

## **HIST 427: Representing Aboriginality: Politics of Production & Methods of Reception**

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**Class meeting: Wednesdays 1:30 to 5:30; HC (Harbour Centre)2235**

Instructor: Mary-Ellen Kelm; [kelm@sfu.ca](mailto:kelm@sfu.ca); 778-782-7299

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:30-2:30; AQ 6227 (Burnaby campus) & other times by appointment.

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### Course Description:

This course examines the ways in which Aboriginal people have been represented in text, photograph, film, performance and exhibit over the last two centuries. It will examine the shifting relationships between cultural production and social, political and economic relations within First Nations and between First Nations and settler societies. While some forms of representation have traditionally excluded Aboriginal people from the processes of production, most, if not all, are now available to Aboriginal people. What difference does this make? Students will gain an understanding of how the politics of production shape and give meaning to various forms of representation of Aboriginal people in Canada and the United States. As well, students will emerge from this course with an awareness of the methodologies for reading that foreground particular viewpoints, read for embedded epistemologies, and bring to the surface how cultural production constitutes as well as reflects relations between First Nations and settler societies.

All readings will be available electronically, either on our webct site(**W**) or electronically (**E**) available through the SFU library.

### Course Assignments:

Reading notes/ Journal: 30%

Producing a reading journal is an assignment in this course as you will need a place to make notes on the readings and to record your emerging interpretation of the course material. I will collect your journal twice during the course of the semester(preferably electronically). The first time on October 8 will be an opportunity to assess your progress in the course and your ability to use the reading journal to your advantage. At this time I will provide feedback and suggestions but will not offer a grade. When the journal is next due, at the end of the semester, I will grade it. At this time, I will be assessing the following:

1. Your ability to comprehend the readings
2. Your ability to build on that comprehension through the discussions in the class (i.e. your ability to pick up new insights from the class discussion)
3. Evidence that you have built your own analysis of the material. I will recognize this by your ability to ask insightful questions of the readings, some of which I expect you will use to generate discussion in class. I will also recognize an emerging and unique interpretation by your ability to carry what we are learning in class out into your interactions with the various discourses that surround us in the world (i.e. media, film, performance) and to bring those interactions back into the classroom as demonstrated in questions for discussion recorded in your journal.

For more details on the possible format of this journal, see **Appendix A**

(due twice: October 8 & November 26)

Major Paper: 40%

A major research paper is required for this class. It should be no longer than 20 pages long and must be written in formal essay style using correct citation style. You may write on any topic related to this course, focusing on Aboriginal people in North America. I will set aside time in class three times during the course to discuss paper topics, research methods and writing assistance (this will be apparent in our weekly schedule below). Come prepared to talk about your paper on those occasions. I also expect to see all of you in office hours or at another time by appointment to discuss your progress with your paper. On November 5 when your papers are due, I also want to see an abstract of your paper and to have you distribute these to the whole class so that they may be prepared when you present your paper in the mini-conference that we will have in the last week of the course.

(due November 5)

Seminar Participation: 20%

Since this is a four hour seminar, I expect all students to come to class prepared to discuss the readings. This means that you will have read all of the readings, that you have thought about them, that you have some questions to ask about them and that you have formulated a scholarly assessment of them.

Each week, as well, a group of students will be presenting on the primary sources that were read. These students will briefly summarize the content of these sources, will relate to the class what they learned about the context of their (the sources) production. Then these students will lead the class in critically analysing the sources. Please see **Appendix B** for a list of questions that might help lead these discussions.

Oral Presentation: 10%

The last week of class will be a mini-conference. Students will present a 5 minute summary of the findings of your major paper. Replicating the practices of major international conferences, I will act as commentator in sessions of three related papers. See **Appendix C** for how to prepare a 5 minute summary of your paper for this mini-conference.

### Weekly Meetings:

#### Week 1: Class Introduction:

- Introduction to course – expectations and assignments
- Work in action (what some scholars are doing on this subject)

- Working with some samples of the types of the material we will be using
- All material for this class will be provided by the instructor

Week 2: Studying Representation:

Scholars have long been aware of the difficulties of understanding Aboriginal people using the sources generated by colonizers. We will begin by looking at the ways others have come to terms with the issues we will be dealing with in this class.

- Chapter 3 in Elizabeth Furniss, *The Burden of History* **E**
- Paige Raibmon, Introduction to *Authentic Indians* **E**
- Julia Emberley, "'A Gift for Languages': Native Women and the Textual Economy of the Colonial Archive." (chapter 4) of *Thresholds of Difference: Feminist Critique, Native Women's Writings, Postcolonial Theory* (Toronto: UTP, 1993) **W**

*Come prepared to talk about possible paper topics.*

**Recommended Readings:**

Elizabeth Furniss, *The Burden of History*

Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians*

Week 3: Fur traders & Missionary Encounters:

Fur traders and missionaries were among the first to live with Aboriginal people. These writers, therefore, provide us with fascinating glimpses into lives of First Nations people from the era before sustained settlement and, in some cases, well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. What do they tell us? And how can we use their work?

- Allan Greer, "Colonial Saints: Gender, Race and Hagiography in New France." *William and Mary Quarterly* 2000 57 (2): 323-348 **(E)**
- Kim Greenwell, "Picturing 'Civilization': Missionary Narratives and the Margins of Mimicry." *BC Studies* 135 (A'02): 3-45 **(E)**
- Philip Round, "The Return of the Native: Recent Scholarship in the Literature of Christianization and Contact." *Early American Literature* vol. 40 (number 2), 375-385. **(E)**
- Jennifer S.H. Brown & Robert Brightman, *The Orders of the Dreamed: George Nelson on Cree and Northern Ojibwa Religion and Myth, 1823*. Pp3-24, "A Cree Myth: the Birth of Wee-suck-a-jock and Mi-shaw-bose," "The Battle of Weesuckajock and the Water Lynxes," "The Making of the Land," "The Making of Human Beings," "The Son of Weesuckajock." PART II, "Cosmogonic Myths & Beings from Lac La Ronge: The Trickster-Transformer, Wisahkecahk," "Nelson's Version of the Wisahkecahk Cycle," PART IV, Stan Cuthand, "On Nelson's Text," and Emma LaRocque, "On the Ethics of Publishing Historical Documents."**(W)**

**Recommended Readings(2):**

Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint*

Myra Rutherdale, *Women and the White Man's God*

Jennifer S.H. Brown & Robert Brightman, *The Orders of the Dreamed*.

Week 4: Government Records:

Aboriginal people in Canada and the United States are among the most watched people in the world. Government agents from military commanders to civil administrators have watched and recorded information on the most intimate details of Aboriginal people's lives. We'll start by reading some basic articles in Canadian Indian policy and then we will turn our attention to what can be read from one source of government documents, the Annual Reports of the Department of Indian Affairs.

- J.R. Miller, "Owen Glendower, Hotspur and Canadian Indian Policy." *Ethnohistory* 1990 37 (4): 386-415 (E)
- Adele Perry, "'From the Hot-bed of Vice' to the 'Good and Well-ordered Christian Home': First Nations Housing and Reform in Nineteenth Century British Columbia." *Ethnohistory* 2003 50(4): 587-610 (E)
- Hugh Shewell, "'What Makes the Indian Tick?': The Influence of Canada's Social Sciences on Indian Policy, 1947-1964." *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 2001 34(67): 133-167 (W)
- See Annual Reports of the Department of Indian Affairs at <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/indianaffairs/> (particularly, have a look at the 1910 reports for several of the Indian agencies in British Columbia)

*Come prepared to think about sources for your papers*

**Recommended Readings(2):**

E. Brian Tittley, *A Narrow Vision*

Cole Harris, *Making Native Space*

Brownlie, *A Fatherly Eye*

Coates, *Best Left as Indians*

Week 5: Legal Record: Declarations, Protest & Court

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At no point, have Aboriginal people ceased protesting the appropriation of their lands and resources or the policies of forced assimilation. We have, therefore, a number of examples of how Aboriginal people have constructed their protests, the ways in which various allies have tried to help and the ways that these protests have been dismissed.

- Tina Loo, "Dan Cranmer's Potlatch: Law as Coercion, Symbol, and Rhetoric in British Columbia, 1884-1951," *Canadian Historical Review* 73(2)(1992): 125-165 (E)
- Wendy Wickwire, "'We Shall Drink from the Stream and So Shall you': James A. Teit and Native Resistance in British Columbia, 1908-1922," *Canadian Historical Review* 79(2)(1998): 199-236 (E)
- David Dinwoodie, "Authorizing Voices: Going Public in an Indigenous Language," *Cultural Anthropology* 13(2)(1993): 193-223 (E)

View the Nemiah Declaration at: <http://www.xenigwetin.com/index.php?mod=declaration>

View the Lillooet Declaration at: <http://www.inshuckch.com/declaration.html>

Week 6: Self-representation in text:

As soon as Aboriginal people acquired literacy in English, they have created texts. This section will examine how Aboriginal self-representation has been translated into text. We begin with Pauline Johnson and some recent interpretations of her work. I encourage you to sample her writing at the website that follows the list of readings.

- Veronica Strong-Boag, "'A Red Girl's Reasoning': E. Pauline Johnson Constructs the New Nation." In Kelm & Townsend (eds), *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Aboriginal Women's History* pp. 367-396 (W)
- Cecilia Morgan, "Private Lives and Public Performances: Aboriginal Women in a Settler Society, Ontario, Canada, 1920s-1960s," *Journal of Colonialism & Colonial History* 4(3)(2003), (E)
- Thomas Guthrie, "Good Words: Chief Joseph and the Production of Indian Speech(es), Texts and Subjects," *Ethnohistory* 54(3)(Summer 2007): 509-546. (E)
- Toni Culjak, "Searching for a Place in Between: the Autobiographies of Three Canadian Metis Women." *American Review of Canadian Studies* 31(1-2)(2001): 137-157. (E)

*Bring examples of your introductory paragraphs for your papers*

See for examples of Pauline Johnson's writing for class discussion:

<http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~pjohnson/home.html>

### **Recommended Reading:**

Strong-Boag & Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*

Cruikshank, *Life Lived Like a Story*

### Week 7: Photography:

From its earliest introduction to the field, photography has been an important medium through which 'truth' about Aboriginal people has been recorded. Soldiers, missionaries, settlement promoters, ethnographers and Aboriginal people themselves have used photography to different ends, producing images of divergent meanings. We will read a number of articles from the Canadian West to help us understand the photographic record of First Nations people. There are a number of good sites on the web where photographs of Aboriginal people may be viewed. For those related to the article by Peers see <http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/american.html>; for those discussed by Williams (and other great BC photographs) see <http://www.bcarchives.bc.ca/bcarchives/default.aspx> and <http://www.vpl.ca/find/cat/C393/>

- Deborah Poole, "An Excess of Description: Ethnography, Race and Visual Technologies," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34 (1)(2005): 159-179 (E)
- Carol Williams, "Introduction," and "Indigenous Uses of Photography," *Framing the West: Race, Gender and the Photographic Frontier in the Pacific Northwest* p. 3-31, 138-169 (W)

- Laura Peers & Alison K. Brown, "Colonial Photographs and Post-Colonial Histories: the Kainai-Oxford Photographic Histories Project." Available at [http://www.cst.ed.ac.uk/2005conference/papers/Peers\\_Brown\\_paper.pdf](http://www.cst.ed.ac.uk/2005conference/papers/Peers_Brown_paper.pdf) (E)

**Recommended Reading(2):**

Williams, *Framing the West*

Geller, *Northern Exposures*

Rosalind Morris, *New Worlds from Fragments*

Week 8: Film, Documentary :

We all know the power of film. In this section we will read some cultural critics of film and view some of the iconic ethnographic films of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

- Rosalind C. Morris, "Through a Glass Darkly: Terms and Problems for Analysis," *New Worlds From Fragments: Film, Ethnography of Northwest Coast Cultures* (Boulder: Westview, 1994), 11-39 and "Remembering: The Narratives of Renewal," *New Worlds from Fragments* , 113-158
- John W. Burton and Thompson, Caitlin W, "Nanook and the Kirwinians: Deception, Authenticity, and the Birth of Modern Ethnographic Representation," *Film History* 14(1)(2002), 74-86 (E)
- Sherrill Grace, "Exploration as Construction: Robert Flaherty and *Nanook of the North*," *Essays in Canadian Writing* (fall 1996), 123-146 (W)

Week 9: Performance:

Indigeneity, confined to performance, has long intrigued and entertained non-Native audiences. But for Aboriginal people, performance offered an opportunity to speak directly to non-Native people without the intervention of Indian agents, missionaries and other intermediaries. Yet performance was always mediated and, some argue, with settlers staging the show, audiences may not have always got the message Aboriginal people were trying to relay. We will try to negotiate our way through the convoluted thickets of Aboriginal performance to see paths cleared by First Nations or covered over by non-Natives.

- Michelle Patterson, "'Real' Indian Songs: The Society of American Indians and the Use of Native American Culture as a Means of Reform," *American Indian Quarterly* 26 (1)(2002): 44-66 E
- Paige Raibmon, "Theatres of Contact: The Kwakwaka'wakw Meet Colonialism in British Columbia and at the Chicago World's Fair," *Canadian Historical Review* 81(2)(2000): 157-190 E
- Gail Guthrie Valaskakis, "Dance Me Inside: Powwow and Being Indian," chapter 6 in *Indian Country: Essays on Contemporary Native Culture* W

Address by Chief Dan George in 1967 re Canadian Centennial

<http://www.powwows.com/gathering/chit-chat/27259-address-chief-dan-george-1967-a.html>

**Recommended Readings:**

Cruikshank, *The Social Life of Stories & Do Glaciers Listen*

Week 10: Museums:

Museums share a long and complicated history with First Nations. Curio collectors, grave raiders, missionaries, and settlers gathered Aboriginal material culture in what they thought would be a last

testament to vanishing peoples, making profits for themselves in the process. In the early days of collecting, museums were the beneficiaries of such practices. Today, through collaboration and repatriation agreements, museums are negotiating new agreements with First Nations.

- Gloria Frank, "'That's my dinner on display': First Nations Reflection on Museum Culture," *BC Studies* 125/126 (2000) E
- Wendy Wickwire and Alan Hoover, "A response to Gloria Frank's 'That's My Dinner on Display': A First Nations' Reflection on Museum Culture," *BC Studies*, 128 (2001) 65-75 (two articles)
- Ruth Phillips, "Disrupting Past Paradigms: The National Museum of the American Indian and the First Peoples Hall at the Canadian Museum of Civilization," *Public Historian* 28(2)(2006): 75-80 E
- Ruth Phillips and Mark Salber, "Double Take: Contesting Time, Place and Nation in the First Peoples Hall of the Canadian Museum of Civilization," *American Anthropologist* 107(4)(2005): 694-704 E

Having read the commentaries above, have a look at the virtual exhibits at SFU's Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology: <http://www.sfu.museum/>

### **Recommended Readings:**

Harris & Darnell, *Historicizing Canadian Anthropology*

Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*

Week 11: No class.

### Week 12: Anthropology & the Media:

Perhaps more than any other discursive force, anthropology and the media construct Aboriginal people to and for non-Native people. For this reason, if none other, their images are powerful. Moreover, if this was not enough, the role that anthropologists and journalists play in describing, discussing and explaining First Nations to government, the courts and interested publics, make understanding their work, their place as cultural mediators, crucial to historians.

- Peter Kulchyski, "Anthropology in the Service of the State: Diamond Jenness and Canadian Indian Policy," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 28(2)(1993): 21-50 E
- Siomonn Pulla, "'Would you believe that, Dr. Speck?: Frank Speck and the Redman's Appeal for Justice," *Ethnohistory* 55(2)(Spring 2008): 183-202 E
- Romaine Smith Fullerton & Maggie Jones Patterson, "'Killing' the True Story of First Nations: the Ethics of Constructing a Culture Apart," *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 23 (3)(September 2008) E

Guest appearance by Duncan McCue

Have a look at some of McCue's work on the CBC website and be prepared to ask him questions.

### **Recommended Readings:**

Kulchyski, *Tammarniit*

Kulchyski, *Like the Sound of a Drum*

Week 13: Miniconference

### **Appendix A:**

A reading journal is designed to be a place where you record what the readings say to you, how you interpret them and what questions they generate for you. A reading journal is also a place where you might highlight vocabulary you are learning, or might record leads on sources you find in the material we are reading (either primary or secondary sources).

You can use any format you want for this journal. I used to always use a ringed notebook. I divided the page lengthwise in two, with the left hand column being about twice as wide as the right hand column. In the left column, I took notes on the readings – pretty straight up. I recorded the thesis of the article, how it proved the thesis and any information that I gleaned from the article. I tried to paraphrase as much as possible in order to force my brain to really come to grips with what I was reading instead of just copying from the page. In the right column, I recorded ideas or questions that popped into my head, even things like “huh?” or “duh” (as you can see, I’ve very articulate), but especially questions I thought would generate discussion , or how I thought this reading and the ideas it expressed meshed with other readings I’d done in the class or elsewhere. Finally, this was the place that I recorded ideas that popped into my head about the class content when I was busy doing other things. This helped me build my own interpretation from the material I was reading + my own life experiences.

Since most of you will use your computers to record your notes, then another way to do this is to use different colour (or style) fonts to record the various sections of the journal. Use regular black font for your notes, italics for your questions, bold for your own ideas.

However you organize it, the reading journal must contain these parts:

- a) Paraphrased notes from the readings
- b) Questions for class discussion
- c) Ideas of your own

Think big! Have fun with this!

**Appendix B:**

Questions for a Primary Source:

Questions of Context:

1. Who wrote/created the source?
2. What were the author/creator's credentials?
3. Why did the author/ creator generate the source?
4. When and where was the source generated?
5. Did the author write about their own social group or another one?
6. What special circumstances may have affected the author's ability to record what happened?

Questions of Content:

1. What kind of language does the author use? Coded? Loaded? Neutral?
2. Does the author over-generalize?
3. Is the document obviously imbalanced in its presentation of facts?
4. Is opinion clearly expressed as opinion?
5. Does that author use words or phrases to indicate approval or disapproval?
6. What has the author left out?
7. How has the author's interests, intentions, or biases affected the content (or the absent content) of this document?
8. Is the reasoning expressed in the article strong or weak?
9. How are hierarchies of power expressed in the document?
10. What does the document tell us about the temper of the times?

Context of Reception:

1. Who read this source in its original form?
  - a. Who was its intended audience? Who else might have read the source?
2. Why would anyone read this source?
3. How does the author's social position affect how a reader would read the document?
4. How would a reading of the source change over time?

**Appendix C: How to do a 5 minute presentation.**

The first thing to know about presentations (and this applies to all presentations of all lengths) -- it takes 2 minutes to read a page. No matter what. No matter how fast you read. 2 minutes – per page. That’s it. If you have five minutes to fill, that means you can read no more than 2.5 pages.

While it is better not to read, it is really bad to try speaking to your topic without notes. So you should have something written down. And it is better to read your notes, but to do it so well that it is not apparent that you are reading, than to try to wing it. So have notes.

For this assignment, you are going to want to make sure your presentation has these parts:

1. Statement of thesis (What?)
2. Statement of how you proved your thesis –i.e. what were your main points (How?)
3. A brief discussion of sources (How?)
4. Why anyone should care (i.e. answer to the question: So What?)