Welcome to Native American Women’s Voices

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January 30 Class

- Introductions
- Storytelling
- Today’s stories
- Today’s poems
- For February 6
Storytelling is part of our culture and our culture is still alive. Anything that is alive is still growing, so we are still adding stories to our story bag. There are old stories passed in the oral tradition from generation to generation that are still applicable to our lives today. But we are telling new stories, as well as stories that help us to understand our contemporary experience. When we share our stories, we find we have more in common than differences, and so we realize that most of us share the dream of a future full of peace and harmony for the coming generations.”

Storyteller, Kay Olan (Haudenosaunee)
“In the old ways practiced by many tribes, a person who is so inclined and capable on occasion sits and tells stories. The stories are woven of elements that illuminate the ritual tradition of the storyteller’s people, make pertinent points to some listener who is about to make a mistake or who has some difficulty to resolve, and hold the listeners’ attention so that they can experience a sense of belonging to a sturdy and strong tradition.”

SWG, “Introduction,” p.1
“The Woman Who Fell from the Sky” (Mohawk traditional):

Two tellings

- The telling in *Spider Woman’s Granddaughters*
- The telling by Kay Olan: "The Woman Who Fell from the Sky"
“The Beginning and the End of the World” (Syilx/Okanogan traditional)

What kind of story is this? How can you tell? What are its characteristics?
Okanogan (Syilx) perspective on ecology

...our Knowledge of the way the physical world "appears" is founded on how these elements are "related" or "bound" together to be the living "earth" which makes life possible. The Earth is not just the land that we live on "We as living things are "earth" in that we are made up of the very same foundational elements.
Two More Traditional Narratives:

“The Warrior Maiden” (Oneida) and “Oshkikwe’s Baby” (Anishanabeg)
Poetry

- “Tear” by Linda Hogan, Chickasaw
- "Tribal History" by Janice Gould, Concow Maidu
- “Grandmother Eliza” by Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Tlingit
- "Eagle Poem" by Joy Harjo, Muskogee
For February 5

- Email to come; postings on OLLI
- We’ll come back to these first stories and poems to continue discussing
- Next readings to discuss:
  - “Heart Butte, Montana” by M. L. Smoker (Sioux/Assiniboine)
  - “Carrying Our Words” by Ofelia Zepeda (Tohono O’odham)
- “Combing” by Gladys Cardiff, Cherokee
- “The Warriors,” by Anna Lee Walters (Pawnee/Otoe) in SWG, pp. 111-126
- “Making Do” by Linda Hogan (Chicasaw) in SWG, pp. 188-196
Events of interest

- Jacob Meddars (Mechoopda) Art Exhibitions and Talks at CSU Chico--see flyer

- Women of Wisdom, An Annual Evening of Intercultural Storytelling, Learning, and Hospitality, Friday, March 1, 4:30-7:30 pm, Bell Memorial Union Auditorium, CSU-Chico--some postcards available