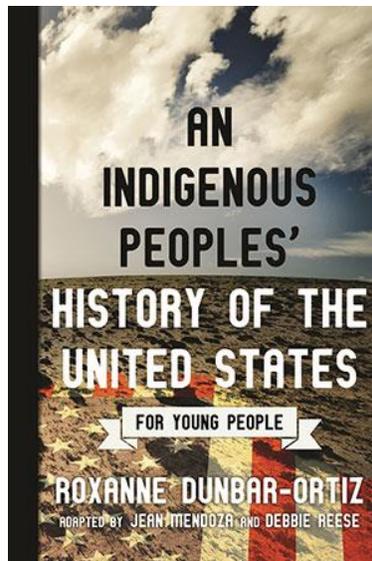


Second Reaction: I Learned Everything Was Taken Away

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the US for Young People*. Adapted by Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese. Kansas City, Mo: Beacon Press, 2019. Print.

Ahmed Mayfield-Reinking



In school I never learned the specifics of Native Americans. I knew Native Americans were on this land before Columbus reportedly arrived. He tried to take credit for “finding” the United States. When that did not work, he decided to take control through overpowering the people on the land, the Native Americans.

In *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the US for Young People*, the author describes history in a way that I was not taught. It was full of information that I think should be in classrooms because it teaches the history of America. I read this book with my cousin, who is

two years older than me. When I asked him what he thought of the book he said, “I liked it. It was really interesting to learn about the history of North America not from an American (European) point of view, but from the Indigenous peoples’ view.”

I agree with his review and noted the author is Native American. When talking to my mom about the book I asked if the author or others like her learned about Native American history in school. She said, “No, not if they attend public school. They would learn the same things you do.” After hearing this I said, “This, the teaching of Native American history in schools, is never going to happen. I mean, they won’t even let people use the word ‘gay’ in some schools in the United States. It will take a lot longer to focus on the actual history when people are worried about what they perceive as immediate problems, for example using the word gay in school.”

In this book I learned *everything* was taken away from Indigenous people, from their language, to their traditions, to their land. I think that teaching the true history of how Europe has colonized the world should be taught because this is our history. Right now we are only learning half of our history, the history from the point of view of the conquerors and not the conquered.

About the Author

Ahmad Mayfield-Reinking is a 7th grade student in Central Illinois. He spends his free time playing video games, rock climbing, and playing soccer. His favorite subject in school is history. He loves learning and reading about African cultures and wars throughout history and the causes of those wars.