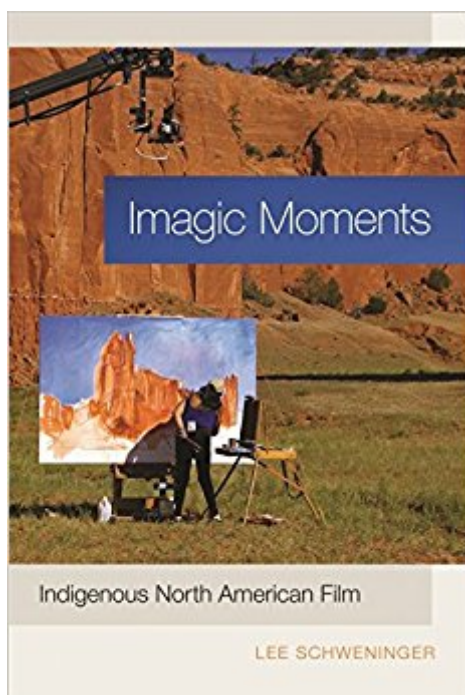


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Imagic Moments: Indigenous North American Film



Synopsis

In Indigenous North American film Native Americans tell their own stories and thereby challenge a range of political and historical contradictions, including egregious misrepresentations by Hollywood. Although Indians in film have long been studied, especially as characters in Hollywood westerns, Indian film itself has received relatively little scholarly attention. In *Imagic Moments* Lee Schweningen offers a much-needed corrective, examining films in which the major inspiration, the source material, and the acting are essentially Native. Schweningen looks at a selection of mostly narrative fiction films from the United States and Canada and places them in historical and generic contexts. Exploring films such as *Powwow Highway*, *Smoke Signals*, and *Skins*, he argues that in and of themselves these films constitute and in fact emphatically demonstrate forms of resistance and stories of survival as they talk back to Hollywood. Self-representation itself can be seen as a valid form of resistance and as an aspect of a cinema of sovereignty in which the Indigenous peoples represented are the same people who engage in the filming and who control the camera. Despite their low budgets and often nonprofessional acting, Indigenous films succeed in being all the more engaging in their own right and are indicative of the complexity, vibrancy, and survival of myriad contemporary Native cultures.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Schweningen honors the resistance and survivance of Natives in films. His perceptions are cogent and original and demonstrate a profound knowledge of the 'cinema of sovereignty.' (Gerald Vizenor

author of *Native Liberty: Natural Reason and Cultural Survivance*) Schwenger's book makes a bold contribution to the growing field of Indigenous media studies by theorizing a distinct genre of Indigenous North American film. In addition to offering a new perspective on several well-known films, the author introduces his reader to films that have received scant scholarly attention, such as *The Exiles*, *Tkaronto*, and *Naturally Native*. Students, scholars, and interested lay people will find the book engaging, as it is written in a highly accessible style with a keen attention to detail. I look forward to using it in my Indigenous media classes. (Jennifer Gauthier, associate professor of communication studies, Randolph College)

Lee Schwenger's text *Imagic Moments* gives deep context into fourteen Indigenous North American films from the last fifty years. (Shirley K. Sneve, *Great Plains Quarterly*) Schwenger's collection of critiques is a valuable resource for anyone interested in film criticism and especially the importance of Indigenous cinema in the last thirty years. Each chapter offers in-depth and valuable studies of significant Indigenous films that will be useful to both the casual film buff and the scholarly audience. Perhaps most significantly, Schwenger's collection of critiques will provide academics a more thorough and useful understanding of Indigenous films and encourage their use in curriculum programs beyond Native American and Indigenous studies classrooms. (Dawn G. Marsh, *American Indian Quarterly*)

LEE SCHWENINGER is a professor of English at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington. He is the author or editor of numerous books including *The First We Can Remember: Colorado Pioneer Women Tell Their Stories* and *Listening to the Land: Native American Literary Responses to the Landscape* (Georgia).

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