

Unexpected Languages: Multilingualism and Contact in Eighteenth-
Nineteenth-century North America
Lisa Philips

This introduction introduces this special issue of *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, which brings together a set of essays that integrate two seemingly disparate intellectual trends in the humanities and social sciences. On the one hand, there is the work of Philip Deloria on American Indians in “unexpected places.” On the other hand, there is the work of linguistic anthropology. Deloria’s writings have been integral to the growing corpus of critical approaches to the study of Native peoples, including the ways in which representational practices of the past continue to resonate, and the ways in which (de)colonization of indigenous histories and structural (in)equities are intertwined. We say seemingly disparate because this line of scholarship, including Deloria’s work, is concerned with the naturalization of inequalities, the ways in which expectations about Native Americans peoples have led to a denial of coevalness. However, there is also a tradition in linguistic anthropology—from Boas through Hymes—that has sought to understand the ways in which linguistic inequalities are naturalized and circulated. In this introduction we trace out the contours of that history of linguistic anthropology as it has engaged with issues concerning the structural and physical violence of linguistic inequalities, racism, and colonialism. Our intervention is to place linguistic anthropology in a meaningful dialogue with contemporary Indigenous Studies.

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