

## ENDNOTE 3

### Working-Definitions Of Some History Terms

**Prehistoric Period / Prehistory** is the time period before the appearance of written records about any specific culture area. For Maine's past, the Prehistoric Period would start c. 12,000 years ago (c. 10,000 BC) with the Paleoindian arrival, and end c. 500 years ago (c. AD 1500) with the start of the European voyages of discovery. Certainly this is a very ethnocentric Euramerican concept, but useful nonetheless. Archaeological digging provides the evidence / data of Prehistory.

**Protohistoric Period / Protohistory** is the time period in any area both following its Prehistory and preceding the appearance of coherent History derived from written accounts about it. For Maine's past, **Protohistory** is only the 16th Century (the AD 1500s) - the **Early Contact Period** when Maine first received repeated voyages of *discovery* from Europe. Verrazanno's 1524 complaint of Maine Indians being *bad people* (because they *mooned* him) comes from Protohistory.

**Historic Period / History** is the time period in any area starting with coherent written records about that area, however biased they may be. Because Euramerican **historiography** (the writing of history) specializes in analyzing written accounts, it emphasizes the **literate** Newcomers' perspectives at the expense of the **nonliterate** Natives' Oral Traditions. (**Ethnohistory** attempts to mitigate that imbalance by including Native-perspective oral traditions whenever feasible.) For Maine's past, *history* begins c. 400 years ago (c. AD 1600) with the start of the *real* (frequent) **Contact / Encounter Period**. Again, this is a very ethnocentric Euramerican concept, but useful nonetheless.

**Ethnohistory** is a combination of ethnological (i.e., cultural anthropological) analysis with historical methodology, focused on peoples without *formal* (written) history of their own. It attempts to incorporate Native Oral Traditions into its research findings as complementary [completing] data. Ethnohistory can provide a (relatively) *objective outsiders'* view of a people's past.

**Folk-History** is the popular version of their own past (based upon their own popular choices of data) held by any people (or group within a people: ethnic, regional, local, or family). *Folk-History* is both oral and written, and often

disagrees with *formal* (written) history. Indeed, often different groups' Folk-Histories are at odds with each other. Folk-History can be a (relatively) *subjective insiders'* view of a people's past.