

UNTOLD
STORIES:

INDIGENOUS CREATORS IN THE UNITED STATES

Written by Maya Rose Dittloff,
Ukkayŭ”kwīyinnimāakii



1914



1944



2005

A Walk Through:

History of Indigenous Representation,
Today's Content and Creators,
and Visions For The Future



2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About FREE THE WORK	1
Letter from FREE THE WORK	3
Letter From The Author	5
Vision	7
Terminology	9

SECTIONS

1	A Fraught History	15
2	A Present Day State of Affairs	35
3	A Brighter Future	45

Credits.....60

References..... 61



Image provided by
Maya Rose Dittloff

About

FREE THE W^{ORK}

FREE THE WORK is a non-profit organization committed to making equity actionable in media and to creating opportunities for a global workforce of underrepresented creators behind the lens in TV, film, and marketing.

Our organization strives to be the most innovative, effective, and action-driven resource possible

until industry-wide equality becomes a reality. We accomplish this goal through our FREE THE WORK pledge, global talent database, community, DEI guidance, impact & insights reporting, and educational tools that help creators to demystify the media industries.

To learn more, visit our website: freethework.com.

**FREE THE WORK
EXISTS TO EMPOWER A
CREATIVE REVOLUTION,
LED BY THE WORLD'S
UNDERREPRESENTED
CREATORS.**

A Letter from

FREE THE W^{ORK}



Our organization's efforts have always been in service of amplification; our earliest iteration, Free The Bid, even included a megaphone in its logo as a nod to the importance of amplifying voices often unheard. We view it as our responsibility to use our platform to highlight the unique perspectives of all our community members, who represent a multitude of global identities; and to imagine action-oriented interventions led by—and reflecting the vision of—those impacted by the issues in question.

This report is intended to kick off a series, Untold Stories, which will examine specific creative communities who have historically been sidelined and misrepresented. The series will aim at providing readers with an introduction to the systemic issues at play in the community's on-screen and behind the lens representation, and shedding light on the contemporary landscape for these creators. Our first edition of the Untold Stories series focuses on creators of Indigenous descent to the region currently known as the United States.

Untold Stories was envisioned as a narrative, personal approach to the topics at hand. The brilliant work of the report's author, Maya Rose Dittloff, weaves statistical information and scholarly source material alongside subjective analysis of her own lived experience. Providing further depth of perspective, interviews with five talented working creators (Bryson Chun, Charley Flyte, Ciara Lacy, Erica Tremblay, and Joey Clift) and with Jennifer Loren, Director of Cherokee Nation Film Office and Original Content, were conducted and integrated into the report's body. We thank these creators profusely for their invaluable contributions, and extend thanks further to all who we have been in communication with throughout the report's completion.

No identity community is a monolith, however, and the subjective experiences compiled within this document should ultimately be viewed as just that: subjective, and solely reflective of the individuals in question. Just as, in the words of Jennifer Loren, "the 0.6% of people that we see in the media do not adequately represent the incredibly complex and beautiful cultures that are unique to each tribe," the creators highlighted in this report cannot be expected to fully encompass the range of experiences of Indigenous people working within the industry.

This document is not intended to be an end in and of itself. Rather, our hope is that it invites readers into a crucially overlooked (but certainly not brand new!) industry-wide conversation. We hope that it provides an engaging entry point, lending context to both the big picture and more human, intimate observations. If any of the content discussed resonates with the reader, we strongly encourage further engagement with the multitude of organizations who have been working tirelessly to advance Indigenous creative voices (some of whom have been highlighted throughout), and urge readers to support their vital efforts.

LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR



Maya Rose Dittloff, or,
Ukkayŭ”kwīyinnimāaki

Indigenous communities in the United States face unique issues as compared to other marginalized communities. Often, these conversations focus on what Native communities lack access to -- from wifi, filmmaking equipment, money, movie theaters, to clean drinking water. While these are real issues that face Indian Country, it is incredibly important to note what Natives do have.

All Native tribes have a tradition of oral storytelling, passing down stories for generations. These range from creation stories, and ghost stories, to morality tales and the effects of traditional plants and medicines. Many Native communities retain a knowledge of the natural world that has been lost

from dominant American culture. For many tribes -- my own included -- there are rules to when and how certain stories can be told, and who can tell them. For example, after the first snow of the year, the season of storytelling officially begins for the Amskapi Pikuni. This is true for many Plains tribes, as the winter brings harsh weather which necessitates we stay inside. Certain stories (such as the creation story for the Blackfeet) are so long that they must be told over multiple nights. Through ceremony and the transfer of ceremonial bundles and pipes, people are given the right and responsibility to carry on certain traditions. Not everyone can tell the creation story; you must be chosen and trusted. Stories are considered of paramount

importance to many Native communities - it is a true testament to the difficulty of “breaking in” that there are not more Native American people working in the entertainment industry.

To introduce myself, the author of this report, my name is Maya Rose Dittloff. I am a Blackfeet, Mandan and Hidatsa writer and director. Growing up in Montana, I was privileged to know my ancestral lands intimately, as well as our traditional practices and stories. My grandfather was the late Gordon Belcourt and my grandmother was Cheryl Belcourt, both of whom are bundle carriers and Okan leaders. It is important that I share this information so that you understand who I am and my biases: I am a cisgender

female, queer-identifying, Plains Native. I cannot speak for the multiplicity of tribes and lived experiences. Native experience is not monolithic; every Indigenous person, tribe, and community have stories that deserve to be told. This document is intended only to draw back the curtain and showcase a snapshot of the entertainment industry as it exists in 2021, as seen through my lens. This report cannot be -- and should not be -- considered a complete roadmap in and of itself, but more as a tool, utilized in tandem with a well-stocked kit of supporting resources, to help the reader begin the journey towards understanding Indigenous ways of knowing, representation, decolonization, Indigenization, and narrative sovereignty.

VISION

The goal of this report is to understand the state of representation of Indigenous peoples behind the camera in the United States film, television, and advertising media industries since 1990. We recognize that defining these boundaries of land as the “United States” is, in and of itself, a reflection of the colonization that has for generations displaced this land’s Indigenous peoples. However, because these man-made

borders do exist today, and because Indigenous people are subject to these borders, it is important to note how they can change the working experience of professionals and creators. Systemic factors, such as government funding, entertainment infrastructure, and Indigenous visibility from America differ versus those of others, such as Canada, Australia, or New Zealand. We have decided to focus on creators and works produced from 1990 on to the present day in order to understand

the contemporary landscape of Indigenous of representation of Indigenous peoples behind the camera over this time period. For prior analysis of representation of Indigenous filmmakers see [1] - [5].

In order to fully and authentically enact change for Native creators, filmmakers and communities through entertainment content, awareness and understanding must first be established.



Image provided by
Maya Rose Dittloff

TERMINOLOGY



Image provided by
Maya Rose Dittloff

“INDIGENOUS”

Given the complexity and variety of experiences of Indigenous people throughout the globe, it is extremely difficult to come to a comprehensive and clear definition of what it means to be an “Indigenous person” or “Native American” [6] - [11] . For a review of perspectives on defining “Indigenous” and for examples of definitions used by various stakeholders, see [6], [8]. In the context of this document, we felt it was important to articulate the conceptualization of “Indigenous” that guided this project.

When we use the terms “Native American” or “Indigenous” we are referring to those who:

- Have been claimed by a tribe or nation through means of enrollment, lineage, or adoption.*
- Foster and maintain a connection to their community.

Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are included in the definition of “Native,” as are those of Afro-Indigenous lineage. Natives in Alaska, as defined under the

Alaska Native Corporations [11] are also included. The terms “Native American” and “Indigenous” to the United States will be used interchangeably throughout this document.

*While our research was guided by these criteria, we would also like to acknowledge those who are not formally claimed by a tribe or nation as a result of colonial or discriminatory practices [12]. We use the term “claimed” instead of “enrolled” as an acknowledgement of the controversial nature of blood quantum and the colonial rules of enrollment.

TERMINOLOGY

“PRETENDIANS AND IDENTITY VERIFICATION”

It is especially important to establish a definition of “Indigenous” in order to address the issues of Pretendians. A “pretendian” is a person who falsely claims Indigenous identity to gain opportunity, work, and by doing so, actively harms Native communities. One of the creators interviewed for this report further articulated the harm that these disingenuous claims can cause:

“Pretendians take up a lot of space, opportunities and funding meant for American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Kānaka Maoli, speak for peoples they have no connection to, sow distrust among our communities, uplift other Pretendians, and push us out from spaces meant for us...They perpetuate colonization, this time of identity.” An Atlantic article [13] referred to Pretendianism and other Identity Hoaxers as acting out a kind of “Cultural Munchausen’s Syndrome.”

Pretendians claims often go unquestioned because decision makers (in the case of entertainment: executives, showrunners and casting and HR departments) don’t know the questions to ask or are too afraid to ask them. Verifying one’s heritage and community ties is expected in Native communities, and is the modus operandi of living and being in Native spaces. For example, if I go to a powwow – say, North American Indian Days (NAID) on my home reservation – I would first be asked, “What is your name?” This would be followed by, “Who are your folks?” In my case, I would also add where on the reservation my family’s roots are, as the Blackfeet Reservation is large and grouped into different communities. My answer would be:

“My name is Maya Rose Dittloff. My family is the Belcourts and the Bakers. We’re from Starr School.”

Non-Natives serving in hiring roles have a responsibility, as decision-makers, to ensure that further harm from pretendians is not perpetuated. In instances where specific information is not included in a creator’s bio and immediately clear, two simple questions can be asked to help gain an understanding of someone’s Native background:

What community claims you?
How has your heritage and upbringing influenced and impacted your work?

Both questions should be able to be answered by folks that are enrolled, as well as descendants. Not everyone is enrolled (for a multiplicity of reasons), and thus, not being enrolled does not immediately negate someone’s claims to Indigenous heritage. It is important that the first question be active, and reciprocal. Being a member of a community means contribution, and participation. In addition, as an active question, the question thwarts pretendians who have distant claims to Indigenous ancestry and no current ties to the community.

It is important to know that “Pretendians” may go so far as to dress “more Native” in appearance and appear in daily life in “brown face.” They can purposefully obfuscate their lack of claims when you aren’t prepared to ask the right questions. However, the harm “pretendians” pose is real. A comparison in the social zeitgeist is the recent memory of Rachel Dolezal, a woman who pretended to be Black in order to take advantage of opportunities in academics. There are many ways to be Native, and anyone should be able to be held accountable

to the communities that they claim a background in. And while Native Americans are the only marginalized group subject to enrollment through blood quantum (i.e., what percentage of your “blood” is Indigenous) blood quantum is in of itself a colonial measure of Indigeneity and was designed to erase Native communities through fractions and math with each generation (for more, see [14]).

TERMINOLOGY

“INDIGENOUS FILMMAKING” IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UNITED STATES

Similar to the issue of defining the term “Indigenous,” there is little consensus over what is considered an “Indigenous Film” or who is considered an “Indigenous Filmmaker.” Stakeholders in Indigenous filmmaking, such as filmmakers, organizations, and scholars, have varying perspectives on what constitutes an “Indigenous Film.” Some definitions are broader than others. For example, Knopf [2, p.30] recognizes texts that are “written, directed, or produced by an Indigenous person” as Indigenous texts whereas organizations such as Telefilm Canada [15] and ImagiNATIVE [16] have developed more concrete definitions.

Telefilm Canada uses the following criteria:

a) At least 51% of the project’s copyright is held by a production company whose majority shareholder is Indigenous.

b) Two of the three key members of the creative team (producer, director or screenwriter) are Indigenous.

Whereas, ImagiNATIVE uses the following criteria:

- The Director must be Indigenous;

- Also, either the Writer or key Producer (or both) must be Indigenous;

- The imagineNATIVE Artistic Director may consider applicants with joint creative positions (co-Director, co-Writer, co-Producer) with additional requirements.

For the purposes of this document, an “Indigenous project” will be defined as a feature, documentary, short film, advertisement or project in which at least one Indigenous person guides the project in an above the line capacity (i.e., writer, director, producer). Please recognize this is the minimum requirement, and the burden of representation should never fall on a single individual nor project.



Image provided by
Maya Rose Dittloff

SECTION ONE

A FRAUGHT
HISTORY

A FRAUGHT HISTORY

Historical context is crucial to the project of change-making. There is a critical lack of Indigenous history taught in American schools; a fact which is abundantly apparent both from personal experience as an Indigenous person operating in the industry, and in those of other Native professionals. “I’ve had friends who live in Los Angeles, who went to college and are fairly woke, ask me if I was born in a teepee,” related creator Joey Clift, in an interview conducted in association with this report. “They’re not trying to be offensive; they just don’t know.” A lack of early education unfortunately results in a workforce of individuals who often have little to no pre-existing awareness of the experiences of their peers from Native backgrounds.

All too often, the burden of education about marginalized communities falls upon members of the community in question. Documents such as this report and others are intended to restructure this dynamic, encouraging conscientious members of the entertainment industry to take on the responsibility of gaining a baseline understanding of marginalized experience.

The following is a brief overview of Indigenous representation in the entertainment industry from the 20th century onward.

Because this section has been intended as a brief introduction, some vital topics of discussion have not been given the depth of historical context that they deserve (including, most notably, a more thorough look at the representation of Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian peoples both behind and in front of the camera during this timeframe). With this in mind, readers are highly encouraged to use this information as a springboard into further knowledge.





VAUDEVILLE

Vaudeville, a theatrical show format generally composed of a variety of acts set to music, began in France but soon became popular in the United States. These variety shows mark the origins of the misrepresentation of Native Americans in entertainment [17], [18].



Esther Louise Deere

Many performers at the time claimed to be direct descendants of Pocahontas; an example of this being Princess Dorothy Deer Horn [18]. She based her acts around her claimed identity as a Native American, alternating between “Indian interpretative dances” (which had no basis in any tribe or culture) and modern dances.

Other notable names include Esther Louise Georgette Deer, who performed alongside the Ziegfeld Follies [19]. Vaudeville captured the imagination of Americans nationwide and continued to influence a variety of traveling shows. Wild West Shows would continue this legacy of misrepresentation.

WILD WEST SHOWS

Touring across the United States and Europe, Wild West Shows were, “an exhibition illustrating scenes and events characteristic of the American Far West frontier [20 p. 77].” These shows often featured re-enactments of Native American ceremonies and reenactments of famous battles [20]. Wild West Shows skyrocketed in popularity when Buffalo Bill Cody began to work with Nate Salsbury and Dr. William Carver in 1884 and continued to rise in popularity as he performed over the next decade [21]. These shows began and solidified the idea of what an American Indian looked like for American and European audiences. Buffalo Bill Cody (amongst others) provided a dip into a life of adventure and danger, but remained entirely staged and imagined. It is important to note that the narratives common in Wild

West shows perpetuated violence against Native peoples by consistently reinforcing the stereotype of Native Americans as violent savages, while portraying white Americans as heroes, who stood for the values of social progress and modernity [22]. At the time of the popularity of Wild West Shows, military massacres and wars against tribes were only decades past - and most audience members only knew of Natives in terms of noble or untamed “savages.” Wild West Shows operated in a mode of historical dramatization, and presented a form of modern primitivism that continues to haunt Natives today.

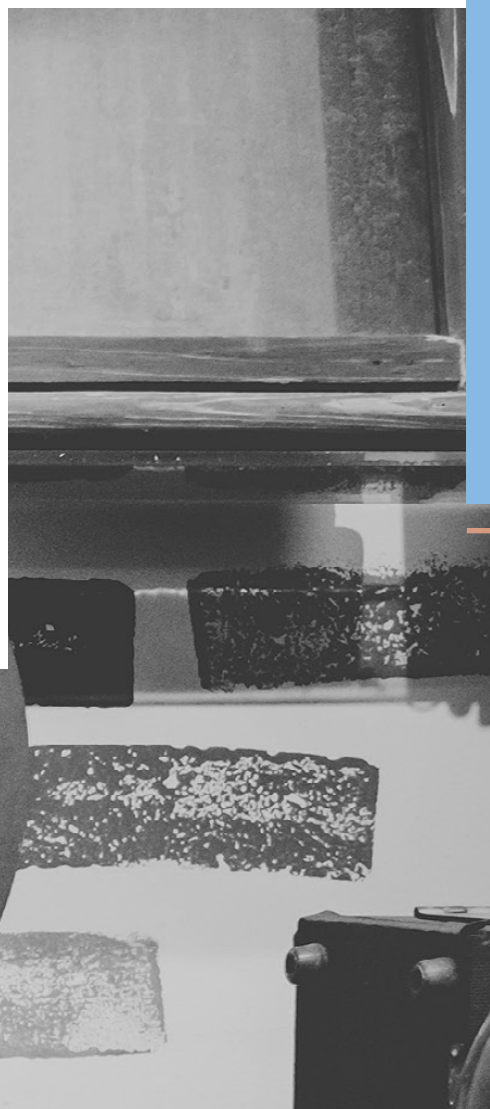
As a means of survival, many Native roles were actually played by real Natives in their own traditional regalia. Chief Joseph and Geronimo even joined Buffalo Bill for some time as he toured across the country [20]. Why? As historian Louis Warren [23] writes, “because they were innovative, courageous men and women searching for a means of economic and cultural survival, and the show offered better hope for that than just about any other paying job (p. 359).” Involvement in Wild West Shows should not be taken as consent to this misrepresentation, but rather as a testament to Native resilience.



SILENT FILMS



Thomas Edison was hooked on the cultural zeitgeist of the Wild West Shows. While concurrently developing the chemical emulsions and process of developing film, he filmed Native people and sold these one reels as reality [1]. Edison's first films were released in the late 19th century. Within silent films, Native people were subject to the lens and perspective of the white viewer, both behind the camera and in the audience.



Old names like Buffalo Bill started their own production companies [1]. Buffalo Bill himself worked alongside the US government to promote enlistment and to portray the “excellent” treatment that Indians were receiving from the US government [1]. These films can be considered propaganda depicting a solved “Indian problem” [1].



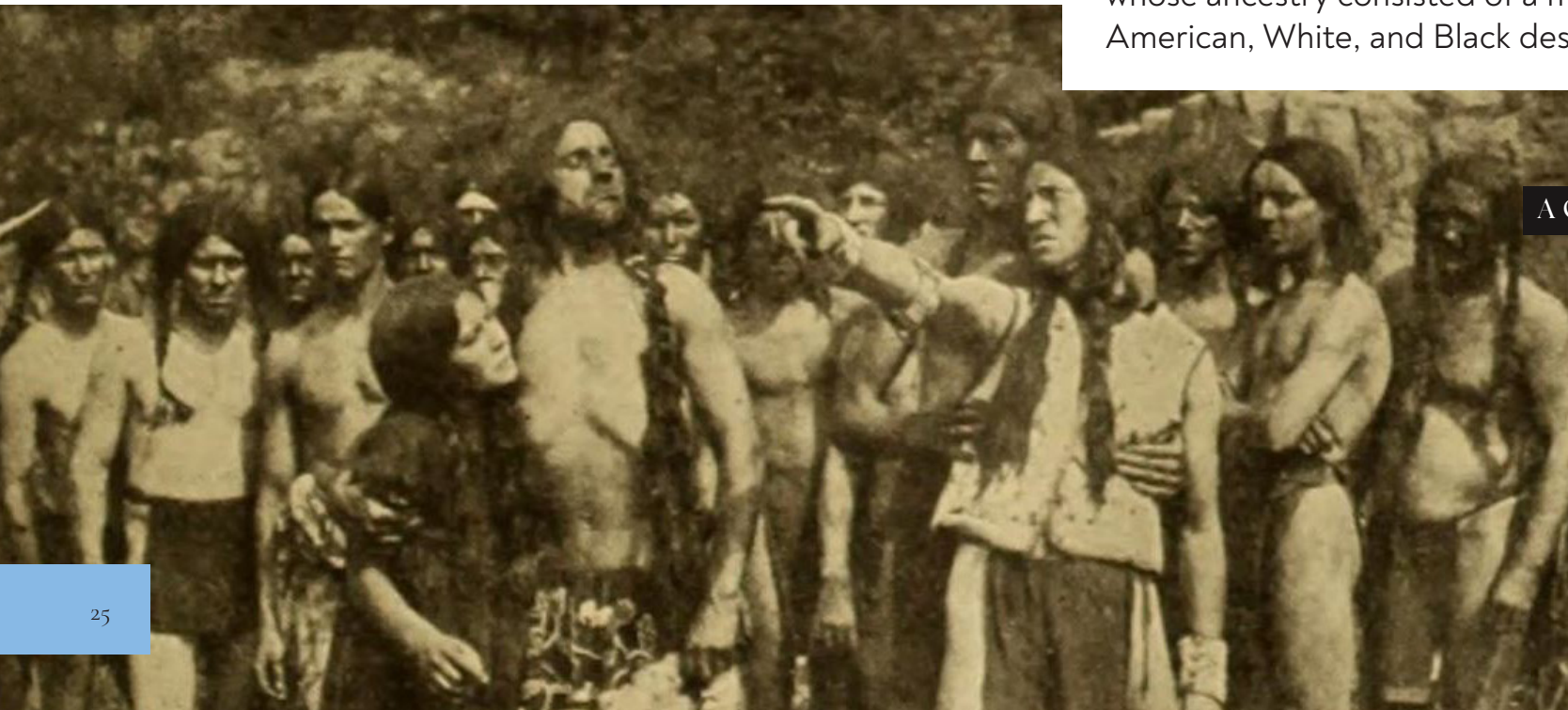
To promote “realism,” Buffalo Bill did include Native actors, but often also forced them to relive past trauma. When directing Lakota women to sing a traditional song to honor the dead at Wounded Knee, for example, he actually forced the women to shoot the sequence right over the place of Lakota graves.

D.W. Griffiths continued this legacy of misrepresentation, depicting Native men as the “Mystical Other” or dangerous savages such as in the films *A Pueblo Legend* (1912), *Massacre* (1912) and *The Battle of Elderbush Gulch* (1913). Content of the time included Native men as keen on kidnapping white babies, assaulting white women, and killing white men. Themes of exoticism, mysticism, and violence continue to haunt the representation of Natives on screen. Griffith's films were particularly effective in creating harmful narratives and images of Native Americans because of his characteristic use of realism, intercut shots, and framing techniques [24].

EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE: INDIGENOUS CREATORS IN EARLY FILM

Throughout the 20th century, prior to 1990, there were very few prominent Native creators active within the industry, and projects where Indigenous creators held creative control were rare. However, filmmakers James Young Deer and Edwine Carewe [4], both active in the early 20th century's film industry, were able to carve out their own careers.

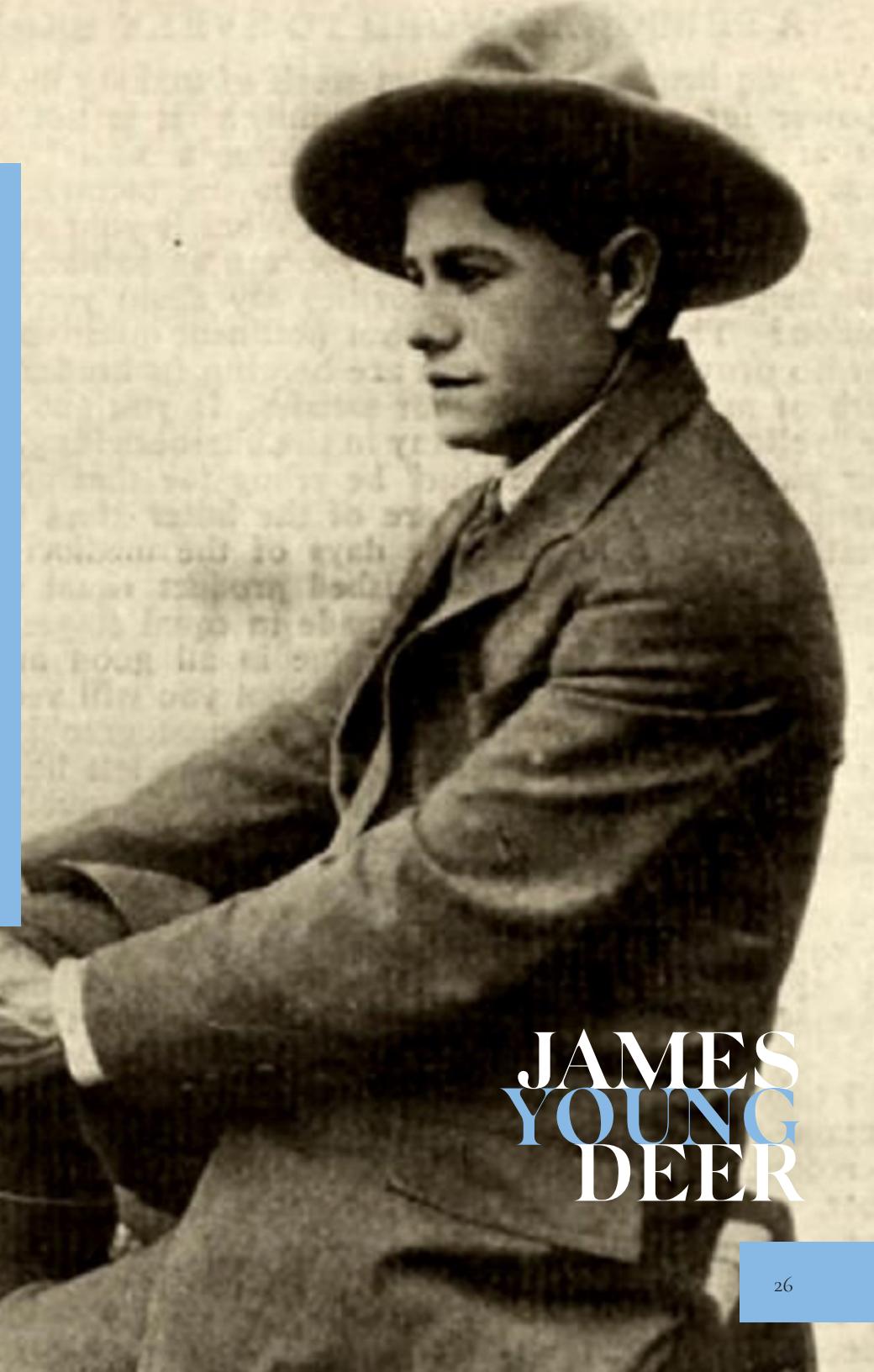
James Young Deer was believed to be a descendant of the Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) and was a director, producer, screenwriter, and actor in the early 20th century, working during the silent film era [1],[4],[25]. It is important to note, however, that some argue that James Young Deer's true identity was James Young Johnson, a man believed to be a member of a community known previously as "The Moors of Delaware" or "Delaware's Forgotten Folk," whose ancestry consisted of a mixture of Native American, White, and Black descendants [26].



A Cheyenne Brave, 1910

James Young Deer, Public Domain

He began his film career acting in films such as D. W. Griffith's *The Mended Lute* (1909) and Vitagraph's *Red Wing's Gratitude* (1909). He was married to Lillian St. Cyr (Princess Red Wing), who was a widely popular Ho-Chunk actress known for her role in Cecil B. DeMille's *The Squaw Man* and many other silent films in the early 20th century [4]. They often worked as a team, seeking to remain relevant while resisting narratives of White dominance by creating films that showed Native men falling in love with White women or Native men as heroes [22], [27]. His most popular works are one-reel western films including *An Indian's Bride* (1909), *White Fawn's Devotion* (1910), and *Young Deer's Return* (1910), among others [1], [4]. However, the autonomy that James Young Deer was able to possess in the Hollywood landscape was short-lived. As the studio system for filmmaking began to take off in the mid 1910's, James Young Deer disappeared from Hollywood [22].



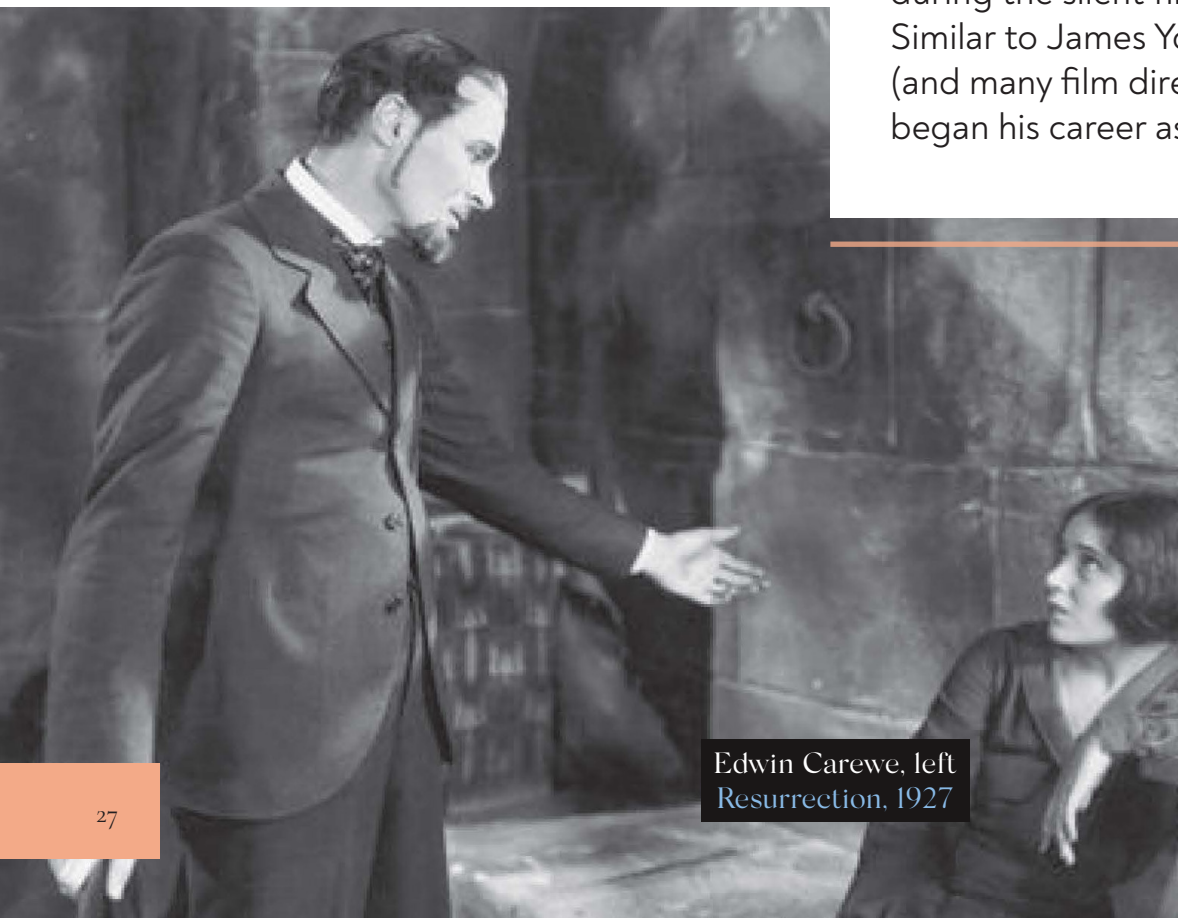
JAMES
YOUNG
DEER



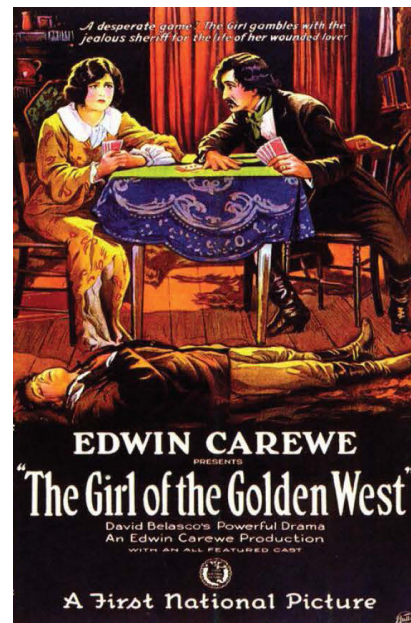
James Young Deer,
front right.
Photograph: Kevin
Brownlow Collection

EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE: INDIGENOUS CREATORS IN EARLY FILM

Edwin Carewe was a Chickasaw director, producer, screenwriter, and actor working during the silent film era. Similar to James Young Deer (and many film directors), he began his career as an actor.



Edwin Carewe, left
Resurrection, 1927

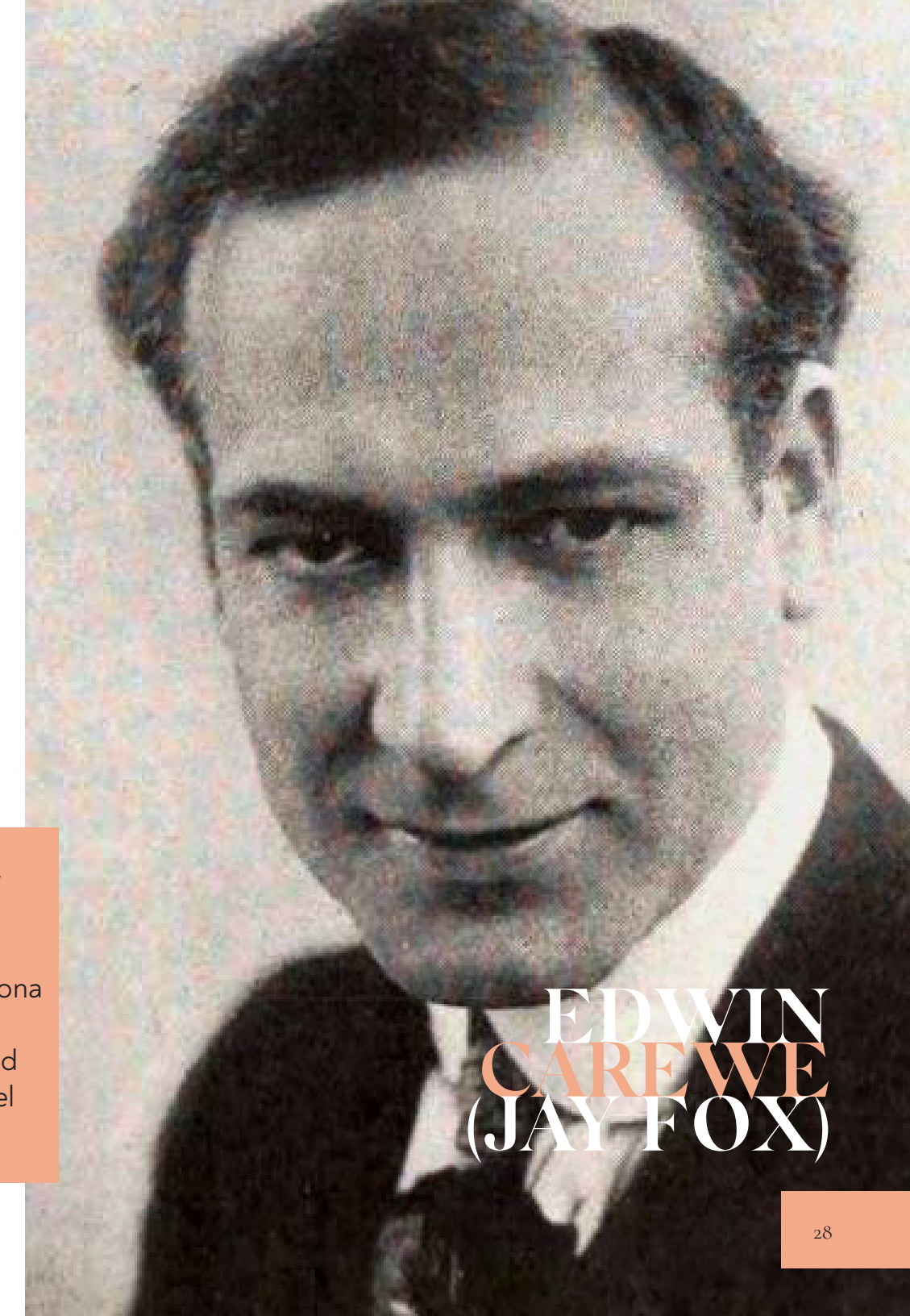


The Girl of the Golden West, 1923



Ramona, 1928

He was involved in the creation of over 60 works including: Rio Grande (1920), The Girl of the Golden West (1923), Resurrection (1927 and 1931), and Ramona (1928) [4], [5]. His peak popularity was during the 1920's and has been credited for making Mexican actress Dolores Del Rio a Hollywood star [5].



EDWIN
CAREWE
(JAY FOX)

THE WESTERN

What is to be said about the proliferation of the Western genre in both film and television in the late 1940s and 50s? Audiences were struck nationwide by notable stars such as John Wayne, Burt Lancaster, and the films of John Ford.

Similar to the silent era, Native actors were replaced by more popular white stars, and the practice of Red Face was commonplace between both women and men (see [4] for a detailed explanation and examples of “redfacing”). Series like Gunsmoke idealized a romanticized version of the west and the depiction of Native Americans remained steadfastly based in stereotype and relegated to the past. These stereotypes, common in Westerns, served a purpose as World War II began: revitalizing and strengthening national identity [5]. The threat of the “other” in the form of an “Indian” was a familiar narrative that took little cognitive effort to apply to the threats of the “other” overseas [1].

Assimilation and miscegenation narratives in Westerns grew in popularity during the 50s and 60s as a response to changes in support for racial integration and the termination era, in which various communities were forced to “relocate” to urban areas [1]. Within these films, Native American women were often portrayed as “sexualized maidens” on the outskirts of white society, who posed a threat to men [28].

Hondo, 1953



NEW HOLLYWOOD TO PRESENT DAY

With a changing social consciousness both in the United States and on screen, the 1970s brought a time to rethink both the Western genre as well as Native representation. During this time, the stereotypes of Native Americans as bloodthirsty savages were abandoned for a return to stereotypes of Native mysticism, spirituality, and primitiveness. In reaction to the Vietnam war and the American public's dissatisfaction with political decision-making, these films flipped the typical Western narrative by portraying Native American culture as "civilized" and White society as "dangerous."

They symbolized a "return to the wild" and a "return to nature" [28]. Famously, at the 45th Academy Awards in 1973, Sacheen Little Feather denied the award for Best Actor on behalf of Marlon Brando [5]. Other socially conscious stars of the time helped donate time and money to the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the band Creedence Clearwater Revival donated the money for a boat to help those occupying the island of Alcatraz.



Sacheen Little Feather
at the 45th Academy Awards



In the 1990s, as a reaction to the end of the Cold War, the portrayals of Native Americans shared similar revisionist trajectories as the 1970s. The year 1992 marked 500 years since Columbus was believed to have "discovered" the Americas. This anniversary caused the nation to reflect on its past and its role in colonization [28]. As the nation struggled to reconcile its national identity, role in colonialism, and racial tensions, it revitalized the western aesthetic but with a much more sympathetic view towards Native Americans.



NEW HOLLYWOOD TO PRESENT DAY

Films of this decade reckoned with the nation's past ills through films that portrayed Native American life in the wilderness as desirable, Native Americans as "friends," or Native Americans as victims of colonialism and imperialism. While some of these films, such as *Dances with Wolves*, received critical acclaim for their story of life in Native American communities, they still received criticism for portraying Native American life in an overly glorified and unrealistic manner, similar to the revisionist films of the 1970s [5].

The 1990s also birthed the beginning of the Native helmed (written and directed) ultra low budget feature. Films such as *Smoke Signals* began instant cult classics in Native communities, resonating with Native audiences as a film of their own. It is of important note that *Smoke Signals* is a comedy -- featuring Natives laughing and smiling on screen, and cracking jokes. Humor is integral to Native communities, and the film succeeded in capturing aspects of real life experience seldom shown in previous media.



Smoke Signals, 1998

In recent years, there has been a blossoming of Native content and creators, due in part to the work of Indigenous activists advocating for self-representation, formation of Indigenous media organizations, increased public funding and support, and the increased accessibility of digital cameras [29] - [31]. However, Indigenous Cinema still struggles to find the necessary funding and distribution, and the pursuit of equitable and authentic representation of Indigenous peoples in the US media industries continues to this day [32].



Dances With Wolves, 1990

SECTION TWO

A PRESENT
DAY STATE OF
AFFAIRS



BEHIND THE LENS. FILM & TV

As of the 2021 United States Census report, Native populations comprise 2.9% of the United States population [33]. However, analysis of existing industry statistics, including key industry guild populations, indicates significantly lower percentages of Native representation. According to the DGA, the percentage of Native American identifying “director members” is .2% [34]. For all DGA members, the percentage stands only slightly above at .3%. Native American representation in the Motion Pictures Editors Guild is equally concerning, as Native Americans represent only .3% of members [34]. Considering these numbers, the presence of Native American directors and editors operating at a union-level is abysmal. While the American Society of Cinematographers has not released data on Native American representation specifically, they have provided data that indicates a severe underrepresentation of racial minorities and women within their membership, with 5% Latino, 3% Asian, 2% Black, and 4.6% women members [35].

These microcosms serve to shed light on the extent to which Indigenous creators may be disproportionately underrepresented in the film, television, and media production industries at large. In UCLA’s 2022 Hollywood Diversity Report [36], an analysis of 200 theatrical and all major streaming, English-language film releases in 2021, ranked by global box office, Native directors consisted of 0.8% of all surveyed feature film directors (up from 0% of films released in 2019 and 2020) [37], [38]. This shockingly small number is a testament to the true barriers facing Native communities.

According to the DGA, the percentage of Native American identifying “director members” is .2% [34].

Native Americans represent only .3% of members in the Motion Pictures Editors Guild [34].



From an intersectional [39] perspective, it is important to point out that marginalization in Hollywood, as demonstrated from the statistics above, affects both marginalized racial groups and women. While research that specifically compares the representation of Native American men and women behind the lens is lacking, broader studies conducted to analyze disparity throughout the industry have shown clear patterns of underrepresentation along gender lines.

Image provided by
Maya Rose Dittloff

BEHIND THE LENS. FILM & TV

For example, the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative's 2020 report, "Inclusion in the Director's Chair: Analysis of Director Gender & Race/Ethnicity Across 1,300 Top Films from 2007 to 2019," found that only 4.8% of 1300 films from 2007-2019 were directed by women. Even more shockingly, underrepresented (non-White) women directed only 1% [40]. As Native American women exist at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities, they may experience the compounding effects of interwoven identity-specific barriers to success in film and advertising industries.

There may also be a historical explanation for why Native American women face additional barriers to entering the film and advertising industries, related to the spread of Christian cultural influence and its impact on traditional Indigenous gender dynamics. Historically, many Native societies and communities were, and continue to be, matriarchal [41]. There were defined gender roles (and often a role for the modern equivalent of Two Spirit/Transgender individuals) but the work of women was important, and for the most part, considered equal [41].

Euro-American influence began to shift these gender dynamics towards patriarchy, largely due to the influence of Christian missionaries who considered men to be the leaders of the home and family [41]. Traditionally, gender parity makes sense and follows a historical precedent. In Canada, there has been a concerted effort on behalf of Telefilm Canada to promote gender equity [15]. Perhaps, in the future, these Canadian efforts could be emulated within the United States to further promote gender equity in Native American representation.

Native directors consisted of 0.8% of all surveyed feature film directors in UCLA's 2022 Hollywood Diversity Report [36].

A QUICK NOTE ON THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY

Before addressing Indigenous representation behind the lens within the advertising space, it is important to acknowledge that common stereotypes of Native Americans in performance and film mentioned in our historical overview were carried over to other forms of media, such as advertising. Many brands have used (and some continue to use) depictions of Native Americans to sell products. This is a form of “commodity racism,” in which racial stereotypes, such as “children of the forest,” “Indian savage,” and “Indian maiden” are used to evoke symbolic meanings that may be attractive to consumers. For example, Merskin [42] examines the case of American Spirit Cigarettes, which use Native American imagery to communicate to consumers that their product is “pure,” “natural,” and “organic.” Merskin argues for representation ethics in advertising, which can be fostered by including more Native Americans in the process of advertisement creation, dissemination, and consumption.

An analysis of the small amount of available data suggests a notable void of Native American creators operating in the advertising space. Of the 324 certified diverse marketing/advertising suppliers compiled by the Association of National Advertisers, only one supplier is of Native American heritage [43]. Similarly, the 4A’s list of 359 minority-owned media companies only includes three Indigenous owned companies [44]. There is a single director that has gone through the Commercial Directors Diversity Program (Christopher Cegielski Nataani).



While there are few examples of Native American creators working primarily and consistently on commercial campaigns intended for broadcast advertising, FREE THE WORK’s database includes 31 creator profiles who have indicated “Commercial” experience, are based within the United States, and who have self-identified as “Indigenous/ Native American”*.

* Please note: FREE THE WORK believes fundamentally in identity self-determination, and as such, relies on its users to self-identify all profile fields, including demographics. All user-provided profile information is subject to the individual’s discretion, and claims made within user profiles are not verified and cannot be guaranteed by FREE THE WORK as an organization. We wish to underscore the importance of verifying claims of Native/Indigenous identity within hiring contexts, as discussed throughout this report, and remind readers of the harm caused by unsubstantiated identity claims.

A QUICK NOTE ON THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY

The following Indigenous-owned companies have been identified as providing production services within a marketing context within the United States. While they do create content that extends thematically beyond Indigenous representation, all have created work that centers Indigenous issues and perspectives.

- Buffalo Nickel Creative
- Indigene Studios
- Olonā Media

Based on the underwhelming evidence of Native representation in the advertising space, it may be worthwhile to examine some contributing factors. When Native creators are able to go to film school, there is often little focus on what it means to work in commercials, use persuasive messaging strategies, or advertising techniques [45]. In addition, with marketing operating budgets that make up an average of 11.3% of a firm's total budget and few opportunities for creative freedom, it can be difficult to raise diverse voices in the commercial space [46], [47]. In 2020, a report found that Chief Marketing positions are disproportionately filled by Whites who fill 88% of CMO positions even though they only make up 61.6% of the United States population [48], [33]. Natives

are considered a “niche” demographic (Native populations comprise 2.9% of the United States population); there is often no perceived need nor want to sculpt Native talent [33]. Even among organizations that research diversity in advertising and share the goal to increase Native American representation in advertising, such as the Association of National Advertisers and Alliance for Inclusive and Multicultural Marketing [48], data on Native American representation specifically is rare. For example, in research reports that measure racial and cultural diversity, Native Americans are often grouped in the “Other” category [48], [49].

This lack of data presents two significant problems:

- There is little empirical support available to communicate the scope of the issue and to justify initiatives to increase Native American representation in advertising and other media spaces.
- It makes it nearly impossible to track progress toward diversity goals, since there are no baseline measurements to use as benchmarks.

It is undeniable that there is money and opportunity in advertising. The total United States digital advertising and marketing market is worth approximately 153 billion dollars and is projected to continue to grow to approximately 255 billion over the next five years [50].

Based on the scarcity of information to refer to, and the advertising industry's immense potential as a space for creator development, it would be hard to deny that the advertising industry is overdue for major growth and improvement in the inclusion of Indigenous talent, on-screen representation, and statistical tracking of these shifts.

RACIST DIESEL AD WITH NATIVE AMERICAN IMAGE RESURFACES, SPARKING AGENCY APOLOGY

Out-of-home ad resurfaced by a social media user was part of a 2010 Cannes Grand Prix-winning campaign

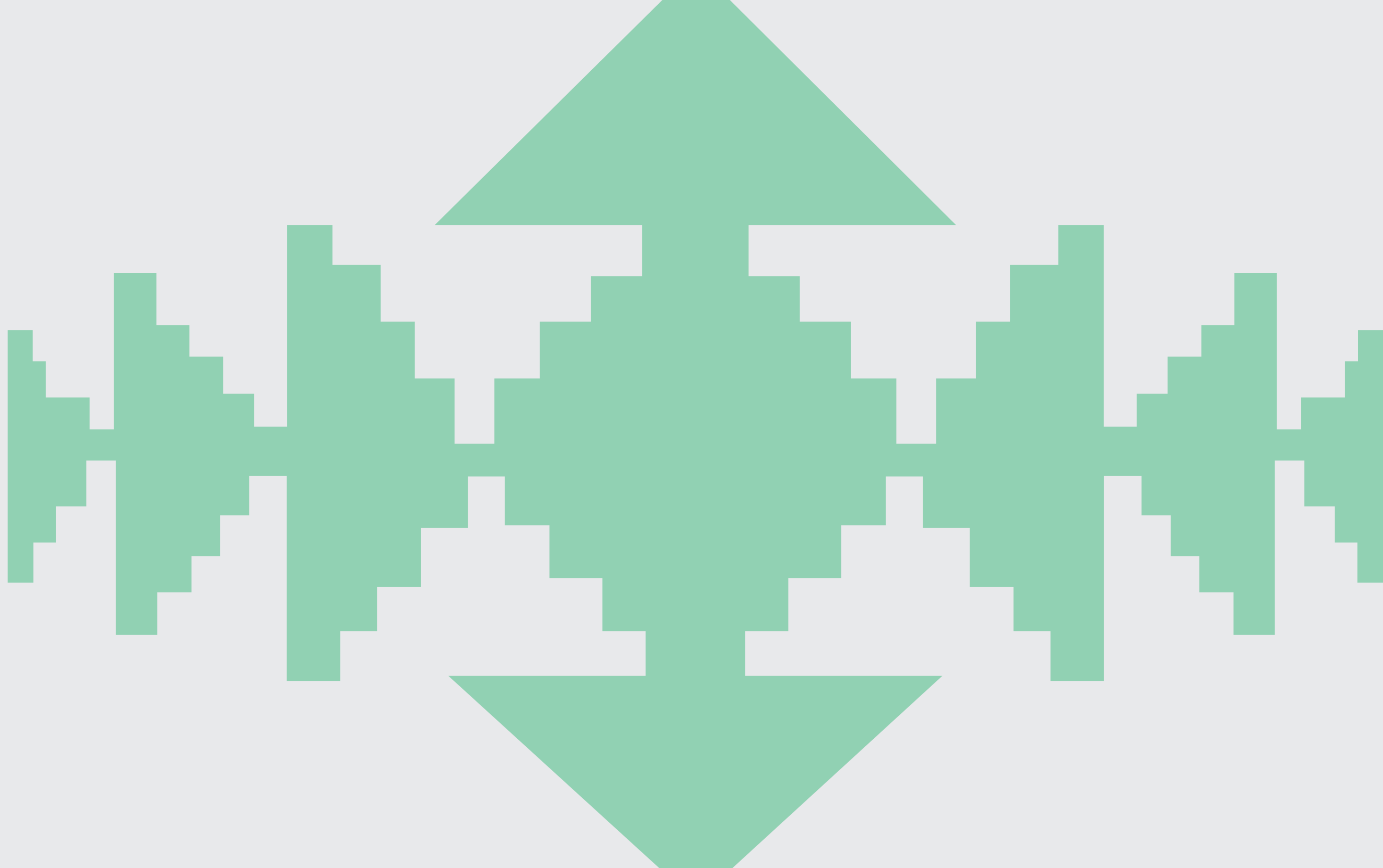
By Tony Hao, Published on July 20, 2022.



Credits: Diesel

SECTION THREE

A BRIGHTER
FUTURE





BEACONS OF HOPE

So now that we've become familiar with some key historical context and have a sense of today's industry landscape, what does the future of Indigenous filmmaking hold? Considering the barriers to entry for Native filmmakers, a storied history of exploitation, as well as a continued lack of on screen visibility in the year 2021 for Native Americans, how can we remain positive for the outlook of Indigenous representation?

Fortunately, there have been undeniable steps in the past five years made by Native Americans [51]: despite systemic barriers, a select few have been able to build careers as successful filmmakers, with new and exciting projects on air and in development. Such projects are chronicled in the yearly "Indigenous List" by the Black List and its partners, The Sundance Institute and Illuminative [52]. The success of these visionaries is lighting a beacon of possibility for future generations of Indigenous talent.

To accompany this report, the following lists have been compiled and hosted on FREE THE WORK's website, to be supplemented by submissions moving forward on an ongoing basis:

- In The Know: Film & TV Content compiles a snapshot of projects released since 1990 and/or currently underway in the industry as of 2022.
- In The Know: Creators & Filmmakers provides a look at Native creators active in the entertainment industry from 1990 to the present day.
- In The Know: Entertainment Landscape surveys some of the organizations that contribute to the industry ecosystem for Indigenous creative voices.

While fully comprehensive directories of content and creators would be extremely difficult to guarantee, we aim for these to serve as an ever-growing resource for those interested in becoming acquainted with the current state of Indigenous-led entertainment content. Engaged readers are encouraged to use these directories alongside the vital resources produced by fellow organizations and individuals, developing their own personal toolkits for liberation.



Joey Clift,
pictured

SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

Even as we celebrate the recent strides made by landmark Indigenous creators, it is important to note that such success stories are an exception, as evidenced by a look at the limited statistics available. A recent letter by the WGA Native American & Indigenous Writers' Committee [53] provides a glimpse into the proliferation of stereotypes and outright cultural erasure that Indigenous creators encounter to this day, seen from development to production. Native creators entering the industry are still confronted by a difficult road ahead, impacted by a unique set of potential barriers.

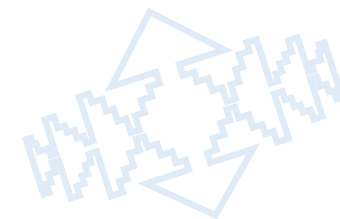
To provide a more robust textual understanding of the experience of Native creators currently operating in the industry, FREE THE WORK's team spoke with a group of emerging filmmakers of Indigenous descent (Bryson Chun, Charley Flyte, Ciara Lacy, Erica Tremblay, and Joey Clift). In these conversations, many expanded upon common experiences and shed light on shared issues.

Monetary considerations were discussed by multiple creators, although importantly, Charley Flyte (Lakota/Mohawk) noted that an understanding of American Indian, Alaskan Native and Kānaka Maoli as "universally poverty stricken" can be based on stereotypical assumptions. "I

think we often look at short films as a great foundational learning tool for burgeoning filmmakers," said filmmaker Bryson Chun, "and while you can certainly make zero-budget short films, that practice separates you from industry. You'll probably be working with non-professional actors and crews and utilizing sub-par or amateur equipment." Ciara Lacy, a Native Hawaiian, discussed the pressure of the "colonial mindset" to move to the continental United States at the start of her career: "get your chops with the credibility from New York or LA and come back home." This pressure could potentially serve as a barrier to entry for other aspiring Native filmmakers without the means to leave their home environments.

For Erica Tremblay, money factored into a nuanced set of barriers in her early career - living with a chronic health condition meant making choices that prioritized access to health insurance. "I never didn't have a dream to be a filmmaker, but I didn't realize that these [access to health insurance and a financial safety net] were points of privilege. I couldn't take unpaid internships, and I didn't have access to health care outside of myself." While similar financial considerations exist for emerging filmmakers across lines of identity ("Millennials as a whole have less wealth and opportunity than prior generations," Flyte mentioned, "and the film industry is definitely easier to get into if one has family money that can provide a launchpad,"), these considerations still serve as a contributing factor within a matrix of identity-specific barriers.

Multiple creators mentioned a shift in the industry that they felt after the 2016 Standing Rock #NODAPL protests gained national attention [54] - [56]. "Before I moved to Los Angeles," Flyte expressed, "I experienced a marked lack of opportunities and programs to foster emerging talent for American Indian, Alaskan Native and Kānaka Maoli. It seemed like prior to 2016 (Standing Rock), Indigenous people were still seen as mostly extinct to the wider population." As Clift (Cowlitz) explained, "A lot of writing opportunities that I got before 2015/2016 felt like they were kind of token opportunities; like, oh, it's November, so we did a meeting with a bunch of Native writers, just so we can say we did. After Standing Rock, people outside of Native spaces started to pay attention and look at our stories and the importance of highlighting our life experiences."



After Standing Rock, people outside of Native spaces started to pay attention and look at our stories and the importance of highlighting our life experiences.

—Joey Clift

SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

Tokenism still functions as a major barrier, however: “On the one hand,” said Chun, “we’re grateful to be able to work in the industry, but there’s also a tokenization that can happen where your role is just to sit in a room so your bosses can point at you and check a box.” Lacy described a conversation with a former collaborator, another Native Hawaiian, who had previously cautioned her against making work about their people: “If you start doing films about Hawaiians, they’re going to put you in a box, and you won’t be able to do anything else.” Adding to the discussion of tokenism, Tremblay questioned the ethics of lumping the wide variety of different Native experiences under the same umbrella:

“I would like to see a conversation around how we tell these stories, and who should be telling these stories. There are so many Nations and so many different Indigenous experiences that not one person can tell all of them, and shouldn’t tell all of them...what is the responsibility around that?”

“The Native experience is not a monolith,” summed up Clift. “There are over 570 federally recognized tribes in the United States—a ton more at the state level—there’s First Nations folks in Canada, there’s Indigenous tribes across Mexico and South America. All of those tribes have their own cultures, experiences, languages, norms, inside jokes, etc. The culture from one tribe to another can be as different as the culture of the United Kingdom is to Egypt.” “I’m hopeful that we are starting to acknowledge that nuance and detail are beautiful,” Lacy expressed, discussing the ways that her Native Hawaiian identity can sometimes be lumped in with AAPI experiences, while in other contexts grouped alongside experiences of Indigenous folks from the continental US.



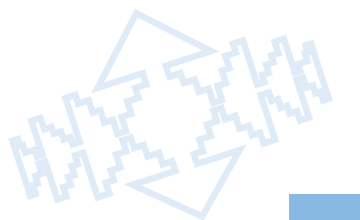
Creators interviewed shared anecdotal accounts of “pretendian” run-ins and the harm these instances cause: one creator discussed meeting someone who had, “heard he was Native through – I’m sure – distant ancestry.com, 23andme means, and, all of a sudden, was taking this huge network diversity showcase opportunity from an actual Native actor who could have benefited from that.” Some discussed the failings of performative allyship and the need, instead, for more accomplices: as Flyte described, “an accomplice is going to approach working with our creators from a place of humility and learning, and is going to stand by our side. An accomplice will center us and our voices, instead of attempting to speak for or over us.” Creators discussed the importance of ground-level Indigenous involvement in Indigenous-centered storytelling (Chun: “For many years Indigenous people were brought in after the fact as consultants to weigh in on something that was more or less going forward with or without their approval; it’s just checking a box to satisfy higher-ups.”); a lack of Native critic voices within industry press publications (Flyte: “Many non-American Indian and Alaskan Native critics may fetishize us or see

us through a racist lens.”); minimized ambitions due to a lack of possibility models early on (Lacy: “Sometimes, somebody just handing you an idea [of what’s possible] can be powerful,”), and the impact of Hollywood’s common focus on historical narratives in favor of contemporary Indigenous stories (Tremblay: “I often have a hard time viewing myself in the context of a modern Native woman... because every single piece of representation that has been provided in my lifetime is locked in this past box”).

“Representation in film and television is virtually non-existent,” said Jennifer Loren, Director of Cherokee Nation Film Office and Original Content, and multiple Emmy-award winning filmmaker. “When Natives are shown in the media, we are typically depicted as someone who lived a long time ago, or worse, as a harmful stereotype. The truth is that we are still here today. Millions of us. And we’re all different. The term Native or Indigenous is not a monolith of one type of person, but because the average audience isn’t exposed to the different tribes and cultures that make up Natives, they don’t know that.”

There are so many Nations and so many different Indigenous experiences that not one person can tell all of them, and shouldn’t tell all of them...what is the responsibility around that?

— Erica Tremblay





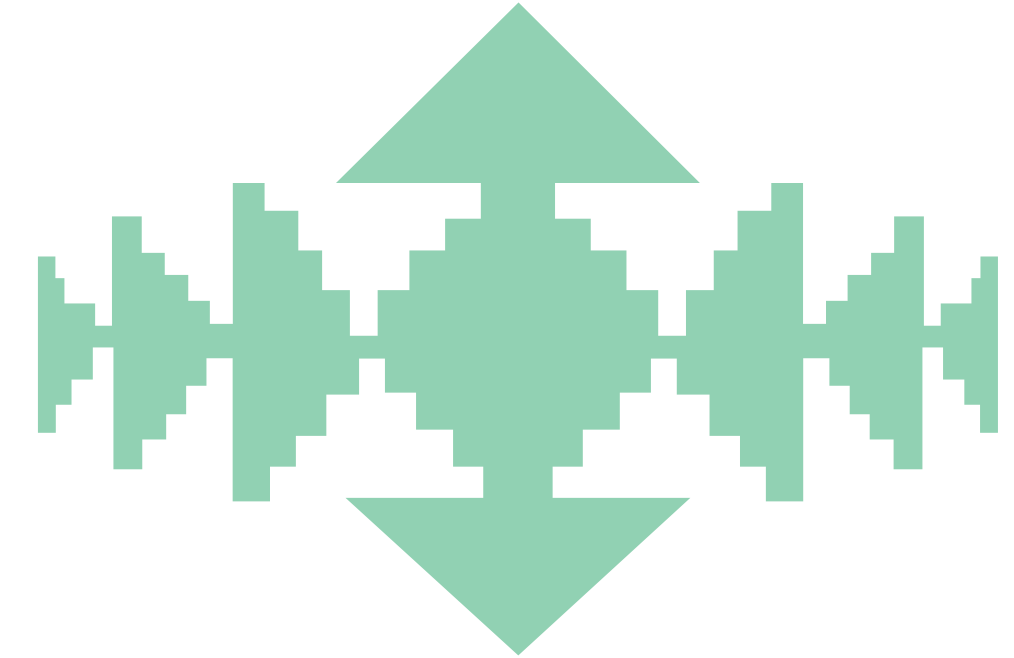
PATHWAYS IN

As Bryson Chun puts it, “the reason why it’s hard to break in for anyone is because it’s easier, safer, more comfortable for people in positions of power to keep working with the people they know.”

When burgeoning filmmakers are provided with opportunities to gain an education or an entry point into the industry, committing to a life in entertainment will be an easier decision. Native talent is underserved by fellowships and national searches for BIPOC talent; this can be attributed to a number of factors, including issues of WiFi access (although access to broadband on Tribal lands has increased over the past decade, Tribal lands still have the lowest broadband deployment rates, when compared to the United States in general, urban areas, and rural areas [57]), but also, notably, through lack of outreach and consideration by large companies. How can we create pathways for Native filmmakers to enter into the film industry? And how can the burgeoning talent that exists today be better supported and uplifted?

To direct interested readers towards the organizations, individuals, and other entities who are currently working tirelessly to amplify Indigenous voices within the film, television, and advertising industries, FREE THE WORK has compiled a living document on their website. The Entertainment Landscape resource compiled to accompany this document is intended to shine a light on those who have actively been on the ground doing the work within this space.

One of the major takeaways from my work on this report is the nonexistent presence of a national funding body in the US. The United States is decades behind in terms of representation for Indigenous people, and this may be partially due to a lack of access to funding options for film. Some such organizations exist in Hawaii– for instance, ‘Ohina Labs, and Pacific Islanders in Communication (which exists in Hawaii but, importantly, services storytelling and distribution across the US and beyond as a Minority Consortia member under the CPB/ PBS universe) – and that is reflected in the number of content exports from Native Hawaiians. (see our Notable Content list to discover some of these works).



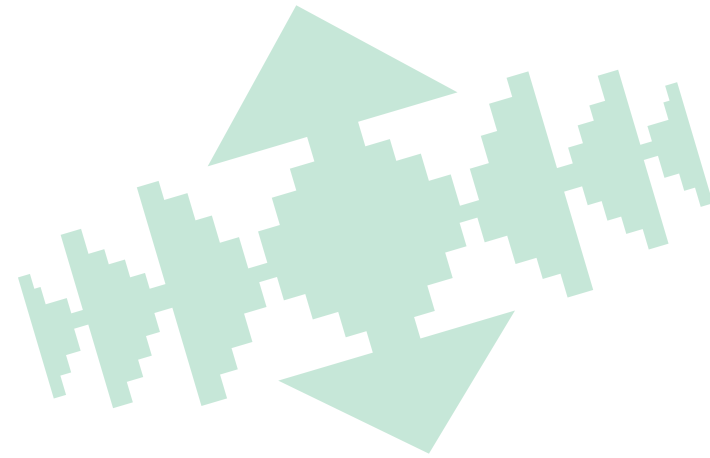
In Canada, there exists the Canadian Media Fund and Telefilm Canada, which has “administered programs on behalf of the Canadian Media Fund (CMF) for the past ten years [58].” Both organizations have specific Indigenous Initiatives to increase inclusion for First Nation peoples in research in development, production, for both narrative and documentary filmmaking. Beyond and in addition to funding dollars, in Canada, the Indigenous Screen Office serves as a nationwide organization to take care of Native filmmakers. Their mission is to “foster and support narrative sovereignty and cultural revitalization by increasing Indigenous storytelling on screens and promoting Indigenous values and participation [59]”. The ISO has the funding to offer training programs, funding for short and long form content, an Indigenous Talent Database, and developed a protocol guide for working in and with Native communities.

PATHWAYS IN

No nationwide equivalent to the Canadian Indigenous Screen Office exists within the United States. However, in the United States, it is important to note that the Cherokee Nation Film Office exists to “increase the presence of Native Americans in every level of the film and television industries, while creating opportunities for economic development and jobs in the Cherokee Nation [60].” The CNFO offers training workshops, a database of creators, and an incentive program for production on Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma.

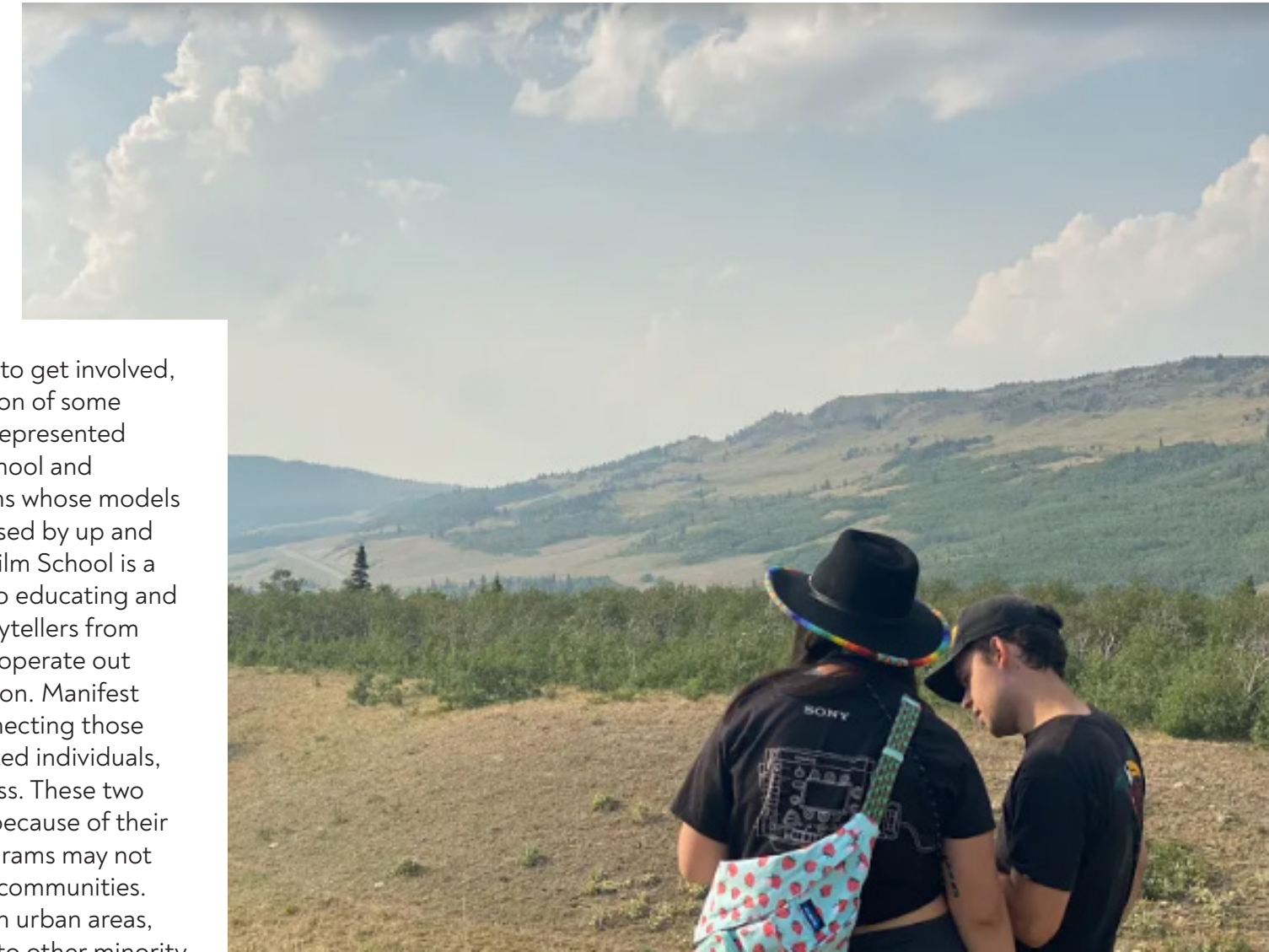
However, with the CNFO’s localized area of service, the need for a body similar to the ISO is still necessary. Entertainment is a demanding field, and at times, an exploitative field -- the importance of a refuge of safety cannot be understated. It is important to remember that Indigenous people not only are subject to the same pitfalls of the system as their non-Native counterparts, but that they also have to learn the non-Native pedagogy, semantics, etiquette and rules of a system built to exclude them.

Australia’s Screen Australia and the New Zealand Film Commission function similarly to Telefilm Canada and the Canadian Media Fund. A case study of note is Taika Waititi’s THOR: RAGNAROK. Taika himself is Maōri, and has long made the visibility of Indigenous people a priority. On the THOR: RAGNAROK set, eight different Maōri “attachments” (interns) were hired for the production [61], [62]. Their wages were paid, and they got to learn on the set of a major motion picture. This level of experience is invaluable to emerging filmmakers, and especially those that may not have access to other modes of film education (i.e. film school).



When brainstorming potential ways to get involved, it can help to begin with consideration of some existing models for fostering underrepresented talent. For example, Ghetto Film School and Manifest Works are two organizations whose models align with some of the needs expressed by up and coming Indigenous talent. Ghetto Film School is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating and building the next community of storytellers from underprivileged communities. They operate out of New York, Los Angeles, and London. Manifest Works is similar, but focuses on connecting those from foster care, formerly incarcerated individuals, and those experiencing homelessness. These two companies do incredible work, but because of their specificity to urban areas, their programs may not necessarily be accessible for Native communities. Only 60% of Native Americans live in urban areas, which is the lowest when compared to other minority groups in the United States [33].

Moving forward, through concerted and targeted efforts to include Indigenous people in consideration for opportunities, the pool of talent will expand and a community will be allowed to flourish.



WHAT'S NEXT? CONCLUSION

Today, Indigenous cinema is forming a rhetoric of how to use the tools of filmmaking to decolonize and Indigenize the screen and how to create substantive social change through storytelling.

As the industry-at-large continues to grapple with questions of diversity and inclusion, an important step will be the installment and promotion of more non-white decision makers in places of power and acting as gatekeepers. During her interview to accompany this report, creator Charley Flyte highlighted a 2022 report from the NAACP, “The Black Executive [63]”. Flyte found this report relevant since, in her words, the report “found that the lack of Black film executives led to the production and distribution of content that was harmful to Black communities...the same could be said for the lack of executives from our communities and the impact of that lack on the further creation of harmful or exploitative stories.” Interventions in representation of this nature, across all levels of the industry, may certainly help Native talent, but these processes take years to build. For Native communities, relationship building can take a lifetime.

To see growth and progress, it’s important to set benchmarks for what wins will look like. “Right now, there’s an almost unwritten expectation of Indigenous creators to tell Indigenous stories,” Bryson Chun expressed. “In a perfect world, there’s no limitation to what Indigenous filmmakers can or should make. Let them make Star Wars or Spider-Man or some weird, eclectic arthouse indie.” Jennifer Loren envisioned a future in which Native individuals no longer hold the burden of representing an entire community with their work: “There are more than 570 tribes in the United States. The 0.6% of people that we see in the media does not adequately represent the incredibly complex and beautiful cultures that are unique to each tribe. It’s unfair to give our Native creators the responsibility of doing so.” Charley Flyte summarized her vision of a future that “includes more execs, creators, writers, and stories of all kinds and genres from American Indian, Alaskan Native and Kānaka Maoli.”



Erica Tremblay expressed a desire for a next chapter of representation that extends beyond portrayals of “model minorities,” or exploitative mining of community trauma. “I just want whatever representation we have to be fully rounded, and to be authentic and true. Sometimes, that might include a Native who went to Harvard Medical School and became a doctor, but it also might include someone who moved to Nebraska after college and became a sex worker. I’m hoping for us to be given the resources to tell those stories... it will be so valuable for everyone to actually truly see themselves represented.” “How do we stay inclusive in that way that still holds people who might not be on the middle of the bell curve?” asked Ciara Lacy, pondering a future of representation that includes more shades and nuance. “How do we still hold them as part of our consideration?”

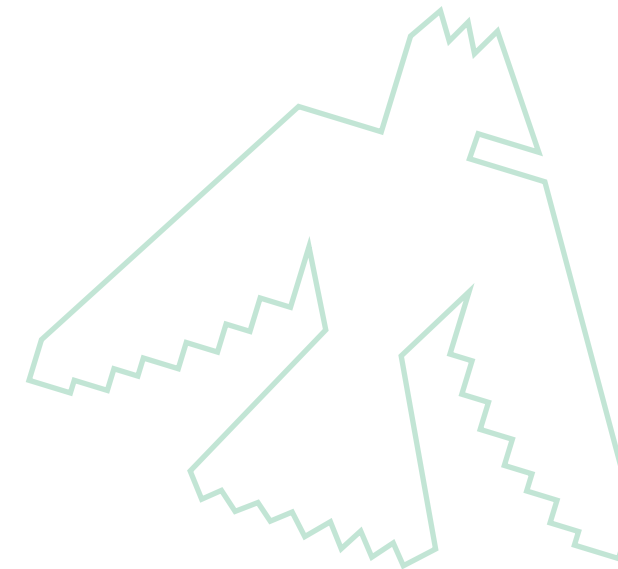
I just want whatever representation we have to be fully rounded, and to be authentic and true.
—Erica Tremblay

“87% of US schools did not teach people about the fact that we’re still here; we exist today,” said Joey Clift. “We’re writers, we’re Lyft drivers, we’re professors, we work at grocery stores, we’re doctors, we exist in contemporary spaces. We’re not just folks that John Wayne shoots in movies from the 50s, you know?”

In summation, not only are Indigenous peoples being underserved in the marketplace, but the narrow scope of content about Indigenous people means that all audiences are being deprived of valuable stories. Further still, Native perspectives are integral to our survival as a species. As we look to the future, 80% of the Earth’s biodiversity is protected by Indigenous people [64] . Humanity will not survive by colonizing Mars: we will live only if we listen to and follow the leadership of Indigenous voices. In 2022 and into the future, as responsible decision makers and arbiters of content (and therefore culture), we must ask: how do the stories we tell shape who we are? Who we are becoming? How do we break from the storied history of colonization in the United States and create a more just, equitable future? No longer can one use the excuse that there are no creators, no writers, no directors -- we exist and we are ready.

RESOURCES

- i. Indigenous Filmmaking at the NFB: <http://films.nfb.ca/pdfs/Backgrounder-NFB-IndigenousFilmmaking.pdf>
- ii. Sundance Institute Indigenous Program: <https://www.sundance.org/programs/indigenous-program>
- iii. LA Skins Fest: <https://laskinsfest.com/about/>
- iv. Native American Media Alliance <https://nama.media>
- v. CAPE New Writers (Pacific Islanders): <https://www.capeusa.org/cnwf>
- vi. Nia Tero <https://www.niatero.org> and [Kin Theory](https://www.kintheory.org) <https://www.kintheory.org>
- vii. Imaginative: ON SCREEN PROTOCOLS & PATHWAYS: A MEDIA PRODUCTION GUIDE TO WORKING WITH FIRST NATIONS, METIS, AND INUIT COMMUNITIES, CULTURES, CONCEPTS & STORIES
- viii. Imaginative: PATHWAYS TO THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET FOR INDIGENOUS SCREEN CONTENT: SUCCESS STORIES, LESSONS LEARNED FROM SELECTED JURISDICTIONS AND A STRATEGY FOR GROWTH
- ix. Imaginative: INDIGENOUS FEATURE FILM PRODUCTION IN CANADA: A NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE
- x. Australian Film Commission: Issues paper: Towards a protocol for filmmakers working with Indigenous Content and communities
- xi. Screen Australia: Indigenous Production, Pathways and Protocols, The Black List (list and chronology of all Australian Indigenous films) and Tools and Insights for Indigenous Program Makers
- xii. New Zealand Film Commission: The Maori Strategy (website) and The Maori Strategy (pdf)



CREDITS:

Produced by FREE THE WORK, with grants provided by Anonymous and **HFPA**.

Written by Maya Rose Dittloff

With contributions from Emily Riewestahl, Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University, The Center for Scholars and Storytellers, based out of UCLA
Original design and bespoke design elements created by Mato J. Steger of Fantasy & Coffee Design

Final report designed by Serotonin Creative Consultancy serotonincreative.com

Special thanks to:
Bryson Chun, Charley Flyte, Ciara Lacy, Erica Tremblay, and Joey Clift, Jennifer Loren and the Cherokee Nation Film Office.

REFERENCES

1. J. Kilpatrick, *Celluloid Indians: Native Americans and Film*. University of Nebraska Press, 1999.
2. K. Knopf, *Decolonizing the Lens of Power: Indigenous Films in North America*. New York: Brill, 2008.
3. B. R. Singer, *Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens: Native American Film and Video*. University of Minnesota Press, 2001.
4. M. H. Raheja, *Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013.
5. A. Aleiss, *Making the White Man's Indian: Native Americans and Hollywood Movies*. Westport: Praeger, 2009.
6. J. Corntassel, "Who is Indigenous?: 'Peoplehood' and Ethnonationalist Approaches to Rearticulating Indigenous Identity," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 75–100, Mar. 2003. [Online]. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537110412331301365>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
7. E. A. Daes, "Working Paper on the Concept of 'Indigenous People'." Jun. 1996. [Online]. Available: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/236429?ln=en>. [Accessed: Sep. 13, 2021].
8. International Labor Organization, "Convention C169 - Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention", 1989 (No. 169)," [Online]. Available: <https://www.ilo.org. 2017>. [Accessed: Aug. 30, 2021].
9. P. Wilson and M. Stewart, "Introduction: Indigeneity and Indigenous Media on the Global Stage," in *Global Indigenous Media*, Duke University Press, 2008.
10. Native American Rights Funds, "Frequently Asked Questions". [Online]. Available: <https://www.narf.org/frequently-asked-questions/> [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
11. National Congress of American Indians, "Alaska Native Corporations," Ncai.org, 2022. [Online]. Available: <https://www.ncai.org/tribal-directory/alaska-native-corporations> [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
12. B. Krauthamer, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters : Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South*. University of North Carolina Press, 2015.
13. H. Lewis, "The Identity Hoaxers" *The Atlantic*, Mar. 16, 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2021/03/krug-carrillo-dolezal-social-munchausen-syndrome/618289/> [Accessed: May 05, 2022].
14. R. W. Schmidt, "American Indian Identity and Blood Quantum in the 21st Century: A Critical Review," *Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 2011, pp. 1–9, 2011, [Online]. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1155/2011/549521>.
15. Telefilm Canada, "Indigenous Initiatives," [Online]. Available: <https://telefilm.ca/en/financing/indigenous-initiatives> [Accessed: Sep. 16, 2021].
16. ImagiNATIVE, "Year-round Artistic Policy Effective as of March 2021," 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5711573b044262398e3acb85/t/603d724d4ccaa2159f7a0876/1614639693379/2021+YEAR-ROUND+ARTISTIC+PROGRAM+MING+POLICY.pdf>
17. C. Bold, "Vaudeville, Indigeneity, Modernity," *Modernism/Modernity*, vol. 5, no. 4, Mar. 2021, [Online]. Available: <https://doi.org/10.26597/mod.0191>.
18. C. Bold, "Fellows find: Seeing 'the Indian' in Vaudeville," University of Texas, Nov. 2016. [Online]. Available: <https://sites.utexas.edu/ransomcentermagazine/2016/11/03/fellows-find-seeing-the-indian-in-vaudeville/> [Accessed Sep. 30, 2021].
19. L. Jessup, *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001.
20. D. B. Wilmeth, *Variety Entertainment and Outdoor Amusements: a Reference Guide*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982.
21. J. S. Kasson, *Buffalo Bill's Wild West : Celebrity, Memory, and Popular History*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2001.
22. P. J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004.
23. L. S. Warren, *Buffalo Bill's America: William Cody and the Wild West Show*. New York: Vintage Books, 2006.
24. N. Vardac, "Realism and Romance: D. W. Griffith," in *Imitations of Life*, Wayne State University Press, 1991.
25. M. Sweet, "The First Native American Director. Or Was He?," *the Guardian*, Sep. 23, 2010. [Online]. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2010/sep/23/first-native-american-director> [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
26. A. Aleiss, "Who Was the Real James Young Deer? The Mysterious Identity of the Path  Producer Finally Comes to Light," *Bright Lights Film Journal*, May 2013. [Online]. Available: <https://brightlightsfilm.com/who-was-the-real-james-young-deer-the-mysterious-identity-of-the-pathe-producer-finally-comes-to-light/#.YohsPahOIPb> [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
27. A. Smith, *Shooting cowboys and Indians: silent western films, American culture, and the birth of Hollywood*. Boulder: University Press Of Colorado, 2003.
28. M. Elise, *Marubbio, Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009.
29. Australian Screen Office, "Collection - A Short History of Indigenous Filmmaking," 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://aso.gov.au/titles/collections/indigenous-filmmaking>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022]
30. H. E. L. Prins, "American Indians and the Ethnokinematic Complex: From Native Participation to Production Control," *Visual Sociology*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 80–90, Mar. 1989, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725868908583640>.
31. A. Smith, "50 Years of Indigenous-Made Cinema in Canada: A Celebration," *National Canadian Film Day*, Mar. 28, 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://canadianfilmday.ca/50-years-of-indigenous-made-cinema-in-canada-a-celebration/>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022]
32. W. Mitchell, "What's Driving the New Wave of Indigenous Filmmaking?," *Screen Daily*, 2022. <https://www.screendaily.com/features/whats-driving-the-new-wave-of-indigenous-filmmaking/5127820.article> [Accessed: May 18, 2022].
33. US Census Bureau, "Race and Ethnicity in the United States: 2010 Census and 2020 Census," 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/race-and-ethnicity-in-the-united-state-2010-and-2020-census.html>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022]
34. Directors Guild of America, "Diversity," 2022. <https://www.dga.org/The-Guild/Diversity/Diversity-FAQ.aspx> [Accessed: May 31, 2022]
35. M. Ordon a, "How the American Society of Cinematographers is Dealing with Diversity," *Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 20, 2019. [Online]. Available: <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-ca-mn-asc-diversity-20190120-story.html> [Accessed: Sep. 26, 2021].
36. D. Hunt et al., "Hollywood Diversity Report 2022," 2022. [Online]. Available: <https://socialsciences.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/UCLA-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2022-Film-3-24-2022.pdf> [Accessed: May 31, 2022].

REFERENCES

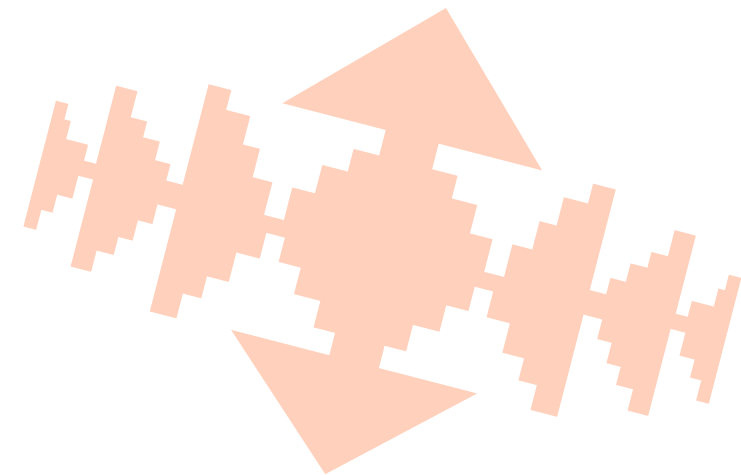
37. D. Hunt et al., “Hollywood Diversity Report 2020,” 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://socialsciences.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/UCLA-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2021-Film-4-22-2021.pdf>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
38. D. Hunt et al., “Hollywood Diversity Report 2021,” 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://socialsciences.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/UCLA-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2021-Film-4-22-2021.pdf>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
39. K. Crenshaw, *On Intersectionality: Essential Writings*. New York: New Press, 2017.
40. S. Smith, et al. “Inclusion in the Director’s Chair: Analysis of Director Gender & Race/Ethnicity Across 1,300 Top Films from 2007 to 2019.” 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inclusion-directors-chair-20200102.pdf> [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
41. B. Bell. “Gender in Native America.” in *A Companion to American Indian History*, P. Deloria and N. Salisbury. New York: Blackwell, 2002, pp. 307-320.
42. D. Merskin, “How Many More Indians? An Argument for a Representational Ethics of Native Americans,” *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, vol. 38, no. 3, pp. 184–203, Jun. 2014, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0196859914537304>.
43. Association of National Advertisers, “Resource List of Certified Diverse Suppliers for Marketing/Advertising,” Aug. 16, 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://www.ana.net/miccontent/show/id/ii-diverse-supplier-resource-list> [Accessed: Oct. 01, 2021].
44. American Association of Advertising Agencies, “BIPOC Owned Media Companies Resource List,” Jul. 16, 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://www.aaaa.org/bipoc-owned-media-companies-resource-list>. [Accessed: Oct. 01, 2021].
45. P. Morris, “Teaching Multimedia Commercial Production for Advertising and Publication Relations,” *Journal of Advertising Education*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 47–58, Nov. 2012, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F109804821201600206>.
46. C. Hackley and A. J. Kover, “The Trouble with Creatives: Negotiating Creative Identity in Advertising Agencies,” *International Journal of Advertising*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 63–78, Jan. 2007, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2007.11072996>.
47. CMO Survey, “Highlights and Insights Report,” 2020. [Online]. Available: https://cmosurvey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The_CMO_Survey-Highlights-and_Insights_Report-Feb-2020.pdf. [Accessed: May, 31, 2022].
48. Association of National Advertisers Alliance for Inclusive and Multicultural Marketing, “A Diversity Report for the Advertising/Marketing Industry,” 2020 [Online]. Available: <https://www.ana.net/getfile/31210>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
49. American Association of Advertising Agencies, “New Ad Industry Diversity Data Provides A New Benchmark—And Room For Improvement,” Sep. 22, 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://www.aaaa.org/new-ad-industry-diversity-data-provides-a-new-benchmark-and-room-for-improvement/?cn-reloaded=1>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
50. Global Industry Analysts, Inc., “Global Digital Advertising and Marketing Market to Reach \$786.2 Billion by 2026,” *Prnewswire.com*, Jul. 13, 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/global-digital-advertising-and-marketing-market-to-reach-786-2-billion-by-2026--301331318.html>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
51. “Indigenous Film-makers are Gaining Prominence,” *The Economist*, Mar. 29, 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://www.economist.com/prospero/2021/03/29/indigenous-film-makers-are-gaining-prominence>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
52. E. Pedersen, “Indigenous Screenwriters List 2022 Finalists Set,” *Deadline*, May 17, 2022. [Online]. Available: <https://deadline.com/2022/05/indigenous-screenwriters-list-2022-finalists-the-black-list-sundance-institute-illuminative-1235025348/>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
53. Writers Guild of America West, “WGAW Native American & Indigenous Writers Committee Letter to the Entertainment Industry,” 2017. [Online]. Available: <https://www.wga.org/news-events/news/press/native-american-indigenous-writers-committee-letter-to-the-entertainment-industry> [Accessed: May 19, 2022].
54. N. Estes and J. Dhillon, *Standing with Standing Rock : voices from the #NoDAPL movement*. Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 2019.
55. Dhillon, J. and N. Estes, eds. 2016. “Standing Rock, #NoDAPL, and Mni Wiconi.” *Hot Spots series, Fieldsights*, December 22. [Online]. Available: <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/series/standing-rock-nodapl-and-mni-wiconi>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
56. Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, “Standing Rock Sioux and Dakota Access Pipeline | Teacher Resource,” 2015. <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/plains-treaties/dapl>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
57. US Department of the Interior, “National Tribal Broadband Strategy,” The United States Department of the Interior, Jan., 15, 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://www.bia.gov/news/doi-and-indian-affairs-announce-national-tribal-broadband-strategy-close-connectivity-gap>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022].
58. Telefilm Canada, “About Telefilm Canada,” Jan. 15, 2021. <https://telefilm.ca/en/about-telefilm-canada>. [Accessed May 21, 2022].
59. Indigenous Screen Office, “About ISO,” Sep. 28, 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://iso-bea.ca/who-we-are/about-iso/>. [Online]. [Accessed: May 21, 2022].
60. Cherokee Nation Film Office, “About,” Jan. 21, 2022. [Online]. Available: <https://cherokee.film/mission/> [Accessed: May 21, 2022].
61. Screen Australia, “Screen Australia’s Indigenous Department supports 10 Indigenous attachments on Thor: Ragnarok and Alien: Covenant - Screen Australia,” 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/sa/media-centre/news/2016/08-01-indigenous-department-celebrates-attachm> [Accessed: May 21, 2022].
62. M. Jasper, “How Taika Waititi Ensured Indigenous Representation on Thor: Ragnarok” *The Mary Sue*, Oct. 22, 2017. [Online]. Available: <https://www.themarysue.com/taika-waititi-indigenous-representation-thor-ragnarok/>. [Accessed May 21, 2022].
63. NAACP, “THE BLACK EXECUTIVE: A Partial Solution to Psycho-Social Consequences of Media Distortions,” 2022. [Online]. Available: https://deadline.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Hollywood-Bureau-Industry-Report_-The-Black-Executive.pdf [Accessed: May 21, 2022].
64. The Editors, “Biodiversity’s Greatest Protectors Need Protection,” *Scientific American*, Oct. 2021, [Online]. Available: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/biodiversitys-greatest-protectors-need-protection/>. [Accessed: May 31, 2022]



DISCLAIMER

* Please note: Non-commercial educational use only. FREE THE WORK believes fundamentally in identity self- determination, and as such, relies on its users to self-identify all profile fields, including demographics. All user- provided profile information is subject to the individual’s discretion, and claims made within user profiles are not verified and cannot be guaranteed by FREE THE WORK as an organization. Statements of fact or opinion are the responsibility of the author or additional contributors alone and do not imply an opinion on the part of the officers or the members of FREE THE WORK.

Copyright © 2022 FREE THE WORK



UNTOLD
STORIES:

**INDIGENOUS
CREATORS
IN THE
UNITED STATES**

Written by Maya Rose Dittloff,
Ukkayŭ”kwīyinnimākii

FREE THE W^{ORK}