

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/we-are-not-animals/>

The speaker discusses their motivation and experiences in writing a book about the indigenous history of California, particularly focusing on the Santa Cruz area and the impact of Spanish colonialism. They reflect on their family history in New Mexico and their curiosity about indigenous communities in Santa Cruz, where they discovered a significant lack of written history.

Through extensive archival research and collaboration with local indigenous communities, particularly the Amam Watson Tribal Band, the speaker uncovered crucial narratives that were previously overlooked. They highlight the importance of oral histories and indigenous perspectives, emphasizing that their work centers on the stories of resilience and resistance among indigenous peoples.

The book aims to dispel myths surrounding California missions, which were often portrayed positively by earlier historians. The speaker highlights the influence of indigenous women in maintaining leadership roles despite patriarchal structures imposed by the colonizers. They recount a specific incident involving a woman named J Kenat, who orchestrated a plan to assassinate a cruel padre, demonstrating indigenous resistance strategies.

The speaker advocates for a deeper understanding of colonial histories and their ongoing effects on contemporary indigenous communities, encouraging readers to learn from and support these communities. Ultimately, they hope that their work will inspire greater appreciation for indigenous resilience and provoke inquiries into local histories of colonialism in various regions.