Introduction to Native American Studies

Bellevue Community College SOC or ETHN 120, 5 Credits

Fall 2007: September 24th – December 7th Daily 10:30 – 11:20, B-101

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides an historic and contemporary perspective on the social, political. and cultural issues of the Indigenous Peoples of North America. You will be exposed to an overview of American Indian life, including Indian-White relations (past and present), Indian sovereignty, and Indigenous aesthetics in art, visual culture, and literature. This course is taught from an Indigenous perspective with the intent of focusing not on "who Indian people were"



but on "how Indians came to be who Indian people are." These concepts will be demonstrated through lectures, readings, multi-media presentations, possible guest lectures, and library research. Further, you are encouraged to bring in outside items of relevance (a newspaper or magazine article, for example) when and if it occurs to you to do so over the course of the quarter.

"Western civilization, unfortunately, does not link knowledge and morality but rather, it connects knowledge and power and makes them equivalent."

-- Vine Deloria, Jr. (Yankton Sioux)

A NOTE ABOUT COURSE CONTENT: Since sociologists examine just about every aspect of the social world, we sometimes talk about provocative material. Please be advised that, when we explore controversial topics, they will always be framed within an academic context. Topics run the gamut in sociology and at times there may be material that makes people uncomfortable. Keeping in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it's an opportunity for learning, you may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. Please know, however, that you will be responsible for any course material you miss if you choose not to participate. If you have any questions or concerns about content or climate, please speak with me about it right away.

REGARDING SAFE SPACE:

This class is a Safe Space for *all* students. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning, queeridentified, transgendered and straight students are welcome in this classroom and encouraged to speak out and be an integral part of this class. A critical understanding and the embracing of alternative genders and sexualities in this classroom is encouraged. Any questions about what this means should be brought to me immediately. All are welcome!

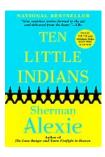
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

If you have medical information to share with me in the event of an emergency, please contact me via email or come to see me during office hours. If you prefer, you may contact the Disabilities Resource Center (DRC) directly by going to B132 or by calling 425.564.2498 or TTY 425.564.4110. Information is also available on their website at http://bellevuecollege.edu/drc/

READING REQUIREMENTS:



- *Spirit and Reason: The Vine Deloria, Jr. Reader* by Vine Deloria, Jr.
- Ten Little Indians by Sherman Alexie
- Handouts and articles (either delivered to you in class or uploaded to our MyBCC Page)



LEARNING AND COURSE OUTCOMES:

Upon your dedicated participation and subsequent completion of this course, you will demonstrate:

- 1) A general knowledge and comprehension of how the experience of the Indigenous Peoples of North America differs from those of the colonizing and immigrant peoples; and of how some Native Peoples perceive those experiences. Analyses will include those of Native people living in the urban and rural centers and Reservations/Rancherias, as well as issues pertaining to mixed-blood Indian experiences.
- 2) A comprehension of some of the basic principles of Indian sovereignty concepts, which provide a framework for Indian Law and Policy and human rights of Indigenous Peoples as autonomous political bodies.
- 3) A general comprehension of the parameters of traditional tribal knowledge and Indigenous epistemologies in both pre- and post-contact tribal cultures.
- 4) A general understanding of Indigenous activism from contact to the present.
- 5) A general understanding of Indigenous representation and identity in historical and contemporary analyses of dominant US popular culture.
- 6) A general understanding of Indigenous aesthetics in the arts and literature.
- 7) A general understanding of the field of Native American/Indigenous Studies, its history and its future, including the understanding of a global approach to the concept of Indigeneity.

GENERAL RULES & EXPECTATIONS:

You are expected to fully participate and express your learning in writing and in class discussions and in your writing assignments. You are expected to attend *all* class meetings, and complete all assigned readings before our weekly meetings. That said, **more than 6** *unexcused* **absences may result in your grade dropping**. Since much of the learning takes place in the classroom and not solely in my comments on your written work, or in our readings, it is essential that you show up and show up *on time*. Staying from the beginning to the end of each class is also required.



*<u>Unexcused</u> means you don't show up and you don't call. If you have to be absent, *let me know ahead of time* and not the next day or later that afternoon. I don't need doctors' notes, a note from your mom, or a reason. Just keep me in the loop if you're going to miss a class. *However*, that does *not* mean that I accept several *excused* absences! What does it all boil down to? I want you in class! ©

I expect that your behavior in class be respectful. Side-talking and whispering is disruptive to the class as a whole as well as to individual students. This is not acceptable in my classroom, so I insist that you refrain from it. Sleeping is also not permitted. Continued disrespectful behavior in class may result in your being asked to leave.

Deadlines are non-negotiable. <u>Unexcused</u> late work will not be considered for course credit. Your *prompt* attendance and *undivided* attention is required of you at every meeting. Consider this course a learning community, and one that everyone takes responsibility for and brings to it a certain modicum of respect. That translates roughly to silencing your voice box and turning off your cell phones when someone has the floor. Please turn your mobile phones all the way off. Vibrating ring tones and the exiting of class to talk on the phone is disruptive and as with side talking, is unacceptable. If you do have a special circumstance that requires you to have your phone on, please let me know.

A note on my expectations about your responsibility for your own learning: There is a lot of useful information in this syllabus. You should read it thoroughly, and check in with it no less that twice a week for the entire term. Please consider consulting your syllabus prior to asking me when something is due, what the expectations are for an assignment, how much an assignment is worth, or if you can email me an assignment. More often than not, the answer lies within. I have no problem fielding questions and helping you out as best I can to ensure your success in my course, but know that this course can be demanding if you're used to being reminded when things are due or what chapters we're reading in a given week. Handouts will be distributed in a timely manner with additional information about the assignments. Those handouts will also be posted

to the MyBCC page for this class, so if you miss a class or a handout, just check in on the MyBCC page. If you want to know what you missed in class in terms of lecture material, **ask someone in class** – quite honestly I "wing it" a lot, which means I can't always tell you what you've missed.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

In this course you will be writing Critical Thinking Papers (1-2 pages), which should show your engagement with course content. You will also do some group work and pop-quizzes. A final group media presentation and individual paper is due at the end of the term, showing your critical engagement with material in class, and how that material ties in critically to a sociological perspective on Native/Indigenous Peoples, in addition to the other (required) research you do outside of class that helps you map out and analyze your area of interest. The key to this course is your thoughtful reflection on course readings and media – please be prepared to share those reflections with your peers during our class meetings, as well as refer to them in your written assignments.

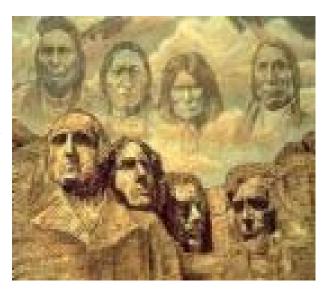
ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND ASSIGNMENT DETAILS:

200
90
260
150
100
200
1000

The Fine Print (or, what I really mean by that table above):

Participation:

Occasionally you will be asked to hand something in for participation credits (see syllabus for that info). Other than that: come to class, be on time, provoke energetic discussion, speak out, listen actively, work diligently and respectfully in your groups, bring your readings to class with copious notes of your scribble in the margins, look up words you don't understand or know, ask lots of questions, etc. Oh yes and lest I forget: Think critically about the world around you. A lot.



<u>Critical Thinking Papers: 3 total, 1-2 pages, 30 points each:</u>

Each week we will be exploring contemporary Indigenous issues and the way in which these subjects relate to current events, popular culture, and our daily lives. In your papers and in class, we'll be discussing these varying themes and these areas will drive our discussion around our readings. Your papers should reflect particular topics and themes we go over. You may be asked to bring in an article or report on the news. You are required to include attachments to your papers when you're asked to do outside research. Your Critical Thinking Papers are not graded on a "right" or "wrong" basis, but you are asked to respond to the Questions and Topics pointedly and show how you're engaging both the reading material as well as the general themes in question. Explore and question what's presented in class, and think about how they relate to our readings and the lecture material. Be prepared to occasionally share your journals in class.

Pop-Quizzes (150 points), Randomly delivered and randomly scored:

Your Quizzes will cover everything up through the week you're quizzed and will usually include multiple choice and short-answer questions. Your responses should be clear and concise. Your short-answer responses must range from no less than one full (four-sentence) paragraph, to three full paragraphs. If you're up on your reading and don't miss class, you should have no problem with these. You will *never* be asked a question out of "left field". Questions will be based on readings, in-class discussion, films and other media, as well as lecture material. Information about point distribution for each question will be on quizzes. A hint: the more I know you're reading by your class participation, the easier (and less often) they'll be!

Group Mini-Presentations: 2 Total, 130 points each:

You will be assigned to a group during the first week of class. This will be your "Learning Community," one within which you will participate throughout the entire quarter. You will do four mini-presentations based on articles I ask you to collectively read in articles I provide for you. You and your group will teach the rest of the class the article; it will give you an opportunity to delve deeply into an article, teach you to read actively, listen actively, and bring your group closer together for the final Big Group Media presentation at the end of the term. You will not need to hand anything in for these projects. Rather, you will be graded in class. You will get a handout in class about these assignments. **NOTE:** If you would like to choose your own article as a group, please let me know!

Group Media Presentation (100 pts):

This assignment should be considered a detailed research and response project dealing with popular culture representations of Indigenous Peoples. It's topically broad on purpose – you and your group have to come up with an agreed upon subject of study. **Your topic must be approved by Week 5.** You can do a response to a film, television show, or a form of mainstream/major print media, or you can look at local tribal issues in the Pacific Northwest, but you must critically engage Mass or Popular Culture Media. **Please do not simply give a review of the film, the TV show, or the article**, rather, explain how it deals with representation of a particular topic, and/or accuracy of

contemporary issues and **do outside research**. Feel free to use a film or media text that we do in class, but you must have my approval on both your topic and the texts you use. Additional information on this assignment will be in a handout in class. The presentation should be roughly fifteen-to-twenty minutes long where you and your group will present your findings, play clips of songs, television or film and generally discuss your work with your colleagues in our classroom community.

<u>Individual Research Paper (5 - 7 pages, 200 pts)</u>:

The paper you'll turn in at the end of the term will reflect the Group Assignment in that the research you do for your presentation will be used for your individual paper. A detailed handout will be given to you later on this term, explaining the assignment in more detail for you. The topic you turn in for your Group Media Presentation can be somewhat different in focus for your Individual Paper and also needs to be turned in during Week 5.

For all of your written work:

Please submit proofread work **only**. Sloppy writing will be returned for a rewrite, expected by the following class meeting in order to receive credit. Your font should be Times New Roman (or the Mac equivalent such as Palatino), 12 points, double-spaced with a 1" margin all around. Your work *must* be cited using either MLA or APA format where necessary, and you must always, *always* give proper credit to the texts from which you draw and formulate your ideas. Even when you don't quote directly, please give credit where credit is due. You may, if



you wish to do so, submit title pages with your papers but I don't require them. If you do use them they are not counted as page numbers due. Similarly with bibliographies, these are not counted as page numbers due. If you decide to place your personal and class information on the first page of your paper instead (which is fine), please do not take up more than for single-spaced lines at the top right or left corner of the page. In essence, nothing fancy, no pink plastic covers are needed or desired. Just the paper. Neat.

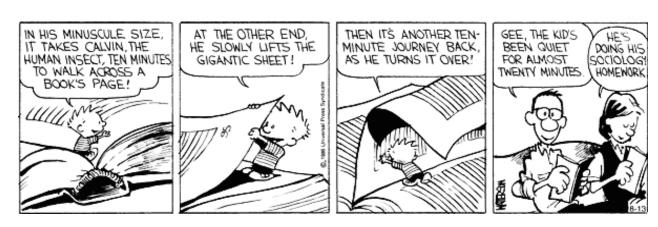
Your written work will be evaluated on:

1) Content

- a. Fulfilling the assignment.
- b. Developing your argument and making use of examples and evidence to support your argument.
- c. Flow of thought throughout the paper, with strong analyses and conclusions.

2) Writing Style

- a. Excellent command of the written English language. In other words, most excellent grammar. NOTE: If you struggle with grammar and spelling or are an ESL student, please let me know! I'm happy to work with you and point you in the right direction.
- b. Clarity of thought.
- c. Good organization and attention to detail.
- d. Persuasiveness of your argument/s.
- e. Creativity. Make it an interesting read!
- f. PROOFREAD your work. Please do a spell/grammar check before you hand it in.
- g. Dude, like totally don't write **colloquially**. A conversation is a conversation. A paper is an entirely different set of discussions. ☺



Grading:

My theory is this: grading is inherently vague. Here's what I do: for your first paper I will write in a brightly hued pen copious comments on your grammar, sentence structure, clarity of thought, etc. (see above points). I am fair and always up for discussion about your grades. FYI: I rarely, if ever, change my mind about a grade, but I have been proven wrong before so always come to me with a grading issue should you have one. After that, I grade on the following scale and ask that you turn to the rubric below to assess the grade/s you receive first:

90-100 = A. The A paper is coveted. It's a paper that shows me you're engaged with the readings, the media, and the lectures in class. It's a paper free from grammar and spelling errors, and a paper that demonstrates your command not only of the English language, but of the form and flow of a solid piece of written work. I also like to see/read/hear your "writing voice." That is, I want your style to come through! Your arguments should be solid and backed up with intellectual ammunition. You should demonstrate a strong understanding of our readings and the in-class media and how they intersect with one another.

80-89 = B. The B tells me you're doing very good work. You may have a few grammar issues, but your paper is still tidy and the writing is still strong. You have a relatively firm

grasp on the themes in the course but you may not be as well-versed in the readings and/or media and/or lecture material as you could be. I should see that you're being challenged and that you're struggling with the course issues and themes, and what they represent to you in an interconnected way. Your understandings of some of the course materials are stronger than others.

70-79 = C. The C paper means that you're not as invested in the class as I'd like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you're not thinking as critically as I'd like you to. Some of what you point out I may not follow logically, and your use of the course materials may not be as solid as it could be. You omit some of the important points raised in class. (NOTE: A C paper can be rewritten ONCE in the term but it's your choice when. I enter the better grade.)

60-69 = D. Ah, the D. D is for "Don't be Discouraged." I will work closely with each of you as much as time allows, getting you up to speed in class. Your struggles should not be with writing so much at this point but if they are please see me immediately. A D paper is not proofread, nor does it deal critically with the themes in the course. It responds, perhaps, to one part of one of the readings but there is no integration of material and there you're not responding to the questions raised in class. Demonstrated understanding of the course materials is not presented clearly, or at all. (NOTE: A D and below may be handed back to you for a rewrite. I enter the better grade.)

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY:

We will set the rhythm of the class in the first couple of weeks. Generally, I don't like to do a lot of talking. As much as I enjoy my own voice, my theory is that I do you a disservice by being a "talking head". I envision a learning community, one in which I am a participant as well. I am a firm believer in being a lifelong learner and to that end I often carry away a lot more information from students than I ever expect. Generally, our class time will be spent engaging with media, followed by a short lecture and then ample discussion. I'm most interested, for the purposes of this class, to see how well we can all wrap our minds around the idea of thinking critically about the various issues and themes presented about the social world in which we live and you should expect to be exposed to new and various ways of thinking and knowing. As a learning community, we'll be helping one another think through all of the ideas that connect back to course themes.

When you don't see your own images through the media or in books, you start thinking you're weird, and your self-esteem gets bruised.

- Francisco Alarcón, poet and dir. of Spanish for Native Speakers, UC Davis

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE (READING ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED BY MONDAY – BUT FOR OUR FIRST WEEK, PLEASE HAVE THEM DONE BY THURSDAY):

WEEK:	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:
DATES AND THEMES	READINGS DUE MONDAY
WEEK ONE	ASSIGNMENTS DUE FRIDAY
WEEK ONE: September 24 th – 28 th Thematic Overview: The Sociological Imagination Shifting the Center Introduction to the field of Native American Studies	Readings: ❖ Reader: "On The Idea of The Indigenous" by John Brown Childs and Guillermo Delgado-P ❖ Study your syllabus!
	Assignments: In one page or less, let me know that you've read your syllabus (50 Points). In your paper, tell me three things in the syllabus you find interesting. Don't give me a list; don't copy and paste. Say what's interesting and why. I'm <i>not</i> looking for compliments; I want to know you've read the thing! Include questions about the syllabus with your write-up.
	Quote of the Week: "I'm sure they felt they were honoring us by having our scalps on their walls, too, or by taking our land." - Susan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne Moscogee)
WEEK TWO: October 1 st – 5 th	Readings: Spirit and Reason, Part I: Philosophy
Thematic Overview:➤ Philosophy➤ New ways of knowing and thinking	Assignments: Sociology Journal #1: Discuss what is meant by "If You Think About It, You Will See That It Is True." What are some of the fundamental differences between "American" culture and Indigenous ways of understanding the world in which we live?
	Quote of the Week: "Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible Frank Zappa

WEEK:	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:
DATES AND THEMES	READINGS DUE MONDAY
	Assignments due Friday
WEEK THREE:	Readings:
October 8 th – 12 th	Spirit and Reason: Part II: Social Science
 Thematic Overview: Native American Sociology? Land Bridge: Fact, Fiction, or just told wrong? How do you measure that which cannot be measured? 	Assignments: Mini-Group #1: Teach your article this week! See handout for details. Presentations will be on Thursday and Friday Quote of the Week: "Two hundred years of tradition does not make using Indians as mascots right." - Tim Giago (Lakota)
WEEK FOUR:	Readings:
October 15 th – 18 th	Spirit and Reason: Part III: Education
	Last Standing Woman: Review the maps, Cast of
**No class on Friday, BCC closed	Characters, Prologue
for classes**	, 0
	Assignments:
**Deanne Eschbach, Social	Sociology Journal #2: Native American Website
Science Advisor will be here on	Evaluation (see handout)
the 18th to talk to you about BCC	,
advising services. Please be on	Quote of the Week:
time!**	"The nobility of the Redskin is extinguished and
	what few are left are a pack of whining curs who
Thematic Overview:	lick the hand that smites them. The whites by law
Ethnic Studies	of conquest, by justice of civilization, are masters
Native American Studies	of the American continent, and the best safety of
➤ How do you know what you	the frontier settlements will be secured by the
know?	total annihilation of the few remaining Indians.
Issues of sovereignty	Why not annihilation? Their glory has fled, their
Indians in/and Higher	spirit broken, their manhood effaced, better they
Education	should die than live the miserable wretches that
	they are."
	- L. Frank Baum, author of The Wizard of Oz and
	editorial contributor for The Aberdeen Journal.
	This came out just prior to the 1898 Massacre at
	M1 117 ' C (1 D 1 .

Wounded Knee in South Dakota.

Many	DELEVINGE O ACCIONATIVE.
WEEK:	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:
DATES AND THEMES	READINGS DUE MONDAY
NAME OF THE PARTY	ASSIGNMENTS DUE FRIDAY
WEEK FIVE:	Readings:
October 22 nd – 26 th	Spirit and Reason: Part IV: Indians
Thematic Overview:	Assignments:
All things American and	Group Media Presentation and
Indian, but maybe not	Individual Paper Topic/s Due
American Indian	Mini-Group #2: Teach your article this
➤ BIA, trust, distrust, and Tribal	week! See handout for details.
Self-Government	Presentations will be on Thursday and
Social Movements in/and	Friday
Popular Culture	
"Can I touch your hair?"	Quote of the Week:
Indians in the American eye	"One does not sell the land people walk on."
"Other" stuff	- Tashunca-Uitco (Crazy Horse) (Lakota Sioux)
WEEK SIX:	Readings:
October 29 th – November 2 nd	Spirit and Reason: Part V: Religion
**No class on Tuesday, 10/30; BCC	Assignments:
closed for classes**	Sociology Journal #3: Find some representation
	of Indigenous Peoples out there in mass media
Thematic Overview:	(TV show, movie, magazine article, etc.) and write
Indigenous Cosmological	a reaction paper to it. Attach a movie review
Frameworks	(doesn't have to be yours) or description, or the
Plastic Shamans	article you're writing about, etc., when you turn in
Sacred Space	your paper.
> Is America a Rights-Society	
or a Respect-Society?	Quote of the Week:
> American Indian Religious	"We must trust our own thinking. Trust where
Freedom	we're going. And get the job done."
	- Wilma Mankiller (former Chief of the Cherokee
	Nation)
WEEK SEVEN:	Readings:
November 5 th – 9 th	Ten Little Indians: The Search Engine, Lawyer's
	League, Can I Get a Witness?
Thematic Overview:	-
➤ American Indian Literature	Assignments:
The Indigenous Aesthetic in	In-Class preparations for group presentations
the Arts	
Visual Culture	Quote of the Week:
Who's voice maintains the	"All I try to do is portray Indians as we are, in
culture?	creative ways. With imagination and poetry. I
Deep discussions, TLI	think a lot of Native American literature is stuck
2 200 410240010110, 121	Brown of Francisca in State in S

WEEK:	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:
DATES AND THEMES	READINGS DUE MONDAY
DAILSAND THEMES	ASSIGNMENTS DUE FRIDAY
	in one idea: sort of spiritual, environmentalist
	Indians. And I want to portray everyday lives. I
	think by doing that, by portraying the ordinary
	lives of Indians, perhaps people learn something
	new."
	- Sherman Alexie (Spokane and Coeur d'Alene)
WEEK EIGHT	Readings:
November 13 th – 16 th	No Reading Assignments this week!
**No class Monday, BCC closed	Assignments:
for classes**	Group Presentations Tuesday and Wednesday
**American Indian Film Festival	Quote of the Week:
@ BCC November 15 th and 16 th .	"The only thing more pathetic than Indians on TV
You are required to go during our	is Indians watching Indians on TV."
class time. See me for extra	Evan Adams (Coast Salish) as Thomas Builds-The-
credit!**	Fire in "Smoke Signals"
WEEK NINE	Readings:
November 19 th – 21 st	Ten Little Indians: Do Not Go Gentle, Flight
**NI -1Tl111	Patterns, The Life and Times of Estelle Walks
**No class Thursday and Friday;	Above
BCC closed for the Holiday**	Assignments
Thematic Overview:	Assignments:
> Deep discussions of <i>TLI</i> ,	 Bring in three discussion questions for <i>TLI</i> based on your readings up through "The
continued	Life and Times of Estelle Walks Above."
Continued	Worth 20 points toward your participation
	grade
	Group Presentations Thursday and Friday
	and the second s
	Quote of the Week:
	"There is no death. Only a change of worlds."
	- Chief Seattle [Seatlh], (Suquamish)
WEEK TEN	Readings:
November 26 th – 30 th	Ten Little Indians: Do You Know Where I Am?,
	What You Pawn I Will Redeem, What Ever
Thematic Overview:	Happened to Frank Snake Church?
Deep discussions of TLI,	
continued	Assignments:
➤ In-class potluck! ©	➤ Bring in three discussion questions for <i>TLI</i>
	based on your readings up through "What
	Ever Happened to Frank Snake Church?"

WEEK:	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:
DATES AND THEMES	READINGS DUE MONDAY
	Assignments due Friday
	Worth 20 points toward your participation
	grade
	Group Presentations Thursday and Friday
	Quote of the Week:
	"Indian legislation on the desk of a do-right
	Congressman
	Now, he don't know much about the issue
	so he picks up the phone and he asks advice from
	the
	Senator out in Indian country
	A darling of the energy companies who are
	ripping off what's left of the reservations. Huh."
	- Lyrics to "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee"
	by Buffy Ste. Marie (Chippewa)
ELEVEN:	We are done! No class. ©
December 3 rd – 7 th	
*FINALS WEEK – GOOD LUCK!	

<u>EMAILING ME:</u> When you email me, ALWAYS put in the SUBJECT LINE the following, in this order: SOC/ETHN 120 – YOUR NAME – SUBJECT

For example: SOC/ETHN 120 - Jane Doe - Question about Pop Quiz #5.

Your emails will be answered much faster this way. For ease of communication, it is ESSENTIAL that you stick to this mode of emailing me.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:

I am of Tsalagi (Cherokee), Irish, Romany/Gypsy, and Russian Jewish descent. I received my Ph.D. in Sociology (with a parenthetical notation in American Studies) from UC Santa Cruz. I received my first MA in Sociology from Humboldt State University and my second MA in Sociology from UCSC, my BA in Sociology and Journalism from Mills College, and my AA in English and Creative Writing from Vista Community College. This is my second year as Instructor of Sociology here at BCC. I am the Native American/Indigenous Studies Area Chair for the Popular Culture and American Culture Association's SW/Texas Regional Conferences. I love to write and am currently working on a memoir and a book of poetry. I'm an avid Scrabble player, tattoo enthusiast, and I definitely drink too much coffee. I probably work too much as well, but who's counting? I live in Central Seattle with my thirteen-year-old son.

Thank you for a wonderful term! [◎]