

# TASKFORCE FOR INDIGENOUS INCLUSION AND ENGAGEMENT

Butler's Taskforce for Indigenous Inclusion and Engagement is a committee comprised of faculty, students, and administrators committed to amplifying the rich, robust contributions of indigenous communities in study and solidarity. In celebration of Native American Heritage Month, the members of the taskforce have compiled a list of resources we recommend for anyone interested in Indigenous studies, activism, and solidarity work.

## DREAMKEEPER (2003) AND SMOKE SIGNALS (1998)

Recommended by **Cameron Tomaszewski** (he/him) - Finance Major - Member of St. Croix Band of the Ojibwe Tribe



*DreamKeeper* tells the story of a young Lakota man navigating life on the Pine Ridge reservation. The young man Shane is looking for his place in this world and encounters struggles that may be unique to Indigenous cultures. Throughout the series, Shane's grandfather gives him unwanted help in the form of stories that eventually break through to Shane and inspire him to embrace his grandfather's teachings. These stories are depicted continuously between moments in Shane's life and offer perspectives into different Indigenous cultures like the Kiowa, Pawnee, and Haudenosee. *Smoke Signals* is a movie about two boys who grew up together and have completely different views of the world. It was the first feature film completely directed, written, and produced Indigenously. This movie follows Victor and Thomas on a journey to get Victor's father's ashes from reservation. It is full of comedy and lightheartedness while involving topics like alcoholism, abuse, poverty, colonization, and the loss of a father who walked out on his family. Available in Butler Library.



## RESERVATION DOGS (2021)

Recommended by **Justin Deem-Loureiroi** (he/him) - Butler Student



What is great about reservation dogs is that "the cast, production crew and primary creator, Sterlin Harjo, who were all Indigenous, offers a view from the inside of lives that are usually ignored". (NPR). This tv series takes a look at modern day life on reservations from teenagers perspectives and the everyday struggles endured. Its comical as well as moving.



Recommended by **Tom Mould** (he/him) - Professor of Anthropology and Folklore



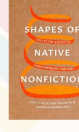
The show is co-created by Sterlin Harjo, a citizen of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma with Muscogee heritage, and Taika Waititi, who identifies as Maori and Jewish. I chose this show for a few reasons. One, it does a great job capturing contemporary reservation life in Oklahoma, countering the all-too-common belief by many in this country that Native North Americans are a vestige of the past rather than a continuous presence on this land. Second, the show plays with Native American stereotypes, challenging them through comedy in ways that ring true for how humor is often deployed in "Indian Country." And finally, the show is just damn good—funny, thought-provoking, dramatic, and deeply human all at once. Available on [Hulu](#).

## SHAPES OF NATIVE NONFICTION: COLLECTED ESSAYS BY CONTEMPORARY WRITERS - EDITED BY ELISSA WASHUTA AND THERESA WARBURTON (2019)

Recommended by **Noel Garcia** (they/them) - Student in Psychology/Criminology/Pre-Med - Descendant of the Navajo Nation



This collection of essays criticizes the dominate cultural narrative that romanticizes indigenous lives, yet denies emotional response. In four different sections, they offer incisive observations, critiques, and commentary on our political, social, and cultural. eBook available through [Butler Library](#).



## RESEARCH ON CENTRAL AMERICAN INDIGENOUS CULTURES BY LORENA CABNAL

Recommended by **Irene del Rio Gabiola** (she/her) - Professor, MLLC - Research on Central American Indigenous Cultures



A short documentary on the role of healing in the Tz'at community in Guatemala. It focuses on the indigenous knowledges transmitted by Mayan women to heal traumas caused by patriarchy and centuries of colonialism. Available on [Vimeo](#).

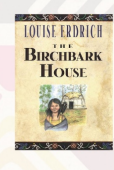


## THE BIRCHBARK HOUSE SERIES BY LOUISE ERDRICH

Recommended by **Lynn Kvapil** (she/her) - Associate Professor, Classics



I want to bring attention to the Birchbark House children's book series written by Louis Erdrich. These books are a wonderful way to introduce kids to life in the midwestern United States in the 19th century from the perspective of indigenous peoples (as opposed to this history as presented in books like the Little House on the Prairie series, which too often vilify native peoples). Louis Erdrich a phenomenal writer, and the world she created (deeply rooted in careful research and discoveries about her own ancestry) is full of vibrant characters, gorgeous settings, and experiences that range from glorious to gut-wrenching. My favorite thing about this series is that Erdrich trusts her young readers and gives them the opportunity to grasp the complexities of her character's lives without watering down real hardships. At the same time, she balances tough moments with the joys of family and community. I highly recommend these for anyone with kids 6-10 (or older) - they are a delight. Available at [Butler Library](#).



## THE NIGHT WATCHMAN BY LOUISE ERDRICH

Recommended by **Julie Johnson Searcy** (she/her) - Assistant Professor, Anthropology



Louise Erdrich is a fantastic indigenous writer. She has a whole bunch of books that explore being Native in the United States. Her books make me feel like I am looking in on a complex world and community that exceeds the bounds of the book pages. Characters in one book appear as minor characters in other books and there's a sense that things are happening in their lives beyond the story. I chose *The Night Watchman* because it features the loosely autobiographical character of her own dad and the politics of 1950's Native American rights. The characters are compelling and it's a good read. eBook available through [Butler Library](#).



## GLOBAL INDIGENOUS DATA ALLIANCE

Recommended by **Alex Roehrkasse** (he/him) - Assistant Professor, Sociology and Criminology



Science is moving toward increasing openness, but research about Native American and other indigenous peoples requires special consideration of data sovereignty. GIDA is at the forefront of articulating a new way of thinking about data collection and analysis that advances indigenous innovation and self-determination. [Link to Access here](#)



CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance

## MISSING AND MURDERED PODCAST & ELEMENTS OF INDIGENOUS STYLE BY GREGORY YOUNGING

Recommended by **Teigha VanHester** (she/they) - Assistant Professor, RGSS - Decendant of Polynesian Indigenous



The *Missing and Murdered* Podcast deals with dark truths. I recommend it as a way of seeing the resilience of the First Nation storytelling, advocacy, and demand for justice, truth and reconciliation. The *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women* project as highlighted in this podcast skillfully illuminates the counterstories that chronicle the all too common reality of crimes against indigenous people, especially women as well as shows a form of activism (through podcasting) that has been able to lead to Canadian reform, apology, and activism around protecting the First Nation and Inuit. I also suggest the *Element of Indigenous Style* for clarity on the robust legacy of oration, composing, and storytelling that is used by indigenous communities and needs to be taken into account when doing any type of indigenous solidarity work through scholarly research. Podcast available [CBC](#).

