

# South Carolina the Portal of Native American Genocide in Southeast.....Still Haunts...the southeastern coastal state

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Charleston has been called "the most haunted city in North America". I would like to think that the Ghosts haunting Charleston are not only the many pirates, indentured servants, European colonists and enslaved Africans that historically passed through this port city, but I would like to believe that many of those spirits that linger in this monumental city and throughout this state are those of the many indigenous people that once called South Carolina their home. Maybe it would be nice to think of these Native spirits as still here, at the coastline, to welcome newcomers as they did hundreds of years ago and to remind residents that South Carolina is still Native American Indian sacred land. Or even just to tell their stories from their grave as they rattle their chains. Possibly they are here to tell their haunting story of the American Indian Holocaust that took place on this soil. I know that one of those Natives that are hauntingly reminding us of this, is that of the famed Seminole Chief, Osceola. Yes, Osceola's decapitated body is interred here in South Carolina today. It was on December 1837 that Captain Pitcairn Morrison of the 4th U.S. Infantry transferred Osceola and 202 other Seminoles to Fort Moultrie in South Carolina, after his capture from their stance in the Florida everglades. The steamship *Poinsett* landed the Seminoles on Sullivan's Island on New Year's Day 1838. Osceola's imprisonment attracted national attention. The famous Osceola's death, at Fort Moultrie, came for Osceola at 6:20 p.m. on January 30, 1838, after which he was decapitated and interred in South Carolina soil. Osceola's life and the fact of his untimely death combine to make his story seem more legendary than real. Though much about Osceola's life will remain a mystery, his role as defender of his people is undeniable. It is those stories that he could be telling retelling in a haunting manner from his grave here in South Carolina. The Seminoles were a people made up of refugees from several southeastern tribes primarily Creek, runaway black slaves and the runaway South Carolina Gullah people. Certainly, Osceola is among those ghosts haunting the state of South Carolina and its' residents, reminding people of its sorted history and the Native American Indian Holocaust.

As it should be told, it was in the port city of Charleston, South Carolina, among others that the genocide of Native American Indian people began in the United States of America. Yes, it began here, in that small geographic region, what is referred to now as South Carolina. Not only is South Carolina's Charleston a port town that was among the first to receive colonists, that devastated Native people and indigenous culture, but it also was the location where the first shots of the Civil War were fired. One lone cannonball arched a dim sky to hit its target in Charleston Harbor. That first cannonball on April 12, 1861 marked the beginning of the Civil War, which would end four long years later in a pool of grief greater than any known before or since in America (except for the American Indian holocaust). The death toll for the Civil War reached over 620,000 lives lost in battle or to battlefield disease — more than the total American lives lost in all other wars combined. Yes, this was after the so-called "**Indian**

**Removal,**” seemingly a footnote to the American “manifest destiny” of taking this entire continent for white control. The fact remains that many Native American Indian peoples and nations were NEVER removed. Also the fact remains that in the south, where racism still has the biggest influence on society and culture, slavery and the CIVIL WAR, seems to have had the most lasting impression and the largest impact on the continued genocide, abuse and oppression of Native American Indian people and their culture in the southeast, not to mention other people of color. Was the killing and displacement of Native Americans by Europeans an act of genocide, and if so, is it meaningful or appropriate to compare it to other genocides in history, such as that perpetrated by the Nazis against the Jewish people? Yes!

When we look at the history of South Carolina it becomes very evident that many of the people that are recorded in the opening chapters of this great state, have no descendants left in South Carolina to celebrate their ancestor’s contributions, history and legacy. Each year at the state's schools, the SC State Department of Education (a state agency) promotes an observance of "*South Carolina History Day.*" Native American Indian people and their contributions to the formulation of this state are forgotten annually on this annual occasion. In response to this blatant racist oversight, the Eastern Cherokee, Southern Iroquois and United Tribes of SC, Inc (a state recognized tribal organization) brought to the state of South Carolina the observance of **National Native American Indian Heritage Month** in 1994. Also, ECSIUT made it evident that Native people and their experience are an important part of the history that schools throughout the state children and teachers are mandated to learn about, within South Carolina history, as part of the curriculum each year. Yet all these attempts to honor and celebrate over 700 years of history in the land that is now referred to as "South Carolina," seems to be undermined by the truth of what happened to the origin people of South Carolina. Linguistic imperialism, race, tribal ignorance, racial difference, inequity and the lack of representation of South Carolina Native American Indian history in education, all have important influences and are part of the ongoing genocide and holocaust story in South Carolina against Natives that continues today.

What happened to the indigenous, the Native American Indian People of South Carolina? Who are the descendants of those Native Tribes and communities that presently call South Carolina home? Are any Native American Indians still here to tell their stories? Who are the ones that remain and who are the ones that **NO LONGER REMAIN?** This is where the story of the South Carolina American Indian holocaust begins. The term Holocaust is used, academically, to describe the holocaust that was experienced by the Jewish people in Europe. The holocaust of Eastern Europe in the early 1940s was truly a horrible historical era. It is generally believed that a total of twelve million people were murdered by the Nazi regime, including political opponents, Gypsies, the mentally ill, homosexuals, and other "undesirables." The Jewish Holocaust was not unlike the American Indian Holocaust, which was also just as tragic and catastrophic. Consequently, I've co-opted with a twist from our Jewish brothers and sisters who once coined the phrase, "**Never forget**". By chanting it to any and all, we can refuse to let the Native Holocaust drift to the back pages of global and American history. We Must “Never forget the American Indian Holocaust.” Like the Jewish experience, so much of our Native American Indian history has been lost to us because we often don't write the history books, don't film the documentaries or don't pass the accounts down from generation to generation. It was for this reason that I agreed to offer a perspective

for this publication about South Carolina and the American Indian Holocaust. In every story of indigenous genocide and oppression, no matter how enslaved, ensnaked or beaten, **we are**, and we find a way to survive and rescue others. Yes, we also have heroes, that surface in our holocaust stories, just like Shindler, of the popular Spielberg film, "Shindler's list" (like Tsali, the eastern Cherokee martyr that helped his people escape the removal). These are the stories that I feel are important to tell when we think of the American Indian Holocaust.

Some Native American Indians are still here today, to tell their stories and share their ancestor's experiences. We, as indigenous people, often shy away from hearing or telling about our historical past **because so much of it is painful**. Often we feel that it is "the past" and should not be used as an excuse for who we are today. Although that is a noble perspective, **that I don't disagree with**, it does not honor the struggles of our ancestors properly. It also does not inspire our youth to carry on the struggle started so long ago. It does not, in anyway, "pass the baton" to the next generation which is so necessary to do. However, it is important to realize that we have not made it yet. Yes, we are still on the journey to our destination. We are still in this struggle together for rights, dignity and yes, apologies for wrongs done to us through the centuries. Yes, apologies from others, from our oppressors, from ourselves, and from other Native American people and nations. Most importantly, we need to always remember... so that we can take steps to ensure that these things never happen again. Therefore, the story must be told and revisited, so that the experience is NOT repeated. We mustn't forget the mass killing of Native Americans that has occurred in our own country. As a result, bigotry and racial discrimination still exist. For Native Americans, the world after 1492 would never be the same. This date marked the beginning of the long road of persecution and genocide of Native Americans, our indigenous people. Conservative estimates suggest that the population of the United States prior to European contact was greater than 12 million. Four centuries later, the count was reduced by 95% to 237 thousand.

Holocausts are characterized by the genocide of a people. There are many facets of genocide, which have been implemented upon Native American Indians and indigenous peoples of the Americas and specifically those in South Carolina, for this perspective. The list of American genocidal policies includes: mass-execution, biological warfare, forced removal from homelands, incarceration, indoctrination of non-indigenous values, forced surgical sterilization of native women, prevention of religious and spiritual practices, just to name a few. The 1994 United Nations Convention on the ***Punishment and Prevention of the Crime of Genocide*** describes genocide **beyond outright murder of people** as "***the destruction and extermination of culture.***" There is NO doubt that our indigenous cultural heritage has been altered nationally and certainly in South Carolina. Certainly that has been the historical policies of many of the missionaries and the federal government here in the United States, the "save the man kill the Indian" policies. Europeans destroyed not only Native Americans current political structure, but they also imposed their customs/religion on a people, and likely enslave the populace, and killed them off with disease. In return, Native American Indians got permant residents, no a smaller land base, and an inferiority complex, oh, and the destruction of all indigenous thought and culture.

The **South Carolina American Indian Holocaust** was the systematic, bureaucratic, federally sponsored, and state-sponsored persecution, disenfranchisement and murder of millions of

Native American Indians by the European, and an American regime and its collaborators and most importantly the South Carolina Native American holocaust was done by other South Carolinians to Native American Indian people here. Although they do not fit the stereotyped image of what most people think of as “Indians,” the indigenous tribes, nations and bands have played a significant role in shaping the distinctive culture of the state. Many of the original inhabitants of South Carolina shared their culture with the newly arrived Europeans and Africans, teaching them how to take advantage of the natural bounty of the land, as early as 1540 with De Soto’s visit. This includes Native Americans tribal groups and individuals that are seemingly extinct and have been referred to as the **Cusabo, Ashepoo, Combahee, Coosa, Edisto, Escamacu, Etiwan, Kiawah, Stono, Wando, Wimbee, Cussabee, Cussobo, Corsaboy, Cherokee, Catawba, Chicora, Waccamaw, Congaree, Cheraw, Chickasaw, Creek, Pee Dee, Edisto, Kusso-Natchez, Oconee, Ashepoo, Saludas, Sampa, Santee, Sewee, Stono, Summerville, Coosa, Cusabo, Wateree, Cheraw, Wanniah, Waxhaw, Winyah, Cotacnicach, Keyauwee, Palachoola, Yamasee, Yuchi, Esaw, and Tuscarora.**

As historian, James H. Merrell clearly states in his book entitled **The Catawbas**, *“Disease had already caused many disseminated tribes to merge with the Catawbas, and officials in South Carolina encouraged this trend. As a result of these tribal mergers, the Catawba Nation became a melting pot of peoples. In the early 1740s a colonist heard more than 20 different languages being spoken by the residents of the Nation’s 6 villages. Like immigrants to America, these new members of the Catawba Nation found that through the years old loyalties to one’s tribe or group of origin were replaced by new attachments to the ‘Nation.’ Cheraws, Waterees and other migrants gradually lost their own identity and came to think of themselves as Catawbas”* pg 52- 53

The American Indian Holocaust also affected the Cherokee Indians, one of the largest and historically significant indigenous groups to the state of South Carolina. At contact, they resided in and controlled over half of the entire state from the “Broad River” to the upstate. Contact, after the initial 1540 meeting, became continuous with the founding of the Carolina colonies. A treaty with South Carolina followed in 1684 beginning a steady trade in deerskins and Indian slaves. In 1715, Governor Robert Johnson of South Carolina took a census of the Cherokees where it was estimated that they had over 30 towns in South Carolina. These numbers drastically was decreased in the year 1738 due to a smallpox epidemic, which decimated some of the Cherokee tribes’ towns. At that time, it was sadly estimated that the number of Cherokees after the plague, that year, had reduced the tribe by at least half that original number. The Cherokee continued to hold their own despite devastating smallpox epidemics in 1738 and in 1753. In 1760 the Cherokees allied with the French due to the hostilities between them and England. As a result, Governor Littleton of South Carolina marched against the Cherokees and attacked their villages killing many, which resulted in yet another treaty. Yet some of the Cherokees still continued to fight the English that again resulted in several more battles between the Cherokee and English that resulted in Colonists burning Cherokee crops and destroying no less than 15 Cherokee Towns. This then led to the treaty of 1761 at Ashley Ferry later known as *Treaty of Charleston*. When the Cherokee War (1760-62) exploded with full fury. Settlers were massacred at Long Canes, and a militia unit was mauled near the Broad River. In June of 1761, 15 middle Cherokee towns were captured

and they destroyed the food the Cherokee needed for the coming winter. Faced with starvation if the war continued, the Cherokee signed a treaty with the South Carolina in September that ceded much of their eastern lands in the Carolinas. Few experts and historians will deny the profound and devastating effects of colonialism on contemporary Native American Indian nations. In the post-colonial division of Native America, many arbitrary borders were drawn based on land division only, with no regard to the ethnicities, nationalities or culture of the people. Look at the contemporary debate about Mexican people (formerly Aztec Indians) that try to travel into Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. Those lands were their ancestral regions, yet the borders are European made and is a product of their devastating imperialism. The Federal government has driven Native Nations into chronic political, social instability and not the least of which being their inability to maintain their own economies, having little valuable resources to export having their ancestral lands taken and their lifeways changed for ever. During the revolutionary War the Continental Congress ordered troops from North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia to attack the Cherokee Indians. Rather than kill all the Indians, Americans began setting up slave auctions and sold Cherokee Women and Children to the highest bidder to raise money for their militia. These few examples from the early history are the type of activities that contributed to the American Indian holocaust of the Cherokee Indians in South Carolina. This story just continues throughout the history of the state of South Carolina.

For the Tuscarora Indians of the Carolinas, the holocaust was also an experience that has had lasting impressions on the people of Tuscarora Indian descent. Historically, many were victims of American Indian slavery. Many of the Tuscarora Indians had been sold and exported from Charleston, South Carolina. The Tuscarora Indian War of 1711 was devastating for the Indians. About 300 Tuscarora men, women, and children were living on 40,000 acres in Bertie County, North Carolina between 1752 and 1761. This tribe never gave up its Indian customs or heritage but their numbers had been reduced by 1766 when they leased part of their land. Approximately 155 members of the tribe moved to the state of New York after the 1766 lease, and others joined them in 1802. Many did remain in North and South Carolina and never migrated north.

Europeans destroyed not only Native Americans current political structure, but they also imposed their customs/religion on a people, and likely enslave the populace, and killed them off with disease. In return, Native American Indians got permanent residents, a smaller land base, and an inferiority complex, oh, and the destruction of all indigenous thought and culture. Even for those Native people that were able to survive, the disenfranchised Native American Indians were also to be made victims of the systemic racism and other "holocaust" activities against their culture and against their person. With the laws of segregation and miscegenation, Native Americans were victims and products of breeding regulations, a special southern racist practice that was made law and sanctioned by state officials and agencies, in addition to the blood quantum policy. Consequently, throughout the slave era, "Jim Crow" and other historical eras, Native American Indian people in South Carolina married other natives from other communities within and outside this state or they tried to leave (forget) their Native American Indian ancestry and merge into acculturated status among the Non-Indians. All of this is to clarify that those surviving were to LOOSE much of their identity, cultural heritage, language, tribal names, and tribal history that was associated with their ancient tribal lineage.

This also contributed to Native American descendants not being able to isolate and identify one specific tribe or culture to claim. This is not only made impossible, by such systematic prejudice, but it is a historical reality for those that were able to survive the holocaust and genocide.

On the larger scale, millions of Native Americans were also enslaved, in the Americas. In the American colonies in 1730, nearly 25 percent of the slaves in the Carolinas were Cherokee, Creek, or other Native Americans. While these Native Americans were being shipped out of Carolina to labor in Barbados, another group of enslaved were being shipped into Carolina from Africa. In all the southern colonies Indian slaves worked in the fields side by side with the blacks or African enslaved up to the time of the American Revolution. So often this story is untold. The discovery, about 1693, of rice as a profitable staple for export, made necessary a large supply of labor in South Carolina; hence along with the blacks so largely imported to meet the demand, the Indian slaves worked also as the plantation system grew. In addition to working together in the fields, they lived together in communal living quarters, produced collective recipes for food and herbal remedies, shared myths and legends, and ultimately became lovers. The intermarriage of Africans and Native Americans is a story that is also not often told, because of southern racist taboos. It has an indelible influence on the Native American Indian populations in South Carolina and American Indians throughout the southeast, and in Central and South America, as well. When Americans think of slavery, our minds create images of Africans inhumanely crowded aboard ships of the “middle passage” from Africa, or of blacks stooped to pick cotton in southern fields. We don't conjure images of American Indians chained in coffles and marched to ports like Charleston, South Carolina, and then shipped to other ports in the Atlantic world. Yet, Indian slavery and an Indian slave trade were seminal to the early American experience. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada, **tens of thousands** of America's native peoples were enslaved, many of them transported to lands distant from their homes, this is important to remember. This enslavement was a devastating contribution to the **American Indian holocaust**, and to perspectives that continue to influence Native American Indian people in the Carolinas. The English settlers of South Carolina practiced the enslavement of Indians on a large scale. For example, during the years 1702-1708 the British colonists sent out three expeditions against the Yamasee, Apalachee, and the Timucua, of north Florida. They carried back to Charleston, South Carolina, almost the entire population of 7 large towns, over 1,400 persons, who were sold as slaves to the Carolina settlers or distributed among the Creeks, who assisted in the capture. Yes, in the American south, European traders, mostly British colonists operating out of Charleston, South Carolina, **engaged local and distant Indians to undertake slaving against their neighbors**, who could be placed onto ships that would carry them to Barbados, New York, Antigua and other ports in the world, where they would serve as slaves. Historically European Americans used different Native American Indian Nations and groups to acquire slaves for agricultural production, and domestic use. In the colonies, Europe was being sent the resources of the Americas that is what helped to inspire the American Revolution. European was in an industrial age, needing large amounts of raw resources, and labor to acquire these raw materials. Then after establishing the United States (1776) continued to use Native America and its people. They used all of Native America, its people, its resources, and its culture, to their selfish advantage. The whites ruled one hundred percent of dominate culture (not including the few sovereign nations that continued their

authority over their people). They divided the Native American Indian people and areas to their own favor. They split clans, and paired rival clans with no respect to the people in American Indian nations and communities. THIS continues to happen today among the Native American Indian nations and the dominate culture, also. The Federal government plays one group against another continuing the battles between tribal communities (i.e. look at the Lumbee and the Eastern Band Cherokee Indians in North Carolina). Even to this day colonialism and the influence of the American Indian holocaust shows its face in the many Native American Indian nations' politics. Corruption, extortion, dictators, nepotism, non-traditional sell outs, and misappropriation of necessities are all apart of "Indian Country" and are all products of the colonial period and the devastation of the holocaust in the Americas. Many South Carolinians used some of these slaves to work their own plantations, but because of the ability of captives to escape over familiar territory among familiar peoples, their captors preferred to export most of them elsewhere. Native American Indian slaves and runaway Indian slaves are featured highlights in the colonial papers and documents of South Carolina chronicled history. South Carolina has the most documentation of the exportation of American Indian slaves than any other.

During certain eras Native American Indian people, in South Carolina, became the victims of the unfair laws that were governing. Just like the experience for the Jewish people in Germany, where the "bad laws" seemly applied to the Jews, Native Americas were victims of similar laws that applied to them in the south. Similar to the German laws that stated that Jews couldn't walk on a sidewalk, only in the middle of the street, Natives had similar unjust laws entrusted upon them during varying periods of their holocaust. Native American Indian people were included specifically in the Slave laws, which governed the Slave Trade. Indian slavery is a large part of South Carolina's history that many know nothing about. No other state has as many historic documents that chronicle Native American enslaved people and slavery as South Carolina. "Indian slavery" intermingles with every aspect of the colonial record of South Carolina. Indian slavery began soon after the settlers arrived, and persisted through the colonial period. Knowing about the Indian enslavement is important for South Carolinians because it has played an important, impressive, and persistent role in the history of South Carolina and because it has affected the Native American citizens of the State, even today as they seek acknowledgement and recognition so that they can be "self determined." Much of the records for these descendants are obscure and hard to find specific mention of proper names (because of enslavement), genealogies and actual names of tribal heritage and/or culture primarily because of the slave trade and the way the documents were recorded. Indian slavery contributed to the development of the colony--economically, agriculturally, politically, and legally. Furthermore, "**Indian slavery**" in colonial South Carolina has made a large and indelible mark upon the tribal histories of the Indians not only of South Carolina, but also of the southeastern and northeastern United States. In short, the destiny of many of the Indian tribes of this region was influenced and determined by Indian Affairs, which centered in Charleston and was involved in the slave racket and trade. **It was slavery more than war or disease that destroyed the small coastal tribes.** As early as 1683 the proprietors had heard that the settlers were making war on Indians around Winyah Bay in order to obtain slaves. Since the Proprietors had given permission to sell Indian captives in the West Indies, the trade in slaves was stimulated and soon the colonists could not distinguish between Indians taken in war and those acquired in other ways. In 1715 the Cherokee allied

with the Yamasee and also the Creeks and these tribes declared war against the settlers of South Carolina. It is at this time that Governor Robert Johnson of South Carolina took a census of the Cherokees where it was estimated that they had more than thirty (30) towns. This number drastically was decreased in the year 1738 due to a smallpox epidemic, which decimated the Cherokee Tribes. At that time, it was sadly estimated that the number of Cherokees after the plague that year had reduced the tribe by at least half that original number. There were other laws that were also influential. Laws that did not allow any Indian to own property or appear in court limited their Native American Indian tremendously in South Carolina. A statute enacted on December 21, 1792, two years after first United States census, was to prohibit further importation of slaves into the State of South Carolina. Yet in that law a definition was employed which included "**Indian, Mulatto or Mestizo.**" As late as 1838, the same year as the "Trail of Tears", Native Americans were in South Carolina's courts fighting for their rights and re-evaluating the interpretation of the slave code of 1740. Expansion of the European colonies led to similar genocides throughout the eastern seaboard. "Indian Removal" policy was put into action to clear the land for white settlers. Methods for the removal included slaughter of villages by the military and also biological warfare (small pox..). The death rates resulted from forced marches to relocate the Indians. The Removal Act of 1830 set into motion a series of events which led to the "**Trail of Tears**" in 1838, a forced march of the Cherokees, resulting in the destruction of many of the Cherokee population. The concentration of American Indians in small geographic areas, and the scattering of them from their homelands, caused increased death, primarily because of associated military actions, disease, starvation, extremely harsh conditions during the moves, and the resulting destruction of ways of life. During American expansion into the western frontier, one primary effort to destroy the Indian way of life was the attempts of the U.S. government to make farmers and cattle ranchers of the Indians. Federal policy also assisted in the holocaust. In South Carolina, the Catawba Indian Nation was made victims of the "**Termination Policy**" of the 1950s. This was after they had been made victims of boarding schools and other federal policies that were designed to exterminate the Natives from South Carolina. Not only the boarding schools but also at the signings of hundreds of treaties, most of which were dishonored by whites, would be set into motion a persistent distrust of the systematic genocide, a distrust that still resonates in our homes and schools and courts of law today.

One of the other tools used in the Native American Indian holocaust in South Carolina and in many other parts of the United States is the use and misclassification of blood quantum. Blood quantum is a scientific, government-approved method of determining blood purity and race purity. The Federal government began to also use "degree of blood" in the latter part of the nineteenth-century, especially in relation to the enrollment of persons before the Dawes allotment commission. The use of "full," "one-half" etc. at that time was both an extension of the previous racist system and also a step in terminating Native Americans. Persons with greater amounts of white ancestry were assumed to be more competent than persons with lesser amounts. In other words, the degree of white blood was much more important than the degree of Native American Indian ancestry. How ludicrous! The white blood entitled an Indian citizen to greater privileges, including being able to have "wardship" restrictions removed, being able to sell property, acquire the right to vote in state and federal elections, and so on. It was also expected that when a person became "competent" (white enough) he would no longer be an Indian and that process would eventually terminate a tribe's existence.



Thus the recording of blood quantum is both a product of white supremacy, racism and of white social science theories of a racist nature, and also a product of a plan wherein Native indigenous nations are expected to vanish when the white or black blood quantum reaches a certain level (above three-fourths, for example). Today, in the era of self-determination, Native American Indian Tribal groups and Nations are using this flawed system to assist in the self-genocide, victimization and “continued holocaust” against their indigenous descendants. One of the most frightening examples of a government's interest in blood purity comes as recently as the twentieth century in Nazi Germany, when Hitler wanted to create an Aryan master race. Once again, in that Jewish holocaust, millions of people were killed because they were not Aryan. While Nazi Germany is an extreme example, it is not unlike the “ethnic purity” required and encouraged in the southeastern states and in South Carolina by Indians and non-Indians alike. There is not a day goes by that I am not asked by both black and white people “Are you full blooded.” To me, “Blood quantum” is a clinical, inhuman, and careless way to determine the ethnic and cultural authenticity of a person. Blood quantum, while it appears harmless, is nonetheless one of the most divisive tools employed in the “Native American Indian Holocaust.” It helps the Native communities to implode on themselves and it has, therefore, had a very negative effect on many Indian Nations. In many cases the issue of quantum has divided “full-bloods” and mixed-bloods, causing resentment, splitting families and nations into factions: politically, spiritually, socially and economically. The issue also divides tribal members and non-members on the issue of proof. Some whites only want to associate with “Full Bloods.” Often, the most apparent bloodline is fraught with difficulty for many reasons. First of all, accurate records of tribal marriages and births were not always kept. Second, Indians have historically intermixed with many different races including Latinos, Blacks and whites making it difficult to define who is truly Indian. Today, this trend continues, as Native Americans are the minority group most likely to marry outside of our race. Ultimately, it is an ahistorical and a faulty system. There was little ethnic purity and cultural purity prior to contact with Europeans; this is why this discussion is almost ridiculous. Native people had migrated, intermarried, traded, co-mingled, exchanged brides, cross pollinated culturally, linguistically and biologically long before Europeans came to the Americas. From a historical and cultural perspective, the idea of blood quantum is a non-Indian system that is dangerous and counter productive to indigenous people everywhere, not to mention non-Indian people.

Today is a pivotal moment in history for Native-American Indians in South Carolina. For the first time Native American Indian groups and tribes can petition this state for [definition of their] status as American Indian. I helped other native leaders in the state for three years, under a governor-appointed task force, to create criteria that can be used and we were able to get it passed into law by the General Assembly. Those Native American Indian Leaders that persevered to get this legislation passed are among those Indians that I call **“American Indian Holocaust heroes”** to the Native American Indian descendants of South Carolina. This is a first for this state. This process will help define “who is Indian” in South Carolina, therefore removing the ability for the state to ignore its first people and will provide groups and tribes with the opportunity for the state acknowledgement of their presence in South Carolina. No longer can Native-Americans remain invisible cultural ethnic communities in South Carolina. Hopefully this opportunity will be a catalyst for Native American indigenous people to finally tell their stories and make it part of the official state record. Now is the time

for them to tell about their individual tribe's holocaust experience, their devastation, their victimization and most importantly **their survival**. We have been quiet for too long. It was on May 13, 2004 that the South Carolina state legislature adopted statutory law that gives the state power to recognize Indian tribes officially in South Carolina. After centuries of being ignored, victimized and mis-classified. Now begins the arduous task of determining which tribes to acknowledge and which tribal groups, communities and individuals are actual descendants of those many Native American indigenous people that called South Carolina their home. The tribes who want to be recognized will have to submit historical information, such as birth certificates, school and census records or other items that prove a legitimate tribe exists. Attaining federal recognition for Indian tribes is a long and difficult process. The Catawba Indian Nation is the only federally recognized tribe in South Carolina. In South Carolina, about 27,000 survivors of the holocaust identified themselves as Native American Indians in the 2000 census. Though thousands more can probably trace their ancestry to the Native American tribes that once predominated in the land now called South Carolina, only one tribe within the state — the Catawbas — enjoys federal recognition, which they just regained in 1994. On the federal level, recognition means the U.S. government considers a tribe a sovereign nation — with the right to govern and tax itself — though members of tribes still pay federal taxes. A recognized tribe decides who belongs to the tribe and how its lands will be used. Recognition also entitles a tribe to apply for federal assistance that may only be used for Native Americans — Bureau of Indian Affairs scholarships, for example. Recognition in some cases allows tribes to set up potentially lucrative gaming operations, such as the Catawbas' high-stakes bingo parlor in Rock Hill. Why this special relationship between the federal government and tribes? The United States, until 1870, signed treaties with native tribes that granted them rights, benefits, and reservations in exchange for giving up the rest of their land. Today, the U.S. government recognizes 562 tribes. An additional 296 are pursuing recognition. Of those, **10 are in South Carolina**. Federal recognition doesn't come easy and really has little to do with the actual number of survivors of the American Indian holocaust.

The American Indian Holocaust and genocide is a continued battle in South Carolina. IT CONTINUES TODAY. We have a recent revival of white supremacist groups that are recruiting young people in record numbers at the university age. We have the "traditional" perspectives of the descendents of Confederate white soldiers, 20-year-old USC students, who have seemed to embrace, understand and find solidarity with the collaborators of our persecution and disenfranchisement. I have had the pleasure of spending time with a couple of these young people, who felt that I was beneath them, beholding to them, less intelligent than they were, certainly less deserving of respect, and all because I was ethnic, I suspect. They also seemed to think and refer to me as a "Yankee", because of my educational achievements, ignoring that my great-great grandfather was a Cherokee in that historic South Carolina's upstate "Tugaloo" Village. Within the two years of dealing with them, it became apparent to me that they relished and enjoyed their privileged status and found nothing peculiar about it, telling me stories of how proud they were to know about the lynchings of ethnic people that their ancestors participated in. It was their birthright as white, blonde, third year college students at the University of South Carolina to take advantage of me, the lowly and stupid minority. It is amazing to me that these "NEW" young white racists have revived and renewed these perspectives, passed on to them from their racist parents, and have forgotten

the social revolution of the 1960s. Most annoying is that they continue to inflict me and other Natives in South Carolina, once again with “age old” challenges as they exert their dominance, a never-ending story where they are always the winners and the one’s in charge! They and the African American leadership of South Carolina seemingly have forgotten the more recent history of the Civil Rights struggles that ALSO desegregated the separate “Indian schools” of South Carolina in 1969. Or maybe they just believe that Civil Rights was only to emancipate African American people from systematic discrimination. (SEE PHOTO of Confederate Flag flyers) The adverse affects which these perspectives continue to afflict upon Native American indigenous people of the southeast, will never be known by most South Carolinians simply because we have chosen to marginalize historical events almost as if they never occurred.

Our indigenous brothers and sisters from Central America have a day when those that have died visit “The Day of the Dead. Since pre Columbian times (before 1800 B.C.), *El Día de los Muertos*, the Day of the Dead has been celebrated in Mexico, as in other Latin American countries. It is the day in which those living remember those that have departed. Maybe they celebrate this special day, a hollowed eve, to have those victims of their holocaust come forth to tell their stories. In South Carolina no special day is needed for this visitation, the haunting past is an ever-present and a daily reminder of the way things have been and the memory of those victims continues to influence and affect the Native American Indian people. With the Holocaust more than six hundred year old, it is seemingly not behind us. With over 10 million Native American Indian peoples from many different tribes dead and their stories not told. To think that this sort of thing could happen and still occurs in our world or has still lasting influences is heart wrenching. Has anyone learned anything from these atrocities? Since Native Americans were at various times killed outright, forcibly removed from their homelands, made to endure appalling conditions on reservations, or subjected to cruel treatments, such as forced sterilization or having their children removed to foster homes, their treatment at the hands of European Americans is proof enough that there has been an American Indian Holocaust. We should look at these dark events in our shared history with a sense of disgust, hurt and shame. That others can set out to systematically eradicate a whole people from this earth and almost succeed should frighten us. The blame cannot be placed solely on one group or on one ethnic/cultural community, yes even Native Americans contributed to the *Native American Indian holocaust* in various ways, also. I may have made it sound like the Native American Indian nations sold their own. In reality, if France took German slaves, to sell to England, we wouldn't consider it selling your own, although they are all European. Though a group may be considered the same by some characteristic that is superficial, in this case race, and doesn't mean that these said groups perceive themselves as the same. There was NO "American Indian" at contact. That racial and culture misnomer is also a direct product and characteristic of the devastational holocaust. I agree that Natives were involved in the "Indian slave trade." Therefore they are to blame, in part, for the "Indian Slave Trade." However, an Aztec never saw himself as the same as an Inca, Tlaxcalan or Mayan, just as an Iroquois never thought he was the same as an Algonquin. In our contemporary the American justice system, if you witness a crime and do nothing to try and stop it, you're guilty by association. The same could apply to those who either directly or indirectly participated in the **Native American Indian Holocaust**. We must never forget this American Indian Holocaust or turn the blind eye to such events taking place today. The

continued racism, discrimination, and cultural torture must end. Because before we know it, another Holocaust could happen and claim the lives of more innocent Native American Indian people. **Native America presently has the highest percentage of suicide** among its youth. The self-esteem and inferiority complex problem and the hopelessness among Native American Indian youth is a direct product of the holocaust. I truly understand this feeling of hopelessness.

Seven generations ago, our warriors laid down their arms and some of our people were placed on reservations. These warriors did what they had to do to preserve our people. Although the United States believed that all American Indians would assimilate or die on the reservations, or through their numerous unsuccessful projects of relocation, assimilation and aculturalization, yet, we have survived. Today, our new warriors are once again men and women dedicated to their people, their tribes, and their children. Our warriors come in many forms, teachers, tribal leaders, priests, doctors, lawyers, artists and journalists. All of their efforts are noteworthy and in the tradition of the great patriot warriors of the past. I believe it is not too late to confront and overcome the poverty and paranoia, and despair and distrust that haunt Indigenous peoples, even here in South Carolina. Maybe through discussions and in the telling of the South Carolina Native stories we can revitalize our public conversation about race, tribal nations, and representation in education, in light of our paralyzing pessimism and stultifying cynicism as tribal people and American citizens. South Carolina today is not like the portal of ancient times, it once was, or even the region that it was of the colonial periods, or even state that allowed termination of its Indians of the 1960s or the Native “Self-determined” people of the 1970s and 1980s and will be still be even more different in 2060. Possibly, education may be the only way to affect change, understanding and also adapt to changing values, ideas, concerns, allegiances, positions, and representation. So at the crux of this fierce debate between Indigenous Peoples of South Carolina and South Carolinian American triumphalists is the teaching of the whole story and the story from a Native American Indian perspective.

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