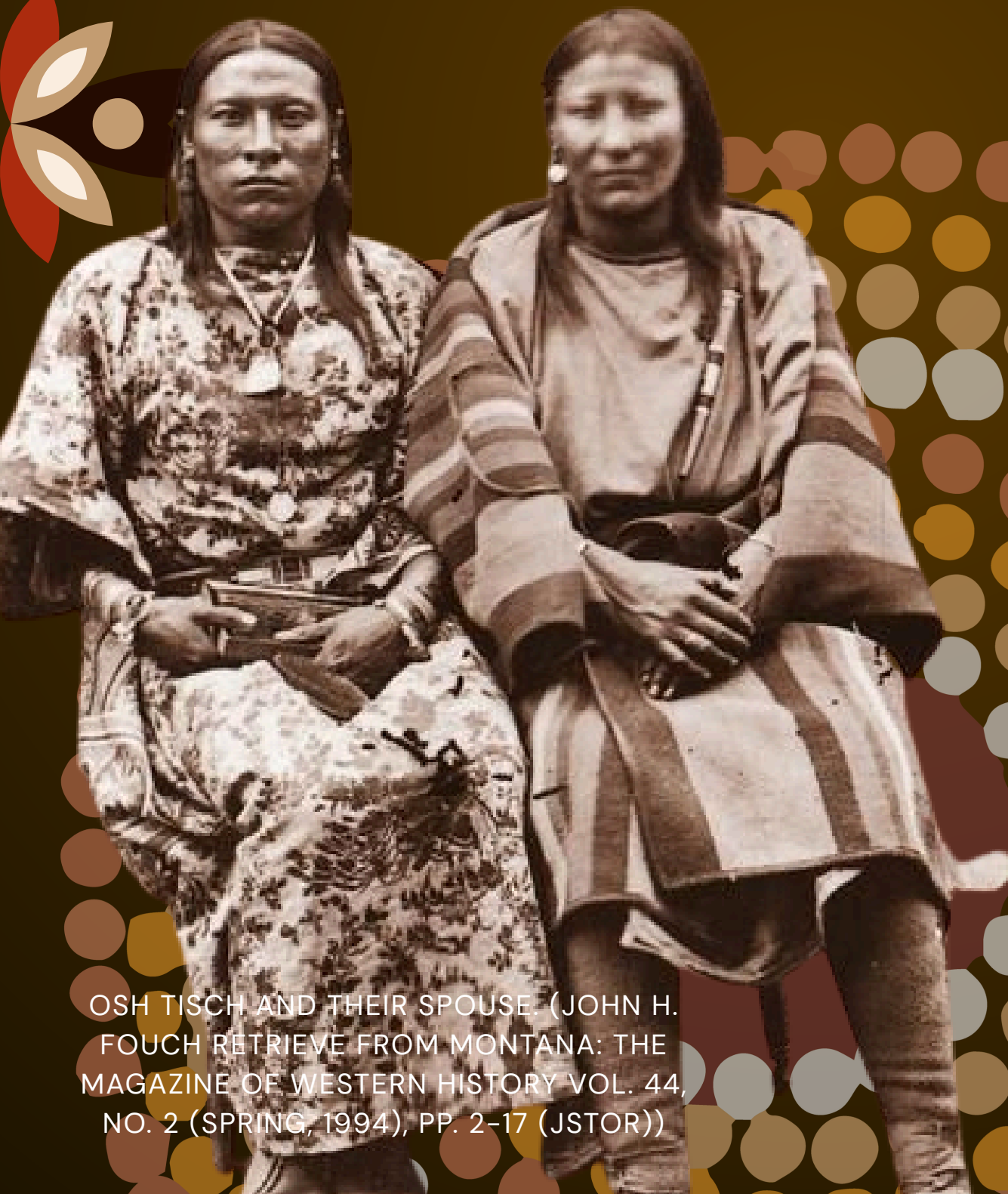


LET'S LEARN:

WHY THE 2S FIRST?



OSH TISCH AND THEIR SPOUSE. (JOHN H. FOUCH RETRIEVE FROM MONTANA: THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN HISTORY VOL. 44, NO. 2 (SPRING, 1994), PP. 2-17 (JSTOR))



WHY THE 2S FIRST?

“Two-Spirit” (2S) is a term created in 1990 at the Third Annual Intertribal Native American/First Nations Gay and Lesbian Conference in Winnipeg. It reflects Indigenous gender and sexual diversity across Nations and acknowledges the sacred roles many Two-Spirit people hold within their communities (Wilson, 1996; Driskill, 2010).



22ND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL TWO-SPIRIT GATHERING
POW WOW, WINNIPEG, 2010.
SOURCE: TWO-SPIRITED COLLECTION, BOX 1, FOLDER 4-
3, [UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG ARCHIVES](#), PHOTO BY
TREVOR STRATTON.



WHY THE 2S FIRST?

By placing 2S first, we recognize Indigenous Peoples as the original caretakers of these lands and honour pre-colonial understandings of gender, identity, and sexuality that existed long before Western LGBTQ+ frameworks.



FLAG REPRESENTING 2 SPIRITS PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS
© ART ZOCCOLE, 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS,
WWW.2SPIRITS.COM



WHY THE 2S FIRST?

The shift to 2SLGBTQIA+ is part of decolonizing how we talk about gender, identity, and sexuality. For centuries, colonialism attempted to erase Indigenous identities, including Two-Spirit roles, through violence, residential schools, and religious assimilation (Jacobs, Thomas, & Lang, 1997).

Putting 2S first resists this erasure and restores rightful visibility and respect to Indigenous worldviews.



WHY THE 2S FIRST?

Two-Spirit people hold unique cultural, spiritual, and social roles in their Nations. Centering 2S identities affirms their sovereignty, leadership, and right to define their own identities, not through Western lenses, but through their own traditions.

It also reminds organizations, service providers, and allies that reconciliation includes making space for Indigenous-led knowledge, healing, and leadership in all equity work.



RRC POLYTECH LIBRARY. (2022, SEPTEMBER 26). POW-WOW 2019 – INDIGENOUS DRESS AND DANCING [PHOTOGRAPH]. IN NIIZH MANITOAG: TWO-SPIRIT SPOTLIGHT. [FLAG REPRESENTING 2 SPIRITS PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS](#)
© ART ZOCCOLE, 2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE 1ST NATIONS, WWW.2SPIRITS.COM

Learn More:

Two-Spirit Archives at the University of
Winnipeg

<https://archives.uwinnipeg.ca/our-collections/two-spirit-collection.html>

2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations
2spirits.org

Native Youth Sexual Health Network
<https://www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com/>



References

Driskill, Q.-L. (2010). Doubleweaving Two-Spirit Critiques: Building Alliances between Native and Queer Studies. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 16(1-2), 69-92. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10642684-2009-013>

Jacobs, S.-E., Thomas, W., & Lang, S. (1997). *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*. University of Illinois Press.

Wilson, A. (1996). How We Find Ourselves: Identity Development and Two-Spirit People. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(2), 303-317.

2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations. (n.d.). About Two-Spirit. Retrieved from <https://2spirits.org>

