This Course is Dedicated to the Memory of Paul Gunn Allen

Literature as Told, Written & Directed by American Indian Women
(An Introduction)
Fall 2008

English 6339-002
Instructor: Dr. Roemer
W: 6-9 PM
Preston Hall 304
roemer@uta.edu

GOALS (& MEANS)

1. To introduce students to several important texts spoken, performed, written, and/or directed by American Indian women (readings, class discussions, films). The emphasis will be primarily but not exclusively on written texts originally composed in English. For authors who have written several book-length works, I selected titles that concentrated on women (e.g.: Hogan's *Solar Storms*; Erdrich's *Tales of Burning Love*);
2. To introduce students to texts that represent a variety of historical periods and literary genres and to examine the importance of historical, cultural, and genre influences on the production and reception of the texts (readings, class discussions);
3. To foster critical examinations of gender, though our discussions of the texts will not be limited to gender (class discussions, exams);
4. To introduce students to “classic” and recent critical and theoretical articles related to the course (readings, class discussions);
5. To help students to develop critical writing and research skills (exams and paper);
6. To help students to develop oral discussion skills (class discussions, including group discussions/presentations).

Students who complete the assignments successfully and participate consistently and constructively in class discussions should obtain an awareness of the nature and diversity of Native women’s literature and its study and the ability to articulate this awareness in oral and written forms.

For specific means of assessment and grading criteria see the Examinations, Paper, and Approximate Grading Weights sections of the Syllabus.

REQUIRED READINGS The last two readings are the longest; pace you accordingly.
For the Hopi Coyote story & Silko’s *Running*: wordsandplace.arizona.edu

Course Packet (CP) at the UTA Bookstore [brief primary sources, historical and cultural background, including brief excerpts from *Indian Country Today*, and critical and theoretical articles; see the table of contents at the end of the syllabus]; Allen, *Spider Woman's Granddaughters*; Underhill, *Papago Woman*; Silko, *Storyteller*; Sarris / Mckay, *Mable Mckay*; Tapahonso, *Saantii Dahataal*; Harjo, *She Had Some Horses*; Hogan, *Solar Storms*; Erdrich, *Tales of Burning Love*. Also four films and two videotapes (see below).
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS, EXAMS, AND PAPER

Introductions: The Topic, the Course, the Instructor 8/27
Personal Contexts: Panel of Metroplex Professional Women

American Indian "Herstory" and Criticism
Reading: Handouts; Course packet (CP): Utter, Roemer, short articles from Indian County Today; Allen’s Introduction to Spider Woman’s Granddaughters; Course Packet (CP): Van Dyke, Kilcup, Ad for Chamberlain, Allen (“Kochinnenako in Academe”), and the four articles from the June 2008 American Quarterly special issue on Native Feminisms [see also the “Paper” section of this syllabus: the resources bibliography] 9/3

Oral to Written (and Viewed) Literatures

19th- and 20th-Century Life Stories: Spoken, Told-Through, Written in Non-Fiction, Fiction & Poetry, & Filmed
Readings: Zitkala Sa (CP) [non-fiction, single author] Papago Woman [cross-cultural, told-through] Sarris/Mckay, Mable McKay [dialoging lives] 9/17

First Take-Home Exam Distributed (due 10/1) 9/24 & 10/1

20th-Century Poetry: Rural/Urban; Tribal/Pan-Tribal; Full-Blood/Mixed-Blood
Readings: (CP): selections, e.g., Rose, Hogan, and Endrezze 10/1
Readings: Tapahonso, Saanii Dahataal, Harjo, She Had Some Horses 10/8

Second Take-Home Exam Distributed (due 10/15) 10/8 & 10/15

19th- & Early 20th-Century Short Stories & Novels (see Karen Kilcup's Native American Women's Writing, 1800-1924 [2000])
Reading: In Allen: Zitkala Sa, Johnson, Deloria, Humishima 10/15

Late 20th-Century Short Stories & Novels (For a broad sampling of short fiction and excerpts from novels, see Joy Harjo's and

**Readings:**
- Sears (in Allen), (CP): Hill, Glancy, Power 10/22
- Reading: Hogan, *Solar Storms* 10/22, 10/29
- Reading: Erdrich, *Tales of Burning Love* 11/5, 12

**Three Sisters & Beauty; Suburban, Urban, Rural; Film, Vaudeville Drama, Documentary**

**Viewing/Reading:** Red-Horse's *Naturally Native* & CP Corrigan 11/12

**Required Conference on Paper Prospectus (due)** 11/19

**Viewing:** Spiderwoman, Theatre's, *Sun, Moon, and Feather*
- Billy Luther, *Miss Navajo* 12/3

**Paper Due**  (I do not accept e-mailed papers. 12/3

**Review for Exam** 12/3

**Final Examination** 12/10

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Examinations**

There will be two take-home exams (due 10/1 and 10/15) and one in-class final exam (12/10). All the exams will require you to apply concepts discussed in class and in the critical readings to specific primary texts. For the (open-book) final, I will distribute and discuss a study sheet during the last class. For all the exams I will expect you to concentrate on the specific issues presented in the questions and to support arguments with relevant examples from the primary and critical texts.

**Research Paper**

Length: approximately 3,750 – 5,000 words (15-20 pages; MLA format); due date: **December 3.** The paper should demonstrate your ability: (1) to define a focus and argument that you can justify as being significant to readers; (2) to integrate your own ideas and the ideas of scholars and critics; i.e., enter the critical conversation about the text(s); (3) to support arguments adequately and to organize them in logical and convincing ways; (4) to write a coherent and engaging paper that also demonstrates mastery of the basic mechanics of writing. The focus should be strongly influenced by the length requirement. Too broad a focus will invite a superficial paper; focusing too narrowly can lead to repetition. You may wish to concentrate on one text or to do a comparative study. The methodological approach is open; for example, New Critical detailed readings, cultural, feminist, biographical, ethnic, postcolonial, or historical studies are all acceptable, though I do want the focus to be on (a) "primary" text(s), (which could be a film), rather than on the theory or criticism.
Guidelines for the **paper prospectus (due 11/19):**

1. **Thesis / Significance** (short paragraph): indicate the short story(ies), book(s), poem(s), or film selected for examination; define the primary argument(s) claim(s), or question(s); indicate the significance of your focus and thesis (i.e., address the "So what question?").

2. **Feasibility** (short paragraph): Is it possible to address this thesis adequately in a fifteen –to twenty-page research paper and in a one-semester course? Does our library or do other Metroplex libraries or interlibrary loan or the Internet have the resources you will need.

3. **Method** (short paragraph): identify the critical approach(es) to interpretation that you will use. Indicate why these are appropriate for your focus) and your thesis.

4. **Tentative Organization** (brief outline): In a few sentences justify how you will order the paper.

5. **Preliminary Bibliography** (short-title list of the most important secondary sources you have found by Nov. 19).

The most valuable Metroplex general resource for research on American Indian literatures is **UTA's MultiCultural Collection** on the second floor of the Central Library. Selected written and Internet Resources include:

Other Words; Louis Owens, Mixedblood Messages; Chad Allen, Blood Narratives; Robert Dale Parker, The Invention of Native American Literature; Daniel Heath Justice. Our Fire Survives [Cherokee]; David Murray, Matter, Magic and Spirit: Representing Indian and African American Beliefs; Mary Lawlou, Public Native America [museums, powwows, casinos]. Literary critical sources (general) Abraham Chapman, ed., Literature of the American Indian; Paula Gunn Allen, ed., Studies in American Indian Literature; The Sacred Hoop; Kenneth Lincoln, Native American Renaissance; Arnold Krupat, Voice in the Margin; Ethnocriticism; The Turn to the Native; David Murray, Forked Tongues; Brian Swann, ed., Recovering the Word and (with Krupat) New Voices in Native American Literary Criticism; Roger Dunmore, Earth's Mind; Amelia V. Katanski. Learning to Write “Indian”; Joel Pfister, Individuality Incorporated James Cox, Muting White Noise (regional) Larry Evers, ed. The South Corner of Time (anthology); Eric Gary Anderson, American Indian Literature and the Southwest; Annette Trefzer, Disturbing Indians: The Archeology of Southern Fiction; Lisa Brooks, The Common Pot: Indigenous Writing and the Reconstruction of Native Space in the Northeast. (oral literatures) William M. Clements, Native American Verbal Art; Karl Kroeber, ed., Traditional Literature of the American Indian; Kroeber, Artistry in Native American Myths; Jarold Ramsey, Reading the Fire; Dell Hymes, In Vane I Tried to Tell You: Brian Swann, ed., Smoothing the Ground; Clements, Oratory in Native North America; (life narratives) H. David Brumble, American Indian Autobiography; Arnold Krupat, For Those Who Come After; Hertha Wong, Sending My Heart Back Across the Years; Kay Sands, Telling a Good One; David Carlson, Sovereign Selves; (poetry written in English) Michael Castro, Interpreting the Indian; Kenneth Lincoln, Sing With the Heart of the Bear; Norma Wilson, Native American Poetry; Robin Riley Fast, The Heart as a Drum; Dean Rader and Janice Gould, eds. Speak to me Words: Essays on Contemporary Indian Poetry. (drama) Hanay Geiogamah, ed., New Native American Drama; Stories of Our Way; Mimi Gisolfi D'Aponte, ed., An Anthology of Native American Plays; (fiction) Charles Larson, American Indian Fiction, Louis Owens, Other Destinies, Richard Fleck, ed., Critical Perspectives on Native American Fiction, James Ruppert, Mediation in Contemporary Native American Fiction, Catherine Rainwater, Dreams of Fiery Stars, Sid Larsen, Captive in the Middle, Susan Berry Brill de Ramirez, Contemporary American Indian Literatures and the Oral Tradition, Joni Adamson's American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice and Ethnocriticism; David Treuer, Native American Fiction: A Users manual; Sean Teuton. Red Land, Red Power; (non-fiction) Robert Warrior, Tribal Secrets; The People and the Word; Maureen Kronkle, Writing Indian Nations; (children’s literature) Doris Seale and Beverly Slapin, ed., A Broken Flute. Important journals include: SAIL (Studies in American Indian Literatures), which has its own excellent Web sites (see below), American Indian Culture and Research Journal (AICRJ), American Indian Quarterly (AIQ), and Wicazo Sa Review, Some excellent articles have also appeared in less specialized journals such as Critical Inquiry, College English, American Literary History, PMLA, Modern Fiction Studies, and American Literature. Surveys of scholarship / the field: Elvira Pulitano, Toward a Native American Critical Theory; Shari Hudendorf, “Literature and Politics of Native American Studies.” PMLA 120 (2005): 1618-26; Philip Deloria, “American Indians, American Studies, and the ASA.” American Quarterly 55 (2003): 669-702; Jace Weaver, “More Light than Heat: The Current State of Native American Studies.” American Indian Quarterly 31.2 (2007): 233-55; Jace Weaver, Craig Womack, Robert Warrior. American Indian Literary Nationalism; Chris Womack, Daniel Heath Justice,
and Christopher Teuton. Janice Acoose, Lisa Brooks, Ted Foster, Leanne Howe, eds. Reasoning Together: The Native Critics Collective. Bibliographical guides to articles and books on specific authors can be found in recent issues of American Literary Scholarship, the PMLA Bibliographies, SAIL, AICRJ. Many Web sites can provide information on Native writers in general and on specific authors. Besides the SAIL site (<http://oncampus.richmond.edu/faculty/ASAIL/>, there is a good Listserv for ASAIL members. One of the best general sites is <www.anpa.ualr.edu>, the American Native Press Archives. Another excellent Web site is the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers (<www.wordcraftcircle.org/>). For children’s literature oyate@oyate.org. The many Individual author books include the new MLA Approaches to Teaching volume on Erdrich and an earlier volume on Momaday. For a sampling of the hundreds of individual author Web sites, see <www.google.com>. See also: <nativeauthor.com>, <www.ipl.org/ref/native/>, <www.english.uiuc.edu/maps> (e.g., Momaday homepage), and <users.mwci.net/~lapoz/MBio.html>. General Web sites: There is a general "American Indian Resources" Web site: <jupiter.lang.osaka-u.ac.jp/~krkvis/naindex.html>. A more recently created search engine is: http://google.com/coop/cse?cx=012776738606739689892%3Alg7yc_isxlo, The Fall 1998 issue of Wicazo Sa (13.2) offers an outdated but useful overview of Internet resources in Native American studies. For information on American Indian literatures and the American literature canon, see <www.uta.edu/english/roemer/ctt> -- a resource guide for American literature anthologies.

APPROXIMATE GRADING WEIGHTS, WARNINGS, AND INVITATIONS

Take-Home Exams 20% (10% each)
Final Exam 30%
Research Paper 50%

Contact me if at any time during the semester you are uncertain about your grade status.

Warnings: (1) Dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism) will be handled according to University procedures, which can include expulsion. Chapter 2 of the MLA Handbook offers good examples of what constitutes plagiarism. (2) Professors are not allowed to drop students for excessive absences. If you drop, please follow University procedures. In this course for every three unexcused absences, the semester grade will drop by a half-letter grade.

Encouragement and Invitations: Consistent and constructive class participation and improvement can elevate semester grades significantly. Also I am very willing to work with students who have disabilities. At the beginning of the semester, these students should provide me with documentation authorized by the appropriate University office. Students seeking academic, personal, and social counseling should contact the Office of Student Success (817-272-6107).

Course Packet for Literature as Told, Written, and Directed by Native American Women English 6339 Roemer

General Background
1 from Utter, *American Indians* (2nd Ed.)
4 Roemer, “Timeline: Literary, Historical, and Cultural Conjunctions”

**Indian Country Today articles**

10 Harjo, “Watch Your Language”
11 Harjo, “Respect Native Women – Stop Using the S-Word”
12i Reynolds, “Call for Equity for Indigenous Women”
13 Melmer, “Lakota Society Helps Victims of Violence”
17 Newcomb, “Fire Thunder’s Historic Inauguration Day”
18 Adams, “Indian Maidens Enliven Miss America Pageant”
19 Adams, “Two Companies Enter Pin-up Model Market”
21 Ad for “Women of the Navajo” calendar
22 Carrying the Legacy: Women’s Leadership Conference
23 Indigenous Grandmas Nearly Kicked Out of Vatican
25 Women’s Dance Continues to Churn Strength
26 Ad for Morning Bird Song doll [not from *Indian Country Today*]

**Scholarly Overviews and “Discoveries”**

27 Van Dyke, “Women Writers and Gender Issues”
37 Kilcup, “Writing ‘The Red Woman’s America’ ”
45 Announcement for the writings of Betsey Chamberlain

**Criticism and Theory (see also Hernandez-Avila’s *Reading Native American Women*)**

46 Allen, “Kochinnenako in Academe”
59 Smith and Kauaniu, Native Feminisms Engage American Studies
64 Goeman, (Re)Mapping Indigenous Presence on the Land In Native American Women’s Literature
69 Ramirez, Learning Across Differences: Native and Ethnic Studies Feminisms
72 Smith, “American Studies without America: Native Feminisms and the Nation-State

**Oral Narratives, Life Narratives, Poetry, Fiction**

76 Wiget, “Telling the Tale: Performance Analysis of a Hopi Coyote Story”
97 Zitkala Sa, "The School Days of an Indian Girl," from *American Indian Stories*
116 Brief selections from Duane Niatum's *Harper's Anthology of 20th-Century Native American Poetry*
135 Glancy, "Aunt Parnetta's Electric Blisters"
139 Hill, "Taking Care of Business"
145 Power, "Christianity Comes to the Sioux"

**Introduction to Film Terminology**

151 Brief excerpts from Corrigan, *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*