



Kent Monkman, 'Being Legendary', 2018

Indigenous Erotics

INDIGST_4J03 SPRING 2022

Instructor: Tracy Bear

Email: beart@mcmaster.ca

Lecture: Tue. & Thu. 10:00am-1:00pm

Room: LRW 1811 – Cultural Room

Course Description

This IN-PERSON course is an interactive lecture and workshop study of the visual and literary forms of Indigenous Erotics. While our exploration remains primarily in North America we travel globally to seek a broad selection of historical and contemporary Indigenous expressions of sexuality and gender. Indigenous erotics has a long history and this is reflected in the diversity of texts and visual representations of sexualities and genders. Indigenous erotics becomes a reclamation of our bodies, a source of joy and a place of political action and sovereignty.

Course Objectives

- Discuss and evaluate social, political, historical, spiritual and intellectual realms of Indigenous erotics.
- Understand and appraise the theories relating to Indigenous sexualities, genders, feminisms, and masculinities.
- Question and understand Indigenous erotic analysis as a methodology to engage in a critical dialogue on the understandings of Indigenous bodies.
- Analyze and communicate the consequences of the historical trauma on Indigenous Peoples by the colonial regime, and how Indigenous erotics serves as a map for reclamation.

Required Materials and Texts

- All course materials including readings, videos etc. will be posted on Avenue to Learn.
- One spiral visual art journal. Minimum of 5'x7' and 50-100 pages. No maximum.

Class Format

This course is hands on and meets in person for a twice weekly lecture, group work and workshops on Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00-1:00pm. In the event of any further provincial Covid restrictions, we shall reconvene with online lectures.

Assignments/Evaluation – a detailed document on these assignments is provided.

- 5% “Where I Am From: A Poetic Introduction” Due May 5th
- 30% VAJ (Visually Active Journal)
 - First hand in Due May 19th
 - Second hand in Due June 7th
- 10% IGNITE presentation practice Due May 31st
- 20% IGNITE presentation & paper Due June 9th
- 25% Final Exam Due June 16th
- 10% participation In class activities

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

3 MAY

Topic(s): Opening Circle includes: expectations, syllabus review, assignment breakdown, Introduction to Indigenous Erotics (1)

Readings: none

5 MAY

Topic(s): VAJ Workshop, questions about course, Introduction to Indigenous Erotics (2)

Readings:

- Lorde, Audre. 1984. “Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power.” *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Freedom, CA: Crossing Press. p53-59. Listen along to Audre Lorde as she delivers (a version) of this written speech here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWmq9gw4Rq0>

- Brown, Adrienne Maree. 2019. "Love as Political Resistance." *Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good*. Edinburgh: AK Press. p59-63.
- Simpson, Leanne. 2013. "gezhihwazh." *Islands of Decolonial Love*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing Books. p105-112.
- Tallbear, Kim. 2019. 'North Prairie City', 'Sexergonomics', '#YEGSummerSex', 'NDNSciFi'. from Poly 100s Available here: <http://www.criticalpolyamorist.com/critical-poly-100s.html>

Due: "Where I Am From: A Poetic Introduction"

10 MAY

Topic(s): The Gender Spectrum & Identities: Exploring Indigenous Femininities & Masculinities

Readings:

- McKegney, Sam. 2014. "Remembering the Sacredness of Men: A Conversation with Kim Anderson." *Masculindians*. Winnipeg, MA: University of Manitoba Press. p87-97.
- Barker, Joanne. 2017. "Introduction." *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. p1-35.
- Tagaq, Tanya. 2018. "That Time." *Split Tooth*. Canada. Penguin Random House. P99-101.
- **Video(s):** Cuthand, Thirza. 2008. "You Are a Lesbian Vampire." 3:20min., Cuthand, Thirza. 2009. "2Spirit Introductory Special \$19.99." 2:53min, Cuthand, Thirza. 2012. "Boi Oh Boi." 9:32min.

12 MAY

Topic(s): Two Spirit, Sexualities

Readings:

- Cooper, Nancy. 2008. "Learning to Skin the Beaver." Taylor, Drew Hayden (ed.) *Me, Sexy*. Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre. p41-49.
- Rifkin, Mark. 2011. "Tradition and the Contemporary Queer: Sexuality, Nationality, and History in Drowning in Fire." *When Did Indians Become Straight: Kinship, the History of Sexuality, and Native Sovereignty*. New York: Oxford University Press. p275-316.
- Scofield, Gregory. 2008. "You Can Always Count on an Anthropologist (To Set You Straight, Crooked or Somewhere in Between)." Taylor, Drew Hayden (ed.) *Me, Sexy*. Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre. p41-49.
- Womack, Craig. 2011. "The King of the Tie-snakes." Qwo-Li Driskill et al (eds.) *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press. p30-47.

17 MAY

Topic(s): Eco-Eroticism and Loving (on) the Land

Readings:

- Nelson, Melissa K. 2017. "Getting Dirty: The Eco-Eroticism of Women in indigenous Oral Literatures." *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies*. London: Duke University Press. p229-260.
- Tagaq, Tanya. 2018. "No Title – excerpt p91-93." *Split Tooth*. Canada: Penguin Random House.
- Campbell, Tenille K. 2021. Chapter 4 "The Land." *Nedi Nezu: Good Medicine*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press. p87-113.
- **Video(s):** Tagaq, Tanya. 2022. "Teeth Agape." 3:32 min. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItYoFr3LpDw> Tagaq, Tanya. 2014. "Animism" – Album Trailer. 1:24 min. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItYoFr3LpDw>

19 MAY

Topic(s): All My Relations: More-Than-Human Kinships

Readings:

- Miranda, Deborah. 2011. "Coyote Takes A Trip". Driskill, Qwo-Li et al (eds.) *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. 59-65.

- Wabegijig, Vera. 2011. "Coyote jumps me from behind and dominates me as I do yoga poses." *xxxndn*. Winnipeg: Manitoba. Aboriginal Writers Collective of Manitoba. p21.
- Tagaq, Tanya. 2017. 'Ritual'. *Split Tooth*. Canada: Penguin Random House. p18-21.
- Simpson, Leanne. 2013. 'Caged'. *Islands of Decolonial Love*. Winnipeg: ARP Books p97-103.

Due: First Hand-in Visually Active Journal

24 MAY

Topic(s): Body Sovereignty (1)

Readings:

- Taylor, William Raymond. 2011. "Gathering of Nations." Driskill, Qwo-Li et al (eds.) *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. p53-54.
- Wabegijig, Vera. 2011. "yes you can." *xxxndn*. Winnipeg: Manitoba. Aboriginal Writers Collective of Manitoba. p19-20.
- Tallbear, Kim. 2017. "Moving Beyond Settler (Colonial) Sexualities." *A Decolonial Feminist Podcast - Feral Visions Making Our Ancestors Proud*. 46:41 min.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rq0l4TOO-E0>

26 MAY

Topic(s): Body Sovereignty (2)

Readings:

- Chantel Fiola. 2020. "Naawenangweyaabeg Coming In: Intersections of Indigenous Sexuality and Spirituality" in Sarah Nickel and Amanda Fehr, eds., *In Good Relation: History, Gender, and Kinship in Indigenous Feminisms*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press. p136-151.
- Denetdale, Jennifer Nez. 2017. "Return to 'The Uprising at Beautiful Mountain in 1913' Marriage and Sexuality in the Making of the Modern Navajo Nation" in *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies*. Durham: Duke University Press. p69-92.
- Video(s): Wilson, Alex. 2017. "Coming In to Indigenous Sovereignty: Relationality and Resurgence." *Weweni Indigenous Scholars Speaker Series*. Winnipeg: University of Winnipeg. 51:38 min. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkQo_yr4A_w

31 MAY

Topic(s): Recover, Rediscover, Reclaim and Reignite (1) IGNITE practice time

Readings:

- Gunn, Allen, Paula. 1992. "How the West Was Really Won." *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions*. Boston: Beacon Press. p194-208.
- Tenille, Campbell. 2017. "682." #Indian Love Poems. Winnipeg: Signature Editions. P84-85.
- Hunter, Al. 2008. "My Whole Life Going Home." *The Recklessness of Love: Bawajiganan gay Ni-maanedam*. Cape Croker Reserve: Kegedonce Press. p38.
- Chrystos. 1993. "Dare." *In Her I Am*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers. p26-28.
- Chrystos. 1993. "Tenderly Your." *In Her I Am*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers. p67.

Due: IGNITE presentation practice 10%

2 JUNE

Topic(s): Recover, Rediscover, Reclaim and Reignite (2)

Readings:

- Rifkin, Mark. 2011. "Labouring in the City: Stereotype and Survival in Chrysto's Poetry." *The Erotics of Sovereignty: Queer Native Writing in the Era of Self-Determination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. p216-266.

- Vorano, Norman. 2008. "Inuit Men, Erotic Art: Certain Indecencies ... That Need Not Here Be Mentioned." *Me, Sexy* (ed. Drew Hayden Taylor). p124-149.

7 JUNE

Topic(s): Humour, Joy & Playfulness: Disrupting Colonial Shackles of Sin & Shame

Readings:

- Bruchac, Joseph. 2003. "Bad Meat." Akiwenzie-Damm, Kateri (ed.) *Without Reservation: Indigenous Erotica*. Cape Croker Reserve: Kegeponce Press. p12-24.
- Van Camp, Richard. 2003. "What to Do When Your Indian Man Doesn't Take His Socks Off During Sex Anymore." Recalma, Joanna (ed.) *Redwire: We Are Healing ... We Are Celebrating... Our Sexuality*. Redwire Magazine 6(2) December.
- RunningMan, James. 2011. "Weenuk." *xxxndn*. Winnipeg: Manitoba: Aboriginal Writer's Collective of Manitoba. p71-73.

Due: Second VAJ hand-in

9 JUNE

Topic(s): Pride, Performance & Burlesque

Readings:

- McKegney, Sam. 2014. "A Calm Sensuality: A Conversation with Louise Berniece Halfe, Skydancer." *Masculindians*. Winnipeg, MA: University of Manitoba Press. p48-55.
- Burns, Madeline. 2020. "Reclaiming Indigenous Sexual Being: Sovereignty and Decolonization Through Sexuality." *The Arbutus Review. Special Edition on Indigenous Wellness* Vol. 11. No.1. p28-38.
- Huard, Adrienne. 2021 March 25. "The Vibrational Effects of Indigenous Burlesque." *CanadianArt*. <https://canadianart.ca/features/the-vibrational-effects-of-indigenous-burlesque/>
- **Video(s):** 2019. "This Mohawk Burlesque Dancer Wants to Decolonize Sexuality Among First Nations Women." *VICE Asia*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwdjMGWQbSI>

Due: IGNITE presentations & paper

14 JUNE

Topic(s): Ball of Knowledge Review (Students take home Final Exam)

Readings: none

16 JUNE

Topic(s): Celebration, evaluation, VAJ sharing, erotic feast

Readings: None

Due: Take Home Final Exam

Course Policies

Email considerations

I respond to respectful written communication. I am not your texting buddy so please follow rules of spelling, grammar and punctuation. Also use a greeting, "tân'si", "sekon", Hello" and a closing that includes your full name, such as "ekosi, Lou Lou Duchesse La Derriere." Any email that fails to meet these minimum standards may be returned unanswered. Any emails that have questions *that can be answered* by referring to this syllabus or to Avenue to Learn will not be answered. All email communication must

come from your mcmaster.ca email account.

Submission of Assignments

Deadlines for assignments will be strictly observed. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day they are due. LATE assignments are penalized 10% PER DAY that they are late to a maximum of three days (-30%); after three days of late assignments will not be accepted. Only in some cases will extensions be granted – you must contact me at least 24 hours prior to the due date of the assignment. The instructor is not responsible for any assignment handed in to anyone other than the instructor. It is expected that all assignments will be typed (except VAJs). Assignments are not handed back until all assignments are in. Your final VAJ will be handed back at the last class.

Review of Marks

I will be diligent in marking all assignments fairly and accurately and in some cases with a rubric. If you disagree with any of the marks you receive, I will be happy to review the mark of any assignment or exam, if the procedure outlined below is followed. ***Please note that when a mark is reviewed, the new mark may be lower than the original.*** To request a review of a mark, first give yourself a cooling-down period of 24 hours before submitting your request. Write a brief (<1-page) memo describing in detail the nature of the perceived marking error. Submit this memo to me via email. You may submit requests for review no later than two weeks after assignments/exams are graded.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

In the event of missed work for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on

the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a [RISO](#) accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be

aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-89	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F