

Portrayal and Popular Opinion

Weston Stephens

This lesson asks students to consider how portrayals of Algonquians shaped popular opinion.

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will gain an understanding of a historical time period, including that time period's major themes
- Students will contextualize and connect primary and secondary accounts.
- Students will identify bias and understand how an image shapes public opinion.

Grade Level: Grade 10

Standards:

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6:** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

Historical Background: Gaudio and Tucker readings (Materials).

Materials:

- Michael Gaudio, "1585: John White paints Virginia" from *A New Literary History of America*, edited by Greil Marcus and Werner Sollors. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.
- Abigail Tucker, "Sketching the Earliest Views of the New World: The watercolors that John White produced in 1585 gave England its first startling glimpse of America," *Smithsonian Magazine* (December 2008).
- Class Handout (White and De Bry images).

References:

- Darvin Martin, "A History of Conestoga Indiantown," Digital Paxton.
- Johannes van Meurs, "Susquehannock Fort, 1671," Digital Paxton.
- "Index of White Watercolors and De Bry Engravings," Virtual Jamestown.

Procedures:

1. Have students read Gaudio and Tucker readings as homework. Teacher may also assign textbook reading on European exploration and interaction with Native Peoples.
2. Opener Activity: Have students primary source image (van Meurs) with secondary source context (Martin).
 - a. Johannes van Meurs, "Susquehannock Fort, 1671," Digital Paxton:



SUSQUEHANNOCK FORT, 1671.

- b. Darwin Martin, "A History of Conestoga Indiantown," Digital Paxton:
"Captain John Smith referenced the Susquehannock in his account of exploration regarding the Chesapeake Bay in 1608...Smith was surprised to find the Susquehannocks trading French goods from Quebec, a colony founded just a few years earlier. The Susquehannocks were also noted by the Swedish missionary Johannes Campanius, in 1645, when he described a fort located twelve Swedish miles (about 80 English miles) from New Sweden (now Wilmington, Delaware). 'They came daily to trade with us...They live on a high mountain...there they have a fort, a square building surrounded with palisades...They have guns and small iron canon.'"

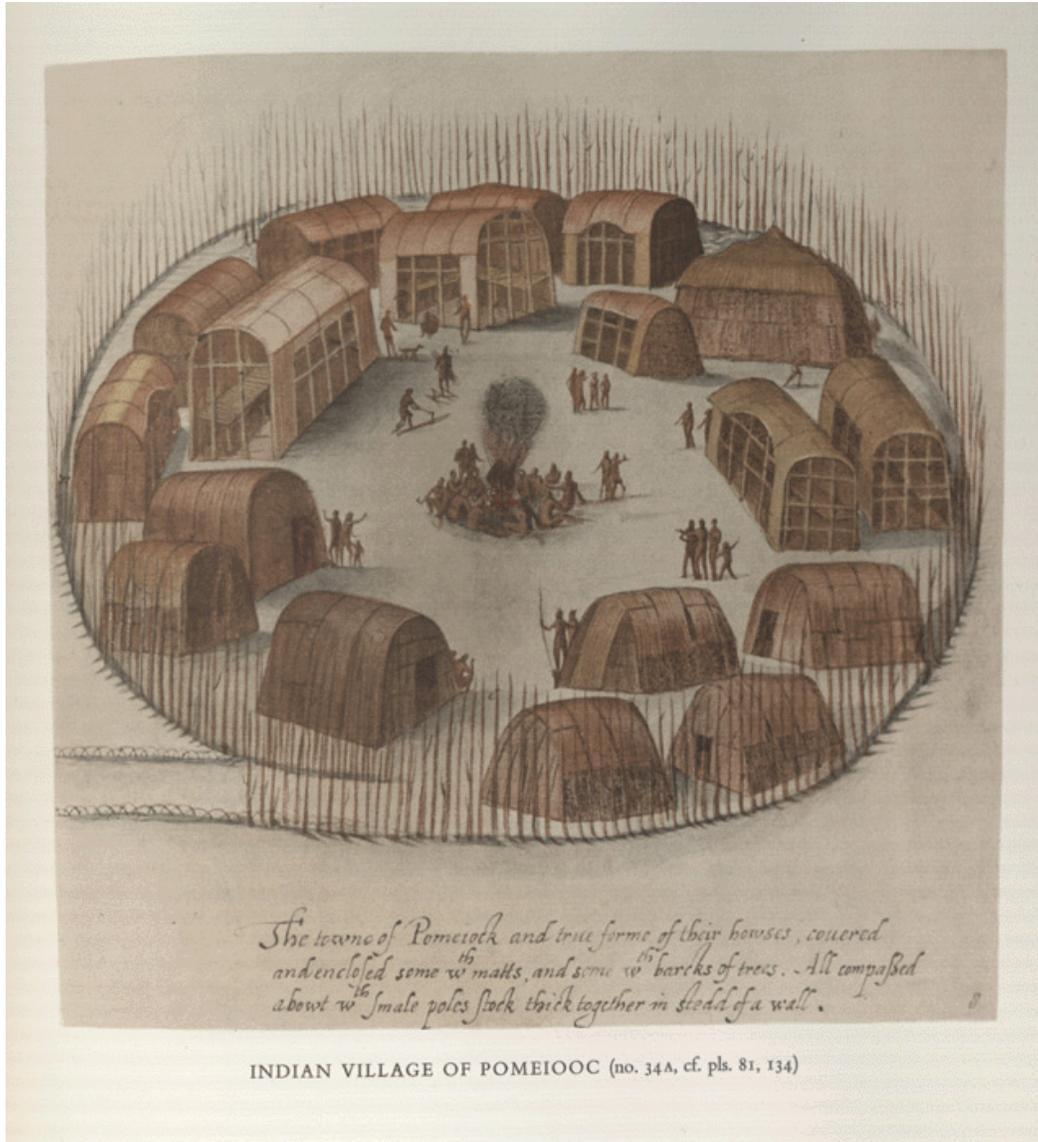
3. Split students into three groups. Give each group two of the six John White and De Bry engravings and watercolors. Only after students examine all six separately may they compare images.
 - a. John White, "Indian Village of Pomeiooc" (1585-1586), British Museum.
 - b. Theodor De Bry, "The Tovvne of Pomeiooc" (1590), based on "Indian Village of Pomeiooc," John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.
 - c. John White, "Indian Village of Secoton" (1585-1586). Virtual Jamestown, licensed by the Trustees of the British Museum.
 - d. Theodor De Bry, "The Tovvne of Secota" (1590), based on "Indian Village of Secoton," John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.
 - e. John White, "Indian Man and Woman Eating" (1585-1586), British Museum.
 - f. Theodor De Bry, "Their sitting at meate" by De Bry (printed 1590), John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.
4. Have students discuss the following questions in groups:
 - a. What aspects of Algonquian life does John White stress in his watercolors? Does De Bry change emphasis at all? If so, how?
 - b. How do White's descriptions and labels help you understand Algonquian life? Does your reading of the portrayals change when De Bry alters labels and descriptions? If so, how?
 - c. Why do you think De Bry would alter White's images for English readers? What is his goal in doing this?
5. Have students share their answers with the class. Then discuss portrayal and public opinion as a class.

Assessment and Extensions:

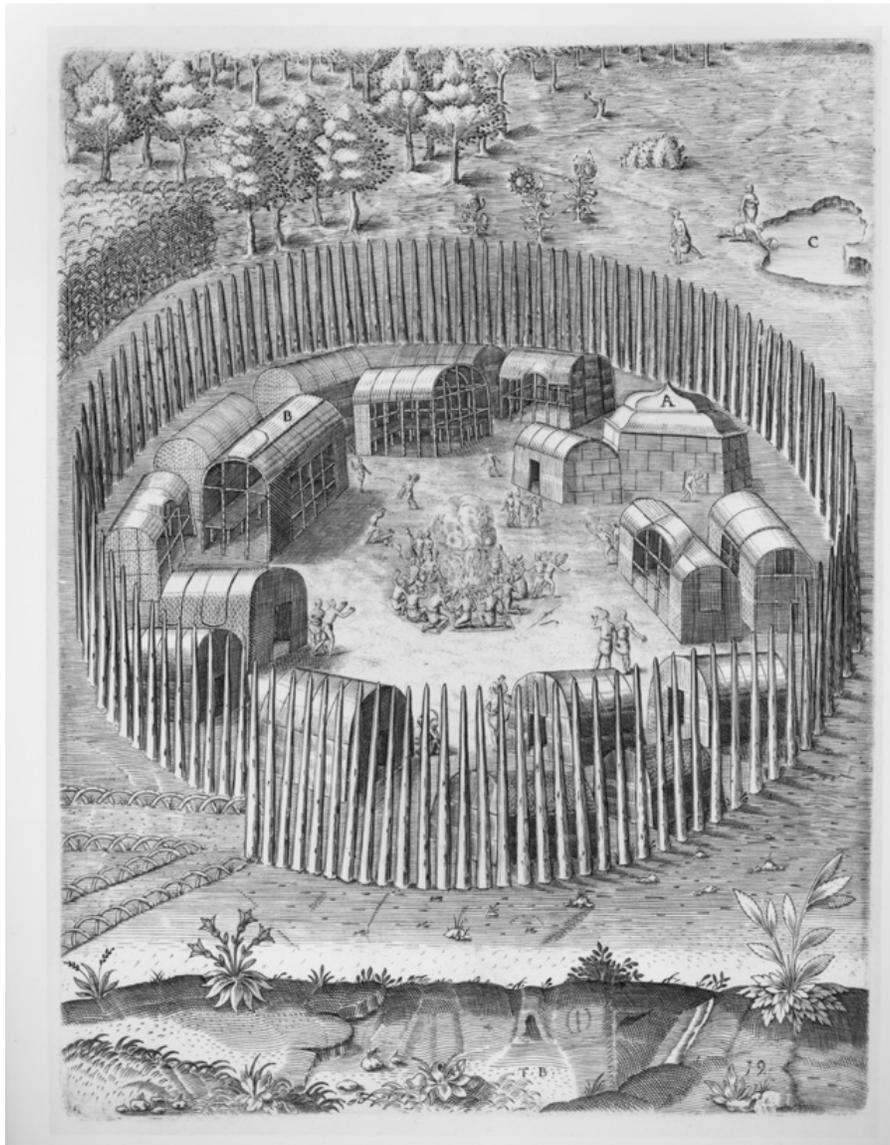
Have students a 1-2 paragraph reflection that responds to this essential question: *How can images shape popular opinion?* Students should use the historical examples from class (White and De Bry) as well as images from news that may be currently shaping popular opinion.

Class Handout

John White, "Indian Village of Pomeiooc" (1585-1586), British Museum.



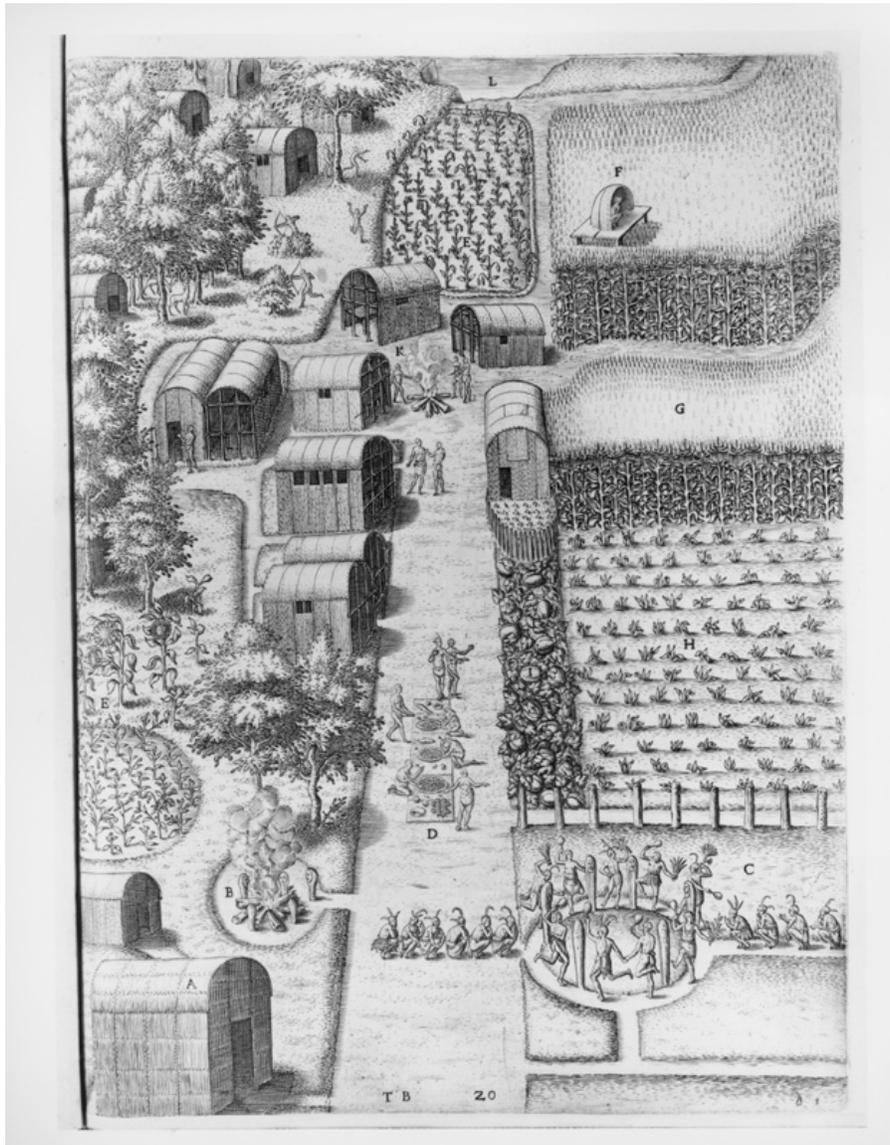
Theodor De Bry, "The Tovvne of Pomeiooc" (1590), based on "Indian Village of Pomeiooc," John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.



John White, "Indian Village of Secoton" (1585-1586). Virtual Jamestown, licensed by the Trustees of the British Museum.



Theodor "The Tolvne of Secota" (1590), based on "Indian Village of Secoton," John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.



John White, "Indian Man and Woman Eating" (1585-1586), British Museum.



Theodor De Bry, "Their sitting at meate" (1590), John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.

