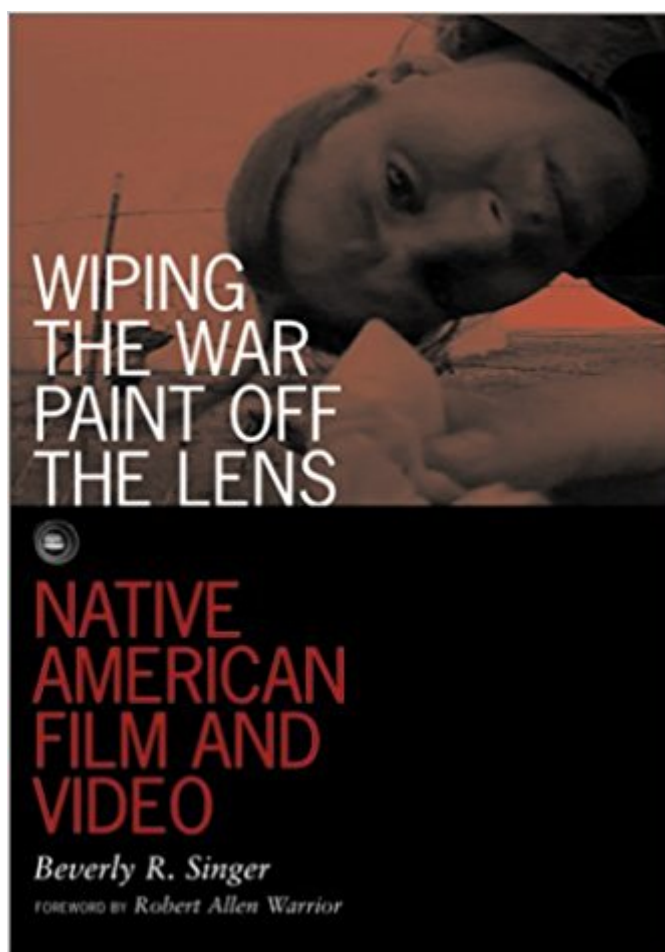


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Wiping The War Paint Off The Lens: Native American Film And Video (Visible Evidence, Vol. 10)



Synopsis

Native Americans have thrown themselves into filmmaking since the mid-1970s, producing hundreds of films and videos, and their body of work has had great impact on Native cultures and filmmaking itself. With their cameras, they capture the lives of Native people, celebrating community, ancestral lifeways, and identity. Not only artistic statements, the films are archives that document rich and complex Native communities and counter mainstream media portrayals. Wiping the War Paint off the Lens traces the history of Native experiences as subjects, actors, and creators, and develops a critical framework for approaching Native work. Singer positions Native media as part of a larger struggle for "cultural sovereignty"-the right to maintain and protect cultures and traditions. Taking it out of a European-American context, she reframes the discourse of filmmaking, exploring oral histories and ancient lifeways inform Native filmmaking and how it seeks to heal the devastation of the past. Singer's approach is both cultural and personal, provides both historical views and close textual readings, and may well set the terms of the critical debate on Native filmmaking. Beverly R. Singer is a filmmaker and director of the Alfonso Ortiz Center for Intercultural Studies at the University of New Mexico.

Book Information

Series: Visible Evidence (Book 10)

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: University of Minnesota Press; 1st edition (October 25, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0816631611

ISBN-13: 978-0816631612

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.8 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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Best Sellers Rank: #85,027 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #74 in [Books > Humor &](#)

[Entertainment > Movies > Theory](#) #163 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social](#)

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Customer Reviews

A filmmaker and director of the Alfonso Ortiz Center for Intercultural Studies at the University of New Mexico, Singer heartily advocates with occasional rhetorical flashes suggesting that the titular "war

paint" can be found in her pen the growth of Native Americans in film and video making. She surveys some previously published facts and observations on Native Americans in film, details selected legislation and social movements in the 1960s and 1970s, gives personal, anecdotal information, presents a transcript of the narration of her autobiographical A Video Book, and offers cursory biographical sketches of over 20 filmmakers with Native American origins. Descriptive discussions of six films by Native Americans include Randy Redhorse's High Horse (1994) and Arlene Bowman's Navajo Talking Picture (1984), about a Navajo woman steadfastly unwilling to be filmed by her insistent granddaughter, the director. The book is not formed by any noticeable discipline, and its diffuse subject matter and cacophony of tones add to its overall lack of focus. Robert Allen Warrior's foreword states that Singer has taken "important steps toward leading" a discussion of the changing meanings of being an Indian in America. More steps are needed. Recommended for special collections. Ann Fey, Rockland Community Coll., Suffern Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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