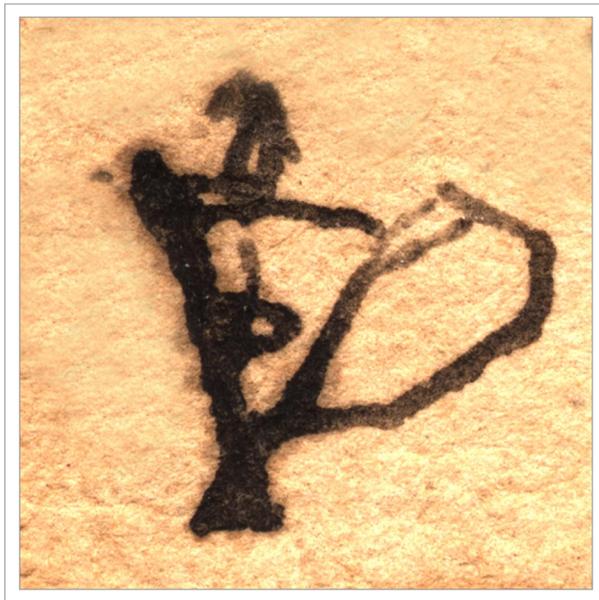


The Mark of Uncas

A Video Documentary and Curriculum



Video Documentary
Produced by Mohegan Tribe & SimonPure Productions
Directed by Ken Simon
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Curriculum
Produced by Mohegan Museum Authority
Written by Kathleen A. Hunter
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Introduction

*"This is the story of Uncas, the controversial 17th Century Sachem of the Mohegan Tribe in Connecticut. His life has become a legend, passed down through 13 generations. It is a complex legacy, mingling fact and fiction."
Eric Schweig, Inuit actor and Narrator of the Mark of Uncas*

Background

The Mohegan Tribe is part of a large language/cultural group of American Indians referred to as Woodland or Algonquian that comprise many tribes. The oral histories of these tribes, and archaeological evidence, indicate that the ancient Algonquian homeland was to the far north and west of the Great Lakes region. Over many centuries, the Algonquians migrated to the northeastern regions of Canada and the United States where they were located at the time of Anglo/European exploration and settlement. Early maps by explorers such as Adriaen Block, and accounts by historians at the time, identified a number of tribes in Southern New England who were a part of the Algonquian language/culture group, including the Mohegan and Pequot Tribes.

The oral history tradition of the Mohegan Tribe recounts that the Mohegan clan was a part of the Delaware Tribe located in upper New York State. By the time of English settlement, the Mohegans had migrated east/southeast to the coastal tributaries of Connecticut's Long Island Sound. Established tribes in the region saw them as aggressive interlopers and referred to them as Pequotaug, or "invaders." Thus, the English and European colonists referred to the Tribe as "Pequots," or some variation of that name.

At about the time of Dutch and English colonization, a rift grew between Sassacus, the Sachem of the Pequots, and his relative Uncas. Uncas challenged both Sassacus' legitimacy as Sachem, and the strategic decision of the Pequots to resist English settlement. Uncas and his followers separated from the Pequot Tribe, reclaimed their traditional name and established the Mohegan Tribe. The homeland for the Mohegan Tribe remains where it was located at the time of Uncas, near Norwich, Connecticut.

Prior to the Dutch and English presence in Southern New England, there existed a fragile balance of power among the larger American Indian tribes of the region, including the Mohawks, Pequots, Narragansetts and Wampanoags. These tribes had established allegiances with the numerous smaller tribes in the region. The Dutch and English exploited the delicate relationships among the tribes - breaking up allegiances and fabricating, inciting and exploiting conflicts.

This is where The Mark of Uncas begins. The English, desirous of capturing exclusive trading relationships and land sales with the Southern New England tribes needed to break up the trade relationship between the Dutch and Pequots. Uncas and the Mohegans, determined that their survival depended on good relations with the English, sided with them against the Pequots. The Narragansetts, anxious to reduce the power of the Pequots in the region, formed an alliance of convenience with the English and Mohegans. Thus, in May 1637, seven months after their arrival in Hartford, the English colonists declared war on the Pequots and virtually exterminated them. For the American Indians of the region, nothing would ever be the same again.

This is the story of how, under the leadership of Uncas, the Mohegan Tribe survived this time and has been able to move forward into the twenty-first century.

The Video Production

The video presentation on Uncas and the Mohegan Tribe follows a timeline beginning with English settlement in the early 17th century to Federal recognition of the Mohegan Tribe in 1994, and the strategies the Tribe is employing to achieve greater sovereignty and self-sufficiency.

The video links episodes and thematic segments together with a narrator. Within these segments the story of Uncas and the Mohegan Tribe is told through members of the Tribe and the surrounding community, scholars and spokespersons from other American Indian tribes and representatives from state and national institutions.

The video presentation runs for approximately 60 minutes. The curriculum presents the video in four thematically linked segments with an accompanying lesson.

The Curriculum Design and Structure

1. Target Audience

The curriculum is intended for honors middle school, high school and undergraduate audiences who have completed coursework in American and European history and government. The curriculum also could be used in conjunction with other coursework and related areas.

2. Length

The curriculum is intended for one-week of classroom study with homework assignments, including outside reading and research, and optional student projects.

3. Goal and Objectives

Students will engage in an intensive examination of Uncas and the Mohegan Tribe in order to understand the unique historical experience, values, practices and aspirations of the Tribe. Through their examination of the Mohegan Tribe, students will increase their understanding of American Indian tribal history, organization and culture and the interaction between American Indian tribes and the Anglo/European groups that explored and colonized the Americas. Students will:

- a. Understand the migration and settlement patterns of American Indian tribes in the northeastern United States prior to Anglo/European exploration and settlement.
- b. Apply the "ways of knowing" used by American Indian tribes to retain cultural memory and maintain cohesion and stability.
- c. Investigate the collision of cultures, values and competing interests of the Southern New England tribes following Anglo/European exploration and settlement, and how this impacted the Mohegan Tribe.
- d. Determine the significance of Uncas in the survival of the Tribe.
- e. Examine the ongoing relationships between the Mohegans and English settlers in Connecticut, and how culture and economics combined to erode the land base and threaten the cultural integrity of the Mohegan Tribe.
- f. Describe the relationship of American Indian tribes to state and Federal governments and the issue of self-determination and sovereignty.
- g. Analyze the contemporary cultural experience of the Mohegan Tribe and the significance of Uncas's heritage to the Tribe.
- h. Identify and consider contemporary issues facing the Mohegan Tribe and other Connecticut and Eastern tribes.

4. Lessons

The curriculum will include four lessons to be conducted over five days. Each lesson will focus on one or more topics that are keyed to the video. The following sequence is recommended:

Lesson One: We are Still Here

Video Segment: 16 minutes

Learning Objectives:

1. Distinguish between fictional representations of the Mohegan Tribe based on James Fenimore Cooper and the reality of the Tribe based on oral tradition and written documentation.
2. Understand the origins and migration of the Mohegan Tribe that brought it to its traditional and historic tribal lands in Connecticut; and compare those stories to other theories on the origins and migration of Native people.
3. Understand and apply the "ways of knowing" used by American Indian tribes to document and preserve their history and heritage.
4. Describe the relationship between Uncas and Sassacus and the causes for the separation of the Pequot/Mohegan tribe.
5. Develop a time frame and map for the interaction of the Mohegans and the colonists in Connecticut.

Lesson Two: Hard Choices

Video Segment: 16 minutes

Learning Objectives

1. Contrast James Fenimore Cooper's image of the Mohegan environment and culture with the reality of the 1600's and 1700's. Remember, Cooper fictionalized the dates for his novel, which is set many years after Uncas actually lived, and utilizes one of the many spelling variations of the Mohegan name: Mohican.
2. Determine the impact of Dutch/English trading and colonization on the American Indian tribes of New England.
3. Analyze the roots of Uncas's choice to ally with the English colonists.
4. Examine ways in which the alliance with the Mohegan Tribe influenced English colonial development in New England, and affected the balance of power between New England's American Indian tribes.
5. Explore the importance of tribal survival to the Mohegan Tribe and the compromises with the English colonists that this required.
6. Identify the ways of knowing for documenting the events of the Pequot War.

Lesson Three: Holding On

Video Segment: 11 minutes

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the concept of tribal sovereignty.
2. Document key events in the history of English/American and Mohegan Tribal relationships during the 18th and 19th centuries.
3. Identify the ways in which the Mohegan Tribe, under Uncas's leadership, affirmed tribal sovereignty.
4. Explore ways in which the Mohegan Tribe incorporated English/American cultural patterns in order to survive. Consider ways in which colonists adopted Native habits to survive.
5. Identify the ways of knowing for documenting the Mohegan Tribe's struggle for survival.

Lesson Four: Moving Forward

Video Segment: 13.5 minutes

Learning Objectives

1. Analyze the conditions for Federal recognition of American Indian tribes in relation to the Mohegan Tribe.
2. Examine how Uncas and Mohegan Tribal heritage contributed to the survival and eventual Federal recognition of the Tribe.
3. Speculate on how Federal recognition will influence the Mohegan Tribe and its future survival.
4. Determine the shared values of the Mohegan Tribe and the non-Indian residents of the region, and how these

values have contributed to good relations between the two communities.

5. Document the changing images and perceptions of the Mohegan Tribe since the time of Uncas.
5. The lessons are followed with a list of suggested readings, internet sites, and resource persons and groups within Connecticut for further study.