

# Lesson 5: Keywords and Phrases

## 1. Wounded Knee (1890)

On December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1890 near Wounded Knee on the Lakota Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, the U.S. 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment commanded by Major Samuel M. Whiteside intercepted Bigfoot's band of Minniconjou Lakota and 38 Hunkpapa Lakota. The troops went into the camp to disarm the Lakota, which, for reasons that may never be fully understood, resulted in the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry opening fire indiscriminately from all sides. The 7<sup>th</sup> killed men, women, and children, as well as some of their own fellow troopers. The surviving Lakota fled, but U.S. cavalrymen pursued and killed many who were unarmed. Some estimates placed the number of dead at 300 and many of the American soldiers who participated in the massacre were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

## 2. The Ghost Dance

Led by a Paiute prophet named Jack Wilson, or Wovoka. The Ghost Dance became prominent among many tribes of the Western U.S. during the 1880's. In the Ghost Dance, Native American tribes synthesized selective aspects of the ritual with their own beliefs, a process which was intended to effect positive changes in those who practiced it. While there are many misunderstandings about the Ghost Dance, Wovoka is believed to have prophesied a peaceful end to white American expansion, while preaching the goal of returning to more traditional ways. Practice of the Ghost Dance Movement is believed to have contributed to the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890 and to a larger conflict sometimes erroneously referred to as "The Ghost Dance War."

### 3. Ex Parte Crow Dog (1883)

Much like the Worcester ruling of 1832, this was a case in which the Supreme Court of the United States held that a federal court did not have

jurisdiction to try Crow Dog, an Indian who killed another Indian, Spotted Tail of the Brule Sioux, on the reservation when the tribal council had tried the offense. In a conflict between two members of the same tribe, one killed the other while on the reservation land. The tribe handled it according to Sioux tradition, and Crow Dog paid restitution. The U.S. government then tried Crow Dog for murder, and he was sentenced to hang. On his appeal to the Supreme Court, the court held that unless Congress authorized it, the courts had no jurisdiction to try the case. Outraged at this affront to Congressional control of Indian Territory, this case resulted in Congress enacting the Major Crimes Act in 1885.

#### 4. Major Crimes Act (1885)

Unwilling to tolerate murder and perceived lawlessness on Indian reservations, Congress worked quickly after the Crow Dog decision to amend a situation they believed was in desperate need of repair. In 1885, the U.S. legislature passed the