

American Indian and Multicultural Connection

Research and discuss American Indian clan totems.

American Indians often had animal affiliations through clan membership. They often carved masks to reflect this clan membership. Masks were used ceremonially for multiple purposes including healing ceremonies, renewal ceremonies, ceremonies for transformation and change, among others. For example, the masks worn during the Lenape Delaware Big House

ceremony are thought to have transformative powers for the wearer, giving him the power to see in all directions at once. Representations of the animals were often carved on parts of the big house itself as well as on items such as musical instruments like rattles. Individuals also might wear fetishes that represent the animal of their clan affiliation.