

1-2002

# ANTH 341.01: Contemporary Issues of American Indians

Neyooxet S. Greymorning

*University of Montana - Missoula*, [neyooxet.greymorning@mso.umt.edu](mailto:neyooxet.greymorning@mso.umt.edu)

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## Recommended Citation

Course also cross listed as NAS 341.01.

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## **Contemporary Issues of American Indians:**

Native American Studies 341 Winter 2002 (Anthro cross listed)

This course is designed to acquaint students with contemporary Native American issues in North America. This will be accomplished through readings that examine the historical roots that have contributed to how these issues developed. From these readings discussions will then explore whether alternative approaches might result in better political, social or economic conditions.

**Course Objective:** The has two main objectives. 1. To help students to develop an understanding of the complexities of contemporary issues, at historical, economic and political levels, that impact North American Indigenous cultures. and 2. To help students to gain insight into a) developments that have given rise to a number of contemporary issues faced by Indigenous North Americans, and b) attempts that have been made to try and address these issues.

Class meeting times: Monday, Wednesday & Fridays 9:10 am to 10:00 am  
Location: Liberal Arts building room 305

### **Instructor**

**Notoniheihi Ceebih'ohuteeyei Neniice'ooke**  
(Dr. Stephen Greymorning)

### **Contemporary Issues of American Indians:**

Office: NAS. Building, Rm. 201  
Office Phone: 243-6381  
Office Hours: 10:15 - 11:45 AM, MW  
or by appointment Mon., Tues. or Wed. afternoons

I. Required readings for this course are: Breaking the Iron Bonds: Indian Control of Energy Development by, Marjane Ambler, Returning to the teachings by Ruppert Ross, Protecting Indigenous Knowledge & Heritage by Marie Battiste & James Youngblood Henderson, & a Faculty Pac. readings

II. Tests will be based on assigned readings, lectures, and videos. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with the assigned readings, lectures and videos if they wish to maximize their best potential for learning and test grades in this course. Students should assume that where lecture material and information from the text cross, such information will most likely show up on exams. Lectures will be presented on the premise that students have taken the initiative to read the assigned material and are bringing to the class an inquisitiveness mind and a level of participation that will spark discussions.

III. Graded assignments:

**A. Short Answer Exam**

This exam will consist of 4 short answers (5 pts ea.) and 5 Identifications (2 pts ea.) and is worth 30 points (15%).

**B. Mid Term**

The mid-term will consist of 5 Identifications (2 pts ea.), 4 short answer (5 pts. ea) & 2 essays (10 pts. ea).

The mid-term is worth 50 points or 25% of the term's course work.

**C. Research Paper**

The final research paper must fall between 1,600 - 2,300 words in length, anything less or more than this will result in a lowered grade. The paper must be properly referenced, with a properly written bibliography of no less than 6 references of which can only include 2 internet resources. Suggested topics for this paper can include but not necessarily be limited to; gaming, economic development, resource management, self-governance, cultural and intellectual property rights, or language and cultural maintenance. Students can combine two or more of these topics in their paper. The final paper is due in class on December 4th. If the paper is turned in late 2 points will be deducted for each day late. The final paper is worth 100 points or 50% of the term's course work.

**D. Group Facilitated Discussions**

Each group will be assigned to facilitate a 20-minute class discussion, as indicated on the course outline. It will be the responsibility of groups 1- 3 to make sure that they have obtained and viewed the videos before they lead class discussions. The final paper is worth 20 points or 10% of the term's course work.

E. **Bonus** Term Synthesis Paper . This paper should be 250- 500 words in length and should reflect an objective synthesis of lectures, assignments and what was generally learned in the class. This paper can earn a maximum of 5 extra points.

IV. Grading: This course can only be taken for a traditional grade, and cannot be taken for a grade of pass/ no pass.

A = 181 - 200      B = 161 - 180      C = 141 - 160      D = 129 - 140      F = 0 - 128

**Academic Honesty:** Under no circumstances should students represent another person's work or ideas as their own. To do this is to plagiarize and it is an intolerable offense in the academic community. Students who plagiarize will fail the assignment, and as a result may fail the course. Students should also be advised that they should not submit the same paper for more than one course.

## COURSE GUIDELINE: NAS 341, Contemporary Issues of American Indians

The weekly guideline that follows is being offered to assist and guide students to prepare for class readings and discussions. Students however must realize that not being prepared for class or discussions will have an over-riding impact, the effect of which may cause some class topics to be condensed, for lack of discussion, altered, or switched. In addition to this weeks may alter due to discussions carrying over to a subsequent day or in some cases discussions may carry over n to the following week.

### Week 1: Sept. 4, Introduction and Course Overview

Sept. 6, This class session will briefly look at why reservations were created. **1)** Students should be prepared to discuss examples of how the Bureau of Indian Affairs can be viewed as having played a major role in binding American Indians by what Ambler refers to as “three iron chains: paternalism, exploitation and dependency.” **2)** Students should be prepared to talk about some of the statistics (pg5) on reservation life that Ambler gives, and **3)** to share thoughts on any of the many reasons why Indians would chose to stay on a reservation.

Since Nationhood the United States has grappled with what it has labeled as “the Indian problem.” For over two centuries, government attitudes have forged policies that have vacillated between acknowledging Indigenous independence and those that reflect a colonial control that consistently lead toward assimilation. Less than 15 years ago, as Ambler points out, President Reagan stated “Americans had humored Indians by giving them reservations, where “primitive lifestyles” is the reason for their poverty (pg3). **4)** What can be said about this statement? Other things to discuss are **5)** the role of treaties in Indian-government relations and **6)** the argument that the treaties of old should be ignored because Indians have assimilated and do not represent the same culture as the Indians who signed the treaties, **7)** the three US political initiatives, either policy or legal ruling, that had devastating impacts on Indian land, and rights. **8)** What negative impacts resulted for Indians from these initiatives. **9)** What were the two US policies that tried to take steps to correct the negative impact of these initiatives?

Reading: Ambler, Marjane, *Breaking the Iron Bonds*, Kansas, University of Kansas Press, 1990, pp 1-30.

### Week 2: Resource Development and the Chain of Exploitation.

In this second week we will examine more closely some of the various acts, regardless of their being individual or governmental, that have clouded title and control over minerals and resources on Indigenous peoples lands. An example of one individuals act occurred in Montana on the Fort Belknap Reservation. When the Indian Agent rented rights to coal that was discovered on the reservation to white entrepreneur Charles Damon, Indians discovered that they had to buy the coal from Mr. Damon while he provided coal free to local white settlers. Another example is the action of Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall. **1)** Students need to be prepared to discuss what Mr. Fall did, **2)** the ethics of his actions. **3)** What the impact of his action was, both short and long term. **4)** In addition to this, students will want to discuss the screening of the video “Broken Rainbow” and what it illustrates with regard to this chapter.

Friday’s discussions will focus on the period during and after the 1970s, a period that many consider represented a turning point for what Ambler terms were the American Indian energy tribes. Discussions during this class session will revolve around the following questions. **1)** Who were the major resource developing companies? **2)** What resource were these companies after? **3)** Who were the people targeted and where did they live? **4)** What eventually happened that revealed how this group of Indians were being exploited **5)** what, if any, actions resulted on the part of the Indians and others to challenge the development? **6)** Who else found themselves to be aligned with Indian interests regarding the environment. And, **7)** What two Native organizations were formed as a resulted of the energy tribes networking?

Reading: Ambler, Marjane, *Breaking the Iron Bonds*, Kansas, University of Kansas Press, 1990, pp 31-61, and pp 62-90.

Video Screening: Sept. 9, **Broken Rainbow**

**Week 3:** CERT Giving Birth to Indian Resource Management.

This week's discussions will focus entirely on the formation and development of the Council of Energy Resource Tribes. 1) Students will want to familiarize themselves with why CERT was formed, 2) who some of the key players were in its creation, 3) when and who helped to bring CERT to national attention, 4) who its first chief economist was and what his vision was for CERT. In addition to these discussions, students should also be prepared to discuss 5) the charges of CERT being unpatriotic, 6) whether this was true, 7) how were these charges countered by CERT, and 8) the soundness of the ways that CERT attempted to face the challenges of the energy crisis that hit the country in the 70s and 80s.

Reading: Ambler, Marjane, *Breaking the Iron Bonds*, Kansas, University of Kansas Press, 1990, pp 91-117.

**Week 4:** Who's Minding the Store? Dealing with the Management of Indian Royalties.

This session of discussions will look at how a history of having land and resources either expropriated or exploited, led to the energy tribe assuming greater control over the business of their affairs. This is especially pertinent in lieu of Indigenous groups like the Blackfeet of Montana, who obtained as much as 90% of its total income from taxes and oil and gas royalties, and the Jicarilla Apache which relied on revenues from oil and gas revenues to pay for such essentials as its fire protection, police, schools, water and sanitation as well as a number of its social programs. 1) What was discovered during the summer of 1980? 2) What resource was being heisted? and 3) What actions resulted from the thefts? 3) After the discovery which tribe offered assistance on how to handle theft? 4) Why did this tribe seem better able to deal with the problem of theft than the United States Geological Survey? What happened to Chuck Thomas and his wife as a result of his discovery? 5) What does this say about a political system that colonized Indigenous North America, on the basis of the colonized people being uncivilized, and maintained persistent efforts toward those peoples assuming the moral and ethical standards of the colonizers? 6) Students should be able to discuss what the purpose of the LACT. 7) What did the investigation reveal in Chuck Thomas' metaphor about the store? 8) What Federal Act was passed to try and correct the problem? In addition to this Act, 9) what did the Department of the Interior do to try and handle royalty accounts? 10) What was said about the Department's efforts?

Reading: Ambler, Marjane, *Breaking the Iron Bonds*, Kansas, University of Kansas Press, 1990, pp 118-144.

**Week 5:** Of Self-government and the Right to Regulate Ones Own Affairs.

This week's discussions will explore some of the positive initiatives that have resulted when various Indigenous groups have managed their own affairs. Class discussions will revolve around this week's assigned reading and the video "Indian Country."

Guest Instructor: Oct. 2, Dr. Richard Sattler

Reading: Ambler, Marjane, *Breaking the Iron Bonds*, Kansas, University of Kansas Press, 1990, pp 172-203.

Video Screening: Sept. 30, **Indian Country**

**Oct. 4, (A) Short answer & identification exam on readings for weeks 1-4 (chapters 1 - 5)**

## **Week 6:** Water and Off-Reservation Energy Development

While many people are highly critical about the level of poverty that exists on the majority of Indian reservations, few are aware of the history events that helped to create this poverty. The forced relocation of the Arikara and Mandan, cited at the beginning of the chapter, is a pattern that has been forced upon Indians right up to the 1980, as addressed in the video "Broken Rainbow." These two groups success at farming had been noted as early as 1800. Even after having been placed on a reservation in 1862 their success remained unimpeded until 1953, when the US government flooded their lands forcing their communities to be broken up and scattered. Ambler notes that "Garrison dam stands as a symbol of the federal government' disregard for the Indian's water rights." (pg.205) Also, think about the ability of a tribe to move out of poverty when a government does such things as use Indian funds to subsidize development around reservations for non-Indian use of water identified for Indian control and use (see page 215 of text).

Guest Instructor: Dr. Richard Sattler

Reading: Ambler, Marjane *Breaking the Iron Bonds*, Kansas, University of Kansas Press, 1990, pp 204-262.

## **Week 7:** From Treaty Rights To Human Rights

Before Indigenous peoples agreed to terms and conditions of treaties they consistently sought for the protection of certain rights. Among these rights included subsistence rights. Lighting the 7<sup>th</sup> Fire examines the extremely charge issues that Indian peoples often face when they seek to claim this right. This week's class discussions will explore the issues underlying treaty and human rights more closely.

Fact Pac Reading: Grinde, Donald *Ecocide Of North America*, "Fishing Rights: The Usual and Accustomed Places", New Mexico: Clear Light Press, 1995, pp 145-170.

Video Screening: Oct.16 Lighting the 7th Fire

## **Week 8:** From Treaty Rights To Human Rights (continued)

The division between Canada and the United States is a line drawn on a map. The division ultimately resulted from a group of ambitious British citizens who successfully revolted against the controlling arm of their government. The birth of this new nation split a continent and numerous Indigenous Nations. The focus of this week will be on very contemporary issues of First Nations Peoples of Canada.

Video Screenings:

Oct. 21 Eastern Tide: A Cry For Freedom

Oct. 23 Eastern Tide: Warriors

Oct. 25 Discussion to follow after each video

## **Week 9:** Human Rights Violations as Shapers of Dark Realities

Government boarding schools had one primary objective, to remove Indian children from their families, cultures, and homes in order to indoctrinate them to the manners of Anglo-European ways of living. For a vast majority of Indigenous children throughout North America, their first experiences of boarding schools were of being abused. This week's reading examines the impact and scars that this has left on Indian communities. **1)** Students should be prepared to discuss possible causes that underlie these abuses. **2)** Discussions will also look at ways in which Indian communities have tried to cope with this dark reality.

Reading: Ross, Ruppert *Returning To The Teachings*, Toronto: Penguin Books, 1996, pp 52-75 (for Monday Oct. 28), and pp 29-51 (for Wednesday's video screening.)

Video Screening: Oct. 30, **Hollow Water**

**Week 10:** Searching for Balance at the Crossroads

This week's class examine how one Canadian First Nations community dealt with abuse. Discussions will look at the applicability of the their approach and efforts as a possible model to deal with issues of different types of abuses, such as substance abuse as one example.

Reading: Ross, Ruppert *Returning To The Teachings*, Toronto: Penguin Books, 1996, pp 131-154 & 192 beginning at Hollow Water Sentencing-212.

**Week 11:** A Healing Path Back to the Beginning (Nov. 11 **Holiday, No Classes**)

This week's class will

Reading: Ross, Ruppert *Returning To The Teachings*, Toronto: Penguin Books, 1996, pp 213-232 (for Nov. 13) & pp 253-274 (for Nov. 15).

**Week 12:** Indigenous Ways of Knowing; A Returning to the Beginning

When Indigenous people talk about the imperialism of being colonized discussions are not about the past. There is a new form of imperialism. In the past where land and resources had long been a focus of colonial powers, today's neocolonialism can be identified by the theft of Indigenous knowledge, spirituality, medicine and DNA. Week 12 will focus on understanding what is Indigenous knowledge, and what underlies issues of cultural appropriation.

Reading: Battiste, Marie & Youngblood Henderson, James, *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge & Heritage*, Saskatoon: Purich Press, 2000, pp 35-56 & 145-168.

Video Screening: Nov. 22, White Shamans & Plastic Medicine Men

**Week 13:** Indigenous Heritage Rights (Nov. 27-29 **Thanksgiving Holiday**)

Monday's class will explore current international work that is being done to address the need to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples' cultures. Discussions will include the role that education should play in de-colonization.

Reading: Battiste, Marie & Youngblood Henderson, James, *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge & Heritage*, Saskatoon: Purich Press, 2000, pp 59-72 & 86-96.

**Week 14:** Biopiracy and the New Body Snatchers **Research Papers Due Dec. 6, 2002**

During the mid 1990s an American pharmaceutical company gained patent rights to the genetic make up of an Aboriginal Australian technically, any offspring he sires are genetically owned by this company. In the latter part of the same decade, a Seattle businessman discovered that his genetic makeup was patented by his family Doctor. This week's discussions will look at this new area of body "snatching."

Reading: Battiste, Marie & Youngblood Henderson, James, *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge & Heritage*, Saskatoon: Purich Press, 2000, pp 117-131 & class handout Who's body is This?

Video Screening: Dec. 4, Gene Hunters

**Week 15:** Issues of Indigenous Intellectual and Cultural Property

This week will continue to look at current international issues of intellectual and cultural property rights.

Reading: Battiste, Marie & Youngblood Henderson, James, *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge & Heritage*, Saskatoon: Purich Press, 2000, pp 171-200 & pp 241-250

**Week 16:** Dec. 16-20 **FINALS WEEK**