Literature Review

Current literature on rematriation largely stems from Indigenous nations looking to reclaim culturally significant practices or lifeways. Rematriation primarily exists as an extension of seed sovereignty, a term that relates to the independent right to use seeds. Scholars are primarily focusing on how seed sovereignty and rematriation can dispel ongoing health crises in Indigenous communities. Scholars examine how nations implement seed sovereignty as an extension of social justice. Seed sovereignty can repair historical injustices that have affected and displaced Indigenous peoples, while also reinforcing political autonomy against colonial exploitation (Hoover 2017). Seeds are the cultural legacy of Indigenous peoples and should be treated as kin, coexisting along with the Indigenous nations that propagated, respected, and maintained them (Hill 2017). Indigenous seed sovereignty is an important part of Indigenous self-determination because it allows tribes to reconnect with their traditional life ways. Food is an integral part of any culture’s identity and without revitalization Pawnee culture is threatened.

Poverty and Food Insecurity

- As a group 1 out of 4 NA/AN are Food Insecure
- Indigenous communities have a poverty rate of 25.4% compared to the U.S. poverty rate of 12.3%
- 1 in 3 Native American children live in poverty
- Roughly 40% of Indigenous students attend high poverty schools compared to 8% of White students
- The median income for Native American households is roughly 30k less than the median income for White households

Food sources in Pawnee Jurisdiction

Analysis

Eagle Corn to the Pawnee has and always will be more than food. The Pawnee people are intrinsically tied to their food sources but through settler-colonialism our connections to food are warped. Reviving traditional Pawnee Eagle corn reinforces our tribal sovereignty and strengthens our community by providing healthy, culturally important foods. Addressing the information gathered in my community, it is clear the tribal people also recognize the importance of traditional diets. Officially establishing a traditional food program as a sovereign nation, increasing health education importance of traditional diets. Officially establishing a traditional food program as a sovereign nation, increasing health education

References


Acknowledgement

I would like to thank the Haskell Environmental Research Studies Institute (HERS) and the National Science Foundation for supporting this research. I would also like to thank the Pawnee Nation for making me who I am today. This project was supported by NSF EPSCoR Award 1656006.