

Driving the Online Conversation by and about Native Americans?

Based on an analysis of the conversations by
and about Native Americans on social media

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What did we do?

- We analyzed 3 **online** conversations from 2023:
 - The general US public talking about Native Americans
 - Native Americans talking about Native Americans
 - Native Americans talking about politics



Photo Credit: National Museum of the American Indian

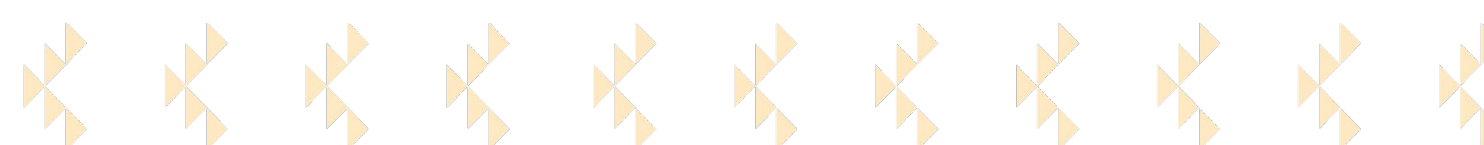




Who did we study?

- **Influential Native Americans on Twitter**
 - Initially, we empirically identified top 100 of about 1,700 self-identified Native Americans on Twitter with at least 250 followers, ranked by key performance metrics (engagement, reach, etc.).
 - Later, we added 58 prominent offline Native American influencers to see if they shifted findings.
- **General US public on Twitter**
 - We sampled almost 1 million tweets from Twitter and several hundred thousand reddit comments that discussed Native Americans to analyze and compare to what native voices were saying.

Photo Credit: rawpixel.com



The power of names

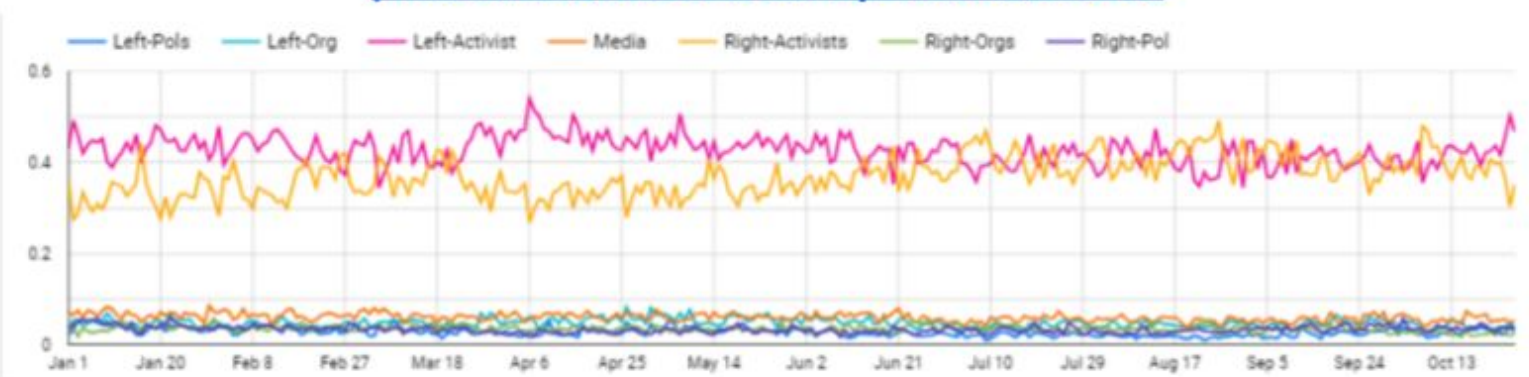
- “Native American” is the most common collective name used by the general US public and by self-identified Native Americans online.
 - Native Americans are much more likely to refer to themselves as such (68%) compared to the general US population (55%).
 - The general US public is much more likely to use “Indigenous Peoples” (28%) compared to Native Americans using the name (18%)
- Is there a reluctance by the general population to embrace the name “Native American”?
 - Anecdotally, we’ve seen a similar dynamic in non-Jews’s reluctance to refer to “Jews” compared to Jews.
 - Is this a misperception of what might be considered offensive?
 - “Jews” can go either way depending on tone and context.
 - “Native American” references “America”, which is the European-given name for our country/continent.
 - Can this be changed by pro-actively shaping the national conversation?



Key findings

- Native Americans span the political and ideological spectrum similarly to the rest of the population.
- Including the 58 offline Native American influencers did not change the overall way the general US population talked about Natives.

Figure 5. How Native Americans talk about general politics compared to left- and right-political influencers (January–October, 2023)





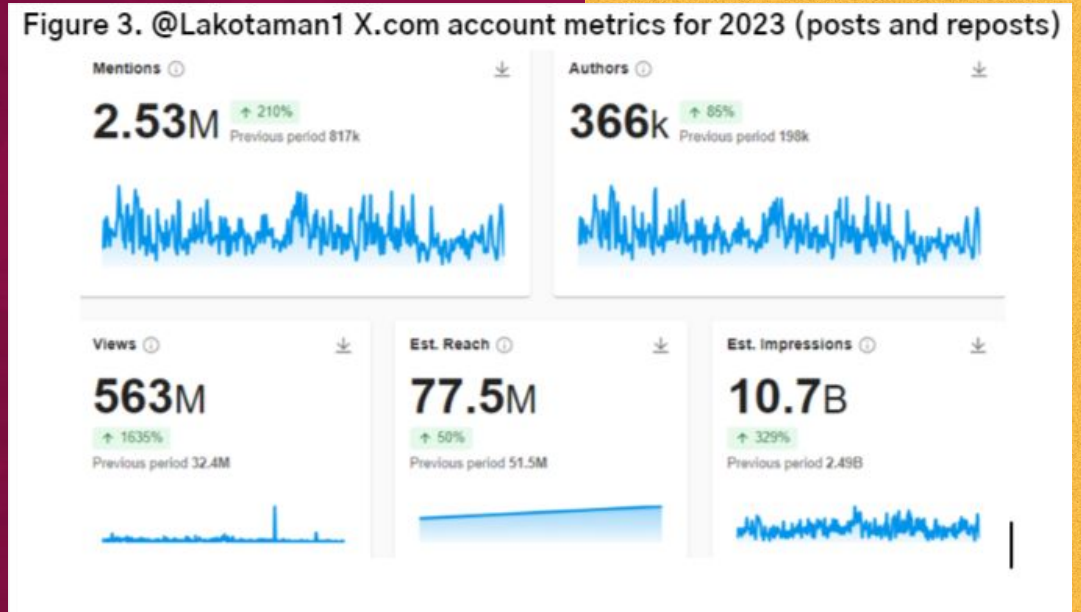
Who is the most influential Native American online?

@LakotaMan1 is the most influential Native American online (based on 2023 data).

- **Impressions:** @LakotaMan1's posts generated 10.7B impressions
- **Engagement:** @LokotaMan1 engaged with 366K Twitter users

Why is LakotaMan1 so effective?

- He is not a publisher, he is an organizer
 - He asks a lot of questions and provides a lot of answers, engaging his audience in conversation.
- He talks a lot about his values, not just his positions.
 - He connects them to each other, but often leads with values (like how important family is to him).
- He posts often, often about regular life topics
 - He makes it personal.
- He is socially generous (reposts often)



Native influencers

Influencer	Reach	X Bio
@lakotaman1	514271	Oglala Lakota —Enrolled at Pine Ridge, S.D. — “The earth sings her revolution, she calls brave men and women to her defense.” — The only easy day was yesterday. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 224M Impressions last week• Posts AND replies many times a day
@cherokeenation	70108	Siyo! The Cherokee Nation is the largest tribal government in the United States with more than 450,000 citizens around the globe. Please enjoy our tweets! Wado! <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6.9M impressions last week• No reposts of others (1 the previous week)
@zhaabowekwe	55834	ojibwe. mama bear. land defender. founder @giniwcollective. co-founder @notyourmascots. speaker @TEDtalks. words @nytimes @vogue @cnn. zhaabo@gmail.com <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 33M impressions last week• Many reposts – generous
@navajotimes	54401	NAVAJO TIMES – OFFICIAL TWITTER SITE. We are the NEWSPAPER OF THE NAVAJO PEOPLE. News tips: editorial@ntpc.biz <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 744K impressions last week• 1–3 posts per day – infrequent

Don't just publish, organize

- If you are only talk at your audience, you are not getting the full value from social media.
- Make it personal, even when posting from organization channels,
 - Speak from a human voice,
 - Share your values,
 - Engage in conversation, and
 - Move people into your online community.
- Track your key metrics... not just how your posts do, but how far your message travels, and how many people are embracing it.



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Questions?

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