

## Oregon Women Writers & the Myth of the American West

EN 306 Diverse Voices in Literary Expression  
Online with Sandy Jensen

This summer we will read three books by three women, each of whom gives us a different view of women in the American West, which happens to mean Eastern Oregon.

Linda Crew, a Corvallis author, fictionalizes the Oregon Trail journey of the very real King family, who settled King's Valley, Oregon. In this young adult book, we find the roots of the American dream of an Oregon Eden. Meticulously researched and narrated in the lively voice of a young heroine, *A Heart for Any Fate* echoes the 21<sup>st</sup> century feelings many of us still have about our home state while also detailing the dangers of the Trail.



Molly Gloss, a Portland fiction writer, in *The Jump-Off Creek* tells the story of a lone woman settler, Lydia Sanderson and how she struggles to make it on her own as a woman.



Terri Jentz tells the true story of her near murder in 1977 at Cline Falls State Park, between Redmond and Bend. She and a friend were run over and attacked by a man with an axe. Decades later, she returns to Oregon to try to solve the mystery of who attacked her in *Strange Piece of Paradise*. This book is over 500 pages long, so we will spend half the class digging into it. I think you'll find not only this book, but the entire summer's reading well worth the journey.

I hope you'll join me!