Native Americans in the West
Marlon Brando, Pocahontas and Me…
How the West was Won

• 2/3 of Indians left lived on Plains; "Wild Indians"
  – Fierce fighters: held their own for 250yrs.
  – Eur. Introduced horses → adopted to their own use
  – Rapid fire of arrows: could fire 20 arrows to Eur. 1 or even 6 bullets (colt pistol)

• Buffalo – 12 million by end of Civil War
  – By 1878 – Fewer than 200 buffalo; railroad, hunters and skinners had killed them
Indian Reservations

• 1850s – Concentration – restricted to areas whites promised never to violate, then did…

• Reconstruction – Sherman/Sheridan sent to enforce Indian policy → HYPOCRISY by RadReps

• Grant’s “Peace Policy” – Civilize and Christianize
**Assimilation?**

- New social conscience, but cultural differences b/t whites and Indians made assimilation difficult
- **Helen Hunt Jackson** – Describes unjust treatment of Indians & need for reform
- **Collier**: “Collective corruption, corruption which did not know it was corrupt.”
• **Dawes Act (1887)** – Break up of reservations into private ownership of land by Indians
  – Those receiving allotments became US citizens
  – Each male could own 160 acres; ownership held in trust for 25 years; Indians could not sell land during that period → rejected farming
  – When trusteeship expired, lost much of their land to fleecing

• **Burke Act (1906)** – could reduce 25 years according to Govt. discretion → gave Indians citizenship

• Funds for education of Indian children

• **BLUM**: Most laws to assimilated Indians were failures, Indians lived in poverty on reservations.
New Western States

- Whites began settling, mining & building RRs → forced Indians to N, S & W
- If Indians refused reservations → subjected to Army
- Gold found in Black Hills of S. Dakota → Conflict!
Indian Wars

- **Sand Creek Massacre (1864)** – After 3 years of attacks by Arapaho & Cheyenne, **John Chivington** refused to accept surrender of **Black Kettle** & killed men, women & children.

- **Little Bighorn (1876)**
  - Sioux Indians were promised sacred grounds called the Black Hills (Wyoming & S. Dakota)
  - Gold was discovered there so 7th Cavalry ordered to move Sioux off ground, led by **Gen. George Custer vs. Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse** (Sioux & Cheyenne)
  - Custer and all 264 troops killed
  - Sitting Bull escapes, but **Sioux and Cheyenne finally defeated and forced to move to reservations**

*Your Heroes Are Not Our Heroes*

“Damn any man who sympathizes with Indians. I have come to kill Indians, and believe it is right and honorable to use any means under God’s heaven to kill Indians!”

“Scalps are what we are after... I long to be wading in gore!”

-The Reverend John M. Chivington, Leader of the Sand Creek Massacre
• 1886 – Apache **Geronimo** surrendered to end resistance in the Southwest

• 1890 – **Wounded Knee**, S. Dakota – 7\(^{th}\) Cavalry surrounded Sioux/Lakota → someone fired → troops used machine guns on Indians; 90 men/200 women & children killed