

MARCH 20 2010 TAH WORKSHOP NOTES

Present: John Daly, Brian Morse, Phil Hureau, Mike Penney, Kelly Davila, Rosemary Ward, Ann Weeks, Sarah Kaye, Nora Werme

9:00 AM

“WHITE MAN’S INDIAN”: PowerPoint presentation

- Tom showed a series of comic book covers that illustrated the portrayal of Indians in the 19th century. Some are portrayed as savages, some as “good guys” who cooperate with the pioneers to fight “bad” Indians (and “bad” whites, too).
- The general portrayal of Indians is negative, violent, and explains why many Indian children preferred to play the “cowboys” in games of “Cowboys and Indians”
- There is usually body paint on the nearly naked bodies of the Indians (even in winter); sometimes even the horses have paint
- Often the Indians (especially if they are young and heroic) “look white” (i.e. have features associated with Caucasians)
- Even Lucy and the Three Stooges appear in Indian comics
- Lots of “Indian” stories/legends
- A number of “White Indian” comics (often the white Indian is the chief, always fights against the “bad” Indians, never against “good” whites)
- What do these images tell us?
 - This was during the Cold War—a time of cultural, political, and even ethnic confrontation between the free “West” and the communist “Asiatic” “East”
 - Can be used to illustrate cultural/racial stereotypes
 - Raises the question, “how do you know what you know”? (TOK)
 - One groups allies/accomplices is another groups traitors
 - This is during the time of arbitrary terminations of tribal status (based on racial categorizations, etc.)

This PowerPoint will be made available on the website.

10:00 AM

- Quick review of Indian voices in this period
- In the 1950’s, particularly east of the Mississippi, Indians are beginning to re-think their identity vis a vis the dominant culture and their own past
- As part of the movements that began with the Progressive Era, Native Americans (especially those who were well educated) began to counter the popular presentation of Indians and attempted to re-invigorate their own communal identity
- A review of the works and career of George Eastman
- Another important figure in this period was Susan La Flesche Picotte (1865-1915) of Omaha background
- Carlos Montezuma was another major voice in the period (Yavapai/Apache background)
- All three of the above were physicians
- All worked to counter public perception of Indians and to address problems in the native communities

- Suzette LaFlesche Tibbles (1854-1903) was the sister of Susan LaFlesche Picotte and a major lecturer about Indian affairs
- Francis La Flesche (another member of the La Flesche family 1857-1932) did a great deal of work documenting Omaha and Osage culture and music
- Arthur C Parker (Seneca and Scots/ Irish background) was another major voice—an anthropologist, publishing extensively
- Gertrude Simmons Bonnin (1876-1938)—pen name Zitkala-Sa (Red Bird), musician, writer, advocate for Indian rights
- Society of American Indians (founded by some of the above, with white sponsors)

- “Speaking for a People”— Chief Long Lance, Grey Owl, Jamake Highwater, Kitt Little Turtle, Asa Carter---ALL OF WHOM WERE NOT NATIVE AMERICANS
- Long Lance produced a movie; went to West Point with Woodrow Wilson’s helped, left to join the Canadian Expeditionary Force (1916), fought with distinction, later moved to the plains country of Canada and wrote extensively on plains Indians. It turned out the Long Lance was born in Winston-Salem NC into an African American family that may or may not have had Cherokee ancestry. He did learn the Cherokee language and was adopted into one of the Canadian tribes. Ultimately it was learned that his father was actually a black janitor in a Winston-Salem, NC school (rather than a Blackfoot chief)

- Who is an Indian? Is it biology/genealogy? Culture? Or, communal? Most Indian tribes today use the last definition

Pan-Indian Resurgence

- Attempt to create a Native American ethnic identity....

The “Government to Government Relationship”

- Up to 35 definitions of “Indian” in federal legislation

(For more information, refer to the PowerPoint associate with this workshop)

BREAK

POPULAR CULTURE (30 minute segment from “Images of Indians”)

“The Indian Movie Massacre”

- The portrayal of Indians as murderers, scalpers, killers of innocent women and children and its impact on Native American culture
- Dime novels and Wild West shows (Buffalo Bill)
- “making Buffalo Bill a hero meant Indians had to play the losers”
- “natural 24 hour a day showman” (quote of a person who personally knew Buffalo Bill)
- Indians portrayed in stereotyped roles—even by people who knew better
- 1975 film, “Buffalo Bill and the Indians” attempted to expose the fakery and manipulations of Bill Cody’s Wild West Show—but was not successful in the box office.
- John Forbes’ Hollywood Cowboy & Indian movies used actual Indians to play act the dominant culture’s roles.

- Filming in Monument Valley (in Navajo lands) became de rigueur (“it was as if every urban film were made in Paris and only Paris)
- Authentic costuming is absent, tribal identities are mixed up, history is completely altered
- “There was no one down there (in Hollywood) to speak for the Indians”. Other ethnic groups had people to speak for them and protest when they were portrayed in false and/or insulting manner.
- Often Mexicans were used as extras to represent Indians
- The Custer myth—George Armstrong Custer was presented as a hero in the movies...
- Even attempts to portray Indians positively often did so from a non Indian perspective

“Haircuts Hurt”

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LUNCH

THE USE OF NATIVES IN MARKETING VARIOUS PRODUCTS: A PowerPoint presentation of romance novel covers, music, etc.

- Indians appear in folk tradition and art in many different ways—some have been told by Indians themselves, but few are verifiable
- What does come through is a folk history of Indian/Euro interactions
- The question becomes, “Why is this important enough to have been remembered?”
- A wide variety of cigar store Indians shown
- Over 100 companies and brands used Indian designations during the 19th century
- Even Indian women are often shown armed
- Wild West shows and Medicine shows also “marketed” Indians in the popular culture

INDIANS IN MUSIC: small groups will look at sheet music from the 1880’s to the 1930’s

- Small groups looked at sheet music covers and discussed the representation in them
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MASCOTS: selected mascots, a review of the APA statement about the harm mascots have done to native self image, short statements by natives on the subject, some “Why bother about this?” statements from a variety of sources

- Small groups looked at a number of documents and resolutions about “mascots”
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ANOTHER SEGMENT FROM "IMAGES OF INDIANS"

PRESENTATIONS: (Rosemarie, Mike)

Mike Penney:

- IB program focuses on depth vs. breadth. Early in the year we took the Edward Winslow letter about Thanksgiving
- Showed a facsimile of the original letter to illustrate the fact that primary sources were not originally created in Microsoft Word 12 font!
- Assignment to create a report on the first thanksgiving based only on the original document (trouble translating the original document). Students found the exercise interesting when compared with the popular culture's beliefs about the first Thanksgiving
- Also presented images of Indians from last year's summer institute....students picked up some very interesting and different elements than the teachers had last summer

Rosemarie Ward: Gallery Walk

- Put editorial cartoons up around the room and distributed sticky notes. Participants were asked to write what they noticed about the individual cartoons and place the sticky notes next to.
- To get students interested in the unit
- To answer the questions, --is an editorial a good way to raise awareness? Does an editorial cartoon effect popular culture? Is the teacher concerned with how favorably or unfavorably well known people or political parties are depicted in a cartoon?...
- 5 techniques for making editorial cartoons
- 4 steps for interpreting political cartoons
- Excellent website: Harpers Weekly