

# The struggles of the native americans

[History](#)



## Native Americans and Land Rights

Despite being the indigenous inhabitants of America, the Native Americans have for a long time been sidelined by the government from development. Both the British and the Americans completely disregarded the Native Americans contribution to the society and completely kept them at bay, even denying them basic rights. American Indians for instance who are one of the largest communities of native Americans have struggled with to gain recognition from first the European authorities and later on the American Government. When the Europeans came to America, they immediately took over the land belonging to natives and either colonized them or forced them to vacate to other places. This has been the enduring history of the Native Americans. Their fight for sovereignty has been largely ignored, and even when some of their rights were officially acknowledged with constitutional changes after the fight for civil rights, they still encounter a lot of challenges in the US, especially with regard to land ownership.

With the establishment of the United States of American government, the American Indians as well as other natives were considered as minorities and were therefore denied basic rights. Very little has been documented about their problems with both the European settlers and the American government because much of their history has been destroyed or forgotten and overshadowed by the American struggle for independence from the Whites or the African Americans fight for civil rights (Schurr, 2004, 87). This has led some scholars to rightly refer to the denegation of the Native American culture and the loss of their historical struggles by using the phrase “ Bury my heart at Wounded Knee”. This phrase indicates that the Native American culture is greatly being forgotten as the country becomes <https://assignbuster.com/the-struggles-of-the-native-americans/>

more modern. Deterioration of this rich culture started when European settlers and military groups took over their land and destroyed some of their historical features as they made they tried to make the land useful to them. This continued with the American Government.

The Native Americans were highly discriminated against, even in the laws of the United States of America. They were denied civil right, among them education rights, voting rights, traveling rights and religious rights among others. Before the establishment of the American Government, land ownership among the native Indians varied from communal land ownership to private ownership in some communities. Private ownership of land was more common in the South East where settled agriculture was practiced (Utter, 2001, 59). When the American government was established, Native Americans and people from other races such as the African Americans were all denied rights, the Native Americans were denied land ownership rights and had their land taken from them. With the fight against segregation, some of the rights have been granted to the Native Americans while the government is still silent on some of them, including land ownership.

It still astonishes that even today; Native Americans are still not allowed to use their own land. In New York the Seneca Indians, a native group of Indians in New York, has endured legal battles with the governor who has been making attempts to collect taxes from the Seneca Nation (Duthu, 2008, 28) This group of natives has fought for a long time to have their land recognized as theirs. The New York governor had for a long time failed to recognize the land ownership of the Seneca Nation.

The other group of native Indians, the Wyandots, also known as the Quendots has been a restless community since a long time ago. They kept

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moving from place to place as they tried to escape the wrath of their enemies their onetime allies, the Ottawas. They had to cede the land given to them by the British in Ohio to the US government and relocated to Detroit. In 1842, they were again moved to Kansas and later on moved to Indian Territory in 1842 and later on moved to Oklahoma. It appears this native community is not free at all like other Americans. They have endured mistreatment from their ancient enemies to the US government.

Such are the struggles of the Native Americans. Their history and injustices have not been given a proper place in the history of America and more people seem to be forgetting about them. Some scholars have stated that the natives need the help of influential groups in the society to help them get full recognition by the state and be allowed to enjoy their rights just like any other citizen. They have been left victims of past treaties between the American government and the British as well as with some of their ancient leaders.

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