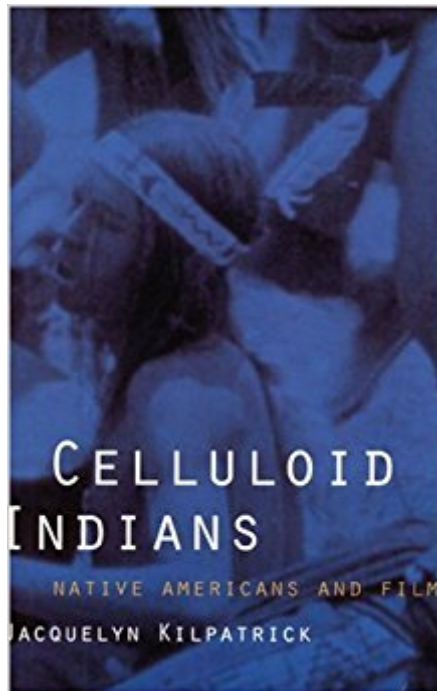




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# Celluloid Indians: Native Americans And Film



## Synopsis

Native American characters have been the most malleable of metaphors for filmmakers. The likeable Doc of Stagecoach (1939) had audiences on the edge of their seats with dire warnings about “that old butcher, Geronimo.” Old Lodgeskins of Little Big Man (1970) had viewers crying out against the demise of the noble, wise chief and his kind and simple people. In 1995 Disney created a beautiful, peace-loving ecologist and called her Pocahontas. Only occasionally have Native Americans been portrayed as complex, modern characters in films like Smoke Signals. Celluloid Indians is an accessible, insightful overview of Native American representation in film over the past century. Beginning with the birth of the movie industry, Jacquelyn Kilpatrick carefully traces changes in the cinematic depictions of Native peoples and identifies cultural and historical reasons for those changes. In the late twentieth century, Native Americans have been increasingly involved with writing and directing movies about themselves, and Kilpatrick places appropriate emphasis on the impact that Native American screenwriters and filmmakers have had on the industry. Celluloid Indians concludes with a valuable, in-depth look at influential and innovative Native Americans in today’s film industry.

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## Customer Reviews

"This is a seminal study of how Native Americans have been portrayed in film since the start of the film industry in this country. . . . This is much more than a book for film buffs; it's about how stereotypes of Native Americans were created. As the book treats the evolution of film images of

Native Americans, the reader may begin to appreciate it as a history of how white people have dealt with Native Americans, including how they have created popular stereotypes of them. . . . An elegantly thoughtful book."•Kliatt (Kliatt)"Any filmmaker seeking to present images draped in honesty should read this book. It is an absolute must."•E. Donald Two-Rivers, author of *Survivor's Medicine* (E. Donald Two-Rivers)

Native American characters have been the most malleable of metaphors for filmmakers. The likeable Doc of *Stagecoach* (1939) had audiences on the edge of their seats with dire warnings about "that old butcher, Geronimo". Old *Lodgeskins* of *Little Big Man* (1970) had viewers crying out against the demise of the noble, wise chief and his kind and simple people. In 1995 Disney created a beautiful, peace-loving ecologist and called her Pocahontas. Only occasionally have Native Americans been portrayed as complex, modern characters, in films like *Smoke Signals*. *Celluloid Indians* is an accessible, insightful overview of Native American representation in film over the past century. Beginning with the birth of the movie industry, Jacquelyn Kilpatrick carefully traces changes in the cinematic depictions of Native peoples and identifies cultural and historical reasons for those changes. In the late twentieth century, Native Americans have been increasingly involved with writing and directing movies about themselves, and Kilpatrick places appropriate emphasis on the impact that Native American screenwriters and filmmakers have had on the industry. *Celluloid Indians* concludes with a valuable, in-depth look at influential and innovative Native Americans in today's film industry.

Good condition, excellent insight and worked well for my class

EXCELLENT BOOK!

Very clean, no marks or wrinkles, just like new

I teach a cultural studies course that examines representations of native peoples in American film, so was searching for a text that would provide a critical apparatus for analyzing films by and about indigenous people. Partly based on the glowing reviews here (and partly due to the dearth of full-length studies on this topic), I opted for *Celluloid Indians*. This book is a letdown, and the disappointment is amplified by the necessity for serious critical work on native peoples and American film. Basically Kilpatrick summarizes films from Griffith to Alexie, with a few withering

editorial comments about stereotypes sprinkled here and there. The critical orientation is puzzling, moreover, a reliance on thinkers like Bakhtin, who was a theorist of the modern novel, not cinema. I might concede that applying Bakhtin to film could be successfully achieved, but not here. I'm waiting on a better book than this, and hope that a scholar of American Indian cultures and film will write one.

"Celluloid Indians" takes on a lengthy and complex history of Natives Americans in film from D.W. Griffith to Sherman Alexie. It offers discussions of nearly 60 films spanning the twentieth century. It highlights some general trends from negative to positive stereotypes, and then towards the depiction of Native Americans as human beings. The author's discussion of such films as "Pocahontas" and "Sunchaser" are perceptive. However, much of what she offers is derivative of the works of others, the research is thin, and there are egregious errors in her discussion of Federal Indian policy. Because of the general level of ignorance in American society of some of the political and historical context that Kilpatrick rightly identifies as relevant to these films, this book is horribly dangerous. The book offers a useful general overview, but readers must labor to verify many of her statements of fact.

This book is an absolute must for anyone...student, teacher or other interested people who might have wondered how and why Native Americans react like they do to the stereotypical images that we see everyday in the media. The author...rooted in the Chicago Indian community... echoes the heart felt sentiments of her people. As an Indian person, I found myself at times cheering...saying 'YOU DAMENED RIGHT MOMMA...YOU TELL EM' and at others I could only stop to wipe away a tear because I realized this woman had actulized what I could never say. In no uncertain terms Ms. Kilpatrick did our community proud. I recommend this book to any teacher who is interested in presenting students with a clear view of how we have been cast and more important why! A good read folks..ya gotta check it out.

Dr. Kilpatrick's new book, *Celluloid Indians*, is a breathtaking account of Native Americans as portrayed in film. Her solid scholarly work is made accessible to readers of varying backgrounds. The subtle humor, sprinkled throughout the book, enhances its appeal and makes this one very good read. I highly recommend *Celluloid Indians* to anyone who is even remotely interested in gaining an increased understanding of the misrepresentation of Native Americans in film. Thank you Dr. Kilpatrick!

Celluloid Indians offers an overview of the history of Indians in the movies but rehearses much of what has been done before. The author cuts and pastes long previously published excerpts from other articles and calls them her own. She adds merely a few comments to issues that have already been thoroughly discussed elsewhere. She knows little of Hollywood history, which makes her book nothing more than a superficial study of Native American images in the motion picture business. But perhaps the most annoying aspect of this book is that it's so one-sided and determined to fault everything on Hollywood that it gets tiresome after a while. Isn't it time for this field to move beyond that stereotype?

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