

University of New Mexico
American Studies 550.001
Spring 1999
M 2:00-4:30
Ortega Hall 313

(Auto)Historiography/Ethnography/Biography

Tribal Narratives

James Treat, Assistant Professor
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Course Description

This graduate seminar offers an interdisciplinary survey of contemporary tribalist autoinscriptions and of selected critical and theoretical approaches relevant to their interpretation. Course texts feature conventional (modernist) historical, ethnographic, and biographical accounts as well as trans-genre tribal narratives informed by postmodern sensibilities: books by Joe Sando, Alfonso Ortiz, Maria Campbell, N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, Gerald Vizenor, Ray Young Bear, and Greg Sarris, and films by Gary Robinson, Arlene Bowman, Gerald Vizenor, and Victor Masayesva, Jr. Critical essays by scholars representing a variety of humanistic and social scientific disciplines introduce useful theoretical perspectives and analytical tools. Key themes include: problems of representation and narrative strategy; intersections of chronology, community, and character; boundaries of genre; dialectics of time and space, history and myth, culture and personality; transformations of orality and literacy.

Course Readings

These texts are available for purchase at the UNM Bookstore and are also on two-hour closed reserve at the Reserve Desk in Zimmerman Library:

Sando, Pueblo Nations (1992)
Ortiz, The Tewa World (1969)
Campbell, Halfbreed (1973)
Momaday, The Way to Rainy Mountain (1969)
Silko, Storyteller (1981)
Vizenor, The People Named the Chippewa (1984)
Young Bear, Black Eagle Child (1992)
Sarris, Mabel McKay (1994)

Course Requirements

Final grades will be assigned according to the following schedule:

Attendance and Participation	40%
Research Presentation (15 min.)	20%
Research Paper (15 pp.)	40%

Course Schedule

January 25

Course Introductions

Film: "Este Mvskoke"

February 1

Sando, Pueblo Nations: Eight Centuries of Pueblo Indian History (1992)

Mihesuah, "Voices, Interpretations, and the 'New Indian History': Comment on the American Indian Quarterly's Special Issue on Writing About American Indians," American Indian Quarterly 20, no. 1 (1996)

King, "Surrounded by Indians: The Exhibition of Comanche and the Predicament of Representing Native American History," The Public Historian 18, no. 4 (1996)

Vizenor, "Socioacupuncture: Mythic Reversals and the Striptease in Four Scenes," in The American Indian and the Problem of History, ed. Martin (1987)

February 8

Ortiz, The Tewa World: Space, Time, Being and Becoming in a Pueblo Society (1969)

Dewitt, "A Conversation with Alfonso Ortiz," La Confluencia 1, no. 2 (1976)

Basso, "History of Ethnological Research," in Handbook of North American Indians, vol. 9, Southwest, ed. Ortiz (1979)

Whiteley, "The End of Anthropology (at Hopi)?" in Indians and Anthropologists: Vine Deloria, Jr., and the Critique of Anthropology, ed. Biolsi and Zimmerman (1997)

February 15

Campbell, Halfbreed (1973)

Lutz, "Maria Campbell," in Contemporary Challenges: Conversations with Canadian Native Authors (1991)

Bataille and Sands, "American Indian Women's Narratives," in American Indian Women: Telling Their Lives (1984)

Georgi-Findlay, "The Frontiers of Native American Women's Writing," in New Voices in Native American Literary Criticism, ed. Krupat (1993)

February 22

Research: Library Resources

Film: "Navajo Talking Picture"

March 1

Momaday, The Way to Rainy Mountain (1969)

Woodard, "Into the Sun," in Ancestral Voice: Conversations with N. Scott Momaday (1989)

Wilson, "Speaking of Home: The Idea of the Center in Some Contemporary American Indian Writing," Wicazo Sa Review 12, no. 1 (1997)

Jahner, "Metalanguages," in Narrative Chance: Postmodern Discourse on Native American Indian Literature, ed. Vizenor (1989)

March 8

Silko, Storyteller (1981)

Coltelli, "Leslie Marmon Silko" in Winged Words: American Indian Writers Speak (1990)

LaGrand, "Whose Voices Count? Oral Sources and Twentieth-Century American Indian History," American Indian Culture and Research Journal 21, no. 1 (1997)

Sarris, "The Verbal Art of Mabel McKay," in Keeping Slug Woman Alive: A Holistic Approach to American Indian Texts (1993)

March 15

Spring Break

March 22

Research: Progress Reports

Film: "Harold of Orange"

March 29

Vizenor, The People Named the Chippewa: Narrative Histories (1984)

Bruchac, "Following the Trickroutes: An Interview with Gerald Vizenor," in Survival This Way: Interviews with American Indian Poets (1987)

Blaeser, "The Wordmaker: Subverting 'Strategies of Containment,'" in Gerald Vizenor: Writing in the Oral Tradition (1996)

Krupat, "Introduction: Ethnocriticism," in Ethnocriticism: Ethnography, History, Literature (1992)

April 5

Young Bear, Black Eagle Child: The Facepaint Narratives (1992)

Ellefson, "An Interview with Ray A. Young Bear," in Speaking of the Short Story: Interviews with Contemporary Writers, ed. Iftekharuddin, Rohrberger, and Lee (1997)

Owens, "Other Destinies, Other Plots: An Introduction to Indian Novels," in Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel (1992)

Velie, "The Indian Historical Novel," Genre 25, no. 4 (1992)

April 12

Sarris, Mabel McKay: Weaving the Dream (1994)

McBride, "The Spider and the WASP: Chronicling the Life of Molly Spotted Elk," in Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History, ed. Brown and Vibert (1996)

Rose, "The Great Pretenders: Further Reflections on Whiteshamanism," in The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance, ed. Jaimes (1992)

Holman, "Photography as Social and Economic Exchange: Understanding the Challenges Posed by Photography of Zuni Religious Ceremonies," American Indian Culture and Research Journal 20, no. 3 (1996)

April 19

Research: Class Presentations

April 26

Research: Class Presentations

May 3

Course Evaluations

Film: "Itam Hakim, Hopiit"

May 10

Research: Papers Due

Academic Integrity

The American Studies faculty has adopted a formal policy on academic integrity, which is based on the "Policy on Academic Dishonesty" adopted by the University President:

Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty or otherwise fails to meet the standards. Any student judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in course work may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

I will be happy to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about academic and professional ethics, either during class or in an office appointment.

Special Accommodations

Please notify me as soon as possible if you experience any personal circumstances that might affect your participation in this course: medical conditions, physical limitations, learning disabilities, academic problems, emotional crises, family difficulties, or religious obligations. I will be happy to make reasonable accommodations when appropriate, provided that you notify me in a timely fashion. All personal information will be kept in strict confidentiality. Several important campus offices that you may find helpful are listed below:

Learning Support Services
Zimmerman Library 339, 277-8291

Student Support Services
Mesa Vista Hall 2021, 277-3506

Counseling and Therapy Services
Student Health Center, 277-4537

Agora Crisis Center
Student Union Building 20, 277-3013