

In could ride a horse.
"in the movies



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In this documentary, *Reel Injun*, by Neil Diamond, the director explores how First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people were treated and portrayed in media from the early 20th century to the present. It analyzes the atrocious stereotypes and mistreatment FNMI people faced.

The number of negative depictions and inaccurate stereotypes about them in films played a significant role in the hatred towards them. Therefore, it reinforced the stigmatized views that mainstream society already had towards them. As a result, their confidence has been destroyed and their self-identity lost, as their ideas of who they truly were as people were abandoned. In the movie *Reel Injun*; First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people are falsely stereotyped as awful things such as the "Hollywood Indian," "Savage Indian," and "Groovy Indian."

"The Hollywood Indian" was illustrated in films as spiritual, noble, and free. Although in my opinion they weren't any of these things except for the spirituality. FNMI people have distinctive beliefs, they didn't need proof for something to be true. This stereotype started when the first settlers came, they found nations rich in culture, languages and beliefs. The world was hooked with FNMI people, this caused them to be the first to be in films. This image of a Hollywood Indian was loved by people, so they created films about it even though it really wasn't who the FNMI people were.

If real Indians were acting then they would be paid tobacco and firewater. They would also have armed guards to make sure the FNMI people wouldn't do anything treacherous. They were all seen as horsemen, and supposedly

all FNMI people could ride a horse. " In the movies all natives are supreme horsemen, at one with their horse.

" Yet in reality, most FNMI people don't even know how to ride a horse. The hollywood Indians set a tone for the real FNMI people, that they should know how to ride a horse and that they should be all these other things which they really shouldn't be." The Savage Indian" was described as prominent, violent, and unreasonable. The filmmakers disrespected FNMI culture by using " Tonto speak.

" They recorded English backwards instead of using the actual FNMI peoples language. Most of the time FNMI people weren't even the actors, they just had white actors play the role of an Indian. They were also generalized and used as props, instead of making them regional they thought it would be easier just to call them " Indians." They weren't interested in distinguishing the tribes, so to make it simple, all Indians are Plains Indians. In the documentary it said, " This is an ingenious act of colonialism, you are essentially robbing nations of an identity and grouping them into one." In the movies they all wore chickens on their heads, headbands, and finger necklaces.

Yes, headbands were used by the FNMI people, but they usually weren't worn by the Plains Indians. They only wore the headbands in the movies so that when there was action in the film the wigs wouldn't fall off, but then it got popularized and everyone started to wear them. The filmmakers just took away tribes identities and just made them all the exact same.

In the 1960s Hippies became Indians. This is when " The Groovy Indian" was born, they were a free-spirited, fictionalized image of FNMI, influenced by hippies. The hippies characterized Indians poorly in the sense that they wore and did things real FNMI people would never do. Sacheen Little Feather was one of the people to object. Someone told her she looked like a hippie. Once she found out what a hippie looked like, she was very surprised. She didn't look anything like a hippie and she knew FNMI people didn't look anything like that either. This quote said by Melinda Micco proves my point: " One of the ways you can honour native people is to dress like them, the hippies wear the headbands to do so but the native people were saying we actually don't dress like that.

" She also did modelling in her earlier days and was put in " hippie" outfits to represent the FNMI peoples culture, however it was the idea everyone thought FNMI people were. This wrong perception led Non-FNMI to represent Native people in a completely different manner, as hippies. First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people were profiled, embarrassed, mocked, and stereotyped on the screen. Not only were they portrayed as something that they were not, but they didn't even have FNMI people playing themselves a lot of the times. This documentary was a great way to show how they were continued to be oppressed and also to restore some honour and dignity to their once mighty nation.

The documentary showed the truth about FNMI people and how they were treated unfairly. It is important for us to understand the truth about FNMI people so that we can truly reconcile.