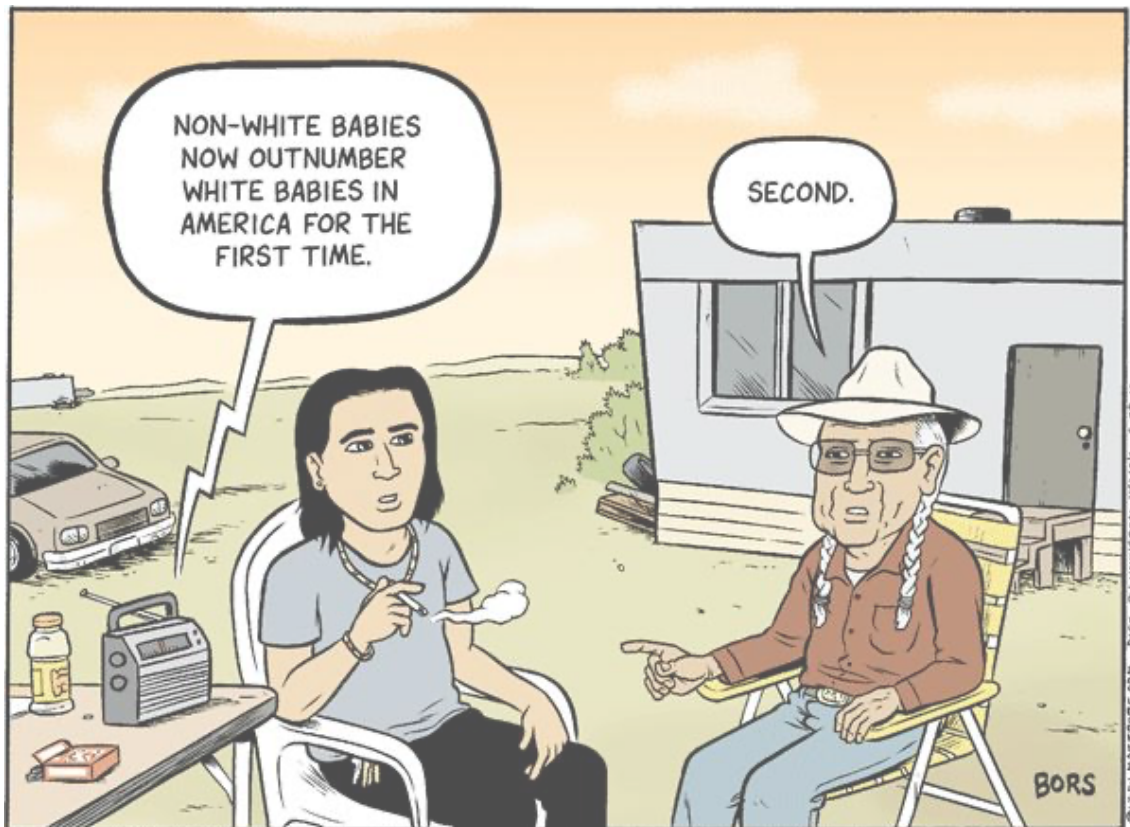


Fall 2019 - AMST/ANT 117A 1
Introduction to Decolonization:
A Native American Studies Approach

Instructor: Leigh Bloch
Class Location: Brown 115
Class time: T & F 12:30-1:50 PM

Email: lbloch@brandeis.edu
Office Location: Brown 327
Office Hours: T 2:00-4:00 PM



Comic by Matt Bors

Course Description

This introductory course will ask, “What is decolonization?” through the perspective of Native American studies. The course is organized around two core interventions: (1) the affirmation that Native American peoples are not fixed in a “pre-historical” past but are still here; and (2) a semester-long inquiry into the nature of decolonization as a liberatory social project. In brief, we will aim to rethink US and Canadian society and politics in a way that centers Indigenous peoples. We will cover multiple approaches and understandings of what decolonization might entail, including “decolonizing the mind,” decolonizing methodologies, and land reparations.

In this course, we will challenge popular stereotypes about Native American peoples, learn about contemporary Indigenous issues, and build analytical tools for critiquing settler colonialism as it permeates our everyday lives and institutions. We will ask questions such as: What is Native American studies and why does it matter? How can it transform our understanding of history,

society, and politics? Why don't we usually learn about Native American peoples and their histories in school? What is the difference between Native American studies and the study of Native American peoples? Topics covered are meant to sample a wide range of issues, including identity, sovereignty, boarding schools, truth and reconciliation, language revitalization, Indigenous feminisms, two-spirit/queer Indignities, environmental justice, and Indigenous futurisms. Focus will be placed on Indigenous peoples in the United States and Canada.

Course Goals

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Articulate some key elements of Indigenous histories as well as the contemporary presence and diversity of Native American peoples in North America;
- Problematize stereotypes that place Native Americans within a mythical, "primitive" past;
- Describe a range of important issues and approaches within Native American and Indigenous Studies as an interdisciplinary field of scholarship, and why the field matters;
- Problematize whose perspectives are taken for granted and whose are marginalized in dominant narratives;
- Explain critical concepts such as settler colonialism, Indigeneity, sovereignty, and decolonization, as well as how these intersect with other axes of oppression, and
- Practice critical truth- and storytelling

Prerequisites

No prerequisites. This course serves as an introduction to Native American studies.

Oral Communication Requirement

This course meets the Oral Communication General University Requirement.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Success in this 4 credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (including readings, papers, preparation for presentations, etc.)

Participation	20 points
Thoughts and Reflections	10 points
Group Presentation	10 points
Short Essay #1	15 points
Short Essay #2	15 points
Final Essay/Presentation	25 points
Post-Assignment Reflections	5 points

A: The student consistently makes creative contributions to discussion and moves the conversation forward in significant ways. The student draws connections between course materials and extends key concepts by applying them to new situations. Engages with both the instructor *and* with fellow students.

B: The student consistently contributes to class discussion and demonstrates a solid understanding of course materials. The student thinks through the readings, other students' comments, and one's own points well. Engages with both the instructor *and* with fellow students.

C: The student sometimes participates in class discussion and understands most of the facts of the readings, but perhaps not the big picture.

D: The student only infrequently participates in class discussion or makes statements that are unrelated or do not advance the project of the course. Only has a partial understanding of the materials. Spotty attendance.

E: The student does not consistently come to class, does not participate in or disrupts class discussion, or misses the point of course materials. This is a failing grade.

Participation

We will work through course materials during class discussion, during which we will review, interpret, extend, draw connections between, and critique the readings. As such, students must come to class having completed the readings and be prepared to discuss them.

This approach departs from a “banking” model of education in which the expert (that’s me!) “deposits” knowledge in students’ brains and “withdraws” it in tests. Instead, the goal of discussion is to practice the tools of critical thinking through collective discussion, or problematizing systems of domination with the aim of transforming the world.

Talking about systems of domination may make some students may feel uncomfortable. This discomfort is a part of the learning process. At minimum, students are expected to work to understand the arguments of the course materials. But I also encourage students to “lean in” to the discomfort by reflecting on where it comes from. Remember, these critiques are not about whether you as an individual are a good person: it is about sharpening your ability to identify settler colonial violence that is often invisible to most non-Native peoples.

That said, it is OK to make mistakes. I promise to make enough for all of us, anyway.

Absences

Life happens, and so students have 2 “free passes” to miss class. After that, all unexcused absences will result in the student’s final grade being lowered by one letter: i.e., a student who would otherwise get an A would get a B, a student who would get a B would get a C, and so on.

Thoughts and Questions

Each week, students should complete one Thoughts and Questions assignment each week, starting the third week. These are brief, written response to one of the readings. A more detailed description will be distributed separately.

T&Q’s will be graded on a credit/no-credit basis. You may skip two of these assignments over the semester with no penalty.

Group Presentation

Students will give an in-class presentation in small groups focusing on contemporary Indigenous peoples in Massachusetts. Groups will conduct research and share what they learned with the rest of the class. Each presentation should be under 40 minutes, with time afterwards for Q&A.

Essays

All essays must be proofread, paginated, and double-spaced, using 12-point font and 1 inch margins. All essays must draw connections to course materials. Prompts will be distributed in class at least two weeks prior to the deadline.

The short essays (#1 and #2) will each be 4-6 pages in length.

The final essay will be 7-10 pages in length. For this essay, will conduct research into a topic of your own choosing that relates to course materials. You may go deeper into a topic we discussed in class or select a totally new topic. You may also look into issues that effect Indigenous peoples in other parts of the world, such as Latin America, Australia, the Pacific Islands, or Africa. Students are also required to give a 10 minute, conference style presentation based on their essay to the class during the final period.

Alternative Creative Option

Students may opt to take a more creative approach as an alternative to a traditional essay format. This could involve making a comic, painting, photo essay, or film, or using another medium entirely. Students selecting this option are expected to reflect on how their approach allows them to do something different than a traditional essay: in other words, *why* select this creative option? Students must get approval from the professor before taking this option.

Alternative Service-Learning Option

As an alternative to the three essays, students with existing relationships with nearby Native American communities or organizations can complete a service-learning option. Students opting to take this option will volunteer with an Indigenous organization and write a short reflection essay. Students must get approval from the professor before taking this option.

Post-Assignment Reflections

Within 36 hours of completing each essay and presentation, please submit a brief response to the following two questions: 1) What do you think you did well in this assignment? 2) What could you have done better if you had more time?

These will be graded on a credit/no-credit basis. Reflections that I consider good faith efforts will pass. I will only read your response after I grade your assignment. The purpose of this assignment is to reflect on your own learning process and identify areas you might continue to think through in the future.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Please consult Brandeis University [Rights and Responsibilities](#) for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Allegations of

alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at [LTS - Library guides](#).

Communications

Updates regarding the class, including syllabus changes and snow days, will be communicated by email.

Email Policy

I will respond to reasonable email inquiries within a reasonable timeframe: usually within 24 hours. I expect your emails to be courteous and professional: it is good etiquette to include a salutation and signature and to make the subject line relevant to the content. Proofread all emails before sending. (Grammar and email etiquette standards are ultimately a means of reproducing social hierarchies. But knowing these rules will make your life easier.)

Students with Disabilities

Brandeis seeks to welcome and include all students. If you are a student who needs accommodations as outlined in an accommodations letter, please talk with me and present your letter of accommodation as soon as you can. I want to support you.

In order to provide test accommodations, I need the letter more than 48 hours in advance. I want to provide your accommodations, but cannot do so retroactively. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Support (SAS) at 781.736.3470 or access@brandeis.edu.

Content Warning

Students who suffer from past traumas may find topics discussed in this class triggering. These include but are not limited to: genocide, racism, rape, forced sterilization, and state-organized child abuse. If a specific topic is likely to be triggering for you, I'd be happy to discuss any concerns you have before that subject comes up in class. If, due to such lingering traumas, you need to step outside during class, you may always do so without academic penalty. I would appreciate it if you explained why you stepped out to me afterwards. Additionally, if you wish to discuss your reactions with me in class or afterwards, I welcome such conversations as an important part of the coursework.

Required Materials

- Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC) and Upper One Games. 2014. *Never Alone (Kisima Innitchuna)*. E-Line Media.
 - Download: <http://neveralonegame.com/>
- Kauanui, J. Kēhaulani (Kanaka Maoli). 2018. *Speaking of Indigenous Politics: Conversations with Activists, Scholars, and Tribal Leaders*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
 - Available as a free e-book via Brandeis Library

- Treuer, David (Ojibwe). 2012. *Rez Life: An Indian's Journey Through Reservation Life*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

Schedule of Readings

Week 1

August 30

Week 2: What/Why NAIS?

September 3

- Review these maps of the lands of Native American peoples. Whose land are you on? Whose land did you grow up on?
 - http://www.emersonkent.com/images/maps/native_american_map.jpg
 - <https://native-land.ca/>
- Lisa Brooks (Abenaki) on the Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast. In *Speaking of Indigenous Politics*.
- Selection from Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. 2014. *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Mark Charles (Diné [Navajo]). 2018. "The 'Indian Savages' at the Heart of America's So-Called Independence." *Indianz*. July 5.
 - *If you want to review the Declaration of Independence to see for yourself:* <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>

September 6

- Deloria, Vine, Jr. (Lakota). 1988[1969]. "Anthropologists and Other Friends" In *Custer Died for Your Sins*, 78-100. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Atalay, Sonya (Anishinaabe kwe). 2006. "Indigenous Archaeology as Decolonizing Practice." *American Indian Quarterly* 30(3-4): 280-310.

Week 3: The Myth of Vanishing Indians

September 10

- King, Tom (Cherokee). 2005. "You're Not the Indian I Had in Mind." In *The Truth About Stories*, 31-60. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bruyneel, Kevin. 2017. "Race, Colonialism, and the Politics of Indian Sports Names and Mascots: The Washington Football Team Case." *Native American and Indigenous Studies* 3(2): 1-24.

September 13

- Keene, Adrienne (Cherokee). 2011. "An Open Letter to the PocaHotties and Indian Warriors this Halloween." *Native Appropriations*, October 2011.
- Film: Real Injuns

Week 4: Rez Life

September 17

- Treuer, Introduction and Chapter 1

September 20

- Treuer, Chapter 2

Week 5: Rez Life

September 24

- Treuer, Chapter 4

September 27

- Treuer, Chapter 5 and Eulogies

Week 6: The Politics of Recognition

October 1: No class

October 4

- Read at least two of these three:
 - Kathleen A. Brown-Pérez (Brothertown Indian Nation) on Tribal Legitimacy in the Face of Termination. In *Speaking of Indigenous Politics*.
 - Chief Richard Velky (Schaghticoke) on the Schaghticoke Struggle for Federal Recognition. In *Speaking of Indigenous Politics*.
 - Gould, Rae (Nipmuc). 2013. "The Nipmuc Nation, Federal Acknowledgment, and a Case of Mistaken Identity." In *Recognition, Sovereignty Struggles, and Indigenous Rights in the United States: A Sourcebook*, edited by Jean O'Brien and Amy E. Den Ouden. University of North Carolina Press.
- Gupta, Pratchi and Kim TallBear (Dakota [Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate]-Cheyenne-Arapaho). 2018. "Our Vote Matters Very Little': Kim TallBear on Elizabeth Warren's Attempt to Claim Native American Heritage." *Jezebel*, October 16.

Short essay #1 due in class on Oct. 4

Week 7: Group Presentations

October 8

- Pember, Mary Annette (Ojibwe). 2013. "Tiny Horrors: A Chilling Reminder of How Cruel Assimilation Was—and Is." *Indian Country Today*, Jan 1.
- Film: *White Ravens*
- Optional: O'Brien, Jean (Ojibwe) "Introduction" in *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- *Group Presentations*

October 11

- Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) Council. 2018. "Statement on "Zero Tolerance" and Family Separation in the United States."
- Film: *Dawnland*

- Optional: O'Brien, Jean (Ojibwe) "Introduction" in *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- *Group Presentations*

Week 8: Boarding Schools and the Politics of Family Separation

October 15: No class

October 18

- Optional: O'Brien, Jean (Ojibwe) "Introduction" in *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- *Group Presentations*

Week 9: From Red Power to Language Revitalization

October 22

- Bruyneel, Kevin. 2007. "Between Civil Rights and Decolonization: The Claim for Postcolonial Nationhood." In *The Third Space of Sovereignty*, 123-169. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Begin: Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC) and Upper One Games. 2014. *Never Alone (Kisima Innitchuna)*. E-Line Media.
 - a. Watch and take notes on the "Cultural Insights" videos as you unlock them. If you miss one, you can find them all here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FII41nipj_g&list=PLIvS4D9HSKasMZmLDNyKOLauwrCdionBQ
 - b. Please do not spend six hours dying over and over. You can always watch someone else run through the game here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GeQPDGefyeA>
- **BRING LAPTOPS TO CLASS FOR A LAB**

October 25

- Baird, Jessie Little Doe (Wampanoag) on Reviving the Wampanoag Language. In *Speaking of Indigenous Politics*.
- Finish: Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC) and Upper One Games. 2014. *Never Alone (Kisima Innitchuna)*. E-Line Media.
- Optional: Selection from Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake (Anishinaabe). 2011. *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence*. Winnipeg: ARP Books.

Week 10: Defining Settler Colonialism and Decolonization

October 29

- Patrick Wolfe on Settler Colonialism. In *Speaking of Indigenous Politics*.
- Mikdashi, Maya (Ojibwe). 2013. "What Is Settler Colonialism? (for Leo Delano Ames Jr.)" *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 37(2): 23-34.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai (Māori). 2012[1999]. "Imperialism, History, Writing and Theory." In *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 19-41. New York: Zed Books.

- Optional: Wolfe, Patrick. 2006. "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8(4): 387-409.

November 1

- Tuck, Eve (Aleut) and K. Wayne Yang. 2012. "Decolonization is not a Metaphor." 2012. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society* 1(1):1-40.

Week 11: Race and Border Struggles

November 5

- Tuck, Eve (Aleut) and Kim Tallbear (Dakota [Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate]-Cheyenne-Arapaho). 2016. "Red and Black DNA, Blood, Kinship and Organizing with Kim Tallbear." *The Henceforward*. July 25. (Podcast).
<http://www.thehenceforward.com/episodes/2016/7/25/episode-3-red-and-black-dna-blood-kinship-and-organizing-with-kim-tallbear>
- David Cornsilk (Cherokee) on Freedmen Citizenship Rights at Cherokee. In *Speaking of Indigenous Politics*.

November 8

- Luna-Firebaugh, Eileen M. (Choctaw-Cherokee). 2016. "The Border Crossed Us: Border Crossing Issues of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas. In *Native American Voices: A Reader*, edited by Susan Lobo Steve Talbot, and Traci L. Morris. New York: Taylor and Francis.
- Simpson, Audra (Mohawk). 2014. "Borders, Cigarettes, and Sovereignty." In *Mohawk Interruptus*, 115-146. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Optional: Tamez, Margo (Ndé Konitsaaiigokiyaa'en [Apache]) on Indigenous Resistance to the U.S.-Mexico Border Wall. In *Speaking of Indigenous Politics*.
- Optional: Berg, Aimee. 2014. "Fighting for More than a Win: Iroquois Lacrosse Team Back in Championships." *Aljazeera America*, July 9.
<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/9/iroquois-lacrossechampionships.html>

Week 12: Decolonizing the Gendered Body

November 12

- Arvin, Maile (Kanaka Maoli), Eve Tuck (Aleut), and Angie Morrill (Kalmath). 2013. "Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging the Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy." *Feminist Formations* 25(1): 8-34.
- Sarah Deer (Muskogee [Creek]) on Native Women and Sexual Violence. In *Speaking of Indigenous Politics*.
- Optional: Torpy, Sally J. 2000. "Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization: On the Trail of Tears in the 1970s." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 24(2): 1-22.

November 15

- For Background: Enos, Tony (Cherokee). 2017. "8 Things You Should Know About Two Spirit People." *Indian Country Today*, March 28.

- Ross, Gyasi (Blackfeet), Wesley Roach (Lakota), Minty LongEarth (Santee-Choctaw-Creek), and Kim Tallbear (Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate-Cheyenne-Arapaho) on *Breakdances with Wolves: Indigenous Pirate Radio*. July 26, 2018. (Podcast) <https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/the-soundcasting-network/breakdances-with-wolves-indigenous-pirate-radio/e/55519634?autoplay=true>
- Driskill, Qwo-Li (Cherokee). 2011. “D4Y DBC (Asegi Ayetl): Cherokee Two-Spirit People Reimagining Nation” In *Queer Indigenous Studies*, edited by Qwo-Li Driskill, Chris Finley, Brian Joseph Gilley, and Scott Lauria Morgensen, 97-112. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.

Week 13: Indigenous Space

November 19

- Thrush, Coll. 2016. “The City of Long Memory: Remembering and Reclaiming Indigenous London, 1982-2013.” In *Indigenous London*, 209-237.
- Todd, Zoe (Métis). 2015. “Decolonial Dreams: Unsettling the Academy through *Namewak*.” In *The New (New) Corpse*, edited by Caroline Picard. Chicago, IL: Green Lantern Press.
- Browse through some of these resources in anticipation of Thanksgiving:
 - a. <https://www.jewishboston.com/i-wont-celebrate-stolen-land/>
 - b. https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/6-thanksgiving-myths-and-the-wampanoag-side-of-the-story-roJhk2s_AkW9pkjONXr-w/

November 22

- Guest Speaker: Eli Nelson
- Browse through some of these resources in anticipation of Thanksgiving:
 - a. <https://www.jewishboston.com/i-wont-celebrate-stolen-land/>
 - b. https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/6-thanksgiving-myths-and-the-wampanoag-side-of-the-story-roJhk2s_AkW9pkjONXr-w/

Week 14: Masculinities and the Prison Industrial Complex

November 26

- Film: *Out of State*
- Browse through some of these resources in anticipation of Thanksgiving:
 - o <https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2018/11/21/the-true-story-first-thanksgiving-and-what-meant/fZFrN9YZQhVLZF6fLel5PJ/story.html>
 - o <https://www.jewishboston.com/i-wont-celebrate-stolen-land/>
 - o https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/6-thanksgiving-myths-and-the-wampanoag-side-of-the-story-roJhk2s_AkW9pkjONXr-w/

Short essay #2 Due in class on Nov. 26

November 29: No class

Week 15: Contemporary Movements

December 3

- Winona LaDuke (Anishinaabe) on Environmental Activism. In *Speaking of Indigenous Politics*.
- Coulthard, Glen Sean (Dene). 2014. "Lessons from Idle No More: The Future of Indigenous Activism." In *Red Skins, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, 151-180. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS FOR LAB

Topics for final essay due Dec. 3

December 6

- Estes, Nick (Lakota [Kul Wicasa/Lower Brule Sioux]). 2016. "Fighting For Our Lives: #NoDAPL in Historical Context." *The Red Nation*, September 18.
- Essays from "Form 2: Enduring Hawaiian Sovereignty: Protecting the Sacred at Mauna Kea," *Radical History Review*, edited by J. Kēhaulani Kauanui (Kanaka Maoli). radicalhistoryreview.org/abusablepast/?p=3250
- BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS FOR LAB

Week 16: Indigenous Futures

December 10

- Watts, Vanessa (Mohawk-Anishinaabe). 2013. "Indigenous Place-Thought and Agency amongst Humans and Non-Humans (First Woman and Sky Woman Go on a European World Tour!)." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society* 2 (1): 20–34.
- Roanhorse, Rebecca (Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo). 2018. "Postcards from the Apocalypse." *Uncanny Magazine*. <https://uncannymagazine.com/article/postcards-from-the-apocalypse/>
- Read either:
 - Selection from *Walking the Clouds*
 - Selection from *Love Beyond Space and Time*

Final Essays due during the final period