



Expanded from PowerPoint programs by the same name
Presented on November 3 and 9, 2011; last updated March 7, 2013

Who's the American Indian on the MU Flag?
A Timeline about Native Americans and Marquette University

Mark G. Thiel, CA (Certified Archivist)

Marquette University Logo and Flag

Pere Marquette and the Indians, Wilhelm Lamprecht, 1869



In 1869, Wilhelm Lamprecht painted this fanciful scene, “Father Marquette and the Indians”, more than a decade before the University’s founding in 1881. It depicts Jacques Marquette (1637-1675), S.J., during his epic exploration of the Mississippi River in 1673. Here he is on the lower Wisconsin River near its mouth where it empties into the Mississippi. In so doing, he is seeking guidance from a Native man with his family while two Native voyageurs steady the canoe. Modern scholars have identified the Native voyageurs as Metis, or men of mixed French and Indian ancestry, and Marquette’s

journals identify meeting villages of Mascoutin or Illinois and Miami Indians in present-day Wisconsin.

Marquette University adopted its circular logo in 1907, which is comprised of its name, motto and founding year around the edge and images relating to its namesake in the center. The lower half includes Lamprecht's image of Marquette, the canoe and the voyageur in the bow; and the upper half includes the coat of arms of St. Ignatius of Loyola with symbols from his family. "Numen Flumenique" is the University's motto, which means "God and the River". The blue edge and gold lettering derive from the French field flag used during the 17th century.

Today, Marquette's legacy is reflected in Midwest place names from Marquette, Michigan, to Milwaukee with Marquette University, Marquette University High School, and Marquette Park.

Preliminary Work towards the founding of Marquette University



Bishop John Martin Henni
1805-1881



P. J. De Smet S.J.
1801-1873

John Martin Henni, the first Catholic Bishop of Milwaukee, had a vision of a Jesuit university in Milwaukee, which would be named in honor of Jacques Marquette. In 1855, Rev. Pierre-Jean De Smet, S.J., who is best known in United States history for his work in promoting peace between the United States and the Northern Plains Indian tribes, spent several months in Wisconsin. In collaboration with Bishop Henni, De Smet made preparations for the future founding of Marquette College by establishing Milwaukee's Jesuit community and securing the Marquette College charter from the Wisconsin State Legislature.

Marquette's First American Indian Alumni



Josiah A. Powless
Marquette's 1st Indian alumni, 1904

Josiah Alvin Powless (1871-1918), an Oneida Indian from the Oneida Indian Reservation, Oneida, Wisconsin, became Marquette's first American Indian alumni. For six years Powless attended, and then in 1891 at age 20, he graduated from the U.S. Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. After some additional training in Pennsylvania, he taught for seven years at the new Oneida Indian Boarding School in Oneida beginning in 1893. However, he had long desired to serve as a physician in his community, which had a recognized need for health and medical services. In 1900, the Episcopal parish in Oneida raised funds to provide for Powless' medical school expenses, two years after it had successfully established a local hospital. That fall Powless entered the Milwaukee Medical College where he graduated with honors in 1904.¹ Five years later Marquette University absorbed his alma mater and retroactively made its graduates Marquette alumni.² Meanwhile, Dr. Powless served as the director of the new Oneida Hospital, provided a clinic at the boarding school and made house calls to patients, and his wife, Electa Skenandoah, served as the hospital's assistant director and nurse. In April 1918, Powless enlisted and served as a medic in the Medical Detachment of the 308th Infantry, 77th Division of the American Expeditionary Force in France. On October 14th, while under intense machine gun and artillery fire, he attempted to rescue a wounded comrade, and in so doing, he was severely wounded and died five days before the end of World War I. He was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.³

¹ L. Gordon McLester III and Laurence M. Hauptman, editors, "A Nation within a Nation: Voices of the Oneidas in Wisconsin", *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 94:3 (Spring 2011): 26-27.

² *Announcement Marquette University Department of Medicine*, 1909, p. 45.

³ McLester and Hauptman, 27.

Thereafter, American Indian students remained an extremely minute and invisible part of Marquette's total student population, which apparently reached its greatest size of 34 undergraduates and 56 total students during the 2008-2009 year.⁴ Within the city, Indians went unnoticed, unless their unique cultural expertise was needed, and Marquette did not begin to actively recruit them as college students until the 1960s, when the recruitment of minority students gained momentum throughout the United States.

Indian Images and Milwaukee/Marquette Mascots



Tom Kitchkume, 1980s
"Chief Noo-A-Homa", 1950s

Throughout most of the 20th century, Indians throughout the Milwaukee area also comprised an extremely small and invisible minority while stereotypical images of them prevailed in Hollywood films and in professional, scholastic and collegiate sports.⁵

⁴ In conversation with the author, Maxine Smallish, Marquette's American Indian student counselor 1986-1990, gave the size of the Indian student population at between two to three dozen students. A 1989 Marquette survey by the Multi-Cultural Center cites 3% of the participants as American Indian undergraduates, which seems incredibly high. Common data set and fall head count reports by Marquette's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment list an Indian undergraduate population fluctuating between 20 and 34 from 2003 to 2011, and a total Indian student population (undergraduates, graduates, and professionals), fluctuating between 32 and 56 from 2007 to 2011. <http://www.marquette.edu/oira/cds.shtml> and <http://www.marquette.edu/oira/enrollment.shtml>, accessed February 10, 2012.

⁵ Milwaukee Indians comprised nearly 1% of the city population according to the 2010 U.S. Census. Renee Zahkar, in *American Indians in Milwaukee* and in her presentation on November 3, noted that Indians' past willingness to accept mascot rolls appears related to their desire to shed their invisibility and powerlessness. In turn, that willingness diminished as their visibility and power grew after the founding of Indian Summer Festival and Potawatomi Bingo Casino in 1986 and 1991 respectively.

In 1953, the Braves professional baseball team moved from Boston to Milwaukee and had a very successful first year with 92 wins and 62 losses that drew a then-National League record of 1.8 million fans to Milwaukee County Stadium. Tom Kitchkume, a local Milwaukee-raised Native youth (Potawatomi-Ho Chunk), served as the Indian mascot, “Chief Noc-A-Homa”, who added to the festivities. While dressed in regalia, he came out of a tipi and danced a war dance whenever one of the Braves hit a homerun.

Prompted by the popularity of the Indian mascot and nickname used by the Braves, the Marquette Student Senate adopted the “Warriors” as its sports nickname in May, 1954. Thereafter, Marquette teams used “Warriors” in conjunction with a series of three Indian images through 1986. ” In the fall of 1954, Patrick W. Buckett, a local non-Indian student, began to promote the nickname through his portrayal of “Chief White Buck” at Marquette football games and homecoming events. With the name from the then popular white buck shoes, Buckett developed “White Buck” from his experiences and wardrobe with Indian-themed pageantry at a nearby Boy Scout summer camp plus support from local author W. Ben Hunt and enthusiasts of Native American powwow celebrations. As White Buck, Buckett also hosted an award-winning Saturday morning children’s television show on WOKY-TV in Milwaukee and performed Indian dances at the 1958 Hokkaido Grand Fair in Japan.⁶

Native images during the Warrior years in Marquette sports –
Chief White Buck, Willie Wampum and First Warrior, 1954-1988



⁶ George C. Fix, compiler, *80th Anniversary of Camping at Indian Mound Reservation, 1917-1997*, Milwaukee: Milwaukee Co. Council, Boy Scouts of America, 1997, pages 77-79; photocopy in Marquette Archives Record Group A-4.5, Series 10, File 01387 (Warriors).

In June 1956, Marquette presented an honorary Doctor of Laws degree to Konrad Adenauer, the Chancellor of West Germany, who was hailed as a “Christian humanist” who saved post-war West Germany. Adenauer also had a well-known childhood fantasy to become adopted into an American Indian tribe, which Marquette aimed to satisfy as well. Marquette secured the services of Morris Wheelock, an Oneida Indian and Chief of the Consolidated Tribes of American Indians, then the principal Indian organization in the city. Wheelock honored Adenauer and Marquette’s president, Rev. Edward O’Donnell, S.J., with honorary adoptions in a ceremony that entailed smoking a sacred pipe, gifts of imitation Plains Indian-style war bonnets and Indian names, and a dance and parade involving several local Indians in regalia, which provided them some brief attention and visibility.⁷



Fr. O'Donnell, Konrad Adenauer (with sacred pipe) and Morris Wheelock, 1954

In 1960, realizing that no other student had expertise in American Indian performance, Marquette students transformed the Warrior concept into a generic buffoon with a paper maché head dubbed “Willie Wompum” (a.k.a. Wampum; spelling varies). Because playing Willie required no Indian cultural expertise, his antics comprised whatever stereotypical maneuvers would please Marquette fans. Consequently, Willie enjoyed popularity throughout the 1960s. In December 1970, world-renowned Native American ballerina, Maria Tallchief, quietly informed President John Raynor, S.J., that Willie Wampum was offensive to some area tribes, which was followed during the following year by four Indian students – Patricia Loudbear, David Corn, Schuyler

⁷ Konrad Adenauer: Wisconsin Center District facilities timeline, June 15, 1956, http://www.milwaukeeetheatre.com/media/mediafile_attachments/03/83-facilitiestimeline.pdf; 1957 Hilltop, pp. 66-67; *The Milwaukee Journal*, “Reich’s Chief Adopted by American Indians”, June 16, 1956, pages 1-2; copy in Marquette Archives, Konrad Adenauer file, Marquette University Record Group A-4.5, Series 9.

Webster and Bernard Vigue – petitioning the Student Senate to retire Willie, which they did. Other Indian students then recast Marquette’s sports image as First Warrior, to provide sustained and institutionalized visibility in the historic garb of Wisconsin tribes.

For sure, some Indians, presumably Marquette students as well as Milwaukee residents, viewed it inappropriate for an Indian to represent an institution when the only basis for the representation was the relationship its namesake had with Indians 300 years ago. First Warrior also came with restrictions that classified it as a volunteer cheerleading position without financial support, which for Marquette’s very small Indian student population, proved to be First Warrior’s undoing. Marquette limited the position to a solitary volunteer who was expected to provide a substantial time commitment by performing at community events as well as Marquette basketball games, all without financial support, which some qualified lower-income students found unacceptable.⁸ First Warrior also represented a culturally foreign concept to Marquette sports fans, the vast majority of who knew nothing about Native culture, and apparently they were unwilling and/or incapable to get sufficiently “fired up” by this specialized cheerleader. Nonetheless, three students did fill the position successfully: Clifford LaFromboise, 1980; Marin “Mark” Denning, 1980-1983 (shown above); and Rick Tourtillot, 1983-1986.

In the fall of 1986, the First Warrior position languished when no qualified student was willing to take on the responsibilities, and two years later, Marquette retired the position. However, Marquette retained the Warrior nickname through the 1993-1994 school year. In 2004, Marquette again searched for a new sports nickname and the Board of Trustees decided that a return to the “Warriors” nickname would not be permitted.⁹

More American Indian Students at Marquette University

American Indian students apparently had positive experiences at Marquette. One was Mike Koehler, a grandson of Olympian Jim Thorpe. He enrolled in Business Administration, 1956-1957, and Liberal Arts, 1959-1961, and played Marquette football. On his 1956 enrollment application, he noted his desire to play football and described Marquette as the “Best Catholic college in country...” Later, he served as first an

⁸ Studies on attendance at urban Indian powwows state that only about 10% of urban Indians today are readily involved in such heritage celebrations as either spectators or participants; since participation in such festivals correlated with the necessary skills to perform the First Warrior role, it would be reasonable to estimate that only about 10% of Marquette’s male Indian students had the necessary expertise to accept it. In conversation with the author, John Logan, a Marquette American Indian student with extensive expertise in traditional Indian dancing, 1986-1990, declined the First Warrior role out of concern for his study and outside employment needs; he was neither enthusiastic with nor opposed to the First Warrior concept.

⁹ In conversation with the author, Joe Whiting, a retired Little Wound High School teacher from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, December, 2009, who reported a new Indian movement of sport ceremonies in South Dakota high schools that began on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in the 1980s. From their warrior traditions, the students retrieved and integrated complex and sophisticated cultural ceremonies that effectively rallied and honored their teams. Consequently, they became popular and spread to other Midwest high schools with majority or significant minority Indian student populations. Like Chief White Buck and First Warrior, the new performances required in-depth Native American cultural knowledge. But now the Indian people themselves created and controlled the ceremonies and the non-Indian fans among them learned to accept them eventually.

administrator and then a counselor in suburban Chicago school districts while earning a Ph.D.¹⁰

John Clifford, a Lakota Sioux from the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota, served Mass in Latin for Jesuit priests while a grade school and high school student at St. Francis Mission on the reservation. Then armed with his knowledge of that language, he pursued undergraduate and graduate degrees in Latin at Marquette from 1957-1961 and 1961-1969 respectively, followed by a master's degree in World History from The University of Notre Dame. In between and afterwards he served in Milwaukee Public Schools until his retirement in 1997, first as a high school teacher and then as the administrator of the We Indians Program, a federally funded educational program for American Indian students.¹¹

Another was Roland "Ro" Chabot, a Passamaquoddy Indian from Maine, who enrolled in Business Administration and ROTC, 1965-1969. Afterwards he became a Chicago area businessman and president of the Mascoutin Society, 2010-2012, an organization that promotes Indian heritage. When searching for a college, he received acceptance letters from many institutions, but he chose Marquette, because unlike the others, Marquette's letter wasn't a form letter. It was personalized, welcoming and handwritten, which set it apart, and he never regretted that he selected Marquette. He found that Marquette prepared him well in a supportive and caring way. However, the civil rights and Vietnam War protest marches were major distractions and notions about Willie's inappropriateness were never an issue.¹²



Ro Chabot, Marquette student (center), 1969, and 2011



Marquette student (left) with counselor Maxine Smallish, 1978



Powwow sponsored by Native American Student Association, 1983

¹⁰ Marquette University Advancement, Mike Koehler contact reports, 2007, 2009.

¹¹ Transcript of John Clifford interview by Mark G. Thiel, May 2012, in the Kateri Tekakwitha Project Oral History Collection, series 1-4, 12-04, in the Marquette Archives.

¹² Ro Chabot (Streamwood, Illinois) conversation with the author, November, 2011.

American Indian students, in collaboration with staff, have participated in and created campus events. During the 1970s, they had limited involvement in the Minority Arts Festival, and during some years of the following decade, they hosted a Marquette University Powwow in conjunction with a springtime Native American cultural week. Since then, the Indian students have hosted intermittent guest speakers within an American Indian Heritage Month held late in the fall semester.

Marquette Faculty and their Teaching and Research about American Indians

Dr. Percy Ford Swindle (1889-1971) served in the Marquette University School of Medicine, 1913-1957, and became the first chairman of the Psychology Department, which he served, 1921-1951. Of Cherokee ancestry from Missouri, Dr. Swindle reportedly spoke six Native American languages.¹³



Dr. Percy F. Swindle

Sociology 112, The American Indian, was Marquette's first course to focus on any aspect of Native American heritage. First taught the second semester of 1963-1964, it was an ethnological survey of the Western hemisphere since European contact that preceded the current Anthropology 3350, Native Peoples of North America.¹⁴

Before and since then, Native American heritage has figured in the course content and research of a number of notable Marquette professors. In the Department of History, Rev. Raphael N. Hamilton, S.J., taught from 1930 to 1961 with the explorations of Pere Jacques Marquette, S.J., as his primary research focus and Rev. Francis Paul Prucha, S.J., taught from 1959 to the 1990s with U.S. federal Indian policy as his primary research focus. In the Department of Sociology-Anthropology, Alice B. Kehoe taught from 1968 to the 1990s with the culture of the historic and contemporary Blackfeet (Siksika) of Montana as her primary research area; Norman Craig Sullivan taught from 1968 to the present with early historic Wisconsin archaeology as his primary research focus; and David Overstreet taught from 1974 to the present with ancient pre-historic Wisconsin archaeology as his primary research focus. In the Law School, American Indian and Federal Indian Law were taught intermittently since 1997-1998 by David James Whitehorse Klauser (adjunct professor) and/or Scott Idleman.

¹³ Unidentified [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel?] undated news clippings in Marquette Archives, Percy F. Swindle faculty file, Marquette University records group A-12.1 series 2 box 8.

¹⁴ *Marquette University Bulletin of the College of Liberal Arts*, 37(1959-1961):9:165 and *Marquette University Undergraduate Pre-Registration Schedule for the Second Semester, 1963-1964*, p. 17.

Klauser is a member of the Ho Chunk Nation who has served as their Attorney General. He has also served as an Assistant Wisconsin State Public Defender, a member and chair of the Board of Directors of the Indian Community School of Milwaukee, and a Lieutenant Colonel of the Wisconsin National Guard in Iraq and he has taught Indian law in the University of Wisconsin Law School.¹⁵

Statistics released by the Marquette Office of Institutional Research and Assessment list three to four American Indian faculty members from 2006 through 2009, which drops to one in 2010. Most served in either the College of Engineering or the Dental School.¹⁶



Robert Mann, Veterans Service Officer for the Ho-Chunk Nation, presents newly promoted Lt. Col. David James Whitehorse Klauser with a blanket during a ceremony at Madison's Joint Force Headquarters March 19, 2011. Wisconsin National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Sarah Ellis.

The Marquette Archives and its Native American Archival Holdings

Following his teaching career, Father Hamilton founded the Marquette Archives Department in 1961, where his research documentation about Jacques Marquette and the commemorations of his epic voyage became Marquette's first archival collection pertaining to American Indians. In 1973, the Midwest celebrated the 300th anniversary of that voyage, which involved Fr. Hamilton in several of the events.

¹⁵ Online biographical statement, Indian Community School of Milwaukee, <http://www.ics-milw.org/board/#>, accessed December 27, 2011; Hocak Worak, 21:23 (December 14, 2007): 1, 25:7 (April 15, 2011): 7.

¹⁶ Fall Head Count Reports of the Marquette Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, <http://www.marquette.edu/oira/faculty.shtml>, accessed February 10, 2012.



300th anniversary of Marquette in Chicago, 1973
Fr. Raphael Hamilton, S.J. (left), 1892-1980, and
Fr. Georges Mathieu (Potawatomi)



F. Paul Prucha, S.J., 1921-



Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, 1874-
Msgr. William H. Ketcham, Director, 1901-1921

Meanwhile, Father Prucha researched his book, *The Churches and the Indian Schools: 1888-1912*, which details a confrontation between the United States federal government and the Catholic Church, regarding the management of government and church-run boarding schools for Indian students. Studying the many facets of the key players, their allies, and the events required extensive research in Washington, D.C., at the U.S. National Archives and the office of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions.

At the Catholic Bureau's office, Fr. Prucha learned that its holdings were extensive and an endangered treasure-trove of archival records. Fr. Prucha then began an effort to preserve those records at Marquette University, which included financial support from Harry John, head of the Milwaukee-based De Rance Foundation and a past president of Miller Brewing, and an endorsement from Herman Viola, a prominent Smithsonian Institution director and Marquette alumni in History. Eventually, extensive negotiations with the Catholic Bureau led to an agreement and the shipping of its records to the Marquette Archives in two fully-loaded semi-trucks.

Since then, the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions has sent more records and their collection has attracted many related ones to the Marquette Archives, including the records of the Tekakwitha Conference, now a Native North American Catholic association named in honor of now St. Kateri Tekakwitha. Marquette in turn has enhanced access to all of them through online descriptive inventories and digital collections of select documents. Furthermore, archivist Mark G. Thiel, in collaboration with scholars Sr. Marie Therese Archambault and Christopher Vecsey coedited *The Crossing of Two Roads: Being Catholic and Native in the United States* (Orbis Books, 2003), which is comprised of letters, articles, transcripts, and photographs by and about Native Catholics. Most of these documents came from the Marquette Archives.



Photography exhibit from the Marquette Archives at the Vatican Museum

In December 2011, the Vatican announced that Pope Benedict XVI would declare Kateri Tekakwitha a saint, which took place at St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City on October 21, 2012. St. Kateri was a 17th century Algonquin-Mohawk convert and mystic who is a model for many Native North American Catholics, especially for those active in the Tekakwitha Conference. As part of the canonization activities, the Marquette Archives provided an exhibit of historical Native Catholic photographs at the Vatican Museum and archivist Mark G. Thiel of Marquette and Religious Studies scholar Christopher Vecsey of Colgate University coedited, *Native Footsteps along the Path of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha* (Marquette University Press with the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, 2012). It is comprised of articles, interviews, and photographs about St. Kateri and her Native Catholic followers, the bulk of which came from the Marquette Archives.

Select Visual Materials from the Marquette Collections

Milwaukee Area



W. Ben Hunt
1888-1970



Black Elk
1863-1950



Siggenauk Center Ceremony
Marquette University, 1980s



Waukesha Powwow, 1980s

LaBelle Family at a
Milwaukee Catholic
cemetery, 2000



W. Ben Hunt was a Milwaukee area outdoor educator and author who photographed the famed Lakota Sioux holy man Nicholas Black Elk in South Dakota for an illustration in his 1954 book, *Indian Crafts and Lore*. The LaBelle family of Milwaukee has Ojibwa roots from Minnesota. In this photo taken while visiting deceased loved ones in a local cemetery, the milky white streak is believed to represent their spirits, one of whom was Jerry Starr, an ironworker killed the year before during a construction accident at Miller Park. The Siggenauk Center began as an urban outreach to American Indians by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, which led to the founding of the current Congregation of the Great Spirit. The Waukesha powwow is one of many Native social events held in the metropolitan area every year.

Elsewhere in North America



Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha (Mohawk), 1656-1680, sainthood candidate



Pope John Paul II visiting Phoenix, 1980

19th century pictorial catechism



San Xavier del Bac Mission, Tucson

Catholic missionaries and catechists used pictorial catechisms as teaching aids that enabled them to transcend language barriers. St. Kateri Tekakwitha was canonized in 2012 after being beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1980. That same year he visited with Native Catholics in Phoenix, Arizona, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Tekakwitha Conference. San Xavier del Bac Mission near Tucson, Arizona, is an American Indian parish named after St. Francis Xavier, the founder of the Jesuits. It is one of the oldest Catholic churches in the United States.

Bibliography

See -- **American Indians and Marquette University: A Comprehensive Bibliography (includes all sources known by author)** by Mark G. Thiel, last updated 2013.