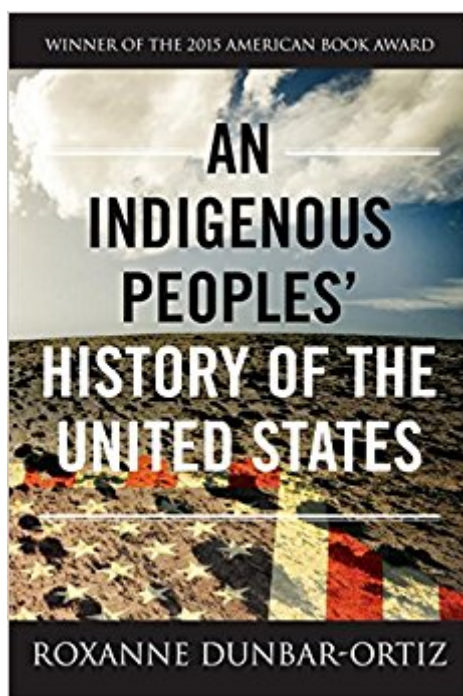


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# An Indigenous Peoples' History Of The United States (ReVisioning American History)



## Synopsis

2015 Recipient of the American Book Award  
The first history of the United States told from the perspective of indigenous peoples  
Today in the United States, there are more than five hundred federally recognized Indigenous nations comprising nearly three million people, descendants of the fifteen million Native people who once inhabited this land. The centuries-long genocidal program of the US settler-colonial regimen has largely been omitted from history. Now, for the first time, acclaimed historian and activist Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz offers a history of the United States told from the perspective of Indigenous peoples and reveals how Native Americans, for centuries, actively resisted expansion of the US empire.  
In *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, Dunbar-Ortiz adroitly challenges the founding myth of the United States and shows how policy against the Indigenous peoples was colonialist and designed to seize the territories of the original inhabitants, displacing or eliminating them. And as Dunbar-Ortiz reveals, this policy was praised in popular culture, through writers like James Fenimore Cooper and Walt Whitman, and in the highest offices of government and the military. Shockingly, as the genocidal policy reached its zenith under President Andrew Jackson, its ruthlessness was best articulated by US Army general Thomas S. Jesup, who, in 1836, wrote of the Seminoles: "The country can be rid of them only by exterminating them."  
Spanning more than four hundred years, this classic bottom-up peoples' history radically reframes US history and explodes the silences that have haunted our national narrative.  
From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Meticulously documented, this thought-provoking treatise is sure to generate discussion. What is fresh about the book is its comprehensiveness. Dunbar-Ortiz brings together every indictment of white Americans that has been cast upon them over time, and she does so by raising intelligent new questions about many of the current trends of academia, such as multiculturalism. Dunbar-Ortiz’s material succeeds, but will be eye-opening to those who have not previously encountered such a perspective. Publishers Weekly “From the struggles against the early British settlers in New England and Virginia to the final catastrophes at Sand Creek and Wounded Knee, Dunbar-Ortiz never flinches from the truth. CounterPunch “[An] impassioned history.... Belongs on the shelf next to Dee Brown’s classic, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*. San Francisco Chronicle “A must-read for anyone interested in the truth behind this nation’s founding. Veronica E. Velarde Tiller, PhD, Jicarilla Apache author, historian, and publisher of *Tiller’s Guide to Indian Country* “This may well be the most important US history book you will read in your lifetime. . . . Dunbar-Ortiz radically reframes US history, destroying all foundation myths to reveal a brutal settler-colonial structure and ideology designed to cover its bloody tracks. Here, rendered in honest, often poetic words, is the story of those tracks and the people who survived bloodied but unbowed. Spoiler alert: the colonial era is still here, and so are the Indians. Robin D. G. Kelley, author of *Freedom Dreams* “Dunbar Ortiz’s . . . assessment and conclusions are necessary tools for all Indigenous peoples seeking to address and remedy the legacy of US colonial domination that continues to subvert Indigenous human rights in today’s globalized world. Mililani B. Trask, Native Hawaiian international law expert on Indigenous peoples’ rights and former *Kia Aina* (prime minister) of *Ka La Hui Hawaii* “An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States” provides an essential historical reference for all Americans. . . . The American Indians’ perspective has been absent from colonial histories for too long, leaving continued misunderstandings of our struggles for sovereignty and human rights. Peterson Zah, former president of the Navajo Nation “An Indigenous Peoples’ History . . . pulls up the paving stones and lays bare the deep history of the United States, from the corn to the reservations. If the United States is a

As she calls it, then Dunbar-Ortiz is its forensic scientist. A sobering look at a grave history. • Vijay Prashad, author of *The Poorer Nations* “Justice-seekers everywhere will celebrate Dunbar-Ortiz’s unflinching commitment to truth • a truth that places settler-colonialism and genocide exactly where they belong: as foundational to the existence of the United States. • Waziyatawin, PhD, activist and author of *For Indigenous Minds Only* “Dunbar-Ortiz strips us of our forged innocence, shocks us into new awarenesses, and draws a straight line from the sins of our fathers • settler-colonialism, the doctrine of discovery, the myth of manifest destiny, white supremacy, theft and systematic killing • to the contemporary condition of permanent war, invasion and occupation, mass incarceration, and the constant use and threat of state violence. • Bill Ayers “Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz’s *Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States* is a fiercely honest, unwavering, and unprecedented statement, one which has never been attempted by any other historian or intellectual. The presentation of facts and arguments is clear and direct, unadorned by needless and pointless rhetoric, and there is an organic feel of intellectual solidity that provides weight and trust. It is truly an Indigenous peoples’ voice that gives Dunbar-Ortiz’s book direction, purpose, and trustworthy intention. Without doubt, this crucially important book is required reading for everyone in the Americas! • Simon J. Ortiz, Regents Professor of English and American Indian Studies, Arizona State University “Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz writes a masterful story that relates what the Indigenous peoples of the United States have always maintained: Against the settler U.S. nation, Indigenous peoples have persevered against actions and policies intended to exterminate them, whether physically, mentally, or intellectually. Indigenous nations and their people continue to bear witness to their experiences under the U.S. and demand justice as well as the realization of sovereignty on their own terms. • Jennifer Nez Denetdale, Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of New Mexico and author of *Reclaiming Diné History* From the Hardcover edition.

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz grew up in rural Oklahoma, the daughter of a tenant farmer and part-Indian mother. She has been active in the international Indigenous movement for more than four decades and is known for her lifelong commitment to national and international social justice issues. After receiving her PhD in history at the University of California at Los Angeles, she taught in the newly established Native American Studies Program at California State University, Hayward, and helped

found the Departments of Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies. Her 1977 book *The Great Sioux Nation* was the fundamental document at the first international conference on Indigenous peoples of the Americas, held at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva. Dunbar-Ortiz is the author or editor of seven other books, including *Roots of Resistance: A History of Land Tenure in New Mexico*. She lives in San Francisco.

An Indigenous People's History of the United States by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz may be the most important book I have ever read. That is a personal and subjective remark, but true. As an indoctrinated child of the U.S. public education system and a graduate of a U.S. University with a degree in U.S. History, and a lifetime of autodidactic immersion into the study of U.S. History, my reaction to this thoroughly researched and painstakingly documented presentation of an alternative perspective was like barely surviving a modern war. I was disoriented beyond belief, shattered mentally, feeling like I had been blitzkrieged into submission, but I emerged absolutely convinced of the truth of what I read. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz tells An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States with meticulous attention to an impressive volume of verifiable factual information, beginning with the premise (later on competently argued and fully proven) that from the beginning U.S. history is a tale of colonial settlement bent on decimating an entire indigenous population in order to appropriate vast new properties and resources. In other words, an invasion of a land inhabited by a pre-existing people with laws and covenants and self-governmental structures identifying them as the rightful owners and rulers of this place. In addition, the author in turn decimates the puerile understandings fostered by generations of teachers and scholars regarding the motivations and actual practices of our so-called American heroes, almost to a man an apologist for genocide, also relating two-hundred years of precedent to the continued intent behind U.S. military involvement throughout the world. She brilliantly exposes the lies behind our self-congratulatory stance, and every U.S. citizen would be well-served to face the truth of his own history. A great starting place for righting wrongs and creating a better country. Joel R. Dennstedt Author / Top Reviewer for Readers' Favorite

Excellent book. It is a must read for anyone who wants to learn what so many history books left out. It is extremely thorough and I learned and will keep with me so many details. I have encouraged my friends and family to read it. I will pass it on....

Good book to gather another opinion for the colonization of America. A must read for historians or anyone interested in other viewpoints for the history of the Americas...once you read it then you can make up your mind as to whether you agree.

There's an old saying, it is the victors who write history. Never has there been such a situation where the truth of what really happened to the Native Americans needs to come to light.

While there are credibility/perspective gaps\* in the book, and the author's own biases sometimes cloud her thinking (& occasionally affect the level of completeness & fairness), this is nonetheless a perspective on the settlers/colonialists/U.S. which needed to be (re-)told in a comprehensive, timeline-based manner. (And as one learns more & more about the settlers'/colonialists'/government's historically abysmal treatment of the First Nations & their citizens, a little testiness is certainly understandable!) All in all, this book gives a generally credible counterbalance to the often extremely biased 'traditional' history texts, is well worth reading and provides a valuable viewpoint.\* e.g.> Pages 64/65: "... murdered ten of her... captors in a nighttime escape." Would the word 'murder' have been used if an indigenous woman had killed 10 settlers in an escape?> The story of the Fairchild plant on page 209. It would be nice to see additional perspectives on the chain of events, including Fairchild's.> The conflict between demanding treaties be enforced, and other sections wherein the book states that the wrong indigenous reps signed certain ones, rendering them invalid.> Handily excusing the indigenous people who fought on the side of the settlers/colonialists

A devastating review of the nation wide, officially sanctioned destruction, and attempted liquidation of all of the native Indian tribes found in the developing United States.

Reading this book inspired me to read more material of this nature.

To truly understand ourselves and current events, we must understand the foundation upon which our society was built. This courageous book illuminates a sordid, saddening but truly essential part of our shared American history. Recommend that everyone read it.

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