Professor: Marybeth (Eleanor) Nevins[[1]](#footnote-1)

Office hours: Tues 12:30-2 and Wed 10-11:30 and by appointment, Munroe 107

Class Meeting: Tues and Thurs 11-12:15 Munroe 320

Ashlee Bird [ahbird@middlebury.edu](mailto:ahbird@middlebury.edu) ; available for meetings by appointment

SOAN 325: Indigeniety and Colonialism: Native North America

In this course we will approach Native North America and the American political mainstream as dynamically intertwined. Through ethnography, ethno-history, oral literature, and indigenous film we will examine the history of colonial encounters between the Indigenous and the 'Western'. We will examine how indigenous cultural difference and moral claims to land have challenged dominant political cultures across the history of the North American settler states. Our analysis will extend to ongoing questions concerning cultural knowledge, sustainability, and imagined futures.

As students, you will come away from the class knowing quite a bit more about Native North American languages, cultures, communication networks and historical experiences. You will also grapple with the question of how it is that we “know” what we think we know about Native Americans. We will develop an understanding of research as one zone of cross-cultural encounter among many. We will work hard to listen to the voices of Native Americans as they engage with researchers, missionaries, filmmakers, business interests, militaries, and journalists. And finally, we will explore the relevance of research and its products for Native Americans as they make use of anthropology, linguistics and historical archives to address ongoing public debates over land, language and social justice for their communities.

Important Dates:

Filmmaker Bennie Klain visit on November 6, Screening at 7:00 pm

Vermont Folklife visit on December 4th

**There are six required texts, all available at the bookstore:**

*The Networked Wilderness: Communicating in Early New England*, by Matthew Cohen. University of Minnesota Press. 2009.

*The Zuni Man Woman,* Will Roscoe. University of New Mexico Press.1992.

*Masso Bwikam/Yaqui Deer Songs: A Native American Poetry*, Larry Evers and Felipe Molina. University of Arizona Press. 1987.

*Ghost Dances and Identity: Prophetic Religion and American Indian Ethnogenesis in the nineteenth century*, by Gregory Smoack. University of Minnesota Press. 2006.

*Hunting Tradition in a Changing World: Yup’ik Lives in Alaska Today,* by Ann Fienup-Riordan, Rutgers University Press. 2000.

*Maidu Indian Myths and Stories of Hanc'ibyjim*, by William Shipley. Heyday Books. 1992.

**This Text is Highly Recommended for Those Students enrolled in this class to fulfill their requirement in Composition and Writing:**

*The Craft of Research,* any edition but I have the 3rd, by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

**Assignment Structure:**

Your grades will be based upon five 2-3 page essays, one per book, in answer to your choice from a set of questions posed by me (selecting from proposed questions elicited from the class), as well as a 6-10 page paper on a topic developed from your interests in a Native American issue or community. Note that each assignment is staged in the course schedule. Note also that the research paper carries proposal and annotated bibliography due-dates prior to the due date of the full paper.

Throughout the semester I am willing to sit with you and work through early drafts of any assignment if you bring these to my office hours.

Cohen essay (2-3 pages) 10%

Roscoe essay (2-3 pages) 10%

Smoack essay (2-3 pages) 10%

Evers and Molina essay (2-3 pages) 10%

Fienup-Riordan essay (2-3 pages) 10%

Research Paper (8-10 pages) 30%

Participation and attendance 20%

**To keep us working together**

This class requires your attendance and timely participation in class and requires that you turn in your essays on time. I’ve designed the class to be engaging and pleasurable but….because all of us have competing demands on our time, it’s necessary to also institute penalties for non-attendance and late submission of papers and essays. I will take attendance and deduct points from your participation grade for every class you miss that isn’t accounted for through communication with me. Essays and papers will be dropped by half a letter grade for every day late. If you cannot make it to class, it is your responsibility to contact me by phone or email before the missed class. If you have extenuating circumstances causing you trouble making it to class or posting assignments, contact me and/or your commons dean.

**CW Students**

Writing and argumentation instruction are built into the class for everyone. But for those of you taking this class to fulfill the writing and composition requirement, you will meet with me in office hours as a group to focus upon writing issues as you prepare your essays and your research papers. Our discussions will refer to the text *The Craft of Research*.

**Schedule**

You are expected to come to class having read the assigned readings listed in the syllabus with that class period**.**

**Part I: Recovering and Reflecting upon Early Indigenous-Settler Encounters in the Northeast**

Tues 9/09—Introduction “Indigeneity and Colonialism:” Histories of Encounter

Thurs 9/11 Cohen, “Introduction,” pp. 1-28 and Chapter 1: “Native Audiences,” pp. 29- 64. Nicholas Reo visits our class.

9/11 at 12:30 you are encouraged to attend the Woodin Colloquia at the Hillcrest Environmental Studies Center. Afterwards the speaker will have lunch with students in Atwater Dining Hall. The speaker is Nicholas Reo and his talk “Native Peoples and Landscape Scale Conservation” is directly relevant to this class. Extra credit opportunity.

Saturday 9/13 at 2:00 Donna Kelly presents “Remembering Newt Washburn” at the Vermont Folklife Center. He was a basketmaker from an Abenaki-Swiss-German family and she will talk about the Abenaki influences on his basketry, which is on display at the Folklife Center. Optional. Extra credit opportunity.

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Tues 9/16 Cohen Chapter 2: “Good Noise from New England,” pp. 65-91.

Thurs 9/18 Cohen Chapter 3: “Forest of Gestures,” pp. 92-130.

[9/18-9/20 Clifford Symposium]---The theme of the symposium, “digital scholarship,” is relevant to this class for a number of reasons. Much of Native American history is relatively hidden, or erased, from the perspective of mainstream or popular historical accounts. Yet there is a strong documentary record in archives and specialist literatures. Digital scholarship and publication can make these hidden histories public and accessible. Go to the symposium. Find examples of Native

American uses of digital scholarship. Think about how you might use digital scholarship in this class.

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Tues 9/23 Cohen Chapter 4: “Multimedia Combat and the Pequot War,” pp. 131-

166; and “Coda,” pp. 167-176.

**Part 2: Third Gender, Colonial and Post-Colonial Misrecognitions**

Thurs 9/25 Roscoe Prologue: “A Death That Caused Universal Regret,” pp. 1-6 and Chapter 1 “The Middle Place,” pp. 7-28

Roscoe Chapter 2 “We’wha, the Celebrated Lhamana,” pp. 29-52.

Roshashanah.

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Tues 9/30 Roscoe Chapter 3 “Among the Most Enlightened Society,” pp. 53-97.

Roscoe Chapter 4 “The Country Was Full of Soldiers,” pp. 98-122.

**Essay 1 due**

Thurs 10/02 Roscoe Chapter 5 “The Rites of Gender,” pp. 123-146.

Roscoe Chapter 6 “Two-Fold, One-Kind,” pp.147-169.

Roscoe Appendix 2: “The Beginning,” pp. 217-222.

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Tues 10/07 Roscoe Chapter 7 “They Left This Great Sin,” pp. 170-194.

Roscoe Chapter 8 “The Berdache Tradition,” pp. 195-214.

**Part 3 Encountering Others Through Prophecy, Dance: Large-Scale Indigenous Communications Networks**

Recommended film “The Way West: Ghost Dance 1877-1893”

Thursday 10/09 Smoack “Introduction: Endings and Beginnings,” pp. 1-14.

Smoack Chapter 1 “Snakes and Diggers: The Origins of Newe Ethnic Identities,” pp.15-47.

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Tues 10/14 mid-term recess, no class

Thurs 10/16: Thurs 10/23 Smoack Chapter 2 “Shamans, Prophets and Missionaries: Newe Religion in the Nineteenth Century,” pp. 48-84.

**Essay 2 Due.**

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Tues 10/21 Smoack Chapter 3 “Treaty Making and Consolidation: The Politics of Ethnogenesis,” pp. 85-112. Ruuska (2011) “Ghost Dancing and the Iron Horse: Surviving Through Tradition and Technology,” *Technology and Culture* 52, pp.

574-597. Find through academia.edu.

**Paper Topic Proposals Due**

Thurs 23 Smoack Chapter 4: “Two Trails: Resistance, Accommodation and the 1870 Ghost Dance,” pp. 113-152

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Tues 10/28 Smoack Chapter 5 “Culture Wars, Indianness and the 1890 Ghost Dance,” pp. 152-190.

Smoack “Conclusion: Prophecy and American Identities,” pp. 191-206.

**Essay 3 assigned.**

**Part 4: Indigenous-Settler Encounters Through Art, Questions of Translation and Collaboration. Maidu, Navajo,Yaqui, and Ojibwe**

Thurs 10/30 Shipley, Read the preface, introduction and Creation stories.

Deborah Cameron talk “Sex, lies and stereotypes: do we ask the right questions about language and gender?” at 4:00 Robert A. Jones Conference Room. Arrive at 3:45 for refreshments.

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Tues 11/04 Shipley, Read the stories of Coyote’s Doings.

Nevins, “Maidu Textual Histories and the Mediation of Indigenous and Settler Publics”

**Class held in Special Collections, Expeditions and “Discovering” Native American**

**Literatures**

**Essay 3 Due**

Thurs 11/06 Indigenous productions and representations for indigenous and settler audiences.

Director Bennie Klain class visit to screen “Return of the Navajo Boy.” This is open to

visitors as well.

Be sure to attend his Screening of “Weaving Worlds” and “Columbus Day Legacy” tonight at 7:00.

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Tues 11/11 Spicer, “Yaqui,” pp. 250-263.

Evers and Molina Prologue

Evers and Molina Chapter 1 “Yopo Nooki: Enchanted Talk,” pp. 7-25

Thurs 11/13

Evers and Molina Chapter 2 “Yeu a Weepo: Where It Comes Out,” pp. 26-72

**Essay 4 due**

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Tues 11/18 Evers and Molina Chapter 3 “Senu Tukaria Bwikam: One Night of Songs,” pp. 73-128

Evers and Molina Chapter 4 “Maso Me’ewa: Killing the Deer,” pp. 129-182 and “Epilogue,” pp. 183-187.

**Part 5: Hunting, Tradition, Creativity, Ecology and Change in the Arctic**

Thurs 11/20 Fienup-Riordan Chapter 1“Continuity and Change in Southwestern Alaska,” pp. 3-28

Fienup-Riordan Chapter 2 “An Anthropologist Reassesses Her Methods,” pp. 29- 84

**Annotated Bibliography Due**

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Tues 11/25

Fienup-Riordan Chapter 3 “Metaphors of Conversion, Metaphors of Change,” pp. 85-108.

Fienup-Riordan Chapter 4 “Mixed Metaphors: Old Yup’ik Acts in the New Catholic Church,” pp. 109-150.

**Essay 5 due.**

Thurs 11/27 Thanksgiving recess, no class

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Tues 12/02 Fienup-Riordan Chapter 5 “Yup’ik Community in the 1990’s: A Worldwide

Web,” pp. 151-182.

Fienup-Riordan Chapter 6 “What’s in a Name?: Becoming a Real Person in a Yup’ik Community,” pp. 183-208.

Thurs 12/04 Fienup-Riordan Chapter 7 “Collaboration on Display: A Yup’ik Exhibit at Three National Museums,” pp. 209-251.

Fienup-Riordan Chapter 8 “Elders in Museums: Fieldwork Turned on Its Head,” pp. 252-274.

Class meets (fittingly) in the Folklife Center for a discussion of Abenaki experiences with Abenaki elder Jeanne Brinke and co-Director Greg Sparrow.

I will be in DC at the American Anthropological Association meetings

**8-10 page paper due by December 14th. Early submissions are encouraged. I am willing to comment on your draft prior to submission if you send it to me by the 10th.**

1. Not obligatory, but if you want to read examples of my own work on the class topic, you can find them at: http://middlebury.academia.edu/MEleanorNevins [↑](#footnote-ref-1)