

Cultural event paper



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

A cultural event that I have attended in the past that has had a memorable affect on my life was a Native American Powwow. This event takes place every year, Thanksgiving weekend in Tucson, AZ. I arrived in the late afternoon, as the sun was going down. I remember seeing many different types of people, from tourists to the different Native American performers. The physical setting of this particular celebration was outside, and based around, one main circle. Drums were beating so loud, you could feel the pound inside your chest.

Different activities were going on all around, such as dancers, vendors, and a huge variety of foods to choose from. The circular dancing arena is known as the arbor, this area is blessed before any of the events begin (Schultz, 2001). This area is considered to be sacred ground, and is respected throughout the entire celebration (Schultz, 2001). The arbor was made of tree limbs and leaves. The four main entries into the festivities were used to resemble the four points of a compass (Schultz, 2001). The dancers entered from the east entrance, and the main announcer was located by the West entrance.

Many spectators were sitting on blankets, and some on lawn chairs.

The environment was relaxed, and a very friendly atmosphere. The activities included dance and drum contests, different ceremonies, and many different vendors. The crafts were all handmade and amazing. Each piece looked as if it were specially made from the heart. The Native American culture to me felt festive, warm, and very inviting. The dancer's come from many different tribes. Their faces were painted, and their costumes consisted of beautiful festive colors. They were made of feathers, sequins, dye, and other natural fabrics.

A powwow is a Native American gathering, or celebration that began with the Plains tribe, and continued to other Native American tribes through the years (Schultz, 2001). A powwow is also the oldest known public ritual of the Native Americans (Schultz, 2001). This culture considers this particular festivity, a celebration of the circle of life. They include much of their culture in their dance, music, art, food, and drumming, especially while performing these rituals (Schultz, 2001). In the past powwows took place around seasonal changes.

This changed as non-natives began to join in celebrating these Native American customs (Schultz, 2001). Native American powwows earliest record dates back to July 4th, 1900 in a Missoula, MT newspaper (Schultz, 2001). Native Americans hold a type of esoteric concept that comes from their philosophy of preserving their environment as well as their kinship that ties them together (Access Genealogy, 2009). They not only have social ties, they are politically and religiously organized through their rituals, government, and other institutions (Access Genealogy, 2009).

They work together to reside in a territorial area, and speak a common language (Access Genealogy, 2009). They are not characterized by any one certain structure (Access Genealogy, 2009). However, the society agrees on fundamental principles that bond together a certain social fabric (Access Genealogy, 2009). Different Native American tribes throughout the years have had different ideas, opinions, philosophies, which are not always predetermined by their past ancestors. The roots and customs of Native American tribes run deep.

A feeling of respect and tradition is in the air. Every little detail has meaning and a certain level of pride and of importance to each individual taking part in the ceremony. According to Access Genealogy, 2009, “ Humanities are studies of the human condition, whether it is the study of art, sociology, anthropology, literature, history, or any other human endeavor. ” Humanities are the core of humanism, and are the product and creativeness of each individual society. Each culture’s has its own form of expression; in this case, it was the powwow.

This was a way to entertain and promote awareness to the Native American culture. They are not afraid to show who they are, like other cultures, which can be more refined in the way they celebrate. Native Americans choose to embrace their heritage, and make it a part of their everyday lives. They are trying to hold on to a special place from their past, and not let it slip away. America is known as the “ Melting Pot” with many different cultures, I believe that celebration is a way for each culture to hold onto their identity, and gain respect in a world that is constantly changing.