Native American Heritage Month Booklist

During the month of November, we celebrate the diverse culture, traditions, and contributions of Native people to the United States. Search the booklist on the following pages to find out how to access all of these titles from the Sage Library. Click on the book title to access the ebook directly or search our online catalog.

**The Other Slavery: The uncovered story of Indian enslavement in America by Andrés Reséndez**

Since the time of Columbus, Indian slavery was illegal in much of the American continent. Yet, it was practiced for centuries as an open secret. There was no abolitionist movement to protect the tens of thousands of natives who were kidnapped and enslaved by the conquistadors, then forced to descend into the “mouth of hell” of eighteenth-century silver mines or, later, made to serve as domestics for Mormon settlers and rich Anglos.

Reséndez builds the incisive case that it was mass slavery, more than epidemics that decimated Indian populations across North America. New evidence, including testimonies of courageous priests, rapacious merchants, Indian captives, and Anglo colonists, sheds light too on Indian enslavement of other Indians — as what started as a European business passed into the hands of indigenous operators and spread like wildfire across vast tracts of the American Southwest.

The Other Slavery reveals nothing less than a key missing piece of American history. For over two centuries we have fought over, abolished, and tried to come to grips with African-American slavery. It is time for the West to confront an entirely separate, equally devastating enslavement we have long failed truly to see.

**Wisdom of the Native Americans**

by Kent Nerburn

These thought-provoking teachings from respected Native American leaders and thinkers provide a connection with the land, the environment, and the simple beauties of life. This collection of writings from revered Native Americans offers timeless, meaningful lessons on living and learning.
**Africans and Native Americans: The language of race and the evolution of Red-Black peoples** by Jack Forbes

This volume will revise the way we look at the modern populations of Latin America and North America by providing a totally new view of the history of Native American and African American peoples throughout the hemisphere. Africans and Native Americans explores key issues relating to the evolution of racial terminology and European colonialists’ perceptions of color, analyzing the development of color classification systems and the specific evolution of key terms such as black, mulatto, and mestizo, which no longer carry their original meanings. Jack Forbes presents strong evidence that Native American and African contacts began in Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean and that Native Americans may have crossed the Atlantic long before Columbus.

**The Indian great awakening: Religion and the shaping of native cultures in early America** by Linford D Fisher

This book tells the gripping story of American Indians’ attempts to wrestle with the ongoing realities of colonialism between the 1670s and 1820. Using religion as a primary lens, this book explores the complex and interesting world of eighteenth-century southern New England co-created by Indians and colonists. By tracing the religious and cultural engagement of American Indians in Connecticut, Rhode Island, western Massachusetts, and Long Island, New York, this narrative pulls back the curtain on the often overlooked, dynamic interactions between Natives and whites.

**“All the real Indians died off”: And 20 other myths about Native Americans** by Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne and Dina Gilio-Whitaker

Scholars and activists Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz and Dina Gilio-Whitaker tackle a wide range of myths about Native American culture and history that have misinformed generations. Tracing how these ideas evolved, and drawing from history, the authors disrupt long-held and enduring myths such as:

Each chapter deftly shows how these myths are rooted in the fears and prejudice of European settlers and in the larger political agendas of a settler state aimed at acquiring Indigenous land and tied to narratives of erasure and disappearance. Accessibly written and revelatory, “All the Real Indians Died Off” challenges readers to rethink what they have been taught about Native Americans and history.

**Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teachings of plants** by Robin Wall Kimmerer

As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers. In Braiding Sweetgrass, Kimmerer brings these two lenses of knowledge together.

Drawing on her life as an indigenous scientist, and as a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings—asters and goldenrod, strawberries and squash, salamanders, algae, and sweetgrass—offer us gifts and lessons, even if we’ve forgotten how to hear their voices. In reflections that range from the creation of Turtle Island to
the forces that threaten its flourishing today, she circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings will we be capable of understanding the generosity of the earth, and learn to give our own gifts in return.

**An indigenous peoples' history of the United States**

*by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz*

Today in the United States, there are more than five hundred federally recognized Indigenous nations comprising nearly three million people, descendants of the fifteen million Native people who once inhabited this land. The centuries-long genocidal program of the US settler-colonial regimen has largely been omitted from history. Now, for the first time, acclaimed historian and activist Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz offers a history of the United States told from the perspective of Indigenous peoples and reveals how Native Americans, for centuries, actively resisted expansion of the US empire.

Spanning more than four hundred years, this classic bottom-up peoples’ history radically reframes US history and explodes the silences that have haunted our national narrative.

**This Indian Country: American Indian political activists and the place they made by Frederick E Hoxie**

Frederick E. Hoxie, one of our most prominent and celebrated academic historians of Native American history, has for years asked his undergraduate students at the beginning of each semester to write down the names of three American Indians. Almost without exception, year after year, the names are Geronimo, Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. The general conclusion is inescapable: Most Americans instinctively view Indians as people of the past who occupy a position outside the central narrative of American history. These three individuals were warriors, men who fought violently against American expansion, lost, and died. It’s taken as given that Native history has no particular relationship to what is conventionally presented as the story of America. Indians had a history too; but theirs was short and sad, and it ended a long time ago.

In This Indian Country, Hoxie has created a bold and sweeping counter-narrative to our conventional understanding. Native American history, he argues, is also a story of political activism, its victories hard-won in courts and campaigns rather than on the battlefield. For more than two hundred years, Indian activists—some famous, many unknown beyond their own communities—have sought to bridge the distance between indigenous cultures and the republican democracy of the United States through legal and political debate. Over time their struggle defined a new language of “Indian rights” and created a vision of American Indian identity. In the process, they entered a dialogue with other activist movements, from African American civil rights to women’s rights and other progressive organizations.

Hoxie weaves a powerful narrative that connects the individual to the tribe, the tribe to the nation, and the nation to broader historical processes. He asks readers to think deeply about how a country based on the values of liberty and equality managed to adapt to the complex cultural and political demands of people who refused to be overrun or ignored. As we grapple with contemporary challenges to national institutions, from inside and outside our borders, and
as we reflect on the array of shifting national and cultural identities across the globe, This Indian Country provides a context and a language for understanding our present dilemmas.

**Legacy: Trauma, story and Indigenous healing**  
by Suzanne Methot

Five hundred years of colonization have taken an incalculable toll on the Indigenous peoples of the Americas: substance use disorders and shockingly high rates of depression, diabetes, and other chronic health conditions brought on by genocide and colonial control. With passionate logic and chillingly clear prose, author and educator Suzanne Methot uses history, human development, and her own and others’ stories to trace the roots of Indigenous cultural dislocation and community breakdown in an original and provocative examination of the long-term effects of colonization. But all is not lost. Methot also shows how we can come back from this with Indigenous ways of knowing lighting the way.

**Native American DNA: Tribal belonging and the false promise of genetic science** by Kimberly TallBear

Who is a Native American? And who gets to decide? From genealogists searching online for their ancestors to fortune hunters hoping for a slice of casino profits from wealthy tribes, the answers to these seemingly straightforward questions have profound ramifications. The rise of DNA testing has further complicated the issues and raised the stakes.

In Native American DNA, Kim TallBear shows how DNA testing is a powerful—and problematic—scientific process that is useful in determining close biological relatives. But tribal membership is a legal category that has developed in dependence on certain social understandings and historical contexts, a set of concepts that entangles genetic information in a web of family relations, reservation histories, tribal rules, and government regulations. At a larger level, TallBear asserts, the “markers” that are identified and applied to specific groups such as Native American tribes bear the imprints of the cultural, racial, ethnic, national, and even tribal misinterpretations of the humans who study them. TallBear notes that ideas about racial science, which informed white definitions of tribes in the nineteenth century, are unfortunately being revived in twenty-first-century laboratories. Because today’s science seems so compelling, increasing numbers of Native Americans have begun to believe their own metaphors: “in our blood” is giving way to “in our DNA.” This rhetorical drift, she argues, has significant consequences, and ultimately she shows how Native American claims to land, resources, and sovereignty that have taken generations to ratify may be seriously—and permanently—undermined.

**God Is Red: A Native View of Religion**  
by Vine Deloria

God Is Red is the seminal work on Native religious views, asking new questions about our species and our ultimate fate. Celebrating three decades in publication, this classic work reminds us to learn "that we are a part of nature, not a transcendent species with no responsibilities to the natural world." It is time again to listen to Vine Deloria Jr.’s powerful voice, telling us about religious life that is independent of Christianity and that reveres the interconnectedness of all living things.