

**Statement on the Indigenous Heritage of the Land on which Amherst College
and the Five Colleges Reside**

Compiled by Bixie Eutsler '20 and Ian Miller '19
for Dr. Manuela Picq's class Indigenous Women in World Politics

Suggested Language:

"I'd like to begin this event by acknowledging that we stand on Nonotuck land. I'd also like to acknowledge our neighboring Indigenous nations: the Nipmuc and the Wampanoag to the East, the Mohegan and Pequot to the South, the Mohican to the West, and the Abenaki to the North."

Facts:

People of Nonotuck:

The Nonotuck are one of the many Indigenous groups from *Kwinitewk*, the Connecticut River Valley. Their territory historically encompassed what is now Hadley and Northampton, MA and much of the land eastward toward what we now call the Pelham Hills.¹ In the early 17th Century, English and Dutch forces pitted various Algonkian groups from throughout *Kwinitewk* against other regional tribes. These wars decimated a population that was already ridden with European diseases to which the indigenous population had no immunity. Due to these "beaver wars," as well as the colonial wars of the 17th and 18th centuries, the Nonotuck people folded in with Abenaki people throughout Northern New England and Southern Quebec, and have continued journeys through the area. Many have family connections with current *Kwinitewk* residents.² Nearby territories belong to the Nipmuc to the East, and the Abenaki and Pocumtuck to the North.³

Lord Jeffery Amherst: The namesake of Amherst, MA and former mascot of Amherst College:

From 1763-1766, Lord Jeffery Amherst, the General who led the British in its conquest of Canada from the French, directed the British colonial forces' action during Pontiac's War, an indigenous rebellion ranging throughout the colonies. During this time, letters he wrote show that he advocated for the dissemination of smallpox-laden blankets to the native population.⁴ While it is unclear whether the plot was ever completed⁵, Amherst did, in an exchange with a subordinate, write, "You will Do well to try to inoculate the Indians, by means of Blankets, as well as to Try Every other Method, that can Serve to Extirpate this Execrable Race. - I should be very glad [if] your Scheme for Hunting them down by Dogs could take Effect; but England is at too great a Distance to think that at present."⁶

¹ Brooks, Lisa. "Map 3: Kwinitewk." *The Common Pot*, Amherst College, 2008, lbrooks.people.amherst.edu/thecommonpot/map3.html.

² Bruchac, Marge. "Abenaki Connections to 1704: The Sadoques Family and Deerfield, 2004." In *Captive Histories: English, French, and Native Narratives of the 1704 Deerfield Raid*, edited by Haefeli Evan and Sweeney Kevin, 262-78. University of Massachusetts Press, 2006. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vk658.29>.

³ Brooks, Lisa. "Our Beloved Kin: Northern-Front-Native-Place-Names-Full-View-MAP-PPip89.Jpg." *Our Beloved Kin*, ourbelovedkin.com/awikhigan/northern-front-native-place-names-full-view-map-ppip89jpg.

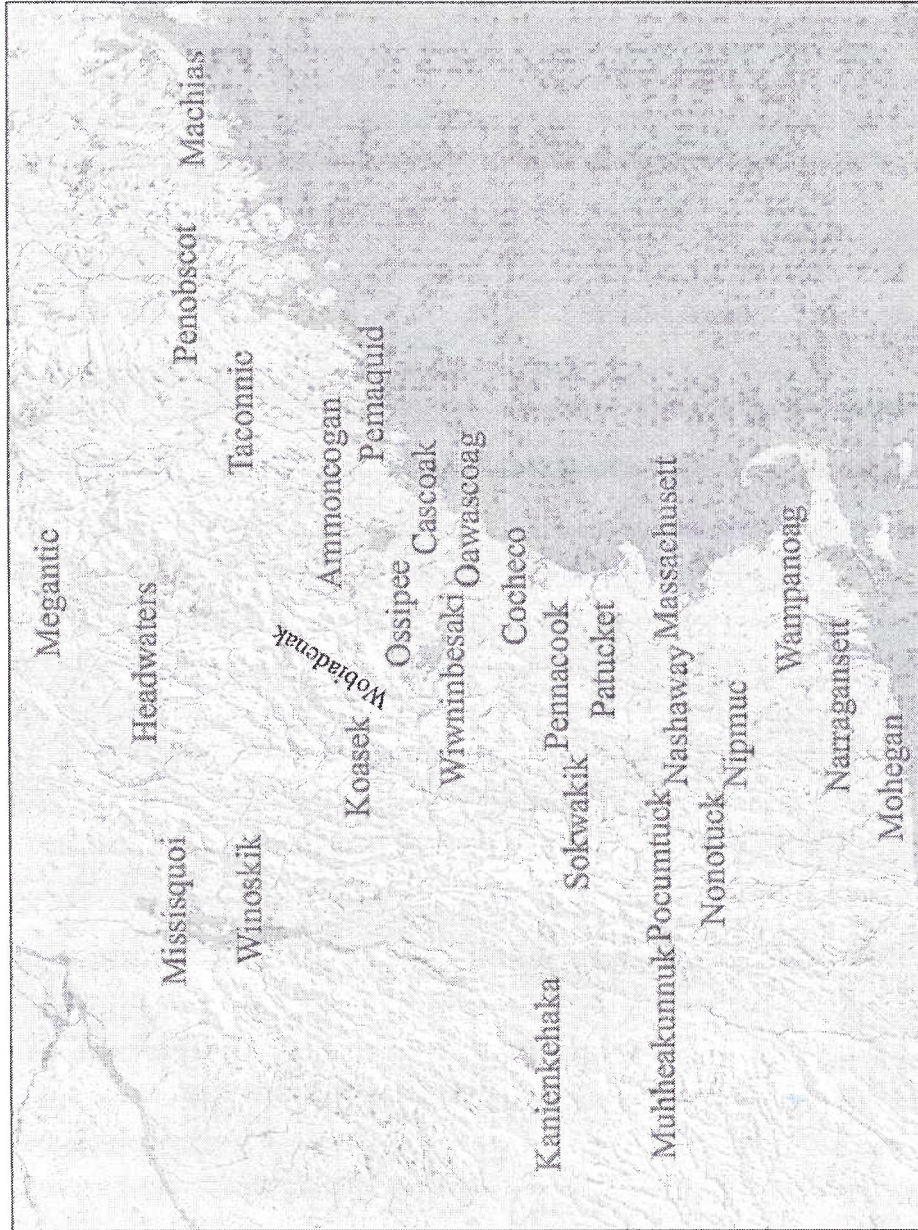
⁴ "Amherst and Smallpox," accessed April 10, 2018, https://www.umass.edu/legal/derrico/amherst/lord_jeff.html

⁵ Miranda, Christine. "Tracing Lord Jeff." *Beyond Lord Jeff*, Wordpress, 14 May 2015, beyondlordjeff.wordpress.com/2015/04/09/tracing-the-mascot/.

⁶ "Amherst and Smallpox," accessed April 10, 2018, https://www.umass.edu/legal/derrico/amherst/lord_jeff.html



Northern Front Territories



This map shows the territories of Native groups prior to European intervention.⁷

⁷ Brooks, Lisa. "Our Beloved Kin: Northern-Front-Native-Place-Names-Full-View-MAP-PPip89.Jpg." *Our Beloved Kin*, ourbelovedkin.com/awikhigan/northern-front-native-place-names-full-view-map-ppip89jpg.