

ENGL/WMST 4671
NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS

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Hours: MF 9-10, TR 2-3 (or by appt.)

Texts (available at the bookstore; there may also be some Xeroxed readings)

Allen, Paula Gunn. *Spiderwoman's Granddaughters*. New York: Fawcett Columbine (Ballantine), 1989.
Crow Dog, Mary (with Richard Erdoes). *Lakota Woman*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1990.
Erdrich, Louise. *The Antelope Wife: A Novel*. New York: Harper Flamingo, 1998.
Hale, Janet Campbell. *The Jailing of Cecelia Capture*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986.
Lurie, Nancy Oestreich (ed.). *Mountain Wolf Woman: Sister of Crashing Thunder: The Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1966.
Silko, Leslie. *Gardens in the Dunes*. New York: Scribner Paperback Fiction, 2000.

Course Objectives

We will consider various contemporary and traditional works written by Native American women, with special emphasis on socio-cultural contexts of each work. We will pay special attention to issues of gender and identity as they surface in the poetry, fiction, and autobiography we read. We will also consider the extent to which the works bridge traditional and contemporary Native American perspectives, themes, and literary styles. Our consideration of cultural contexts and implications of the literature will lead to larger questions and issues regarding both women's studies and Native American studies. Gender and identity often surface most poignantly in the work of women whose lives are marginalized in the mainstream. Our discussions may lead us to ponder as well more general issues connected to the cannon and contextual studies of literature.

Course Description

This course will involve lectures and discussions of the works students will read outside the classroom as homework. The professor will offer contextual information for the cultures and authors of each of the works to be considered and will lead students in careful textual analysis of the novels we read. You are *not* required to have any prior knowledge of Native American cultures or women's studies. Most important is a sense of curiosity about Native Americans, women's studies, issues of culture and identity, and a willingness to do the readings and participate in the course. You will write a short critical response to a reading, a final, in-depth, analytical essay, and a final exam that will give you an opportunity to discuss comparatively the works and issues from class.

Requirements

- T One short critical response to an assigned reading (1-2 pages). You do not have to do any research or additional reading but should merely write detailed analysis of one particular passage from one of our readings in which you interpret that passage.
- T A final exam in which you answer specific essay questions about our readings and discussions. You should show an awareness of class issues, strong analysis of readings, and synthesis of your original insights.
- T An analytical essay (8-10 pages) in which you explore in depth one or more works of Native American literature, either according to a theoretical or contextual framework from class, or an equivalent one you research on your own.
- T Regular, active attendance. Be prepared to ask and answer questions, and to raise and discuss issues of significance to this class.
- T Timely completion of all assignments. Readings are to be completed **before** the lecture on the day on which they are to be discussed.

Grading

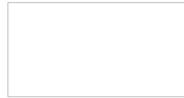
Critical Response & Participation:	20%
Examination:	30%
Final Essay:	50%

Grades on individual assignments will be based on effort and thoughtfulness as well as correctness of logic and development of ideas. Critical responses should use the text as a guide in analysis. Prior to mid-semester, you will receive feedback on your academic performance in this course.

Notes

- < E-mail me if you have any questions or concerns about the class, readings, or assignments.
- < It is your responsibility as a student to keep up with work and any changes in the syllabus (even for classes you may miss). Late work will not be accepted and make-up exams will not be possible. Attendance in this class is mandatory. Respectful participation is expected.
- < Cheating and plagiarism are unethical and unacceptable (and a waste of your tuition). Doing your own work helps you learn and makes the most of your experience here. Cheaters will fail.
- < This syllabus is a guide and is subject to revision. It is your responsibility as a student to note and adhere to any changes.

We are ascending through the dawn
The sky blushed with the fever
of attraction. ~Joy Harjo (2000)



Calendar of Classes / Readings

NOTE: Readings should be completed before the beginning of class on the date assigned

Week 1

Tues, 8-18 Introduction & brief history/survey of major geographic and cultural areas
Thurs, 8-20 Begin discussion Paul Gunn Allen, READ: 1-64

Week 2

Read and discuss Paula Gunn Allen, *Spiderwoman's Granddaughters*
Tues, 8-26 Gunn Allen, 65-126
Thurs, 8-28 Gunn Allen, 127-187

Week 3

Read and discuss Gunn Allen and Lurie, *Mountain Wolf Woman*
Tues, 9-2 Gunn Allen (concluded), 188-277
Thurs, 9-4 Lurie, 1-83 (appendices optional)

Week 4

Read and discuss Crow Dog, *Lakota Woman*
Tues, 9-9 Crow Dog, 1-91
Thurs, 9-11 Crow Dog, 92-155

Week 5

Crow Dog (cont.) and begin Diane Glancy, *Pushing the Bear*
Tues, 9-16 Crow Dog, 156-263
Thurs, 9-18 Glancy, 1-60

Week 6

Read and discuss Glancy
Tues, 9-23 Glancy, 60-118 CRITICAL RESPONSES DUE
Thurs, 9-25 Glancy, 121-161

Week 7

Read and discuss Glancy
Tues, 9-30 Glancy, 165-232
Thurs, 10-2 Art and History of the Trail of Tears

Weeks 8

PAWS to think (both Tues and Thurs -- NO CLASS -- work on papers)

Week 9

Read & discuss Hale, *The Jailing of Cecilia Capture*
Tues, 10-14 Hale, 1-99
Thurs, 10-16 Hale, 100-142

Weeks 10

Read and discuss Hale (cont.)
Tues, 10-21 Hale, 143-201
Thurs, 10-23 POETRY (handout) FINAL ESSAY TOPICS DUE (appts. for office conf.)

Week 11

Read and discuss Erdrich, *The Antelope Wife*
Tues, 10-28 Erdrich, 1-41
Thurs, 10-30 Erdrich, 42-71

Week 12

Read and discuss Erdrich (cont.)
Tues, 11-4 Erdrich, 72-129
Thurs 11-6 Erdrich, 130-181

Week 13

Read and discuss Erdrich and Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes*
Tues, 11-11 Erdrich, 183-240
Thurs, 11-13 Silko, 13-64

Week 14

Read & discuss Read and discuss Silko's *Gardens of the Dunes*
Tues, 11-18 Silko, 67-149
Thurs, 11-20 153-197 FINAL ESSAYS DUE

Week 15

Read & discuss Silko (cont.)
Tues, 11-25 201-267
Thursday THANKSGIVING -- NO CLASS

Weeks 16 Read & discuss Silko (cont.)

Tues, 12-2 Silko, 271-427
Thurs, 12-4 Silko, 431-477

Week 17
Tues, 12-9

FINAL EXAM (in class)
2-4:45 p.m. -- in-class essay exam (no make-ups)