Anthropology 333: Native American Literatures
Spring 2003
Cabell 341, MW 3:30-4:45

Course Description:
In this course we will explore contemporary Native American written and oral literatures. We will be addressing the question of how Native American Literature has been defined and what part American Indian languages and cultures may have to play in this definition. Two issues will run throughout the class. First, we will question received ideas about the distinction between "oral tradition" and "literature". And secondly, we will ask how our own cultural assumptions influence the way we understand works of Native American Literature and consider the extent to which ethnographic accounts of language use and meaning within Native American contexts may change our understandings. We will compare the written work of contemporary Native American authors with examples of oral performances by persons living in Native American communities, including performances recorded by local artists, educators, anthropologists, linguists and folklorists. Our reading will be interwoven with experiences of films, audio-recordings, poetry-slams, and Web publications.

Grading policy
The course is designed so that each student turns in some writing for every class. For the majority of classes these will take the form of typed responses to the reading assigned for a given day. To get full credit, reading responses must be 1/2-1 page long. Students will write four 3-5 page essays on texts read for the class. Students will also develop an ethnopoetic analysis of a text of their choosing and present the results of their work to student workshop groups. On days when a paper or project is due, students are not required to turn in reading responses. Student grades will be based upon:
- four 3-5 page papers, 16% each
- an ethnopoetic project, 16%
- reading responses, 10%
- evidence of involvement with the class--including regular attendance, participating in class discussion or small group discussion, writing to the class e-mail list, coming to office hours, 10%

Required reading
Sherman Alexie, The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven

Dell Hymes, *Reading Takelma Texts*

Refugio Savala, *The Autobiography of a Yaqui Poet*

Evers and Molina: *Yaqui Deer songs*

Additional articles in the course schedule are also required reading. They will be available through toolkit's electronic reserve and at other locations online as specified in the schedule.

**Recommended**

Julie Cruishank, *Life Lived Like a Story: Life Stories of Three Yukon Native Elders*

In conjunction with our readings on various Native American groups and languages, look these up in *Ethnologue: Languages of the United States* to find out what you can about the language, native language literacy efforts, and current population.

**Schedule**

**Week 1**

*Wed 1/15*: Introduction to the class
View: *2001 World Heavyweight Championship Poetry Bout: Sherman Alexie vs. Saul Williams*

**Contemporary Fiction**

**Week 2**

*Mon 1/20*: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Alexie, pp. 1-53
Listen to Alexie reading "Dear John Wayne"
For an author bio, and information about Alexie's other works in print and film, check out the official Sherman Alexie website.
For background on the Wounded Knee Massacre and the Ghost Dance go to *The Wounded Knee Massacre*, information contributed by Lori Liggett at Bowling Green State University, American Culture Studies Program.
Also, see *The official Coeur d'Alene Tribal website*, and *The official page of the Spokane Tribe*.

*Wed 1/22*: Alexie, pp. 54-103

**Week 3**

*Mon 1/27*: Alexie, pp. 104-153
**Paper 1 assignment given**
Watch first portion of the motion picture *Smoke Signals*

*Wed 1/29*: Alexie, pp. 154-223
**Class meets in Clemons 201** to watch the second portion of the motion picture *Smoke Signals*

**Last Day to Drop**

There are many other contemporary Native American authors who it would be well worth your
while to learn about. You can do so at the Internet Public Library's Native American Authors site. Here you will find bibliographies of published works, biographical information, and links to online resources including interviews, online texts and tribal websites.

January 31: Last Day to Add

Oral Narratives as Contemporary Literatures

Week 4
Mon 2/3: Jahner "A Critical Approach"
Silko, "Yellowwoman"
View Running on the Edge of the Rainbow: Laguna Stories and Poems, with Leslie Marmon Silko.

Paper 1 due
Wed 2/5: Basso, "Stalking with Stories: Names, Places and Moral Narratives Among the Western Apache"
Heath, "What No Bedtime Story Means: Narrative Skills at Home and School"
Optional: Read texts 19-23 of Chiricahua and Mescalero Apache Texts
Watch first portion of videorecording The Origin of the Crown Dance: An Apache Narrative and Ba'tsoosee: An Apache Trickster Cycle with Rudolph Kane
Cibecue, the community Basso describes, is located on the White Mountain Apache Reservation. Explore the official website of the White Mountain Apache Tribe.

Week 5
Mon 2/10: Frey, pp. xiii-38
Listen to Paul Ethelbah's Ndah Ch'iidn
Wed 2/12: Frey, pp. 39-107
Watch second portion of videorecording The Origin of the Crown Dance: An Apache Narrative and Ba'tsoosee: An Apache Trickster Cycle with Rudolph Kane

Week 6
Mon 2/17: Frey, pp. 108-168
Wed 2/19: Frey, pp. 169-231
Paper 2 assignment given

Week 7
Mon 2/24: Sarris, "Keeping Slug Woman Alive: The Challenge of Reading in a Reservation Classroom"
Check out a webpage representing the Kashaya Pomo
Wed 2/26: Dennis Tedlock "On the Translation of Style in Oral Literature"
Paper 2 Due

Week 8
no class--spring break
Native American Languages, Poetic forms

Week 9
Mon 3/10: Hymes, "Some Northwest Pacific poems"
Listen to Paul Ethelbah's Deer Song
Wed 3/12: Barre Toelken and Tacheeni Scott, "Poetic Retranslation and the 'Pretty Languages' of Yellowman"

Week 10
Mon 3/17: Hymes, pp. 1-22
Chose a text to work on from Chiricahua and Mescalero Apache Texts
Ethnopoetic project assigned
Wed 3/19: Hymes, pp. 23-42
Exercise: recognizing lines and verses
Last Day to Withdraw

Week 11
Mon 3/24: Hymes, pp. 43-65
Exercise: recognizing stanzas, scenes and acts
Listen to Ethelbah "He Became an Eagle"

Hybrid Genres, Cross-Cultural Translation, Cultural Encounter

Wed 3/26: Silverstein, "The Secret Life of Texts"
Read "Old Apache Customs", "A Mescalero's Prophecy in Chiricahua and Mescalero Apache Texts"
recognizing genre and metacommunicative cues.

Week 12
Mon 3/31: Hanks, "Discourse Genres in a Theory of Practice"
Ethnopoetic Project due

Week 13
Mon 4/7: Savala, pp. 27-50, 155-170; 51-72, 171-184
Wed 4/9: Savala, pp. 73-94, 185-196; 95-117, 197-206
Paper 3 assignment given

Week 14
Mon 4/14: Savala, pp. 117-144, 207-218
Strategies for Presenting Poetic Genres in Cultural Context

**Wed 4/16**: Evers and Molina ch 1  
**Paper 3 assignment due**

**Week 15**

**Mon 4/21**: Evers and Molina ch 2  
Watch *Yaqui Flower World* videorecording  
**Paper 4 assignment given**

**Wed 4/23**: Evers and Molina ch 3

**Week 16**

**Mon 4/28**: Evers and Molina ch 4  
**last day of class**

**Mon 5/5** **Paper 4 due**-- leave them for me at the Anthro office during regular hours or in my box in the basement of Brooks Hall.