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COMMENTARY

**“The Earth Itself Was Sobbing”: Madness and the Environment in Novels by Leslie Marmon Silko and Louise Erdrich**

**PETER G. BEIDLER**

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One of the difficulties faced by those of us who teach Native American literature is that our students come to us forearmed with all sorts of generous stereotypes about Indians. Our students tend to think, for example, that virtually all Native Americans live close to the earth, are proud victims of white domination, and are spiritually superior to those who have colonized them. That Indians are humble people who worship a god of nature, peaceful people who love dogs and horses, reverent people who pay daily homage to their mother earth and their father sun. That Native Americans are strong and silent in the face of oppression. That they sit tall on horseback silhouetted against the setting sun. And so on. One of the things that teachers do—or let the voices of Native American writers do for them—is complicate these kinds of stereotypes.

Of course, there is usually some truth to stereotypes. The trouble with stereotypes is that people want to be able to oversimplify a complicated subject by taking what may be true for one or two or many individuals and assume

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that it is true for everyone in a certain group. Part of the job of a teacher, then, is to help our students to see individuals rather than groups. Part of the job of a teacher of Native American literature is to help students to understand that there are many, many Indian tribes, and that within each tribe there are many different attitudes about almost everything. Some Indians are capitalists, some not. Some are gay, some straight. Some are noble, some pretty ignoble. Some drink too much, some not at all. Some are Christians, some not. Some are lazy, some not. Some identify with the earth and the sun and some do not. Some foul their earth-nests, while others do not. Native American authors themselves are the best allies we teachers have in “troubling” for our students certain stereotypes about Indians.

One of the more enduring stereotypes about Indians is that they are the victims of the white conquerors who have despoiled their land. There is, of course, such a strong historical, political, and scientific basis for this a view that most readers would shrink from using the term “stereotype” to describe the damaging effect that white men (and it usually is the *men*) have had on the land. I leave it to you to discuss among yourselves and with your students whether “stereotype” is an accurate term. My point here is that the best Native American writers work to complicate the notion, even as they agree with it, that Indians are victims when white men destroy the environment.

In this commentary, I want to discuss the way two contemporary Native American novelists, Leslie Marmon Silko and Louise Erdrich, have called attention in their fiction to the way white people have harmed the environment. I want also to suggest that while they seem to agree that the Indian peoples are the economic and social victims of the scarred earth, the denuded forests, the destroyed animals, both Silko and Erdrich make that simple notion more complex by specifying that some Indians have been driven insane by the damaged environment. Making that commonality even more complex is that the two writers diverge in their thinking about whether that insanity is curable.

In what I say this morning I shall try to remember that most of you at this conference do not read or teach Native American literature and that you know nothing about the writers that I speak of, their fiction, or the growing tendency to apply to their works principles of ecocriticism. Those of you who are interested in pursuing these issues farther may want to start with a recent book by Joni Adamson, *American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice, and Ecocriticism*.<sup>1</sup>

I want to begin by assuring you that in selecting the Laguna Pueblo writer Leslie Marmon Silko and the Ojibwe writer Louise Erdrich as my two authors, I bring to you writers whom most scholars in the field would recognize as two of the most important voices in contemporary Native American fiction. And I selected as the focus of my remarks two books, *Ceremony* and *Tracks*, that have proved “teachable,” are relatively short, and are available in inexpensive paperback editions.<sup>2</sup> A third book by Louise Erdrich, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*, gives me the anthropomorphic title of my talk: “the earth itself was sobbing.”<sup>3</sup>

Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, published in 1977, was the first of the important new novels by Native American writers to make the environment a central concern. Silko's novel is about a young man named Tayo who returns to the reservation after being away on the Pacific front during World War II. He survives the Bataan death march in the Philippeans psychotically disoriented, the victim of terrifying experiences in which he had lost his brother Rocky. Shell-shocked, disconnected, and terrified, Tayo is released from a prisoner-of-war camp and placed in a Veteran's Administration psychiatric hospital in Los Angeles. There he finds some comfort by hiding in a foggy world of his own making. An army psychiatrist helps him begin to come to terms with what is called reality, and he is sent home, a psychological mess, to Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico.

Tayo slowly and uncertainly recovers from the psychological horrors of his experiences in the white man's war and from his equally damaging experiences back on the reservation, where he encounters horrors almost as bad. Chief among those on-reservation horrors are two attempts by white men to conquer the living earth and to make it their own. One of those efforts is made by a white rancher named Floyd Lee who fences in thousands of acres on Mt. Taylor to enclose "his" cattle, including a herd that he has stolen from Tayo's uncle Josiah. Here is what Silko says of him and his attempt to fence in the land:

The white man, Floyd Lee, called it a wolf-proof fence; but he had poisoned and shot all the wolves in the hills, and the people knew what the fence was for: a thousand dollars a mile to keep Indians and Mexicans out; a thousand dollars a mile to lock the mountain in steel wire, to make the land his. (188)

Part of Tayo's recovery is to sabotage that fence, reclaim his uncle's cattle, and show to the earth-proud Floyd Lee that the land will never really be his. The other anti-environmental push by white men is their rape of the earth by taking uranium from a mine on the reservation only a few miles from the Laguna Pueblo itself. The uranium is used in weapons of mass destruction for the war.

*Ceremony*, then, is about Tayo's gradual recovery from the craziness of his experiences with the white man's war in Asia and the white man's attempts to steal Indian land and the natural treasures it contains. The "ceremony" of the title of the book refers to the series of actions recommended by the old Navajo medicine man, Betonie. Tayo's ceremony involves his falling in love with the mysterious earth-woman Ts'eh, his recovery of his uncle's cattle from the fenced-in land of the corrupt Floyd Lee, and his decision *not* to kill two corrupted Indians named Emo and Pinkie, who torture his friend Harley, another disoriented war veteran. The climactic scene of the novel takes place at the uranium mine on the Laguna reservation, the place where the U.S. military engineers had scarred the earth and removed the yellow rock that destroyed so many Asian people during the war. That climactic setting serves as a bleak reminder of the death-making horrors of white domination of the earth.

Key to an understanding of the environmental theme of *Ceremony* is Tayo's uncle Josiah, who had the foresight to purchase the herd of desert-savvy Mexican cattle that Tayo later recovers from Floyd Lee. Here is what Josiah says about the new breed, the tough cattle that provide a stark contrast to the white man's lazy and stupid Herefords who cannot survive in the desert and who stand dumb and dependent by the water tanks the white man provides for them:

"Cattle are like any living thing. If you separate them from the land for too long, keep them in barns and corrals, they lose something. Their stomachs get to where they can only eat rolled oats and dry alfalfa. When you turn them loose again, they go running all over. They are scared because the land is unfamiliar, and they are lost." (74)

The parallel with Indians is clear. If Indians are taken away from the land that they know and love, they become disoriented and dependent on the food provided for them by their captors. Instead of eating rolled oats and alfalfa, the Indians in this novel drink beer, but when they are turned loose again, as Tayo and his Laguna war-buddies are, they too "go running all over," are "scared because the land is unfamiliar," and are "lost." Only Tayo is able to recover by the end of the novel. The other three, Pinkie, Emo, and Harley, remain lost, but Tayo is able triumphantly to find himself and his humanity again.

In stark contrast to Tayo, who finds himself by reconnecting with the land through the help of the lovely earth-woman Ts'eh, are the "white-skin people" who, like Emo, Pinkie, and Harley, have no hope of regaining their sanity. Scattered through the present-day narrative of *Ceremony* are a number of traditional Laguna tales and legends. Here is one of them about the white-skin people:

*Then they grow away from the earth  
then they grow away from the sun  
then they grow away from the plants and animals.  
They see no life  
When they look  
they see only objects.  
The world is a dead thing for them  
The trees and rivers are not alive  
The mountains and stones are not alive.  
The deer and the bear are objects  
They see no life. (135)*

*Ceremony* is finally an optimistic novel, at least for Tayo. Tayo gets back to the "magnetism" of the earth:

The magnetism of the center spread over him smoothly like rainwater down his neck and shoulders. . . . It was pulling him back, close to the earth, where the core was cool and silent as mountain stone. . . . He

would seep into the earth and rest with the center, where the voice of the silence was familiar and the density of the dark earth loved him. (201-2)

The novel is optimistic because in spite of the efforts of corrupt white people and corrupt Indians, the land will survive to provide solace and strength to the Indian people who respect it. At least some of those driven insane by the damaged earth can regain their sanity through a curative association with the land. Silko shows that some Indians can lose their craziness and become mentally whole again:

The snow-covered mountain [Mt. Taylor] remained, without regard to titles of ownership or the white ranchers who thought they possessed it. They logged the trees, they killed the deer, bear, and mountain lions, they built their fences high; but the mountain was far greater than any or all of these things. The mountain outdistanced their destruction, just as love had outdistanced death. The mountain could not be lost to them, because it was in their bones. (219)

Louise Erdrich is less optimistic in her treatment of environmental themes and the madness of the Indian victims of white marauders. The novel *Tracks*, published in 1988, takes place on an Ojibwe reservation in North Dakota in the decade after an epidemic of tuberculosis carries off many of the Indians. The novel has two narrators who in nine alternating chapters give first-person accounts of certain events that take place on and around the reservation. We get to know these two narrators pretty well. The first narrator is Nanapush, the funny and garrulous old full-blood who is himself named for Nanabozho, a mythical Ojibwe trickster. The second is Pauline Puyat, the anorexic, homicidal, fanatical, deceiving young mixed-blood who is eager to deny her Indian blood by convincing the people around her, and perhaps herself, she is as all-white as her Canadian grandfather.

The environmental theme of *Tracks* is expressed in several ways, but particularly in the distress felt by the Indians that the white loggers are cutting down the trees around Matchimanito Lake. Like Silko, Erdrich suggests that distress in part by setting up certain linkages between the natural world and the human world.

One of the clearest of such linkages is with trees. Nanapush speaks of trees as if they were humans and speaks of his self as if he were a tree. In the first chapter of *Tracks*, for example, he speaks of the distress he feels when the wagons of the loggers move in to the uncut forests around the lake and come out loaded with felled trees. It is as if he is the forest, as if the diminishing of the forest diminishes him as a man and makes him grow weak and old:

I watched the wagons take the rutted turnoff to Matchimanito. Few of them returned, it is true, but those that did were enough, loaded high with hard green wood. . . . I heard the groan and crack, felt the

ground tremble as each tree slammed earth. I weakened into an old man as one oak went down, another and another was lost, as a gap formed here, a clearing there. (9)

Making the connection between trees and people even clearer is Nanapush's despairing dream of himself in a forest. It is for Nanapush a recurring dream, one that he has had many times since his own blood family was taken from him in the epidemic of 1912. It comes to him again now after he has a squabble with his companion Margaret. She has left him alone in his little shack in the woods:

I stood in a birch forest of tall straight trees. I was one among many in a shelter of strength and beauty. Suddenly, a loud report, thunder, and they toppled down like matchsticks, all flattened around me in an instant. I was the only one left standing. And now, as I weakened, I swayed and bent nearer to the earth. (127)

In many ways the central character in *Tracks* is Fleur, though we learn about her not from her own point of view, but from the contrasting points of view of Nanapush and Pauline. Fleur's life, like Nanapush's, is tied to the trees. She associates herself with the tall trees around Matchimanito Lake, and, like Nanapush, she is diminished when the lumber company takes the trees on the land of her ancestors around the lake. She gets her small revenge by secretly sawing off almost clear through the bases of the large trees right around her cabin. Then, when the lumbermen draw near, she sends a wind to blow the trees down in such a way that they do damage to the men, their equipment, and their wagons. Nanapush is the observing narrator:

The men spun in surprise when the first tree crashed down. . . . Another tree, a large one, pitched loud and long, closer to where we stood. The earth jumped and the shudder plucked nerves in the bodies of the men who milled about, whining softly to each other like nervous cattle. . . . One man walked quickly to the east, then stopped. A small tree went down and barred his path. Men climbed into their wagons, licked fingers to test the breeze. The next tree slipped to earth. . . . One man laughed and leaned against a box elder. Down it fell, crushed a wagon. (222-3)

That scene where she cuts the trees down to prevent the hateful loggers from doing it is Fleur's last, and somewhat futile, hurrah. She gets her revenge against the loggers, but does so only by cutting the trees before they do. Then she takes her cart and leaves the reservation. The story ends with her moment of triumph, but it is a pyrrhic moment, the empty revenge of a woman who is unable to keep the land and the trees she holds sacred. The setback for the loggers and their rich bosses is minor and temporary. The land remains naked, and the cutting down of the trees at Matchimanito is symbolic of the cutting down of a noble people.

I want now to turn my attention to the second narrator of *Tracks*, young Pauline Puyat. Pauline's origins are somewhat mysterious, in part because she is eager to deny that she is an Indian at all. Pauline's mother is the mixed-blood offspring of a Canadian white man and an Ojibwe woman. Pauline's mother had married a mixed-blood skinner named Puyat. Their daughter Pauline is a very strange young woman. She is apparently not a particularly attractive woman to begin with, but she starves herself and dresses so strangely that she becomes especially unattractive to men.

Because Pauline's central goal in life is to become a Catholic nun in a culture where no Indian women need apply, it is perhaps understandable that she wants not to be tempted by men and so tries to make herself unattractive to them. That goal, however, is confused by a contradictory desire to have a sex life. With the use of a love medicine potion, she derives some vicarious pleasure by arranging a sexual liaison between Fleur's husband and the nubile Sophie, but the pleasure is fleeting and not repeatable. She has a real sexual affair with a mixed-blood loser named Napoleon Morrissey, but it is a union that does not seem to be much fun for either of them. And when she finds herself pregnant, Pauline does all she can to abort the child—for example, by jabbing herself in the stomach with an axe handle. When birth-time comes she is absolutely uncooperative in the natal process, forcing the baby's aunt and midwife to tie her down and forcibly deliver the baby girl Marie with a homemade forceps-like contraption rigged up from two wooden spoons. In short, Pauline acts kind of crazy.

Pauline continues to act kind of crazy. The night that she goes out to the middle of Matchimanito Lake alone in a leaky boat on a stormy night, and then refuses all attempts to save her, she seems not only suicidal, but psychotically suicidal. Her own illogical reason for her strange action is to emulate Christ's forty days in the wilderness, but none of this really makes any sense, and she seems to the other characters, and to us, to be downright insane.

Perhaps the weirdest feature of Pauline's strange personality is what might generously be called her fascination with death. Pauline volunteers to look after the mortally sick. She serves as a kind of midwife of the dying, helping to ease their journey out of life. There are strong suggestions, mostly in her own narrative sections of the story, that she not only looks after the dying, but also hastens their death. She is apparently directly responsible for a number of deaths. There is evidence that she kills Mary Pepewas, a woman apparently recovering from an illness until Pauline is on watch. She kills two men she locks in a meat freezer. She strangles her ex-lover Napoleon Morrissey. Most memorably, she refuses to help Fleur stop the bleeding during a miscarriage and so in effect—and apparently intentionally—kills Fleur's baby.

It seems strange indeed that a woman who is so utterly life-denying would want to be a nun, but by turning away from her own Indian heritage she is able to convince the sisters at the convent on the reservation that she is white and so is eligible to become a bride of Christ named Sister Leopolda. What are we to make of the strange Pauline? What makes her so aberrant, so inhuman, so contradictory, so life-denying, so murderous? Is she merely insane,



one of those people who are wired wrong from birth and for that reason deserve to be kept apart from other people? Perhaps so, but Erdrich suggests a different reason for Pauline's insanity in *Tracks*.

In one of the chapters that Pauline herself narrates, she retells the story that Nanapush had once told about the time he served as a guide on a white man's buffalo hunt. That story helps us to understand that the craziness of the surviving buffalo is parallel to the craziness of Pauline, one of the surviving Indians. Here is the story she reports that Nanapush had told:

It was as old Nanapush had said when we sat around the stove. As a young man, he had guided a buffalo expedition for whites. He said the animals understood what was happening, how they were dwindling. He said that when the smoke cleared and hulks lay scattered everywhere, a day's worth of shooting for only the tongues and hides, the beasts that survived grew strange and unusual. They lost their minds. They bucked, screamed and stamped, tossed the carcasses and grazed on flesh. They tried their best to cripple one another, to fall or die. They tried suicide. They tried to do away with their young. (139–40)

Pauline apparently does not see the relevance of Nanapush's story of the buffalo to her own situation, but we readers can see that Erdrich suggests that Pauline is one of those surviving buffalo, one of those who "lost their minds, . . . grazed on flesh, . . . tried their best to cripple one another, . . . tried suicide, . . . tried to do away with their young." We see that for Erdrich the craziness of Indians like Pauline is caused by the destruction of their natural environment by the white man. Erdrich wants her readers to see that Pauline's crazy acts are caused by the white man's destruction of the environment—the buffalo and the forests—that sustains the Indians.

A similar theme is picked up in Erdrich's more recent novel, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* (2001). The plot of the novel is too complex to recount here, but it covers some of the same years that were covered in *Tracks*, and some of the same characters, among them Pauline Puyat and Nanapush. The environmental theme of *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* is evident mostly through the words of the central character in the novel, the faux-priest Father Damien. Father Damien turns out to be a woman who masquerades for more than eight decades as a male priest, missionary to the Ojibwe at Little No Horse. In doing so she probably helps the Ojibwe far more than the "real" Father Damien would have done if he had not been drowned in a raging flood in 1912.

One of the nuns, Sister Hildegarde, tells Father Damien early in her tenure as the priest at Little No Horse that the Ojibwe are destined to lose their reservation because they are not savvy enough to keep it:

"They'll lose all the land, of course, being unused to the owning of land. Incredibly, it makes no sense to them. They avow, in their own peculiar

way, that the earth is only on loan. Yet, it's going constantly into private ownership and already they are selling out to lumber interests. Father, your poor charges cannot read the documents they sign." (72)

Father Damien is more sympathetic to the "peculiar" view that the earth is only on loan to us, and she does all she can to counter the efforts of the wealthy land barons like John James Mauser, who seek to purchase the land and cut the trees.

In her own record of the events at Little No Horse, Father Damien notes in a letter Mauser's horrid methods and the disastrous environmental effects of his greed:

"John James Mauser . . . buys the land tax forfeited. He buys the land by having the Ojibwe owners declared incompetent. He buys this parcel and the next and the next. He takes the trees off. He leaves the stumps." "New legislation passes. Is reversed. Mauser prospers with every fumble. His hands are always open, ready to receive. He denudes all holdings as they come his way, though sometimes he waits for certain special parcels that produce, as do one series of prime allotments on Little No Horse, oak trees of great density, beauty, and age that will never again be seen in this region." (*Last Report* 106)

In addition to chronicling the loss of Ojibwe lands, Father Damien writes down the history of the Puyats and, many years later, shares it with a fellow priest who is seeking information about Pauline. Basing her history in part on the letters of her own predecessor, Father LeCompt, Damien tells about a buffalo hunt that Father LeCompt had witnessed himself. This hunt is probably not the same one that Nanapush had told about in *Tracks*, but it is a similar one. The point, once again, is that after the massacre the surviving buffalo act crazy, and act crazy in ways that specifically parallel the ways some of the surviving Indians act. Here is Father Damien's account of the massacre of the buffalo:

[T]he whirlwind destruction, lasting twenty minutes, left twelve hundred animals dead. . . . [T]he surviving buffalo milled at the outskirts of the carnage, not grazing but watching with an insane intensity, as one by one, swiftly and painstakingly, each carcass was dismantled. Even through the night, the buffalo stayed, and were seen by the uneasy hunters and their families the next dawn to have remained standing quietly as though mourning their young and their dead, all their relatives that lay before them more or less unjointed, detongued, legless, headless, skinned. At noon the flies descended. The buzzing was horrendous. The sky went black. It was then, at the sun's zenith, the light shredded by scarves of moving black insects, that the buffalo began to make a sound.

It was a sound never heard before; no buffalo had ever made this sound. No one knew what the sound meant, except that one old toughened hunter sucked his breath in when he heard it, and as the sound increased he attempted not to cry out. Tears ran over his cheeks and down his throat, anyway, wetting his shoulders, for the sound gathered power until everyone was lost in the immensity. . . . That sound made the body ache, the mind pinch shut. An unmistakable and violent grief, it was as though the earth itself was sobbing. One cow, then a bull, charged the carcasses. Then there was another sight to add to the sound never heard before. Situated on a slight rise, the camp of hunters watched in mystery as the entire herd, which still numbered thousands, began to move. Slightly at first, then more violently, the buffalo proceeded to trample, gore, even bite their dead, to crush their brothers' bones into the ground with their stone hooves, to toss into the air chunks of murdered flesh, and even, soon, to run down their own calves. (157-8)

In short, the buffalo go mad, just as Pauline does.

Father Damien himself makes the connection between the strange actions of the surviving buffalo and the strange actions of the surviving Indians:

[T]he people were struck to the core and could never speak of what they saw for a long time afterward. "The buffalo were taking leave of the earth and all they loved," said the old chiefs and hunters after years had passed and they could tell what split their hearts. "The buffalo went crazy with grief to see the end of things. Like us, they saw the end of things and like many of us, many today, they did not care to live." (158)

Father Damien specifically parallels the grief-crazed buffalo with the strange behavior of Pauline Puyat:

"Pauline was, of course, the warped result. . . . She was the residue of what occurred when some of our grief-mad people trampled their children. . . . And the history of the Puyats is the history of the end of things. It is bound up in despair and the red beasts' lust for self-slaughter, an act the chimookomanag [white people] call suicide, which our people rarely practiced until now." (158)

Erdrich, then, like Silko, shows us the madness that comes to Indian people who are caught in the wake of the destruction of the natural trees and animals and earth that we call the environment. Like Tayo, Pauline is driven half-mad. She is driven to self-slaughter, to trampling her own children, to the end of things.

If Tayo is one of those mixed-breed cattle that survive capture and desert drought, then Pauline is one of those grief-crazed buffalo that survive the massacre. But while Tayo lives in such a way that he demonstrates the happy prospects for recovery and sanity, Pauline lives a life of denial and despair. She still lives, but she still lives madly. She has become a monstrous woman who

denies her own people, who lives apart from them, who kills them and tries to kill her own baby and herself. For Pauline, the outcome is bleak, and the earth sobs to see “the end of things” for one of the mad-made descendants of a once-mighty people that lived in harmony with the earth.

But to say that Silko’s novel is optimistic while Erdrich’s novels are pessimistic is itself an oversimplified stereotype. For Silko, the lives of Pinkie, Harley, and Emo, other crazy-made Laguna veterans, show that there is no curing ceremony. Tayo may merely be the optimistic exception to the pessimistic rule. And for Erdrich, despite the pessimism of Pauline’s life of destructive madness, there are other Ojibwe who, though driven *windigo* by the loss of their families and the destruction of the earth, manage to keep their sanity and find a way to live meaningful and optimistic lives. We think immediately of Nanapush, of course, and Eli and Marie and Lipsha and Lulu, all of whom, with others, find a way to be genuine and reasonably happy. And we think of Fleur, who finds a way to win back her ancestors’ lands. In the larger view, Pauline is perhaps the pessimistic exception in a series of optimistic novels. Those novels, of course, are not yet finished. Due out in 2004 is a new and expanded version of *Tracks*. Will we find out there that Fleur, far from being crushed by the loss of her land and the destruction of her ancestral oaks, finds a way to follow John James Mauser to Minneapolis, where he is using the oaks from her land to build himself a mansion on a high hill? Will the earth smile once again?

My point is that what looks like a stereotype and sounds like a stereotype and walks like a stereotype may not after all be a stereotype. My point is that the finest novelists show us—and help us to show our students—that life is complicated. They show us through their life-reflecting artistry that the modern world is complex and that simple responses to it, and to literature about it, lead us into generalities that can never be simply true. In these novels Silko and Erdrich agree in their fiction with many other Native American writers that many white men have worked hard and heartlessly to destroy the environment. They complicate that notion, however, by connecting the destroyed environment with the madness of the Indians whose environment is destroyed. They further complicate even that notion when by showing us that for one a strong connection to the earth can be a cure for madness, while for another there is no such cure. And then they further complicate even that notion by showing that these individual cases may be aberrations and that speaking more broadly precisely the opposite may be true. Native American writers, then, help us teachers study the stereotypes about native and non-native peoples. And they help us to look beyond the stereotypes so that we can all help each other search for solutions to environmental madness in a modern America.

## NOTES

1. Joni Adamson, *American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice, and Ecocriticism*. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001).

2. The editions I cite in this article are Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* (New York: Penguin, 1986 [orig. publ. 1977]) and Louise Erdrich's *Tracks* (New York: Henry Holt, 1988).
3. I quote from page 158 of the HarperCollins edition (New York, 2001).