



Watchlist: ‘What We Can Learn About #LandBack From These Native American Comedies’

(Editor’s note: It is estimated that there are approximately 149 billion videos on YouTube, and the number continues to grow. Grand Ronde Tribal member and Social Media/Digital Journalist Kamiah Koch sifts through those myriad videos twice a month to recommend a worthwhile Indigenous video to watch. Follow her bimonthly recommendations and enjoy!)

By Kamiah Koch
Social media/digital journalist

PBS introduced a new series called “Historian’s Take” to its PBS Origins YouTube channel in April 2022. In the latest 10-minute episode, “Historian’s Take” compares Native American representation in television during the 20th century versus the representation we see today.

The episode introduces Tai Leclaire, a Mohawk actor and writer for the comedy television show “Rutherford Falls,” which features a prominent Native American cast and addresses realistic Native issues. “Rutherford Falls” started airing in 2021, around the same time as another popular Indigenous-themed comedy series, “Reservation Dogs.”

“Native American representation growing up was very limited,” Leclaire says. “Especially being a kid in the ’90s, it was ‘Indian in the Cupboard,’ ‘Pocahontas,’ ‘Dances With Wolves,’ but ‘Dances With Wolves’ wasn’t allowed in our house.”

Leclaire says many Native storylines in entertainment depict Native people inaccurately.

Liza Black, Cherokee Nation citizen, author and history professor at the University of Indiana, is also introduced to talk about how Hollywood’s depiction of Native people shaped the way Americans views Natives now.

Black says by the 1960s movements of young Native activists began protesting the American government and one Indigenous activist leader received so much media attention that he was hired by Hollywood. Russell Means starred in the 1992 film “Last of the Mohicans” along with Wes Studi who went on to win an Academy Award.

“I think if we hadn’t had these shifts, however small, in the 1960s, we wouldn’t be where we are today,” Black says. “I am really, really excited about ‘Reservation Dogs’ and ‘Rutherford Falls’ – these two television shows that broke out in 2021 during the pandemic and generated a tremendous conversation on where Native people stand today.”

One of the issues acknowledged by both shows is the “land back” movement.

The plot to “Rutherford Falls” focuses on a Tribe fighting to recover stolen land. Leclaire says half of the show’s writers is made up of Native Americans, which is unique for Hollywood.

“That part of the story was very much inspired by a lot of our Nations and Tribes trying to use the law to get land back to essentially honor these treaties and land treaties that were signed 300, 400 years ago, all of which have been broken both in the United States and in Canada,” Leclaire says.

Black ends the video stating she is excited about the representation of Native people on mainstream television shows and believes it will generate more talent from the Native community and attention of Native American issues.

To watch “What We Can Learn About #LandBack From These Native American Comedies” for yourself, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8ePZ46eTD0 or find it linked on the *Smoke Signals* YouTube channel under the “Watchlist” playlist. ■

Health & Wellness Center entrance

Reminder: The drive-through entrance at the Health & Wellness Center is for loading and unloading only. The entrance was built with our Elders and those with mobility issues and their ease of access in mind. If you are coming to the center to pick up prescriptions, please park in one of our regular parking spaces.

Pacific lamprey harvest season underway

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife set the Pacific lamprey harvest season from June 1 through July 31 from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Fridays through Mondays. Harvesting is not allowed Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

Harvesting is confined to the east side of Willamette Falls and does not include the horseshoe area at the peak of the falls. In addition, harvesters should avoid the lamprey ramps that help lamprey make it over the falls that have been installed.

Gear is restricted to hand or hand-powered tools only and a permit is required. Tribal members are allowed to use their Tribal enrollment card in lieu of a state-issued permit.

Tribal members can harvest for distribution to other Tribal members, but it must be done without charge. Commercial sale of lamprey and the use of lamprey as bait is prohibited.

Catches must be recorded on an ODFW harvest card available from the Tribe’s Natural Resources Department, 47010 S.W. Hebo Road, or by contacting the Clackamas ODFW office at 17330 S.E. Evelyn St. Harvest cards must be returned by Aug. 31.

Due to the water being unseasonably high, fishers should check the forecast before attempting to harvest lamprey.

Tribal members planning to harvest lamprey should contact the Natural Resources Department for a packet at 503-879-2424. ■

PROBATE ORDINANCE OPEN FOR COMMENT

Tribal Council is considering adopting a Probate Ordinance. The proposed ordinance was given a First Reading at the June 1, 2022, Tribal Council meeting.

Tribal Council has determined that it is in the best interest of the Tribe to exercise its powers of self-governance as a sovereign nation by establishing a process for transfer of Tribal member property upon their deaths and providing a means to probate estates in Tribal Court. The purpose of this ordinance is to encourage Tribal members to plan for the transfer of their property upon their deaths and to authorize the Tribal Court to hear and determine probate proceedings to simplify the probate process for surviving family members.

Tribal Council invites comments on the proposed Probate Ordinance. For a copy of the proposed ordinance, please contact the Tribal Attorney’s Office at 503-879-4664. Please send your comments to the Tribal Attorney’s Office, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, Oregon 97347 or by e-mail to legal@grandronde.org.

Comments must be received by July 15, 2022. ■

LOOKING FOR WORK?
SIGN UP FOR THE TERO
SKILLS BANK!

CARPENTERS, GENERAL LABORERS,
CONCRETE MASONS & LABORERS,
ASPHALT LABORERS, AND MORE!

HOW? Contact the TERO Office at 503-879-2188 or email tero@grandronde.org

WHO CAN SIGN UP? Grand Ronde Tribal members and members of other federally recognized Tribes. Must be 18 years or older.

WHAT IS NEEDED? TERO Skills Bank application and Tribal ID

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