

# Sacheen Littlefeather

## 1946 - Present



## Who Is She?

Sacheen Littlefeather is an actress, model, and Native American civil rights activist. She was born to an Apache father and a European mother. Sacheen is most known for accepting an Oscar on behalf of Marlon Brando to protest Hollywood's portrayal of Native Americans and draw attention to the standoff at Wounded Knee. She went on to earn a degree in health and a minor in Native American medicine, and worked with Mother Teresa in helping AIDS patients in hospice care in San Francisco.

## Fast Facts

- Sacheen co-founded the National American Indian Performing Arts Center.
- Sacheen participated in the occupation of Alcatraz.

## References

Rose, S. (2021, June 3). 'I promised Brando I would not touch his Oscar': the secret life of Sacheen Littlefeather. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/jun/03/i-promised-brando-i-would-not-touch-his-oscar-secret-life-sacheen-littlefeather>.

# Susan La Flesche Picotte

1865-1915



## Who Was She?

Susan La Flesche Picotte was born and raised on the Omaha Indian Reservation. La Flesche Picotte attended an American Indian Boarding School and then went on to receive her MD from the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania. She became the first American Indian female doctor.

In 1913, La Flesche Picotte opened a hospital near Walthill, Nebraska that served all people, regardless of color, and was the first hospital to be built on reservation land without federal government support.

## Fast Facts

- Picotte advocated for modern hygiene practices and standards for disease prevention for the Omaha people
- In 1933, her hospital was named a National Historic Landmark and is now called the Susan La Flesche Picotte Center.

## References

Pratt, S. (2019, March 28). 10 native women you should have learned about in history class. HelloGiggles. Retrieved February 28, 2022, from <https://hellogiggles.com/lifestyle/native-women-learned-history-class/>

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# Suzan Shown Harjo

1945-



## Who Is She?

Suzan Shown Harjo is a poet, writer, lecturer, advocate, and more. Harjo is Cheyenne and Muscogee and is currently the president and executive director of the Morning Star Institute, a non-profit American Indian rights organization.

Harjo has been incredibly busy throughout her life with *many* advocacy efforts:

- Since the 1960s, Harjo has been advocating for schools, colleges, and professional teams to get rid of Native names and mascots.
- In 1967, Harjo advocated for sacred garments at the Museum of the American Indian in New York to be returned to their rightful tribes and helped change policies surrounding Native artifacts.
- In the '70s, she served as legislative liaison for law firms that fought for American Indian rights.
- In 1978, she was appointed as a congressional liaison for Indian Affairs.

## Fast Facts

- Harjo co-produced the first American Indian news program in the United States, "Seeing Red."
- In 2014, Harjo received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which is the United States' highest civilian honor.

## References

Pratt, S. (2019, March 28). 10 native women you should have learned about in history class. HelloGiggles. Retrieved February 28, 2022, from <https://hellogiggles.com/lifestyle/native-women-learned-history-class/>

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# Wilma Mankiller

1945-2010



## Who Was She?

Wilma Mankiller was a citizen of the Cherokee Nation and was born in Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

At 11 years old, Wilma

and her family were relocated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs Relocation Program to San Francisco, California. Here, she became involved in the Black Panther Party and became inspired by activism. In 1977, Mankiller returned to Oklahoma, where she started various community projects in support of her Cherokee people.

## Fast Facts

- In 1983, she became deputy principal chief of the Cherokee Nation.
- In 1998, Mankiller was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

## References

Pratt, S. (2019, March 28). 10 native women you should have learned about in history class. HelloGiggles. Retrieved February 28, 2022, from <https://hellogiggles.com/lifestyle/native-women-learned-history-class/>

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# Winona LaDuke

1959-



## Who Is She?

Winona LaDuke is an Anishinaabekwe (Ojibwe) enrolled member of the Mississippi band Anishinaabeg and was born in Los Angeles in 1959. Winona graduated from Harvard in 1982 with a degree in rural economic development, and here her interest in Native issues grew. Founder of the Indigenous Women's Network (IWN), the White Earth Land Recovery Project (WELRP), and the Honor the Earth group, Winona continues to fight for American Indian rights. As an activist, economist, and author, she has shown devotion to advocating for Indigenous control of their homelands, natural resources, and cultural practices.

## Fast Facts

- When Winona was young, she spent her summers living in Native communities to develop a stronger connection with her heritage.
- Winona has received many honors for her advocacy work.

## References

Brandman, M. (2021, April). Winona LaDuke. Biography: Winona LaDuke. Retrieved from <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/winona-laduke>

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# Zitkala-Sa

1876-1938



## Who Was She?

Gertrude Simmons grew up on the Yankton Indian Reservation in South Dakota and lived within the Sioux culture until 1884, when she went off to the White Indiana Manual Labor Institute in Indiana. Here, her American Indian heritage was taken from her.

Zitkala-Sa went on to higher education at Indiana's Earlham University and later studied music at the New England Conservatory of Music in Massachusetts. Zitkala-Sa wrote about her experience as a Native woman in education and became known for her critiques of the forced cultural assimilation of American Indians.

## Fast Facts

- As a teen, Simmons changed her name to Zitkala-Sa, which means Red Bird in Lakota.
- In 1926, Zitkala-Sa founded the National Council of American Indians.

## References

Pratt, S. (2019, March 28). 10 native women you should have learned about in history class. HelloGiggles. Retrieved February 28, 2022, from <https://hellogiggles.com/lifestyle/native-women-learned-history-class/>

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