

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/redface-race-performance-and-indigeneity/>

This video is an interview discussing the motivations, research, and findings related to the book on "Red Face" in American theater. The speaker, a professor and a member of the Choctaw Nation, reflects on their academic journey, starting from a personal interest in Native American representation in theater while pursuing a graduate degree. The conversation emphasizes the lack of scholarly focus on "Red Face," contrasting it with the extensive discourse surrounding "Blackface," and argues for a deeper understanding of racial representations in theater.

The term "Red Face" is described as a collaborative process involving artists and audiences to define what constitutes an "Indian" portrayal in theater, focusing on casting, costuming, and the underlying meanings beyond mere appearances. The speaker outlines their research methodology, which involved analyzing plays that feature Native American characters across history, and highlights the shifting portrayal of these characters from noble representations in the early 19th century to more negative stereotypes by the end of the century and into the 20th century.

Key findings include the use of Native American characters to explore broader American identities and challenges, as well as how portrayals have evolved in response to societal changes. The speaker emphasizes the impact of these representations beyond theater, particularly how they shape public perceptions and influence political responsibilities regarding tribal sovereignty. The professor aims for readers to be more critical of the representations they encounter in media and acknowledges ongoing projects, including a digital database on "Red Face" performances and research on Native American representation in German theater.

Overall, the interview underscores the importance of understanding and critically engaging with the portrayal of Native Americans in theater and its wider implications in society.