Interest in Native American studies has never been greater, as evidenced by the growing number of books, films and educational courses devoted to this field of study. Unfortunately, comprehensive, well-organized reference books on the subject have been virtually nonexistent, until now. Filling the void is the Gale Encyclopedia of Native American Tribes, a new resource that offers both broad and in-depth coverage of 400 Native American groups.

Appropriate for all levels
Offering hundreds of objective and sensitive essays on the history, culture and current status of the tribes most studied in high school, the Encyclopedia consistently presents information at a level appropriate for students and general audiences. Coverage includes not only groups whose roots are in the U.S. and Canada, but also those from selected areas of Mexico/Central America, South America, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

Details you won’t find elsewhere
Tribal essays help students and other readers gain a deeper understanding of Native American culture. Each presents a thorough introduction that explains how the tribe began and describes its current status. Location, population and language are also described here. Following the introduction, entries typically cover the following points:

- **History** — a brief description of the tribe prior to European settlement and over the last 500 years
- **Oral Literature** — stories passed down over the years through the tribe, including information on the cultural significance of the story and a bibliography of its source
- **Culture** — the tribe's religion, language, architecture, subsistence methods, clothing, adornments, healing practices and customs
- **Current Tribal Issues** — land claims, rights to natural resources, health care, civil rights and preservation of culture

Each entry ends with a bibliography, directing readers to sources for further information and study.

Arranged for ease of use
Native American Tribes is arranged into four regional volumes that cover the Northeast and Southeast; the Great Basin and Southwest; the Arctic, Subarctic, Plateau, and Great Plains; and The Pacific Northwest, California and Hawaii. Regional essays throughout the four volumes give users a geographic perspective as well as insights on commonalities among cultures and tribes. Entries on individual tribes follow in alphabetical order and are consistently arranged by rubrics that simplify research and make it easy to compare groups.

Features keep interest high
The Gale Encyclopedia of Native American Tribes compelling content includes hundreds of Native stories, more than 200 short biographies of tribal leaders, and both historical and modern maps. More than 650 photos and illustrations add visual appeal, and “key dates” boxes detail significant events in each tribes history at a glance. You’ll also find a helpful glossary of terms, and each volume contains both cumulative and volume-specific indexes.
INTRODUCTION
The Métis, a group whose name is derived from a French word meaning "to mix," are descendants of Native women and European fur traders. Although the majority of Métis were French and other Crees, Ojibways, or Scottish ancestry, they are a proportion that trace their European origins to English, Scottish, Irish, or Scandinavian settlers. While there were many such offspring during the early years of the fur trade in Canada's west coast, and later in the Great Lakes region, the term Métis is most often applied to those who developed a common identity on Canada's plains during the mid-nineteenth century, as well as their descendants. The Métis mixed ancestry has evolved, and continues to evolve, much debate as to their correct definition and identification. Indeed, as Joe Sawchuck commented in his book, The Métis of Manitoba: Reconciliation of an Ethnic Identity, "it is easier to define what is not a Métis than indicating one that is."

Historically, the Métis was a nomadic and autonomous group that adapted and relocated as political, ecological, and social conditions demanded. As a result, there were numerous periods of displacement whereby large portions of the Métis population migrated to modern-day Alberta, Saskatchewan, and along the North Dakota border in the United States. Generally speaking, following the Northwest Rebellion of 1885 and the ensuing migration westward, the Métis could be found from Lake Superior to Alberta. As a testament to their independence, the Métis have repeatedly declared reservations at the behest of the government, opting to form their own settlements instead. Today, organizations such as the Alberta Federation of Métis Settlements represent and position for their interests at the government level. Métis population estimates for the mid-1890s, according to Arthur J. Ray in Indians in the Far North, "totalled only 150 persons in 1813, increased . . . to nearly 1,300 in 1881 and 2,000 in 1883. By 1886 the population had climbed to 3,250, while in 1870 it exceeded 12,000." According to Canadian census figures, there were 135,285 Métis identifying themselves as such in 1991.

HISTORY
The history of the Métis began with the advent of French fur traders, known as voyageurs, who penetrated into the wood and prairies of Western Canada during the 1600s. Lacking the required expertise to survive in the harsh and wild conditions of the interior, the whites turned to the Native population for instruction. The Western Canadian Indians (Cree, Ojibways, and Assiniboines) accommodated the traders with all manner of goods and services; they acted as guides, interpreters, canoe men, trappers, and hunters. They supplied the voyageurs with pemmican, buffalo tongue, clothing, and women. As the fur fashion exploded in Europe throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, many French traders found themselves far away and lonely. Most of these traders were in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, an English fur trading company based on the shores of the Hudson Bay. Through casual and sometimes formal unions between French men and Native women, the Métis people were born. At first, French politicians encouraged these marital relationships, as Native Ingenuity was necessary for the survival of the colony and fur trade. In Native People, Native Lands, anthropologist Jennifer D. H. Brown asserted that, "French marital offspring were born of formal church marriages . . . French officials support-