



(Un)Settling Genealogies: Self-Indigenization in Media, Arts, Politics, and Academia

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Message from the Guest Editors

The special issue focuses on the pervasive phenomenon in the US, Canada, and globally of individuals and groups that make unverifiable or remote claims to Indigenous or Native ancestry in order to gain access to opportunities, resources, and governance rights. Various referred to as self-indigenization, pretendianism, race shifting, or playing Indian, this phenomenon is not completely new. Dakota historian, Philip J. Deloria (1998), documented the roots of “playing Indian” in the U.S. American colonial era when settlers dressed up as Indians in the Boston Tea Party protest. Throughout US history, Deloria demonstrated, non-Natives have continued to appropriate Native dress, artifacts, and representations in their fraternal orders, scouting organizations, and sports teams in order to make psychic and moral claims to land, history, and resources, and to help build a uniquely “American” identity. Self-indigenization extends such practices to a final act of appropriation.





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