If You’re an Alien, and I’m an Alien, then Who’s Driving the Spaceship?

An Exploration of the Treatment of Indigenous Peoples in Science Fiction

By Hannah Roberts
Historical Inspiration

- World Lit class with Dr. Cheryl Duffus
- Accounts of Columbus, Cabeza de Vaca, and Díaz (about service under Cortés)
- Ideological and colonial imperialism
- Privileging of “civilization”
- Entitlement
Imperialism as a Trope

As Embodied by *Alien* Franchise

[Most evidently in *Aliens* (1986) and *Alien: Covenant* (2017)]
Aliens (1986)

Colony, Hadley’s Hope, on LV-426

Weyland-Yutani company representative, Burke-> wanted to sell aliens as biological weapons

Ripley’s goal is to exterminate aliens->burns eggs and queen’s ovipositor
Colonization ship, *Covenant*, headed for Origae-6
- Find a planet even more perfect for human life
- 2,000 colonists and 1,140 human embryos

Android, David, experimented and killed off native life in an attempt to play God
Anthropocentrism

Internal rhetoric of series: who can colonize who first
- Appropriation of materials

Western Culture’s fear of being colonized back

Prioritization of humanity’s interests above all
Indigenous Sci-Fi Authors

- Reversal of colonialism
- Flight- Sherman Alexie
- Killer of Enemies- Joseph Bruchac
- Midnight Robber- Nalo Hopkinson (written in Patois-> Carribean dialect)
- Walking the Clouds: An Anthology of Indigenous Science Fiction