Introduction The Jesuit Relations, an annual publication of the Jesuit Order of missionaries to promote their activities in North America, provide the best evidence available for seventeenth-century indigenous people. The Jesuits were careful record keepers with a keen eyes for ethnological detail. They described customs and values they despised and sought to eradicate through the conversion of indigenous people to Christiainity. Because they ventured into Native communities, the Jesuits had to learn the languages and customs of their hosts. Few in number and far from home, they had to persuade and could not command obedience. Some of the Jesuit’s most focused work was done during their mission to the Wendat (or Huron), a confederation of villages located in southern Ontario. The Jesuits lived and worked among the Wendat between 1634 and 1649 when the Wendat were defeated and dispersed by the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois confederacy). This was a tumultuous period in Wendat history as it marked the introduction of the first European diseases (smallpox and measles) and intensifying warfare with their inveterate enemies the Haudenosaunee. During that time they sought to teach the Wendat about Christiainity, convert and baptize them into the Church. Progress was slow and it was not until the 1640s that a significant number (though not a majority) of Wendat put themselves forward for baptism. Scholars debate how the Wendat understood baptism and Christiainity and whether they viewed conversion as a fundamental change that undermined their culture or simply an addition to an existing culture. Essay Assignment In this assignment, you will write a 4-5-page paper explaining the successes and failures of Jesuits’ attempts to convert the Wendat to Chrsitiainity. Your essay should answer the following questions: Why did some Wendat accept and others reject Christiainity? Who was most likely to accept baptism and who was most likely to reject Christianity? Did Wendat attitudes towards baptism, conversion, and the Jesuits change over time? If so, why? Did conversion represent a major threat to indigenous cultures? Writing the paper You will write the paper using six edited selections from the Jesuits Relations provided below. The Relations date from 1636 to 1643 and focus mainly on Wendat customs, disease, and baptism. With the questions above in mind, read the six selections taking notes as you go. Then you have two options for writing the paper. You may write a standard essay in which you have a clearly worded thesis statement in the introduction and organize evidence to support your argument. You may write a fictional account from the perspective of a Wendat who either embraces or rejects Christiainity. If you choose this option, you will still answer the questions above, but you will weave your answers into the narrative and dialogue. You will be expected to use footnote as will the standard paper. Your paper will: Be well written with evidence of proofreading, editing, and polishing Provide citations in the form of footnotes for both direct quotations and ideas borrowed from any source Be four to five pages in length. Use 12 pt. font Have a one-inch margin Include your name, date submitted, and a descriptive title Warning Keep in mind as you read that the Jesuits did not have a modern explanations for disease. They believed that disease was God’s will. Moreover, they are prejudiced against people they consider savages and pagans. Their descriptions of people and events contain Eurocentric bias that you should not adopt in your paper. In other words, separate the description of events from their judgements of the people. Footnotes Use the following form for footnotes. Remember that you must footnotes any information taken from another source whether it is a direct quote or not. Document 1, Jean de Brébeuf, Relations of 1636. Document 6, Jean Filleau, Relation of 1643-1644.