



JIM THORPE

THE WORLD'S GREATEST ATHLETE

STUDY GUIDE

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HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

Teachers may screen the whole documentary and engage students in a general discussion, or they may choose to teach a class based on one or more of the nine short articles in the guide that best fits their curriculum. Both the guide and the DVD are designed for selective use.

Articles can be photocopied and given to students. Alternatively, students can view the articles online at www.jimthorpefilm.com/guide

At the end of each article are teaching tools to help prepare and structure the learning experience.

- **Learning Objectives** describes, in broad terms, what students should know as a result of studying the material in the article.
- **Teacher's Quick Reference** provides a bulleted outline of information in the article.
- **Key Content** is a short list of names, places, things, and events discussed in the article.
- **Content Review** is a series of questions designed to test students' knowledge. Ask these questions in the classroom or incorporate them into a written quiz.
- **Discussion Questions** are designed to help students to think and/or write analytically about each topic. They can be the basis of an in-class discussion, or they can be assigned as essay questions.

For college undergraduates or advanced high school classes, you can direct students to the online version of the teacher's guide at www.jimthorpefilm.com/guide and instruct them to use the guide's hyperlinks to research and write about topics in greater depth.

If you are reading this on paper, you do not have access to the Web links in the guide. To access the Web links, put the DVD in a computer with an Internet connection, select GUIDE from the main menu, and follow the onscreen instructions.

HISTORIC IMAGES WEB GALLERY

Forty key historical photographs from the documentary are displayed on the film's Web site at www.jimthorpefilm.com/photo. Accompanying text provides detailed information, context and historical background for each of the photographs

NAVIGATING THE DVD

The DVD of *Jim Thorpe, The World's Greatest Athlete* is divided into chapters that can be individually accessed through the DVD chapter menu. We recommend accessing the chapters in the feature length version of the film which contain more historical information and are more closely allied with the content of this guide than the shorter TV version. Teachers may choose to screen a single DVD chapter in preparation for discussion of one of the chapters in the study guide. The content of the DVD chapters correlates with the content of the chapters in the study guide as follows.

STUDY GUIDE CHAPTER	DVD CHAPTER
1: THE LIFE OF JIM THORPE	— PLAY ENTIRE FILM
2: THE SAC AND FOX ODYSSEY	— ORIGINS
3: THE DAWES ACT AND THE LAND RUSH	— ORIGINS
4: INDIAN SCHOOLS	— SCHOOL
5: AMERICAN FOOTBALL	— RISING STAR
6: THE OLYMPIC GAMES	— OLYMPICS
7: BASEBALL AND JIM THORPE	— BASEBALL AND 1st FAMILY
8: PRO FOOTBALL'S EARLY YEARS	— FOOTBALL AND 2nd FAMILY
9: INDIANS IN HOLLYWOOD	— HOLLYWOOD & BEYOND
10: INDIAN RIGHTS	— HOLLYWOOD & BEYOND

DVD COMMENTARY

The entire feature-length film or separate chapters within it may also be viewed with commentary by the filmmakers. The commentary provides additional information on the life of Jim Thorpe and related history as well as anecdotes on the production of the film.

NOTE ON THE USE OF THE WORD “INDIAN”

How should the descendants of the Americas’ pre-Columbian inhabitants be referred to: as Indians? Native Americans? Aboriginal nations? First peoples?

In the United States, the most frequently used terms are “Indian” or “American Indian” and “Native American.” However, “Indian” and “American Indian” are most favored by native peoples. That preference is reflected by the fact that the two most widely distributed native newspapers are *News From Indian Country* and *Indian Country News*. Further, the name for the new national museum in Washington, D.C., chosen after consultation with tribal representatives, was not the

National Museum of the Native American but the National Museum of the American Indian.

There are several reasons for this. Because there are hundreds of different indigenous languages spoken by the first peoples of what is now the United States, no one word or term from a single American language can be used to refer to all Indians. Even though the term “Indian” is likely the result of a historical misperception, when Columbus assumed that the islands of the Caribbean were part of the East Indies, it has now been in use by both Native and non-native people for hundreds of years. “Indian” also appears in treaties and legal agreements between various Native nations and the United States.

In fact, one could argue that American Indian is a more accurate term for referring to people of aboriginal ancestry than “Native American.” Anyone born in North or South America, of whatever ancestry, might be called a Native American.

CHAPTER ONE

THE LIFE OF JIM THORPE

MIXED BLOODLINES

James Francis Thorpe was born in 1887 in the *Indian Territory* that would later become the state of Oklahoma. Jim, as most people called him, has most often been described as a Sac and Fox Indian, but his ancestry was complex. He sometimes wryly referred to himself as an “American Airedale” – referring to the popular breed of hunting dog that blends many bloodlines.



Charlotte Thorpe
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

Jim’s mother, Charlotte Vieux, was a member of the Citizen Pottawatomie Band. Charlotte’s parents, Jacob and Elizabeth Vieux, shared between them a mixture of Pottawatomie, Kickapoo, Menominee, and French ancestry. In 1867, when Charlotte was only four years old, her entire family and the thousand other members of their band were forcibly relocated from their home in Kansas to Indian Territory. Jim’s father, Hiram Phillip Thorpe, was born to a Sac and Fox mother and an Irish-American father. Summing up his lineage, Jim observed he was five-eighths Indian, one-fourth Irish and one-eighth French.

THE THORPE FAMILY

By the time Hiram and Charlotte got married, Hiram already had at least three children by two earlier wives. Charlotte gave him eleven more. It was common in the late nineteenth century for both white and Indian men to marry more than once, especially since women frequently died in childbirth (as did Charlotte with their last child). Polygamy was a common practice among many American Indian nations. Hiram married more than most. After Charlotte’s passing he fathered two more sons by one further wife. Of Hiram’s fifteen or more children, less than half survived to adulthood.



Hiram Phillip Thorpe
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

Six of the eleven children born to Charlotte and Hiram died before the age of 12, most of them at a much younger age. Jim Thorpe's brothers and sisters, in order of their birth, were George (1882), Rosetta (1882-1889), the twins, Mary (1883-1884) and Margaret (1883-1887), Jim's twin brother, Charlie (1887-1897), Mary#2 (1891), Jesse (1891-1892), Adeline (1895), Edward (1898), and Henry (1898, died at birth).

Family has special meaning among American Indians. Even today, when one talks about oneself, one is expected to mention family first. Sharing rather than accumulating personal wealth was and remains a strong tradition among the Sac and Fox and most other Native American peoples. An individual's accomplishments are measured not in personal terms but in terms of what one does for one's people. Throughout his life Jim was loyal to his family. After his parents died, he kept in close touch with his siblings, helping them in any way he could. He often returned to Oklahoma to visit. When he played professional football, he recruited one of his brothers to play on his team.

Family in American Indian cultures goes beyond blood relationships. You are related to those who are of the same clan. A *clan* is a grouping of people that traces its descent from a common ancestor in the distant past. Sometimes this is a real person, sometimes a totemic figure. The word totem comes from the Ojibwa word *nindoodeem*, which refers to that object or animal to which one is ancestrally related. Those of the same clan, even if there is no blood connection, are considered relatives, and they are entitled the same respect and consideration that one would give to one's own blood uncles, aunts, grandparents, cousins, etc. Clans also play an important role in political, religious and social relationships within Native American communities.

The eight Sac and Fox clans are Bear, Partridge, Elk, Black Bass, Fox, Swan, Wolf, and Thunder. Jim's Sac and Fox grandmother was of the Thunder Clan. Her name was No-ten-o-quah, which means "Wind Before a Storm." It was the Thunder Clan that gave the Jim the name Wa-tha-sko-huk, which means "The Light After the Lightning." Watho-Huck (as most books record it) has often been mistakenly translated as "Bright Path" by Jim's biographers.

That Thunder Clan name made Jim a clan relative of the famous chief *Black Hawk* (described in the next chapter). Jim grew up hearing stories of Black Hawk's deeds and feeling a connection to his illustrious clan ancestor.



Chief Black Hawk
WESTERVELT-WARNER MUSEUM

Jim's mixed-blood family, and the forced migration of his Indian ancestors, was both a result and a reflection of United States Indian policy in the nineteenth century. Many different tribes from various parts of the continent were brought together in "Indian Territory," and intermarriages frequently resulted.

Whites also found their way into Indian country on a regular basis. Jim's paternal grandfather was an Irish-American named Hiram Grace Thorpe. Born in Connecticut in 1811 and trained as a blacksmith, Hiram went west to Iowa in the 1840s, where he got a government job as the tribal blacksmith for the Sac and Fox. There he formed a lasting bond with his wife No-ten-o-quah and her people. Their first child, Mary, was born shortly before a smallpox epidemic devastated the tribe, killing 300 Sac and Foxes. Hiram's family survived, but as a blacksmith, Hiram had the job of making coffins for the victims of the epidemic.

When the government relocated the surviving members of the tribe, sending them to Kansas, Hiram and his family went along. There Hiram and No-ten-

o-quah had their second child: Hiram Phillip Thorpe, born in 1850 or 1851, who would become Jim's father. Tribal elders observed that he looked a lot like Black Hawk, and like Black Hawk he was defiant towards any who dared oppose him.

JIM'S FATHER, HIRAM PHILLIP THORPE

Jim's father was a well-known figure in Indian Territory, both feared and respected. He was a successful rancher who raised hogs, cattle, and horses and grew wheat and corn on a 1,200-acre spread on the North Canadian River. English was the common language in the Thorpe home, and the everyday clothes that Jim and Hiram wore were not traditional garb but cotton shirts and trousers.

Hiram had a reputation as a bootlegger, a bad man, and a heavy drinker. He went on sprees in the nearby town of Keokuk Falls, famed for its "Seven Deadly Saloons." A frequently told story is that he was present at a gunfight in one of those saloons. One of the gunmen, after killing his rival, dared anyone else in the place to take him on. Hiram stepped up, stuck his finger in the bullet hole in the dead man on the floor, and then licked it clean. "Let's go outside," he said. At that the gunman grew pale, lowered his weapon and backed off, saying, "I'm sorry Hiram. I didn't know you was here."

Hiram was also one of the few Sac and Fox tribal members who could read and write. He believed you needed learning to beat whites at their own game and was determined that his children would be even better educated than he was.

Hiram also instructed his sons in the natural world and how to hunt and fish. Jim was only eight when he shot his first deer. Though the era of buffalo hunts and plains warfare was over, Sac and Fox men still competed in feats of physical prowess and endurance. Wrestling matches, foot races, and horse racing were favorite pastimes. Hiram was the undisputed champion in all these contests, and he passed on his love of physical contest to Jim.

At one point, when Jim was about fourteen, he and some friends were charged by a mean bull belonging to a local rancher. According to Sam Morris, a Sac and Fox elder who was there that day, everyone ran except

Jim. He held his ground and shot the bull dead with a bow and arrow. Hiram had to pay the farmer for the bull, but instead of punishing Jim, all he said to his son was "No more bulls." The story suggests he was proud of his son's courage.

Jim took to the outdoors and the physical skills that Hiram taught him, but he hated the schools he was forced to attend.

GOING TO SCHOOL

In 1893, when Jim and his twin brother, Charlie, were six years old, their father sent them to the Sac and Fox Agency Boarding School twenty-three miles away. Their older half-brother, **Frank**, their half-sister, Minnie, and their older brother, George, were already enrolled there.

Jim excelled in sports. Charlie was better at schoolwork. But they were close and they encouraged each other. Then in early 1897, when they were nine, disaster struck. An epidemic swept the Agency school. According to one account, Jim's father had just taken him out of school for a few days to go hunting. Another version is that Jim was not in school because he had run away. In any event Charlie remained, became sick, and died.

The loss of his twin affected Jim deeply. He believed that when Charlie died his brother's strength came into him and that this ultimately contributed to his athletic prowess. Though Charlie was gone, he was always with Jim.

HASKELL INSTITUTE

Jim's distrust of school deepened after the loss of his brother. Hiram took Jim back to school after Charlie's death. But as soon as his father left him, Jim ran all the way home, cutting across fields and rivers to get there before his father did.

Evidently Jim was not afraid of Hiram, and Hiram, tough as he was, found his son hard to handle. Eventually, in 1898 at the age of eleven, Jim was put on a train to **Haskell Institute**, an Indian boarding school in Lawrence, Kansas, 270 miles away.

Founded in 1884, Haskell Institute had a student population of close to a thousand Indian boys and

girls from nearly a hundred different tribal nations all over the United States.

At Haskell Jim was first introduced to organized sports, especially football, which fascinated him. Small for his age (Jim would not get his growth until his late teens), Jim idolized such Haskell football players as Chauncey Archiquette. Archiquette gave him his first homemade football, stitched together from scraps of leather from the school's harness shop and stuffed with rags.



Haskell Students
KANSAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Jim was adjusting to life at Haskell when he received word that his father had been mortally injured in an accident. Jim's request to go home was denied by the school authorities, so he took off on his own. He hopped a freight train but then discovered it was going in the wrong direction. He jumped off and walked. It took him two weeks to get home. By that time Hiram had unexpectedly recovered from his injury. Jim was allowed to stay and help around the ranch.

In 1901 Jim struck out on his own. His mother had died giving birth to her eleventh child, and he'd had another argument with Hiram. There seemed nothing to hold him. He was just fifteen, but he got a job catching and breaking wild horses on the Texas high plains.

Jim returned a year later with a team of horses he had bought from his earnings. Hiram had remarried,

and Jim's older brothers had moved out. Jim went back to school again, this time at a public, non-Indian school. The Garden Grove school was only a few miles from his home, making it possible for Jim to live at home and help care for his four younger siblings.

Jim also took part in sports at Garden Grove, including track and baseball. He became a star on the local baseball team, and Walter White, the teacher who had opened Garden Grove, suggested that Jim go to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, because it was a great place for an athlete. According to Jim's own account, an assistant superintendent from Carlisle, who was recruiting promising athletes, came to Garden Grove and met with him and other students.

THE CARLISLE SCHOOL

In any event, in early 1904, Jim Thorpe boarded a train that started him on the long journey to Carlisle. His father's last words to him were these: "Son, you are an Indian. I want you to show other races what an Indian can do."

At this point in history Hiram's words were particularly poignant. In 1904, the general consensus was that Indians were a "Vanishing Race." Census figures showed that only 250,000 American Indians remained in the United States. It was assumed that the Indian would simply disappear before the end of the twentieth century. American Indians were virtually powerless after years of fruitless struggle to protect their land. By law they were not American citizens; they had the legal status of dependent children.

Proving what an Indian could do was a formidable task. And it was made no easier when Jim learned, soon after his arrival in Pennsylvania, that his father was dead from blood poisoning.

Jim's first years at *Carlisle* were not promising. When he enrolled at the age of 16, he was only 5 foot 5 1/2 inches tall and weighed 115 pounds, according to school records. Nor did he do much in the way of schoolwork. Instead, he was sent out as a low-paid laborer (at \$8 a month) to various farms in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, as part of a Carlisle *Outing Program* intended to teach students the white work ethic.



Carlisle Students at work in the school's cabbage patch

CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JIM IS DISCOVERED

In the spring of 1907 Jim was noticed by **Glenn Scobey ("Pop") Warner**, Carlisle's ambitious athletic director and football coach. Pop asked Jim to join his track squad. That same fall, despite Pop's fears that his budding track star would be injured, Jim joined the football team. As one of Pop Warner's "Athletic Boys" Jim got to live in a new dormitory with special food and accommodations. It also meant that he shared in the financial perks of being a Carlisle athlete. The Carlisle Athletic Association, controlled by Pop Warner, kept all receipts from ticket sales. Some of the money was used for improvements around campus – the athletic dorm, the building of the Leupp Art Studio and Pop Warner's own house. Thousands of dollars also went directly to the student athletes, who had expense accounts at local stores and were given cash in the form of "loans" that were never expected to be paid back. Jim's drinking habit probably began at Carlisle, where school employees actually made occasional beer deliveries to the athletic dorm and Pop sometimes invited his best athletes over to his home for a drink.

Jim distinguished himself in both track and football during 1907 and 1908. Then, at the end of the 1909 school year, he went south with several other Carlisle players to play minor league baseball in the Carolina Class D leagues. (School records indicated that he left to play summer ball.) It was common practice for college athletes to play semi-pro baseball in the summers,

but they usually did so under assumed names. After two summers in the poorly organized Eastern Carolina League, where he had earned about \$15 a week – much less than he'd been given as one of Pop Warner's boys at Carlisle – Jim returned home to Oklahoma, where he lived with relatives and continued to play baseball.

OLYMPICS AND COLLEGE FOOTBALL FAME

While Jim was gone, Carlisle's football fortunes went downhill. Pop Warner kept trying to convince Jim to return, and he finally did so in 1911. That year, Jim and his teammate, Louis Tewanima gained national prominence in track and field. It led to their being selected for the **Olympic Games of 1912**. (Tewanima had already taken part in the previous Olympics in 1908.) Getting Jim to the Olympics had been one of Pop Warner's aims in inviting him back to Carlisle, and Warner traveled with his two stars to Sweden as their coach. In the Swedish Olympics, Jim gained world fame, winning both the decathlon and the pentathlon, while Louis Tewanima took second place in the 10,000-meter event. Returning to Carlisle from Sweden, Jim refused numerous offers to become a professional athlete. Because of his loyalty to Pop Warner, he went on to play another season of football, where his team won their famous victory against the West Point Military Academy, on November 11, 1912. For once in modern history, it could be said: "The Indians beat the Army."

For the second year in a row, Jim was named to that elite group of players known as the All-Americans.

It was ironic that Jim and Louis Tewanima came to represent the United States in the Olympics. Like most Indians, Jim and Louis were not citizens of the United States, and lacked the rights of American citizenship. Louis Tewanima was in fact technically a prisoner of war. He had ended up at Carlisle after troops from Fort Wingate were sent in 1906 to the Hopi Reservation by Indian Commissioner Francis C. Leupp, to quash continued Hopi opposition to white schooling. Twelve years earlier, in 1894, similar opposition by the Hopis had resulted in nineteen Hopis being sentenced to hard labor at **Alcatraz**. In the 1906 invasion of Hopi

lands, seventy-two resisters were captured. Seventeen Hopis ended up imprisoned at Fort Huachuca, the two main Hopi leaders were banned for life from the reservation, and *Tewanima and eleven other "hostiles"* were ordered to serve five years at an Indian boarding school of their choice.

THE OLYMPIC SCANDAL

Jim's great successes of 1912 were followed by scandal. An article published in January of 1913 claimed that Jim Thorpe had played professional baseball and that he was not an amateur athlete when he took part in the Olympics. Pop Warner and Moses Friedman, the Superintendent of Carlisle, at first denied it, even though both knew Jim had played summer ball. According to Joe Libby, one of the Carlisle players who went with Jim to Carolina, the \$15 per week they earned in the *East Carolina League* went straight back to Pennsylvania to be placed in their Carlisle accounts to pay for their clothing for the next school year. When the evidence mounted that Jim had played in East Carolina, Warner and Friedman drafted a letter for Jim to rewrite in his own hand, taking all responsibility on himself for hiding the fact that he had played summer baseball. He was subsequently stripped of his Olympic medals and records.

PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

Despite the scandal, Thorpe's career as a professional athlete was just beginning. In 1913 he signed a lucrative contract with the *New York Giants* baseball team and went on a round-the-world baseball tour with the team, accompanied by his new wife, Iva Miller, who had been called "the prettiest girl at Carlisle." He also brought life to the new sport of professional football as a player and in 1920, he became the first president of the American Football Association, which would later become the National Football League (NFL). In 1922 he founded, coached and played for the Oorang Indians, the only all-Indian professional football team.



Thorpe on Oorang Field

ROBERT WHITMAN

FAMILY

Though Jim Thorpe was a money-making machine for others, he never became wealthy. He and Iva, his first wife, had a comfortable home in Yale, Oklahoma, and together they had four children, Jim Jr., Gail, Charlotte, and Grace. But the demands of his life as a professional athlete kept Jim on the road, and Iva was often alone. After the tragic death of their first child, Jim Jr., in 1917, the marriage became troubled. Jim's long absences and his drinking led to a divorce in 1923.

He married again, to Freeda Kilpatrick, in 1925. The two of them had four sons, Carl Phillip, William, Richard, and John. Once again, however, the demands of his professional life meant that he had little time to spend with his family. That second marriage also ended in divorce in 1941.

THE DEPRESSION AND HOLLYWOOD

After his professional sports career ended, Jim weathered the Great Depression and found work in Hollywood. He had small speaking parts and appeared as a extra in numerous films. He also was an advocate for other Indians seeking roles and equal pay in the movies. In 1929, he sold (for \$1,500) the rights for a movie to be made about his life, to be called "Red Son of Carlisle." Nothing came of it at the time, in part because of the Olympics scandal. Employment was often hard to find, and Jim had a series of jobs, making a countrywide lecture tour for the W. Colton Leigh Bureau in 1940 and working as a gate tender at a Ford Motor Company plant in Dearborn, Michigan, in 1942. He made numerous unsuccessful attempts to enlist in the armed forces during World War II. Finally, in 1945, he was able to join the Merchant Marine as a ship's carpenter. After the war he found part-time jobs, including one as a bouncer at a Los Angeles bar and grill in 1947.

RECOGNITION AND THE FINAL YEARS

Interest in Jim Thorpe was reignited when on January 24, 1950, an Associated Press poll of 391 broadcasters and sports writers voted him “The Greatest Football Player of the Half Century.” Several days later, a second Associated Press poll, in which he received 252 of the 393 votes cast, chose Jim as “The Greatest Athlete of the Half Century.” A popular movie, *Jim Thorpe, All-American*, starring Burt Lancaster, was made in 1951. Jim no longer owned the rights to his life story, but MGM hired him as an advisor during the production of the film.

During his last years, Jim traveled as a lecturer and advocate for Native rights. He was known for his generosity, often giving away the money he earned at speaking engagements to friends in need. He received numerous accolades. No American Indian of the twentieth century was better known or more beloved than Jim Thorpe. A series of heart attacks weakened him, and he was hospitalized in 1952 with lip cancer. Jim’s third wife, Patricia Askew, whom he had married on June 2, 1945, declared: “Jim has nothing but his name and his memories. He has spent his money on his people and given it all away.” Funding drives were started throughout the nation to pay for his medical expenses, and Jim recovered enough to return home to their trailer in Lomita, California. The iron man of Carlisle, the indestructible Jim Thorpe, passed on from a final heart attack on March 28, 1953, at the age of 66.

After Thorpe’s death some of his children followed in his footsteps as advocates for Native American rights. Jim’s youngest son, Jack, served as chief of the Sac and Fox nation from 1980 to 1987 and remains active in Indian affairs. Jim’s daughter *Grace Thorpe*

successfully led a drive to prevent the dumping of radioactive waste on first her own Sac and Fox and then other American Indian reservations.

In 1982, thanks to the efforts of the Thorpe family and countless others, both Indian and non-Indian, the International Olympic Committee restored Jim Thorpe’s amateur status and returned his name to the Olympic record books. In 2000, in a national poll conducted by Wide World of Sports, Jim Thorpe was voted the Greatest Athlete of the Twentieth Century.

Throughout his life, Jim Thorpe moved between the white and native worlds. His life reflects the complex relationship between Native people and an American nation burdened with lingering race stereotypes, stereotypes of Indians as a doomed and degraded race.



Jim Thorpe in Hollywood, 1940s
JIM THORPE HOME



THE LIFE OF JIM THORPE

Concepts and Discussion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students learn about the major events of Jim Thorpe's life, his family and tribal background. The story of Jim Thorpe should also be understood within the context of the larger story of American Indian history in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and the development of amateur and professional sports in the United States.

TEACHERS' QUICK REFERENCE

- Jim Thorpe's mixed ancestry
- Large families were common, many children did not survive.
- Special place of family in American Indian culture
- Clans and clan relatives
- Jim receives the Thunder Clan name Wa-tha-sko-huk, which means "The Light After the Lightning."
- Hiram P. Thorpe, Jim's father, rancher, bad man, and believer in education for his children
- Twins go to school at the Sac and Fox Agency. Jim hates it. Charlie dies.
- Jim goes to the Haskell Institute in Kansas.
- Jim enrolls in the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in 1904.
- First successes in track and field and football at Carlisle, 1907-1908
- Plays baseball during the summers of 1909-1910 in minor leagues.
- Returns to Carlisle and leads football teams in victorious seasons 1911-1912.
- Wins two gold medals at the 1912 Summer Olympics and wins the sobriquet "The Greatest Athlete in the World."
- Olympic scandal, Thorpe judged not to have been an amateur.
- Professional sports. Jim signs with New York Giants baseball team.
- Marries Iva Margaret Miller. Their first son, Jim Jr., dies. Seven more children are born, from Iva and Freeda, Jim's second wife.
- Hollywood and the Great Depression
- Jim becomes an advocate for Indian actors in Hollywood during the 1930s.
- Goes on lecture circuit in 1940.
- Selected as best Football Player of the Half Century in 1950.
- Movie based on Thorpe's life is released in 1951.
- Jim Thorpe dies in 1953.

KEY CONTENT

- Jim Thorpe's tribal and family background
- Indian Schools, Haskell and Carlisle
- Pop Warner, Carlisle Athletic Director and Thorpe's mentor
- Thorpe's successes in track and football at Carlisle
- The 1912 Olympics and ensuing scandal
- Jim's career as a professional athlete
- Jim Thorpe's life and advocacy in Hollywood and beyond

CONTENT REVIEW

- What led to Jim Thorpe's family being of such mixed ancestry?
- How many American Indians were there at the start of the twentieth century?
- Why did Charlie Thorpe die and Jim survive?
- How did Jim react to school?
- Where was Jim first sent to school?
- Where was the Haskell Institute?
- When was Jim sent to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School?
- Who was Jim Thorpe's coach at Carlisle?
- Was the Carlisle system truly amateur?
- Why was Jim Thorpe stripped of his Olympic medals?
- What was Jim Thorpe's career in sports after Carlisle?
- Why did Jim Thorpe's first two marriages fail?
- Why was Jim Thorpe never a wealthy man?
- What else did Jim do aside from sports?
- Were Jim Thorpe's Olympic records ever restored?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Identify three factors that led to Jim's mixed ancestry.
- How do family and clan affect American Indians? How did they impact Jim Thorpe's life?
- Did Jim Thorpe succeed in showing other races what an Indian can do?
- What is the difference between an amateur athlete and a professional one? How are today's ideas of amateurism different from those of the early 20th century?
- Was Jim Thorpe's life a tragedy? What elements in his life were tragic and what parts were triumphant?
- What was the place that American Indians occupied in American culture in the early twentieth century? How is that place different today?
- If American society were a ladder, what rung did the Native American occupy in the early twentieth century? Why? What rung do they occupy today? Why?

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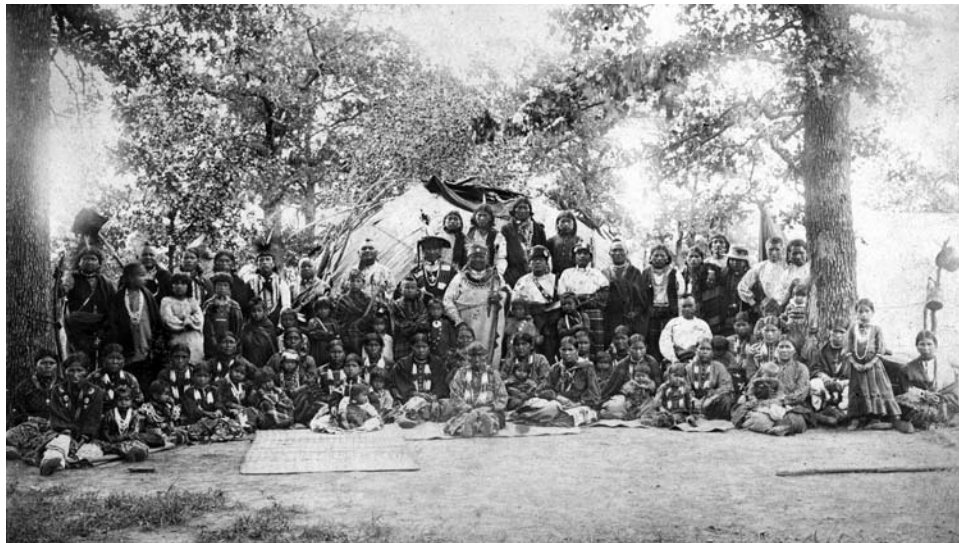
CHAPTER TWO

THE SAC AND FOX ODYSSEY

His people were of the same clan as Black Hawk, a leader who fought against the American taking of Indian lands. They were the Sac and Fox. In sixty years, the tribe was transformed from wide-ranging buffalo hunters to a band of 700 survivors on a small reservation. It was the same story for Native Americans all over the country. — Narrator, Jim Thorpe, The World's Greatest Athlete

ORIGINS

The Sac and Fox nation is a confederacy of two tribes, the Sauk and the Mesquakie, whose traditional homelands were in eastern Michigan and northern Ohio. By the late 18th century, they had become principally located in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. Their large village of *Saukenuk*, located at the confluence of the Mississippi and Rock Rivers, was described by an English traveler in 1766 as “the largest and best-built Indian town.” Surrounded by hundreds of acres of planted fields, its population was estimated to be as high as 6,000.



Sac & Fox Group with Chief Pa She Pa Ho, late 19th century

OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In their own language, the Sauk called themselves the Asakiwaki, or “People of the Outlet.” This was eventually shortened in English to Sac.

The Mesquakie, or “Red Earth People,” became known to the French as “Re-nards,” the French word for foxes. Apparently, when a group of Mesquakies was asked to identify themselves by early French visitors, they replied that they were Wahgohagi, or members of the Fox Clan. Thus their clan name was mistaken for the name of their tribal nation.

Closely related in language and culture, the Sauk and Mesquakie shared a history of stubborn resistance to the expansion of French control in Wisconsin. After being nearly wiped out by the French in 1732, about 200 surviving Foxes were given sanctuary by the Sacs. Together, the groups thrived, intermarried, and gained a reputation as a powerful nation to be feared by their enemies.

But the Sac and Fox did not initially seek conflict with Europeans. On the contrary, they were eager to do business with Spanish, British and even the early French traders who came into their territory. In 1806, the famous American explorers *Lewis and Clark* described the Sac and Fox as the best hunters on the Mississippi and the Missouri rivers, estimating that they brought in \$10,000 worth of furs each year.

MANIFEST DESTINY AND THE ORIGIN OF INDIAN REMOVAL POLICIES

By the beginning of the 19th century, the balance of power between American Indians and Europeans was beginning to change. In 1803, the *Louisiana Purchase*, in which the United States obtained from France 828,800 square miles of territory, an area encompassing much of the central part of the continent, opened up vast new lands for American expansion to the west. The idea of *Manifest Destiny* began to dominate United States policy. This was a sort of historical mysticism that regarded it as natural, good, and inevitable that American civilization would spread across the continent.



William Tecumseh Sherman,
Fort Laramie Treaty Peace Commission, 1868
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA, WESTERN HISTORY COLLECTION

The solution that the U.S. government applied to the Sac and Fox was the one used to solve virtually all “Indian problems,” namely: Get rid of the Indians. This was done either by warfare or by treaty, in which native groups were forced to cede or sell their lands.

The policy of eradication of peoples who stood in the way of national expansion was not new. It had had its roots in the early 1600s, when the first European settlements were established at Jamestown and Plymouth Plantation. These earliest settlers saw Indians as nomads who did not (by European standards) make full use of the land and therefore had less right to it than the new white settlers, for whom agriculture as a mark of civilization. The settlers and those who followed ignored or were ignorant of the fact that many tribal nations had practiced sophisticated forms of agriculture long before the coming of Europeans. *Crops* that were helping feed the world by the 19th century—maize and potatoes, for example—originated in the Americas.

Religious intolerance also played a pivotal role in shaping how attitudes evolved towards the native inhabitants. The Christian pilgrims and other European settlers also saw Indians as heathen pagans, following false gods. At best they were poor, degraded unfortunates, in need of salvation. At worst, they were the savage enemies of Christian civilization, in league with the devil.

These deeply ingrained biases often caused colonists to discount the experience of their own first contacts with Indians. There are many accounts of early European visitors who remarked on the moral and tolerant nature of the native peoples they encountered. Ironically, many American Indians saw little difference between their own ways of worship and the underlying moral principles of Christianity. In fact, after more than two centuries of contact with European priests and missionaries, a large number of American Indians had accepted the new faith.

It is not surprising that Christianity had become the norm in Jim Thorpe’s own family by the end of the 19th century. His mother was a devout Catholic, and Jim was baptized in the *Sacred Heart Church* near Konawa, Oklahoma. The Sacred Heart Mission near the town of Konawa in Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma,



Indian Chiefs and U.S. Government Officials

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where Jim Thorpe was baptized had been built with the help of his mother's tribe. That Catholic faith would continue as a part of Jim's life. When given the choice at Indian school, he would attend the Catholic services, and the three women he would eventually marry would all be Catholic.

EARLY RESISTANCE TO AMERICAN EXPANSION

The way Manifest Destiny and U.S. government policy, shaped and justified by religious intolerance and European imperialism, played out to determine the fate of the Sac and Fox is similar to the histories of many individual tribes.

In the case of Jim's ancestors, it began as settlers poured into the native lands between the Ohio River and the Mississippi. It resulted in an Indian armed resistance that lasted for several decades. A few names stand out in that heroic but futile native resistance. The first was **Pontiac (1720-1769)**. An Ottawa tribal leader, Pontiac's famous "rebellion" took place in 1763 and brought together a coalition of a dozen different tribal nations to halt what was then British expansion.

Tecumseh (1768-1813) of the Shawnee forged a similar intertribal alliance that included the Sac and Fox. Tecumseh's power was broken in 1811 by the American army at the **Battle of Tippecanoe**. The third and last of those who attempted military resistance in the region was Jim Thorpe's illustrious ancestor, **Black Hawk (1767-1838)**. Known also as Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak, or Black Sparrow Hawk, Black Hawk and some of his warriors had been among the first to join forces with Tecumseh and fought on the English/Canadian side in the **War of 1812**. After that war, Black Hawk continued to resist American encroachment on the land, even as another Sac and Fox chief, **Keokuk**, the "Watchful Fox," gave in to demands to relocate the Sac and Fox from Saukenuk to Iowa.

BLACK HAWK WAR

Finally, in 1831, Blackhawk and a band of followers agreed to abandon Saukenuk and accept Keokuk as chief. Blackhawk was 65 years old at the time and had been fighting for most of his life, but then he was persuaded to change his mind. A Winnebago prophet named White Cloud (Ho-Chunk) urged him to resist

the Americans and reclaim his lands, and a band of Fox warriors came to him for sanctuary. Followers from other nations, Kickapoos and Potawatomis, joined Black Hawk's band. When the spring of 1832 came, Black Hawk led a group of over 2,000 men, women and children back to Saukenuk.

This was the beginning of the tragic misadventure that became known as the **Black Hawk War**. Keokuk had warned the Americans of Black Hawk's plans. A large force of federal troops under General Henry Atkinson and Illinois volunteers under General Samuel Whiteside were sent to intercept Black Hawk. Among them was a lanky 23-year-old from New Salem, Illinois, who thought military service as a captain of volunteers might help him win a seat in the Illinois legislature. His name was **Abraham Lincoln**, and he was later to become the 16th president of the United States.

"Honest" Abe Lincoln would later ridicule the boasts of personal heroism made by such people as Lewis Cass (who was to become Secretary of War) during the campaign against Black Hawk. Lincoln wrote: "If General Cass went in advance of me in picking whortleberries, I guess I surpassed him in charges on the wild onions. If he ever saw any live fighting Indians, I guess it was more than I did, but I had a great many bloody experiences with the mosquitoes; and although I never fainted from loss of blood, I can say I was often very hungry."

Black Hawk led his followers north, fruitlessly seeking support from other native nations. Some, among them the Menominees, Winnebagos and Sioux, joined forces with the Americans to fight against him.

On May 12, Black Hawk found himself facing a detachment of cavalry under Major Isaiah Stillman and 275 militiamen. It seemed hopeless, so he sent a party to Stillman under a flag of truce. Despite the white flag, the troops attacked and killed three Indians. With no choice but to fight, Black Hawk and his warriors made a stand so fierce that the militiamen, panicked and took flight back to Dixon Ferry, 25 miles away. Stillman's Run, as it became known, was the only real Indian victory of the campaign. From then on, it was fight, flight and hunger for Black Hawk's desperate followers.

It ended on August 3, 1832, when the starving, tattered band reached the junction of the Mississippi with the Bad Axe River. Black Hawk tried again to parlay. As before, his delegation was fired upon. Hundreds of others then tried to flee across the river in canoes and on makeshift rafts. They were cut down by heavy fire from the shore and a gunboat on the river. Most died. Only 39 women and children survived.

Black Hawk, White Cloud, the Winnebago prophet, and a number of his followers were taken prisoner and incarcerated in St. Louis. When the famous artist **George Catlin** visited them, they refused to pose for him until he agreed to paint them wearing their balls and chains.

In 1833, Keokuk and **William Clark**, Indian Agent and former explorer of the Louisiana Territory, arranged for the release of most of the prisoners. But Black Hawk, his handsome son Neapope, the prophet White Cloud and two others were judged too dangerous to set free. They were sent east to a safer prison in Maryland.

BLACK HAWK'S SURRENDER

In the east, Black Hawk and the other prisoners were treated as celebrities. Their tragic war was already becoming a part of the American mythology of the West. They met **President Andrew Jackson**, who was surprisingly cordial. They were given new clothing. At Fort Monroe on the Chesapeake they were given the freedom of the post. In May, their promises to end all resistance and Clark's words on their behalf resulted in their release. They were returned west, after being taken on a tour of Norfolk, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York and Albany, where throngs of awed onlookers gawked at them and gave them presents. Several women impulsively kissed Black Hawk's son Neapope, described by a Washington reporter as "a noble specimen of physical beauty."

Near the end of their tour, properly awed by the wealth and power of the Americans, Black Hawk made this statement to a group of Seneca Indians, "Brothers, we have seen how great a people the Whites are. They are very rich and very strong — it is folly for us to fight them."

He allowed himself to be taken to the new reservation in Iowa, where he died in 1838, the year that the Cherokees were removed to Indian Territory on the *Trail of Tears*. With the exception of the Seminole resistance in Florida, Black Hawk's War marked the end of armed conflict between the United States and the tribes east of the Mississippi.



The Trail of Tears, 1838

THE GRANGER COLLECTION, NEW YORK

But the Sac and Fox odyssey was not yet over. Keokuk, who had betrayed his own people, was now undisputed principal chief of the Sac and Fox. In addition to all Sac and Fox lands east of the Mississippi, in the Treaty of 1832, he ceded an additional 50-mile stretch on the Iowa side of the great river, some of the richest farmland in America. The United States honored Keokuk with a statue. Keokuk, now a rich man, then convinced most of his people to give up the rest of their Iowa lands—another ten million acres—and move to a reservation of 435,000 acres in Kansas, with poor soil for agriculture and tribes hostile to the newcomers all around them.

THE RESERVATION SYSTEM

The system of removing Indians from their homelands and restricting them to reservations was a long-standing part of United States Indian policy. A tract of “public land” would be set aside for the use of a particular Indian group. Those reservations were usually created as a result of treaties signed between the United States and representatives of an Indian nation and were supposed to hold the same force of law as a treaty between two nations. In exchange for ceasing

resistance and ceding their lands, Indians were promised certain benefits, including food, clothing, housing and education for their children. An Indian agent, appointed by the federal government, was placed in charge of each reservation, and his word was law. Indians on reservations did not enjoy the same rights as American citizens. Often, they could not leave the reservation without written permission. They were forbidden to engage in most of their traditional practices. Even farming was difficult, because the land on most reservations was relatively unsuited for agriculture. There was little game within the reservation boundaries, so men often had to leave, with or without permission, to get food. Because there was little available employment on the reservation, most had to rely on the United States government for rations.



Indians and Log Cabin

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA, WESTERN HISTORY COLLECTION

The Sac and Fox experienced all the problems of the reservation system, including the fact that the land “given” to them by the United States government lay in the middle of territories long claimed by other American Indian peoples. In Kansas, the Sac and Fox found themselves encroaching on the traditional hunting grounds of powerful plains tribes, all of whom resented the new “frontier Indians.” Fortunately, the Sac and Fox were good at fighting. In 1854, a group of 100 Sac and Fox buffalo hunters were encountered by a party of over 1,000 Comanches, Osages, Kiowas, and Cheyennes near Fort Riley. In the fight that followed, half a dozen Sac and Fox were killed, but their adver-

saries were forced to retreat after losing four times that number. In his 1856 report, the superintendent of the Central Division of the Indian Bureau stated that “By their adventurous courage (the Sac and Fox) ... though greatly outnumbered ... [have] caused a panic among those very bands of Comanches long considered so terrible upon the frontiers of Texas.” Jim Thorpe’s ancestors were tough people.

REMOVAL TO INDIAN TERRITORY

Still the Sac and Fox were dwindling. Two thousand four hundred had been settled on the Kansas reservation under the Treaty of 1842. Within twenty years, half of their population had perished from cholera, smallpox, and measles. In 1851, a hundred of the Kansas Foxes returned to Iowa. Other Foxes joined them, and they were able to eventually purchase a 3,000-acre settlement near Tama, Iowa, using money from their annuities and sales of their horses and jewelry. Given state recognition in 1856, they are known today as the *Mesquakies*.

Meanwhile, the United States abrogated its treaty with the Sac and Fox. In 1854, Congress passed the

Kansas-Nebraska Bill, which not only provided for the creation of the territories of Kansas and Nebraska, but also stated that the Indians of the region should be resettled in the region then known as *Indian Territory*, the present-day state of Oklahoma.

In 1859, a group of Sac and Fox leaders, led by *Moses Keokuk*, the son of the old chief, signed a new treaty in which they gave up 300,000 acres of their Kansas reservation. Seven years later they were pressured give up all the rest of their land in Kansas in exchange for money they could use to buy land in Indian Territory.

In December of 1869, during a heavy snowstorm, the survivors of what had once been a mighty nation made their last relocation. The remaining Sac and Fox people, as few as 387 by one count, their old and weak loaded onto government wagons, made the nineteen-day trek to Indian Territory. There, on about 480,000 acres of land, less than 10 percent of which was suitable for farming, they received an annuity of \$60 each. There, in Indian Territory, Jim Thorpe would be born eighteen years later.



THE SAC AND FOX ODYSSEY

Concepts and Discussion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students learn about the history of Jim Thorpe’s tribal nation, the Sac and Fox, linked to the broader history of Western settlement and the United States policy of Indian Removal, treaties, the Indian Wars, and the reservation system.

TEACHER’S QUICK REFERENCE

Origins

- Original homelands in eastern Michigan and northern Ohio
- Village of **Saukenuk**, at the confluence of the Mississippi and Rock Rivers, estimated population 6,000
- Asakiwaki (Sauk) and Mesquakie (Red Earth People) joined together after war with the French
- Sac and Fox active in fur trade

Manifest Destiny and the Origin of Indian Removal Policies

- Louisiana Purchase in 1803
- Idea of Manifest Destiny
- Policies of Indian eradication
- Religious and cultural intolerance of whites toward Indians

Early Resistance to American Expansion

- Pontiac’s rebellion in 1763
- Tecumseh’s alliance and the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811
- Black Hawk sided with the English in the War of 1812

Black Hawk’s War

- Troops attack Saukenuk in 1831.
- Black Hawk leads followers back to Saukenuk in 1831.
- Abraham Lincoln in Black Hawk’s war
- Stillman’s Run
- Massacre at Bad Axe River

Black Hawk’s Surrender

- Black Hawk’s tour as a prisoner of war
- Black Hawk’s death in 1838, the year of the Trail of Tears
- Keokuk cedes more land in the Treaty of 1832.
- Sac and Fox removal to Kansas

The Reservation System

- “Public” land set aside for Indians
- Indians given certain benefits
- Reservation system

- Role of Indian agent
- Problems of reservation system and treaties
- Sac and Fox problems

Removal to Indian Territory

- Sac and Fox population dwindles to half.
- Breakaway group of Foxes go to Iowa in 1851, become Mesquakie.
- Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854
- Remaining Sac and Fox go to Indian Territory in 1869.

KEY CONTENT

- Identity of Sac and Fox
- American expansionism and its effects on Sac and Fox
- Misunderstandings about American Indian cultures
- Indian Removal Policy
- Black Hawk's War
- Indian Territory
- Sac and Fox Removal(s) to Kansas and the Indian Territory
- Indian Treaty system and its effect on Sac and Fox
- Reservations

CONTENT REVIEW

- Why did the two nations of the Sac and Fox become one allied group?
- What was Saukenuk? How large was the Sac and Fox Nation?
- What were the arguments for Indian Removal?
- Why did American Indians resist removal?
- Who were some of the main Indian resistance leaders in the Great Lakes region in the early 19th century?
- Who was Black Hawk?
- What role did Keokuk play?
- What tribes allied themselves with the Americans in Black Hawk's War?
- What is an Indian Treaty?
- What is a Reservation?
- What was the role of the Indian Agent?
- Why were there often problems on reservations?
- What difficulties did the Sac and Fox encounter in Kansas?
- What is the Mesquakie Community? How and why was it formed?
- How many Sac and Fox ended up in Indian Territory, and what did they find there?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Was the Sac and Fox experience of conflict with the United States and removal from their homelands similar or different from that of many other American Indian nations? Research one or two other tribal nations who were impacted by American Expansionism, such as the Delawares, the Cherokees, or the Navajos, and compare their experience.
- The argument of Manifest Destiny was used to justify the removal of Indians from the East. Have a debate, dividing into two groups, with one defending the right of Indians to their own land and the other defending the United States policies of the time.
- Many American Indians took the side of the United States in disputes against other tribal nations and even their own people. Were they traitors? Were there logical reasons for their actions? Discuss this question.
- What were the problems with the Indian Treaty System? Do some research about the treaties made with other American Indian tribes throughout the United States.
- Discuss the pros and cons of the reservation system. Imagine yourself as an Indian Agent who wants to do good and talk about the problems you might face in that role. Imagine yourself as an American Indian on a reservation in the late 19th century who wants to make things better, and talk about what problems you might face. What changes might be made that you could both agree upon?

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CHAPTER THREE

THE DAWES ACT AND THE OKLAHOMA LAND RUSH

*When Jim was two years old, the Oklahoma Land Rush opened up most of the Indian land to white settlement. New towns sprang up overnight – but Indians did not enjoy the rights of the new white citizens. They could not vote. By law they were minors, wards of a government that viewed them as recalcitrant children. This was the world that Jim Thorpe came into. — Narrator, Jim Thorpe, *The World's Greatest Athlete**

INDIAN RESERVATIONS AND REFORMERS

By 1887, the year that Jim Thorpe was born, the days of the free-ranging Plains tribes were over. Almost all Indians remaining in the United States, about a quarter of a million of them, had been relocated on 187 reservations. There was a combined total of about 150,000 square miles of reservation land, a space roughly equivalent to the state of Montana.

On the reservations, white **Indian Agents**, employed by the **United States Bureau of Indian Affairs**, had absolute control over people who lived in conditions of extreme poverty. Many agents were corrupt and used their positions of power to profit from government-issued rations and supplies intended for the Indians.

Ironically, it was an awareness of the grim nature of life on the reservations that led well-meaning reformers to support a new approach intended to integrate Indians into white culture.



Sac & Fox, Late 19th Century

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA, WESTERN HISTORY COLLECTION

As the celebrated reformer **Carl Shurz**, a Missouri senator and Secretary of the Interior under President Rutherford B. Hayes, put it in 1881:

“I am profoundly convinced that a stubborn maintenance of the system of large Indian reservations must eventually result in the destruction of the red man, however faithfully the Government may attempt to protect their rights... What we can and should do is, in general terms, to fit the Indians as much as possible, for the habits of and occupations of civilized life, by work and education; to individualize them in the possession and appreciation of property, by allotting them lands in severalty ... and to obtain their consent to a disposition of that part of their lands which they cannot use.”

In other words, what Shurz proposed was to make individual Indians landowners while, at the same time, taking away whatever land was “left over” after the distribution. This would serve the purpose of making much more land available for white settlers who could “make better use of it” than the former Indian owners.

THE DAWES ACT

The United States Congress passed the **General Reallocation Act, or Dawes Severalty Act**, into law in 1887, to do what Shurz and other reformers proposed. The results were devastating. To understand why the Act did so much damage, one needs to understand first how the ideas of “property” and “ownership” were conceived in traditional Indian cultures.

Traditionally land was held in common by a tribal nation. Agriculture was carried out communally, with everyone sharing in the harvest. The tribe controlled hunting territories. It was regarded as both honorable and prestigious to share personal wealth rather than amass it in the form of money or material goods. These **values**, though diminished, still guided many people living on American Indian reservations in 1887.

It was exactly the opposite in white culture. There, private land ownership was regarded as a mark of civilization. The more property a man owned, the better. Reformers also believed that individual ownership of

land could only benefit the Indian, making him more civilized and responsible.

Indian Territory had been set aside by the **Indian Intercourse Act of 1834** as land that would be tribally owned in perpetuity and from which all white settlers were to be excluded. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 had already given the president the authority to remove Indian tribes from their lands east of the Mississippi and the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokees, Chickasaw, Creeks, Seminoles, and Choctaws) were among the first of dozens of tribes to be relocated there. Originally, Indian Territory had included most of present-day Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska, until the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 that created Kansas Territory and Nebraska Territory and resulted in the Sac and Fox exodus to Oklahoma.

Now, following the Dawes Severalty Act, the boundaries of Indian Territory were further redefined to make space for white settlers within what had been solely native land. An Act of Congress created Oklahoma Territory from the western half of that formerly Indian land on May 2, 1890.

The Dawes Act, so-called for the legislator who was its principal sponsor, called for the Indian lands to be divided up in two ways. First of all, Indians would be allotted 160 acres per head of household, with smaller acreages to their dependents.

It was in the first General Allotment that Hiram Thorpe, as a member of the Sac and Fox Tribe and the head of a large family, was able to obtain 1,200 acres on the Sac and Fox Reservation in Indian Territory.

The allotment system was based on the underlying assumption that most Indians would become farmers, making a living from the plots of land that were assigned to them. But there were problems: Many did not want to be farmers, and often the plots of land were too small or infertile to support a family. Added to this was the fact that even in the late nineteenth century, large-scale agribusiness was already starting to dominate the farm economy, making it increasingly hard for small farmers to survive. Finally, allottees were no longer entitled to the goods and services promised by treaties. In Oklahoma and other parts of the country, the reservations that had been carved up through allotment officially ceased to exist.

THE OLKAHOMA LAND RUSH

As Shurz envisioned it, the allotment resulted in leftover “surplus” acreage that could be parceled out to white claimants on a first-come, first served basis. The first “run” for Indian land was scheduled for noon on April 22, 1889. At the sound of a pistol shot, thousands of settlers raced in to “stake their claim” to nearly two million acres of land formerly owned by the Creek and Seminole Nations. It was known as the *Oklahoma Land Rush*. By 10 a.m. that morning, the new town of Guthrie, pre-designated as the new territory’s central city, was already full of people.



Boomers at State Line April 18, 1889

OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Oklahoma state nickname of “Sooners” came from that event. It described the many enterprising individuals who “jumped the gun,” sneaking out ahead of the official start, to stake their claim to what had been native land.

On September 22, 1891, a presidential proclamation opened up another 900,000 acres of land that had been owned by the Sac and Fox and the Pottawatomies. Twenty thousand more white settlers rushed in to claim seven thousand 160-acre tracts.

The white population of the expanded Oklahoma Territory soon swelled to 100,000. All kinds of set-

tlers surrounded the Thorpes and the other Sac and Fox land owners. Some were good neighbors, but there were also *outlaws and cattle rustlers*. Hiram had to guard his livestock at night.

Saloons sprang up in the wake of the land rush. “*Whiskey towns*” such as nearby Keokuk Falls with its “Seven Deadly Saloons,” drew both white bootleggers and Indians seeking the alcohol they couldn’t get on the reservation.

For a time Indian Territory and Oklahoma territory existed side by side. However, on June 16, 1906, Congress passed the Oklahoma Enabling Act, in the preamble of which it is described as “An act to enable the people of the Indian and Oklahoma Territories to form a state constitution and State government.” In November of 1907, Oklahoma was admitted to the Union as a single state. At that point Indian Territory ceased to be, forever.



Sac and Fox at Trading Post, Late 19th Century

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By the start of the twentieth century the Indians of Oklahoma were in a bad way. Tribal governments were being disbanded. Indians as a whole were truly powerless. As a result of allotment and other government policies, they were the most impoverished minority group in the country. In many cases, all they had left were their homes, the clothes on their backs, a few remaining government subsidies.



THE DAWES ACT AND THE OKLAHOMA LAND RUSH

Concepts and Discussion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students learn about the pros and cons of the United States policy of Indian Land Allotment. They also learn about the Oklahoma Land Rush and its effect on Indians.

TEACHER'S QUICK REFERENCE

Indian Reservations and Reformers

- In 1887 250,000 Indians lived on 150,00 square miles of reservation land.
- Indian cultures emphasized common ownership and sharing, while white culture values private ownership and accumulation of property.
- Carl Shurz and his idea

The Dawes Act

- Assumption that Indians will become farmers
- 160 acres are allotted per family member.
- Some plots of land are too small or infertile.
- Agribusiness pushes out small farmers.
- Allottees lose previous benefits.

The Oklahoma Land Rush

- 2 million acres claimed in first Oklahoma Land Rush on April 22, 1889.
- The origin of the state nickname "Sooners."
- The second land rush of 1891 results in the loss of Sac and Fox land.
- The impact of white population boom on Indian communities included dubious neighbors and whiskey towns.
- The condition of the Indians at the start of the twentieth century is a consequence of the Dawes Act and the land rushes.

KEY CONTENT

- Indian Territory and its eventual demise
- Differences between Indian and white ideas of land use and ownership
- The Dawes Severalty Act
- Some problems with the allotment system.
- Oklahoma Land Rush
- Impact of the Land Rush on Indians

CONTENT REVIEW

- How were Indian ideas of land different from those of majority Americans?
- Why did reformers think that allotment would help the Indians?
- What were some of the problems of allotment?
- Why was so much Indian land opened to white settlers?
- How were Indians in Indian Territory affected by the Oklahoma Land Rush?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Consider and discuss the two viewpoints regarding land, that of the Indians and that of the average American. Was one side right and the other wrong, or are the issues more complex?
- Like many other laws regarding the Indian, the Indian Allotment Act was supposedly meant to help the Indians. Was this the result? If not, why did it fail to reach that part of its objective? Or were there ulterior motives? Do further research pro or con and debate both sides of the issue, speaking either for or against allotment.
- Imagine yourself as white settlers undertaking the Land Rush, or an educated American Indian whose land is being lost. Describe your experience.

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CHAPTER FOUR

INDIAN SCHOOLS

Some sent their kids to Indians school, but others, they would come and pick you up and take you, whether you wanted to go to school or not. It was the time to educate the Indian, and get them away from being heathens ... living the old way of living off the land. They wanted you to become farmers, you know, to wear wool pants and shirts and live in a house, learn to eat with a knife, fork, and spoon. – Jack Thorpe

EUROPEAN STYLE EDUCATION OF INDIANS

In 1887, the year of Jim Thorpe's birth, American Indians did not enjoy the rights of U.S. citizenship. In the eyes of the law they were minors, unable to make decisions on their own. The United States was also now taking away Indian children and sending them to distant government boarding schools.

European-style education was not new to Native Americans. Both white and Indian teachers, many of them *missionaries*, had long been providing Western education to numerous tribes. For example, in early eighteenth century New England, *Reverend Eleazar Wheelock*, the founder of Dartmouth College, taught theology to such American Indian converts. Some of them went on to be missionaries themselves, like *Samson Occum* of the Mohegan tribe, who studied under Wheelock from 1743 to 1748. Such prestigious American universities as Harvard had Indian education as a part of their original purpose. Although conversion to Christianity was often the primary motive behind missionary efforts, Indians sometimes used such education to benefit their people. Numerous tribal leaders had a similar philosophy as Hiram Thorpe. They believed that if their children gained a white education, they could use that knowledge to help protect Indian interests. But in the late nineteenth century, education became a weapon against Indian cultural survival, with the creation of the Indian boarding schools.



Primary Class, Carlisle Indian School

CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

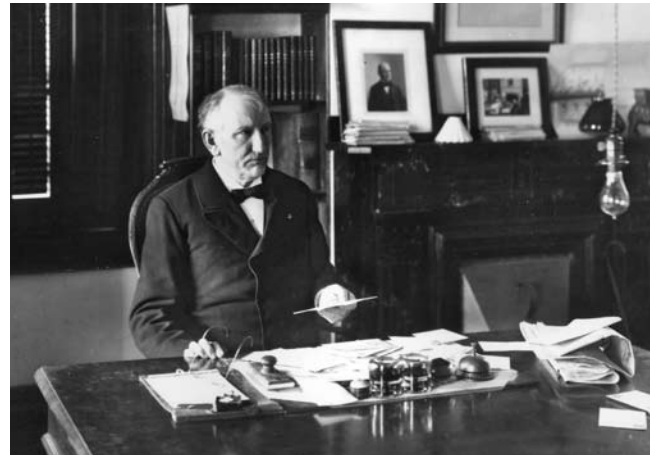
RICHARD HENRY PRATT

The best known of these institutions was the Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, headed by **Richard Henry Pratt**, a decorated veteran of the Civil War. Pratt's first experiences with Indians came in 1867, when he was serving as a lieutenant in the Tenth Cavalry, a new unit composed of African American enlisted men and white officers and based in Indian Territory. Pratt not only respected his "colored" troops, he also discovered that he could work well with Indian scouts. He gradually came to the conclusion that color and race were artificial barriers between people. Any man, Pratt realized, could better himself. "The rights of citizenship," he wrote, "include equal fraternity and equal privilege for development." It was a radical idea for his time, and he would pursue it with nearly religious fervor for the remainder of his life.

After the **Red River War** of 1875, Pratt was given the job of escorting seventy-two Indian prisoners, largely Kiowas, Comanches, and Cheyennes, to imprisonment at Fort Marion, an **old Spanish fort** in St. Augustine, Florida. As their jailer, Pratt saw an opportunity to try out some of his radical ideas. Even though the prisoners included men labeled as renegades and murderers, he was sure they could be redeemed. He gave his charges considerable freedom, **dressed them in military uniforms**, and treated them as new recruits. He also began offering classes in reading, writing, and Bible study.

The results, Pratt would later claim in his 1923 memoir, *Battlefield and Classroom*, were that his men "set an example to civilization in good behavior." Not only did they learn to read and write, several began to study for the ministry. A number of the younger men went on to **Hampton Institute**, in Hampton, Virginia, also founded by a former military officer, in 1869, to provide education for African Americans, and to other schools of higher learning. His successes were not without some setbacks, but Pratt was now convinced he had found the way to solve the nation's so-called "Indian Problem." The Indian needed to be raised to the level of white culture – an idea that would now be called patronizing and ethnocentric. But while Pratt

respected native intelligence and potential, he felt that the native cultures held back his charges. He followed the Hampton model and developed a plan for "civilizing" those Indians who were most malleable: the children. Their parents might be set in uncivilized ways, but native children taken far away from their homes and placed in a regimented setting could more readily be forced to leave behind the traditional lifestyle of their relatives on the reservations.



Richard Henry Pratt, Carlisle Indian School
CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE CARLISLE INDIAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL

Pratt succeeded in procuring the abandoned military barracks in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, for his experiment. Some of his "Florida Boys" came with him to build the fence around the new school and to help the incoming students adjust to their strange new surroundings. **The Carlisle Indian Industrial School**, the largest and most influential of all the government Indian boarding schools, was opened in 1879. Carlisle was ultimately the model for two dozen other similar paramilitary institutions around the nation. **Haskell Institute** in Kansas, where Jim Thorpe went to school for a short time, was one of the more successful. (Haskell still exists today – with a radically different philosophy – as an American Indian college.) There were also less prestigious boarding and day schools near most of the reservations, such as the Sac and Fox school where Jim would first experience being cooped up in a classroom.



Students in 1874, Carlisle Indian Industrial School
CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Carlisle, as it was popularly known, remained the model for Indian education for decades to come. During the thirty-nine years of its existence, more than 10,000 children from dozens of tribes attended *Carlisle*. Many of them started when they were very young. Under strict military discipline, they were separated from their families for at least five years. On arrival at Carlisle, the boys had their long hair cut and were dressed in military uniforms. The girls were outfitted in long drab dresses and taught to wear their hair in the modest fashion of the day. All students at Carlisle – and the other Indian boarding schools that followed – were forbidden to speak their own language or engage in any traditional practices. Strict penalties, including incarceration and beatings, were meted out to offenders. They were required to go to church on Sunday and trained in such useful skills as sewing and carpentry, leatherwork, farming, and baking, in addition to reading, writing, and arithmetic. Vocational training and manual labor were highly stressed at all the Indian boarding schools. It was strongly believed that training in such useful trades would give these young Indians the best chance to earn a living after leaving school and entering the workforce. Many

educators also wrongly believed that Indians lacked the intellectual ability to excel in any vocational training other than menial labor. Carlisle and the other Indian schools also relied heavily on the unpaid labor of their students, who did the cooking, the laundry, the grounds-keeping, and all the other jobs needed to keep a school running smoothly and in good repair. For example, when steam heat was introduced to the campus buildings, it was Indian students who dug the trenches and did the pipefitting.

The Outing System at Carlisle was an important adjunct to the academic and vocational training. In order to give the students a sense of the working world and to place them in white families who were supposed to accept them into their households, many Carlisle students were sent out to labor in outlying farms and shops at very low wages during the summers, or for even longer periods. Pratt called his *Outing System* “The Supreme Americanizer,” since he felt it would make the students self-reliant and impress upon them the worth of time and work. Some were also sent to work in factories, including the *Ford plant* in Detroit, Michigan, in the 1910s. Many of the outing students were treated well, but others suffered neglect and abuse at the hands

of their host families. Jim Thorpe's own school record at Carlisle indicates that he was sent off to a farm only four months after his arrival, but that he ran away and came back to Carlisle. He was sent out to yet another farm not long after. During his first three years at the Indian School, Jim spent twenty-one months on farms and only about fourteen months on campus.

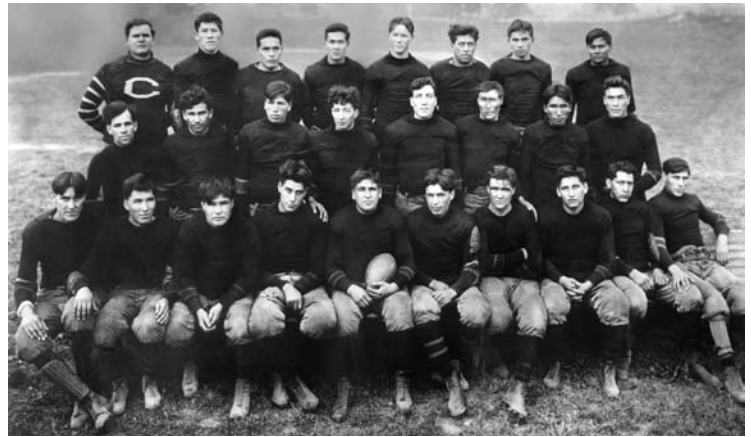
It should be noted that Carlisle, more than any other Indian school, stressed academic training. Painting, debating, poetry, and the plays of Shakespeare were considered important components of a well-rounded education and were included in the curriculum. The famous American poet *Marianne Moore* first taught at Carlisle, where Jim Thorpe became one of her favorite students.



Student String Quintet, Carlisle Indian School
CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Carlisle's reputation was built on its sports program, which was second to none. Although the education of its older students was only at the high school level, and thus the number of Indian athletes old enough and talented enough to engage in college-level sports was quite small, Carlisle's teams began competing with great success against some of the largest and most prestigious colleges and universities, including the Ivy League teams of Harvard, Yale, and the University of Pennsylvania. It helped, of course, that Carlisle employees recruited talented and promising American Indian athletes from all over the United States. But when Carlisle went up against such football powerhouses as

Harvard, its opponents had three or four times as many varsity players.



1907 Carlisle Football Team
CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Carlisle's sports programs brought a lot of attention to the school. Initially opposed to football because of its violence, Pratt later accepted and celebrated it because it enhanced the image of his school. A tireless propagandist, Pratt kept up a steady stream of letters to influential people and Congressmen, brought out *posters* and pamphlets extolling the school, and saw to the publication and wide distribution of booster publications (sometimes with articles written by white teachers pretending to be Indian students), such as those found in the weekly *Indian Helper*.

Publicizing Carlisle's success in sports was the job of another man – Carlisle's charismatic athletic director and football coach, *Glenn Scobey Warner*. Known familiarly as "Pop," Warner was a Cornell graduate whose tenure at Carlisle lasted twelve years. Known for his constant attempts to "beat the rules," Warner was one of the game's greatest innovators. His sports program also brought huge revenues to Carlisle through ticket sales. Interestingly, the money was not controlled by the United States government or by Superintendent Pratt. It is a measure of Pop Warner's power at Carlisle that he maintained absolute control of the income from Carlisle sports activities.



Glenn Scobey ("Pop") Warner, Carlisle Football Field
CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Despite the glamour of its sports programs and all Pratt's publicity efforts, Carlisle's overall record was far from perfect. Fewer than 1,000 Indian students actually graduated. More than 1,000 ran away. Many Indian families opposed the boarding school system, but their children were still taken from them – often by force. Children suffered from homesickness, disease, and abuse at the school. The Carlisle cemetery is full of the graves of Indian children who died there. Others, sent home suffering from one epidemic disease or another, not only died at home but also passed their sickness on to others in their communities. Communities and families were also affected in another way. The harsh military discipline of Carlisle (and most other Indian schools) stood in sharp contrast to the nurturing family atmosphere Indian children usually enjoyed at home.

After being raised in these regimented institutions, many Indian boarding school students found it hard to become loving and nurturing parents when they returned to their tribal nations. They had been cut off from the training so critical to their traditional identity, relative to family, extended family, and nation.

There were other problems as well, even for Carlisle's success stories. Those who "assimilated" still found little opportunity to succeed in white society, where they were often viewed as "savages." They also found it hard to fit in when they eventually returned home – strangers in their own lands, caught between two worlds. One way or another, every American Indian family in the United States was affected by the boarding schools, which persisted well into the second half of the twentieth century.



INDIAN SCHOOLS

Concepts and Discussion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students learn about the creation of American Indian boarding schools, their history and goals, and their effect on American Indians.

TEACHER'S QUICK REFERENCE

European-Style Education of Indians

- Begun by missionaries.
- Early mandates of Harvard and Dartmouth included Indian education.
- Education was seen by some tribal leaders as useful.
- Boarding schools were used as a means to destroy native culture.

Richard Henry Pratt

- A Civil War veteran and a commander of troops in the West, where he grew to respect Indian scouts.
- In charge of Indian prisoners at Fort Marion, Florida, he gave them military training and education.
- The success of Pratt's Indian prisoners led to his idea for solving the "Indian Problem."
- Pratt founded the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Carlisle Industrial Indian School

- Founded in 1879, the school existed for 39 years.
- The school employed strict military discipline and emphasized both vocational and liberal arts.
- Carlisle's Outing System was designed to teach Indians the white work ethic.
- Carlisle became a model for other government boarding schools.
- Carlisle sports teams successfully competed against much larger non-Indian schools.
- Sports came to play an important role in Carlisle's reputation around the United States.
- Athletic Director Pop Warner controlled all the money earned from ticket sales at sports events.
- Over 10,000 Indian students were enrolled in Carlisle, but fewer than 1,000 graduated. Many ran away or died of disease.
- Some students were forcibly brought to Carlisle, against the wishes of their families.
- Carlisle students suffered abuse and disease, and the harsh military discipline they were subjected to disrupted their family relationships later.
- In general, Carlisle graduates ultimately found it hard to fit in, whether in white or Indian culture.

KEY CONTENT

- Indian Boarding School system
- Richard Henry Pratt's background and role
- "College" sports at Carlisle
- Negative effects of the Indian boarding schools

CONTENT REVIEW

- Why did Hiram P. Thorpe and some American Indian leaders consider Western-style education could be useful to their people?
- How were the goals of the government boarding schools different from these goals?
- What experiences led Richard Henry Pratt to appreciate the qualities of the Native Americans?
- How did he put his ideas of racial equality into practice?
- What did he do at Fort Marion, and how did this affect his educational philosophy?
- Why did he choose Indian children rather than adults?
- When and where was Pratt's school opened?
- How long did the Carlisle Indian School exist?
- What was life like for a Carlisle student?
- How did Pratt publicize the success of his school?
- Who was Pop Warner, and why was he important to Carlisle?
- What benefits did sports bring to Carlisle?
- What were some of the negative aspects of Carlisle and other Indian boarding schools?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Divide into two groups, one of which represents Indian parents or leaders who feel that education is good for Native children and one that represents Indian parents or leaders who oppose such education. Engage in a debate.
- Some described Richard Henry Pratt as a messiah for the Indians, while others called him a madman. Can either or both of these two opposing points of view be justified?
- Imagine yourself as a young Indian child who has never been away from home and has just been sent to Carlisle. Describe what your experience might be like.
- Imagine yourself as a nineteenth-century teacher at Carlisle in your first day of classes with a group of new Indian students. What problems do you think you would encounter? How would you solve them?

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CHAPTER FIVE

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

There were not a lot of rules in football. It's probably because of what happened at Carlisle that many of the rules exist today.— Barbara Landis

ORIGINS OF FOOTBALL

American football, the most popular college sport in the United States, can trace its origins back to **soccer** and **rugby**, games first played in England.

Soccer is called football everywhere except in North America. With the exception of throwing the ball in from out of bounds, only one player, the goalie, is allowed to touch the ball with his hands. But in 1823, school boys in England began to modify the rule of the game; picking up the ball and carrying it. The new game was named “rugby” after the **Rugby School**, one of the oldest of England’s private schools, where it was first played.



First Football Game at Brown University, 1878

BROWN UNIVERSITY

The evolution of rugby-style football in the United States was chaotic. An 1869 game between Rutgers and Princeton was the first documented contest between two American colleges, in which players carried the ball and actually called their game “football” rather than rugby.

Because the game was developing in different places at the same time, problems soon arose. Each college made up its own rules, making it difficult to organize intercollegiate games. To make it possible for clubs and schools to play each other, it became necessary to standardize the rules.

Thus it was that in 1876, representatives from the athletic departments of Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Princeton Universities met and created the **Intercollegiate Football Association** to regulate the game. American football was officially born.



Yale Football Champions, 1881
YALE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

WALTER CAMP – FATHER OF AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Present at the birth was a Yale student named **Walter Camp**, who would become a central figure in the development of the sport. Camp loved the new game of football. In 1888, just six years after he graduated from Yale, he became head football coach and eventually its athletic director.

Camp edited every American Football rulebook until his death in 1925. Among the **innovations** that he contributed to the game were the establishment of a line of scrimmage separating the two teams before each play, the quarterback and center positions, snapping the ball with the hands, the forward pass, eleven-man teams instead of fifteen, the scoring system, down and distance rules, tackling below the waist, the neutral zone and the penalty system.

JIM THORPE’S FAMOUS COACH

Jim Thorpe’s coach, **Glenn Scobey Warner** (a.k.a. “Pop”) was another important innovator and strategist of the game. He trained for a career in law at Cornell University but gave it up to become a coach.

Warner ran the sports program at Carlisle from 1899-1903 and from 1907-1914. He invented the reverse play, the single wing, the double wing, the three-point stance, and a variety of blocking schemes still in use today. He is also famous for plays and tricks that were soon outlawed. They included sewing a football-shaped leather patch to the front of players’ uniforms to make it hard to tell who had the ball, running off the field behind the opposing team’s bench and then coming back on to catch a pass downfield, and a play called the “hunchback,” in which the ball was shoved inside the ball carrier’s shirt.



Warner's Blocking and Tackling Techniques
FOOTBALL FOR PLAYERS AND COACHES BY GLENN S. WARNER

FOOTBALL NEARLY BANNED

During Pop's first years as coach at Carlisle, football was an incredibly violent game. Mass formations such as the *Flying Wedge* (which was later banned) led to brutal collisions that sometimes resulted in fatalities. Records indicate that there were either eighteen or nineteen deaths in college football in 1905. President Theodore Roosevelt publicly voiced his opinion that the game should be banned unless changes were made. As a result 62 schools joined to form the *Intercollegiate Athletic Association* to devise rules and practices that would make the game safer. Later the Association was renamed the *National Collegiate Athletic Association* (the NCAA) which survives to this day.

American college football rapidly gained in popularity. The first college football league, a precursor to the Big Ten, was founded in 1895. In 1902, the first post-season game, the *Rose Bowl*, was played, in which Michigan beat Stanford 49-0. *Soldiers' Field* in Boston the largest sports stadium in the United States, was built in 1903. The arena, which seated 30,000 people, was home to the *Harvard Crimson*, one of the most formidable college football teams in that early era.

THE AMATEUR IDEA

All competitive college sports were classified as amateur. At its most basic level, this meant that college athletes not be paid money to play sports. To do so would have been considered "unsporting."

The concept of amateurism came from Victorian England and was a reflection of its rigid class distinctions. The upper class, the British aristocracy, wished to protect sport from contamination by the working classes. The British Amateur Rowing Association

banned lower-class competitors, stating that no person could be an amateur who "is or ever has been by trade a mechanic, artisan, or engaged in any menial duty." The London Amateur Athletic Club stated that the only true amateur was "a gentleman," and that "the only way to keep sport pure from the element of corruption" was to ban participation by "the average workman," who "has no idea of sport for its own sake."

Though the British concept of amateurism ran counter to American democratic ideal of equal opportunity for all, American colleges made amateur status a requirement for all intercollegiate competition. But who really was an amateur? Could it only be a student rich enough to pay his own way? Could an athlete ever receive payment of any kind?

THE AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION

In the United States, rules governing amateur competition were established with the founding of the *Amateur Athletic Union (AAU)* in 1888. American colleges came to accept the AAU as the supreme arbiter of all the major events in track and field. Only athletes "sanctioned" as amateurs by the AAU could take part in its events. Though working men were not barred from competition, anyone paid to engage in sports was ineligible. In 1898 the Intercollegiate Athletics Associations stipulated that "no student should be paid for his athletics." Furthermore, it declared that "The practice of assisting young men through college in order that they may strengthen athletic teams is degrading to amateur sports."

Such was the power of the AAU that in 1913, Jim Thorpe was stripped of his Olympic medals at the insistence of its president, James Sullivan. The Inter-

national Olympic Committee, which regulated the Olympic Games, was not eager to disqualify Thorpe, but Sullivan's AAU pre-empted the chance for the IOC to make a decision.

JAMES SULLIVAN

A former runner and boxer, Sullivan was a key figure in the promotion of amateur sports in the United States. Working as a sports journalist for his own publication, *Athletic News*, and then the *New York Sporting News*, Sullivan realized that there was considerable profit to be made in controlling athletic events. While athletes were not allowed to be paid, there was nothing to stop "sponsors" and promoters from raking in huge sums of money from ticket sales.

THE PROFIT MOTIVE

Paradoxically, the lure of money gradually changed the culture of college sports. Schools hired professional staff to train and take care of the student athletes. The practices of recruiting top players by giving them gifts, cash bribes, and guarantees of good grades became common. College football was already big business by the time Jim Thorpe first played for the Carlisle Indians in 1907.

At Carlisle, all of Pop Warner's "athletic boys" were given special housing and meals that were much better than those served to ordinary students. In addition, they received expense accounts, clothing, and generous "loan" and "expense money," in proportion to their success on the playing fields.



Carlisle Boys in Dorm Room

CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Pop himself was a master publicist. The more people who knew about Carlisle, the greater was the money to be made from ticket sales. Warner built a well-oiled public relations machine. His agents, such as Hugh Miller, a letter-shop operator, wrote and sent out articles about Carlisle's sports to a syndicate of over 150 newspapers. E.L. Martin, the editor of the town of Carlisle's *Evening Herald*, was paid by Warner to place items about the Carlisle teams in the paper, to distribute placards and flyers, and to take team portraits and game pictures.



Pop Warner (Right) With Players

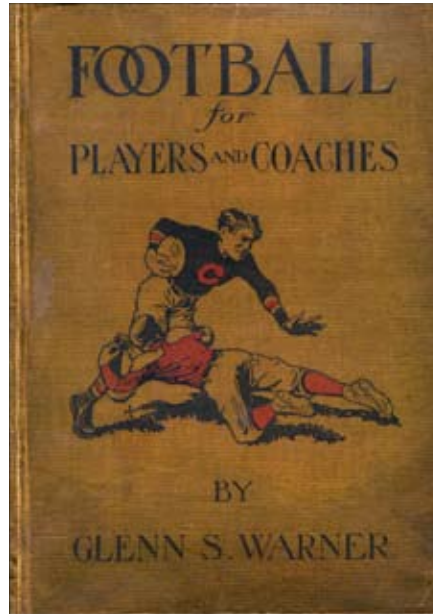
CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPALDING, SULLIVAN, AND WARNER

Sullivan, the head of the Amateur Athletic Union, also cultivated connections with powerful commercial benefactors. One of these was **Albert Goodwill Spalding**, the co-founder with his brother of the world's largest sporting goods business. Spalding had been a successful pitcher for the Chicago White Stockings before retiring from baseball at the age of 28 in 1877. In 1876, even before the end of his playing days, Spalding opened a sports emporium in Chicago to sell "all kinds of baseball goods." He then started publishing ***Spalding's Official Baseball Guide***, officially approved and endorsed by the major league teams. By 1882, at the age of thirty-two, Spalding became the president of the Chicago White Stockings. In 1892, he created the ***American Sports Publishing Company*** to bring out books by such leading sports figures as Pop Warner. James Sullivan was hired by Spalding to manage his publications and the entire advertising budget for the company. As a result Sullivan was, at one and

the same time, a powerful force for the commercialization of college sport while presiding over an organization, the AAU, dedicated to defending and regulating amateurism.

Meanwhile Pop Warner was developing his own relationship with Spalding, the king of sporting goods. He designed various types of protective padding for football players that Spalding's company produced. Spalding also published Warner's book *Football for Coaches and Players*, (1913), one of the first important publications on football strategy.



Book Cover

FOOTBALL FOR PLAYERS AND COACHES BY GLENN S. WARNER

Pop's connections with the Spalding Company brought him into contact with James Sullivan, who directly oversaw the publication of Pop's book. Both men were skilled at turning a profit from sport events, and they were natural allies. This may explain why, when Sullivan demanded the erasure of Jim Thorpe from Olympic records, Warner went along. No doubt he believed in his protégé and might have supported his case in other circumstances. But Warner had too much at stake to risk alienating Sullivan and his powerful Amateur Athletic Union.



COLLEGE SPORTS

Concepts and Discussion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students learn about the history of college sports, in particular American football, the development of the idea of amateurism, the creation of the Amateur Athletic Union and the troubled link between business and amateur athletics.

TEACHER'S QUICK REFERENCE

Origins of football

- Evolution from soccer and rugby in England
- Early intercollegiate games in the United States
- 1876 Convention to standardize rules of the game
- Walter Camp, father of American football
- Glenn Scobey Warner, Thorpe's famous coach
- Football criticized because of injuries and deaths
- Growing popularity of the game

Amateurism

- The idea of amateurism
- British concept: Sports are for gentlemen only.
- Amateur Athletic Union founded to regulate amateur sports.
- James Edward Sullivan

Profit Motive

- Profit motive changes college sports
- Albert Caldwell Spalding
- American Sports Publishing Company
- Pop Warner's links to Sullivan and Spalding

KEY CONTENT

- The development of football from the British games of soccer and rugby
- The first intercollegiate competitions in football and football's early problems
- Walter Camp and Pop Warner as early football pioneers
- The development of amateur athletics and the narrow definition of an amateur
- The growth of businesses that depended on amateur sports for their revenue and the roles played by James Sullivan, Walter Spalding, and Pop Warner

CONTENT REVIEW

- How is American football similar to the games of rugby and soccer, and how is it different?
- What role did Walter Camp play in the development of American football?

- What were the ideas that shaped the early definition of amateurism in the United States? How were these ideas at odds with American ideals of democracy?
- Who was James Sullivan, and what was his relationship to the AAU, Pop Warner, and the Spalding Company?
- In what ways did Pop Warner benefit financially from amateur sports?
- Why did Pop Warner want his Indian athletes to compete in the Olympics?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Look closely at the role that team sports play in American culture today. Consider how that role may be different from one nation or one culture to another and discuss why sports seem to be so important to human beings.
- Consider and discuss the idea of amateurism as it was first defined in the United States. How has that idea changed from then to now, and why is that so?
- Does it make sense for others to make money from college sports while the athletes themselves are not paid? Have a debate on the pros and cons of being “paid to play.” Consider in your discussion such things as college athletic scholarships and other perks that athletes receive as well as the huge salaries now paid to successful college coaches.
- What were the problems implicit in the relationship between Sullivan, Warner, and Spalding? Have things changed from then until now in terms of the relationship between coaches, amateur athletic organizations (including the Olympics) and sports businesses such as Spalding, Nike, etc.?

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CHAPTER SIX

THE OLYMPIC GAMES

*At the modern Olympics athletes were amateurs. To be an amateur means that you do not compete for money, but in those days the word “amateur” carried a broader meaning: The London Athletic Club defined an amateur as a “gentleman” and decreed that “No person shall be considered as an amateur. . .who is a mechanic, artisan or laborer, since the average workman has no idea of sport for its own sake.” — Narrator, Jim Thorpe, *The World’s Greatest Athlete**

The Olympic Games were the oldest and one of the most important of the many festivals of ancient Greece. Begun around 776 B.C. in Olympia, Greece, they took place every four years until 393 A.D., when they were banned by the Roman Emperor Theodosius. The often warring city-states of Greece observed a truce during each Olympiad and sent their best athletes to compete in athletic competitions such as running, wrestling, and jumping. Each winning athlete was crowned with a laurel wreath. The ancient Olympics encouraged peace, friendly competition, and the ideal of a fit and healthy citizenry.

It was because of a belief in the importance of those same ideals that the Olympic Games were resurrected fifteen centuries later. The modern Olympics were in part the creation of a French aristocrat, **Baron Pierre de Coubertin**. De Coubertin became convinced at an early age that France’s defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 was due to the French soldiers’ lack of vigor. Exercise, he concluded, especially sports, helped to produce a stronger, more vigorous person. In 1890, at the age of 27, he organized and founded the Union des Sociétés Françaises des Sports Athlétiques. Two years later, he proposed the revival of the Olympic Games.

But de Coubertin was not the first to propose the renewal of the Games or even to help stage modern games based on the ancient Olympics. Others, in Greece and England, suggested the revival of the Olympics well before de Coubertin. In 1835, Panagiotis Soutsos, a Greek poet, proposed to the Greek government the idea of a new Olympics to celebrate Greece’s recently won independence from the Ottoman Empire. In 1856, **Evangelis Zappas**, one of the wealthiest men in eastern Europe, not only proposed reviving the games in Athens but agreed to finance them. Zappas’ Olympic Games took place in Athens in 1859, but on a small scale and with poorly trained athletes. In 1865 Zappas died, leaving his entire fortune to Greece for their Olympics. His will stated that part of the money should be used to build an Olympic stadium on the site of the ancient Panathenaic stadium. It also stipulated that Zappas’ body should be buried at his estate in Romania and his head encased in the new Athens stadium. But the next Greek Olympic Games did not take place until 1870.

Meanwhile, an English doctor named **William Penny Brookes**, who admired the ancient games, was following the new Olympic movement. He created an organization that managed to stage a British National Olympic Games in 1866. The

Games took place in the Crystal Palace, London's huge indoor arena. They were attended by 10,000 spectators, as well as competitors from all walks of life.

In spite of the Games' obvious success, many of England's top athletes boycotted them: Brooke's English Olympics had a powerful enemy, the **English Amateur Athletic Club** (AAC). The club, a creation of politically connected men of the upper class, controlled sport in Britain. They disagreed with Brookes, who believed that talent and achievement, not birth, was the measure of who should be allowed to compete. It was the opposite for the AAC.

The Amateur Athletic Club officially boycotted the 1867 and 1868 National Olympics, decreeing that anyone who took part in contests that included "professionals" (meaning all men of the working classes) would themselves be barred from AAC events. It brought an end to Dr. Brookes' National Games.

Brookes did not abandon his dream. He was the first to propose an International Olympic Games as "a generous rivalry with athletes of other nations in the time-consecrated stadium at Athens." In the 1880s the young French aristocrat Pierre de Coubertin corresponded with Brookes and visited him in England. Inspired by the English doctor's ideas and work on a national scale, de Coubertin became an ardent promoter of an international Olympics.

In 1892, de Coubertin brought together delegates from nine countries, who voted unanimously to revive the Games. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) was created. Demetrios Vikelas of Greece was chosen as its first president. Unfortunately, the IOC also chose to follow the AAC's restrictive definition of amateur athletics. Furthermore, Coubertin took full credit for the idea and went so far as to deny ever having had contact with Brookes. As a result, de Coubertin is most often cited as the father of the modern Olympics. Brookes died in the spring of 1896, before he could see his dream come true.

The first modern international Olympics was held in Athens in 1896, three months after Brookes died. It was surprisingly successful. The highlight came in the **marathon**, the final event, which was first introduced that year. It was meant to memorialize the fabled run of the Greek soldier Pheidippides from the Battle of

Marathon to Athens in 490 B.C. Fittingly, that first modern marathon was won by Spyros Louis – the only Greek athlete to take a first place. His victory was celebrated by the whole country.

The next three Olympics, in Paris (1900), St. Louis (1904), and Athens (1906), were hampered by poor organization and political infighting. The 1908 Games in London fared better, but they were far from perfect. The modern Olympic Games might not have survived had it not been for a dramatic reversal of fortune in **Stockholm**, in 1912. Two things restored the Games to the world stage. The first was Sweden's hosting of the Games. The second was Jim Thorpe.

Swedish organization was so effective and efficient that the Games were later described as "the clockwork Olympics" and the "Swedish masterpiece." On July 6, 1912, a crowd of 30,000 watched the opening day parade of 2,407 athletes from twenty-eight countries march into the **new stadium in Stockholm**.

Jim Thorpe, more than any other athlete, took center stage, and no one would ever mention the Swedish Olympics without thinking of him. His exploits in Stockholm made him an instant international sensation, universally acclaimed as "the Greatest Athlete in the World."



US Olympic Marathon Team, 1912

LA84 FOUNDATION

The American Olympic team that included Jim was diverse and colorful. Many of its members did not fit the British elite's definition of a true amateur as a mem-

ber of the upper class (understood to mean exclusively of white and of noble blood). **Howard Drew**, a sprinter, was an African American. The world-class swimmer **Duke Kahanamoku** was a Hawaiian islander.



Howard Drew
LA84 FOUNDATION

Pat McDonald, who would win the shotput, was a traffic cop from New York City. **Abel Kiviat**, then the world record holder in the 1,500 meters, and Jim Thorpe's roommate on the ship that carried the U.S. team to Europe, was a Jew. Andrew Sockalexis, a marathon runner, was a Penobscot Indian and a cousin of Louis Sockalexis, the first American Indian to play major league baseball. Then there was **Louis Tewanima**, the Hopi long-distance runner who had been sent to Carlisle Indian School as a prisoner, and Jim Thorpe, who was so poor that he had to borrow from his better-off teammates.

Although he was representing the United States, Jim was still an American Indian and, like all Indians, legally a ward of the federal government. It was government policy that any money earned from leasing or extracting oil or minerals from Indian land was not paid to Indians directly but held in trust for them by **Indian agents**, men employed by the federal government to manage the affairs of each reservation. Jim had written to his Indian agent to ask for some of the funds paid into his account for the leasing of his lands. But Horace Johnson, the superintendent of the Sac and

Fox Agency, disapproved of Jim "wasting his time" going to the Olympics and denied his request.

"He is 25 years old," Johnson wrote, "and should be perfectly content to make his own living without depending on trust and lease funds which have cost him no effort to obtain. ... I understand that a trip to Sweden might be of considerable benefit to the young man, but I am strongly convinced that instead of being a benefit it will be a deterrent. He has now reached the age when, instead of gallivanting around the country, he should be at work on his allotment."



*Warner, Tewanima and Thorpe
at the Olympic Homecoming Reception*
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

One of the men on the U.S. team who lived up to the British "amateur" ideal was **Avery Brundage**, who came from a wealthy Midwestern family. Brundage, who was soundly beaten by Thorpe in the events in which he competed against him, became the president of the International Olympic Committee in 1952 and held the post for twenty years. He was so zealous in defending the strict definition of amateurism that he earned the nickname "slavery Avery." Significantly, Brundage refused to consider any of the many petitions that were made to restore Jim Thorpe's Olympic records.

When Jim Thorpe won the pentathlon at the start of the Games, the world press began following the big Indian's every move. By the time he won the **1,500 meter race** of the decathlon, the final event of the competition, he had arguably become the most famous athlete in modern history.



Thorpe Throws Javelin
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION



Thorpe Broad Jump, Stockholm 1912
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION



Thorpe Shot Put, Stockholm 1912
CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Thorpe (2nd from left) in 1500 Meter Race, Stockholm 1912

JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

Although no film of his Olympic competitions exists, there are newsreel shots of Thorpe being crowned by King Gustav of Sweden with a laurel wreath. The king also gave him a gold-and-jewel-encrusted model of a Viking ship and a bust of Gustav himself.

The King's voice reportedly shook with emotion as he took Thorpe's hand and said "Sir, you are the greatest athlete in the world."

The Greatest Athlete in the World. It was a title that would remain with Thorpe throughout his life, despite the scandal over his amateur status. He was officially stripped of his Olympic honors only a few months later.



THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Concepts and Discussion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students learn about the origins of the modern Olympic Games.

TEACHER'S QUICK REFERENCE

- Olympics in Ancient Greece
- Baron Pierre de Coubertin
- Evangelis Zappas finances the 1859 Games
- Brookes' British National Games, 1866-1888
- English Amateur Athletic Club created 1866.
- International Olympic Committee created 1892
- Rules derived from British concept of amateurism
- First Modern International Games, Athens, 1896
- Failures in Paris and St. Louis, 1900 and 1904
- Swedish Games in 1912
- American Olympic team
- Jim wins pentathlon and decathlon and is named "World's Greatest Athlete" by King Gustav of Sweden

KEY CONTENT

- Development of Modern Olympics
- The role of Greek, British, and French supporters,
- Zappas, Brookes, and de Coubertin
- The creation of the IOC and rules of amateurism
- The early Games of the twentieth century
- The Swedish success and Jim Thorpe's victories

CONTENT REVIEW

- What was the purpose of the Olympics in ancient Greece?
- Who were the founders of the modern Olympics?
- What role did Brookes play?
- Who was Baron Pierre de Coubertin?
- What problems did the first four modern Olympiads face?
- Why were the Stockholm Games so successful?
- What was unusual about the American team in 1912?
- Who was Avery Brundage?
- Why was it surprising that Jim Thorpe did so well?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- In what ways were the modern Olympics the same or different from the ancient games that inspired them?
- Why were the early modern Olympic Games important to the countries that participated in them?
- Debate and differentiate the contributions of the men who conceived and created the modern Olympics.
- Discuss how the Olympics today might be different if the IOC had not adopted the British rules of amateurism.
- Do you think the Olympics today have the same importance and meaning to countries and athletes as they did 100 years ago? Consider, for example, the 2008 Beijing Olympics. What has changed? What is the same?

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CHAPTER SEVEN

BASEBALL AND JIM THORPE

*As soon as he was disqualified as an amateur, offers of big money came in. In 1913 football only enjoyed wide popularity as a college game. Baseball was all the rage. Several major league teams wanted Jim. He chose the best offer, signing with the New York Giants for \$6,000 a year and a \$500 bonus, a generous contract for an untried prospect. — Narrator, Jim Thorpe, *The World's Greatest Athlete**

AMERICA'S GAME

The poet Walt Whitman said of baseball: *“It’s our game ... America’s game.”* In the early decades of the twentieth century, no sport in the United States could rival baseball. It truly was a national sport, and also the only one where a man could earn a good living as an athlete. When Jim Thorpe signed with the New York Giants in 1913, baseball had been a professional sport for almost 50 years. *The Cincinnati Red Stockings* became the first openly salaried team in 1869. The *National League* was formed in 1876.

AMERICAN INDIANS IN BASEBALL

Besides Thorpe, there was one other American Indian on the New York Giants team. He was *John Meyers*, a Cahuilla Indian from California. He played catcher for the Giants from 1909 to 1915 and earned the nickname of “the Ironman of the League” for catching in most of their games from 1910 on. He was also known as “Chief Meyers.” Even though Meyers was not in fact a chief, it was the persistent habit of sports writers and promoters to refer to any Indian player as “Chief.”



John Tortes (a.k.a. “Chief”) Meyers Baseball Card

Thorpe and Meyers were not the first American Indians in baseball. The first to become famous was *Louis “Sock” Sockalexis*, a Penobscot from Maine. As a star college player at Holy Cross, he pitched no-hitters, and his two-year batting average was an incredible .440. Sock broke into the major leagues in 1897 with the Cleveland Spiders. Playing as an outfielder, he batted .331 in sixty-six games. But he only played as a pro for three years, his career tragically shortened by alcohol. In 1915 the Cleveland team (which had become the Cleveland Naps) was renamed the “Cleveland Indians” by a panel of local sports writers. Although there are several theories as to the source of that name, many believe it was chosen as a tribute to Sock’s popularity.

Charles Bender, a Chippewa, was one of Jim's idols. As soon as Bender graduated from Carlisle Indian School in 1902, he began his professional baseball career in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. His best years as a pro were from 1903 to 1914 with the Philadelphia Athletics. He appeared in five World Series and was widely regarded as one of the two or three best pitchers in the American League in 1910. He was later chosen for the Baseball Hall of Fame.

THORPE AND BASEBALL AT CARLISLE SCHOOL

When Thorpe was a student at Carlisle, baseball was already one of his favorite games. He had the potential to become a star player at the school, but the athletic director, **Glenn "Pop" Warner**, had other plans for him. Early on Warner observed Thorpe's natural ability in track sports and conceived the long-range plan of grooming him for the Olympics. Because the track and baseball seasons coincided, Thorpe did not play baseball for Carlisle on a regular basis. But Warner did allow him to join the Carlisle baseball team at the end of the 1908 track season, where he reportedly pitched a 1-0 shutout against a professional team from Hagerstown.

SUMMER BALL AND AMATEUR ATHLETIC RULES

Although it was against the rules governing amateur athletics, it was common practice for college students to play "summer ball," for semi-pro baseball teams. (A semi-pro athlete is one who engages in a sport for pay but not as a full-time profession.) Athletes could earn a little money (often playing under an assumed name) and then return to their schools in the fall, where they competed as amateur athletes on the gridiron.

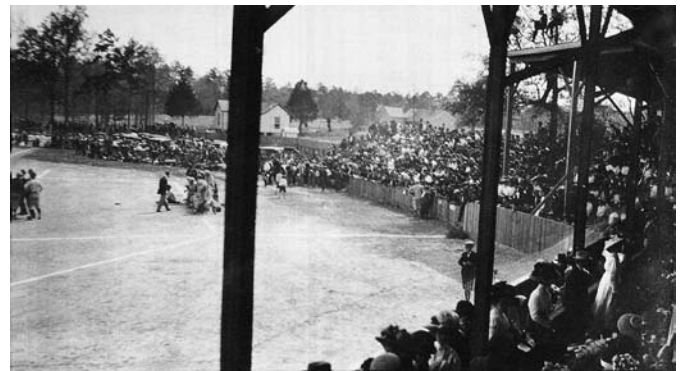
Pop Warner appears to have had a network of semi-pro contacts to which he would not just recommend but send his "boys," so that they would stay in shape over the summer. In fact, he often called attention to the letters praising his athletes that he received from the managers and coaches of the pro team for which they had played summer ball.

After the scandal over Jim Thorpe's "pro ball career" broke in 1913, both Pop Warner and Carlisle Superintendent Moses Friedman swore that they had as-

sumed Jim Thorpe had gone home to Oklahoma when he left Carlisle in 1908. But documents from Carlisle tell another story. Thorpe's official school record states plainly that he was "granted a summer leave to play baseball in the South."

Furthermore, Jim had made no secret about his desire to play the one sport where he could earn a living. At one point, coming home from a track meet by train, Warner recalled Jim saying, "Shucks, Pop, I'm through with track. It's me for baseball."

Jim left Carlisle in June 1908 and went south to North Carolina with two friends, Jesse Youngdeer and Joe Libby. That summer Jim played forty-four games as a pitcher and infielder in the loosely organized **Class D Eastern Carolina League**, for the Rocky Mountain Railroaders. His hitting was average, but his speed and fielding was admired, and he was regularly mentioned in the local papers. At the end of that summer he went back home to Oklahoma. It appeared that he had no intention of returning to Carlisle.



Cone Ballpark, Greensboro NC, around 1910
GREENSBORO HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Pop Warner tried to lure him back after a dismal 1909 football season, but Jim only showed up in the stands, as a spectator at a Carlisle game against St. Louis University.

In 1910, Jim returned to the Carolina leagues for another season. That same year, exasperated because baseball was drawing away so many of his athletes, Warner dropped baseball as a sport at Carlisle "because of summer professionalism."

Just as in 1909, Jim Thorpe earned about \$60 a month for the 1910 season in North Carolina. He was a favorite with the Fayetteville Highlanders. Charley

Clancy, the team manager, kept a photo on his wall showing Jim with other Fayetteville players on a hunting trip. After a minor injury in his last game, Jim went back again to Oklahoma, where he remained through the summer of 1911.

THORPE ASKED BACK TO CARLISLE

It was there on a street in Anadarko, Oklahoma, that Thorpe encountered his old Carlisle teammate and mentor, Albert Exendine. Exendine would write to Pop Warner that Jim seemed “as big as a mountain.” They had a long talk, and Exendine convinced Thorpe to return to football at Carlisle to play football. It is quite probable that this meeting was no accident and that Pop had dispatched Exendine to bring back their wayward star.



Albert Exendine

CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

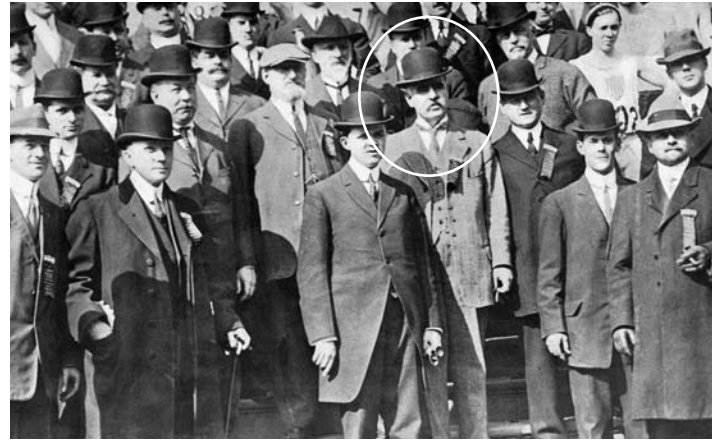
After his Olympic victories in 1912, Thorpe received numerous offers from professional baseball teams, but Pop urged him to return to Carlisle. There, in 1912, he played his greatest season of football. He led Carlisle in its deeply symbolic victory over the U.S. Army team

at West Point and earned a spot on the All-American team for a second year.

“THORPE NO AMATEUR”

Jim intended to go on to a final year of track at Carlisle, but in January of 1913, the public revelation of his previous involvement in baseball changed everything. A newspaper story quoted Charley Clancy, the manager of the Fayetteville Highlanders, on Jim’s tenure as a paid player. The headline “Thorpe No Amateur” quickly went around the world.

Pop Warner at first denied it and attempted to shield Thorpe from the press. Carlisle Superintendent Friedman and James Sullivan of the Amateur Athletic Union (which had sponsored the U.S. Olympic team) also denied the account, even though Jim had never made a secret about playing summer ball.



James Sullivan with Marathon Race Officials in New York
US ARMY MILITARY HISTORY INSTITUTE,
CARLISLE BARRACKS COLLECTION

THE BETRAYAL

When the evidence mounted, including the hunting photo on Clancy’s wall and newspaper accounts from North Carolina, Pop Warner changed his tune. Warner, Friedman, and Sullivan could be ruined if it was discovered they had knowingly sponsored a professional athlete at the Stockholm Olympics. There was only one way out. Warner and Friedman wrote a letter in which Jim “confessed” to deceiving his coach and everyone else because he was “simply an Indian school boy” and did not know he was doing wrong. Other members of the Carlisle team urged Thorpe not to go

along with it, but he remained loyal to Coach Warner and did as he was told.

Although the International Olympic Committee did not ask for the return of Thorpe's medals, **Sullivan** insisted. The AAU stripped Thorpe of his amateur status. Pop Warner packed up Thorpe's Olympic trophies, which he had "in safekeeping" for Jim, and returned them to the International Olympic Committee.

THE NEW YORK GIANTS

Warner's involvement with Thorpe did not end there. He subsequently acted as his agent, negotiating a lucrative contract with the Giants for \$6,500, a huge sum at that time. As Thorpe's manager, Pop Warner pocketed a fee of \$2,500.



Thorpe Signs Giants Contract, 1913
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

One of the questions about Thorpe's career in professional baseball is why he was not more successful. Some have speculated that he was not given time to mature as a pro player with experience in the minor leagues. Although his fielding average as an outfielder was well above .900 in five of the six years he was in the majors, it was said he just couldn't hit a curve ball.

There is another explanation. When Thorpe was signed by the Giants, it was not for his ability as a player, but for his fame. In 1912 baseball attendance at baseball games was falling off. Bringing in the famous Jim Thorpe was a way to get fans to come to games just to see him, whether he played or not.

To Giants manager **John J. McGraw**, Thorpe was just an attraction, not a valued team member. He was never a star because he was never given the chance to shine. He was kept visible, but more often on the bench than on the field.

Another reason for Thorpe's relative lack of success in baseball was the prejudice against Native Americans that prevailed at the time. If it was hard for a new white player to make it in the pro game, it was twice as hard for an Indian, who had to deal with racial taunts from hostile crowds and racial stereotyping in the press.

Finally there was the hot-tempered Giants manager. John McGraw had a penchant for harsh language and was ejected from the game more than 100 times for his outbursts. McGraw and Thorpe did not get along. Jim resented having to ride the bench "like a sittin' hen." The tension between the two men reached a head when McGraw called Jim a "dumb Indian." **Al Schacht** was Jim's roommate during his years with the Giants. According to Schacht, who gained a reputation as a baseball clown, entertaining fans with his antics after his effective playing days were past, "that kind of abuse was the only thing that Jim would not tolerate. Jim took off after McGraw and chased him all over the Polo Grounds. It took half the team to stop him." Soon after that, Thorpe left the Giants.



Al Schacht, Clown Prince of Baseball
NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME

BASEBALL CAREER CONTINUES

Part way through the 1919 season, Thorpe was sold by the Giants to the Boston Braves. There he finished off the season, playing as an outfielder in 60 games

with a fielding average of .926. He batted an impressive .327. Clearly, he must have been hitting a few curve balls then.

In 1920 Thorpe became increasingly involved with professional football and left major league baseball. However, he continued to play baseball with Triple A (Minor League) teams in the spring and summer. At Akron in 1920 he batted .360. In Toledo in 1921 his average was .358. Jim Thorpe played his last minor league baseball game in 1928 at the age of 40.



Thorpe in Toledo Mudhens Uniform, 1921
CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



BASEBALL

Concepts and Discussion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students learn about American Indians in baseball and the role the sport played in Jim Thorpe's athletic career.

TEACHER'S QUICK REFERENCE

- The Cincinnati Red Stockings become the first professional baseball team in 1869.
- Baseball was the only broadly popular professional team sport in the United States in the nineteenth century.
- Besides Jim Thorpe, famous American Indian ball players include Louis Sockalexis, Charles Bender, and John Meyers.
- Thorpe is singled out for track at Carlisle Indian School but plays a few games with the Carlisle baseball team.
- Contrary to the rules of amateur athletics, "summer ball" is tolerated and even encouraged by coach Pop Warner.
- Jim plays semi-pro baseball in North Carolina for two years.
- After two years' absence, Thorpe is lured back to the Carlisle School to reverse the losing streak of the football team.
- A newspaper article breaks the news about Thorpe's pro-baseball career.
- Warner, Sullivan, and Friedman first deny that Thorpe played for money and then force his "confession." Thorpe loses his Olympic medals.
- Thorpe signs with the New York Giants Baseball Team.
- His Olympic fame is a drawing card for the Giants, but he is kept on the bench most of the time.
- Prejudice and disagreement with Giants manager John McGraw force Thorpe's departure from the team.
- Jim Thorpe continues playing for Triple A teams until age 40.

KEY CONTENT

- Baseball as early national sport
- American Indians in the sport
- Amateur athletics and "summer ball"
- Loss of Jim Thorpe's Olympic medals
- Jim Thorpe in professional baseball

CONTENT REVIEW

- Who were some of the successful Indians in early baseball?
- Why was Jim Thorpe so interested in playing baseball?

- What was summer ball, and how did it involve Thorpe?
- Why did Pop Warner send his players to the summer leagues?
- Why did Pop Warner and Carlisle try to deny knowledge of Thorpe's summer ball?
- How and why was Thorpe's semi-pro career revealed?
- Why did Jim Thorpe not get much playing time on the Giants team?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Consider the difficulties that Jim Thorpe and other American athletes faced in professional baseball from racism and stereotyping. Discuss how this may have been similar to or different from the problems faced by Black athletes such as Jackie Robinson.
- Why did Jim Thorpe remain loyal to Coach Warner during the scandal and afterwards? Consider in your discussion the roles that coaches play in the lives of athletes in your discussion. Then speculate on what might have happened had Jim Thorpe not written that letter of confession.

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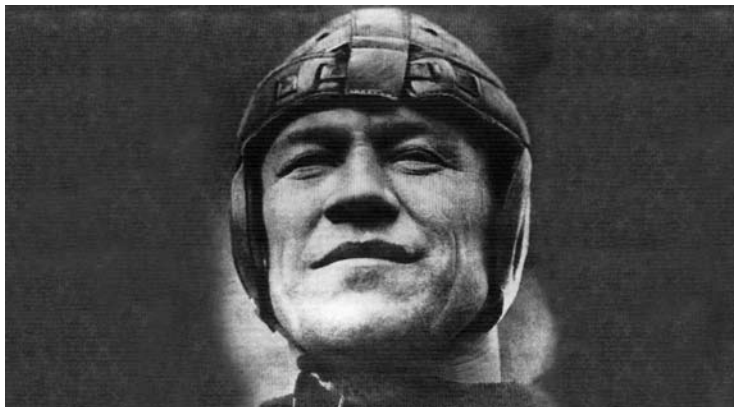


CHAPTER EIGHT

PRO FOOTBALL'S EARLY YEARS

Then all of a sudden this team was playing to 6,000–8,000 people. I personally think that the Oorang Indians, the Canton Bulldogs, and the Massillon Tigers were three teams that probably introduced people to pro football. — Robert Whitman.

Professional football got its start long after pro baseball, and for many years was largely ignored by the general public. Prior to 1915, when Jim Thorpe signed with the **Canton Bulldogs**, there was little money in the game. The players earned less than was paid, under the table, to some allegedly amateur players on successful college teams.



Jim Thorpe, 1920s
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

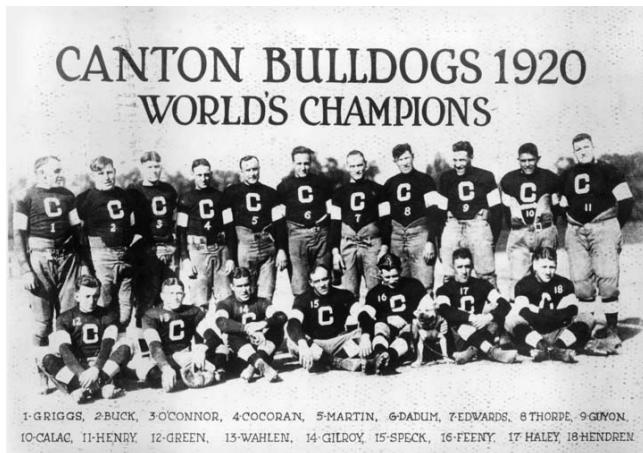
Things changed when Thorpe entered the pro game. Jack Cusack, the manager of the Canton Bulldogs, recalled:

“I hit the jackpot by signing the famous Jim Thorpe ... some of my business ‘advisers’ frankly predicted that I was leading the Bulldogs into bankruptcy by paying Jim the enormous sum of \$250 a game, but the deal paid off even beyond my greatest expectations. Jim was an attraction as well as a player. Whereas our paid attendance averaged about 1,200 before we took him on, we filled the Massillon and Canton parks for the next two games — 6,000 for the first and 8,000 for the second. All the fans wanted to see the big Indian in action. On the field, Jim was a fierce competitor, absolutely fearless. Off the field, he was a lovable fellow, big-hearted and with a good sense of humor.”

Unlike Thorpe’s experience in professional baseball, he was fully utilized on the gridiron as a running back, kicker, and fierce defensive player. In 1916 **Thorpe and the Canton Bulldogs** went 9-0-1. Then, before 10,000 fans, they won the professional football championship, a feat that he and Canton repeated in 1919.

Despite its success, things were poorly organized in the first five years of professional football, when Jim Thorpe was at his peak. There are photos and news

accounts of many games, but no official statistics were kept, so the record of his accomplishments in that early period is incomplete and largely anecdotal.



Canton Bulldogs World Champions
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

Then in 1920 pro football took a major step forward. The *American Professional Football League*, later to become the NFL, was formed. The fourteen teams that eventually signed up were the Akron Pros, the Buffalo All-Americans, the Canton Bulldogs, the Chicago Cardinals, the Chicago Tigers, the Cleveland Tigers, the Columbus Panhandles, the Dayton Triangles, the Decatur Staleys (led by George Halas, whose team that would become the Chicago Bears), the Detroit Heralds, the Hammond Pros, the Muncie Flyers, the Rochester Jeffersons, and the Rock Island Independents.

Jim Thorpe was chosen as the president of the league. His position was largely symbolic, but his name was a major selling point for the new endeavor.



Thorpe (center) and Lingo (right) with Airedales
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

In 1922 Thorpe took part in forming one of the most unusual franchises in the history of professional sports. For several years, he'd been friends with a dog breeder named Walter Lingo. Like Jim, Lingo loved the outdoors, and the two of them spent hours hunting together. Lingo raised and sold Airedales from his *Oorang Kennels* in the small town of LaRue, Ohio. Lingo publicized his business by placing his Airedales with famous people. Gary Cooper, the movie star, President Warren Harding, and Jim Thorpe were three doting recipients.

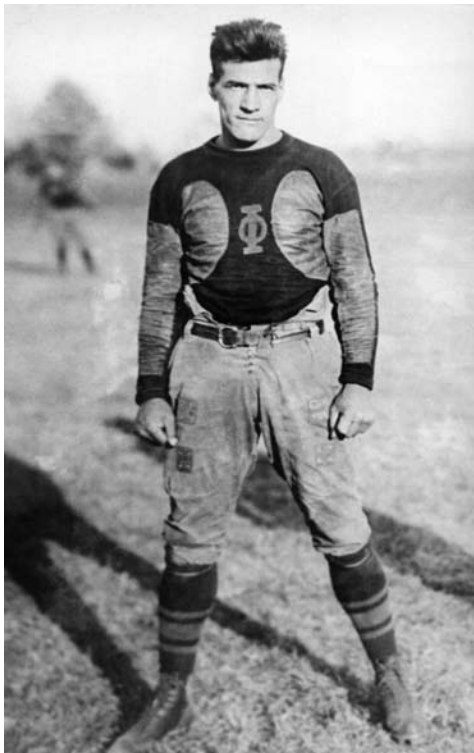


Gary Cooper and Rusty
ROBERT WHITMAN COLLECTION

While Thorpe and Lingo were on a hunting trip, the idea of starting an all-Indian football team sponsored by the kennel came up. Jim agreed to be both a coach and a player. In June of 1922, Lingo paid \$100 to purchase a franchise for a new professional football team that he named the *Oorang Indians*.

Thorpe and Lingo recruited *players* from reservations and Indian boarding schools around the country. Some, like *Joe Guyon*, (the only other American Indian besides Jim Thorpe to be named to the Pro Football hall of Fame), Pete Calac, and Elmer Busch had been part of the great Carlisle teams of the past.

Jack Thorpe, Jim's younger brother, was also part of the first squad of 17 Indian players.



Joe Guyon

ROBERT WHITMAN COLLECTION

Because LaRue, population 750, had no football field, all Oorang games were played on the road. Training was relaxed and unorthodox. It consisted of equal parts football practice and hunting with Lingo's dogs. Nighttime coon hunts or chases after the tame bears kept by Lingo were part of the fun.

The main goals of the Oorang Indians were to publicize the Oorang kennels, to entertain the public, to have fun, and to win football games, more or less in that order.

At half time the team put Lingo's dogs through their paces and enacted a Wild West show, in which the players put on Indian regalia and did war dances. In this way Thorpe and his men were playing, tongue in cheek, with the image of being Native American.

Over the last two centuries American Indians have often found themselves compelled to play the part of being Indian for white audiences in order to be considered authentic or to earn a living. For example, nineteenth-century tribal leaders who normally wore the same clothing as white farmers would dress in more traditional garb when visiting Washington, D.C., on diplomatic missions. And Indians who wished to be employed as entertainers, such as the men who worked in the popular Wild West Shows, were required to look Indian, to wear feathers, and whoop it up.

Most of the men on the Oorang team were well educated, but they seem to have enjoyed getting away with acting like wild Indians, the more outrageous the better. Instead of the everyday names they usually went by, the Oorang players used either versions of their own Indian names, such as Bright Path (Jim Thorpe), Red Fox (Emmett McLemore), Wrinklemeat (Stancil Powell), or such made-up stage names as Red Fang (Xavier Downwind), Dead Eye (Jack Thorpe), Long Time Sleep (Nick Lassa), and Bear Behind.

Jim Thorpe And His Indians Are Heading This Way To Play Baltimore Football Club Saturday



Pre-game publicity brought in large crowds - *The Baltimore News*, December 6, 1923.

Cartoon in the Baltimore News, December 6, 1923

JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

The Oorang Indians' first game was against the Dayton Triangles. The results of their laid-back training were evident. They were shut out 36-0. Having fun was one thing, but being embarrassed was another. Thorpe then put the team through some serious workouts to prepare for their second game, played in nearby Marion. The score was a 20-6 victory against the tough Columbus Tigers. However, with no home field, a tight schedule, and an emphasis on showmanship rather than aggressive playing, their final record for that first year, including non-league games, was 4 wins and 7 losses.

On the plus side capacity crowds filled every stadium, and the Oorang Kennels had its most successful year, selling 17,000 dogs.

It seemed fans were there less for the game than for the show, in which they could see real Indians in full regalia dance, work the dogs, throw tomahawks at targets, and put on a re-enactment of Indian scouts in World War I using their "Red Cross Dogs," Oorang Airedales trained to find wounded soldiers and bring them bandages and medicine.



Indian Dog Trainers at Oorang Kennels
PATRICIA GREGG COLLECTION

The Oorang Indians lasted only two years. It was enough for Thorpe and the other players, especially after going 1-10 in their 1923 season. The only win that year was in their final game against Louisville. With Thorpe out with a torn ligament, the Indians shut out the Louisville Brecks 19-0. Despite their record, the

Oorangs provided one of the most colorful shows in the history of pro football and they did a great deal to boost attendance at professional games in general.

That year of 1923 was a tough one for Jim Thorpe. It saw the end of his marriage to Iva, who finally decided she had had enough of her husband's long absences and wayward behavior. In 1925 Jim married again, this time to **Freda Kirkpatrick** of Galion, Illinois. Although the two of them had four children together, Carl Phillip, William, Richard and John, once again Jim spent most of his time on the road.

By the mid-1920s, Thorpe was sustaining injuries, and his once seemingly iron body was beginning to wear down. Injured or not, however, he kept playing professional football, and he continued to show bursts of the speed and power that had made him a legend. His final pro game was for the Chicago Cardinals in 1929, when he was forty-one years old. However, all his skills did not desert him. Years later, even in retirement, a sixty-year-old Jim Thorpe could still drop-kick a football through the goal posts from mid-field.



Thorpe, Coaching for Horjo's Indians, 1940s
CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

When the **Pro Football Hall of Fame** was dedicated in Canton, Ohio, in 1963, one of the first players inducted into its ranks was Jim Thorpe. A large statue of Thorpe stands as a symbol of the sport, and a diorama in the museum depicts him sitting on the bench with a red Canton Bulldogs cape over his shoulders, his spirit forever in the game.



PRO FOOTBALL

Concepts and Discussion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students learn about the history of professional football, including the only American Indian professional team, the Oorang Indians.

TEACHER'S QUICK REFERENCE

Early Years of Pro Football

- Little public interest in pro football prior to 1915
- Some “amateur” players make more money than professionals.
- Jack Cusack signs Thorpe with Canton Bulldogs, game attendance rises from 1,200 to 8,000.
- Bulldogs win championships with Jim Thorpe in 1916 and 1919.
- 1920 formation of the American Professional Football League
- Jim Thorpe is first president of what would become the NFL.

Oorang Indians

- Sponsored by Walter Lingo to publicize his Oorang Airedale Kennels
- Thorpe as coach and player
- Thorpe and Lingo recruit Indian players from around the country
- Team franchise purchased for \$100 in 1922
- No home field, based in LaRue, Ohio
- Goals were to publicize kennel, have fun, and entertain.
- Highly popular for their colorful halftime shows
- Team disbanded after second year

Jim Thorpe's Last Years in Football

- Plays for several more teams in the 1920s
- Last game in 1929 at age 41 for the Chicago Cardinals
- One of the first inducted (posthumously) into Pro Football Hall of Fame

KEY CONTENT

- Jim Thorpe's entry into pro football
- Foundation of the precursor to the NFL
- The story of the Oorang Indians
- Jim Thorpe's last years in professional football

CONTENT REVIEW

- Why was Jim Thorpe important for the success of early pro football?
- What team did he first play for and how successful were they?
- What was Thorpe's role in the founding of what would become the NFL?

- Where did the Oorang Indians get their name?
- Who played on the Oorang team?
- What were the main objectives of the Oorang Indians?
- How did they use stereotyped behavior to attract crowds?
- When did Jim Thorpe retire from pro football?
- How did the NFL Hall of Fame honor Jim Thorpe?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Can you think of a modern athlete who has had the sort of major effect on a sport that Jim Thorpe had on professional football? If so, talk about the impact of that player and then compare it with Thorpe's entry into pro football and what it did for the sport.
- Discuss the careers of some of the more popular professional athletes of today and compare them with Jim Thorpe. Consider what things are different now and what things may be similar.
- How did the Oorang team use stereotyped images of Indians to draw audiences to their games? Discuss the use of what may seem to be racial or ethnic stereotypes by members of the very groups to which such stereotypes have been linked.
- Some have said that the most entertaining professional sports team over the past few decades has been the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. How are the Globetrotters similar to the Oorang Indians? Talk about the approach to their respective sports and the abilities of both teams and the idea of sports as entertainment. Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

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CHAPTER NINE

INDIANS IN HOLLYWOOD

The Indian would come and register with Dad and then he would get them into studio work. Dad was after to get equal pay for Indians – say if an extra got \$15 a day, the Indian would get \$7.50. A non-Indian rolls off a horse, he'd get \$150. If an Indian did it, he'd get \$25. So Dad was insisting that he wanted equal pay for Indians. So he started getting it.

What Dad didn't like about the movies is the way they portrayed the Indian. Little People. Bloodthirsty, drunken savages. We was always getting our butt whipped. I don't think we ever won one movie. — Jack Thorpe

“The Hollywood Indian,” wrote University of New Mexico professor Ted Jojola, a Pueblo Indian, “is a mythological being who exists nowhere but within the fertile imaginations of movie actors, producers, and directors.” Although some authentic films have been made since about 1970 by American Indian filmmakers, Jojola’s characterization still rings true for the vast number of Hollywood productions in which Indians appear.

It is also true that portrayals of the American Indian are among the most enduring and popular images in the movies. Films featuring Native Americans have been with us since the birth of cinema. When Thomas Alva Edison introduced the kinoscope in 1893, the brief film he showed was *Hopi Snake Dance*. The first feature made in Hollywood was Jesse Lasky and Cecil B. DeMille’s *The Squaw Man* (1914). It told a tale of doomed love between an Englishman and an American Indian woman. Its message was that white civilization has no room for natives and that American Indians and their culture are doomed to extinction.

D.W. Griffith, a pioneer in early cinema, was a believer in racial separation. In his *The Battle at Elderbush Gulch* (1914), Indians are “stirred up” by the actions of villainous white men. In their agitation they even steal the heroine’s little puppy dogs, planning to kill and eat them in ritual sacrifice. In Griffith’s *The Call of the Wild* (1908), the hero is an Indian who attends college and lives for a time among the upper class, but his skin color and his Indian ways are at odds with civilization, and he returns to the reservation. There he is trapped in a disappearing way of life. He and his culture are doomed to be eradicated by government policies, education, disease, and the superior technology of the white man.

The Vanishing American, a novel by the popular Western writer *Zane Grey*, dealt more realistically with the obstacles faced by American Indians at the end of the nineteenth century. In Grey’s story, missionaries and corrupt Indian agents destroy Indian culture by taking away Indians’ possessions. Grey called for awareness, understanding, and a change in government policies toward Indians.

Grey’s novel was turned into a movie in 1925, but the movie version told a very different story. In it Indian soldiers, return from the battlefields of World War I. Then they revert to their innately savage nature. Stirred up, they discard their uniforms

(a mark of civilization) and attack a town with bows and arrows. There are no corrupt missionaries in this version of the story, as the filmmakers feared to offend white church-going audiences. Instead the Indian hero dies in the arms of the white heroine, as she reads to him from the Bible.

The Indian-as-victim was one dominant stereotype in the movies. The other was that of the godless savage swooping down on circled wagon trains. Often both stereotypes were played out in the same film, even in the same Indian character. In many movie plots Indians went on the warpath (exhibiting all the traits of the bloodthirsty savage) only after they had been victimized and treated unfairly by unscrupulous whites. In *The Big Trail* (1930), John Wayne plays a sympathetic character who says of the Shoshones and Cheyennes: "Feed 'em right and treat 'em well, and we'll have no trouble." But when the inevitable violent confrontation occurs, Wayne's character has no qualms about shooting one Indian after another.

Why have these stereotypes of Indians been so resilient that they color the perception of Native Americans to this day? The origins of these false images were deeply ingrained hundreds of years ago.

During the eighteenth century, philosophers of the *Enlightenment*, most notably *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, put forward the idea that such indigenous peoples as South Sea Islanders were children of nature, free of the restraint and corruption of modern society. This idea of the "Noble Savage," as Anglophone writers dubbed such innocents, was then applied to American Indians. It ignored the range of human strengths and weaknesses that exists in every culture.

Another stereotype, that of the "godless savage," came from the first European colonizers of the American continent. These men, such as the founders of *Jamestown* and the *Plymouth Colony*, acted on the belief that the natives they encountered were inferior, devil-worshipping impediments to the spread of Christian civilization. The Indian, in their eyes, had no real culture and did not know how to properly use the land. If they failed to give way to European demands for territory, then they would have to be eradicated. These perceptions say more about the interests of what

would become the dominant culture than about the native people the early colonizers dealt with.

These two images, of the noble savage and the godless savage, were embedded in literature. Because of its dramatic appeal, writing about Indians was very popular in the eighteenth century. *Captivity narratives* written by white men or women who had been taken prisoner and then redeemed from the savages, became best sellers. The nineteenth century novels of *James Fenimore Cooper*, featuring both noble and savage Indians, continued the trend.

In 1863 the first dime novel, *Malaeska: The Indian Wife of the White Hunter*, was published. The term "*dime novel*" was as a catchall phrase used not only for actual novels but also weekly publications and pulp magazines. In dime novels, the lives of such historical figures as Kit Carson, *William "Buffalo Bill" Cody*, and "Wild Bill" Hickock were fictionalized in an exaggerated, heroic, highly romantic way. The Indians, of course, were either vile brutes or saintly savages.

Buffalo Bill Cody's popular "*Wild West Show*" and its numerous imitators brought the image of the head-dress-wearing Plains Indian on horseback to audiences all over the world. In 1885 over one million people attended a Wild West show.



Buffalo Bill's Wild West
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Hollywood adapted and expanded on stereotypical stories about Indians. Television continued the trend. Indians protested, but their voices were few and their protests were ignored. There was no lobby for Indians

in Hollywood. Early directors like D. W. Griffith felt that Indians were the only cultural group that could be portrayed as villains without public censure. Producers worried more about the reaction of the American Humane Association to the treatment of horses in Westerns than the reaction to their treatment of Indians.

Jim Thorpe's experience in Hollywood was like that of many other struggling actors. When he arrived in Los Angeles in 1930, his expectations were high. Just the year before, he had sold the rights to his life story for a movie to be called *Red Son of Carlisle*. Jim had only been paid \$1,500 but he was told that he would be hired to play himself. The film was never made, partly as a result of the financial difficulties of the Depression.



Thorpe (right) in Battling With Buffalo Bill
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

Meanwhile, Thorpe and his second wife, Freeda (who died in 2008 at the age of 101), had a **growing family** to feed. Jim took whatever work was available in those Depression years. His first job in California was as a painter for an oil company, painting gas stations and trucks. In the fall of 1930, he got his initial job at Universal Studios, playing a bit part as Swift Arrow in *Battling with Buffalo Bill*, followed by parts in a film about baseball and another about football – in which Pop Warner also appeared. But bit parts didn't pay the bills, and Jim took other jobs. During one brief stint in 1932 as a laborer, a photographer took his picture of him working on the excavation for the new Los Angeles City Hospital at 50 cents a day. The newspaper article described the former Olympian as a man

who could not even afford a ticket to the **1932 Olympic Games**, which were about to take place.



Jim Thorpe as Laborer, 1932
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

One person who read that article was the vice president of the United States, **Charles Curtis**. Not only was he, like Jim, from Oklahoma, but his ancestry was also a mix of white and American Indian (Kaw) ancestry. Curtis knew Thorpe; his daughter was married to Thorpe's friend and Carlisle teammate Gus Welch. Curtis invited Thorpe to attend the opening of the Los Angeles Games and sit with Curtis in the presidential box. When Thorpe was introduced to the crowd of 105,000, the stadium erupted in a roar of applause. But when the Olympics ended, Thorpe was back in the job hunt. He continued to get **movie work**, mostly non-speaking bit parts, which included being one of the native dancers in the epic *King Kong* (1933).

Thorpe was not a charismatic presence on screen, and his delivery was wooden in the few speaking parts he landed. Despite this, he appeared in at least 65 movies between his first role in *Battling with Buffalo Bill* (1931) and his last in *Wagon Master* (1950).

He was friends with such cowboy icons as Tom Mix, but was never quite comfortable in the Hollywood milieu. When his daughter Grace came to live with him, he cautioned her to stay away from actors because "They're all phonies." One of the worst was Errol

Flynn, the swashbuckling hero of countless movies. The story (told in our documentary by Jack Thorpe), of Jim's run-in with Flynn during the production of *They Died With Their Boots On* is a famous example of Thorpe's lack of patience with poseurs. It may have signaled the end of his movie career, for he appeared in only a few films after he floored Flynn.



Poster: "They Died With Their Boots On"
JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

Thorpe made a mark in Hollywood in other ways. He knew every Indian who worked in the film industry, and he was outraged by the way Indian actors were treated in the 1930s. Indian extras were paid \$5.50 a day, while white extras got \$11. Similarly, if a white stunt man fell off a horse, he would get twice as much as an Indian for the same stunt.

Another problem was the grossly inaccurate depiction of Indians in films. The *Indian Actors Association* was formed partly in response to this. Instead of having white actors playing Indians who "talk and grunt like morons" (as a member of the Indian Actors Association expressed it in a June 4, 1939, New York Herald Tribune article), they urged that the studios hire Indian technical experts who could teach authentic sign language and spoken vocabulary. One of the founders of the Indian Actors Association was *Luther Standing Bear*, a Lakota who had been part of the first class of

Carlisle students in 1879. Standing Bear had traveled with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and then come to Hollywood to play movie Indians.

Thorpe became an active member of the Indian Actors Association. He served as the primary spokesman against the practice of hiring non-Indians. Although in some of the earliest movies major parts were played by Indians, such as *Princess Red Wing and her husband, James Young Deer*, by the 1930s, most Indian parts were played by non-Indians. With the assistance of the Department of Labor, Thorpe determined that less than half of the so-called "Indian" extras were actual Indians. Even Jimmy Cagney, later famous for his tough-talking gangster roles, played a spray-painted red Indian in one film.

Being a Hollywood Indian brought Thorpe in contact with Indians of many tribes.

Whenever an Indian arrived in Hollywood looking for film work, he or she went first to Thorpe, who put together a list of 250 "real" Indians and demanded that casting offices hire only from his group. He even went so far as to send a letter of protest to President Franklin Roosevelt when producers and directors failed to hire from his list.

Thorpe was also known among Hollywood Indians as a practical joker. An elderly Pueblo/Apache friend of mine named Swift Eagle told me a story: When he first met Thorpe, Swifty was asked if he could shoot a bow. "Yes," Swifty replied. Then Thorpe led him to a movie set and gave Swifty a bow.

"A man will step out of that doorway over there. Can you shoot him?"

"Yes," Swifty replied, "But I don't miss. I might kill him."

"Don't worry," Thorpe said, "He'll duck back in time." Then Thorpe walked over to that doorway about a hundred feet away and went inside. "Now," Thorpe shouted, and a man leaned out of the door.

Swifty shot his arrow, and it hit the man right in the chest. "Oh no!" Swifty shouted. He dropped the bow and ran to the doorway where Jim Thorpe was standing and laughing over the dummy Swifty had just shot.

In another of Thorpe's practical jokes, he and his friends petitioned the federal government for recognition as a new tribe, to be named the "Hollywood In-

dians.” The Bureau of Indian Affairs took the request seriously and wrote back a detailed letter explaining why such recognition would not be possible.

The efforts of Jim Thorpe and the Indian Actors Association met with partial success. By the mid-1930s, Indian actors were receiving salaries equal to their white counterparts. More Indian actors were being hired, and Indian advisors were occasionally retained to ensure that the Plains Indian culture was more accurately portrayed. The Indian language spoken in films was now often an actual Native American tongue—though it was frequently different from the one called for by the role.

Still, whenever there was a starring Indian role, male or female, it went to a white actor. In *They Died With Their Boots On* (1941), the Sioux leader Crazy Horse was played by Anthony Quinn. And despite all of Thorpe’s efforts, Indians still ended up being portrayed as stereotypes. This remained true until *Chief Dan George’s* 1970 role in *Little Big Man* marked a turning point.

Indians in Hollywood found that they could not get parts in movies or succeed in the growing tourist trade if they did not “look Indian.” If they had short hair and wore their everyday clothing, they were not judged authentic. Not just in Hollywood, but all over the nation, Indians had to dress and act like their movie counterparts to earn a living. That meant looking like a Plains Indian from the mid-nineteenth century. The result was that during much of the twentieth century, native people engaged in any aspect of entertainment began to dress (and even behave) like movie Indians. Even if they were Cherokees from North Carolina, Powhatans from Virginia, or Iroquois from New York State, the Plains-style eagle-feather headdress and a stoic demeanor became a must for any public occasion. As Ted Jojola put it, this process of revisionism recast “native people away from and apart from their own social and community realities.”

In 1950 when Thorpe was recognized as “the football player of the half-century” and “male athlete of the half century,” the renewed publicity made a film about his life seem feasible. Thorpe had tried repeatedly to regain the rights to his own story, without success. Warner Brothers purchased the rights from MGM after World War II – reportedly for \$35,000. With Burt Lancaster in the leading role, another white man in dark makeup playing an Indian, *Jim Thorpe, All-American* was released in 1951. Thorpe was a paid advisor on the film, but it drastically revised aspects of his sports career, and largely ignored his later life, including his fight for the rights of Indian actors.



Thorpe at Premiere of Jim Thorpe, All-American

JIM THORPE ASSOCIATION

However, at Thorpe’s request, the movie premiered on the same day, August 23, 1951, in both Oklahoma City and Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where Thorpe, who attended the showing, was honored with a parade.



INDIANS IN HOLLYWOOD

Concepts and Discussion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students learn about the images of Indians in the movies and the roots of those images in popular culture and history, as well as the ways in which Jim Thorpe attempted to make a change in Hollywood.

TEACHER'S QUICK REFERENCE

- The Hollywood Indian as a “mythological being”
- Early films with Indians: *Hopi Snake Dance* and *The Squaw Man*
- D.W. Griffiths portrays Indians as doomed “noble savages.”
- Another popular stereotype is the “murdering Redskin”
- Zane Grey’s novel *The Vanishing American* is a more realistic portrait of Indians, but the movie version reverts to stereotypes.
- False images of Indians originated with the Enlightenment and New World explorers, dating back to Columbus.
- These images are integrated into eighteenth century popular literature, including captivity narratives.
- The romantic novels of James Fenimore Cooper continue to distort the perception of Indians.
- Dime novels and Wild West shows continue the trend, and Hollywood picks up the thread.
- Indians protest but lack a lobby to effect changes.
- Jim Thorpe comes to Hollywood, gets small parts in the movies as well as a variety of odd jobs.
- Thorpe becomes active in the Indian Actors Association, advocating for Indian actors in Indian roles as well as equal pay for Indians.
- Anecdotes about Thorpe’s practical jokes, Swift Eagle shoots a dummy.
- Indians are required to look like Hollywood Indians in order to get work.
- Thorpe’s life story made into a movie with Burt Lancaster in 1951.

KEY CONTENT

- Images of Indians in movies
- Noble savage vs. murdering Redskin
- Sources of the images of the Indian
- Native views of the stereotypes
- Jim Thorpe’s Hollywood experience

CONTENT REVIEW

- What are the usual images of Indians in cinema?
- How long have these images been part of American film?
- What are the earlier sources of these stereotypical images of Indians?
- Why have these images remained popular for so long?
- How do American Indians feel about the way they are often represented in movies?
- Why did Jim Thorpe go to Hollywood?
- What successes did he have there?
- What are some of the problems Indian actors and stuntmen faced?
- What did Jim Thorpe do to help other Indians in Hollywood?
- Why did his life story finally get made into a movie?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Discuss the practice of casting white actors as American Indian characters. Is this done with people from other racial groups? Take a look at clips from old films in which “white” Indians appear (many can be found on the Internet) and compare them with more recent films in which such white actors as Raquel Welch played Indians.
- A number of recent and contemporary films have attempted to portray Indians more sympathetically. Discuss one or more of those films – such as *Dances With Wolves* or *Little Big Man*, in terms of their portrayals of Native Americans. Are there still stereotypes in these films?
- View the movie *Jim Thorpe, All-American*, then discuss how its portrayal of Jim Thorpe differs from the documentary you’ve just seen. Also consider how the film *Jim Thorpe, All-American* is different from or similar to other Hollywood movies of the 1930s in which Indians play a role.

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Land of the Spotted Eagle, by Luther Standing Bear, first published in 1933, University of Nebraska Press reprint, 1978. A member of the first class of Indian students at Carlisle, an author and an influential “Hollywood Indian” during the early twentieth century, Standing Bear tells his own story in this classic of American Indian autobiography.

Making the White Man’s Indian, Native Americans and Hollywood Movies, by Angela Aleiss, Praeger, 2005. A book that deals quite well with the complicated picture of American Indians as depicted in Hollywood films, not only describing the stereotypes that characterize most movie depictions of Indians, but also going behind the scenes to show how and why Hollywood has created its Native American characters.



CHAPTER TEN

INDIAN RIGHTS

I have never forgotten that I am an Indian. We settled this country long before the white people ever came to these shores. But Red Men are wards of the government. The Indian should be permitted to shed his inferiority complex and live like a normal American citizen.
– Jim Thorpe

AMERICAN INDIANS AT START OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

At the start of the twentieth century American Indian people were in a bad way. Most of their land had been taken. Many tribes had been forced to leave their original homelands and resettle on distant reservations where the soil was poor. Virtually every *treaty* signed by the United States with the more than 300 American Indian nations had been violated by state governments or the federal government.

Indians were also the most impoverished minority group in the United States. They had few opportunities for employment on their isolated reservations, and they did not control the income from oil, gas, and coal leases on their land. Tribal funds were held in trust by the United States and could not be disbursed to Indians without the agreement of white Indian agents, federal appointees placed in charge of each reservation.

American Indians as a whole had not been granted citizenship, and the majority of American Indians did not have the right to vote. They did not even enjoy freedom of religion – unless the religion they chose to practice was Christianity. Traditional religious practices were generally banned. American Indian children were being educated in schools in which their entire education was designed to assimilate them into white culture, and they were forbidden to speak their own languages.

The total population of Native Americans in the United States had shrunk so drastically that their numbers, perhaps as low as 250,000, were a small fraction of the pre-Columbian total. The Indian was viewed by many as the “Vanishing American,” and it was often predicted that American Indians’ distinctive cultures would cease to be within a few generations.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY REBIRTH

However, the twentieth century witnessed a virtual rebirth of the American Indian. With the help of many non-Native supporters, American Indians successfully won not only civil rights, but also at least partial redress for what twentieth-century courts ruled was the illegal taking of Indian land. A new generation of modern American Indian warriors, men and women who more often than not fought their battles in lecture halls and courts, made substantive gains.

By the end of the twentieth century all American Indians were American citizens with full voting rights and religious freedom guaranteed by new legislation.

Millions of acres of land had been returned to numerous tribes. Rather than disappearing, many tribal communities had grown stronger and increased in number, taken responsibility for the education of their own children, provided employment for their people, and cultivated new sources of revenue. American Indian population figures at the end of the century stood at over 2.5 million and continue to increase.

There still were significant problems, especially in terms of limited employment and economic opportunities on many reservations, as well as ongoing struggles for the redress of past wrongs and the return of native lands. However, the American Indian most emphatically did not vanish.

THE INDIAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT

One major reason for the survival and success of American Indians in the twentieth century was the Indian Rights Movement, which may be viewed in four distinct phases.

ASSIMILATION

The first efforts for Indian rights were dominated by white Christian reformers whose roots were in the anti-slavery and temperance movements. Shocked by the unfair treatment of Indians (even those who had adopted white ways and Christianity) by a corrupt and paternalistic government, these reformers began to protest treaty violations.

One of the first of these groups was *the Women's National Indian Association*, founded in 1879. In 1882 the *Indian Rights Association* (IRA) came into being and became the most important of the early rights organizations. It advocated education, legal protection for Indians, and the division of their lands into individual ownership. Then, in 1883, the *Lake Mohonk Conference of the Friends of the Indian* was convened by Albert K. Smiley, a Quaker and a member of the federal Board of Indian Commissioners. Its yearly conferences provided a forum and focus for those involved in the Indian rights movement.

The symbolic case that was most focused upon by all these groups was that of the *Poncas*. A peaceful nation friendly to Christianity, the Poncas had been

forced into Oklahoma from the small reservation in Nebraska given to them by treaty in 1858, with tragic results. Their eloquent chief, *Standing Bear*, begged to be allowed to return to their homeland to bury the remains of his son, who had died as a result of removal. Standing Bear and *Susette LaFlesche*, an educated Omaha woman, traveled around the country in the 1880s lecturing about the plight of the Poncas to large audiences. Their lectures were an important factor in raising public awareness. The various Indian rights groups created an extensive reform literature and campaigned in the secular and religious press around the case of the Poncas, drawing attention to the overall failures of the government's Indian policy.

The conclusion of these early friends of the Indian was that assimilation was the only way for Indians to survive. Assimilation meant that Indians needed to become Christian, acquire private property, give up their old outdated ways and enter American society as individuals. The Christian reform groups nearly all wholeheartedly supported the *Dawes Act of 1887*, which promised the fair allotment of tribal lands and eventual citizenship for all Indians. Allotment meant that tribal lands formerly held in common would be divided among individuals, each of whom would receive up to 160 acres, own the land, and have to pay taxes on it. However, after the land was portioned out to Indians, the majority of the land that was "left over" was given to white settlers.

Allotment proved disastrous not only for the tribes but for most Indians. As a result, American Indians lost millions of acres, and native people became more impoverished. The promise of citizenship for Indians was neglected. Nevertheless, for the next few decades, the failed policy of assimilation remained the central tenet of most Indian rights advocates.

Although its overall aim was the dissolution of all tribal entities, the Indian Rights Association frequently fought to uphold the legal rights of tribes and successfully opposed further removals of several tribes. It advocated local day schools for Indian children rather than distant boarding schools. It also attempted, with limited success, to end government contracting with religious bodies for the education of Indian children.

PAN-INDIANISM AND SELF-GOVERNANCE

The second phase of the Indian rights movement began with the emergence in the early 1900s of a number of “progressive,” Western-educated, and extremely eloquent American Indians. All of these native men and women had spent their childhoods in their tribes and then developed, often through boarding school educations, extensive contacts with the white world and with Indians of other tribes. Most had become Catholics or Protestants. Dr. **Carlos Montezuma**. (Yavapai), Dr. **Charles Alexander Eastman** (Dakota), **Arthur C. Parker** (Seneca), **Gertrude Bonnin** (Lakota), and **Charles Carter** (Chickasaw) were among the better-known members of this group.

The general aim of the Indian progressives was the creation of a secular pan-Indian movement that would work for the welfare of the Indian race and humanity in general. They believed that Indian unity, self-help, initiative, and education were essential to progress. Among the influential white men who supported them in their goals was none other than Richard Henry Pratt, the founder of the Indian Industrial School at Carlisle.

In 1911 the **Society of American Indians** (SAI) was founded. Eastman, Laura Cornelius (Oneida), Thomas L. Sloan (Omaha), Montezuma, Carter, and several other prominent Indian progressives were its leaders. The SAI held conferences, published a periodical edited by Parker, and set up a legal division. Carter, who went on to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives for 20 years, worked for legal reform to codify Indian law. After World War I the idea of self-determination for the various tribes became one of SAI’s major themes. However, the organization struggled with factionalism. Its membership dwindled, and it declined into obscurity after 1923.

The 1920s saw the rise of a new group of white reformers led by **John Collier**. They were inspired by that early generation of Indian reformers, but their goals were somewhat different. These new reformers felt that the Dawes Act had been corrupt and destructive. Their aim was to protect American Indian land and move away from assimilation. They sought to preserve

traditional tribal customs, which put them at odds with many of the educated Indian progressives, who felt that traditional customs would hold back Indian progress. In 1923 Collier became the head of the newly formed **American Indian Defense Association (AIDA)**. This soon became the most influential organization dealing with American Indian issues and gained the support of many tribal communities. A year later, with the support of both the new reformers and the older progressives, the Snyder Act, popularly known as the **Indian Citizens Act of 1924**, was passed. It declared that all American Indians were citizens, without affecting any rights to tribal or other property.

The most important accomplishment of this period of Indian rights was the Indian New Deal. After the election of President Franklin Roosevelt, John Collier was appointed in 1933 as the new Commissioner of Indian Affairs. After meeting with the various Indian rights organizations, Collier and his staff helped create the **Indian Reorganization Act**, which became law in 1934. The act secured certain rights for American Indians and Alaskan natives. It reversed the Dawes Act, ending allotment. Over the next twenty years more than 2 million acres was returned to various tribes. It was also meant to restore to Indians the management of their assets, while providing provisions meant to create a sound economic foundation for those living on reservations.

Another advocacy group that was to be of considerable importance to American Indians was also founded in late 1942 with Collier’s encouragement. **D’Arcy McNickle** (Salish-Kootenai), an anthropologist and extremely talented author who worked for Collier’s Bureau of Indian Affairs, was one of the leaders of this organization, which became known in 1942 as the **National Congress of American Indians** (NCAI). The NCAI, which is still a major voice for American Indians, resembled the old Society of American Indians, but was more tribally oriented. Its membership was restricted to persons “of Indian ancestry,” and any Indian tribe, band, or community could become a member organization. Its aims included preserving Indian cultural values, enlightening the public toward a better understanding of the Indian race, and preserving Indian rights.

However, in the 1940s, the Indian rights movement had lost momentum. Many of the more than 44,000 American Indians enlisted in the armed forces during World War II were native leaders whose energy could no longer be directed toward tribal affairs. John Collier was called “un-American” for his continued insistence that Indians deserved “special treatment,” and he resigned under pressure as Indian Commissioner in 1945. By the end of World War II American Indians and their rights were generally forgotten by the public, and the attitude of the federal government toward Indians was changing. In 1954, under the Eisenhower Administration, the U.S. Department of the Interior began to put a new policy into effect — the termination of federal control over Indian lands.

ACTIVISM AND SELF-DETERMINATION

The policy of **Indian Termination** was developed by Dillon Myer, who became Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1950. His aim was to end the relationship between the United States government and the tribes long established by treaties and legislation. “Withdrawal programming,” Myers said, would save the U.S. government money. All previous programs in which government funds went to Indians would be ended. So, too, would the relationship of trust between the government and the terminated tribes, from whom all aspects of tribal sovereignty would be taken. Once again, Indians would be forced for their own good to assimilate and become more “civilized.”

Larger and better-organized tribes, such as the Navajos, managed to protect their people from the worst effects of the policy. However, between 1953 and 1956, the federal government removed all federal services and protections from sixty-one American Indian tribes, bands, and communities. Once again, hundreds of thousands of acres of Indian land were lost to Native people. Once-thriving tribal nations such as the Menominee of Wisconsin became impoverished. Ironically, termination actually ended up costing the United States more. The resulting welfare and unemployment payments were much greater than the expense of the tribal subsidies that had been discontinued.

The NCAI was a major voice against termination. At its 1948 convention it had strongly opposed the

idea of terminating reservations and relocating Indians in the cities. At its 1953 convention its members expressed the idea that tribes were “nations within a nation” and that their status was thus different from all other minorities’.

The threat of termination united the various tribal nations of the United States as never before. Indians began to vote in even greater numbers in local and state elections. Congressmen and senators from states with large American Indian populations took note and began to pay closer attention to Indian concerns. In 1964, as a result of the efforts of Indian tribes and their advocates, including elected officials, the misguided policy of terminating tribes was stopped, although the legislation for termination was not actually repealed until 1988.

American Indians were also affected by the changes in the country brought by the election of John Kennedy and the decade of the 60s. Many younger Indians felt their elders were too conservative and not representative of Indian opinion. In 1961, the **National Indian Youth Council** (NIYC) was formed in Gallup, New Mexico, and a new era of increased militancy, much like that in the African-American civil rights movement, began. Instead of “sit-ins,” the NIYC staged “fish-ins” in states where Indian tribes were being denied fishing rights that they claimed were theirs by treaty. In 1964 **Vine Deloria Jr.** became the executive director of the NCAI and began to advocate taking more forceful stand on behalf of native rights. Deloria, the author of *Custer Died for Your Sins* and numerous other books on Indian history, culture and law, also drew attention to the need for legal services staffed by fellow Indians.

The BIA relocation programs had produced substantial communities of American Indians from various tribes in a number of large urban centers. An increasing number of American Indians were now in college. It was from those urban and campus populations of Indians that the most militant organizations sprang. In 1968 the **American Indian Movement** (AIM) was formed in Minneapolis. In that same year the United Native Americans, Inc. was formed in San Francisco. Both groups espoused Red Power and “self-determination.”

In 1969 a group of Indians, many of them students, took over the then-deserted former federal prison on *Alcatraz Island*. Calling themselves the “Indians of All Tribes,” they claimed Alcatraz as Indian land, citing the statute that abandoned federal land should revert to its previous owners (the Indians). Their nineteen-month takeover was largely symbolic. However, the publicity it received was immense. It inspired many American Indian people all over the country and drew public attention to the federal abrogation of treaties and the desperate living conditions on most reservations, where the first Americans were the most impoverished Americans in the country. Among those prominent in the takeover of Alcatraz was a determined native woman with a famous name – Grace Thorpe, one of Jim’s daughters, accompanied by her daughter Dagmar Thorpe.

The events of the 1960s and ’70s ushered in a new relationships between American Indians and the federal government. In 1969 President Richard Nixon appointed *Louis Bruce* (Dakota Sioux/Mohawk) to head the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the first Indian to be Commissioner of Indian Affairs since Ely Parker in 1869. Bruce immediately gave 14 of the 20 top positions to Indians. Bruce then announced that the BIA’s new role would not be to manage Indians but to serve them.

Numerous other student protests, takeovers, and fish-ins took place over the next few years, led by the NIYC, AIM, and other militant Native groups. One of the most prominent was the “*Trail of Broken Treaties*,” a caravan of Indians that traveled cross-country to Washington, D.C., in 1972 and ended with a six-day takeover of the BIA building. Ironically, it also led to the firing by President Nixon of Louis Bruce as Indian Commissioner.

The culmination of the “protest period” of American Indian rights came in February of 1973, when 200 armed members of AIM and local Lakotas opposed to the tribal chairmanship of Richard Wilson seized the small hamlet of *Wounded Knee* on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Soon the protesters were surrounded by a large, heavily armed federal force, and thousands of rounds were fired by both sides. The armed standoff lasted for 70 days before a pact was

signed between the AIM leaders and the government negotiators. Amazingly, only two people were killed, both members of AIM. Indian rights groups and tribal communities were divided about the event, some supporting AIM and some condemning the organization for its violent tactics.

In 1975, the *Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act* became law. It renounced the policy of termination, empowered tribes to administer federally funded programs on their reservations, authorized funding for legal assistance to tribes prosecuting complaints against the federal government, and provided greater support for economic development and health programs. Self-determination for American Indian tribes had become not just a goal but accepted policy.

By the final decades of the twentieth century, the survival of American Indians that had been the goal of all the various advocates for Indian rights was no longer in question. Although many problems faced by American Indians would persist, there would no longer be any danger that they would lose their reservation lands or their status as tribal nations.

JIM THORPE AND INDIAN RIGHTS

The most obvious relationship between Jim Thorpe and the struggle for Indian survival in the twentieth century is Jim’s role as a model of Indian success in the white world. He was to Indians what Joe Louis was to the African-American community. When Joe Louis defeated Max Schmeling, a German boxer who had been held up by Adolf Hitler as a symbol of the superiority of the Aryan race, Louis became beloved by the entire nation, but even more by blacks. Jim Thorpe’s success in the Olympics two decades before had a similar meaning for American Indians. Jim had, as his father, Hiram, had urged, “showed the world what an Indian can do.” Virtually every American Indian knew who Jim Thorpe was and found inspiration in his athletic accomplishments and his determination to succeed.

Even the loss of his Olympic medals endeared Jim Thorpe to Indians and made him a symbolic figure. Like other Indians, men and women who had lost their land or suffered removal, something had been taken

from Jim that seemed rightly his. The drive to restore his Olympic records to the books and his medals to his family brought American Indians together all over the nation. When those medals were finally restored, Native Americans felt it was their victory as well.

As *Grace Thorpe, Jim's daughter*, put it, "Dad was always fighting for Indian rights." Unfortunately, not much attention has been paid to this aspect of Thorpe's life. An exception is an interview conducted in 1937 by Earl Eby of the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, about Thorpe's efforts to secure remuneration for his Sac and Fox tribe for their original land holdings. Eby wrote:

Jim Thorpe, the fabulous Carlisle Indian, is in town, and his mind is not on athletics. "I've never mentioned this to any other reporter," Jim said, "because most of them have always been interested in my athletic career. This claim, however, has been on my mind for years. Here's the story: in 1814 the government purchased 70,000 acres from my tribe, which was part of the land used in the famous Land Rush. That money was deposited in a St. Louis bank for the Indians. The compound interest on that land now amounts to \$456,760,000." Thorpe reached into his pocket and pulled out a sheaf of papers with figures on them to prove his point. He also showed letters from influential men in Washington, who are working with him. "The land that was purchased from us has since yielded millions and millions of dollars in oil. Too bad we didn't hold onto it."

In an interview we conducted with Jack Thorpe, one of Jim's sons, Jack spoke of his father's vocal opposition to certain aspects of the Indian Reorganization Act. In particular, Jim Thorpe was against the replacement of traditional consensus government with a written constitution based on the United States model and a system of electing tribal officials by majority vote.

"Dad was an advocate," Jack said, "of keeping it traditional, not adopting the white man's way of having that type of government, Dad argued on that when he came back to Oklahoma. I've read some of the articles in the paper that the Bureau of Indian Affairs had written (about him). They said, 'Don't pay attention

to this man. He's a radical. He doesn't know what he's talking about. He's going to get you Indians in trouble. You need to have this constitution.'

"If Dad hadn't been the person he was and the stature he had, you know, the recognition he had, he could probably have ended up having a hole put in him. It still takes place today. If you start getting too radical, you disappear or you end up being in prison."

Jim Thorpe's action was not limited to Indian affairs. In his later years he championed youth fitness and the creation of a *national youth Olympic program*.

During the latter part of his life, Jim often traveled the nation on the *lecture circuit*. His schedule was so busy that he was often on the road for weeks at a time, giving as many as three lectures a day. His audiences were most often students and service clubs, and his words were heard by tens of thousands of eager listeners.

The topics of four talks that he offered were his own life story, his view of the present sports season, the importance of sports in modern life, and "The American Indian Today." Imagine yourself as a young person in 1941, hearing these words spoken by Jim Thorpe, the world's greatest athlete:

"Indians, you know, are misnamed. We aren't Indians. We are Red Men, and we settled this country long before the white people ever came to these shores. Why then should we be deprived of citizenship until we can qualify through a written examination? None of you here is a government ward. You are citizens because that heritage has been passed on to you. But Red Men are wards of the government. ...

"Years ago, the Indians were made wards of the government. Yet their reservation lands are taken away from them if the government wants the land.

"I have four sons who want to be loyal American citizens. So that's what I'm working for, that and better athletic training for all American youth. I would like to ask every one of you here to work for the improvement of Indian conditions. They can be bettered with your help. Perhaps some day another Abraham Lincoln will come along to free the Red Men of this country."



INDIAN RIGHTS

Concepts and Discussion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students learn about the struggle for American Indian rights in the United States in the twentieth century and how the life of Jim Thorpe relates to it.

TEACHER'S QUICK REFERENCE

American Indians at the start of the twentieth century

- Most impoverished minority group
- Most did not have civil rights or citizenship
- Lacked freedom to practice traditional religions
- Their numbers had shrunk to about 250,000

Twentieth Century Rebirth

- Gained civil rights
- Gained full citizenship and religious freedom
- Population had increased to 2.5 million

The Indian Rights Movement

- First dominated by white Christian reformers
 - Women's National Indian Association in 1879
 - Indian Rights Association in 1882
 - Lake Mohonk Conferences begin in 1883
 - Christianity and assimilation seen as the solution
 - Standing Bear a symbolic focus
 - Support for Dawes Act of 1887.
- Pan-Indianism phase led by progressive, educated Indians
 - Society of American Indians in 1911
 - Secular pan-Indian movement
 - Self-help, initiative, and education emphasized.
- The New Reformers, led by John Collier
 - American Indian Defense Council in 1923
 - Indian New Deal in 1932
 - Collier appointed Indian Commissioner
 - Indian Reorganization Act in 1934
 - National Congress of American Indians in 1944.
- World War II
 - 44,000 Indians, many tribal leaders enlist in armed forces
 - Reform loses momentum
 - Collier accused of being "anti-American," resigns in 1945.

- Phase of activism and self-determination
 - Termination policies between 1953 and 1956
 - NCAI and tribes unite against termination
 - Vine Deloria heads NCAI, supports Indian legal services
 - National Indian Youth Council in 1961
 - Protest period, Red Power, fish-ins, Alcatraz, Wounded Knee
 - Louis Bruce appointed head of BIA in 1969
 - Indian Self-Determination and Education Act in 1975.
- Jim Thorpe's relationship to Indian rights
- His life and career symbolic of Indian achievement
 - As advocate and lecturer.

KEY CONTENT

- Condition of American Indians at the start of the twentieth century
- Stages of Indian rights movement between 1879 and 1975
- Key figures and organizations in Indian rights
- Key legislation from Dawes Act to Indian Self-Determination Act
- Jim Thorpe's life in relation to the Indian rights movement.

CONTENT REVIEW

- What was the condition of American Indians at the start of the twentieth century?
- What groups and attitude characterized the first phase of the movement for Indian rights?
- What did the first American Indian progressives who were involved in Indian rights have in common, and what were their goals?
- What is Pan-Indianism, and what are its roots?
- What ideas did the new reformers of the 1920 have, and how were they different from the previous advocates for the American Indian?
- What was the National Congress of American Indians?
- Why did Indian rights become less of a national issue in the 1940s?
- What was Indian termination, how was it justified, and what results did it have?
- What were the causes of the more radical activism of the 1960s and '70s?
- What changes took place in federal Indian policy in the 1970s?
- How was Jim Thorpe's life similar to that of the American Indians who became prominent in Indian rights?
- In what ways can Jim Thorpe be linked to the movement for Indian rights?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Consider the differing goals of such groups as the Indian Rights Association, the Society of American Indians, and the National Congress of American Indians. Choose one of those groups and defend it in a debate with someone playing the role of a supporter of one of the other organizations.
- Compare the policies of Allotment and Termination. How are they similar or different in their stated goals, and how did they affect American Indians? Consider why the creators of those policies might have thought they would benefit Indians.

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