

Native Cultures in the 21st Century

USA, Canada, Mexico. 6th Annual Students Conference, May 3-6, 2006

Call For Papers

For many indigenous people, historical pressures and the advancement of Western thinking, norms and culture have made it increasingly more difficult to maintain an identity that is unique and yet compatible to the world around them. Many Native groups in the United States, Canada and elsewhere continue to struggle with the effects of modernization, capitalism, and colonization, as well as the accompanying social, cultural, governmental, spiritual, economic, technological and legal ramifications thereof.

Modern media has multiplied the amount of contact Native people have with the rest of the world, with a visible effect on language, lifestyle, oral history and ceremonial knowledge. However, while MTV and CNN might bring the good, the bad and the ugly of culture and society of the U.S. in to many Native homes, it does not bring the long-needed physical, social, and financial infrastructure that is needed to blend the historically-strong ways and means of Native people with modern society. And while the potential positive effects of outside cultures are at times kept at bay, it has often been the case that the social and cultural resources of the indigenous group are taken away in the process. As indigenous cultures moved through critical moments in their history, such as conflicts with invading nations or epidemics of imported disease, scientists began to study the native cultures and export indigenous objects, traditions and ceremonial knowledge away from their original context. Through the years, these exported ideas and material goods have taken on a life of their own. At the same time, the very same philosophies or objects, their application and their meaning, have evolved within the originating culture.

Ideas of economy, governance, family structure, attitudes regarding health and emotional wellness and the general values of a community are all subject to change over time, with or without the influence of a conquering power. And with no fewer than 600 different Native communities and tribes, each with a slightly (or greatly) different approach to history, change, culture and relations with the government, it is a complicated fabric of relationships and development. There is

If you are interested in holding a 20-minute presentation, please submit a short abstract by January, 2006.

Please see the conference web site for further information:

www2.hu-berlin.de/amerika/projects/natives

The Annual Students Conferences Series

The Annual Students Conferences series sets out to support and foster the students' interest in academic exchange and discussions. It provides students of all levels (undergraduate, graduate and doctoral) with a space for the discussion of academic topics in the absence of the usual hierarchy often found in university seminars.

The topics will be related to the curricula of the American Studies Program while also incorporating different ideas and approaches, topics which are less often featured, topics which combine contemporary culture with academic interests. The conferences are thus supposed to both enrich the normal curriculum and offer a truly academic forum for exchanging ideas.

The conferences are organized by students of American Studies, the addressees are students from Humboldt Universität as well as from other universities.

Organizers and Contact Information

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not one solution to each difficult issue that might arise, but there are steps that continue to be taken to address the future of Native communities in a positive way. This series of speakers will address just some of the topics that continue to play a role in the every day lives of Native people, their governments, their society and their future.

The conference focuses on American Indians in the United States, Canada and Mexico. It will be organized into distinct thematic blocks:

- Globalization and Modern Indigenous Culture on Cheyenne River, in cooperation with The Cheyenne River Youth Project, Si Tanka University, Ehanni, Inc. and First Nations OWEESTA Corp.
- First Nations in Canada, in cooperation with the Canadian Embassy
- Mexican Indians / Mestizaje / Border Issues
- Images of "The Indian" abroad
- Indigenous art

The conference will feature talks from both experts on the topic and university students, art presentations and surrounding events.

Canada 

American Studies

