FROM THE VANISHING NOBLE SAVAGE TO AN ABORIGINAL CINEMA: A HISTORY OF REPRESENTATIONS OF NATIVE AMERICANS ON FILM

In this course, we will explore a history of the changing representations of Native Americans in North American film. Key moments in our investigation include the studio recordings of Indigenous performers at the end of the 19th century, the golden age of Westerns in the post-war era, the documentation of the events surrounding the actions of the American Indian Movement in the 1960s and 70s, and the development since the 1990s of a growing body of films made by and starring Indigenous filmmakers and actors. We will screen a wide range of films, including commercial studio productions, independent films, documentaries, and shorts. Engaging both collaboratively and individually in a critical analysis of these films, as well as a selection of relevant academic literature and contemporary film reviews and articles, students will consider strategies of representation, documentation, intervention, and narrativity as employed within various historical, political, and cultural contexts.