

History 427: Re-Presenting Indigenous Histories

Friday, 9:30-1:20
AQ 5028

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Unretouched original 1911 photograph by Edward S. Curtis, showing a clock between Yellow Kidney and Little Plume.

The production and dissemination of knowledge of Indigenous peoples' pasts has been a major interest of European explorers, settlers, and academics in North America and around the world. And yet, even before these writers were delving into the topic, Indigenous peoples were creating and maintaining their own histories through very different means. More recently, Indigenous peoples have also re-appropriated settler texts, engaging with them in critical and complex ways.

This course explores the ruptures and entanglements between divergent forms of historical knowledge by comparing and contrasting how Indigenous peoples have represented themselves with the ways settler scholarship has depicted their cultures and histories. We will see there have been moments of intellectual collaboration, compromise, and conflict as people in the colonial contact zone have tried to make sense of themselves, their communities, and their pasts. As our class takes place on unceded Coast Salish territories, we will focus some of our discussion on the evolution of this process here in British Columbia.

Methodologically, this course is influenced by ethnohistory. We will spend time exploring written records, such as fur trade and missionary accounts, governmental policy and correspondence, anthropological field notes, and newspaper articles. However, we will also come to understand how archaeological records, material culture, oral tradition, oral histories, artwork, music, photography, and film help broaden our conceptions and complicate some of the understandings presented by textual evidence.

Course breakdown

Seminar Participation (in class)	20%
Reading Responses (due weekly)	20%
Primary Source Analysis (due week 4, 10%) & Presentation (in class, 5%)	15%
Review Essay (due week 8)	20%
Final Paper (due week 13)	35%

Text

Sarah Barber and Corinna M. Peniston Bird, eds. *History Beyond the Text: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*. New York: Routledge, 2009.