

American Indian Rhetorics

AL891.002, Spring 2012

Dr. Malea Powell

289 Bessey Hall

517-432-2583

powell37@msu.edu

Office hours –

Mondays, 1-3 p.m., and by appointment

Andrea Riley-Mukavetz

274 Bessey Hall

517-355-2400

rileyan1@msu.edu

Office hours –

Wednesdays, 10-12 p.m. and by appointment

Course Goals

The goal of this course is to explore American Indian rhetorical practices. We'll take a broad historical approach in order to make productive intellectual connections between ancient rhetorical practices (like petroglyphs), pre-contact rhetorical practices (like wampum and/or wintercounts), and post-contact practices (like beadwork, creative and academic writing, music, and multimedia composition). At least part of our time together will be spent thinking about how indigenous rhetorical practices work to "make" meaning for American Indian cultures and communities (tribal and pantribal) as well as how those practices are used to make meaning inside the interdiscipline of American Indian Studies, and how they can contribute inside our own fields/disciplines.

What we'll actually do – read, talk, write, read, talk, see, listen, visit, write, read, talk, write. Write. You bring your own interests and to the table. we've organized some readings and experiences. Together we'll think about our practices as scholars who are gathered together in order to think about rhetorical practices, we'll talk about how Native people engage in the practice of meaning-making, and we'll practice ways to understand the rhetoricity of those productions. In the end, we hope that we'll learn new ways to tell some habitable stories about American Indian rhetorics.

Course Requirements

Texts, Access, Materials --

You'll need to have access to a computer connected to the internet in order to use our ANGEL course site. You'll also need to have a way to read the PDF files in the Course Reader – either on-screen or printed out – and have those materials with you during class time.

Books you'll need to buy

Apress, selections from *A Son of the Forest and Other Writings*. (O'Connell, ed.)

Blue Spruce & Thrasher, eds. *The Land Has Memory*.

Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast*.

Chrystos, *Not Vanishing*.
 Driskill, Justice, Tatonetti, Miranda, eds. *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literatures*.
 Dunlop & Fountain-Blackledge, *The Indians of Hungry Hollow*.
 Erdrich, *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country*.
 Harjo, *The Woman Who Fell From the Sky*.
 Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony*.
 Womack, *Art As Performance, Story As Criticisms: Reflections on Native Literary Aesthetics*.

Available in the Course Reader on ANGEL

Alexie, "Indian Boy Love Song," *The Business of Fancydancing*.
American Indian Quarterly 30.3&4 (Summer/Fall 2006).
 Blackbird, *Complete Early and Late History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan, A Grammar of Their Language, Personal and Family History of the Author*.
 Blackbird, *The Indian Problem From the Indian Standpoint*
 Chrystos, "The Old Indian Granny," *Reinventing the Enemy's Language* (Harjo & Bird, eds.).
 Driskill, "Beginning Cherokee," *Walking With Ghosts*.
 Driskill, Finley, Gilley, Morgensen, eds., selections from *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature*. (Driskill, Finley, Rifkin, Morgensen)
 Erdrich, H., "Craving: First Month," *Sister Nations: Native American Women Writers on Community* (Erdrich & Tohe, eds.).
 Ettawageshik, "My Father's Business," from *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*.
 Geniusz, selections from *Our Knowledge is Not Primitive: Decolonizing Botanical Anishinaabe Teachings*.
 Gould, "Coyotismo," *Reinventing the Enemy's Language* (Harjo & Bird, eds.).
 Gunn Allen, selections from *American the Beautiful*.
 Haas, "Wampum as Hypertext: An American Indian Intellectual Tradition of Multimedia Theory and Practice," *SAIL* 19.4 (Winter 2007)
 Harjo & Bird, "Introduction," *Reinventing the Enemy's Language*.
 Howe, L., "The Story of America," *Clearing a Path: Theorizing a Path in Native American Studies* (Shoemaker, ed.).
 J. Clifford, "Identity in Mashpee," *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, Art*.
 Johnston, *Tales of Nokomis*.
 Konkle, selections from *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863*.
 Lyons, "Rhetorical Sovereignty: What American Indians Want From Writing," *CCC* 51.3 (Feb 2000).
 Maracle, "The First Wives Club: Coast Salish Style," *First Wives Club*.
 Maracle, *On Oratory*
 Miranda, "Dildos, Hummingbirds, and Driving Her Crazy," *Reading Native American Women: Critical/Creative Representations* (Hernandez-Avila, ed.).
 Native Tech wampum history, <http://www.nativetech.org/wampum/wamphist.htm>
 NMAI, *The Changing Presentation of the American Indian: Museums and Native Cultures*
 Powell, "Listening to Ghosts," *AltDis: Alternative Discourses and the Academy* (Schroeder, Fox & Bizzell, eds.).
 Powell, "Rhetorics of Survivance, How American Indians Use Writing," *CCC* 53.3 (Feb 2002).
 Smith, "Rape and the War Against Native Women," *Reading Native American Women: Critical/Creative Representations* (Hernandez-Avila, ed.).
 Tehanetorens, *Wampum Belts of the Iroquois*.

The Wampum Chronicles, <http://www.wampumchronicles.com/>
 Tuhiwai-Smith, selections from *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*.
 Vizenor, "Aesthetics of Survivance," *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence* (Vizenor, ed.).
 Warrior, selections from *The People and the Word: Reading Native Nonfiction*.
 Williams, selections from *Linking Arms Together: American Indian Treaty Visions of Law and Peace, 1600-1800*.
 Yazzie Hunter, "Old Great-Grandma," *Reinventing the Enemy's Language* (Harjo & Bird, eds.).

Work, Production, Community –

Attendance, participation & collegiality

Everyone in the course is a member of the intellectual community we're creating. We are all responsible for finding ways to be helpful, engaged, productive and decent in our relations with one another. This doesn't mean not asking difficult questions, or not disagreeing with one another – in fact, it often means doing just that, but doing it in a way that opens and furthers discussion. There are some simple practices that arise from your responsibility as a member of this community. First, you need to be in class every day. If you can't be in class, it's your responsibility to catch up on what you've missed in a timely fashion. Second, you must participate in class discussion and course activities regularly and with a good heart. This means keeping an eye toward the needs of the whole group, not just on your own needs as an individual, and consistently striving to be thoughtful and productive in your engagement with others. This community-minded approach makes the regular academic display and competition nearly impossible to maintain; it does so on purpose.

Weekly Writings

One of the ways that you'll consistently make a contribution to the intellectual community of the course is through weekly writings on our ANGEL blog or discussion group (we'll decide which works better in the first week, then stick with one forum after that). Each week you'll have a 1-2 page critical response writing due to the ANGEL blog/discussion list no later than noon on the Sunday prior to our class meeting. These writings serve as an opportunity for you to demonstrate intellectual engagement with the course materials & with the issues and discussions that arise from those materials. A critical response writing should not be a summary or a surface-skim of the readings for that week; instead they should form a provisional response to that week's readings, explore issues raised by those readings, articulate questions across readings, or demonstrate you practicing theory in a deliberate, specific way. (For theory newbies, see the "advice to reading theory" handout posted in ANGEL.)

There are 15 required weekly writings. Twice during the semester you can (but aren't required to) substitute your detailed notes on the readings for a critical response writing – these should be e-mailed directly to me via ANGEL with a subject line indicating what they are.

Once during the semester, your weekly writing will lead our class discussion. You will sign up for date of this responsibility during the first day of class.

After-Break Writing

This 3-5 page report is due on March 13th by 5 p.m. Your task over break – in addition to the regular work of the course – will be to find a substantial piece (or a collection of pieces) of scholarship in your own field/discipline that is firmly situated in American Indian or indigenous

studies, read it, think about the rhetorical practices it enacts, and report back about your findings.

Final Project

This 10-15 page (or the equivalent) project is due on Friday, May 4th by 5 p.m. The central task for this project is to enact native rhetorical practices as they intersect with your own work in your own field/discipline. Whatever form your project takes – digital, alphabetic, visual, audio, filmic, multimedia – it will appropriately document all source materials used and consulted in compliance with the most recent MLA, APA or Chicago style guidelines for in-text and bibliographic source citations. Due to the wide variety of your scholarly experiences and interests, final projects will be individually negotiated with the professor. The purpose of this final project is to give you the opportunity to apply, extend, practice or situate the teachings you've experienced in relation to your own scholarship or teaching. The project can be exploratory or it can function as a professional product/performance – how you decide to approach or align the project depends on your own intellectual and professional goals. As we work together to plan the project, we'll balance your own goals, interests and program of study with the challenges that theory might present to those self-interests. In order to be successful with this project, you should meet with Dr. Powell to specifically discuss your project at least once by April 10th. However, we encourage you to meet with us much earlier and more often than this in order to have the most successful project possible.

Grading

Grading is tricky in a graduate seminar. When Dr. Powell evaluates your performance at the end of the semester, she'll look at it in two ways – your daily performance & participation (weekly writings, discussion responsibilities, attendance, participation) and your project work (conferences, group work, rhetorical analyses, group project). Though we won't grade your materials during the semester, we will respond evaluatively in writing. If you have any questions or concerns about what those responses mean, about the quality of your work in general, or how your work to-date might translate into a grade, please talk to us.

If you have any questions at any time during the semester, please let us know.

Daily Syllabus

Note – all readings & assignments must be completed by the date they are listed on the syllabus.

January 10

To READ

L. Howe, "The Story of America"
 Maracle, *On Oratory*
 Lyons, "Rhetorical Sovereignty"
 Powell, "Rhetorics of Survivance"

To Do

Weekly Writing, in class

January 17

To READ

Johnston, *Tales of Nokomis*
 Introduction from Harjo & Bird, *Reinventing the Enemy's Language*
 Powell, "Listening to Ghosts"
 Plus the following poems:
 Driskill, "Beginning Cherokee"
 Alexie, "Indian Boy Love Song"
 Gunn Allen, selections from *American the Beautiful*
 Erdrich, H., "Craving: First Month"
 Gould, "Coyotismo"
 Yazzie Hunter, "Old Great-Grandma"
 Chrystos, "The Old Indian Granny"

And a story:

Maracle, "The First Wives Club: Coast Salish Style"

To Do

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

January 24

To READ

Apess/O'Connell, ed., *A Son of the Forest*:

O'Connell, "Introduction," pgs. xiii-lxvii (opt.);
 Apess, "A Son of the Forest," pgs. 1-100;
 Apess, "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man," pgs. 154-161;
 Apess, "Indian Nullification," pgs. 163-274;
 Apess, "Eulogy on King Phillip," pgs. 275-310.

Konkle, "Introduction" and "William Apess, Racial Difference, and Native History"

Warrior, "Introduction" and "Eulogy on William Apess: His Writerly Life and His New York Death"

J. Clifford, "Identity in Mashpee"

To Do

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

January 31TO READ

Brooks, *The Common Pot*

Tuhiwai-Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*:

“Introduction”;

“Imperialism, History, Writing and Theory”;

“Notes From Down Under”

TO DO

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

February 7TO READ

Tehanetorens, *Wampum Belts of the Iroquois*

Williams, *Linking Arms Together*:

“National Mythologies and American Indians”

“Conclusion: Understanding American Indian Treaty Visions of Law and Peace”

Haas, “Wampum As Hypertext”

Native Tech wampum history, <http://www.nativetech.org/wampum/wamphist.htm>

The Wampum Chronicles, <http://www.wampumchronicles.com/>

TO DO

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

February 14TO READ

Chrystos, *Not Vanishing*;

Smith, “Rape and the War Against Native Women”

Miranda, “Dildos, Hummingbirds, and Driving Her Crazy”

From *Sovereign Erotics*: “Introduction”; Sections I-II

From *Queer Indigenous Studies*:

“Introduction”

Finley’s “Decolonizing the Queer Native Body”

Rifkin’s “The erotics of sovereignty”

TO DO

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

February 21To READ

Harjo, *The Woman Who Fell From the Sky*;

From *Sovereign Erotics*: Sections III-IV

From *Queer Indigenous Studies*:

A. Smith's "Queer Theory & Native Studies,"

Driskill's "Cherokee Two-Spirit People Reimagining Nation"

and the multi-authored conclusion "the revolution is for everyone"

Morgensen's "What Can Non-Natives Learn from Two-Spirit organizing" (opt.)

To Do

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

February 28To READ

Womack, *Art As Performance, Story As Criticism*

To Do

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

March 13 - making dayTo READ

Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony*

Riley-Mukavetz, "Re-Listening to the Theories of the Circle Women," excerpt from dissertation

"Talking Circles with multi-generational women of the Little Traverse Bay Band"; Education and Leadership, excerpt from DVD

To Do

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

March 20 - CCCC - no class meeting**March 27**To READ

Erdrich, *Books & Islands in Ojibwe Country*

Vizenor, "Aesthetics of Survivance"

To Do

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

April 3To Read

Blackbird, *Complete Early and Late History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan, A Grammar of Their Language, Personal and Family History of the Author*
 Blackbird, *The Indian Problem From the Indian Standpoint*
 Supplemental materials for Andrew J. Blackbird, Harbor Springs, and the Little Traverse Bay Band.

To Do

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

April 10To Read

Dunlop, *The Indians of Hungry Hollow*
 Geniusz, selections from *Our Knowledge is Not Primitive*
 Ettawageshik, "My Father's Business," from *Unpacking Culture*
 TBD

To Do

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

April 17To Read

Blue Spruce & Thrasher, *The Land Has Memory*
 NMAI, *The Changing Presentation of the American Indian*
 AIQ 30.3&4 (Summer/Fall 2006), special issue/section on the NMAI

To Do

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

April 24 - making dayTo Read

TBD, Native Music

To Do

Weekly Writing due by Sunday at midnight

Course Evaluations

Thursday, May 3, 5:45 p.m.

Feast & project sharing