

**Title**

Analyzing Dream Woman's character in Ella Cara Deloria's *Waterlily*.

**Grade Level**

College juniors, seniors, and graduate students.

**Theme**

Appreciating the continuing influence of traditional Lakota stories on modern written literature (in a new language—English—and an alien narrative form—the novel).

**Duration**

3 sessions of 1.25 hours each.

**Goal**

Students will learn how to locate and research oral traditions in order to understand their contributions to modern fictional narrative.

**Objectives**

1. Students will come to appreciate that gender roles in traditional Lakota society differed considerably from Western notions, and to understand Lakota women's contributions to traditional designs.

**South Dakota Standards**

N/A.

**Cultural Background**

Information about Lakota culture and history in various media, particularly by Lakota authors, scholars, and artists; biographical information about Ella Cara Deloria.

**Student Activities**

1. Learning contract at the beginning of the course (Why are you in this class? What are your expectations of yourself, your peers, and me? What grade do you hope for, and what steps will you take to deserve that grade? What are your favorite books, videos, films? Do you work a job, and if so, what, and how many hours/week? Is there any other information about you that you'd like to share with me so that I will know you better?) Learning contracts are revised at mid-term and serve as a basis for the final reflection.
2. At the very beginning, free write (7 minutes max) on "What I think I know for sure about American Indians" and "What I think I know for sure about American Indian women."
3. Two-minute papers (on a small index card or piece of paper) about what students are learning about traditional Lakota women's roles as they progress through the novel. Two-minute papers are assigned at the beginning of class; they are anonymous and not graded. The instructor collects them and comments on them.

**Resources**

- The novel *Waterlily*.
- PBS and Humanities Council DVDs.

- Readings on the course management software class page.
- One or two Native women guest-speakers.
- Local exhibitions of porcupine quill work (in SD, the Sicangu Heritage Center Museum at Mission on the Rosebud Reservation, and the Heritage Center at Red Cloud Indian School in Pine Ridge).
- Please also see “Assessment Possibilities” and “References” below for further resources.

### **Assessment**

1. Microthemes (short essays of no more than 650 words, submitted electronically; microthemes are predominantly about textual analysis, so students will have to pay special attention to when and the way the passages about Dream Woman occur)
2. Online discussion forum contributions (Moodle) to more open-ended questions exploring the various female gender roles in *Waterlily*
3. Small group work (randomly selected by instructor to avoid cliques); groups remain stable throughout the semester/session, and each group will rotate recorders to submit findings online to the entire class within 24 hours
4. A final project (in groups or individual), topics ideally generated by students; those students in the College of Education may submit lesson plans; other projects might include a fuller study of porcupine quill “embroidery;” censorship of the novel by Deloria’s three Euroamerican female editors, who wished her to downplay spiritual details in a novel aimed at middle-class (white) women readers of romance fiction in 1947; other narrative conventions expected by readers accustomed to linear narrative in comparison with *Waterlily*’s circular structure.

### **References**

- Berlo, J. C. (1993). Dreaming of double woman: The ambivalent role of the female artist in North American Indian myth. *American Indian Quarterly*. 17.1: 31-43.
- Deloria, E. Two-Women. Untitled ethnographic notes manuscript, Delta, Box 2, Dakota Ethnography. Available online from the American Indian Studies Research Institute, Indiana University Bloomington. Permission to use this material must be obtained from Professor Philip J. Deloria, Professor of History and Director of the program in American Thought, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
- Gardner, S. (2009). Introduction to the new edition of *Waterlily*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, v-xxviii.

### **Developer**

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### **Date**

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