

Hist 4790 American Religions

Study Guide: Scott Momaday, *Way to Rainy Mountain*

- 1) *Way to Rainy Mountain* is structured in a unique way that sheds insight into Native American thinking patterns. How is it structured and why?
- 2) For Native Americans, the spoken word does more than merely convey information, what meanings does it have as reflected in *Way to Rainy Mountain*?
- 3) Likewise, the land has a special quality. How do the Kiowa understand the land?
- 4) What roles to men and women, “male” and “female” play in *Way to Rainy Mountain*?
- 5) Scholars of literature have stressed that Momaday believes that “imagination is the defining principle of reality.” How does this appear in *Way to Rainy Mountain*.
- 6) In what ways does the buffalo link all aspects of Kiowa life as discussed in *Way to Rainy Mountain*?
- 7) Generations of family members are important to the Kiowa story. What insight into Native Americans can you deduce from focusing on children, parents, and grandparents?
- 8) What do you think Momaday is trying to say about the relationship between myth and history?
- 9) What do you think Momaday is saying about time?
- 10) Given how the book is structured, what is Momaday saying about how personal identity is created?