

# STORY TELLING PLACES: JICARILLA APACHE HISTORY IN THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY



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In the novel *Ceremony*, Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo) writes that stories are “all we have, you see, all we have to fight off illness and death. You don’t have anything if you don’t have the stories.” Silko’s statement speaks to the central role storytelling plays in indigenous ontology. Stories preserve social memories and provide a mental template for moving through the landscape. One such foundational narrative is that of the Jicarilla Apache origins, in which the Taos Valley is identified as the center of the earth and the place ancestral Jicarillas chose to settle after emerging from the underworld. This origin story situates Jicarilla identity within the Taos landscape and provides a framework for interpreting the extant archaeological record. This talk will reconstruct the Jicarillas storied landscape through an investigation of place-names, origin stories, and personal narratives. I then integrate these narratives with the archaeological record of the region, which consists of tipi rings, pot drops, and rock art. These materials act as another form of storytelling, through which social memories are archived and passed on. Through a synthetic reading of the material and oral historical records, I hope to present an indigenous history of the Taos region which can counter settler colonial narratives of indigenous erasure.

**MONDAY**

**MARCH 12, 2018, 3:30 - 5:00 PM**

**CONFERENCE ROOM, BLDG. 50, RM. 51A**

**DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY**