The National Museum of American Indians

The National Museum of American Indians, located at 1 Bowel Green, New York, was founded in 1916 by George Gustave Heye. The foundation was created after obtaining many indigenous objects, turning it into one of the largest collections in the world. What stood out to me the most was the history behind Indigenous Americans. Sometimes it can be so easy to hear people talk about how this land is stolen, but when I visited the museum, it gave me a bit of a shocking realization that I too play some part in being on stolen land by living here in America. Seeing the beautiful clothes, the collection of objects, and the things they used in their everyday civilizations shook me to the core because that was the first time, I actually pictured real civilization and life before us on this land. It can be so easy to hear about it, but when you visualize it, things become a reality. The Lacrosse sticks were a huge reality check for me. When I learned that boys in the Haudenosaunee tribe were given these sticks when they were born, I was a bit confused; it is something we have never been taught in school or when the history of lacrosse is brought up. In a way, I felt as if America had taken certain things from different cultures, changed their name and meaning, and turned it into their own.

The staff could represent the topic well enough by answering questions regarding a collection or helping us understand the history when there needed more clarity. At the same time, not every single staff member there was Indigenous Native American, so in a way, they couldn't make that close relation background and representation.

One thing I learned from this museum was the depth and torture that Native Americans went through when Europeans migrated to America. I romanticized movies like Pocahontas, and we see how Americans try to wash away the horrific things that occurred during this time. Still, while I was there, I was able to learn about the true history (even things I was not taught in

school able) of Native Americans. After my visit, it led me to think about all of the times we went over how America came about during my time at school in the American System. I realized that every time Native Americans were a topic of discussion, it either tuned down with little detail and history of what life was like before Europeans migrated, or it was romanticized. After my visit, I realized that it was important to research and learn more about black history, other cultures' history, and how America came to be.