

## ***What's wrong with this picture??***



I used to think this was cute when my brother and I wore these costumes as children.

But since working with the Penobscot Nation on LD 291, I've changed my mind.

### ***Why?***

1. These costumes do not represent any particular Indigenous tribe.
2. As I am not of Native American ancestry, I cannot pretend to be one.
3. I am not honoring any Native people dressing up in a 'costume' that perpetuates

stereotypes.

### ***What can I do differently?***

I now try to:

- honor them by identifying my own biases/prejudices;
- learn more about specific tribes in the past and today;
- when speaking of Native Americans, I now try to identify a specific people and a specific time period;
- use culturally inappropriate materials as teaching tools;
- acquire culturally appropriate materials for my students; and
- share my new perspective with everyone who will listen.
- I also now use the term 'regalia' instead of costume.

This packet provides the educator with starter materials as you begin your work on LD 291. It is not meant to be all-inclusive. Although my primary focus initially was on stereotypes and elementary levels, I have attempted to include starter resources/info for all levels. I urge you to begin a collection of your own observations, books, websites, and articles that may be of benefit to your own school district. For those working with upper levels, I have included sample copies of book reviews for books for older students from [The Broken Flute](#) (Oyate).

Feel free to contact me with any questions/comments you may have during or after this project.

Lynn Lowell Mayer, Librarian  
Old Town Elementary School