



**Rainy Day History** podcast  
Episode 1: Kikisoblu/Princess Angeline  
Audio transcript

Voice 1: How much of your own history do you not know?

Voice 2: On whose land does Seattle stand?

Voice 1: Who is part of the Seattle story?

Together: What is Seattle?

*(theme music plays)*

Voice A: Seattle is—

Voice B: Well, we don't use umbrellas.

Voice C: Coffee.

Voice A: Computers?

Voice C: It's a city with a needle

Voice B: Home to sasquatch

Voice D: Home to the Museum of History and Industry.

Voice B: Innovation

Voice C: Rain.

Voice A: A story.

Voice D: A history

*(music fades out underneath)*

Voice 2: My name's Atul.

Voice 1: and I'm TK. We're Youth Advisors at the Museum of History and Industry in Seattle—

ATUL: And this is Rainy Day History, pre-recorded at MOHAI. In this first season, we're exploring inclusion, exclusion, objects, people, and how the Seattle we know now - the questions we grapple with now about what it means to be a Seattleite—

TK: Are all part of a bigger story. Enjoy the show...whether it's raining outside, or not.

*(sound of rain fades in and out)*

TK: Before we get started, we should tell you a little bit about MOHAI, and the podcast.

Atul: The Museum of History & Industry - MOHAI for short -

TK: is located in the South Lake Union, a neighborhood of Seattle.

Atul: Home to shiny tech and medical buildings - Amazon, Fred Hutch, Facebook, and the University of Washington School of Medicine...



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TK: But the museum sits right on the lake, next to a park, the Center for Wooden Boats, and a historic ships wharf.

Atul: Housed in a historic naval armory reserve building.

TK: By collecting and preserving artifacts and stories of the Puget Sound region's diverse history, MOHAI highlights our tradition of innovation and imagination. Through compelling exhibits, scholarship, education, public programs, and community engagement, MOHAI bridges the past, present, and future.

Atul: *True Northwest: The Seattle Journey* is the core exhibit at MOHAI, and it's pretty much a big 3D timeline of Seattle's history.

TK: So in this first season of the podcast, we're going to be looking closely at some of the objects on view in *True Northwest* -

Atul: To see what stories they can tell us

TK: And to explore what it means to be a Seattleite

Atul: Both in the past

TK: And today

Atul: This podcast was imagined, researched, written, produced, and edited by the MOHAI Youth Advisors, a dedicated

TK: Creative

Atul: talented

TK: And fabulous

Atul: Group of high school students who work closely with museum staff to guide the museum in what teens want and need.

TK: We are very excited to share these objects with you!

Atul: Alright TK, ready to get started?

TK: Yes!

*(jaunty piano music plays)*

Atul: Okay - so *True Northwest* begins with a section called "Native Ground."

TK: This area has been home to Coast Salish Native peoples since time immemorial.

Atul: right. The Duwamish and Suquamish in particular both have ancestral lands in and around what is currently considered Seattle.

TK: And Coast Salish histories go back well before the place where *True Northwest* starts

Atul: thousands of years

TK: and continue throughout the exhibit into the present.

Atul: The history of Seattle as an American city however, begins with a story of expulsion.

TK: Which brings us to a small wooden object on display in the galleries. In a small case in the “Getting Started” section of the exhibit,

Atul: which explores early American settlement of Seattle and Seattle as a pioneer town

TK: right - so the top portion of a cane, sitting next to a rosary...both objects, personal and intimate, were likely carried with the owner at all times.

Atul: They belonged to Princess Angeline.

TK: Woah wait, Atul. Not quite.

Atul: Wh-what do you mean?

TK: Well, Princess Angeline was a name American settlers referred to her by. Catherine Maynard, a prominent early Seattleite told her, and I quote: “You are too good-looking a woman to carry around such a name such as that, so I now christen you Angeline.”

Atul: That’s horrible.

TK: Right? Her real name was Kikisoblu. And though not a princess per se, she was the eldest daughter of Chief Si’Ahl, for whom our city is named. And ironically Seattle is not the chief’s traditional Lushootseed name, and instead an Americanized one.

Atul: Since we aren’t native Lushootseed speakers, we don’t want to butcher his name more than we already have, so we’re going to stick with Chief Seattle/Si’Ahl.

TK: so...born in 1828, Kikisoblu would see the landscape of her home - both culturally and physically - change forever.

*(sound of rain fades in and out)*

TK: The Duwamish lived along Elliott Bay, The Duwamish River, Lake Washington, and Lake Sammamish. They lived in longhouses for most of the year, navigating the waters and catching fish.

Atul: By the time American settlers came to the area in 1851, Coast Salish life had already been transformed by epidemics and European trade economies. Although the Duwamish and the first settlers got along relatively well, increasing numbers of settlers encroaching on Native lands led to conflict, and the US federal government ultimately sent the governor of the Washington territory, Isaac Stevens, on a mission to get Native communities to cede their territories through a series of treaties.

TK: It was in 1855 when Kikisoblu's father, chief Si'ahl, signed the Treaty of Point Elliott, along with the Snoqualmie and Lummi chiefs, with Isaac Stevens, the governor of what the United States had declared to be "Washington Territory".

Atul: This treaty ceded tribal rights to huge swaths of territory- over 54,000 acres. But despite the treaty, wars and conflict in the region over land and natural resources continued. Soon after the treaty occurred the Battle of Seattle, Yakima War, and Puget Sound War.

TK: Chief Si'ahl did not fight in these battles, instead advocating for cooperation between Native people and settlers. He died in 1866, and was buried in the Suquamish reservation cemetery, with no newspapers reporting it, and no record that any of the pioneers who claimed to be his friends attended the ceremony.

Atul: I can't imagine how his daughter must have felt.

TK: We can never know. But we can glean aspects of her character from her actions, theatricalized by those around her as they may have been. She lived in what some called a "shack" in the area that would become Pike Place market, working as a laundress and refusing to give up her property.

Atul: The Point Elliott Treaty stipulated that she had to leave her ancestral land.

TK: But she never would.

Atul: Along with many others. Native enclaves remained along various parts of Seattle's growing urban waterfronts. Even though city ordinances decreed (quote) "no Indians shall be permitted to reside in the town of Seattle" (unquote) many settlers hired Native people as laborers, and so these families remained, merging traditional knowledge into their new urban lifestyles.

TK: Her presence there, as one of many Duwamish who refused to leave their lands, would be met with polarized reactions. Some complained viciously about their presence in local newspapers. Some would ask her to pose for photos for them (for which she sometimes charged a fee). Some children threw rocks at her, and she is recorded as throwing rocks back. And her act of defiance would be softened by prominent settler families who hired her, gave her food and gifts, and described their relationship as one of friendship.

Atul: Images of her were used on postcards and souvenirs for more than 100 years. She was almost always shown wearing a red bandanna, a shawl, and several layers of clothing. Some of her portraits were shot in studios where Kikisoblu was posed with props and backgrounds to enhance the so-called "authenticity" of the photos.

TK: Much of the art of her has been criticized as exoticizing and perpetuating images of Indigenous people as mysterious and poor, as part of a “vanishing” race, and of some Native women as “Indian Princesses”

Atul: Indian Princesses? Oh... like... Princess ...Angeline... gotcha.

TK: Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, a Native scholar, historian, and writer, explains the harm of the Indian princess stereotype this way: in stories told by settlers and historians where these women leave their tribe, are compliant and living in community with explorers or settlers, and taking on a Christian name, the implication is that white Eurocentric values are better than traditional Indigenous ones. These stories help perpetuate and enforce white patriarchal values.

Atul: It sounds kind of similar to the idea of the uh, “noble savage” too.

TK: yes. And all of these ideas - the vanishing race, the noble savage, the Indian princess, were placed upon Kikisoblu by other people. These stereotypes are used to enforce notions of (again) authenticity, and to make it difficult to tell the difference between what is real, and the image we are presented with, which we are used to and inclined to see as real.

Atul: Kind of like how many of those images of her created by other people were altered and used to promote whatever idea of her, her people, or Seattle they wanted.

TK: It’s another instance of cultural erasure, of the real and thought-to-be real colliding. Which acts of defiance, which cultural stories, are seen as immediate, tragic, and which are seen as quaint, as something fit to be casually featured on a postcard?

Atul: Kikisoblu passed away in 1896, leaving both names and many legacies behind. She is buried in Lake View Cemetery next to Henry Yesler, who was a close friend. Many attended her funeral, presumably those that knew her as both Angeline and as Kikisoblu. Years later, Seattle school children would raise money for a special stone for her grave marker. It describes her friendship with the early settlers of the region.

TK: But there’s one last thought we want to leave you with. Her other name, Angeline, comes from a Greek root. It means “messenger.”

Atul: Everything she meant to those that paid a dollar for her photo, everything she meant to Seattle and its history- all the stories contained in the name Kikisoblu that we will never know- contain a profound message for Seattleites past and present- for our individual and collective legacies.

TK: And her story of resistance hasn’t ended. Today, the Duwamish tribe continues to fight. They currently have over 600 enrolled members and many others who are not registered.

Atul: Chief Seattle is not forgotten. Our city bears his name. A monument at his gravesite was recently rebuilt by the Suquamish Tribe in 2011. His ideas and vision for his people are valued and taught.

TK: But without federal recognition and services, the Duwamish tribal services have struggled to provide many social, educational, health, and cultural programs over the last 35 years.

Atul: The lesson and message that Kikisoblu carried with her, while not for us to define, held this meaning for us: individual legacies are set in stone after death, though they can mean something different from person to person. But they are contained within cultural legacies. And cultural legacies are alterable in the present, subject to current turbulences and the needs, hopes, and dreams of a very real people, not on an image on a postcard or a fantasy of simpler times.

TK: To preserve the legacy of Kikisoblu, of Chief Si'ahl, and to honor their lives, we must take action for the Duwamish in the present.

*(sweeping music comes in and plays out)*

Atul: Well, it seems like we've come full circle, TK.

TK: We hope you've enjoyed listening in on our conversation. We'd love for you to start conversations of your own, in your own communities, or with us!

Atul: To learn more about the Duwamish tribe, you can visit their website at [duwamishtribe.org](http://duwamishtribe.org) – that's d-u-w-a-m-i-s-h-tribe dot org – or visit their long house in West Seattle.

TK: And you can find us to learn more about MOHAI at [mohai.org](http://mohai.org) – that's m-o-h-a-i dot org  
See you next time on Rainy Day History, where we go over one man's scheme to civilize Seattle with a boatload of un-married women.

*Laughter breaks out*

TK: I'm so sorry I'm so sorry I have no idea what happened!

*Laughter fades into music, which fades slowly underneath credits*

Finch: This is Finch, I'm one of our editors, here with the credits. This episode was researched by Leela, written by Emily C., and recorded by Ziah and Julia. Our editors are Grace and myself. I wrote the theme music, and performed it along with Tyler and friend of the pod Sylvie Wang. Our logo was designed by Grace. Marketing help came from Julia, Tyler, and Grace. Special thanks to Pei Pei, Chris, Tori, and our wonderful ladyship Emily T.