
Fall 2022

The Original People Are Still Here

Sally Brown

West Virginia University, sally.brown1@mail.wvu.edu

Joe Stahlman

University of Buffalo, joestahl@buffalo.edu

Bonnie M. Brown

West Virginia University, BonnieM.Brown@mail.wvu.edu

Beth Toren

West Virginia University, beth.toren@mail.wvu.edu

Michael Sherwin

West Virginia University, Michael.Sherwin@mail.wvu.edu

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: <https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/indigenous-exhibit>

Recommended Citation

Brown, Sally; Stahlman, Joe; Brown, Bonnie M.; Toren, Beth; Sherwin, Michael; Anderson, Richard; and Zafar, Maryam Marne, "The Original People Are Still Here" (2022). *Indigenous Appalachia*. 4. <https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/indigenous-exhibit/4>

This Other is brought to you for free and open access by the Library Exhibits at The Research Repository @ WVU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Indigenous Appalachia by an authorized administrator of The Research Repository @ WVU. For more information, please contact beau.smith@mail.wvu.edu.

Authors

Sally Brown, Joe Stahlman, Bonnie M. Brown, Beth Toren, Michael Sherwin, Richard Anderson, and Maryam Marne Zafar

INDIGENOUS APPALACHIA



The Original People are Still Here

INDIGENOUS APPALACHIA

*An Exhibition by WVU Art in the Libraries in Partnership
with WVU Native American Studies*

“Indigenous communities are not static. Everytime we move, encounter other peoples, marry into communities, adopt people, and so on, we incorporate elements into the larger society. However, when this occurs, we don’t necessarily change who we are. We are simply adding to the pot of complexity and choice. Think about America: What America strives to be, Indigenous communities have been here for 1,000s of years. Indigenous communities had gender equality and equity, race was non-existent, and territories had fuzzy boundaries, and so sharing Turtle Island peace became the standard for getting by.”

– Dr. Joe Stahlman, Ph.D, Director, Seneca-Iroquois National Museum



As our country and the University proceed in acknowledging the erasure of much Indigenous history, a reconciliation of this erasure is needed. This effort must center Indigenous perspectives, scholarship, leadership, guidance, and participation to inform new perspectives. This exhibit is intentionally curated with the expertise and contributions of Indigenous Appalachians alongside other scholars of Native American Studies.

Exploring Indigenous Appalachia is complex for many reasons, notably due to general misunderstandings of Indigenous histories and myths generated to justify colonialism and Eurocentrism. These misrepresentations have often been reinforced throughout the education system, a lack of self-representation in mass media, and non-Natives’ generally limited interaction with Indigenous people and communities. Thus, many accounts continue to marginalize the first peoples of Native North America, perpetuating warped, imagined, and obsolete depictions. Misinformed, resistant social and academic narratives have negative implications, harming contemporary Indigenous people and hampering educational integrity.

This exhibit is to encourage observing, as well as listening, feeling, reflecting, and questioning. Care was taken with regard to how Indigenous artwork and perspectives can function within this particular educational context. What impressions might be shaped and what values recognized? The exhibit was curated to honor contemporary Indigenous artists and their art, processes, and perspectives, thus encouraging viewers to have rich dialogues that invite dismantling of centrisms and extending understandings of Indigenous cultures and communities.

What constitutes being an Appalachian? People define this identity in many ways with different kinds of maps. For the purpose of this exhibit, Appalachian refers to being from or situated within the states included in the Appalachian region of TURTLE ISLAND (the traditional name many Indigenous North Americans used and still use to refer to the Native North American continent), including displaced peoples whose communities are originally from Appalachia.

Who is considered Indigenous? This can be defined broadly, strictly personally, ethnographically, genealogically, or, as an artifact of colonization, by a federal or state government’s recognition of one’s tribal nation. There is no single definition just as there is no one definition as to who is an American.

For SOURCES AND LINKS
to additional background information,
CLICK and VISIT the ONLINE Exhibit:

