## National History Day Process Paper

"On Track to Citizenship: The Exploration, Encounter and Symbolic Exchange of the Wanamaker Expedition of Citizenship to the North American Indian"

When I was younger, Native American myths and folklore fascinated me. I was shocked to learn that my three times great grandmother was half Cherokee, and I felt a sense of pride in my distant heritage. In social studies this year, we started the semester by learning about bits and pieces of Native American history. In my opinion, we only scratched the surface, so I sought to find a Native American themed topic for National History Day. After many dead ends, I finally discovered the perfect topic when my mother told me about a book she read twenty years ago regarding the Rodman Wanamaker Expedition of Citizenship to the North American Indian.

For starters, I conducted my research both at the Boulder Public Libraries and at home through databases such as Prospector, Chinook, Worldcat, and ProQuest. I am very lucky to have a sister who attends the University of Colorado in Boulder because through her, I was able to access many of these databases, check out several elusive academic books, and access the University's special collections. The experience of looking through their special collections was remarkable, and one that I will never forget. After checking my ID, the librarian had me put everything but a pencil and paper into a locker, tie my hair back, put on gloves so as not to smudge the pages, and put the delicate books in cradles so as not to break their spines. I proceeded to pour over photographs, pamphlets, and books by using weighted shoe strings to hold down the edges of the pages. I ended up using several photographs from this experience in my performance including the ones of *Emma Kickapoo* and *Moses Wilkie*.

I selected the individual performance category for two reasons. The first was that I did an individual performance in eighth grade, and therefore, I could comfortably weigh the pros and cons of presenting one. The second reason was that I had a multitude of beautiful photographs from the expedition. Images cannot accompany a paper, my second preferred option, so I ruled that method out quickly. A performance also allows me to truly express the thoughts and feelings of someone who lived in the early 1900s, an aspect that I believe is imperative in a historical project. After raiding my siblings' wardrobes and going to the craft store twice, I finally assembled my costume and props. Then I set to practicing incessantly.

My topic relates to the theme because the Wanamaker Expedition of Citizenship sought to **explore** American Indian culture, before it "vanished," through **encounters** with every tribe in America in which photographs were taken and an American flag was ceremonially presented. Both the American Indians and leader Dixon viewed the American Flag as representative of honor and a suitable exchange for the American Indian's loyalty to the United States. The expedition and its exchange framework led to a high American Indian participation in World War I which set the stage for them to gain widespread citizenship in 1924.

Word Count: 500