Readings may be changed or added. I will let you know through Blackboard.

“Savage Sexualities” in Modernity: Settler Colonialism, Heteropatriarchy, and Queer Indigenous Theories

ES 410
TR: 12-1:20PM
CRN: 26934
16 Pacific Hall

Dr. Chris Finley
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818 E. 15th Ave Alder Building
Room 205
Office hours: T: 10-11:30am and R: 2-3:30pm

**Purpose Of This Course**
This class critically analyzes how discourses of sexualities discursively makes Native political organizing or resistance in the present impotent because Native peoples are constructed as dead and dying in the past and therefore cannot exist in the present or the future. This temporal and spacial racialization of Native peoples places them in what Anne McClintock calls “anachronistic space.” We will see how sexuality plays a key role in narratives of conquest and the alibi of the U.S. settler state. Yes, Natives are sexy but this class will look at how the biopolitical structuring of the “non-normative” sexualities of Native peoples erases Indigenous peoples through the failure of Native peoples ability to be “normal” enough to enter into white heteropatriarchal settler state, which justifies the genocide of Native peoples and the expansion of settler colonialism. I contend that all Native peoples have been “queered” through colonial logics of sexuality by making Natives appear sexually aberrant from white settlers and therefore in need of paternalistic care by heteropatriarchy. This move to queer Native Americans performs several important functions to maintain settler colonialism: Natives as queered non-citizens that are unable to manage their land and resources so Native peoples fall under the management of white heteropatriarchy. I critique how dominant U.S. popular culture sexualizes Native bodies as culturally and, therefore, racially unable to conform to white heteroreproductive norms.

Many Native peoples respond to these biopolitical discourses by desexualizing our communities and conforming to heteronormativity in an attempt to avoid the violence of settler-colonialism. This response has meant the exclusion of queer Native peoples and has not allowed either Native peoples or Native studies to take sexuality seriously as an analytic of study. We will interrogate these heteronormativity in Native America, the U.S. settler state, and provide sex-positive alternatives for Native nation building as an important means of decolonizing Native America.

**Attendance:** This is a collaborative class that requires student participation and preparation for class. (You must do the readings for the course on the day they are assigned and turn in a reading response for that day.) Students should not miss any class.
If you know you are going to miss a class, please let me know at least a week in advance so you may turn in your work early. You must turn in your reading responses BEFORE class starts to get full credit for the response. **There are no excused absences.** If you miss more than two classes for the quarter, your overall grade will be affected. Late work will not be accepted as a result of an absence. If you miss more than three classes, your overall grade for the course will drop by **a full letter grade per absence after three absences. Six absences will result in failure for the course unless a very sound medical excuse is proffered in a timely fashion.** (In the latter case, you may require additional make-up work.)

**Grading**  
Final Project/Essay: 35%  
Reading Responses: 50%  
Participation: 15%

**Final Project:** Over the course of the term, you will complete a creative project to turn in at the end of the quarter. (Some examples are: art installations, plays, paintings, films or other creative project. Please come meet with me to discuss your creative project at least 2 weeks in advance of the due date so I may approve your project.) This project can be part of an honor’s thesis project. Or you can write a 12-page research project. You will need to use at least 5 sources from the class to make an argument about the importance of queer Indigenous theory to critical ethnic studies.

**Reading Responses:** You will need to complete a reading response for each day of reading. I want you to include the main arguments of the readings, questions you have about the arguments, and your response to the readings. You may set-up up the readings responses in a way that will aid you in your final project. Each response is worth 3% of your overall grade.

**Participation:** You will need to participate in class discussions throughout the quarter to demonstrate a working knowledge of the reading materials due for that day.

**Texts that you will have to purchase or get your hands on for the course:**

Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*

Michel Foucault’s *History of Sexuality Vol. I*

Daniel Heath Justice’s *Kynship: The Way of Thorn and Thunder Book One*

*Queer Indigenous Studies: Interventions in Theory, Politics and Literature*

*Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature*

Craig Womack’s *Drowning in Fire*
All other readings for the course will be available on Blackboard.

**Week 1**
January 8: Introductions and Andrea Smith’s “Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy”

January 10: Michel Foucault’s *History of Sexuality*

Anne McClintock’s “Lay of the Land: Genealogies of Imperialism” in *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*

**Week 2**
January 15: Selections from Qwo-Li Driskill, Chris Finley, Brian Joseph Gilley, and Scott Lauria Morgensen’s *Queer Indigenous Studies: Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature*

January 17: Continue with selections from Qwo-Li Driskill, Chris Finley, Brian Joseph Gilley, and Scott Lauria Morgensen’s *Queer Indigenous Studies: Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature*

**Week 3**
January 22: Daniel Heath Justice’s *Kynship: The Way of Thorn and Thunder Book One*

January 24: Continue Daniel Heath Justice’s *Kynship: The Way of Thorn and Thunder Book One*

**Week 4**
January 29: Make-up day

January 31: Selections from the work of Jessica Yee’s corpus, Native Youth Sexual Health Network, and National Native Youth HIV and AIDS.

**Week 5**
February 5: Selections from Scott Lauria Morgensen’s *Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization*

February 7: Continue with selections from Scott Lauria Morgensen’s *Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization*

**Week 6**
February 12: M. Jacqui Alexander’s “Imperial Desire/Sexual Utopias: White Gay Capital and Transnational Tourism” in *Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age*

February 14: Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*
Week 7
February 19: Selections from Mark Rifkin’s *Erotics of Sovereignty: Queer Native Writing in the Era of Self-Determination*

February 21: Continue with selections from Mark Rifkin’s *Erotics of Sovereignty: Queer Native Writing in the Era of Self-Determination*

Week 8
February 26: Sander L. Gilman’s “The Hottentot and the Prostitute: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality” in *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness*

Ann Stoler’s “Epilogue” in *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*

February 28: Rayna Green’s “The Pocahontas Perplex”

Read Jennifer Nez Denetdale’s “Chairmen, Presidents, and Princesses: The Navajo Nation, Gender, and the Politics of Tradition”

Week 9
March 5: Craig Womack’s *Drowning in Fire*

March 7: Finish Craig Womack's *Drowning in Fire*

Week 10
March 12: Selections from *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature*

March 14: Continue reading selections from *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature*

**Final Essay due March 19 at 8am**