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Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film. By Michelle H. Raheja.

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Klopotek delves into sensitive topics and opposing positions in an even-handed manner. The interviews that complement the historical work center on a small number of tribal representatives; nevertheless, the opinions and perspectives show diversity and depth. The book supplies vital material addressing race, identity, and Native American and African American relations. While probably not suitable for an undergraduate course, the book would aid anyone doing research on these topics. The text is an invaluable resource for any instructor designing courses that cover Native American history and contemporary issues, recognition, sovereignty, education, casino gaming, and Native Americans in the southeast. Klopotek also provides a good model in terms of conducting ethical research with Native peoples and incorporating the diverse voices and perspectives of Native individuals in written representation.

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Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film. By Michelle H. Raheja. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011. 360 pages. \$50.00 cloth; \$30.00 paper.

Conversations about Native people start in the margins and are frequently left there, a confusing heap of complicated passion. Adding to this confusion, the Native American image often leads to an entire history lesson to fill in gaps of the unknown and forgotten. In *Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film*, Michelle Raheja has shown us how to take a deeper and more cohesive look at Native American films, not only the creation of the Native American image, but the agency evoked by the media maker. Native actors, directors, and producers previously considered disenfranchised, unknowingly creating stereotypes and stigmas, are examined in an innovative light, giving us the opportunity to participate in an ongoing process of reimagining, reinventing, and reappropriating the different images and ideas that plague Native film.

There are no victims in Raheja's book. Rather, the text showcases the opportunities individuals seized to sustain a career in the film industry. Raheja guides the reader to embrace the notion that Native individuals working in film are not only becoming self-sustaining but are methodically speaking back to the larger hegemonic narrative in an environment that does not always give them purchase. *Reservation Reelism* often presents the non-Native filmmaker or actor as less cognizant than the Native filmmaker or actor, yet holds both accountable for their plot and character choices. The author provides the

reader with the tools to observe cohesively both historical and contemporary filmmakers and actors through a Native lens, so that we see a paradigm shift when reading the “Native film.” By creating space in the text for humor and self-awareness, two philosophies that are often absent when discussing culture and image, the author enables the reader to process each concept less strictly and lending the Native subject more confidence as well. Any scholar of film can access the theories presented in the book from a multitude of viewpoints and not feel overwhelmed, although the reader is forced to step outside the comfortable boundaries of traditional readings of Native actors and filmmakers as casualties of history. Previous similar books and anthologies often paint a picture of post-racial identity crises, white policy, and manifest destiny that still push the Native perspective to the side. By introducing more diverse ways of reading film, this text complicates those earlier discussions. Instead of portraying Native people as pulling away from their community when creating film, they are portrayed as creating community to sustain their film career.

To add a more intuitive reading dynamic to film analysis, *Reservation Reelism* presents many theories that pertain to self-reflection from an indigenuous perspective and the decolonization of media technology, including theories such as Gerald Vizenor’s “trickster discourse.” Though image and sovereignty are explored in relationship to Native community and culture, the bulk of the book does not condemn or defend beyond the boundaries of the field of film. Raheja demonstrates the methods in which different people have had and continue to control and generate agency over their image. Most of the book stays away from debates of blood quantum and identity, only introducing historical facts about relocation and government policies when necessary to explain a specific example of misuse or misunderstanding of Native imagery.

Often these images conjure up the title of “Hollywood Indian,” resulting in different ideas for different communities. According to Raheja’s reading of the “Hollywood Indian,” the real victim is the non-Native attempting to pass. Raheja examines the non-Native actor and performer using the concept of “redfacing” or “playing Indian.” The Native community has informally compared the representation of non-Natives playing Native Americans in film to that of the black face minstrel, but until now the “redface” concept has not been explored in a book, and in a very thoughtful case study of Iron-Eyes Cody, Raheja identifies the highs and lows of being a Hollywood Indian and successfully explains the phenomenon without accusatory condemnation.

Reservation Reelism unpacks complicated concepts of identity and sovereignty by highlighting the diverse moments of film history with a variety of sources. In presenting films that have usually been overlooked in past anthologies, the book creates a solid assembly of knowledge and theory drawing from multiple disciplines. Not only does Raheja apply theories from well-known

Native academics such as Gerald Vizenor, Paula Gunn Allen, and Vine Deloria Jr., but draws from feminist theorists such as Audra Lorde and cultural scholar W. E. B. DuBois to support her readings. In tackling this large subject matter by breaking theoretical boundaries, *Reservation Reelism* distinguishes itself from previous texts.

The book elegantly ties together conversations started more than a decade ago in books such as Jacquelyn Kilpatrick's 1999 *Celluloid Indians* or S. Elisabeth Bird's 1996 anthology *Dressing in Feathers*. *Reservation Reelism* brings still-relevant theories from these books into the twenty-first century, providing a great springing board for future Native film scholars. The focus in these previous texts was on highly problematic examples of non-Native-made films that consistently appropriated indigenous images for gain or power, often without acknowledging the contemporary community. Raheja builds upon these examples of previously problematic practices and supplies counter-examples of agency and sovereignty in an up-to-date context, demonstrating that there is more than one way to explain, explore, and expose the intricacies of Native American film. Raheja's text travels far from the ground covered by Robert Berkhofer Jr.'s 1978 study *White Man's Indian*, which showcases Native imagery from a historical and (anti)colonial viewpoint. Expanding upon the merely historical, *Reservation Reelism* acknowledges that there is authority being (re) created constantly, without overlooking the contribution of the media maker.

With the recent explosion of online media platforms for self-expression and conversation, *Reservation Reelism* hits the ground running, encouraging the contemporary Native scholar who not only sits in the classroom, but communicates through online media outlets, writes blogs, and posts comments for the online world, engaging in dialogue about the past, present, and future of indigenous film. Although the book does not detail how the Internet is being utilized by Native media makers, the text lays an excellent foundation for visual and cultural scholars to discover and expand the ways in which we think about Native media. In creating this book, Raheja has literally shown us how to access the "virtual Reservation" (149). Not only does it exist in the Native film world, but is now sustained by creative choice as opposed to predetermined control. We see the various ways counter-narratives are created in unexpected situations and the Native actor, from silent era to the present, exposed as methodical and human. The language may have changed, but the ideas are still relevant: "where did this image come from?"

Raheja has brought the conversation into today's fast-flowing media world. The text is a poignant and timely communication with the Native view and the rest of society. *Reservation Reelism* invites all to engage in the interchange between popular media and the Native American image. It is a great addition to courses concerned with representation of marginalized communities,

decolonizing methodology, community-based research, third-world cinema, and visual and cultural scholarship. Native visual culturalists have been waiting for a book like this, one that displays past sovereignty, creates counter-narratives, and showcases the Native media maker's own agency in rethinking, rebuilding, and reinvigorating the visual community.

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Rez Life: An Indian's Journey Through Reservation Life. By David Treuer. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2012. 368 pages. \$26.00 cloth; \$15.95 paper.

Dibajimowinan. Through *dibajimowinan* (stories), David Treuer's latest book *Rez Life* makes it clear that much of contemporary reservation life in Minnesota, and on many other reservations in the Great Lakes region, is not at all what many non-Indians imagine. *Rez Life* is much more. This well-written, clearly worded, easy to understand collection of *dibajimowinan* recounts the events which led up to present-day reservation circumstances and illustrates Treuer's points about present-day Native reservation life. In the Anishinaabe world, and other Native worlds, *dibajimowinan* take on different meanings. In addition to underscoring the persistence of Anishinaabeg (who refer to themselves as the original people), *Rez Life* details how many contemporary reservations remain vital communities even though they were "supposed to disappear" (259). The introduction is filled with short stories that outline many of the challenges the author and his extended family faced. For example, the story of his grandfather's death is painful and sad, but it is also a story that informs and reminds us of the deeply meaningful kinship relationships in contemporary reservation life. Despite all of the hardships, readers of *Rez Life* are witness to these strong family ties.

Throughout Treuer discusses many past and present issues important to all Native people: sovereignty, treaty rights, tribal law, poverty, casinos, boarding school abuse and trauma, tribal enrollment, and Native identity. Importantly, his perception of all these issues is presented in the light of an understanding of *dibajimowinan* that makes reservation life what it is today. With tribal enrollment one of the key issues, *Rez Life* devotes several pages to examining how enrollment in an American Indian tribe can be a bureaucratic, legal, and financial nightmare. Because of the constricting (as opposed to expanding) nature of tribal enrollment, the enrollment process can become a setup that purposely costs time, money, and effort. Treuer writes, "Tribal enrollment