

History Department Web-Talk on Being Upper Skagit

The Department of History on 24 September 2020 held a web-talk on *Being Upper Skagit*. The Upper Skagit tribe living in the State of Washington is one of the 500 tribes in the USA and like all Indigenous American tribes have been pushed to the margins after the discovery of the Americas more than five hundred years ago. Ryan Booth belonging to the Upper Skagit explored their struggles, hopes and how far have they been able to preserve their traditional culture. While a lot has been written about the or the aboriginals in the last few decades very few have given an insider's perspective and this talk was successful at providing an in-depth analysis of the travails of the Native Americans from the beginnings of the colonial settlements and to what extent their grievances have been redressed. Booth explained how Indigenous Americans have moved forward with more opportunities and affirmative being provided to them. From being referred to pejoratively as 'Red Indian' the modern appropriate nomenclature is 'Native American' or 'Indigenous American' It led to a better understanding of the marginalized, their customs and whether these are at the danger of being obliterated or will they survive in modern pluralistic societies.

The talk was attended by students of History, Political Science and Geography. It was particularly relevant as some students could draw a parallel between the tribal communities in India and those of USA.