

WMST 4671
NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS

www.faculty.de.gcsu.edu/~mmagouli

Instructor: Dr. Mary Magoulick Office Phone: 445-3177
Office: A&S 3-21 magoulick@yahoo.com Hours: TBA

Texts

Allen, Paula Gunn. *The Woman Who Owned The Shadows*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1983.
Crow Dog, Mary (with Richard Erdoes). *Lakota Woman*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1990.
Deloria, Ella Cara. *Waterlily*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990.
Erdrich, Louise. *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2001.
Green, Rayna. *That's What She Said: Contemporary Poetry and Fiction by Native American Women*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984
Hale, Janet Campbell. *The Jailing of Cecelia Capture*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986.
Hogan, Linda. *Power*. New York: WW Norton & Co., 1998
Howe, Leanne. *Shell Shaker*. Aunt Lute Books, 2001.
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. What is important is a sense of curiosity about Native American women writers and their cultures and a willingness to do the readings and participate in the course. You will also 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

- 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 about the ideas you had while reading.
- A final exam in which you discuss (in essay form) the works read during the session. Your discussion should show an ability to synthesize class readings and discussions with your own original insights.
- 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.
- Regular, active attendance. Be prepared to ask and answer questions, and to raise and discuss issues of significance to this class.
- 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: 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.

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.
- This syllabus is a guide and is subject to revision. It is your responsibility as a student to note and adhere to any changes.

Calendar of Classes / Readings

Week 1 - Brief history / survey of major geographic and cultural areas (slide lecture)

Week 2 - Read and discuss poems and stories from Green's anthology

Week 3 - Read and discuss Deloria's *Waterlily*

Week 4&5 - Read and discuss Crow Dog, *Lakota Woman*

Weeks 6&7 - Read and discuss Gunn Allen's *The Woman Who Owned the Shadows*

Weeks 8&9 - Read & discuss Campbell's *The Jailing of Cecilia Capture*

Weeks 10&11 - Read & discuss Read and discuss Silko's *Gardens of the Dunes*

Week 8 - **CRITICAL RESPONSE DUE**

Weeks 12&13 - Read & discuss Hogan's *Power*

Weeks 14&15 - Read & discuss Erdrich, *Last Report on Miracle at Little No Horse*

FINAL ESSAYS DUE

Week 16 - Final discussions and **FINAL EXAM**

ENGL 4671 NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE

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Instructor: Dr. Mary Magoulick Office Phone: 445-3177

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Texts (for a general version of the course)

Alexie, Sherman. *Reservation Blues*. Warner Books, 1996.

Erdrich, Louise. *Love Medicine: New and Expanded Version*. New York: HarperCollins, 1993 (originally published 1984).

Hogan, Linda. *Solar Storms*. New York: Scribner, 1997.

Momaday, N. Scott. *The Ancient Child*. New York: HarperCollins, 1990.

Owens, Louis. *Dark River: a Novel*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999.

Purdy, John and James Ruppert (editors). *Nothing But the Truth: An Anthology of Native American Literature*. New York: Prentice Hall, 2000.

Silko, Leslie. *Ceremony*. New York: Penguin Books, 1986 (originally published 1977).

Swann, Brian. *Coming to Light. Contemporary Translations of the Native American Literatures of North America*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.

Course Objectives

We will read and discuss various contemporary and traditional literature written by Native Americans, with special emphasis on cultural contexts of each work. Only recently has Native American literature been allowed into the canon of literary studies, yet it represents some of the most profound and metaphorically rich writing today. Native American cultures today remain vital, in the process of a dynamic renewal of identity, as each of our readings will demonstrate. By examining some traditional Native American literature (as we explore the contexts of our texts), we will also ponder the meaning of tradition and authenticity and more generally the dynamics of culture. Although many Native American writers today draw upon themes, images, and characters from traditional Native American myths, tales, and songs, they nonetheless set their works in our world, often focusing upon blending of cultural impulses and demonstrating the ongoing vitality of their cultures in the contemporary world. Our consideration of cultural contexts and implications of the literature will lead to larger questions and issues regarding both Native American history and the overall importance of context in the study of literary texts.

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Calendar of Classes / Readings

Week 1 - Brief history / survey of major geographic and cultural areas (slide lecture)

Week 2 - Read and discuss traditional Native American literature (from Swann reader)

Weeks 3&4 - Read and discuss Silko, *Ceremony*

Weeks 5&6 - Read and discuss Momaday, *The Ancient Child*

Weeks 7&8 - Read & discuss Erdrich, *Love Medicine* **CRITICAL RESPONSE DUE**

Weeks 9&10 - Read & discuss Alexie, *Reservation Blues*

Weeks 11 - Read & discuss poetry (from Purdy reader)

Weeks 12&13 - Read and discuss Hogan, *Solar Storms*

Weeks 14&15 - Read and discuss Owens, *Dark River* **FINAL ESSAYS DUE**

Week 16 **FINAL EXAM**