

The man to send rain clouds symbolism and obscurity essay

[Art & Culture](#), [Symbolism](#)



In her short story "The Man to Send Rainclouds" Leslie Silko writes about the burial of a dead native elder, stating that "he sat down to rest in the shade and never got up again" (Silko 1). Silko uses obscurity and symbolism to display her attitude towards culture. She was very open to different religions and ways of life because she was of a mixed descent.

Obscurity is a recurring motif in the story. Silko uses it to show how blurred the lines of culture can really become. "The curtains were heavy, and the light from within faintly penetrated..." (Silko 2) is an example of a quote that features the motif. It showcases that because there wasn't sufficient lighting it was hard to see, which is a metaphorical way of saying that a clear decision couldn't be made. It was unclear whether giving the natives the holy water was right or wrong in the priest mind and this quote highlighted that fact. Another quote is "They were nearly hidden by the red blanket," (Silko 2). It is an example of obscurity because the blanket is blocking the view of Teofilo and his moccasins which can be interpreted as the culture itself being hidden. Examples of the motif of obscurity can be found in many parts of the short story.

Symbolism is a very prevalent literary element in Silko's work. One example is in the quote, "Leon's green arm jacket that was too big for her," (Silko 2) where the jacket represented the western culture. It was something that Louise was not used to and it didn't suit her. It seemed as though it was placed into her life unwillingly but she began to embrace the different way of life. Another example of symbolism is Teofilo; it could be argued that he represented the native culture. With his death came the breakdown of his

culture. His people began to incorporate the western ways of living into their own. Symbolism is a very important part of this story because Silko uses it to communicate with the reader.

All in all, “ The Man to Send Rainclouds” is a piece of literature that is written with a motif of obscurity and a lot of symbolism. Both keeps the reader entertained and betters the work. Silko maintained openness to the cultures of both the western world and the natives while showing that one was beginning to overtake the other.