

# Native Americans

- ▶ Unique among all ethnic minorities in America
- ▶ Millions of Americans can claim some Indian heritage
- ▶ Many Indian tribes fiercely defend their autonomous status within the U.S.
- ▶ History of Anglo-Indian relations in America is a long & complicated one
- ▶ A wide variety of Native American cultures thrived across North America before Europeans arrived
  - ▶ Distinct traditions, religions, & social & political systems
  - ▶ Some historians place estimates of the Indian population as high as 10-12 million people at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> c.

# Colonists & Native Americans

- ▶ Most colonists saw Indians as a strange & savage people who were more to be feared than befriended.
- ▶ N.A. saw most colonists as greedy & untrustworthy (too prone to forget in anger the promises they made so easily in times of peace).

# Sharing of Culture

- ▶ The English adopted some Indian agricultural practices & fighting techniques.
- ▶ Indians quickly came to rely on European manufactured goods (mostly weapons).
- ▶ Some of this cross-culturalization occurred due to the Indians' practice of taking white captives during wars or raids.
  - ▶ Female colonists

# 1924 Indian Citizenship Act

- ▶ Many N.A. had, and still have, separate nations within the U.S. on designated reservation land.
- ▶ Congress granted citizenship to all N.A. born in the U.S.
- ▶ Yet even after the act was passed, some N.A. weren't allowed to vote because the right to vote was governed by state law.
  - ▶ Until 1957, some states barred N.A. from voting.

# Native Americans

▶ **Prior to the Indian Citizenship Act, an act called the Dawes Severalty Act (1887) shaped U.S. Indian policy.**

-Since 1887, the gov't had encouraged N.A. to become more like mainstream America.

-hoped to turn Indians into farmers-gave out tribal lands to individuals in 160-acre parcels

-Unclaimed or "surplus" land was sold & money was used to establish Indian schools

-By 1932, the sale of unclaimed land and allotted land resulted in the loss of two-thirds of the 138 million acres N.A. held prior to the Act.

# 1934 Indian Reorganization Act

- ▶ gave N.A. greater control over their own affairs & allowed them to manage their own lands
- ▶ provided federal funds to help N.A. build tribal economies
- ▶ restored freedom of religion for N.A.
- ▶ encouraged tribes to revive their own cultural traditions



# 1953 Termination Policy

- ▶ ended federal programs for N.A.
- ▶ shifted those programs to the states
- ▶ states then controlled N.A. lands within their borders
- ▶ states often sold rights to resources on these lands to businesses
- ▶ U.S. gov't hoped N.A. would leave their reservations to look for jobs in the cities
- ▶ set up a program to help them find a jobs & places to live
- ▶ came to an end in the 1960s under Kennedy & Johnson administrations