

SBS Community Classroom

Native Peoples of the Southwest

Thomas E. Sheridan, Ph.D.

March 19-April 23, 2019

Time and Location: 4-5:30 p.m. in room S230 in ENR2 at 1064 E. Lowell Street, UA Campus

Contact Information: tes@email.arizona.edu

About the Instructor: Tom Sheridan is a Distinguished Outreach Professor at the University of Arizona, where he holds a joint appointment in the Southwest Center and the School of Anthropology. He has conducted fieldwork in the Southwest and Northern Mexico since 1971 and has written or edited 15 books about the region, including *Paths of Life: American Indians of the Southwest and Northern Mexico* (with Nancy Parezo) and *Arizona: A History*. He is currently finishing the second and final volume of *Moquis and Kastilam: Hopis, Spaniards, and the Trauma of History*, a collaborative project between the Hopi Tribe and the UA.

Course Description: *Native Peoples of the Southwest* will focus on the Native Peoples of the Southwest, particularly those of southern Arizona, and their interactions with the Spanish empire, the Mexican republic, and the United States over the last 500 years. The Southwest is a region that remained a frontier in the most basic sense of the term---a place where no group had a monopoly on violence---until the 1880s, when Geronimo and the Chiricahua Apaches surrendered for the final time. During those centuries, Native peoples living in the region like the Hopis and O'odham encountered two waves of newcomers---Athabaskan-speaking peoples from the north and Spaniards from the south. This class will focus on those encounters as well as the contemporary struggles of Native peoples to reclaim their tribal sovereignty and take control of their own destinies in the 21st century.

Recommended Reading: Sheridan, T. and N. Parezo (eds.) *Paths of Life: American Indians of the Southwest and Northern Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996).

Paths of Life Exhibit, Arizona State Museum. Participants in the class are also encouraged to visit the Paths of Life Exhibit in the Arizona State Museum, which focuses on ten groups in the Southwest and Northern Mexico, including the O'odham, Apaches, Yaquis, and Hopis.

Class 1, March 19: The Columbian Exchange in the Southwest

In 1492, Christopher Columbus triggered one of the most profound cultural and ecological revolutions in human history. For 12,000 years, since the end of the last Ice Age, the so-called New World of the Americas had remained biologically isolated from the Old World of Eurasia and Africa. After 1492, the New and Old Worlds exchanged genes, plants, animals, and microbes that transformed human history on both sides of the Atlantic and Pacific. In the Southwest, pandemics of smallpox, measles, and other Old World diseases decimated some Native populations. Old World plants and animals, in contrast, particularly wheat and domestic livestock, revolutionized Native societies and made groups like the Apaches and Comanches the most formidable enemies of the Europeans and Euroamericans.

Suggested Reading: Crosby, "Conquistador y Pestilencia"

Class 2, March 26: The O'odham

The Tohono O'odham (Desert People) and Akimel O'odham (River People) have lived in southern Arizona and northern Sonora for at least 1,000 years. Descendants of the Hohokam, the archaeological culture who built the largest irrigation canal system in Native North America, the O'odham came into contact and conflict with Spaniards and Apaches in the late 1600s. Many were missionized by Jesuits like Padre Eusebio Francisco Kino. Others remained independent and outside the missions until their homeland became a part of the United States in 1854. Today they are the largest Native group in southern Arizona, living on four reservations. After a centuries-long legal battle to reclaim their water rights, the O'odham are becoming major cultural and economic forces in the region.

Suggested Reading: *Paths of Life*, "The O'odham," pp. 115-140.

Class 3, April 2: The Indé: Western and Chiricahua Apaches

Athabaskan-speaking peoples, ancestors of the Diné (Navajos) and Indeh (Apaches), were just beginning to move into northern Arizona and New Mexico in the early 1500s, when the Coronado expedition encountered them in 1540. Ancestors of the Western and Chiricahua Apaches continued southward, absorbing or displacing earlier Native peoples to become a dominant force in the region by the late 1600s. Farmers and hunter-gatherers, they also developed a livestock-raiding economy which made them enemies of both the O'odham and the Euroamericans and triggered patterns of blood vengeance that kept the region a frontier until the late nineteenth century. But during the late 1700s, some Apaches settled in *establecimientos de paz* near Spanish presidios like Tucson, where they were given rations in return for peace with the Spaniards. These *Apaches Mansos*, or Tame Apaches, became a part of their local communities. By the 1830s, there were more Apaches than Hispanics living in Tucson.

Suggested Reading: *Paths of Life*, "The Indé," pp. 61-90.

Class 4, April 9: The Hopis: Palatkwapi and Southern Clans

Hopis have lived in northern Arizona for more than a thousand years, if not longer. But after their emergence into the present Fourth World, Hopi ancestors were instructed by Masaw to embark on a series of migrations until they arrived at the center of the world, the Hopi mesas. More than 30 Hopi matrilineal clans trace their origins to the south, where they participated in the Hohokam florescence and may have traveled from as far away as central Mexico. During the late pre-Columbian period, Hopis and other Pueblo peoples established communities in southern Arizona, linking them to the region and other Native peoples living there. In a letter written in 1716, Jesuit missionary Felipe Segesser stated that Hopis used to travel every year to a trade fair in the San Pedro Valley until a fight between O'odham and Hopis broke out and some of the Hopis were killed. We will also discuss *Moquis and Kastilam: The Hopi History Project*, which compares and contrasts Spanish documentary records with Hopi oral traditions and reveals the historical trauma of the Spanish mission period which still affects Hopis today.

Recommended Reading: *Paths of Life*, "The Hopi," pp. 237-266

Class 5, April 16: The Yoemem: Yaquis

The Yoemem homeland (*Hiakim*) is along the lower Río Yaqui in southern Sonora. But Yaquis have lived in southern Arizona ever since the colonial period. Arizona gets its name from a silver deposit discovered by a Yaqui prospector in 1736, and Yoeme oral traditions indicate long-term ties of trade and travel with the region for a very long time. Before the Mexican Revolution broke out in 1910, Yaqui resistance drove the Mexican government to carry out a policy of cultural genocide that killed many Yoemem, deported thousands more to henequen plantations in the Yucatan, and forced others to settle near Tucson and Phoenix as political refugees. The Yoeme communities of Old Pascua and Barrio Libre in Tucson and Guadalupe in Phoenix originated during this Yaqui Diaspora. Everywhere they settled, Yoemem recreated their elaborate ceremonial system, including their rituals during *Waehma* (Lent) and Holy Week. The Yaqui community of New Pascua along Valencia Road was granted tribal recognition and a small reservation in 1978. **The tribe welcomes visitors to their Lent and Holy Week ceremonies, but no photography is permitted. Easter is Sunday, April 21, and a tentative schedule of ceremonies will be provided.**

Recommended Reading: *Paths of Life*, "The Yoemem," pp. 35-59.

Class 6, April 23: Native Peoples and the Future of the Southwest

This final session will discuss the increasingly important role Native peoples in The Southwest are playing in the development of the region. Asserting their tribal sovereignty, Native peoples are taking greater control over their own lives on reservations, including telling their own stories about their pasts. We will address topics like casino revenues, language revitalization, cultural heritage, and economic development. Special attention will focus on Native water rights, especially to Colorado and Gila River flow. Once marginalized, Native peoples are playing an ever more central role in the present and future of the Southwest, and water is perhaps the most important foundation of their increasing power.

Suggested Reading: Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, "The Political Ecology of a Desert State," pp. 399-413.