

Real Indians: Indigeneity and the Politics of Authenticity

Anthropology 253

Fall 2018

Dr. Nell Haynes

nell.haynes@georgetown.edu

Car Barn 308 I

Class: T/Th 3:30-4:45, Car Barn 309

Office Hours: M/W 3:30-5:00pm or by appt.

Course Description

In settler societies, Indigenous peoples face a variety of social and institutional pressures to conform to certain expectations. These range from the need to be recognized by the state in order to have rights, to pressures associated with the representation of Native peoples in media. Indigenous people face considerable tensions between embodying external stereotypes and racial expectations, while trying to forge individual and collective identities that go beyond these expectations. In this seminar, we will engage with recent scholarship in Native American and Indigenous Studies that addresses indigeneity as a political status, a supposed biological category, a social experience, and a point of departure for political involvement and activism. Our readings will also engage feminist and queer perspectives on the problem of authenticity and we will devote attention to the appropriation of Indigenous culture by non-Indigenous people. Geographic focus includes North and South America, Oceania, and some examples from Europe and Asia. Moreover, we will discuss indigeneity as a source of global affinity among colonized peoples and as a human rights framework within the United Nations.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. identify key concepts and theories associated with indigenous studies
2. critique the concept of indigeneity as a social construct while acknowledging indigenous peoples' lived experiences
3. compare and contrast the concepts of indigeneity and authenticity in diverse world locations
4. apply understandings of indigeneity to a research project on a specific group, event, or identity.

Course Expectations

Assignments

Short Assignments (4)	40%	Submitted through Canvas
Final Paper	30%	Submitted through Canvas
Leading Discussion	15%	In Class
Class Participation	15%	In Class

Students are encouraged to use the resources available through The Writing Center (see writingcenter.georgetown.edu for details).

All students are required to complete written assignments by the due date. **I cannot accept assignments for credit after they are due without a medical reason.** When presenting valid excuse, it is best to do so as much in advance as possible.

Short Assignments: These assignments will be announced in class before they are due. They are sometimes an essay of a page or two, or at times will involve a creative or media component. They are meant to help you reflect on what we have discussed and apply concepts to your own experiences or observations.

Final Paper: Your final paper can take a number of forms, focused on a topic of your choice. You may engage in research on a particular topic we have covered in class, or a particular group in an ethnographic setting. You might also conduct an interview with someone about a topic related to indigeneity and write an account of this person's experience or knowledge. It may also focus on analysis of a current event related to indigenous peoples. All students will meet with me during office hours to discuss their paper.

Leading Discussion: Each student will be responsible for leading the class discussion once in the semester. Students *must* prepare 3 discussion questions, and *may* include media (like related YouTube videos) or activities in their discussion. Media or activities should take no more than 15 minutes of class time. Discussion questions will serve as a jumping off point for further discussion during the rest of the class period.

Participation: One cannot fully participate without being present. However, **not all presence and participation are equal.** Anthropology is a discipline that is constantly in motion, building off of old ideas and incorporating new ones. Thus, class time will not consist of monolithic lectures about concepts that must be memorized. Instead, they will be discussions in which we practice applying ideas of the authors we read to new situations and contexts. The **class will be expected to offer opinions and examples, and pose challenges to some of what we discuss.** The class is also expected to listen carefully and respectfully (for example, students may not wear ear buds during class). Disagreement is fine, but debate should happen in a respectful and constructive manner. This class is an important time to explore ideas and learn new ways of understanding the world. Therefore participation is not only part of the final grade, but will also be necessary to building the kind of understanding required to successfully complete other assignments. To make sure you are in the best possible position to get a good participation grade:

1. Complete the required reading. You do not need to worry that you understand absolutely everything you read, but take notes about parts that strike you as especially intriguing, important, or disconnected. Think about how it relates to things you have experienced in different contexts. Think about when it was written and by whom. Think about whether you agree or disagree and why.
2. Be prepared to ask questions. Whether they are about something you don't understand in the reading, or are simply about how other people reacted to a specific detail, questions help move class discussion along.
3. Be open to new ideas. Anthropology often challenges our assumptions about the world. Newer readings in anthropology often challenge older ideas that were common in anthropology. And hopefully, you will even challenge some of the readings that you think miss the point. You don't have to agree with everything that you read or hear, but take the time to think about it carefully before you decide. Or allow yourself to not decide. But most importantly, be respectful to all the opinions offered in class, and think about why someone might agree or disagree with them.
4. Participate in ways that make you comfortable. Some people love to talk in class and others are intimidated. I hope to create an environment where intimidation is minimal, but don't fret if you're not a "talker." Feel free to come to office hours or email me to find out other ways you can make your opinions known. And if you are a "talker" please remember that you may have a funny story related to the class discussion, but unless it advances our thinking on an anthropological topic, your anecdote might not move discussion in a productive manner.
5. Be respectful. Perhaps most importantly, respecting the classroom, your fellow classmates, and the instructor will help you succeed. Spending class time on Facebook, texting, whispering to friends, or doodling excessively in your notebook are not conducive to anyone learning about the topic at hand. Paying attention to the discussion and finding thoughtful ways to contribute will make everyone's experience more pleasant.

If you have a major medical problem or family concern that requires you to miss several classes, please provide documentation and we will do our best to help you stay involved. Additionally, please make every effort to come to class on time so as not to disrupt discussion once it has begun. **Repeated tardiness will have an effect on your participation grade.** Leaving early is also disruptive, so **please limit bathroom breaks. Leave class early only when absolutely necessary**, providing a reason in person or by email before the class begins.

*Students are responsible for all material in the readings, lectures, and audiovisual presentations in class. Readings should be completed before the day for which they are assigned. It is crucial to link the ideas in readings to those in lectures and discussions.

*In the case of any major medical or other type of attendance issue, please speak with the professor during office hours if at all possible. If not possible, please communicate by email. Be advised that doing so early is key to creating a workable solution to problems. Last-minute emails will not be met with sympathy.

Content Warning

This should serve as a general warning that some of the class material deals with sensitive subject matter. Students are encouraged to be prepared to discuss difficult subjects and push their boundaries. If you foresee any problems, please make an appointment to see the professor.

Grading Standards

- A Superior: Student shows excellent critical analysis and *originality* in oral contributions and writing; all assignments turned in on time. A 93-100, A- 90-92
- B Very Good: Solid work evidenced by careful synthesis of reading, timely contributions to class discussion, and clear, logical writing; all assignments turned in on time. B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82
- C Satisfactory: Work demonstrates some understanding of materials and an average performance in written assignments and class discussion; all assignments turned in on time. C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70-72
- D Inconsistent: Meager performance in all assignments and class discussion; late in turning in written work. 60-70
- F Failing: Student makes minimal effort, shows little understanding of assignments, and turns in incomplete or unacceptable work. Below 60

No grade change requests will be accommodated unless the result of clerical error.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. All work you turn in must be your own. This means no borrowing of ideas or wording from friends' work, other author's work, or the Internet. Any time another person's work is used, it absolutely **MUST** be cited properly. Student work may also be checked using electronic databases. Suspected violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Dean's office. For more information on Georgetown's honor council policies see <https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/whatisplagiarism>.

Academic Accommodations

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with Georgetown Disability Support Services (202-687-8354, arc@georgetown.edu) and provide professors with an accommodation notification, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

Laptop Policy

No laptops should be used in class unless under an accommodation through Disability Support Services.

Required Readings

Circe Sturm. 2002. Blood Politics: Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Berkeley: University of California Press. (available online through library)

Philip J. Deloria. 1998. Playing Indian. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Jeff Sissons. 2005. First Peoples : Indigenous Cultures and their Futures. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

All other readings available on Canvas

Course Schedule

PART 1 BEING NATIVE

August 30 **Introductions**

September 4 **Expectation and Anomaly**

- Philip J. Deloria. 2004. "Introduction: Expectation and Anomaly" in Indians in Unexpected Places. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

September 6 **Identity and Authenticity**

- Michelle Harris, Bronwyn Carlson, and Evan S. Poata-Smith. "Indigenous identities and the politics of authenticity" in The Politics of Identity: Emerging Indigeneity. Sydney: University of Technology Sydney Press.

September 11 **Authenticity**

- Hervik. 1998. The Mysterious Maya of National Geographic. Journal of Latin American Anthropology 4(1): 166-197.

September 13 **Blood Politics**

- Circe Sturm. 2002. Blood Politics: Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapters 1-3.

Assignment 1 Due (Working Definitions)

September 18 **Blood Politics**

- Circe Sturm. 2002. Blood Politics: Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapters 4-6.

September 20 **Blood Politics**

- Circe Sturm. 2002. Blood Politics: Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapters 7-8.

September 25 **Testing Genetics**

- Kim Tallbear. 2015. Who Owns The Ancient One? BuzzFeed.
<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/kimtallbear/how-the-man-stole-ancient-man-from-his-native-descendents>
- Carl Zimmer, Deborah Bolnick, and Kim Tallbear. 2018. Is Your DNA You? Sapiens.
<https://www.sapiens.org/body/podcast-dna-you/> (listen to podcast)

September 27 **NAGPRA**

- Margaret M. Bruchac. 2010. Lost and Found: NAGPRA, Scattered Relics, and Restorative Methodologies. *MuseumAnthropology*, Vol. 33, Iss. 2, pp. 137–156.
- Sonya Atalay. Nd. Repatriation Comic. <https://blogs.umass.edu/satalay/repatriation-comic/>

Highly Encouraged

Jeffrey Gibson: *DON'T MAKE ME OVER* performance at **6:30pm** in Maria and Alberto de la Cruz Art Gallery.

October 2 **Who Wants to Count?**

- Ryan Smith. 2017. Are the Vinyard Indians the Rachel Dolezal of native tribes?
<https://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/vinyard-indian-settlement-native-american-tribe/Content?oid=34960758>

October 4 **Who Doesn't Want to Count?**

- Emily T. Yeh. *Tibetan Indigeneity: Translations, Resemblances, and Uptake*. Indigenous Experience Today. Wenner Gren Foundation.

In Class

Discuss Assignment 2

PART 2 NATIVES ON DISPLAY

October 9 **Playing Indian**

- Philip J. Deloria. 1998. *Playing Indian*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Introduction, Chapters 1-3.

October 11 **Playing Indian**

- Philip J. Deloria. 1998. *Playing Indian*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 4-6, Conclusion.

October 16 **Mascots**

In Class

Watch Film: *In Whose Honor?*

Assignment 2 Due

October 18 **Self-Representation: Pop Culture**

- Nell Haynes. Nd. *Wrestling with Indigeneity*.

October 23 **Self-Representation: Tourism**

- Jane C. Desmond. 1997. Invoking The Native: Body Politics in Contemporary Hawaiian Tourist Shows. *TDR* 41(4):83-109.

October 25 **Self-Representation: Theater**

- Rosemarie K. Bank. 2011. Show Indians/Showing Indians: Buffalo Bill's Wild West, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and American Anthropology. *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 26(1):149-158.

October 30 **Reel Indians**

- Leighton C. Peterson, "Reel Navajo": The Linguistic Creation of Indigenous Screen Memories" *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 35(2):111-134, 2011

In Class

Begin watching Reel Injun

November 1 **Reel Indians**

In Class

Finish watching Reel Injun, followed by discussion

November 6 **Museums**

- Amy Lonetree. 2012. "Introduction: Native Americans and Museums" and "Exhibiting Native America at the National Museum of the American Indian: Collaborations and Missed Opportunities" in *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

November 8 **Meet at Smithsonian**

- Thomas King. 2012. "Too Heavy to Lift." *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

PART 3 REIMAGINING INDIGENEITY

November 13 **Indigeneity and Neoliberalism**

- Linda Tuhiwai Smith. 2007. *The Native and the Neoliberal Down Under: Neoliberalism and Endangered Authenticities*. Indigenous Experience Today. New York: Berg.

November 15 **Indigeneity and Diaspora**

- Louisa Schein. 2007. *Diasporic Media and Hmong/Miao Formulations of Nativeness and Displacement*. Indigenous Experience Today. New York: Berg.

November 20 **Indigeneity and Resistance**

- Selections from the Standing Rock Syllabus

Assignment 3 Due

November 22 **Thanksgiving-No Class**

November 27 **Indigenous Futures**

- Jeff Sissons. 2005. First Peoples: Indigenous Cultures and their Futures. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1-3.

November 29 **Indigenous Futures**

- Jeff Sissons. 2005. First Peoples: Indigenous Cultures and their Futures. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 4-6.

Assignment 4 Due

December 4 Meet individually with professor about final paper

December 6 **Discussion and Summation**

December 19 **FINAL PAPER DUE BY EMAIL**