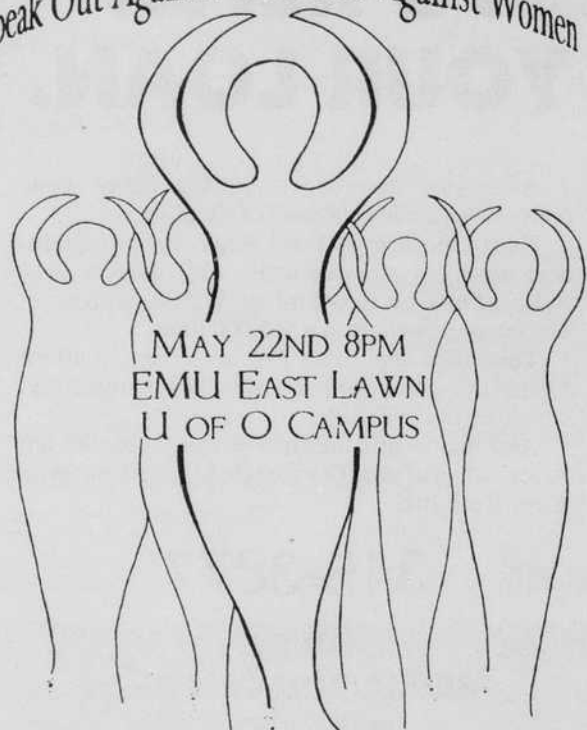


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Two children at the annual NASU Pow-Wow compete in the women's fancy dance.

AUTUMN DE POE/Emerald

Momaday speaks at conference

■ **LECTURE:** The Pulitzer Prize-winning author spoke to a rapt audience about Native American literature

By Autumn De Poe
Student Activities Reporter

Bo-talee rode easily among his enemies, once, twice, three-and four times. And all who saw him were amazed, for his was utterly without fear; so it seemed. But afterwards he said: Certainly I was afraid. I was afraid of the fear in the eyes of my enemies. — N. Scott Momaday, *The fear of Bo-talee*

N. Scott Momaday, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author and poet, spoke to a standing-room only crowd Saturday at the University's Native American Literature Conference. Momaday read poem excerpts from his soon-to-be-released book about dialogues between the gods and bears. His speech centered around the theme of the meanings of language and the history of spoken and written words.

Momaday, currently a professor at the University of Arizona, also spoke about the realization of human experiences, infinite possibilities and imagination. "Hold me in your imagination. If I am not here, you are not here," Momaday said, reading from a story.

Conference organizer Sidner Larson, a University English professor, introduced Momaday. "This [conference] has far exceeded all of my expectations," Larson said. NASU member David Lewis introduced Momaday and welcomed him to the University by presenting him with a handmade traditional pine nut necklace made with nuts from the Pacific coast region.

gion.

Author Robert Allen Warrior, who is known for his contribution to the book *The American Indian Movement: From Alcatraz to Wounded Knee*, welcomed Momaday and assured the audience they were in the company of excellence. Warrior also praised Momaday's work in drama and painting.

"Momaday is a wonderful worker within that media [painting]. Often, those strokes are strokes of genius," Warrior said.

Earlier on Saturday, poet and professor Joy Harjo also spoke to a crowded audience and not only gave a number of poetry readings, but played the soprano saxophone. Between readings, Harjo spoke of events in her and her family's life while she was writing many of her poems. After Harjo's readings, audience member Nancy Arnold said it was as if Harjo were sitting at her dining room table and saying, "Welcome, come in and let me tell you about my life."

The Native American Literature Conference coincided with a number of other related events on campus, including the Annual NASU Pow-Wow and a special ceremony commemorating the history of the Coquille Indian Tribe.

The pow-wow featured Native American dancers, drummers and singers from around the region, fry bread and a number of Native American craft vendors.

In a closed ceremonial potlatch, elders from the Coquille Indian Tribe received approximately 60,000 documents that make up the known written history of the Coquille Indian Tribe. The documents were uncovered by

"You grow up wondering about who your ancestors are. The history books tell a different story than what is passed down from your elders. It makes you wonder.

[The Native American students] went to D.C. to confirm what we knew in our hearts, that Oregon was once home to many native peoples."

Jason Younker
Graduate Student

two University students who are members of the Coquille tribe. The students traveled to Washington, D.C. during a 1995 research project and uncovered the documents in the Smithsonian Institution archives.

"You grow up wondering about who your ancestors are. The history books tell a different story than what is passed down from your elders. It makes you wonder. [The Native American students] went to D.C. to confirm what we knew in our hearts, that Oregon was once home to many native peoples," said Jason Younker, a University graduate archaeology student.

"Coquille and many other Indian tribes were rounded up and marched to the Coast Reservation, where they were basically eliminated from our history," he said. "Our ancestors lived through Oregon's own Holocaust — we are remnants from that experience."

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