**Teaching Notes**

**The Native American Tribal Land Back Movement in Washington State**

By

 Barbara Leigh Smith

**Learning Objectives**

--Understand what the “land back movement” in Indian Country is about

-Learn about the importance and impact of treaties on Tribe’s lands

-Learn about court decisions impacting treaty rights

=Learn about the impact of climate change on Tribal lands

**-**Understand why land back is important to contemporary Indian Tribes

-Understand the goals of Washington Tribes in seeking land back

-Understand the process and approaches Washington Tribes have used to get land back

**Audience**

Suitable for college students, graduate and undergraduate and high school students. Especially useful for study in history, political science, environmental studies, Native American Studies, and law

**Themes**

Activism, land, economic development, law and justice, treaty rights and self governance, leadership, intergovernmental relations, cultural preservation, environmental preservation , community development

**Implementation**

The case can be taught in a variety of ways. Small groups are a particularly useful way to address the key issues in the case. Using collaborative approaches like small groups has the additional benefit of building skills in groupwork and learning from one another. Students frequently mention how much they learn from their peers.

Students should read the case in advance and then be divided into small groups, ideally 3-7 people in each group. Random assignment to groups is best and can be quickly accomplished by counting off. Each group is given different questions organized around different themes and questions. Give students a set amount of time (~30 minutes) to answer the questions and tell them one person should take notes and record their conclusions on butcher paper. The final part of the class involves each group reporting out to the whole class their questions and their responses. This is usually followed by an all class discussion in which teacher emphasizes the key points. An end of the class written evaluations are usually filled out, often with a couple questions –one being “what are the three major things you learned from doing this case. “ Using a form asking them to evaluate the group process and their role is also helpful.

**Group 1: Treaty Rights**

1. Why did the Tribes in Washington have to fight to have their treaty rights recognized?
2. How did they fight for their treaty rights? List specific actions they took
3. Which actions have tribes taken to bring together the land back movement?
4. Why after nearly 150 years since treaty signing is the landback effort occurring now?

**Group 2: Movements and Change**

1. What creates a “movement” ? Sometimes there are “trigger events” that inspire reform efforts. Is that evident here? What are they? What makes their reform efforts successful?
2. How do small reform efforts turn into movements? Why did they emerge in this case?
3. What are Tribal goals in the land back movement?
4. Movements often involve a group of core leaders and other individuals and partners that later join the effort. Is that evident here in these cases? Which ones?

**Group 3: The LandBack Effort**

1. What are the various goals of the Tribes in the landback movement in Washington ?
2. How are different Tribes securing land back?
3. Why is getting land back important for Tribes?
4. What specific approaches did they use? Process? Partners?

**Group 4: Lessons from Washington’s Land Back Efforts**

1. What do you see as the important lessons from the Tribal landback efforts in this case?
2. What were some of the key turning points in recent history for Tribes to pursue land back?
3. What are the ways court action and law suits have played in the landback efforts? Make a table showing specific information and the Tribes impacted
4. What were the key partnerships evident in the landback efforts of Tribes in this case? What motivated different partners to join up with Tribes?

**Research**

Research is a good way to deepen student understanding of critical topics.

 Since the landback issue affects nearly all Tribes in the United States looking at what Tribes in other states are doing is important. Is what is happening in Washington different, unique? Why?

Students could also do a deeper dive into the landback issues in Washington by doing research on Tribes not discussed in this case.

Have students individually or in pairs do research on the land back movement in several other states. After their research is completed have the students do reports in class and/or write a paper on their research.

**Assessment and Evaluation**

To assess student learning from the case prepare and distribute an end-of-class brief survey as well as an evaluation of their participation in group work.