

ENGL 6350: STUDIES IN NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE

Cultural Mediation: Identity, Land, Nation

Spring 2002

Thurs. 6:30-9:30

Dr. Ellen Arnold

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Office hours: T/Th 9:30-11,-12:30-2, and by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This graduate seminar will examine fiction, poetry and personal narratives by American Indians writing in the 20th century. We will read one novel from the early part of the century, but our primary focus will be Renaissance and post-Renaissance writers (from the 1970s to the present). Our studies will be interdisciplinary, including not only literary history and theoretical approaches and controversies, but also political, historical, and cultural contexts. In particular, we will explore the processes of cultural conflict, exchange, and mediation that shape and are shaped by Native American literature, and consider how Indian identities are constructed in literature within those processes, especially in relation to language, land, nation, and sovereignty.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

REQUIRED TEXTS:

D'Arcy McNickle, Wind From an Enemy Sky
Leslie Marmon Silko, Ceremony
Louise Erdrich, Tracks
Gordon Henry, Jr., The Light People
Joy Harjo, In Mad Love and War
Craig Womack, Drowning in Fire
Delphine Red Shirt, Bead on an Anthill
Philip Red Eagle, Red Earth
Linda Hogan, Power
Marilou Awiakta, Abiding Appalachia
Barbara Duncan, Living Stories of the Cherokee

RECOMMENDED TEXTS (also on reserve at Joyner Library):

Winona LaDuke, All Our Relations
Arnold Krupat and Brian Swann, Here First: Autobiographical Essays by Native American Writers

RESOURCES ON RESERVE:

Paula Gunn Allen, The Sacred Hoop
Joseph Bruchac, Survival This Way (interviews)
Laura Coltelli, Winged Words (interviews)
M. Annette Jaimes, The State of Native America (essays on contemporary issues)
Arnold Krupat, Ethnocriticism
Arnold Krupat, The Voice in the Margin
Arnold Krupat and Brian Swann, Here First
Louis Owens, Other Destinies
John Purdy and James Ruppert, Nothing But the Truth
A. LaVonne Ruoff, American Indian Literatures (bibliography)
James Ruppert, Mediation in Native American Literature
Greg Sarris, Keeping Slug Woman Alive
Brian Swann and Arnold Krupat, I Tell You Now (autobiographical essays)
Craig Womack, Red on Red

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION: Regular attendance and active participation are essential to this class. One absence is permitted, no questions asked; each additional absence will lower your grade by one-half a letter grade. Participation includes: arriving on time and staying the full class period; coming to class fully prepared with all required materials and assignments and a list of questions or points you would like to bring up in class discussion; responding with appropriate feedback to the written work, presentations, and comments and questions of other class members; providing input and feedback to the instructor regarding the structure and goals of the class; active, respectful listening and questioning. **Please come to every class prepared to do the Close Reading or Key Term exercise described below.**

JOURNAL: You will keep a reading journal for making notes and recording your personal reflections on course materials. The journal is for your private use; I will not take them up or read them, but you will be required to draw on your journal responses for class discussion and formal papers. You may also be asked to write short responses or quizzes in class, for which you may use the notes in your journals; therefore, you will want to be sure to bring your journal to every class period. For maximum effectiveness, coordinate your journal with active reading of the texts by underlining key words and phrases, making notes in the margins, and noting page

numbers of key quotes and references in your journal.

PAPERS: Short in-class papers should be handwritten (or printed if your handwriting is difficult to read) in ink on lined paper that is not torn out of a spiral notebook. Therefore, you should come to class every day with an ink pen and unlined loose notebook paper, in addition to your syllabus, a notebook for taking notes in class, your journal, and the assigned reading material. All papers written outside of class should be typed on a computer, double spaced, with standard 1 inch margins, normal 12 point font, and MLA format (Gibaldi, MLA Handbook, 5th ed.). All written assignments should be titled, each page numbered with a running head that includes your last name, and stapled. Please proofread and edit your papers carefully; I encourage you to exchange papers with your classmates for proofing and editing assistance.

Reaction Papers: You will write five short (3-4 pages) reaction papers, each comparing two primary texts. In these papers, you will trace your personal responses to the books, their associated critical/contextual essays, class lectures, and discussions. Reaction papers should be written in the first person (using the word "I"), but should be polished essays centered on a specific theme. A good reaction paper will balance personal opinion and reflection with critical analysis. See the attached handout for suggestions; look at this sheet each time you complete a reading assignment to help stimulate responses for your reading journal.

Critical Paper: You will write one longer (8-10 pages) critical paper on a novel or poetry collection of your choice that we did not read in class, using at least four critical sources. You may choose another work by one of the authors we are studying, or something by a different writer altogether. I will give you suggestions, and we will discuss your choices in class.

GROUP PRESENTATION: Each class member will participate in a groups of 2 or 3 to prepare a 45-minute presentation on one of texts we are studying. The presentations will provide background on the author, historical and cultural contexts, and starting points for discussion. Each class presentation should be accompanied by a 1-page handout outlining key points (biographical information, other published works, main themes, etc.) and a 2-page annotated bibliography of five sources (interviews, critical articles, cultural/historical background, etc.) that are especially useful for interpreting the text.

GRADING:

Attendance/participation/ short responses	20%
Group presentation	20%
Reaction papers	30%
Final Paper	30%

PROJECTED CALENDAR:

- 1/10 First Class: Syllabus Review, In-class Journal Write (see assignment below),
Introductory Lecture
- 1/17 **Due:** Journal Summary
Ruppert, Mediation: "Introduction" (vii-xiii)
McNickle, Wind From an Enemy Sky
- 1/24 Silko, Ceremony (1-153)
Gunn Allen, "The Sacred Hoop" (in The Sacred Hoop or Nothing But the Truth, 62-81)
- 1/31 Ceremony (153-262)
Silko, "Interior and Exterior Landscapes" (article on reserve)
Ruppert, Mediation: "Mediation" 3-21, "No Boundaries" (74-91)
Group I: Silko
Due: Reaction Paper I
- 2/7 Erdrich, Tracks
LaDuke, "White Earth" (115-138)
- 2/14 Tracks
Castillo, "The Silko-Erdrich Controversy" (in Nothing But the Truth, 15-22)
Group II: Erdrich
- 2/21 Henry, The Light People
Henry, "Entries into the Autobiographical I," in Here First (164-181)
Due: Reaction Paper II
- 2/28 Harjo, In Mad Love and War
Womack, Red on Red: "Introduction" (1-24), "The Creek Nation"+ (25-49), and "Joy
Harjo" (223-261)
Group III: Harjo
Due: Critical Paper Topic

- 3/7 NO CLASS (SEWSA Conference)
Begin Womack, Drowning in Fire
- 3/14 SPRING BREAK
- 3/21 Drowning in Fire
Due: Progress Report on Critical Paper Topic
Due: Reaction Paper III
- 3/28 Red Shirt, Bead on an Anthill
Krupat, Ethnocriticism: "Native Amer. Autobiog. and the Synecdochic Self" (201-231)
Group IV: Red Shirt (Oglala Lakota); Red Eagle (Dakota/Salish), the "Sioux"
- 4/4 Red Eagle, Red Earth
LaDuke (139-162), "Buffalo Nations"
Due: Reaction Paper IV
- 4/11 NO CLASS (Native American Literature Symposium)
Begin Hogan, Power
- 4/18 Power
LaDuke (27-48), "Seminoles"
Hogan, "The Two Lives," in I Tell You Now (233-249)
Group V: Hogan
- 4/25 Awiakta, Abiding Appalachia
Duncan, Living Stories of the Cherokee (xi-73, 143-187)
Due: Reaction Paper V
- 4/29 **Due:** Critical Paper
- 5/2 FINAL EXAM; Individual Reports on Critical Papers

Note: All items on this syllabus are subject to revision, depending on the needs and interests of the class and the professor.

Inclement Weather: Check www.ecu.edu/alert/ or 328-0062.

Contacting the Professor: You will get a quicker response from me if you contact me by email rather than by phone. Please be sure to provide a readily identifiable subject line (e.g. ENGL 6350).
FIRST JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT (Summary Due 1/17)

In your personal journal, freewrite several pages of reflection on the knowledge, preconceptions, opinions and emotions that you bring to this class. Please be informal and do not censor yourself. These reflections will form the basis of class discussion. After class, continue to freewrite on anything else that comes to mind. Then summarize your reflections in a paragraph or two to be turned in to me on 1/17)

What do you know about Indians?

What do they mean to you?

Think back to your childhood; what games, TV shows, movies, books, or events shaped your ideas about Indians?

What feelings accompanied these experiences?

What emotions do you have now remembering them?

What fantasies did/do you entertain about Indians?

What have Indians symbolized for you?

How have your early ideas been reinforced or changed by more recent experiences?

What did you learn about Native Americans in school?

What contacts have you had with living Native Americans?

What do you hope to get from this class?

CLOSE READING ASSIGNMENT:

Choose a passage from the text (1 or 2 sentences to a paragraph) that you think is particularly significant for understanding the meaning of the text as a whole. Describe the passage: what is it about?; whom does it involve?; what does it accomplish in the text?; what does it set up or resolve?; what is its relationship to the text as a whole? Situate the passage in the context of the text in which it is embedded. Is it typical or paradigmatic of the text as a whole, or does it provide some kind of rupture or shift? Why did you choose this passage? What does it mean to you?

KEY TERM ANALYSIS: Choose a word or short phrase from the text (it may be contained in the passage you selected or elsewhere; it may be obvious or marginal) that you think is critical to an understanding of the novel, poem, or story as a whole. Explain the term and its importance to the text. How is the meaning of the term developed within the text, and how does it help build the meaning of the text

as a whole?

READING JOURNALS/REACTION PAPERS

Have your journal available each time you read any material for the course. Jot down responses as you read, and when you are done, reflect more broadly on the text as a whole. Link your responses to specific illustrations and passages in the text (don't forget page references!). Use your journal responses to generate questions or points you wish to bring to class for discussion and to generate ideas for your reaction papers. The following are some questions you can consider:

Content/Analysis

Who are the main characters? What are their relationships to each other? Their roles in their communities and in the text itself?
What recurring images and symbols help tie the text together? How do they contribute to the development of what you consider to be the primary themes?
What historical or cultural forces do you see at work in the texts, both overt and implied?
What cultural and social values are expressed in the text? How are they similar to or different from the social and cultural values that are familiar to you?

When comparing each text to others, what commonalities of theme, method, and style did you observe among the readings?
Differences?
How do you explain the similarities and differences among the texts?
What questions occurred to you in the course of reading the assignments that were not answered? What was extra or didn't seem to fit?
What kind of explanations might account for these omissions or inclusions?

Personal

Did you like or dislike the material?
What exactly did you like or dislike and WHY? Give specific examples (with dates and page numbers for future reference).
How did you feel while you were reading/participating in class?
What images, associations, or memories came to mind?
What surprised, shocked, or disturbed you? Disappointed you or made you angry? Enlightened or inspired you?
What internal conflicts did you experience? (Try writing a conversation or debate between two parts of yourself about conflicting ideas or feelings.)
What bored you? Can you explain WHY you were not engaged?
What experiences or expectations (relating to your life history, your education, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, or religion) do you bring to the reading that might help you understand your reactions?
What did you learn of personal significance to you that has either challenged or confirmed your thinking?

WEBSITES FOR INFORMATION ON NATIVE AMERICANS AND NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE

www.richmond.edu/faculty/ASAIL

homepage for the Association for the study of American Indian Literature, with links to Native American studies Programs in the US and Canada, announcements, subscription information, and texts of journals to 1987, with indices to more recent volumes

www.hanksville.org/native/

Virtual Library of American Indians, index of Native American resources on the Internet

www.uwm.edu:80/People/mwilson

site for the on-line Native Literature Journal Gohweli, course syllabi, etc.

www.Jupiter.lang.osaka-u.ac.jp/~krkuls/naindex.html

Library of Native American literature, cultures, education, history, and language resources

<http://info.pitt.edu/~lmitten/aila.html>

American Indian Library Association Homepage

www.nativeweb.org

NativeWeb, resources for indigenous cultures around the world

<http://cs.fdl.cc.mn.us/natnet/index.html>

NativeNet, website dedicated to "protecting and defending Mother Earth and the rights of indigenous people worldwide"

www.indiancountry.com

website of America's largest Indian newspaper, offering news, archives, editorial features, and more

www.dickshovel.com

First Nations site index, lists many internet Native American resources; offers links to information about political issues, which must be read critically

www.indiancircle.com

Indian Circle Webring, lists the more than 550 federally recognized Indian tribes of the continental USA and Alaska, with links to 100 active tribal homepages

www.ipl.org/ref/native/

Native American Authors site, with bibliographies, biographical information, and links to other resources

www.oyate.org/main.html

evaluations of resource materials and fiction by and about Native peoples; teaching materials

INDIANS IN NORTH CAROLINA AND THE SOUTHEAST

WEBSITES:

www.cherokee-nc.com Eastern Band Cherokee Homepage

www.lumbee.org Lumbee Homepage

www.oceaneechi-saponi.org Occaneechi Band (Saponi Nation) Homepage

www.doa.state.nc.us/cia/indian.htm North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs

www.mindspring.com/~tipi/powwow.html Listing of regional powwows

www.powwows.com Information about powwows across the U.S.

www.ncai.org National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)

www.doi.gov/bia/tribes Federally Recognized Tribes (Bureau of Indian Affairs)

MUSEUMS:

Frisco Native American Museum (252-995-4440), PO 399, Frisco, NC 27936

Museum of the Cherokee Indian (828-497-3481), PO Box 1599, Cherokee NC 28719

Guilford Native American Art Museum and Gallery (336-273-6605)

200 North Davie St., Greensboro, NC 27401

Museum of the Native American Resource Center (910-521-6282)

Old Main Building, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Pembroke, NC 28372

North Carolina Indian Culture Center and Henry Berry Lowrie House (910-521-2433)

(Site of annual Lumbee Powwow), PO Box 2410, Pembroke, NC 28372

University of North Carolina at Pembroke (910-521-6249)

PO Box 1510, Pembroke, NC 28372-1510

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

Gaillard, Frye. Photographs by Carolyn DeMeritt. As Long As the Waters Flow: Native Americans in the South and East. Winston-

Salem: John Blair, 1998.

"Indian Country: N.C.'s Native People." Our State: North Carolina 68.6 (2000). 44-72.

Moore, Marijo, ed. Feeding the Ancient Fires: A Collection of Writings by North Carolina American Indians. Crossroads Press, A Project of the North Carolina Humanities Council. 1999. (ISBN 0-9672180-0-4)