

AGAINST THE DARKNESS Multimedia Educational System

Written, produced and directed by Frederick Matthew Wiseman, Ph.D.

Directed by Anna Marie Roy
Computer postproduction by Frederick William Wiseman

(According to Assistant Attorney General Bill Griffin ¹ ...) There is no concrete evidence that this group (The Missisquoi Abenakis) comprised a distinct community from historical times to the present. The St. Francis band has not maintained a political influence or authority over its members from historical times. The family history of these members cannot be traced back through history to this Indian tribe.

Editorial "Opinion"

Burlington Free Press

May 2, 2005

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AN HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE
AGAINST THE DARKNESS SYSTEM

By Frederick M. Wiseman

The attack against Vermont native identity

In their sophisticated dismantling of Vermont

Indigenous identity ² , the Vermont Attorneys General determined that existing teaching materials fail to describe an indigenous Vermont Indian community. For example, the beliefs and activities illustrated in the Vermont Folklife Center's *The Abenakis: A living culture* to exemplify Vermont Abenaki culture, were actually ethnically equivocal (i.e. shared with the Franco-Vermont or even Anglo-Vermont communities), or derivative of Canadian (specifically Odanak/Wôlinak Abenakis of Quebec) or Midwestern (Oklahoma/Great Lakes "Pan Indian") Native sources ³ . This problem is much broader. Except for three semi-scholarly works, almost all Abenaki post contact culture history, language, spirituality, performing and decorative arts as taught in Vermont are derivative of Canadian, Maine, and Midwestern sources, ⁴ and there is little recent interest in generating Vermont (or even American)-based Abenaki studies.

Are the critics right—is there little of worth in Vermont Abenaki cultural history?

The Wôbanakik Heritage Center and the defense of Vermont Abenaki identity

In 1999 the Wôbanakik Heritage Center ⁵ was asked by the late Grand Chief Homer St. Francis and the Abenaki Tribal Council (St. Francis/Sokoki Band) to organize its material culture, archival imagery, and newly discovered primary documents, to supplement the outdated Abenaki Research Project's work on the recognition petition before the federal government. It was also called upon to refute specific anti-Missisquoi allegations by the Vermont Attorney General in 2002 and the Odanak Band Council in 2003. In response, the Center collections were re-evaluated, researched and photographed for 20+ written reports to the state and federal governments and to the Odanak Band Council. By late 2003, Vermont Indigenous politics; in relations with the State, and relations among Abenaki factions, made it obvious that mere written defense was inadequate. This political reality led to the decision to convert the assembled data and imagery into a multi media ⁶ presentation. In 2004, the Center began to purchase the necessary cameras, computers,

software, sound, lighting and projection systems, and recruit the technical expertise necessary to effectively carry out the data conversion.

Against the Darkness

The *Against the Darkness* project title was chosen 1.) to imply a conflict theme; with the Euroamerican and Native forces of ethnocide against Missisquoi, and also 2.) to refer to the universal “dawn” imagery used by the Abenakis and their neighbors. The concept was first presented with live actors as an “Abenaki Heritage Celebration” pageant at the Missisquoi Valley Union High School (Highgate, VT) in May of 2004. In the fall of that year, the video screenplay was developed from the Heritage Celebration script. The growing and evolving video gathered

together a coordinated array of live action by American Abenaki performers, genealogical information, historic objects, documents and photographs to directly refute the ongoing cleansing of American Abenaki indigenous history. At the request and encouragement of VT Senator Vince Illuzzi in early 2005, the *Against the Darkness* video's message of documenting aboriginal Vermont Abenaki cultural endurance was refined and converted into a focused forensic tool used in Vermont Senate hearings regarding S.117 (the VT state recognition bill). With recognition assured by the passage of S.117 in the Senate, the production team began to translate the materials into a broad-based account of historic and modern Vermont indigenous culture and community. Since the State of Vermont recognized the Abenaki people on May

3, 2006 (perhaps in part due to screenings of this video for VT legislators in the Springs of 2005 and 2006), *Against the Darkness* was enhanced by the addition of images, tables, timelines and papers concerning the culture of the Abenakis and their neighbors, and ultimately transformed it into a conflict-themed pedagogical tool. The *Against the Darkness System* (*ADS*) was specifically refined to help teachers understand the late historic Vermont Abenaki experience and some of the reasons for the Vermont's data war against its indigenous people. Frederick M. Wiseman, Ph.D. (*Voice of the Dawn* and *Reclaiming the Ancestors*), wrote *Against the Darkness* using well documented, but heretofore unreleased historical information. All along the way, many dedicated Missisquoi Abenaki high

school and college students ably assisted in conceptualization, filming and postproduction. Using live action and voiceover by these young Abenaki actors and native-inspired music by Peter Buffett, this digital video inspires as well as informs. The ADS[©] historic objects and graphics, mostly seen here for the first time, come from the Wôbanakik Heritage Center collections. They were carefully selected and researched to best illustrate a persistent a 1790-2005 indigenous Vermont Abenaki continuity, distinct from that of their native and non-native neighbors. The CD portion of the ADS[©] includes materials that are from non-Vermont sources that refer to widespread practices that were almost certainly shared by indigenous Vermonters⁷.

Notes:

1. The “according to” refers to an earlier citation of Griffin in the text of the Free Press editorial.

2. i.e. State of Vermont’s Response to Petition for Federal Acknowledgement of the St. Francis Sokoki Band of the Abenaki Nation of Vermont . W. Sorrell and Eve Carnahan, Vermont Attorney General’s Office, Montpelier, December 18, 2002, available from the VT Attorney General’s Office or from most libraries, as well as press releases, broadcast interviews etc. on file at the Wôbanakik Heritage Center. In this document and in interviews and testimony, the Attorneys General also portrayed Vermont scholars who dealt with post 1790 Vermont Abenaki culture as intellectual lightweights

who relied on dubious data provided by Abenaki advocates.

3. The particular reference to the Vermont Folklife Center video surfaced in debates with the Attorneys General and is referred to in a manuscript submitted to the Vermont Historical Society (Wôbanakik Heritage Center archives).

4. In the fall of 2003 the Odanak Abenaki Chief and Tribal Council reinforced this idea in a series of letters and band resolutions (in Wôbanakik Heritage Center archives) rescinding their recognition of the Missisquoi Abenakis, also claiming (in part) that their culture was derivative. In testimony to the VT Senate in the spring of 2005, VT

Assistant Attorney Bill Griffin made this point as well (field notes in the Wôbanakik Heritage Center archives).

5. The privately funded Wôbanakik Heritage Center was established in Swanton, VT after the closing of the Laboratory for Traditional Technology at Johnson State College in 1995. In 1998, some of its materials were relocated in the Abenaki Tribal Museum, and 2001 it became the archive and ceremonial repository of the Seven Fires Alliance. In addition to Wabanaki and Laurentian Mohawk materials, it houses an extensive collection of well-documented American Abenaki objects (ca. 150 artifacts w/provenance) and

archival imagery (ca. 60 original maps, prints, documents and photographs) collected from the 1970's until today.

6. This process was successful, the current media include video, still photography, music, oratory/interview, and text,

7. Exclusively non-Vermont Native sources are cited as such (i.e. "Micmac" or "Innu"), widespread practices are also noted (i.e. "Abenakis and their neighbors") so that the teacher and student can know what is local and what is regional.

ØØØØ | ×××× DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

The ADS © is entirely based on digital technology, except for archival analog VHS tape converted for one segment.

Digital video and stills were shot with Sony DCR-PC-101 and DCR HC-1000 mini-DV video cameras, aided by the Glidecam motion stabilizer and Røde Videomic.

Footage, sound, imagery and music were edited on a Sony Viao multi-media computer using the Vegas 6 professional non-linear video editor. Music ¹, voiceover

and sound was filtered and enhanced with Cool-Edit Pro, (now Adobe Audition) Sony Acid and Sony Sound Forge audio systems. Vegas 6 , Magic Bullet Movielook , Laughingbird Logo Creator , Boris Graffiti, Boris Red and Boris FX CGI software created the special effects in the video. DVD Architect 3 produced the ADS DVD menu systems and converted the final footage to the Dual-layer DVD format. The data in the CD were composed with Dreamweaver , which also designed the menu structure. Screenings were aided by an Infocus digital projector/Optimus sound system. The Internet

domain name

againstthedarkness.org has been registered and parked by GoDaddy in preparation for website development.

1. Emmy Award-winning film composer and recording artist Peter Buffett (500 Nations, Dances with Wolves ; his website is “bisonhead.com”) gave the production team permission to use digital music files (© 2002, 2004) for educational purposes.

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NATIVE, SCHOLAR, AND EDUCATOR INVOLVEMENT

A project dealing with comprehensive community identity is inherently controversial, and cannot be the vision of a single person. The production team attempted, from the beginning, to involve Missisquoi Abenaki community leaders and scholars specializing in the historic Abenaki experience. This involvement was later expanded, through public and

private screenings to include hundreds of First Nations people, educators, and public servants. A sense of the breadth of collaboration may be seen below.

1. Native involvement

To assure a representative view of the Abenakis' experience, advice was sought from culturally active Abenakis. Video "drafts" were screened at all stages of development for approval by

the Governor's Advisory Commission on Native American Affairs, Missisquoi Abenaki Tribal Council, Missisquoi Abenaki General Meeting, Title VII Indian Education Parent Advisory Committee, the Abenaki/UVM "Summer Happening," the Circle of Courage Youth Group, the Randolph, VT Abenaki Unity Meeting, and 2006 Abenaki Heritage Days Celebration. Private screenings were also held for Abenakis who requested to see

and approve it. The ADS production team screened the video for neighboring Native nations in order to gain an external perspective by comparison to other tribal educational initiatives, and to insure that broader issues, such as respectful presentation of potentially controversial materials, were attended to. Thus the video was screened at the Musée des Abénakis (Odanak, QC), the Akwesasne Historical and Genealogical Society, the

Mashentucket Pequot Museum (CT) the Seven Fires International Meeting at Akwesasne, Indian Township Passamaquoddy Reserve (ME), an inter-tribal gathering at UMASS Boston Harbor, and to Kahnawake Mohawk and Penobscot elders visiting the Wôbanakik Heritage Center. Technical advice from Native filmmakers Irene Miracle (Osage) and Alanis Obomsawin (Abenaki) was particularly valuable. Sage advice from all of these sources has been

incorporated into the *Against the Darkness System* © . Franklin Northwest Supervisory Union Title VII Indian Education, and the Governor's Commission on Native American Affairs secured funding to support the digital editing, and final printing/"burning" of the CD/DVD combination pack.

2. Scholarly and professional involvement

Advice was sought from the Vermont scholarly community concerning the science and forensics in the video, and proper referencing of materials. This was accomplished through venues such as the Vermont Archaeological Society, and the University of Vermont's "New Directions in Ethnic Studies" Symposium as well as screenings for state and federal anthropologists,

political scientists, attorneys and archaeologists at the Heritage Center. The continual and broad based professional assistance of the late Prof. Jim Petersen of the Anthropology Department, UVM, Dr. Jeff Benay of Title VII Indian Education and Ted Timreck of Timreck Productions (NYC) was especially valuable. Gyan Baird graphics designer and editor extraordinaire of Stowe,

VT, produced the teachers' guide and the DVD case graphics. Sigrid Lumbra, Social Studies Coordinator, Vermont Department of Education, has been an important partner in developing teaching materials and teacher training venues.

3. Student and teacher involvement

This system of 40-minute video and hours of auxiliary materials is designed as an interactive “DVD/CD combo” for Vermont educational institutions, complete with extensive teachers’ resources including bibliographies, resources contact data, essays, genealogies and special materials developed for students and teachers. The Against the Darkness System is unlike any current

resource available to Vermont educators. Although best introduced in grade 4, it is not designed for any specific grade. It is multi-and interdisciplinary, designed for use across the curriculum, from history to anthropology to industrial and domestic science, to music and dance, to recreation, to biology and geography. The extensive auxiliary CD bibliographies and databases contain a

suite of local and regional data sets for teachers and students at the upper primary school, middle school, high school and undergraduate college levels. Adult researchers or interested laypeople may also find something of value there. In order to assure a quality educational product, the video portion of the System was screened in 2005 and early 2006 for at least fourteen

elementary-school classes in Newport, Enosburg and Swanton, Vermont, specifically as part of their Native American curricula. The video was also screened for Missisquoi Valley Union High School students. Their teachers unanimously approved it (often with valuable suggested modifications) as being appropriate for use from second semester third grade to twelfth grades. College

students and their professors at the Community College of Vermont, the University of Vermont and Johnson State College and UMASS Boston Harbor were equally enthusiastic. It has been eagerly accepted for use in cultural competency training and domestic violence workshops.

Targeted public screenings included historical society members, adult education students, senior “lifelong

learning” and Elderhostel groups, assemblies of VT legislators; these audiences also appreciated the video and offered their valued perspectives.

THE AGAINST THE DARKNESS SYSTEM

Introduction

As pointed out above, ADS is unlike other educational resources, in that it

comprises a system of electronic data files, videos, trainers, internet resources, and professional development resources.

The Movie

The DVD first contains the film “Against the Darkness,” divided into nine episodes. Episode 1, the “Prologue” sets up the film’s problem, showing that until 1995,

there was no conflict between the State of Vermont and its indigenous people over Abenaki identity. Episode 2, the “Introduction” discusses the “data war” between Vermont and the Abenakis, and what this means to modern Missisquoi citizens. It then introduces the descendency concept. Episode 3, “First child” discusses the Vermont or American artifacts, images

and documents appropriate to the late 18th century Missisquoi Abenaki experience. Episode 4, “Second child” discusses early 19th century Missisquoi Abenaki Vermont or American documents, artifacts and images. Episode 5, “Third child” discusses the artifacts, images and documents of mid 19th century Missisquoi. Episode 6, “Fourth child” discusses the

Vermont or American artifacts, images and documents appropriate to the late 19th century Missisquoi Abenaki experience. Episode 7, “Fifth child” discusses images, artifacts and documents explaining the early mid 20th century Missisquoi Abenakis. Episode 8, “Sixth child” discusses the American artifacts, images and documents appropriate to

Missisquoi Abenaki
Renaissance of the late mid
20th century. Episode 9,
“Seventh child” discusses
the modern Missisquoi
Abenaki documents,
artifacts, and images from
the late 20th and early 21st
century.

Supplementary videos

Also on the DVD is a
series of interviews and

events designed to amplify the film's message. In a 40+ minute video, Dr. Jeff Benay of the Title VII Indian Education Office discusses the cultural and educational issues facing the modern Abenakis. In a second video interview, Mr. Bruce Spaulding of Swanton, discusses his

ancestor Samuel Santimore of Stowe, VT, who was a Civil War Veteran, and proud to be Abenaki. In the third video interview, Ms. Alice Roy, of Barre, VT discusses both her father's stories of visiting the Abenakis in N. Vermont in the 'teens, as well as her dealing with the Gypsies in the

1920's and 1930's, who she affirms, were known to be Indian by the Barre Francophone community. In the fourth video interview, Judge Kilburn discusses the role of the Missisquoi Abenakis in Swanton's past. An included video was filmed by Fred W. Wiseman of Governor Jim

Douglas' signing of the S.117 recognition bill into law on May 3, 2006.

Another video clip explores Missisquoi's "Circle of Courage" youth group practicing traditional Abenaki dances. It includes interviews with Abenaki children. Lastly, a short "prototype" video explores Darkness

Falls- 1609-1776 , the next installment of the “Against the Darkness Trilogy.” The music, Abenaki language, and editing are incomplete, and necessarily contain significant errors, but the video “draft” gives a sense of the video, to be released in 2008.

Written materials

The CD or “Disc II” contains a series of data sets designed in a layout identical to a website so as to be a familiar format and aid in navigation. It includes teachers’ resources materials, photo galleries, bibliographies, and a series of papers on

topics of interest to teachers, students or professionals dealing with the Abenaki experience. Most of the documents in the CD have appended images. These are indicated in “blue type” in the text. Right clicking them with the mouse will bring up the image. Below is a quick synopsis of the

material on the CD.

Teachers' and professionals' resources is a listing of books, articles, maps and other written, recorded, or human resources on the Abenakis, as well as appropriate materials from the Northeast that are applicable to

Vermont Abenakis studies. Against the Darkness CD image database is a listing of the CD images file names and auxiliary data, such as date of manufacture, origin, materials, etc. Against the Darkness music arranged by Chapter is a comprehensive listing of all of the music used

in the video, so if students are interested in obtaining copies of the music files from Peter Buffet, they will know which tracks to request. Bibliographies are divided into two sections, “General; All topics” and “Postcontact 1600-today”.

An introduction to Vermont Abenaki cultural competency through ethnic revitalization discusses, in an analytical manner, the rebirth of the Abenaki Nation in Vermont, and some of the historical and ongoing problems facing the revitalization process, as well as a

possible solution.
Analysis of the Vermont
Attorney General's
attack against the
Abenaki Nation at
Missisquoi is a
comprehensive
deconstruction of the
State's numerous
attempts at destroying
Vermont Abenaki
credibility, and
misrepresenting the

potential “harm” that acknowledging the Abenakis would have on the state’s people and land. Vermont State Recognition: An historical timeline is a comprehensive listing of the significant dates in the “Road to Recognition” from the early 1990’s until the May, 2006 signing of the

VT recognition bill. The Abenaki Recognition Bill (S.117) as signed by Governor Jim Douglas is a typescript of the current statute as passed by the VT legislature and signed by the Governor. Against the Darkness genealogical database is a genealogical listing of one of published the Missisquoi hereditary

lines, one that was used as a basis for the “Seven Generations” theme used in the video.

An American Abenaki timeline: 1760-2006 is a dated listing of important Missisquoi (or regional) events or documents. The Wampum Laws of the

Abenakis and their neighbors is a comprehensive re-evaluation of the Great Council Fire Alliance, the organization from which many of the Abenakis' original law derives. Although the information is mainly from Maine, Missisquois were known to be part of the Alliance, and thus these

data are directly applicable to the Vermont Abenakis. In addition to the interpretive section, original documents are included. This makes clear that the Wabanaki wampum laws are not derivative of the Great Law of the Iroquois, but that law system may actually be derived from

one of the Great Council
Fire's Wendat
messengers.

Ceremonies of the
Abenakis and their
neighbors is a
discussion of various
ceremonies re-written
and from various
published and other,
more primary sources
that I respect. I have
tried to be careful to

attempt to separate
“Pan-Indian” from what
may be residual ancient
Abenaki beliefs.

Abenaki architecture
and settlements is a
short discussion of
Wabanaki wigwams,
longhouses and village
and camp structure.
Place Names of

Wôbanakik is a listing of place names in Vermont and neighboring areas, giving the Abenaki name, a published translation, and the modern place name. Western Abenaki clothing and adornment is in response to many Missisquoi community members who would like

to move beyond “Pan-Indian” clothing styles, to be more historically correct. Using the few extant Vermont and American Wabanaki materials that remain, this discussion makes a first attempt to point craftspeople in the right direction to make locally appropriate headgear, shirts,

blouses, dresses, sashes etc. Abenaki games is a discussion of the popular games played by the Abenakis and their neighbors.

Abenaki ethnobotany is a discussion of plant use by the Native people in the Wabanaki area (with some input from the Innu

people). It includes medical ethnobotany, Abenaki agriculture, sap collection and use, dyestuffs, and fuel woods. Abenaki hunting and fishing is a short discussion of the equipment and techniques used in hunting and fishing by the Abenakis and their neighbors. Canoes and

canoe building of the Abenakis is a discussion of the equipment and techniques used in building various types of canoes by the Abenakis and their neighbors.

Ogenak Alnôbaiwi:

Historic Abenaki

snowshoes is a short discussion of making Abenaki snowshoes—this is a craft that survived

until the mid 20th century in Missisquoi. Lastly, Abazenoda Alnôbaiwi: Historic Abenaki basketry is a short discussion of making Abenaki baskets—this is another craft that survived until the mid 20th century in Missisquoi.

ADS Trainers

Teachers and other professionals interested in Vermont indigenous studies require responsible and articulate speakers to address their classroom or conference. The ADS system is not just a series of electronic

files; it includes people who can discuss the Abenakis' experience from a perspective that is deeply embedded in the philosophy of the ADS. As soon as their certification training is complete, they will be listed on the website (see below). The

Against the Darkness System includes a network of people trained to use and work with the System. While only a small percentage of the presenters of the Abenaki experience in Vermont, these people have been involved in the design and

development of the ADS and are thus uniquely qualified to articulate their presentations with the other forms of information in the ADS. The production team has endorsed their knowledge in the areas listed below; and their teaching skills, to

assure that the ADS system maintains high quality outcomes in the class or conference room. In addition, each person has an independently acquired knowledge of one or more facets of the material in the ADS. As time goes on, the production team

expects to certify more trainers, these people will be added to the list on the web site.

ADS Professional Development

Workshops will be held as soon after the release of the Against

the Darkness System ©
as possible; to recruit
educators at all levels
to refine the application
of the materials
therein to curriculum
development. The
teachers trained in the
workshops will be given
a copy of the CD/DVD,
and become “ADS
Partners” in the

system. They will be designated as contacts within their Supervisory Unions, and will be able to make or obtain copies for their peers. Lastly, funding has been secured for the development of graduate level course(s) in support of

the ADS System to be offered for teachers and other professionals. These will hopefully debut in the summer of 2007

The Website

We have registered the domain name for

the web site; it is:

againstthedarkness.org

As you can see, it is currently under construction as a meeting place for

students, teachers and others interested in the Abenakis. As of now, limited content has been created for againstthedarkness.org, including this document, and “Frequently Asked Questions,” and a

pair of
“downloadable”
posters and other
materials. We are
planning interactive
web site sectors for
teachers, students,
museum
professionals and
others to develop
and/or submit new

content, resources, web links. In addition we are investigating data conversions to the PSP (Sony PlayStation Portable), iPod and smartphone digital formats. We believe that the future lies in having students and teachers

intimately connected to the ADS data through wireless personal communication devices, as well as through more traditional channels.

**FUTURE OF THE ADS
© SYSTEM**

The script for
Against the
Darkness II:
Darkness Falls , is
complete. This new
installment deals
with the period from
Champlain (1609) to
the American
Revolution. The
period artifacts,

imagery and costuming have been obtained, and casting is under way. Filming began on September 15, 2006. Continuing the “sovereignist” approach of its predecessor, **Darkness Falls**

intends to portray the 17th and 18th century Missisquoi Abenakis and their allies as technologically and politically progressive. It asserts that they were not mere pawns in the

continental Colonial
conflict but had
sophisticated
independent
military, cultural and
diplomatic curricula
for the preservation
of their homeland
against the
mounting terrorism
by the British

Americans and their allies. Thus ADS intends to “push the envelope” of historical interpretation of the Vermont past to where it is in other parts of North America which attend to a Native

voice.

A release date of 2008 is projected in preparation for the Champlain Quadracentennial.

Assuming the normal progression

of technology, the current (1790-2005) version will be integrated into the new materials as an entirely interactive HD DVD (probably Blu-Ray format), with all of the text

and auxiliary materials directly addressable from the video presentation. The next generation of the ADS is also intended to be podcast, PSP, and smart-phone

enabled.

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DISCLAIMER

1. Due to its
technical forensic

ancestry, the ADS
System ©
necessarily
represents a
pragmatist/sovereig
ntist approach to
American Abenaki
studies. Due to the
complex and
evolving state of

Abenaki cultural politics, other pedagogical and philosophical viewpoints exist, some decidedly hostile to this perspective. Other voices should be should be

thoroughly
considered by
teachers in
developing Abenaki
curriculum.

2. Although the
ADS System © is
representative of

the American
Abenaki experience
and thus widely
applicable to other
Abenaki groups
and regions, it was
originally
designed, (and
remains) as a
focused historical

defense of the St. Francis/Sokoki Band, Abenaki Nation at Missisquoi. Due to this specific design, other regional American Abenaki bands organizations, and

professional
Abenaki individuals
could not be
included in the
video exposition
unless they had
specific expertise
applicable to
Northern and/or
western Vermont

indigenous
ethnohistory.

3. Lastly, this
“first edition” or
beta version of the
CD/DVD Combo
will contain
typographical and

other (hopefully!)
minor errors that
will be corrected
in future editions.

For example, the
format conversion
of edited MS
Word documents
into the HTML

format with Dreamweaver, caused a few format errors in the CD documents. These are largely “cosmetic” (such as incorrect

indentations associated with quotes), that could not be easily corrected within the tight completion deadline, and were left “as is.”

CONTENT: AGAINST THE DARKNESS

DVD/CD STRUCTURE

In order to

understand the
Against the
Darkness System
© we need to
know how to
“navigate” the
DVD/CD combo.
Disc I may be
played on a

standard DVD
player or a “fast”
computer with a
DVD drive and
appropriate
software such as
Windows Media
Player (older
computers may

take a long time to load the video imagery, so it is usually best to use a DVD player), while Disc II, which is set up as a “web-site on disc” can be

played on almost any modern (Pentium platform or later) computer that can recognize the HTML format. However, some computers may

not immediately recognize the menu and documents on Disc II. In such cases, teachers and students will need to use the computer's web

browser to access
the list of
documents on the
disc.

Disc I (DVD)

The DVD or “Disc I” is laid out in a format similar to theatrical DVD releases, so that teachers and students will be familiar with

navigating it. Upon inserting the DVD in the player, the “Opening Sequence” is played, then the opening menu, which contains

buttons for the main video, which can be played all the way through, or episode-by-episode, as well as navigating to supplementary

videos of
interviews,
dances, and
historical
events. It is
arranged thus:

Opening

Sequence (Precontact Abenakis at the Fortin Farm Caves in Highgate, VT) Opening Menu

Play All
(plays the entire
video through)

Episodes
(plays individual
chapters of the
video.)

Episode 1. Prologue

The “Prologue” sets up the film’s problem, showing that until 1995, there was no conflict between

the State of
Vermont and its
indigenous people
over Abenaki
identity.

Episode 2.

Introduction

The “Introduction” discusses the “data war” between Vermont and the Abenakis, and what this means to modern Missisquoi

citizens. It then introduces the descendency concept.

Episode 3.
First Child

“First child”
discusses the
Vermont or
American artifacts,
images and
documents
appropriate to the
early 19th
century Missisquoi
Abenaki

experience.

Episode 4. Second Child

“Second child”

discusses the
Vermont or
American
artifacts, images
and documents
appropriate to the
late 18th century
Missisquoi
Abenaki
experience.

Episode 5. Third Child

“Third child”
discusses the
Vermont or
American
artifacts, images

and documents
appropriate to the
mid 19th century
Missisquoi
Abenaki
experience.

Episode 6. Fourth Child

“Fourth child”
discusses the
Vermont or
American
artifacts, images

and documents
appropriate to the
late 19th century
Missisquoi
Abenaki
experience.

Episode 7. Fifth Child

“Fifth child”
discusses the
Vermont or
American
artifacts, images

and documents
appropriate to
the early mid 20th
century
Missisquoi
Abenaki
experience.

Episode 8. Sixth Child

“Sixth child”
discusses the
Vermont or
American
artifacts, images

and documents
appropriate to
the late mid 20th
century
Missisquoi
Abenaki
experience.

Episode 9. Seventh Child

“Seventh child”
discusses the
Vermont or
American
artifacts, images

and documents
appropriate to
the late 20th
and early 21st
century
Missisquoi
Abenaki
experience.

Supplementary materials menu

Interviews

sub-menu

Jeff

Benay interview

In this 40+

minute video
Dr. Benay of
the Title VII
Indian
Education
Office discusses
in detail, the
numerous

cultural and
educational
issues facing
the modern
Abenakis.

Bruce Spaulding interview

In this video
interview Mr.
Bruce

Spaulding of
Swanton,
discusses his
knowledge of
his ancestor
Samuel
Santimore of
Stowe, VT, who

was a Civil War
Veteran, and
proud to be
Abenaki.

Alice Roy interview

In this video
Ms. Roy, of
Barre, VT
discusses both

her father's
stories of
visiting the
Abenakis in N.
Vermont in the
'teens, as well
as her dealing
with the

Gypsies in the
1920's and
1930's, who
she affirms
were known to
be Indian by
the Barre
Francophone

community.

Ron

Kilburn

Interview

In this video
Judge Kilburn
discusses the
role of the
Missisquoi

Abenakis in Swanton's past.

Governor signing the S.117 bill

This video was
filmed by Fred
W. Wiseman of

Governor Jim
Douglas'
signing of the
S.117
recognition bill
into law on May
3, 2006.

Abenaki youth group dance practice.

In this video we
explore
Missisquoi's

Circle of
Courage Youth
group
practicing
traditional
Abenaki
dances.
Includes

interviews with
Abenaki
children.

Trailer for

1609 (the
next video to
be produced in
the ADS series)

This short
“prototype”

video explores
Darkness Falls-
1609-1776 ,
the next
installment of
the “Against
the Darkness
Trilogy.” The

music, Abenaki
language, and
editing are
incomplete, and
necessarily
contain
significant
errors, but the

video “draft”
gives a sense
of the video, to
be released in
2008.

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Disc II (CD)

The CD or

“Disc II” is a series of databases set up as a website so as to be a familiar format and aid in navigation.

It includes
teachers'
resources
materials,
photo
galleries,
bibliographies,
and a series of

papers on
topics of
interest to
teachers,
students or
professionals
dealing with
the Abenaki

experience.
Unlike the
feature video,
the CD
includes
materials from
both within and
external to

Vermont. For example, we know from historical information that indigenous Vermont was once part of

the Great
Council Fire
alliance.

Therefore, “
The Wampum
Laws of the
Abenakis and
their

Neighbors”
and parts of
“ Ceremonies
of the Abenakis
and their
neighbors” on
the CD,
contains a

wealth of
information
from
non-Vermont
sources on the
Alliance, which
nevertheless is
directly

applicable to
the Vermont
Abenaki
experience.
Except for “CD
Images,”
which is a
folder

containing a series of printable photographs (in the JPEG format); all other documents are

in the HTML
format.

Images
embedded in
the text

Most of the documents in the CD have appended images. These are indicated in **blue type** in the text.

Right clicking them with the mouse will bring up the image. In addition, there is a database associated with

the images (“
Against the
Darkness
image
database ”)
that gives
much more
detail on each

picture, for
older students
who wish to
use them in
their own
work, but need
more specific
data on date

and
provenience
(origin and
history) of the
item. The
database is
also arranged
in the same

sequence as
the images in
the image
folder, so that
a window
including
“thumbnails”
of the photos

can be opened
beside a
window of the
image
database, for
people who
wish to view
the images

with the full
labels
available.

Curriculum
Development

The Against
the Darkness
System ©
does not
provide
extensive
curriculum
development

procedures or
teachers'
guides. We
expect this
material to be
available as
downloadable
documents on

a website that supports the disc-based portion of the ADS System. Its http address is:

againstthedarkness.org

The CD/DVD
combo is

designed so
that individual
teachers at all
grade levels
and across
the curriculum
in the social

and natural
sciences, the
arts and
recreation can
straightforwardly
assemble
their own

unique
interactive
programs and
syllabi to
meet their
individual and
school needs

as well as
those of the
VT
Department of
Education's
Grade
Expectation

(GEs). For example, the “History and Social Sciences Grade Expectation”

(GEs) five
content areas:
inquiry;
history;
physical and
cultural
geography;

civics,
government
and society;
and
economics;
are generally
addressed in

the DVD as well as more specifically in the content sections of the CD (see below).

Opening Menu Teachers and researchers' reso urces

Teachers'

and Professionals' Resources

This is a listing
of books,
articles, maps

and other
written,
recorded, or
human
resources on the
Abenakis, as
well as
appropriate

materials from
the Northeast
that are
applicable to
Vermont
Abenakis
studies.
(Includes data

from outside of
Vermont)

Against
the Darkness
CD Image
Database

This is a listing of the CD images file names and auxiliary data, such as date of manufacture,

origin,
materials, etc.

Against
the Darkness
music arranged

by Chapter

This is a
comprehensive
listing of all of
the music used
in the video, so

if students are interested in obtaining copies of the music files from Peter Buffet, they will know which tracks to

request.

**Bibliographies
(Includes data**

from outside of
Vermont)

General;
All topics

Postcontact
1600-today

Modern
Issues

An introduction to Vermont Abenaki cultural competency through

ethnic revitalization

This document
discusses, in

an analytical
manner, the
rebirth of the
Abenaki Nation
in Vermont,
and some of
the historical

and ongoing
problems
facing the
revitalization
process, as
well as a
possible

solution.

Analysis
of the

Vermont Attorney General's Attack Against the

Abenaki Nation at Missisquoi

This is a

comprehensive
deconstruction
of the State's
numerous
attempts at
destroying
Vermont

Abenaki
credibility, and
misrepresentin
g the potential
“harm” that
acknowledging
the Abenakis

would have on
the state's
people and
land.

Vermont State Recognition: An Historical Timeline

This is a
comprehensive
listing of the
significant
dates in the
“Road to
Recognition”

from the early
1990's until
the May, 2006
signing of the
VT recognition
bill.

The Abenaki Recognition Bill (S.117) as signed by Governor Jim

Douglas

This is a
typescript of
the current

statute as
passed by the
VT legislature
and signed by
the Governor.

Genealogical Database Against the Darkness Genealogical Database

This is a
genealogical
listing of one
of published
the
Missisquoi
hereditary

lines, one
that was
used as a
basis for the
“Seven
Generations”
theme used

in the video.

Historical

Database

An

American

Abenaki

Timeline:

1760-2006

This is a dated listing of important Missisquoi (or regional) events or documents.

Religion, ceremony and politics

The Wampum Laws of the Abenakis and their neighbors

This is a
comprehe
nsive
re-evaluatio
n of the
Great

Council Fire Alliance, the organization from which many of the Abenakis'

original law
derives.

Although the
information
is mainly
from Maine,

Missisquoi
were known
to be part
of the
Alliance, and
thus these

data are
directly
applicable to
the
Vermont
Abenakis. In

addition to
the
interpretive
section,
original
documents

are
included.
This makes
clear that
the
Wabanaki

wampum
laws are not
derivative of
the Great
Law of the
Iroquois, but

that law
system may
actually be
derived from
one of the
Great

Council
Fire's
Wendat
messengers
. (Includes
data from

outside of
Vermont)

Ceremonies of the Abenakis and their neighbors

This is a
discussion
of various
ceremonies
re-written
and from

various
published
and other,
more
primary
sources that

I respect. I
have tried to
be careful
to attempt
to separate
“Pan-Indian”

from what
may be
residual
ancient
Abenaki
beliefs.

(Includes
data from
outside of
Vermont)

Abenaki Geography

Abenaki

Architecture and settlements

This is a
short
discussion
of
Wabanaki
wigwams,

longhouses
and village
and camp
structure.
(Includes
data from

outside of
Vermont)

Place Names of Wôbanakik

This is a

listing of place names in Vermont and neighboring

areas,
giving the
Abenaki
name, a
published
translation,

and the
modern
place
name.

Western Abenaki Clothing and adornment

This section
is in
response to
many
Missisquoi
community

members
who would
like to move
beyond
“Pan-Indian
” clothing

styles, to be
more
historically
correct.
Using the
few extant

Vermont and American Wabanaki materials that

remain,
this
discussion
makes a
first
attempt to

point
craftspeople
in the
right
direction to
make

locally
appropriate
headgear,
shirts,
blouses,
dresses,

sashes etc.
(Includes
data from
outside of
Vermont)

Abenaki
Games

Abenaki
Games

This is a
discussion
of the
popular
games
played by

the
Abenakis
and their
neighbors.
(Includes
data from

outside of
Vermont)

Abenaki
Ethnobiolog
y

Abenaki

ethnobotan
y

This is a

discussion
of plant use
by the
Native
people in
the

Wabananaki
area (with
some input
from the
Innu
people). It

includes
medical
ethnobotan
y, Abenaki
agriculture,
sap

collection
and use,
dyestuffs,
and fuel
woods.
(Includes

data from
outside of
Vermont)

Abenaki Hunting and fishing

This is a
short
discussion
of the
equipment
and

techniques
used in
hunting and
fishing by
the
Abenakis

and their
neighbors.
(Includes
data from
outside of
Vermont)

Canoes and canoe building of the Abenakis

This is a
discussion
of the
equipment
and
techniques

used in
building
various
types of
canoes by
the

Abenakis and their neighbors.

Ogenak
Alnôbaiwi :
Historic
Abenaki
Snowshoes

This is a
short
discussion
of making
Abenaki
snowshoes—

this is a
craft that
survived
until the
mid 20th
century in

Missisquoi.

Abazenoda

Alnôbaiwi: Historic Abenaki Basketry

This is a
short
discussion
of making
Abenaki
baskets—th

is is
another
craft that
survived
until the
mid 20th

century in
Missisquoi.