

- American Indian Health and Diet Project website (<http://aihd.ku.edu/>)
- SEVENTH ANNUAL “Week of Indigenous Eating” is November 19-26, 2017
A culinary adventure in which hundreds of people around the globe have participated.
- See Indigenous Eating on Facebook for food ideas from past years



Effects of Relocation on Food Access and Nutrition

Importance of Place

- Homeland determines identity
- Site of creation, ceremonies, and burial
- Medicinal plants
- Remembrance
- Synonymous with Indigenous knowledge

Indigenous knowledge (TIK, TEK)

- Local decision-making about fundamental aspects of day-to-day life, such as hunting, farming, gathering, seed saving, and fishing.
- Instructions on how to behave as part of the group
- Connects people to their culture and to the Natural World

Indigenous Knowledge is expressed through:

- Stories
- Songs
- Dances
- Rituals
- Community laws
- Language
- Agricultural and hunting practices

India 2005

- India's isolated Anadaman and Nicobar islands
- earthquake and tsunami
- killed 901 people
- 6000 missing on the islands

- All the Jarawas escaped.
- Knowledge of the tides, animal behavior, weather patterns, saved them while others perished.
- They knew how to live with that environment



Forces at work

- Removal and relocation of tribes were fueled by political, economic, religious, and racist motivations.
- These forces affected food resources and nutrition

- The Five Tribes in Indian Territory (1830-1907) Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muskogee-Creek, Seminole

- Congress passed the Indian Removal Act in 1830



- At least 46,000 Natives were removed from east of the Mississippi
- Thousands perished

- Removals 185 years ago, but memories still fresh
- Repercussions are still felt

James Earle Fraser's "End of the Trail"



TREATY WITH THE CHOCTAW, 1830.

Sept. 27, 1830. | 7 Stat., 333. | Proclamation, Feb. 24, 1831.

Ishmaryubbee, his x mark, [L. S.]

James McKing, [L. S.]

Lewis Wilson, his x mark, [L. S.]

Istonarkerharcho, his x mark, [L. S.]

Hohinshamartarher, his x mark, [L. S.]

Kinsulachubbee, his x mark, [L. S.]

Emarhinstubbee, his x mark, [L. S.]

Gysalndalra, bm, his x mark, [L. S.]

Thomas Wall, [L. S.]

Sam. S. Worcester, [L. S.]

Arlartar, his x mark, [L. S.]

Nittahubbee, his x mark, [L. S.]

Tishawnee, his x mark, [L. S.]



The Roads of My Relations

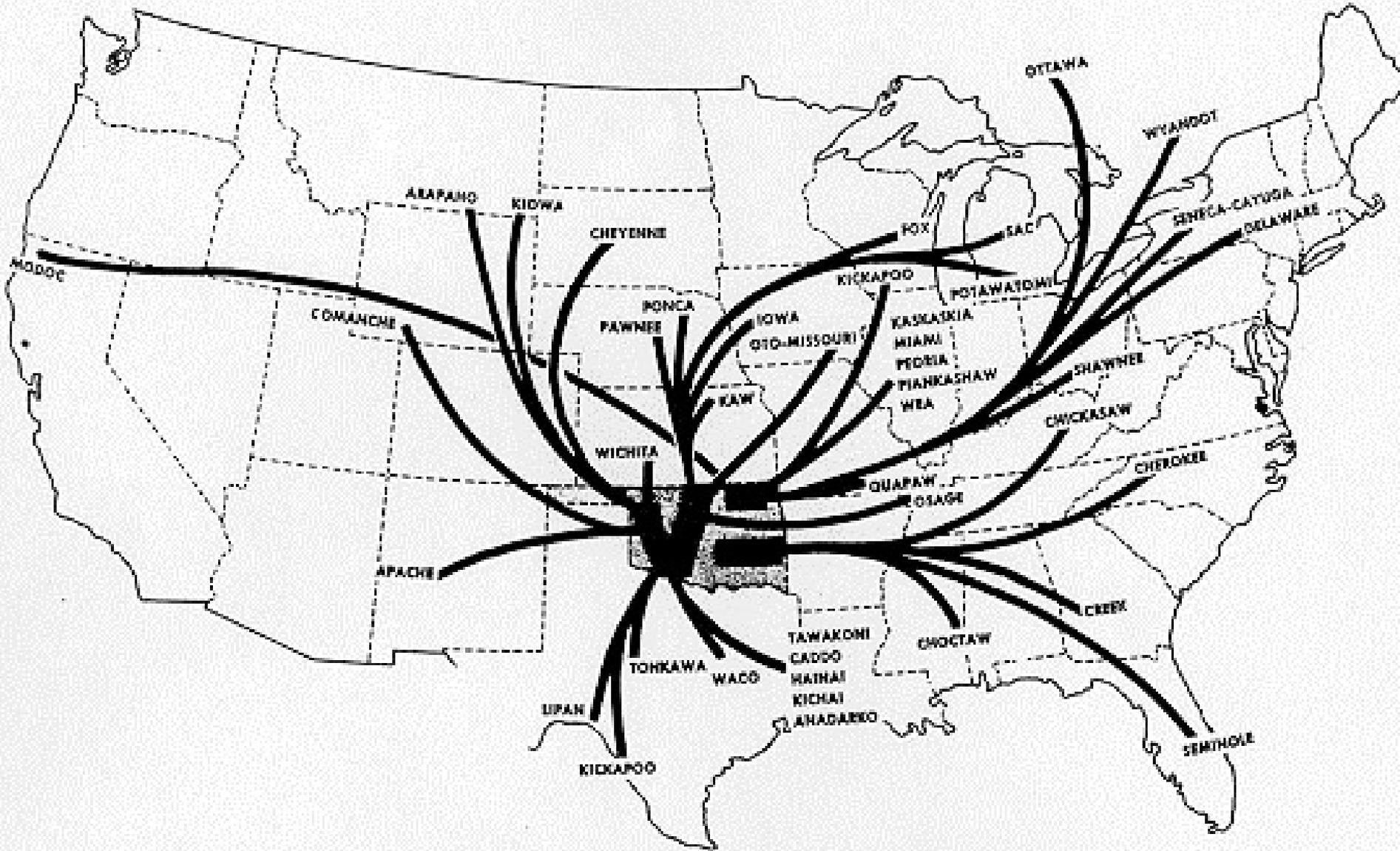
DEVON A. MIHESUAH

*"A gorgeous mosaic of memories, philosophies, and cultures.
The reader becomes part of this great native family."*

—GERALD VIZENOR



- At one time more than 60 tribes in Indian Territory
- Today in Oklahoma: 39



- Five Tribes reestablished governments, built homes, created gardens.

- Found the many Indian Territory waterways, forests, fertile soil, and edible flora and fauna similar to resources east of the Mississippi.

- ample water (today more shoreline than MN);
- plentiful fish and game (deer, turkeys, bears, squirrels)
- fertile soil
- variety of nut trees and wild fruits (pecans, walnuts, acorns, hickories, grapes, plums, berries)

some few miles from Fort Smith, Arkansas.

After erecting a home which consisted of a small one-room structure, I completed preparations and put in a small store in 1889. The business of a merchant of 1889 can hardly be compared with the same business of today for a pioneer merchant had in store very little merchandise. Comparatively speaking, people bought only actual necessities and that wasn't so very much for they lived largely on corn bread, beef and wild game, of which there was an abundance; turkeys and deer roamed the prairie.

It was a very common thing to see an Indian, for there were many coming across the prairie with their bow and arrow in hand and perhaps a deer strapped across their back.





Glycyrrhiza glabra L.	Cultivated Licorice	Respiratory aid (asthma); Cough medicine; Expectorant; Throat aid	Cherokee	Not in Indian Terr per USDA and OK Vascular	(Far) West	Hamel and Chiltoskey, Cherokee Plants, (p. 43)	
Ceanothus sp.	California Lilac	Antihemorrhagic - decoction of roots taken in small doses for lung hemorrhage	Choctaw			Bushnell, "The Choctaw of Bayou Lacomb," (p. 24)	Referred to as "redroot" in Choctaw - Disseration resource/Link shows error of USDA - could not tell which variety
Viola rotundifolia Michx.	Roundleaf Yellow Violet	Analgesic; Antidiarrheal, Blood medicine; Cold remedy; Cough medicine; Dermatological aid; Insecticide; Respiratory aid; Tonic	Cherokee	Not in Indian Terr per USDA and OK Vascular	East	Banks, William (1953). Ethnobotany of the Cherokee Indians, (pg. 89); Hamel and Chiltoskey, Cherokee Plants, p. 60)	
Erythrina herbacea L.	Redcardinal	Analgesic	Creek	Not in Indian Terr per OK Vascular; but listed on USDA site in OK but no couties given	East & West	Swanton, "Religious Beliefs," (p. 666).	

Note: Any cell that is blank has missing information that was not found/verified in resources including OK vascular, USDA website,

How Health Changed

- First on the agenda was to recover.
Thousands ill; many died and were buried
after arrival

- They realized the land was not really theirs

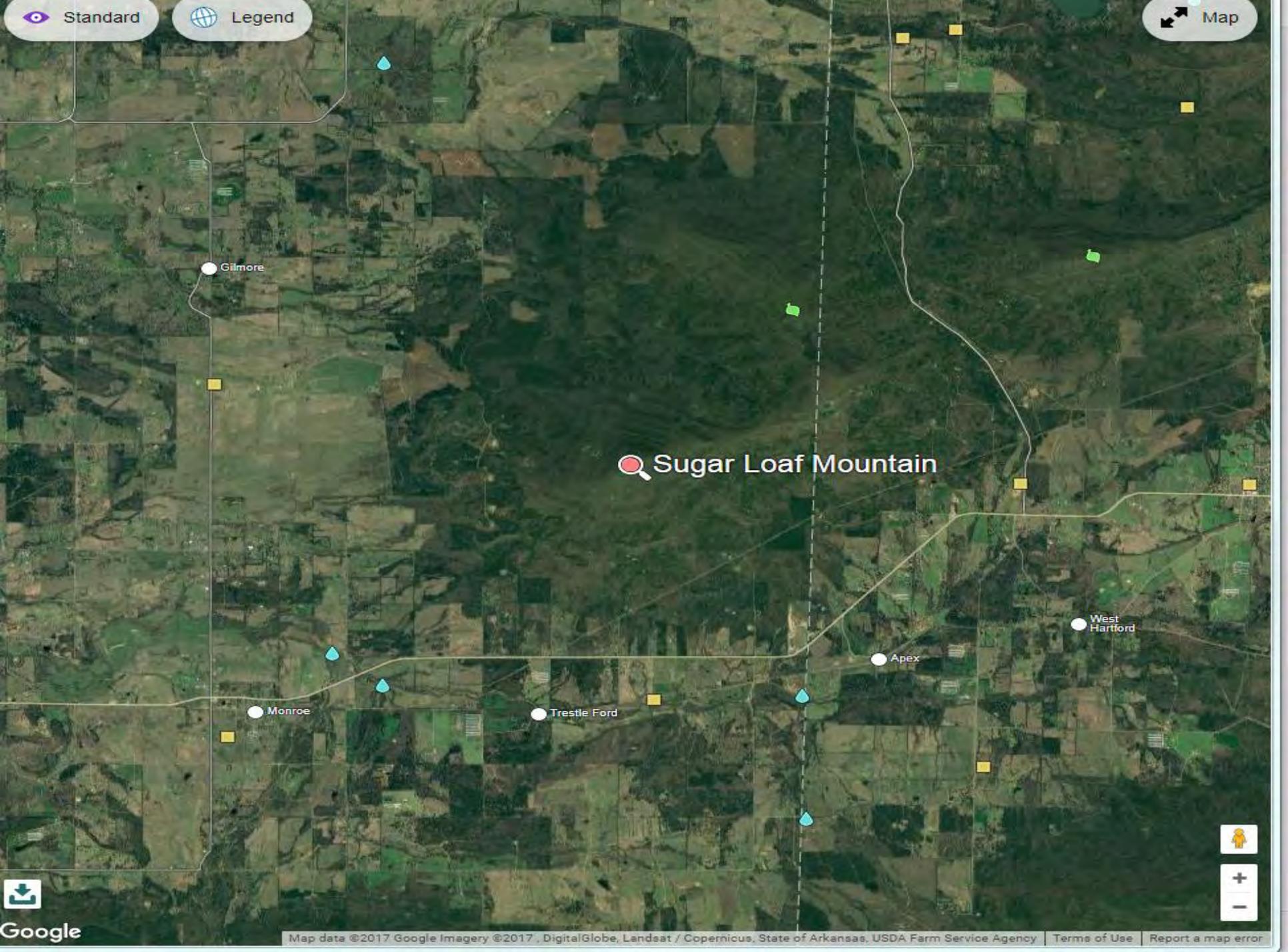
- By the 1840s, tribes begin to see their resources diminishing from deforestation, damming, overhunting, overgrazing, poaching, mining and later, railroads

Sugar Loaf Mountain

- 28th most prominent peak in the US
- 2560 feet
- Mid-1800s deemed an "oasis" of springs, game and plant foods
- Wild fruits, nut trees, turkey, black bears, deer, bees and other pollinators







Sugar Loaf Mountain

Gilmore

Monroe

Trestle Ford

Apex

West Hartford





- Much of the destruction in IT was done by non-Indian intruders; but, much was done by tribal members for profit

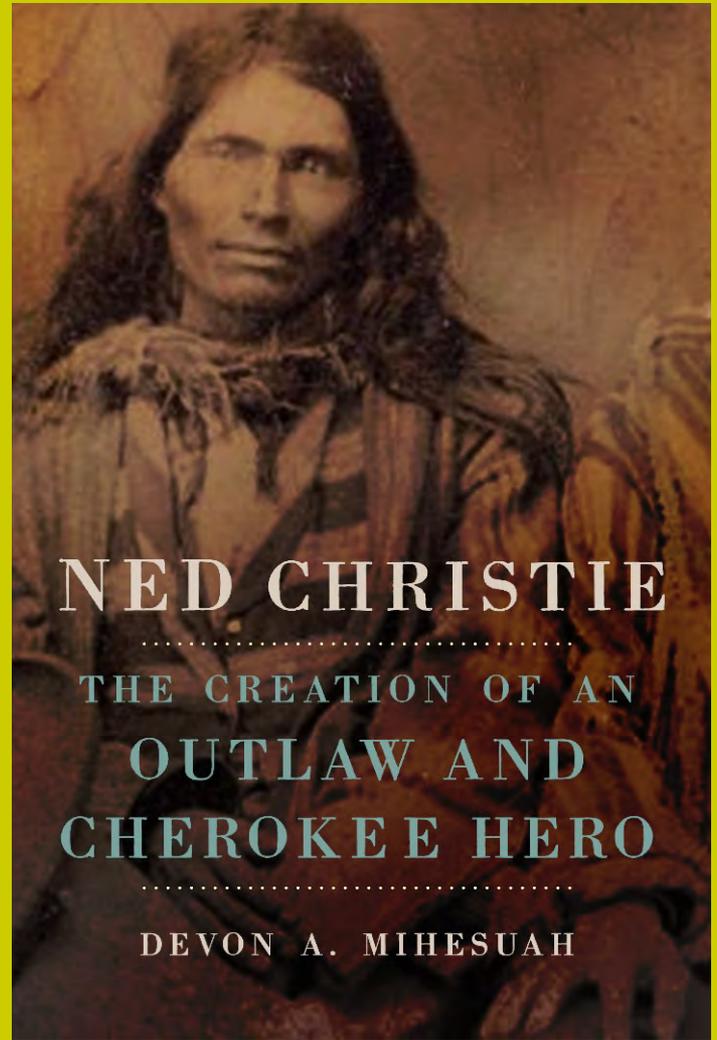
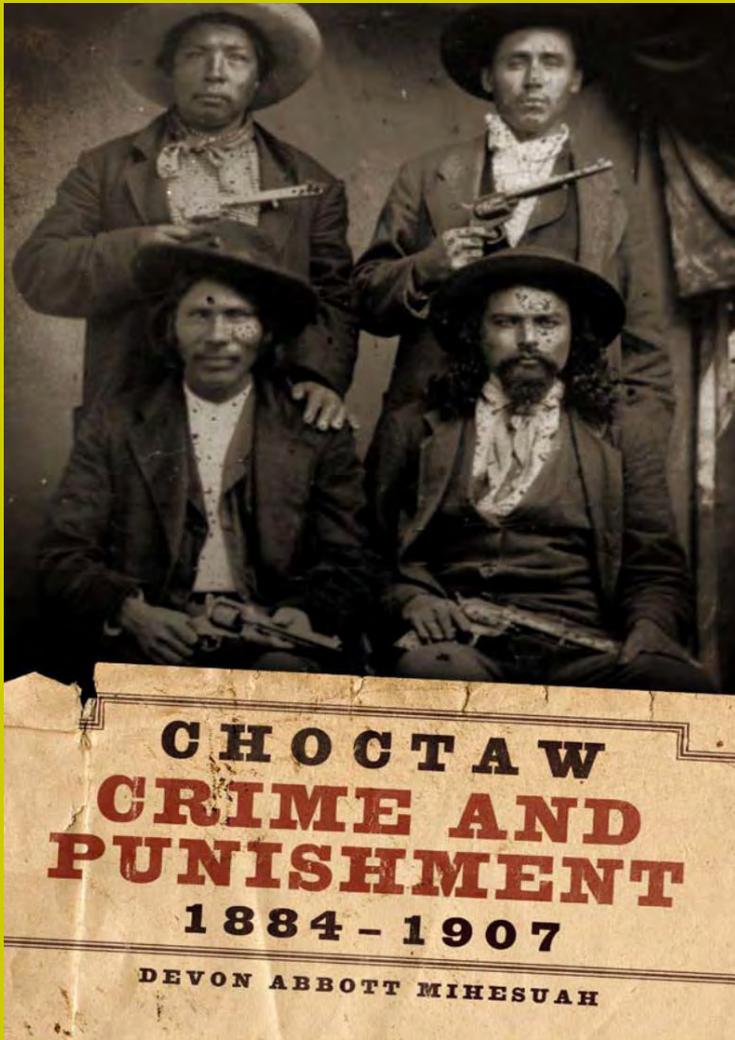
Results of Removal

- Environmental degradation
- Population reduction
- Loss of resources
- Psychological issues (anguish, depression, loss of identity, cultural confusion)

Intratribal factionalism

- Nationalists and Progressives
- Difficult to make decisions
- Violence erupted
- *True Grit*

- After the Civil War, murders, rapes, thefts were common.
- Most people carried weapons



- Cultural upheaval
- Loss of cultural knowledge
- Loss of spiritual connection to the natural world
- Dramatic health changes

- Affluence/poverty
- Some intermarry with whites; others avoid them
- By 1850, some Cherokees 1/128 degree IB

- Many become influenced by outsiders' values, including food choices
- Moving away from tribal traditions

- Not everyone who lives on tribal lands are Native
- The majority of the 233,126 people residing within the Choctaw Nation are not Choctaws

- In Oklahoma, as long as there is one member of a federally recognized tribe in the residence, non-Indians in the home can receive commodities in the Food Distribution Program.
- Their food choices may not include items that are healthy or culturally connected and their preferences might influence others in the house.

- Loss of foodways knowledge is many times directly related to acculturation via intermarriage, boarding schools and missionary efforts

Oklahoma
Historical
Society®

Cherokee National Female Seminary,
Tahlequa, Okla.



- Nothing taught about Cherokee culture
- No ceremonies
- English only
- The Cherokee Male and Female Seminaries fed students white flour and sugar three times a day.
- Cakes, pies, butter, cream, candy

- Suffered from constipation, hemorrhoids, headaches, diarrhea, rheumatism, jaundice, colic, ulcers, and acne. Dozens of cases of “bowel complaint” appear on every medical report and the frequencies increased each year.
- Irregular menstrual periods, one symptom of pre-diabetes

- Those with money adopted non-traditional foods such as lard, sugar, salt, white flour, milk and cream, and processed foods (candy, canned fruits, pies, cakes, etc.).
- Impoverished tribespeople suffered nutritional deficiencies because they did not have access to natural resources or only had access to corn

- The results of their dietary changes prior to the Civil War were unprecedented food-related maladies including obesity, tooth decay, and intestinal upset.
- Diabetes referred to as the “thirst”

- Kelly M. West's ("Father of Diabetes Epidemiology") theory that diabetes was unknown among tribes prior to 1940 is incorrect

"Historical Research and Diabetes in Indian Territory: Revisiting Kelly M. West's Theory of 1940," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 40 #4 (2016): 1-21.

- Many dependent on commodities
- Poverty
- Food deserts
- Stores sell GMO products
- Fracking
- 54 OK lakes polluted with mercury
- Invasive species
- Loss of pollinators

- Loss of cultural knowledge about traditional foodways is a major cause of diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure
- Lack of knowledge about significance of those foods—how they connect to culture

- What is “traditional” food? Foods you like, or pre-contact foods?

“Indigenous Health Initiatives, Frybread, and the Marketing of Non-Traditional “Traditional” American Indian Foods.”
Native American and Indigenous Studies 3/2 (Fall 2016):
45-69.

BLUE GRAPE DUMPLINGS

1/2 gal. unsweetened grape juice
2 C. sugar
2 tablespoon shortening, melted
1 tsp. baking powder
1 C. water
flour

CHOCTAW PERSIMMON CAKE

1/2 C. sugar
1 C. flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. soda
1 C. persimmon pulp
1 egg, slightly beaten

CRACKLING BREAD

1 C. cornmeal
1/2 C. flour
1 tablespoon sugar
2 tsp. baking powder
2 C. milk
1 C. cracklings (Crisp pork rinds, cracked)
1 egg

EASY BLACKBERRY COBBLER

2 c. sugar
1/3 c. butter
2 c. flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
1 c. milk
1 c. blackberries
2 c. boiling water

FRIED CORN

10 ears of sweet corn
3 tbsp. butter or margarine
3 tbsp. bacon fat
1/2 c. boiling water
1/2 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. Pepper

SWEET POTATOES

5 med. sweet potatoes (yams)
2 c. sugar
1 c. flour

- Five counties in the Choctaw Nation are among the poorest in the United States.
- The tribe pulled in \$670 million in 2016.

- Not every tribe had an agricultural tradition



- In the 1870s, the nomadic hunters Comanches settled at Fort Sill where there were no traditional food sources (bison, antelope, deer)
- Forced to depend on inadequate government rations. They have no agricultural or seed-saving traditions to revitalize.

- Tribal food self-sufficiency involves a complex mesh of social, political, religious, economic, and environmental concerns

“Indigenous Food Sovereignty”

- Marshal court: “Domestic Dependent Nations”
- “Sovereignty”

"Searching for Haknip Achukma (Good Health): Challenges to Food Sovereignty Initiatives in Oklahoma," for *American Indian Culture and Research Journal's Special Issue on Food Sovereignty*. In progress.

- In 1846, Indian Agent William Armstrong commented that the Choctaws prior to removal were “the most hearty, robust looking people I have ever seen.”

- Some new to the food movement tend to believe historic health and diet were pristine
- Health was not perfect
- Resources not available to everyone
- Diseases, wounds, broken bones, bites and stings, infections, hunting dangerous

Can traditional indigenous knowledge that solved past environmental and health problems also solve modern day issues?

- The challenge is not to find *Yakni Achukma* (the Good Land). The goal is to discover how to regain understanding and appreciation of what it is, how to revitalize it and how to maintain it.
- In so doing, tribes once again regain their health.

- Varied diet
- Fresh, unprocessed foods
- Access to culturally-related flora and fauna
- Unpolluted water, soil, air
- Medical care of traditional and modern medicine

