

INDIGENOUS



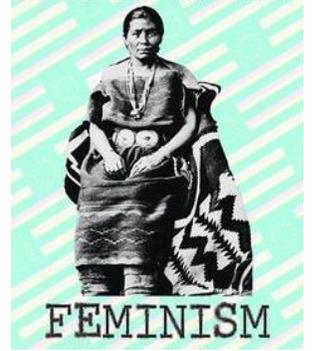
FEMINISM

Credit: RISE: Radical Indigenous  
Survivance & Empowerment

**Women's Studies 2119 – Fall 2019**  
**Indigenous Feminisms**  
**Mondays and Wednesdays, 8:30– 10:00 AM**  
**Thunder Bay: ATAC 5041; Orillia OA2020**

Instructor: Dr. Jan Oakley  
Email – [joakley@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:joakley@lakeheadu.ca)  
Office hours: Mondays, 10:00-11:00  
(or before/after class, or by appointment)  
Bora Laskin (Education) Building: BL-1027  
Or by phone: (807) 343-8701

DECOLONIZE



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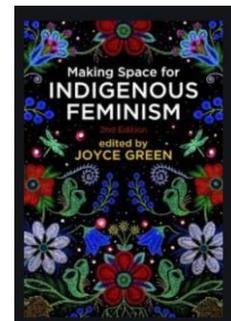
***Boozhoo, Tansi, Aaniin, Wotziye, Ho/Han, Tanshi, Asujutilli, Hello and Welcome...***

to Indigenous Feminisms! In this course we will examine how Indigenous feminisms cut across boundaries of nation, language, and culture. They respond to individuals' shared experiences under the combined effects of colonization and patriarchy, to address issues particular to Indigenous women's lives in settler-colony countries. We will consider Indigenous feminisms in relation to political eras, legislation, and social practices. We will also consider how Indigenous women resist colonial domination and work toward decolonization and cultural revitalization and resurgence.

**Required Text (available at the bookstore)**

*Making Space for Indigenous Feminism, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.*

Edited by Joyce Green. Fernwood Publishing, Black Point, Nova Scotia.  
Other texts and optional readings will be posted on our D2L website.



**Assignments/Marks Breakdown**

|                                                                                                                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <u>Class Participation</u> – evaluated throughout term                                                                            | 10% |
| <u>Personal Introduction and Land Acknowledgement</u> – due September 16                                                          | 10% |
| <u>Response to a Guiding Question of our Course</u> – due October 9                                                               | 20% |
| <u>Spotlight on an Indigenous Feminist Organization or Movement</u><br>(Paper and Presentation) – due Oct. 21, Nov. 4, or Nov. 25 | 25% |
| <u>Reading Response Journal</u> – due November 20 (or earlier)                                                                    | 35% |

## Guiding Questions for our Course

1. What are Indigenous feminisms?
2. Why is an understanding of colonialism central to an understanding of patriarchy?
3. What are the varying positions of Indigenous women activists and scholars in regard to feminism, and what is the rationale behind these positions?
4. Describe some structural forms of colonial violence (e.g., legislation, political ideology, social practices) and how they have impacted Indigenous women.
5. How have colonial practices impacted Indigenous women's status and gender roles in their communities?
6. How do Indigenous women resist colonial domination and violence? What are some of the ways they are working toward cultural resurgence and revitalization?

## Course Website

We will use a D2L website for course-related materials and announcements, and for the submission of most assignments. Please get in the habit of checking our site regularly.

## Assignment Descriptions

### Class Participation (10%)

This course will be structured around engaged learning experiences. During our classes we will work together to explore and understand Indigenous writings regarding identity, relationship with feminism, lives and livelihoods, resistance to colonization, and more. We will also learn from watching documentaries, participating in lectures and classroom activities, invited guest speakers, and listening/learning from each other.

Your participation in this class means more than just attending; it means coming to class with an openness to engage. Your final class participation mark will be based on various indicators of your engagement, including your attendance, participation in class discussions and class activities, evidence that you are doing the readings (and meaningfully participating in discussions about them), and respectfully being "present." You will have an opportunity to self-evaluate on the final day of the class, and your feedback will be taken into consideration for your mark.

**Note:** If you will be missing more than two classes during the term, please provide appropriate documentation so that your participation mark is not compromised. In this situation we can discuss ways for you to make up for missed classes.

*Indigenous peoples are widespread across the globe. In this course we will consider the experiences and writings of Indigenous women from various Lands and regions:*



Turtle Island (North America/Canada)

*...continued*

## Personal Introduction and Land Acknowledgement (10%) – due September 16

Land acknowledgements recognize and respect the traditional First Nations, Métis and/or Inuit territories of a place. Inspired by the recommended calls to action of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, land acknowledgements respect Indigenous peoples and their relationships to the Land.

In the spirit of identifying yourself (as is customary in reflexive feminist practice), and in acknowledgement of the Lands on which we live and work (as should be customary for all treaty partners, meaning those who inhabit the lands of Turtle Island/Canada), write a short paper (maximum 2 pages, double-spaced) that includes the following:

- Personal Introduction: Who are you, and what is your social location? What is your place in the story of colonization?
- Land Acknowledgement: What is the treaty region of the place where you are currently living and learning? Whose traditional territory is it in? What is the name of the community/ies in their own language?
- Commitments: What does it mean to you to be a treaty partner? What do you see as your role in reconciliation?

## Response to a Guiding Question of our Course (25%) – due October 9

On page 2 of this syllabus are six [guiding questions for our course](#). Select one question and express your response to it in a format of your choosing. For example, you may wish to write a paper in traditional (or untraditional) format, create a series of visual images with text, draw a detailed mindmap, record a video or audio-recording, create artwork with an accompanying written statement, or engage in any other mode of expression you are drawn to. You will draw on course texts and materials, as appropriate, to respond to your question. Further parameters for this assignment are posted on our class website. We will allocate time in class for sharing our responses.

## Spotlight on an Indigenous Feminist Organization or Movement: Paper and Presentation (25%) – due dates TBD

Research an example of Indigenous feminism in action in the world today, write a short paper about it, and share your findings with the class. This assignment can be completed alone or in pairs.



Mexico



Australia



Samiland (Northern Europe)



New Zealand



South Africa

First, research an organization, a movement, or an individual or small group of people working toward decolonization/social change for Indigenous women and peoples. Some possible examples are: Native Women's Association of Canada, Orillia Native Women's Group, the WomenSpirit Coalition, the International Indigenous Women's Forum, Mending the Sacred Hoop organization, Aboriginal Women's Action Network, Ontario Native Women's Association, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, and women's involvement in the Zapatista Movement. There are many possibilities (and many outlined in our course text). We will coordinate a "sign-up" in class so there is no overlap.

Next, write a 2-3 page paper (if working alone) or a 4-5 page paper (if working in pairs) that explains the Indigenous feminist organization or movement's goals, *raison d'être*, activism, programming (if applicable), audiences, challenges, victories, and any other relevant details.

Third, prepare a brief discussion or presentation (6 minutes maximum) to share your research with the class. You can use a PowerPoint or Prezi to visually communicate ideas, but it is recommended that you work with 5 or less slides/screens to keep to time. We will further discuss guidelines for both the paper and presentation in class.

**Paper and presentation due dates:** Three days of classes have been set aside for sharing: October 21, November 4, and November 25. We will determine who will present when during the second or third week of class. Your paper is due the day you are presenting.

### **Reading Response Journal (30%) – due November 20**

For this assignment, keep an ongoing journal in which you reflect on chapters of our course text, summarize them, and document your responses to them. You are asked to complete **five journal entries** throughout the course, with each entry being approximately 2 typed pages.

For each journal entry, provide a summary of the reading under consideration. Identify the primary claim the author is making, and how she is supporting or developing her ideas. Then, respond to the reading by outlining your response. Some questions you might consider for your response are: What have you learned from this reading? What ideas and/or feelings, or questions and concerns, were stirred up by it? What was comfortable and known? What was not? How might your positionality (e.g., your identity, context, academic and/or professional background) have influenced your response?

Your reading response journal will be evaluated based on the quality of your writing, depth of engagement, originality, and evidence of critical analysis and self-reflexivity. In particular I will consider two questions: (1) is it convincing that the readings were done? and (2) has considered thought, rather than superficial thought, been applied? (For example, superficial thought = "I really enjoyed reading about Indigenous women and feminism" or "I learned a lot from the chapter." Considered thought goes into more reflective detail, grappling with key ideas in the text and with argument and/or evaluation and/or interpretation of the discussion.)

**Due date:** Your reading response journal is due November 20, but you can submit it earlier if you wish. You are encouraged to complete journal entries as the course progresses, selecting a diversity of readings. There will be an opportunity for you to get feedback on your journal half-way through the course (e.g., after you have completed three entries), if you'd like.

**Bonus Marks!** You can earn bonus marks in this course by participating in Indigenous cultural events that take place during the term (from September-end of November 2019), and handing in a short write-up about your experiences and learning. A maximum of 2% can be earned by participating in an event. Suitable events might include: participating in the Full Moon Memory Walk on September 12 in Thunder Bay, visiting the "Call to Action #83: Creative Collaboration Toward Reconciliation" art show in Orillia, or attending a powwow, participating in a sweat lodge ceremony, attending an Indigenous language class, etc. Please run your ideas by me in advance.

Your write-up should include:

- the name of the event, a description of the event, and your role in it
- what you learned from participating in this event
- how the event connects to what we are studying in class

Your write-up should be a maximum of 2 pages, double spaced. You are encouraged to submit Write-ups within one week of attending the event, if possible. All submissions must be made by November 30.

## Other Important Course Information

**Assignment due dates:** All assignments must be handed in by the specified due dates. If you have trouble meeting a due date, please discuss it with me **at least one week prior** to your due date and, if accepted, we will negotiate a new due date. Missing due dates without prior approval will result in a deduction of 5% per day.

**Final drop date:** The final date for course withdrawal without academic penalty is Friday, November 8, 2019. By then you should have a sense of how you are faring in this course.

**Accessibility and Learning Accommodations:** Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities and/or medical conditions to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and register as early as possible – see

<http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca> or contact [sas@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:sas@lakeheadu.ca)). If you have special needs regarding the format or the due dates for the assignments, please inform me.

**Student Success Centre:** Additional help regarding academic matters, including how to change your Major or how to declare a Minor, can be found at the Student Success Centre located in SC 0008 or phone 343-8018 or online at - <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-success-centre>

**Academic dishonesty and plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a *serious* academic offence. Presenting an idea, words, or an exact phrase of another author as your own work constitutes plagiarism, even if it is done by accident. Other instances of Academic Dishonesty, including but not limited to double submission (submitting your own work across courses, or within the same course), purchasing of assignments (either online or from another student on campus), or copying of assignments, will be dealt with in accordance to the University regulations on Academic Dishonesty. All students are required to know what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it. Click [this link](#) to review the policy. **Please do your own work.**

**Respectful conduct:** All students are expected to foster an atmosphere of respect which includes, but is not limited to, open-mindedness, listening attentively, not speaking over or for others, and avoiding all forms of harassment and discrimination. Please note that the material covered in this class may not always be “comfortable,” so we must be prepared to challenge and be challenged, to be critical and to be critiqued, and to support and to be supported. We may not always agree with each other. However, it is essential that we enter our conversations with generosity of spirit, good humour, and high regard for each other. Now is an ideal time to hone your skills at being “critical friends.”

**Your mental health is important!** If you require immediate support regarding a mental health crisis, call Crisis Response at 346-8282 (24 hours/day). For non-crisis issues, please call Good To Talk at [1-866-925-5454](tel:1-866-925-5454). For additional community resources, please call 211.

## Course Readings by Week

*Please come to class having already read the assigned readings each week. Additional readings, links to documentaries, and other course materials will be posted on our D2L website.*

### Part 1: Exploring Indigenous Feminisms

**September 4:** Welcome and Introductions

**September 9, 11:** What Do We Mean by Indigenous Feminisms?

Chapter 1: Taking More Account of Indigenous Feminism: An Introduction (Joyce Green)

**September 16, 18:** Relationships with Feminism

Chapter 3: Feminism is for Everybody (Verna St. Denis)

Chapter 8: Deploying and Disputing Aboriginal Feminism in Australia (Megan Davis)

**Personal Introduction and Land Acknowledgement due Sept. 16**

**September 23, 25:** Indigenous Womanhood and Elderhood

Chapter 16: Culturing Politics and Politicizing Culture (Shirley Bear)

Chapter 10: Spare a Thought for Métis Women Elders: Illness and Poverty in Elderhood (Diedre A. Desmarais)

### Part 2: Colonization, Violence and Resistance

**September 30, October 2:** Living Under a Colonial State

Chapter 5: Being an Indigenous Woman is a “High-Risk Lifestyle” (Mary Eberts)

**October 7, 9:** Legislation and (De)Colonization

Chapter 9: ReBalancing Strategies: Aboriginal Women and Constitutional Rights in Canada (Joyce Green)

Film: Stolen Generations (to be viewed in class)

**Response to a Guiding Question due October 9**

**\*\*Reading Week October 14-18: No classes this week\*\***

**October 21, 23:** Violence and Resistance

Chapter 13: Perpetual State of Violence: An Indigenous Feminist Anti-Oppression Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (Robyn Bourgeois)

Chapter 6: Politics of Gendered Violence in Indigenous Communities (Rauna Kuokkanen)

**Spotlight Presentations Part 1: October 21**

**October 28, 30:** Organizing for Change

Chapter 12: “Empowerment, Revolution and Real Change”: An Interview with Fay Blaney (Fay Blaney & Sam Grey)

Chapter 15: Colleen Glenn: A Métis Feminist in Indian Rights for Indian Women (Colleen Glenn with Joyce Green)

### **Part 3: Identities and Resurgence**

**November 4, 6:** (Re)Claiming Identity

Chapter 4: My Hometown: Northern Canada, South Africa (Emma LaRocque)

Chapter 14: Looking Back, Still Looking Forward (Shirley Green)

**Spotlight Presentations Part 2:  
November 4**

**November 11, 13:** Cultural Resurgence

Chapter 2: Being Indigenous Feminists: Resurgences Against Contemporary Patriarchy (Gina Starblanket)

**November 18, 20:** Reflections on Identity and Home

Chapter 7: Métis and Feminist: Contemplations on Feminism, Human Rights, Culture and Decolonization (Emma LaRocque)

Chapter 17: Long Way from Home (Emma LaRocque)

**Reading Response Journal due  
November 20 (or earlier)**

**November 25, 27:** Restructuring a Colonial State

Chapter 11: The State is Not a Saviour: Indigenous Law, Gender and the Neoliberal State in Oaxaca (Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez)

**Spotlight Presentations Part 3:  
November 25**

**December 2:** Course wrap-up



*Artwork by Christi Belcourt, Métis artist, Canada*