

This analysis focused on how the Oneida of New York used tribal gaming to claim sovereignty over land and resources in New York. This unique aspect of Oneida history would not have been possible without the wealth of primary and secondary sources within the Lied Library.

My initial research efforts focused on selecting a tribe and studying their gaming history. I began my research by browsing the book stacks within the library, and as a result I discovered Colin G. Calloway's study on Native Americans in the U.S. Revolution. The book's history of the Oneida during and after the Revolution, coupled with my precursory review of Spilde Collections' tribal data, convinced me that the Oneida of New York would make an interesting case study. The next step was reviewing secondary sources that explained the dominant themes of gaming sovereignty. Through JSTOR, the book stacks, and Special Collection's books and Occasional Papers, I discovered studies by esteemed historians and anthropologists such as Eileen Luna-Firebaugh, Jessica Cattelino, Kevin Bruyneel, and Theodor Gordon who have analyzed the significance of cultural, social, economic, and political histories to contemporary gaming issues. After learning about the sovereignty issues facing tribal gaming, I shifted my research to focus on the Oneida themselves, and for this aspect I drew heavily from Laurence M. Hauptman, the dominant New York historian, who has written twelve books on tribal communities in New York. I also extensively used a legal history by George C. Shattuck.

Acquiring these secondary resources was not easy, but I had the benefit of them being centrally located within the library itself. My initial research issues centered on keyword searches within the online databases, inputting “Oneida sovereignty,” “Oneida gaming,” and a litany of other searches that yielded some results; but even the subject searches did not help with my specific focus of land sovereignty—as if land sovereignty leading to gaming was an exceptional case study. Hauptman’s books focused primarily on the Seneca. After perusing his research, I realized his insights were relevant because of the historical relationship of the mutual occupation of New York by the Seneca and Oneida, and their history together within the Iroquois Confederation. By selectively reading Oneida aspects of his histories, I realized that all major New York and federal policies aimed at the Iroquois would affect the Oneida. Bibliographies were not helpful either, because as with the subject searches, none of the studies I reviewed had much to do with interconnections between land sovereignty and gaming.

The primary documents I used were newspapers, gaming profiles, casino guides, economic impact studies, casino annual reports, government research information, a congressional hearing, and the New York state’s government webpage. These primary resources served as a historical dialogue, informing me that what I was reading was primarily a reoccurring land battle, which was both historic in origin but related to issues the Oneida were having in establishing their first casino and their attempts at establishing subsequent casinos. The Spilde Collection within Special Collections was the main venue in acquiring these sources, but I also relied on ProQuest for congressional documents and a government webpage for current information. My most significant source was the

Spilde Collection. I would have never been able to analyze the interplay between Oneida jurisdictional problems on gaming and land, and the historic legal claims that directly influenced these disputes.

The Spilde Collection is a little over a year old, and it is only available in Lied Library's Special Collections. As one of the first students to benefit from this resource, I was initially dismayed by the difficulty of locating resources that pertained to the Oneida. I used the Online Guide to narrow my search and browsed through magazines and documents within the 41-box collection, but most of the boxes had little or nothing to do with the Oneida. But, the discovery of resources that represented a unique aspect of Oneida history excited me, and as I began finding materials I realized that archival work could be insurmountably beneficial to analyzing and discovering new topics.

The sources to which my research is anchored determined the organization of my analysis. Part I is a general history of federal and state policies toward tribal societies in general, and the Oneida in particular. Part II addressed the advent of tribal gaming, the issues the Oneida had developing gambling on tribal reservations and the development of their first casino. Part III examines how the Oneida flexed their sovereignty by acquiring more property and developing future casinos.