

Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity

POL195H1F

Wetmore Hall, New College, Room 75

Thursdays, 10am–12pm



Screenshot from *The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open* co-written and co-directed by Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers (Blackfoot, Sámi) and Kathleen Hepburn

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This First-Year Foundations Seminar explores the politics of representation in Indigenous multimedia. We examine Indigenous cultural productions of memoir, documentary, graphic novel, film, poetry, music, and video games to discuss representations of settler colonialism and Indigeneity. Through multiple forms of media, students investigate how Indigenous people endure colonialism. While Indigenous peoples have endured settler colonization, Indigeneity endures despite it. As a system of power structured upon dispossession, elimination, and genocide, settler colonialism is thus a failing project. Indigenous multimedia illustrates this failure by signifying the survival and endurance of Indigenous peoples, political thought, legal orders, and social ecologies. In addition to reading, watching, listening, playing, and creating multimedia content, students engage with new research by Indigenous scholars on the politics of knowledge production in textual, visual, sonic, and virtual representation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand the politics of knowledge production in relation to representation
- Think critically about representations of settler colonialism and Indigeneity
- Compare Indigenous cultural productions
- Write effectively in the concentration of Indigenous politics
- Create engaging multimedia content

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

For this course, I expect you to:

- Closely read, watch, listen, and play with required materials
- Coordinate and complete small group work within cohort
- Submit assignments on time in accordance with deadlines
- Interact respectfully with your peers and professor

- Contribute positively to a safe course climate

PROFESSOR RESPONSIBILITIES

For this course, you should expect me to:

- Provide enriching lectures
- Convey content, ideas, and material in a clear way
- Facilitate engaging discussions and small group work
- Respect each student's individuality as a person and learner
- Encourage you to be excellent readers, writers, and critical thinkers

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- *From the Ashes*, Jesse Thistle
- *Bad Indians*, Deborah A. Miranda
- *This Place*, Alicia Elliot
- *Moonshot*, vol. 3, Elizabeth LaPensée and Michael Sheyahshe
- All other required materials are available in the Library Reading List

COURSE POLICIES

1. **Health and Safety:** This course follows U of T policy, rules, and protocols for health and safety. I strongly encourage everyone to remain up-to-date on vaccinations and to upload your vaccination documents to U of T's UCheck platform. Maintaining updated information on the vaccination status of our community will help inform future health and safety planning. It will also minimize disruption should conditions require vaccine requirements to be reimposed. Vaccination documents can be uploaded to UCheck [here](#). If you are feeling unwell or experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, you should stay home and self-isolate. [The provincial self-assessment tool](#) can help provide guidance and information for those that may have been exposed and/or have symptoms. While the current pause in our mandatory mask requirement continues, the use of a [medical mask](#) in high-density indoor spaces when physical distancing is not possible is strongly encouraged during the period when cases are rising in Ontario. U of T is a mask-friendly environment, and we ask everyone to respect each other's decisions, comfort levels, and health needs. The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly changing public health crisis, which national and provincial governments as well as the university are responding to in real time. This course is designed to adapt to such responses and, most importantly, keep you and our communities healthy and safe.
2. **Accommodations:** If you require accommodations throughout the course, I will do my best to accommodate your particular needs. Register with Accessibility Services on the phone (416-978-8060), via email (accessibility.services@utoronto.ca), or at their office

(455 Spadina Avenue, 4th Floor, Suite 400, Toronto, ON, M5S 2G8). Contact me, or have a representative from Accessibility Services contact me, as soon as possible so you can be accommodated in a timely manner. Likewise, contact me if you require specific accommodations related to access to course content that is online.

3. **Absences:** Students are expected to complete the Absence Declaration form, available on [ACORN](#), anytime they are absent from class. No additional information or documentation is required. In relation to the policy on health and safety, if you are not feeling well, you are highly encouraged to stay home. In that case, it is your responsibility to contact me to receive accommodations.
4. **Academic Integrity:** This course follows U of T policy, rules, and protocols on academic integrity. According to the International Center for Academic Integrity's definition endorsed by the university, we should communicate and act in our class community and coursework with honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. You are required to understand and adhere to the Faculty of Arts and Science's Code of Behavior on Academic Matters. More information on academic integrity and what constitutes misconduct is available online: governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019.
5. **Submitting Assignments:** All assignments are due on Sunday at 11:59pm. Assignments must be submitted electronically via Querqus (q.utoronto.ca). Normally, students will be required to submit their papers to the university's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the university's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation web site (<http://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).
6. **Late Work:** Late submissions for assignments are not accepted.
7. **Remarking:** You may submit a formal request for remarking after receiving work back, but no later than 2-weeks after it was returned. The request, submitted through Querqus messenger, must include a rationale for remarking, which will be evaluated to determine if remarking is granted. I will remark the submission and return it no later than 2-weeks from the date remarking was granted. There is an appeal process that you can read more about online: teaching.artsci.utoronto.ca/teachinginas/academichandbook-jitreminders/#remarkingpolicy.
8. **Communication:** Use the Querqus messenger to contact me. Do not email me concerning the course. I will try my best to respond via Querqus within 24–48 hours after receiving a message during the week. If you are experiencing an emergency and need to be in touch with me, send me an email.

SMALL GROUP WORK — 20 points

You are required to coordinate and complete small group work with a cohort for each section of class. Small group work is assigned based on each section's required material, and the assignments are designed to teach you skills in creating multimedia content necessary for the final project. Therefore, small group work is assigned in each of the five sections. Each assignment is worth 4-points. You will be randomly sorted into a cohort at the beginning of the term. For the duration of the semester, you will coordinate with your cohort to complete small

group work. Cohorts will also work on the final project together. Group work is assigned during lecture and assessed for topicality (2-points) and completeness (2-points). Cohorts are expected to coordinate and complete the assignment outside the seminar.

REFLECTIONS — 15 total points

You are required to write and submit three reflections throughout the semester. The topic of reflection is based on the cultural production under examination for a respective section. Sections are outlined below. You are required to write and submit reflections on a memoir (section one) and documentary (section two). For the proceeding sections, you are only required to write and submit one additional reflection. You may choose one cultural production to write about from the following sections: graphic novel/comic (section three); film (section four); poetry, music, and video game (section five). Each reflection is worth 5-points and you are expected to address three main questions: (1) What did I read, watch, listen, and/or play? (1-point); (2) How is settler colonialism and/or Indigeneity represented in it? (2-points); (3) What did I learn about settler colonialism and/or Indigeneity from this cultural production (2-points)? Each reflection should be 2–3 pages double-spaced. For each submission, select *one cultural production* to reflect on from a respective section:

Section 1: Memoir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>From The Ashes</i> • <i>Bad Indians</i>
Section 2: Documentary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nîpawistamâsowin • INVASION
Section 3: Graphic novel/comic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This Place</i> • <i>Moonshot</i>
Section 4: Film	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beans • The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open • Blood Quantum
Section 5: Poetry, music & video game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Colonization” & “Into Our Light I Will Go Forever” • “Kaona” & “Hawai‘i Pono‘ī” • “Return of the Maka‘āinana” & “I Live In the Kingdom” • When Rivers Were Trails

FILM PAPER — 25 points

You are required to write one paper about a selected film from the required material. This assignment is worth 25-points. Select one film to analyze: (1) Beans; (2) The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open; and (3) Blood Quantum. Your objective in the paper is to describe the narrative—with close attention to setting, characters, dialogue, and plot—and develop an argument about the film’s representations of settler colonialism and/or Indigeneity. This assignment will be assessed for four main elements: development of thesis (5-points), description of narrative (5-points), analysis of representations (10-points), and organization, spelling, and grammar (5-points). Film papers should be 5–6 pages with a 1-point deduction for each page under/over the requirement. Submissions should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins in Chicago 17th edition style.

FINAL PROJECT — 40 points

The final project is required and worth 40-points. Working in assigned cohorts, design and create multimedia content about one selected scholarly article or essay from the required material. As a cohort, select one piece of scholarly literature to design and create a [social media carousel](#): a chain of content contained within a single threaded post. The primary objective is to (1) *summarize* the selected scholarly literature and (2) *translate* it into an informative social media carousel. You are expected to incorporate multiple forms of media—text, images, video, and/or audio—into the carousel. This should be designed with one of the following platforms in mind: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, or TikTok. Projects are required to contain 8–10 posts/slides contained within a carousel. For design software, I encourage you to use [Canva](#), a free software accessible online and downloadable as an application to smart phones and tablet computers. Before turning in the final project, each group is required to record and submit a video presentation that summarizes the selected piece of literature, narrates the social media carousel, explains the carousel’s logic and aesthetic, and discusses ideas for publishing. You may access recording equipment for the presentation in the Indigenous Politics Collaboratory (SSH 3067). You are not required to publicly publish the project. The final project will be evaluated for four components: the summary of literature (10-points), incorporation of multiple media (10-points), design and execution (10-points), and the group presentation (10-points).

MARKING SCHEME

<i>Term Work</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Weight in Percentage</i>
Small Group Work	Sep. 18, Oct. 2, Oct. 19, Nov. 6, Nov. 27	20%
Reflections	Sep. 25, Oct. 9, Oct. 23, Nov. 20, Dec. 4	15%
Film Analysis	Nov. 20	25%
Final Project	Dec. 6	40%

GRADING SCALE

Percentage	Grade	GPA Value	Grade Definition
90-100	A+	4.0	Excellent
85-89	A	4.0	
80-84	A-	3.7	
77-79	B+	3.3	Good
73-76	B	3.0	
70-72	B-	2.7	
67-69	C+	2.3	Adequate
63-66	C	2.0	
60-62	C-	1.7	
57-59	D+	1.3	Marginal
53-56	D	1.0	
50-52	D-	0.7	
0-49	F	0.0	Inadequate

COURSE SCHEDULE

<i>Topics and Readings</i>		<i>Assignment Due</i>
Week 1: Sep. 8	Introduction	Complete introduction tasks in Querqus
Week 2: Sep. 15	Politics of Representation in Memoir Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>From The Ashes: My Story of Being Métis, Homeless, and Finding My Way</i> by Jesse Thistle 	Small Group Work: book cover

	Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “My Ancestors Are With You’: Jesse Thistle and George Canyon on Canada Reads 2020” 	
Week 3: Sep. 22	Memoir as History Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir</i> by Deborah A. Miranda <p>*September 22 last day to enroll*</p>	Reflection 1
Week 4: Sep. 29	Documenting the Reality of Violence Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up by Tasha Hubbard Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native” by Patrick Wolfe • “‘A Structure, Not An Event’: Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity” by J. Kēhaulani Kauanui 	Small Group Work: meme
Week 5: Oct. 6	Mediating Frontline Defense Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INVASION by Unist’ot’en (directed by Michael Toledano, Sam Vinal, and Franklin López) • “Reconciliation Is Dead: RCMP Invade Unist’ot’en Territory” by Unist’ot’en Listen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Unist’ot’en Camp: No Access Without Consent w/ Anne Spice” from The Red Nation Podcast 	Reflection 2
Week 6: Oct. 13	Old Stories, New Graphic Novel Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This Place: 150 Years Retold</i> (forward by Alicia Elliot) • “Historical Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies: Touching on the Past, Looking to the Future” by Jean M. O’Brien Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How Comic Books Centered on Native Heroes Inspire Young Readers” 	Small Group Work: comic strip
Week 7: Oct. 20	Comic Visions of the Future Read:	Reflection 3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Moonshot: The Indigenous Comics Collection, Volume 3</i> by Elizabeth LaPensée and Michael Sheyahshe • “Imagining Indigenous Futurism” by Grace Dillon 	
<u>Week 8:</u> Oct. 27	<p>Feeling Film</p> <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beans by Tracey Deer <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Toward a Genealogy of Indigenous Film Theory” by Michelle H. Raheja 	
<u>Week 9:</u> Nov. 3	<p>Filming the Missing and Murdered</p> <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open by Kathleen Hepburn & Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Pedagogy of Indifference: State Responses to Violence Against Indigenous Girls” by Megan Scribe 	Small Group Work: street poster
<u>Week 10:</u> Nov. 10	<p>Fall Reading Week: No Class</p> <p>*November 7 last day to drop*</p>	
<u>Week 11:</u> Nov. 17	<p>Imagining Pandemic Worlds</p> <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood Quantum by Jeff Barnaby • “Cast & Crew Interviews” <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Visual Sovereignty” by Michelle H. Rajeha 	Reflection 4 Film Analysis
<u>Week 12:</u> Nov. 24	<p>Poetry and Music of Resistance</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Colonization” & “Into Our Light I Will Go Forever” by Haunani-Kay Trask • “Hiding and Seeking Meaning: Kaona and Kaona Connectivity” by Brandy Nālani McDougall <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Kaona by Team Hawai‘i” & “Hawai‘i Pono‘ī by Heoli Osorio” <p>Listen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Return of the Makaainana” & “I Live in the Kingdom” by Homework Simpson 	Small Group Work: lyrics

<p>Week 13: Dec. 1</p>	<p>Gaming Survival and Endurance</p> <p>Play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When Rivers Were Trails <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When Rivers Were Trails: Cultural Expression in an Indigenous Video Game” by Elizabeth LaPensée 	<p>Reflection 5</p>
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REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Dillon, Grace. *Walking the Clouds: An Anthology of Indigenous Science Fiction*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2012.
- Elliot, Alicia. *This Place: 150 Years Retold*. Winnipeg, MB: Highwater Press, 2019.
- Kauanui, J. Kēhaulani. “‘A Structure, Not An Event’: Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity.” *Lateral: Journal of the Cultural Studies Association* 5, no. 1 (2016): <http://csalateral.org/wp/issue/5-1/forum-alt-humanities-settler-colonialism-enduring-indigeneity-kauanui>.
- LaPensée, Elizabeth. “When Rivers Were Trails: Cultural Expression in an Indigenous Video Game.” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* (2020): [online article](#).
- LaPensée, Elizabeth, and Michael Sheyahshe. *Moonshot: The Indigenous Comics Collection, Volume 3*. Nunavut: Avani, 2020.
- McDougall, Brandy Nālani. *Finding Meaning: Kaona and Contemporary Hawaiian Literature*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2016.
- Miranda, Deborah A. *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir*. Berkeley, CA: Heyday, 2013.
- O’Brien, Jean M. “Historical sources and methods in Indigenous Studies.” In *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, edited by Chris Anderson and Jean M. O’Brien. London: Routledge, 2017.
- Raheja, Michelle H. “Visual Sovereignty.” In *Native Studies Keywords*, edited by Stephanie Nohelani Teves, Andrea Smith, and Michelle H. Raheja. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2015.
- _____. *Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film*. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2010.
- Scribe, Megan. “Pedagogy of Indifference: State Responses to Violence Against Indigenous Girls.” *Canadian Woman Studies* 32, no. 1/2 (2017/2018): 47-57.
- Thistle, Jesse. *From the Ashes: My Story of Being Métis, Homeless, and Finding My Way*. Toronto: Simon & Schuster, 2019.
- Trask, Haunani-Kay. *Night is a Sharkskin Drum*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai‘i, 2002.
- _____. *Light in the Crevice Never Seen*. Corvallis, OR: CALYX Books, 1994.
- Wolfe, Patrick. “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native.” *Journal of Genocide Studies* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387-409.