – United States Government and Citizenship: 3/1/c; 3/2/d; 4/3/a

Accreditation Competencies

Thinking and Reasoning/Integrates new learning with existing knowledge and experiences/Uses various reading and writing strategies to organize, interpret, analyze, and comprehend information; Social and Civic Responsibility/Demonstrates an appreciation of diversity and interdependence of all people/Analyzes diverse viewpoints of social and civic issues in local, regional, and global events

NCSS Standards

High School: 1/a-f; 4/c,e&f; 5/a,b&d;10/c



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AT A GLANCE: SOVEREIGNTY, TRIBAL CULTURE, AND “LIVING IN TWO WORLDS”

This lesson explores how Utah's Indians negotiate their place in Utah and the United States. As members of tribes, they are part of sovereign aboriginal nations that predate the United States. This means that they belong to a group that can govern itself independently from federal, state, and local governments. Sovereignty for these five nations is rooted in ancient ties to their homelands and traditional cultural practices and resides, in part, on articulated agreements between tribes and the federal government, in tribes' explicit pronouncements of sovereignty as written into formal governmental constitutions, and in tribes' powers to control their membership. It is important to remember that each of the tribes represented in this curriculum guide have distinct histories of sovereign relations with the U.S. and the states, and they articulate aspects of their sovereignty in distinct ways.

Although members of a political entity that possesses inherent sovereignty in its relationship to state and federal governments, Utah's Indians also are part of life in Utah and in rest of the United States. Contrary to the perception of some non-Indians, being a tribal member does not exclude one from being a citizen of the United States or participating in state and city activities. The Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 formally conveyed American citizenship to American Indians and confirmed their right to vote in both tribal elections and state/local government elections. Unfortunately, the act was not uniformly applied; Utah, for instance, did not allow Indians to vote until the 1950s, making it one of the last states

to do so.

Utah's failure to grant Indians the vote prior to the 1950s—despite the federal ruling—is in keeping with a history of marginalization that has profoundly shaped the experience of being Indian in Utah. Historically, many non-Indians viewed Indians as inferior to white Europeans and Americans. The doctrine of white superiority supported the idea that it was legitimate to take away vast tracts of Indians' original territory and place Indians on reservations.

The settlement of Utah, contrary to popular belief, was in many ways typical of the national story. In his introduction to *A History of Utah's American Indians*, Forrest Cuch, the director of the Utah's Division of Indian Affairs and a Ute educator, identifies two major “myths” about Utah history: that “no one” lived in Utah prior to Mormon settlement and that after settlement, Utah's American Indians received better treatment than Indians in other states. Both assumptions about the state's past are inaccurate and deny Utah Indians their rightful place in the state's history. The second assumption is particularly damaging because it masks the mistreatments and injustices that Utah's Indians suffered. Indeed, as Cuch points out, “in the case of the Bear River Massacre . . . treatment was even more harsh and severe than what was experienced by Indians residing in other states.”

Ironically, while most whites did not want Indians in their midst, they also believed that



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Indians should be forced to assimilate into Euro-American culture, and starting at the end of the nineteenth century the federal government implemented a series of policies aimed at forcing Indian assimilation. Perhaps the most well-known example of the national assimilation effort was the policy of sending Indian children to boarding schools, where they were not allowed to use native languages or engage in indigenous practices. In Utah, the push for assimilation was more complicated because it could come from both the federal government and the dominant immigrant group, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Some Indians rejected Mormon doctrine as incompatible with their traditional belief systems and church-sponsored farms as contradictory to their traditional economies. But others embraced Mormonism and the social and economic support the LDS Church provided, although for many Indians, conversion did not necessarily mean giving up all ancestral spiritual beliefs and practices.

Contemporary Indians, as KUED's documentaries make clear, are well aware of whites' historic desire to eradicate or alter their native cultures. They are also aware that some whites still do not acknowledge the importance of Indian cultures today, but still think of Indians as "out of place" when they engage in "white" cultural practices, especially in cities and towns outside of tribal sovereign boundaries. Such prejudices affect tribal members' perception of their relationship to both tribal and national culture. While some choose to stay on ancestral lands to maintain close ties to their communities, others may do so because they believe that they would not be accepted in white society. At

the same time, while some Indians disdain mainstream American and Utah culture, the majority engage deeply with those cultures. Indeed, we should not see "American" culture as completely separate from tribal cultures, given that the latter predate the American nation and have profoundly influenced its formation. Accordingly, the notion of "living in two worlds," which is used repeatedly in the KUED documentaries, accurately reflects some Indians' individual experiences but does not fully convey the complexity of those individuals' relationships to their sovereign cultures and American culture at large.

In spite of being an oversimplification, the idea of "two worlds" is useful because it reminds us that tribal cultures remain distinct from—and marginalized by—the dominant U.S. worldview. Listening to current members of each of Utah's seven tribes discuss their and fellow tribal members' place in the world is the best way to understand how they have personally experienced historical efforts to erode their tribe's sovereign rights and culture. For example, in the *We Shall Remain: The Paiute* documentary, tribal member Travis Parashonts discusses how the history of marginalization of the Paiutes has made Paiutes feel that they must choose between being Paiute and participating in the world at large. Parashonts says, "You can have balance in the modern world, the white world, and you can have balance in the Indian world, and when I went to college I had this thing called marginalism for my people. We live in a world of marginalism—we walk the fence, and sometimes this fence is made up of all kinds of obstacles. . . and the Indian person has to walk that. Where do they fall in at, you know? A lot of them get confused. Where am I in life? Who am I, you know?"



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Parashonts uses the metaphor of “two worlds” to show how Paiute cultural values have been undermined in the broader American society.

Because of such marginalization, it becomes increasingly necessary for Indians to experience and assert their distinctive and sovereign tribal cultures. In *We Shall Remain: The Ute*, Ute language and cultural studies instructor Venita Taveapont argues that it is important for students to learn tribally specific cultural practices such as speaking the Ute language. Such knowledge benefits both the tribe and the individual; as the tribe’s *Ute Indian Tribe Education Department Plan of 2004* states, students need a strong Ute cultural program so that they will “realize their maximum learning potential in maintaining dignity and self-worth throughout their lives.”

Indians can exert this cultural sovereignty and also participate in American culture at large. In *We Shall Remain: The Goshute*, student Candace Bear suggests that Goshute people can both maintain their cultural knowledge and be part of the larger world. She feels that the real question is “Do we go forward or back?” and notes that her grandfather used to tell her, “There is another day coming.” She also points out that

the Goshute people have survived the effects of non-Indian settlement in their territory, and this persistence serves as evidence that the Goshutes have a bright future and can move forward as a distinct people living in the broader world.

These are only a few examples of the reflections by tribal members in *We Shall Remain*, and more extensive excerpts have been included in the student materials for this lesson. These diverse voices indicate the complex ways Utah’s Indians negotiate tribal, state, and national cultures and remind us of the distinct histories and cultures of each of Utah’s tribes. The *We Shall Remain* documentaries—along with the individual lesson plans that follow—testify to the value of tribal sovereignty, but they also insist that Indian cultures and individuals are integral to the cultures of America and Utah.

VENITA TAVEAPONT INTERVIEW, *WE SHALL REMAIN: THE UTE*

Interviewer: What does it mean to walk between two worlds? What's the experience like?

Taveapont: Okay. You know, they have some people say that they walk in two worlds. You know, the non-Indian world and the Indian world. But one of the things that I've found, as an Indian person, is that I think you have to be strong in your own language, in your own culture, in your own identity, knowing where you come from, and in knowing where you're going and to be able to do that. If you lack knowledge, in either, then you're not going to be able to do that. If you have knowledge of non-Indian culture, non-Indian world, non-Indian language, you know, you're going to be able to do that successfully. But if you don't, if you don't have a good command of that, then you're not going to be able to do that. And I found that most of the Ute people that are successful can do that, but they also know their own language. They also know your own culture, and participate in the cultural practices, traditional practices, and they're able to move easily between the two worlds. And I find that, in my own experience, that in living in the Uintah Basin, and working with what we used to call the good ol' boys, you know, I knew what kind of language to use with them. And it's English, but it had to be the way they thought. And I couldn't do that if I didn't have knowledge of them. And, in working with my own people, I have to have knowledge about the language and the cultural practices—because if I didn't, then I would be ignorant, or looked at as ignorant, and being impolite and disrespectful. And so that helps me in my other world. And I think the students today, or young people today, have a hard time, because they don't have that knowledge of being able to move easily between the two. And sometimes I see them hurting because of that, not being able to. And my experiences, I try to share with them, so they'll be able to see, and be able to do that.

Venita Taveapont, interview with Nancy Green, n.d., *We Shall Remain*, KUED Public Television,
<http://www.kued.org/productions/weshallremain/pdfs/Venita.pdf>.

ELLA CANTRELL AND CANDACE BEAR INTERVIEWS, *WE SHALL REMAIN: THE GOSHUTE*

Cantrell: I'm 85 years old. I take great pleasure in telling about my life as it has been. Well all I can say is that the Goshutes have come a long way from the time that they were I'd say interned on that reservation like they were some kind of prisoners. The way my elders told me, the reason why we were there on the reservation was that the white men put us there within that barbed wire fence, and if we ever found out that we were outside that line, that we'd get taken off to jail. And, we came to fear the white people, for that reason, because I'd say every time we see a white person we'd think that they're coming, coming to take us off the reservation and put us somewhere else, or make us a slave of some sort.

I was 16 years old. I realized that I needed to learn this new language. We were told at school not to speak our language, and if we did we, we'd get extra duties; we'd have to clean toilet bowls and washbasins and mop floors and scrub floors, and this and that. So that's how it, our life has been and it, it hasn't been easy.

Bear: Growing up in Skull Valley really has been a joy; I feel my life is truly blessed. I would never say that I've had a bad life. I'm very happy [laughs].

As a teenager and Native American I suppose the biggest struggle is just that constant decision "Do I modernize or do I stay?" Well the real question is do we go forward or back. That thinking, that we have to fit the stereotype, we really don't.

I think that as far as Goshutes go, Skull Valley band of Goshutes, for us the biggest thing is to survive. Tradition of course, even if we didn't practice it in government or economy we would still practice it at home. That's our way of preserving it, keeping it close to the family.

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN INTERVIEW, *WE SHALL REMAIN: THE NORTHWESTERN SHOSHONE*

Interviewer: What does it mean to be federally recognized, what does it mean to you to be a Northwestern Shoshone tribe member? What does it mean to be Northwestern Shoshone?

Timbimboo-Madsen: I think about so long ago when Columbus came and what did he call the Indians? He thought he was in India and called us Indians; not really knowing where he was, the label he put on us and it stuck. I think about when the trappers came into the area and they came with an Indian guide probably. And they asked, what, “Who are these people?” We call them Shoshones. Well then, it’s another label given to you by somebody else. So then if you ask me who I am, I would say I’m Newe; Newe meaning “the people,” the people of this area. I think you have a lot of Native American people who are going that way, the Ute, Nuche. You have Denai, the Papago people, Tohono O’odham, are going back to the traditional names. And I think that certainly for us, is our identity, not somebody else identity that was given to us. So, to recapture that, it’s almost like we talk about the circle. We’re coming back to where we were. And I think a lot of the stuff that we are doing to try to enrich our children’s lives is what we need to do to make them whole too.

Interviewer: Do you feel like you are defined by everybody else? That the Newe, the people, have been defined by the surrounding culture?

Timbimboo-Madsen: I certainly think at times that they have, they have stereotyped us and it’s been done by TV—you think about Buffalo Bill. Buffalo Bill started the powwow, it wasn’t the Indians. It was him. Because of what he created and

at times, you saw the savage part of it, and there was also at times, the romantic part of it. But I think that in any culture there’s always good and there’s always bad. And that’s the same way with the Indian people. But how did you deal with it? You don’t blame a whole group of people for what one person did. You deal with that one person and that’s the way the Indian people would deal with, with things. There was a lady who came into our encampment here last week and she says, “My word, you speak good English.” And I thought, “How am I supposed to speak?” Certainly in our household, my mom and dad both spoke Shoshone and I always thought it was a language for them. They didn’t want us to hear what they were saying. So it wasn’t really anything. As I got older, I realized that my mother was spanked during her school years for speaking Shoshone. And in my mind I thought, maybe that’s why we were never taught. Because she didn’t want us to go through what she did. I really didn’t think about the way I spoke as anything different than anybody else. Only ’til I got to school, when I went to Utah State, that was probably back in about 1972, and the Indian students, the other Native American students, came and says, “You don’t act like an Indian.” And that was the first time I ever hurt, I ever felt prejudice, was that my own, I thought were my own people telling me, “You’re not an Indian because you don’t speak like one, you don’t act like one.” But it didn’t, for me it really didn’t matter because I felt that if they don’t like me it’s ok, and just move on. And after about a year I got to know more of ’em and it was ok. But I could still feel that, a little uneasiness in my life.

Interviewer: Do you think that's because the Northwestern Shoshone, and correct me if I'm wrong, have lived more of an assimilated life-style?

Timbimboo-Madsen: Umm-hmm.

Interviewer: Explain to me that assimilation, and the way that affects you.

Timbimboo-Madsen: I think for those of the Northwestern band, the assimilation came, it was both good and it was both bad, because you had to give up something for the other. But it was a way to survive, too. I think after the massacre they felt that it could happen again and maybe next time there will be none of us left anymore. I think they had to try and if the leaders of the tribe said, "This is the way we need to go to survive; this is what we're going to do." They embraced the Mormon Church.

One of our elders, Kenneth Neaman, said that it, the religion, was so much like our own religion. We believe in life after death, we believe in one great being or spirit or god. Maybe the difference is how you pray to it, to them or to him or whatever but it's the same. I think the idea of family also touched them because you know, without that family structure for Native American people, you can't survive. You need all those helping hands. You need to pass on your skills to the next generation. So that unity was important.

Interviewer: Is there a cost to that assimilation? Is there a cost to the living with both worlds?

Timbimboo-Madsen: I think the cost for the assimilation for us has been the, the loss of some of the living skills of our ancestors. Certainly, and the skills that they had then, how useful are they now? But I know and my husband has certainly said, we can survive if anything ever happens. We can put meat on our table. We can clothe our family. And we can probably survive in the elements. And those skills, so many people don't have and take it for granted that the store is always gonna be there. Look, is there gonna be gas there tomorrow? But trying to recapture it, it makes it so much more important because it was lost. It means more. I think as far as living in the communities, I would say, education was important to the people our tribe. But not everybody was fortunate enough to take advantage of that. But some of 'em were, and some of 'em did go far with their education.

There's a lady up in Fort Hall, and we would go up there and they would say, yes you guys are our relatives and you were the people that wash a lot. Or you were the, we wanna come down and visit you people because you people put up fruit.

But that's what they learned from the Mormon people, was that part that people looked at us and said, "Those are those Indians, those Mormon Indians." It helped because the people of the communities knew us. I think back around 1860s, seventies and eighties, when the communities were still trying to settle in. There was a lot of dissension. I think land ownership was important to the nonnative people that came in to here. And so it caused some problems.

JENNIFER DENETDALE AND JOE SHIRLEY INTERVIEWS, *WE SHALL REMAIN: THE NAVAJO*

Interviewer: How do the Navajo interpret manifest destiny?

Denetdale: The interpretation of manifest destiny, you often hear—I think it’s still true—that American western history is about American expansionism into the West, acquiring lands and attempting to extinguish indigenous peoples’ claims to the land. And so manifest destiny has meant to the Navajo people the loss of their land, the loss of their liberty, and the loss of their personal freedom. Manifest destiny has meant genocide to indigenous peoples.

Interviewer: How do Navajo perceive the world differently than western worldviews?

Denetdale: One of the most important reasons for retaining the language is because the language has within it a people’s worldview. The language has within it a very distinctive way of seeing the world. And for the Navajo people that way of seeing the world is founded upon the philosophy of Hozhó. Hozhó, the path to beauty and old age—that is the quest. It is the fulfillment of a life well lived. To understand that Navajo worldview, one has to know the language and to understand it, to appreciate it.

Interviewer: How have the Navajo, over the years, managed to maintain themselves as a separate and distinct people?

Denetdale: Integral to Navajo identity is the land. We have managed to keep a significant land base, and I think from that is rooted our identity and our philosophy as Navajo people. I think that’s one of the main reasons for our capacity to remain Navajo.

Interviewer: What does it mean to be a sovereign nation?

Shirley: It means pride, it means independence; it means doing for self, and, if there’s anything left over after having done for self, being a contributing member of society here in the world.

Interviewer: What are the greatest ambitions of the Navajo Nation?

Shirley: What is the greatest ambition of the Navajo Nation, I think is getting back our independence, getting back to standing on our own. I think the Creator created us to be just that; as his children, as being members of the Holy People, and stand on our own. I think that can be the greatest ambition.

Interviewer: What are the obstacles to those ambitions?

Shirley: We’re a different people, and we don’t have the same values as those that are on the outside. Money doesn’t mean the way it means to the outside world. We need jobs, we need revenues, we need infrastructure, we need a lot.

Interviewer: What does culture mean to you?

Shirley: Culture is the essence of being. The Creator created us with our language, with our color, with our land, with our paraphernalia, with our herbs. There’s only one way that we can grow, and this is to be Navajo, this is to speak the language, to have the color, to know the herbs, to know the sacred songs and the sacred stories. Nobody else can grow that way. To me, the difference is culture.

Jennifer Denetdale, Ph.D., interview, n.d., *We Shall Remain*, KUED Public Television, <http://www.kued.org/productions/weshallremain/pdfs/WSRDenetdaleInterview.pdf>;

Joe Shirley, interview, n.d., *We Shall Remain*, KUED Public Television, <http://www.kued.org/productions/weshallremain/pdfs/WSRShirleyInterview.pdf>.

TRAVIS PARASHONTS INTERVIEW, *WE SHALL REMAIN: THE PAIUTE*

Parashonts: People look at me and they think that well, you know you're doing good, you know you've got a job and everything seems like it's going . . . but it's not true. Even I have imbalance in my life—in my spirit and my soul, and I think that's what that is saying that today there may be an imbalance in some people's lives. . . . You can have balance in the modern world, the white world, and you can have balance in the Indian world, and when I went to college I had this thing called marginalism for my people. We live in a world of marginalism—we walk the fence, and sometimes this fence is made up of all kinds of obstacles—the Mormon Church, religion, culture, tradition, white world, Indian world, white education, Indian education, you know it's . . . and the Indian person has to walk that. Where do they fall in at, you know? A lot of them get confused. Where am I in life? Who am I, you know? Because we live in a white world yet we want to be Indian. We want to be Indian, but we want all of the things that the white people have, so how do you find the balance? . . . Termination threw us way out of balance. Our tribe is way out of balance. When we got federally recognized in April 3, 1980, the pride just came back—to be able to own land again, you know, just the level of pride just shot up, and when we first started this powwow over here, we had very few people who were dancers, and now we have lots of people who are dancers, and you know you talked about Shanan earlier. She was just a little girl when termination happened, when restoration happened, and you know now she has been taught a lot of those things, and she brings that pride into that circle, into the powwow arena, as well as all of the other Paiutes who come and dance and sing, and to me that's very gratifying for me to see, you know, to see that happen because back in 1979 in the '70s, you never saw any of that, you know. It was all lost. It was all gone. . . .

Travis Parashonts, interview, June 14, 2008, *We Shall Remain*, KUED Public Television,
<http://www.kued.org/productions/weshallremain/pdfs/TravisParashonts.pdf>.