

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
London **Canada**
Department of English

Testimony, Trauma and Revitalization in Indigenous Writings
ENG 9070B
Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays: 10:30-1:30
Currently On-Line

Spring/Summer 2020

Professor Julia Emberley PhD FRSC
Department of English and Writing Studies

Office Hours: Email or by appointment
(on Zoom if necessary)
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Course Description:

Students will read Indigenous critical and literary approaches to testimony and trauma studies in a transnational context. In Canada, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission opened up debates about the role of testimony in the contexts of human rights truth commissions and historical accountability. Students will read Indigenous storytelling and writings that address the Indian Residential Schools and their damaging effects on generations of Indigenous communities. Students may examine traumatic, testimonial and healing texts related to sexuality and gender, racism and genocide. They will also explore the meaning of “revitalization” for Indigenous writers today and how Indigenous peoples are determining their own futures through literature and literary scholarship.

Required Texts:

Richard van Camp (Dene, Dogrib Nation), *The Lesser Blessed*
Warren Cariou (Métis), “The Shrine of Badger King” from *The Exalted Company of Roadside Martyrs*.
Ma-Nee Chacaby (Ojibwe-Cree), *A Two-Spirit Journey: the Autobiography of a Lesbian Ojibwa-Cree Elder with Mary Louisa Plummer*
Cherie Dimaline (Métis), *The Marrow Thieves*
Tomson Highway (Cree), *Comparative Mythologies*
Basil Johnston (Ojibwe), *Indian School Days*
Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton (Inuvialuit), *fatty legs*
Eden Robinson (Haisla & Heitsuk), *Monkey Beach*
Gregory Scoffield (Métis) *Thunder Through My Veins*
Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg), *Dancing on the Turtle’s Back*
Katherena Vermette ((Métis), *The Break*
Joshua Whitehead (Ojibwey-Cree, Peguis First Nation), *Johnny Appleseed*

Other required articles and book selections will be made available on OWL

Course Evaluation:

Seminar Presentation 25%
Presentations are expected to be 20 minutes long, after which there will be additional time for discussion. Please do not read from a written text. This is an exercise in presenting material orally and leading class discussion. I recommend using power point to create an outline for presentation purposes. Please provide me with a copy of your outline before your presentation.

Response papers 15%
Please write a two page, double-spaced “response” to the day’s readings. You are required to do at least 5 days. Engage in a critical discussion with some aspect of the reading materials.

Participation 20%
Due to the concentrated nature of the course, attendance will be taken. Participation also includes contributions to class discussion.

Research Paper (6000 -8000 words): 40%
Students are required to submit an annotated bibliography of at least 15 academic sources on June 30th for 10% of the essay grade. Essay due July 15, 2020. Please note, an annotated bibliography requires that you read the source and provide two or three sentences of description, including the central argument.

Course Syllabus:

Week 1: Wed May 6 Introduction

Week 2: Decolonizing racism, homophobia and eurocentric epistemologies

Mon, May 11 Thomas King, “You’re Not the Indian I had in Mind?” from *The Truth About Stories* (on OWL)
Tomson Highway, *Comparative Mythologies*
Wed, May 13 Leanne Simpson, *Dancing on the Turtle’s Back*
Fri, May 15 “Introduction” from *Queer Indigenous Studies*, Qwo-Li Driskill et al. (on OWL)
TED Talk: TBA

Week 3: Indian Residential Schools

Mon, May 18 Official Holiday!
Wed, May 20 Basil Johnston, *Indian School Days*
Film: *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (88 min.) Jeff Barnaby, dir.
Fri, May 22 *The Survivors Speak* (TRC) <http://www.trc.ca/about-us/trc-findings.html>
“Repairing the Circle: A Conversation with Tomson Highway” From *Masculindians*, ed. Sam McKegney (on OWL in MASCULINDIANS INTERVIEWS)
TED Talk: TBA

Week 4: Intergenerational Trauma and the Revitalization of Family, Kin and Community

Mon, May 25 Eden Robinson, *Monkey Beach* and *Sasquatch at Home* (selection, see OWL)
Wed, May 27 Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, *fatty legs*
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/fatty-legs>

YouTube video: Fatty Legs Webinar Series: Part One - Meet the author of Fatty Legs (49 min)

Fri, May 29

Richard Van Kamp, *The Lesser Blessed*.

Kristina Fagan, "Weesageechak Meets the Weetigo: Storytelling, Humour, and Trauma in the Fiction of Richard Van Camp, Tomson Highway, and Eden Robinson" (on OWL)

Week 5: Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and Boys

Mon, June 1

Katherena Vermette, *The Break*

Wed, June 3

Films: *Finding Dawn*, Christine Welsh, dir. (73 min.)

Richard Cardinal: Diary of a Métis Child, Alanis Obomsawin, dir. (30 min.)

Selections from *The Winter We Danced*, The Idle No More Movement, Ed. The Kino-nda-niimi Collective (on OWL)

Fri, June 5

Cherie Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves*

Week 6 Sexuality, Identity and Healing

Mon, June 8

Selections from *Masculindians*: "This is a Vision: Lee Maracle"; "Our Bodies, Our Nations: Jessica Danforth"; "Affirming Protectorship: Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm." (see OWL: MASCULINDIANS INTERVIEWS)

Lisa Tatonetti, "Indigenous Fantasies and Sovereign Erotics: Outland

Cherokees Write Two-Spirit Nation" from *Queer Indigenous Studies* (on OWL)

Wed, June 10

Gregory Scoffield, *Thunder in my Veins* an

YouTube video, February 2020 at Vancouver Island University,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7pR-F2m4zaY>)

Fri, June 12

Quw-Li Driskill, "**D\$Y D#C (Asegi Ayetl)**: Cherokee Two-Spirit

People Reimagining Nation" from *Queer Indigenous Studies* (on OWL)

Joshua Whitehead, *Johnny Appleseed*

Week 7 Literatures of Survival and Beyond

Mon, June 15

Ma-Nee Chacaby, *A Two-Spirit Journey: The Autobiography of a Lesbian Ojibwa-Cree Elder with Mary Louisa Plummer*

Wed, June 17

Drew Hayden Taylor, "Cry Me a River, White Boy" from *Speaking My Truth: Reflections on Reconciliation and Residential School*. Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2012.

"Why Native People Listen to Elders," and "Why Non-Native People Should Listen to Elders" (On OWL – On Listening ...)

Fri, June 19

Catch up!

The following must be included on all course outlines:

Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words and for each class taken. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar, pp. 32-33). Plagiarism Checking: The University

of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

Senate Policy Regulations, UWO

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf>

The full policy is set out here:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

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