

ANTH 313: INDIAN-WHITE RELATIONS

Tom Thornton, Ph.D.

Winter 2007, T, Th 10:00-11:50a

Office: Cramer Hall, Room 141-P

Office Hours: T, Th 4:00 – 5:00p

Phone: 503-725-3316

Email: tthornto@pdx.edu

Website: <http://web.pdx.edu/~tthornto/index.html>

The history of Indian-white relations has not usually produced complex histories. Indians are the rock, European peoples are the sea, and history seems a constant storm . . . the sea wears down and dissolves the rock; or the sea erodes the rock but it cannot finally absorb its battered remnant, which endures. . . but the tellers of such stories miss a larger process and a larger truth. The meeting of sea and continent, like the meeting of whites and Indians, created as well as destroys. Contact was not a battle of primal forces in which only one could survive. Something new could appear.

--Richard White, *The Middle Ground*

OVERVIEW

Indian-White relations is many stories, many themes, many creations and destructions, many entanglements and mixings, which to this day are still being played out. American Indians are not like other ethnic minorities; they hold a special status as domestic dependent nations in the US Constitution. Similarly, because of their indigenous status and unique ties to their homelands, Indians hold a special status in the Euro-American imagination. To understand why is to understand a critical dimension of American history and of the origins, development, tolerance, and organization of cultural diversity in what we now call the United States and Canada. This course emphasizes key problems and themes in the Indian-White relations over time, and how they continue to shape events and perceptions today.

The texts, lectures, films, discussions, projects, and assignments are designed to provide you with:

- Knowledge of the complex historical, legal, and cultural contexts that contemporary Indian-White relations;
- a critical grasp of “Indians” and “Whites” as complex and changing cultural constructions of ethnicity and identity rather than “races.”
- an understanding of key contemporary issues that American Indians and Canadian First Nations face as indigenous minorities and ethnic nationalities within modern industrial nation states;
- knowledge of the ethnographic, scientific, historical, and other methods, concepts, and sources used to examine Indian-White relations;
- A critical perspective on the dominant U.S. narrative and popular images of Indian-White relations that we are fed through many school curricula and popular media.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND WEBCT

1. *The Lance and the Shield: The Life and Times of Sitting Bull (SB)* by historian Robert Utley is a biography of a pivotal figure and icon in the history of Indian-White relations.
2. *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations (BS)* by attorney Charles Wilkinson examines the legal-historical struggles and precedents that have governed Indian-White relations and self-determination.
3. *Facing East from Indian Country: a Native History of Early America (FE)* by historian Daniel K. Richter is a provocative set of essays on Indian-White relations in colonial America.
4. *Playing Indian (PI)* by historian Philip Deloria is an exploration of how whites have adopted various aspects of Indian identity since colonial times.
5. *Being Comanche: A Social History of an American Indian Community (BC)* by anthropologist Morris Foster is an ethnographic and ethnohistorical study of change and continuity in an Indian community.

6. *The Whale and the Supercomputer (WS)* by Charles Wohlforth is a study of the fate of northern Inupiaq Eskimos, who are facing what may be their greatest challenge--rapid climate change.
7. Other course readings and resources (e.g., syllabus and web links) will be posted on WebCT, an internet resource to facilitate communication and distribution of course materials. Students are automatically enrolled in WebCT and can access class resources with their odin account and a password (usually the last 4 digits of your PSU ID) at www.psuonline.pdx.edu. If you do not have an odin account, please obtain one (www.account.pdx.edu).

These texts will be supplemented with additional handouts and other media, especially films.

FORMAT & EVALUATION

Weekly classes will feature instructor presentation of new material through lecture, film, and in-class exercises, as well as student-led discussions and presentations. Evaluation is based of the following requirements:

- 1) *Essays (90% or 900 points)*: Three 4-page (~1200 word) essays will be assigned over the course of the term (see Course Schedule), based on exam-style questions. Students will receive detailed guidelines for each paper assignments in separate handouts. Each paper will be graded on a 300 point scale.
- 2) *Talking Points* and other assignments. (*10% or 100 points*): Students will be asked to complete minor assignments both inside and outside of class. Among the most important of these are Talking Points worksheets (questions, comments, quotes, etc. for discussion—see example) to be turned in to the instructor 5 times during the term and worth 10 points each. Being a discussant means being prepared and ready to listen and contribute, and the Talking Points you prepare should enhance your participation, while at the same time giving the instructor valuable feedback. In addition students may be expected to attend campus or local events and report on them. Full participation in all classes is expected. Talking Points worksheets are available on WebCT.

Grading is: 970+ points = A+; 930-969 = A; 900-929=A-; 870-899=B+; 830-869 =B; 800-829=B-; 770-799=C+; 730-769 =C; 700-729 = C-; 670-699=D+; 630-669 =D; 600-629 = D-; < 600 = F (☹).

POLICIES

All work must be completed to receive a grade. Late papers will be penalized or rejected, except in cases of verifiable illness or emergency. Also, please be advised of the following Department policies: a) a “P” grade for the course requires an accumulated grade of C- or better; b) an “I” grade requires, in addition to the instructor’s approval and “passing” standing in the course, a written petition, documenting (extraordinary) circumstances, approved by the Department Chair; c) the Anthropology Department insists upon academic integrity and intellectual honesty and is vigilant on the matter of plagiarism (see: <http://www.anthropology.pdx.edu/assets/plagiarism.pdf>).

Students with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychological, vision, hearing, etc.) who need to arrange reasonable accommodation must contact both the instructor and the Disability Resources Center at the beginning of the term. Also, be aware of your responsibilities for academic integrity and intellectual honesty ().

To be an effective participant in class, it is important to keep up with the readings because they provide an important basis for what is covered in class. For discussions to succeed students must attend class and prepare assignments in a timely manner. Please abide by the following principles of discussion:

1. **Prepare “Talking Points”** as you read and engage course materials to help you comprehend, connect, and assess the readings and put key ideas, questions, and concepts into play for discussion. I will collect Talking Points 5 times during the term, but encourage you to complete them for each set of reading assignments.

2. **Listen actively and reflectively**—Try to understand and analyze others’ opinions as they are spoken; ask questions to clarify and further your understanding. Don’t just sit passively “waiting your turn” or thinking about your own responses. Reflective silence is okay.
3. **Respond constructively**—Imagine what kind of role you are playing in responding to others and to texts. Do you wish to: 1) comprehend their analysis by paraphrasing or analyzing it; 2) extend their analysis by applying it new situations; 3) synthesize or link it with other concepts, issues, or arguments (especially those raised by others in the class and by the texts, which we share) through comparison, etc.; 4) evaluate it against relevant criteria? Do not engage in *ad hominem* or personal attacks. Agreement or disagreement is not necessarily the goal—Comprehending, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating important concepts, theories, and perspectives are the main objectives.

ADVISING

If you are an anthropology major, or are considering declaring the major, please chose a faculty advisor and meet with them once or twice a year to chart a course and assess your progress through the major.

COURSE SCHEDULE (not etched in stone)

Wk	Topics	Assignments
1	1/9: Introduction and overview. Does the US government owe an apology to Indians? 1/11: Working backward and forward from the apology; the role of anthropology. A peace ceremony.	Read Kevin Gover's apology on behalf of the BIA. http://www.tahtonka.com/apology.html ; <i>Sitting Bull</i> (SB) Preface
2	1/16: Perspectives on Indian-White relations. 1/18: Indian-White Relations through biography: Sitting Bull.	SB Prologue, 1-7 SB 8-15 Talking Points #1
3	1/23: Sitting Bull as leader. 1/25: Sitting Bull as legacy.	SB 16-20 SB 21-Epilogue; FE Prologue
4	1/30: Early Indian-White Relations as perspective and exchange 2/1: Early Indian-White Relations (cont)	FE 1, 2, 3 Essay 1 Due FE 4, 5, 6 Talking Points #2
5	2/6: "Playing Indian" and cross-cultural identification with Natives over time. 2/8: "Playing Indian" (cont).	PI 1, 2, 3 PI 4, 5, 6 Talking Points #3
6	2/13: "Blood Struggle" and the confounding legal-historical context of contemporary Indian-White relations. 2/15: "Blood Struggle" (cont).	BS Part One BS Part Two Talking Points #4
7	2/20: "Blood Struggle" (cont). 2/22: Can there be justice within the present legal context of Indian-White relations?	BS Part Three BS Part Four; Coda Essay 2 Due
8	2/27: Individual and communal identity in the context of changing Indian-White relations. 3/1: "Being Comanche" (cont).	BC 1, 2, 3 BC 4, 5, 6 Talking Points #5
9	3/6: Environmental justice in the Fourth World- "The Whale and the Supercomputer." 3/8: "The Whale and the Supercomputer" (cont).	WS 1, 2, 3 WS 4, 5, 6 Talking Points #6
10	3/13: "The Whale and the Supercomputer" (cont). 3/15: The future.	WS 7, 8, 9 WS 10, Handbook (WebCT)
11	3/20 Finals Week	Essay 3 due 3/20

See <http://www.kstrom.net/isk/maps/cultmap.html> for a link to a dynamic, scaleable map showing culture area and other information for more than 500 North America tribes.