

Professor Brian Klopotek  
[klopotek@uoregon.edu](mailto:klopotek@uoregon.edu)  
541-346-0903  
205 Alder Building  
Office Hours: Weds 9-10:55

Native Americans and Film  
ES 370, Fall 2016  
CRN 16678, 4 Credits  
MW 2:00-3:50  
116 Esslinger

**Course description:** Some of the first films ever made were about American Indians, and Indians have continued to hold an important place in American cinematic history. Images of Indians from film and television have had an enormous impact on public perceptions of Native Americans, on Native American senses of identity, and on the relationship of Native governments to local and federal government entities. This class discusses the history of cinematic and other popular images of Indians with particular attention to control of production and the broader influences and impacts of these images, from the days before film to *The Revenant*.

**Grading:**

In-class (and Canvas) film analysis (15 total, 1-2 pp each): 30%

Outside-of-class film review (2 total, 1000 words): 10%

Paper proposal (1 paragraph topic statement, 3+films): 5%

Research paper (10-12 pages): 30%

Final exam: 25%

After each movie we view, you will complete a movie worksheet in class and write a 10-minute analysis of the film that draws on the week's readings. You will also write a longer analysis paper on an *approved* topic of your choosing. There will be a final exam for the class that will incorporate knowledge from the readings, films, and class discussions.

**Attendance and participation:** Class discussions will be central to the course, so your attendance and participation are vital. That means you must be here, and you must talk! You are expected to be on time for the class and stay until the end of the class. Your grade will suffer if you are consistently late, asleep, absent, or not participating, up to and including failing the class.

**Electronics policy:** If you plan to use a laptop in class, you must sit in the front row. No cell phones allowed.

**Academic honesty** is required at all points in your education. Acts of academic dishonesty will result in an F for the class and referral to the office of student conduct. Be particularly careful to avoid plagiarism by properly acknowledging all sources of information, *including quotations, paraphrases, and ideas* that are not your own. If you are unsure about what needs to be cited, err on the side of caution and/or speak to me about it. See <http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism/plagiarism> for details. For those of you with disabilities, please let me know what accommodations I can make that will help make this class equally accessible for you.

**Required texts:**

- Phillip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004.
- Beverly Singer. *Wiping the War Paint off the Lens: Native American Film and Video*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.
- Other readings on Canvas in PDF format

**Schedule: SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

Mon. Sep. 26: Introduction. In class: *Images of Indians*

Wed. Sep. 28: In class: *Imagining Indians* 1:01

**Read:**

- Rennard Strickland, "Tonto's Revenge, or, Who Is That Seminole in the Sioux Warbonnet? The Cinematic Indian!" *Tonto's Revenge: Reflections on American Indian Culture and Policy*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 17-45. (Canvas)
- Deloria, ix-14.

Mon. Oct. 3: In class: *Nanook of the North* 1:19

**Read:**

- Shari Huhndorf, "Nanook and His Contemporaries: Traveling with the Eskimos, 1897-1941," *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001, 79-128. (Canvas)
- Deloria, 15-108.

Wed. Oct. 5: In class: *Drums Along the Mohawk* 1:44

**Read:**

- Ken Nolley, "The Representation of Conquest: John Ford and the Hollywood Indian, 1939-1964," in Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, eds., *Hollywood's Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film*, (Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 73-90. (Canvas)
- Deloria, 109-182.

Mon. Oct. 10: In class: *The Searchers* 1:59, **post** ~500-word analysis of film to Canvas

**Read:**

- Tom Grayson Colonese, "Native American Reactions to *The Searchers*," in Arthur M. Eckstein and Peter Lehman, eds., *The Searchers: Essays and Reflections on John Ford's Classic Western*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), 335-342. (Canvas)
- Deloria, 182-240.

Wed. Oct. 12: In class: *Broken Arrow* 1:33

**Read:**

- Frank Manchel, "Cultural Confusion: Broken Arrow," in Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, eds., *Hollywood's Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film*, (Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 91-106. (Canvas)
- Paige Raibmon, "Theatres of Contact: The Kwakwaka'wakw Meet Colonialism in British Columbia and at the Chicago World's Fair." *Canadian Historical Review* 82(2): 157-90. (Canvas)

Mon. Oct. 17: In class: *Powwow Highway*, 1:27

**Read:**

- Eric Gary Anderson, "Driving the Red Road: Powwow Highway (1989)" in Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, eds., *Hollywood's Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film*, (Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 137-152. (Canvas)

**Due: Film review 1**

Wed. Oct. 19: In class: *Pocahontas* (Disney) 1:31

**Read:**

- Pauline Turner Strong, "Playing Indian in the 1990s: *Pocahontas* and *Indian in the Cupboard*," in Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, eds., *Hollywood's Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film*, (Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 187-205 (Canvas)
- Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," *The Massachusetts Review*, 1 Oct 1975, Vol. 16 (4), 698-714.
- Epic plotfail (Canvas)

Mon. Oct. 24: In class: *Smoke Signals* 1:30

**Read:**

- Brian Klopotek, "'I Guess Your Warrior Look Doesn't Work Every Time': Challenging Indian Masculinity in the Cinema," Matthew Basso, et al., eds., *Across the Great Divide: Cultures of Manhood in the American West*, (New York: Routledge, 2001), 251-274. (Canvas)

Wed. Oct. 26: In class: *Grand Avenue* 2:47

**Read:**

- Beverly Singer, *Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens: Native American Film and Video*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 1-31.

Mon. Oct. 31: In class: finish *Grand Avenue*

**Read:**

- Singer, 33-99.

Wed. Nov. 2: In class: *Atanarjuat* 2:54

**Read:**

- Shari Huhndorf, "Atanarjuat, The Fast Runner: Culture, History, and Politics in Inuit Media." *American Anthropologist*, vol. 105, no. 4, Dec. 2003. (Canvas)

**Due: Film review 2**

Mon. Nov. 7: In class: finish *Atanarjuat*

**Read:**

- Faye Ginsburg, "Atanarjuat Off-screen: From 'Media Reservations' to the World Stage," *American Anthropologist*, vol. 105, no. 4, Dec. 2003. (Canvas)

Wed. Nov. 9: NO CLASS (Ethnohistory conference).

Mon. Nov. 14: In class: *The Revenant* 2:36

**Read:**

- Dustin Tahmahkera, "Preface: Sign-on: Sitcom Kid" and "Introduction: Decolonized Viewing, Decolonized Views," *Tribal Television: Viewing Native People in Sitcoms*, Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

**DUE: Paper proposal in class and on Canvas**

Wed. Nov. 16: In class: finish *The Revenant*

**Read:**

- Robert Baird, "Going Indian: Dances with Wolves," in Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, eds., *Hollywood's Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film*, (Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 153-169.
- Shari Huhndorf, "Introduction: If Only I Were an Indian," in *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001, 1-5.

Mon. Nov. 21: In class: *Finding Dawn* 1:13

**Read:**

- Sarah Deer, "Introduction: The Sovereignty of the Soul," "Knowing through Numbers?" and "What She Say It Be Law," in *The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015, ix-30. (Canvas)

Wed. Nov. 23: See Disney/Pixar's *Moana*, individually or with class, read the following critiques, **post** your ~500-word analysis of the film on Canvas.

- <https://thenonplasticmaori.wordpress.com/2014/10/24/for-whom-the-taika-roars-an-open-letter-to-taika-waititi/>
- <http://www.cartoonbrew.com/disney/fijian-boatmakers-to-disney-we-want-compensation-for-moana-105257.html>
- <http://www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/film/84381619/disneys-moana-accused-of-cultural-appropriation>
- <http://www.honolulumagazine.com/Honolulu-Magazine/September-2016/Disney-Pulls-Controversial-Moana-Halloween-Costume-Amid-Protests-of-Brownface/>

Mon. Nov. 29: In class: *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* 1:28

**Read:**

- Kali Simmons, "Return of the Living/Dead: Reading Native Subjectivity in the Figure of the Zombie."

Wed. Dec. 1: TBD

**Read:**

- Paul Chaat Smith, "The Big Movie," *Everything You Know About Indians is Wrong*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

**Research Papers due Friday Dec. 2 by 4:00pm**

**Final Exam:**

**Mon. Dec. 5, 2:45pm**

**Research papers** should include some aspect of research on and analysis of Natives and film and may *not* be based on movies we have watched in class. Suggestions for topics:  
on one actor/filmmaker (Chris Eyre or Tantoo Cardinal, for example)  
on one genre with 3 examples (children's films or horror films, for example)  
on a book/movie/history translation (*Last of the Mohicans* or *Black Robe*, for example)  
on one issue (native language use or Native sexual identities in films, for example)

We will discuss all assignments more as we come closer to the due dates!