**Sociology 75: American Settler Colonialism**

**Pitzer College, Fall 2018**

Professor Erich Steinman Class: Thur 1:15-4:00 Scott Hall 217 Broad Hall 214 Office Hours: Wed 10:30-12:30 Online via “Sakai.claremont.edu” [Erich\_Steinman@pitzer.edu](mailto:Erich_Steinman@pitzer.edu)

**Course Description** Understanding the United States as a *settler colonial* society provides great insight. How do the settler colonial foundations of the country affect present social life in the United States? This course will examine the impact of this ongoing settler colonial nature on a variety of aspects of American society, including; incarceration, militarism, gender, national culture and myths, education, sports, racial inequality, capitalism, social movements, and feminism. Material will address historical and contemporary dynamics. A sub-theme will be identifying the experiences of and resistance by the Indigenous nations of North America in response to processes of colonization and settlement. This is a Social Responsibility Praxis Course.

**Goals/Objectives of the Course**

1. Understand common qualities and dynamics of settler colonial societies.
2. Apply settler colonial concepts to the history and present of the United States.
3. Identify differences between a settler colonial conception of the United States and dominant narratives about the United States.
4. Understand how this framework and the social dynamics it describes applies to students, Southern California, and the Claremont Colleges.
5. Understand historical and contemporary American Indian presence and resistance, including by local Tribal Nations.

**Specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

1. Conceptually identify features, logics and dynamics of settler colonial societies
2. Identify key actions and policies in United States history and society that reflect settler colonial dynamics.
3. Be able to specify how these settler colonial dynamics and specific actions/policies have shaped the construction of social structure, organizations, social identities, national culture, and other core sociological dimensions of the United States.
4. Identify the distinct but interrelated effects of these settler colonial dynamics on Euro-American settlers, non-Euro-American immigrants, and American Indian nations and individuals.
5. Be able to communicate the relationship between American settler colonialism and the experiences of American Indian peoples.
6. Identify and think critically about differences between a settler colonial conception of the United States and dominant narratives about the United States.

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# **We Are On**

# **Tongva Land**

**Territorial Acknowledgement** This course and the learning it supports is being conducted on the traditional territories of the Tongva, who lived in this area for thousands of years before Europeans arrived, and who continue to live here today. We are grateful for the opportunity to live and learn here, and, to the degree possible, learn from Tongva people.

**Course Texts**

Many articles and book chapters will be available on sakai in addition to the following books, many of which are available as Ebooks through Honnold Library.

*Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England*, Jean M. O'Brien. Univ Of Minnesota Press; 2010. ISBN-10: 0816665788; ISBN-13: 978-0816665785

*Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment*, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. City Lights Publishers, 2018. ISBN-10: 0872867234; ISBN-13: 978-0872867239

*City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771–1965*, Kelly Lytle Hernández. University of North Carolina Press; 2017. ISBN-10: 1469631180; ISBN-13: 978-1469631189

*A* *Third University Is Possible,* by la paperson. Univ Of Minnesota Press; (2017). ISBN-10: 1517902088; ISBN-13: 978-1517902087

*Resurrecting the Past: The California Mission Myth*, by Michelle M. Lorimer. Great Oak Press (2016). ISBN-10: 1942279027; ISBN-13: 978-1942279020

*Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada,* Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J. Barker.Fernwood Books (2015). ISBN-10: 1552667782; ISBN-13: 978-1552667781

**Pedagogical Approach**

The course will involve some lectures, extensive discussion, mixed with some film segments and other modes of learning, combined with social responsibility praxis beyond the classroom.

**Means of assessing goals and student learning outcomes**

Assignments are designed to support *ongoing* and *integrative* learning and application throughout the whole semester (versus exam-focused cramming). Comprehension and mastery are cumulative processes. Each element of the course - texts, discussions, films, independent research, community engagement, and more - will contribute to and deepen your understanding.

Students will be graded on the following basis:

* Midterm essay (20%)
* Final essay (25%)
* Social responsibility praxis and engagement reflections, culminating in final engagement analysis (\*or action research product/project implementation) (20%)
* “Family/place” research-based presentation applying course concepts to your family history (15%)
* Diverse and regular forms of participation and contribution to our collective learning (which may include short in-class reflections, etc.) (20%)

**Social Responsibility Praxis**

Students will be responsible for 40 hours of cumulative social responsibility activities drawn from these possibilities:

Single Event Fixed Time Options

These are events sponsored by our American Indian partners, who request support and participation from our involved students. Such participation deepens, sustains, extends, and integrates students into existing relationships which is actually a goal (an “end”) in addition to a means supporting this and other such events. As previous scholarship has established (Steinman 2011, Wilson 2008) and many Indigenous partners have stated, actively being part of such relationships is at the core of Indigenous cultural frameworks; our social responsibility praxis works partly through engaging Native people on *their* cultural terms and learning/working with them.

*\*Sarah Winnemucca Day Celebrating Indigenous Women:* A multi-hour event on a Saturday in October to be held at the Grandmothers’ Garden at the Pomona College Farm, under the guidance of Tongva Elder Barbara Drake.

**Estimated hours: Preparation (4 hours prior to the event day) and event (9 am to 3 pm) = 10 hours**

*\* This event is tentative.*

*Fall Equinox:* Starting in summer of 2017, Tongva members, led by Tongva astronomer Glenn Miller Jr., have been observing solstices and equinoxes at, and in conjunction with, the Robert Redford Conservancy. In fall 2018 the Fall Equinox observance will be held Sunday, September 30th at 11:30 AM. Students will welcome attendees, assist elders, help with food, and help clean up after the event (which ends at 2 pm).

**Estimated hours: 11:00-3:00 = 4 hours**

Other events may also be added.

Ongoing Projects Fixed Schedule Options

*IndigeNations Claremont Scholars*: Students will participate in a mentoring program with Semillas High School and Sherman Indian High school. This will include two orientation meetings and six Saturday morning sessions with the students who come to Claremont. Students will assist the high school students with a variety of college prep actions, including help with application essays.

**Estimated hours: 4 hours x 8 session = 32 hours**

*Blanket Exercise*: Students will become part of the fall 2018 Blanket Exercise team. This involves preparing for, doing logistics in support of, and leading the Blanket Exercise on campus and at a number of other institutions in or near Claremont. The Blanket Exercise is a participatory popular education experience that educates participants about the history of colonialism and Indigenous resistance in North America.

**Estimated hours: 10 hours preparation/outreach work + 4 Events (x 3 hours each) = 22 hours**

*Living History Garden*: Students will participate in Friday afternoon work sessions with Tongva Elder Barbara Drake.

**Estimated hours: 2 hours per week for 10 weeks = 20 hours**

Time Flexible Project Options

*Self-Chosen*: If students are already participating in a community engaged project that relates to American Settler Colonialism and/or Indigenous resistance, they may petition for this involvement to count as their social responsibility praxis. The professor will assess such possibilities.

*Thanksgiving Research and Education*: Students will participate in a collective research project a) investigating knowledge of and attitudes about the US ritual of Thanksgiving among Pitzer students, faculty, and staff, as well as among American Indian and Indigenous community members, b) providing information about Thanksgiving, and c) soliciting any revised perceptions. Students will conduct interviews and focus groups, compile an analysis, and make a presentation about perspectives and possible proposals for how Pitzer might differently observe Thanksgiving.

Estimated hours: time is variable depending on other Social Responsibility activities (hours). In general, time invested will reflect the number of interviews / educational sessions. A rough estimate is:

5 interviews / educational sessions = 15 hours

10 interviews / educational sessions = 20 hours

**Class Participation**

The best way to learn, and to contribute to overall student learning, is to participate actively in a way that reflects you and your concerns, insights, experiences, and questions. Be you (actively!), and in doing so help yourself and your fellow students develop a deeper understanding of the course material.

* Ways of participating include: a) attending class – this is mandatory, b) appropriately tracking and continuing discussion threads, c) asking clarifying questions, d) offering empirical examples that help clarify concepts under discussion, e) contributing salient hypotheses (that are, ideally, logically debatable or empirically testable), f) asking thought-provoking questions, g) summarizing discussion points or threads, as well as other actions.
* Some of these ways of participating will be more comfortable than others. During the course of the semester, further develop your abilities to contribute in your most familiar ways and also work on and develop new competencies. This is the place to try out new roles in discussion!

**Special Needs**

I will make every reasonable effort to accommodate students with disabilities; if you need to request accommodations or need additional assistance, feel free to contact the Academic Support Services Office at campus extension 7-3553, or at gabriella\_tempestoso@pitzer.edu.

**Other Issues**

*Don’t* cheat or plagiarize. At the very least, you will receive no credit for any assignments that violate standards of academic integrity. Late assignments are strongly discouraged and will be marked down.

*Do not* use your cell phone in class, even for texting.

*Do* come to class; this is a foundational aspect of your class participation grade.

*Do* read your Pitzer email; you are accountable for formal class information sent to that account. Also, regularly check the course website on Sakai.

*Do* be generous and kind, as well as rigorous and critical,in your comments.

*Do* be honest, real, and sincere in your contributions to discussions and in other ways.

*Do* take care of yourself - physically, emotionally, intellectually, etc. - through the semester.

*I retain the right* to amend the syllabus as necessary to address course developments. Revised versions of the syllabus will be posted on Sakai, and identified as such.

**Writing Center:** 131 Mead Hall;<http://www.pitzer.edu/offices/writing_center/>; 7-4321

The Writing Center offers student writers free one-on-one conferences with experienced fellow writers trained to consult on assignments in any discipline, application essays, and cover letters. Students are encouraged to schedule an appointment using the online scheduling system, but walk-ins are welcome. *Writing Center Online Scheduling System*:<http://pitzer.mywconline.com/>

**Course Schedule**

**Dates & Week Theme & Assignments**

**Week of Semester**

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| Week 1 *September 6* | **Unsettling: the United States and Settler Colonialism**  Unsettling Engagements: Collaborations with Indigenous Nations,Communities and Individuals, Scoggins and Steinman  Cowboys and Indians: Toys of Genocide, Icons of Colonialism, Yellowbird  Settler Identity and Colonization, Lowman and Barker, pp. 1-2, 13-23 |

Week 2 **Settler Storytelling: Vanishing and Inevitability**

*September 13*  *Firsting and Lasting*, xi-53, 55-57, 72-84, 91-104, 145-149, 157-206

Week 3 **Continuities of Settler Colonial Violence**

*September 20* *Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment*, Dunbar-Ortiz

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| Week 4  *September 27* | **Unending Theft and the Spirit of American Political Culture**  The Great Law of Peace, Mann  Adventures in Denial, Johansen  *Empire of the People: Settler colonialism and the foundations of modern political thought*, Dahl. pp. 77-126 |

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| Week 5  *October 4* | **Normalizing and Naturalizing California Mission Domination****& Exploitation**  *City of Inmates*, Hernandez, pp. 1-44  *California Mission Myths*, pp. 1-8, 14-35, 36-59 132-153, 173-191  *Bad Indian*, Miranda, pp. 1-16 |

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| Week 6  *October 11* | **Genocide and Establishing White Settler Supremacy in****California**  *Racial Fault Lines*, Almaguer pp. 1-15  Settler Colonialism as Structure, Nagano Glenn  *An American Genocide*, Madley pp. 1-15; 59-66; 346-359  *Murder State*, Lindsay pp. 35-41, 225-247  \*\*Conduct Kairos Blanket Exercise, Friday Oct 12, 3-5 pm |

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| Week 7  *October 18* | **Thanksgiving and Settler Rituals of Disavowal, Denial and Negation**  Deconstructing the Myths of “The First Thanksgiving”, Dow and Slapin  Invention of Thanksgiving, Siskind  Classical Mythology, Day 1: The Pilgrims, George Washington and  Santa Claus, Olson  Thanksgiving, A Native Perspective (sections)  *Essay 1 due around here* |

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| Week 8  Break Oct 22-23  *October 25* | **Sport, Boundaries, Identity, Appropriation, Visibility**  Stealing Home: Decolonizing Baseball’s Origin Stories and their Relation to Settler Colonialism, Fortier  Race, Colonialism and the Politics of Indian Sports Names and  Mascots, Bruyneel  I See You: A Story from the Haudenosaunee, Anter |

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| Week 9  *November 1* | **Growing Capitalism through Commodifying Nature: Dispossession****and Environmental Destruction**  *Settler Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada*, Lowman and Barker, pp. 48-66  Forest Stories: Restorying encounters with “natural” places in early childhood education, Nxumalo  *Red Skins, White Masks: Beyond the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, Coulthard. Pp. 6-15.  Wounded Knee: Settler Colonial Property Regimes and Indigenous Liberation, Estes  The Dakota Access Pipeline, Environmental Injustice, and US Colonialism, Whyte  Preservation and Sustainability, Dixon  Settler Colonialism as eco-social structure and the production of colonial ecological violence, Bacon |

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| Week 10  *November 8* | **White Settler Sovereignty and Continuing Racialization Projects**  *City of Inmates*, ALL: 64-91, 158-194, and *either* Ch. 4 *or* Ch. 5  *Staking Claim: Settler Colonialism and Racialization in Hawaii*, Rorher, pp. 48-64 |

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| Week 11  *November 15* | **Social Movements, Indigenous – Non-Indigenous Dynamics, and****Unsettling Settlers**  Decolonization is Not a Metaphor, Tuck and Yang  Suspending Damage: A letter to communities, Tuck  Already Occupied: Indigenous peoples, settler colonialism and the Occupy movements in North America, Barker  *Settler Identity and Colonization*, pp. 90-107, 108-123  Not a Metaphor: Immigrant of Color Autoethnography as a Decolonial Move, Chandrashekar |

Week 12

\*Nov 22 - No Class / Break\*

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| Week 13  *November 29* | **Decolonization, Knowledge and Universities**  Cautionary Tales, Steinman and Scoggins  *A Third University if Possible*, paperson, pp. to be determined |

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| Week 14  *December 6* | **Settler Colonialism, Indigeneity and Feminism**  Theorizing Indigeneity, Gender and Settler Colonialism, Whyte  How Environmental Decline Restructures Indigenous Gender Practices, Norgaard, Reed and Bacon  Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging connections between settler colonialism and heteropatriarchy, Arvin, Tuck and Morrill  A Feminist Approach to decolonizing anti-racism: Rethinking transnationalism, intersectionality and settler colonialism. Dahomey |

Week 15 **Final Class to be determined**

*December 13* Final papers due Thursday, December 20