

Section III

Solar Storms (1994)

by Linda Hogan

BIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT: LINDA HOGAN

Linda Hogan (Chickasaw) (b. 1947) is a storyteller, Pulitzer Prize finalist, Writer in Residence for the Chickasaw Nation, and Professor Emerita at the University of Colorado. She has written several poetry collections, essays, fiction, and nonfiction books that emphasize the beauty of nature and relate her view of Indigenous knowledge systems, including *Dwellings: A Spiritual History of the Living World* (1995) and *The Woman Who Watches Over the World: A Native Memoir* (2001). She considers her work to be rooted in politics and often draws on historical research.¹² Her novel *Solar Storms* won the Colorado Book Award for Fiction.

Like many of Hogan's works, *Solar Storms* revolves around environmental concerns and features themes related to **Indigenous** cultural preservation. Hogan's body of work is interested in the dispossession of Native Americans and complicates the idea of both Native and American identities.¹³ Hogan herself is of mixed Native ancestry, her father hailing from a prominent Chickasaw family, and her mother being of German descent. Much of Hogan's writing poses questions about cultural intersections, our shared humanity, and our shared responsibility to protect the Earth through balancing the spiritual, intellectual, and physical realms and through building community across differences.¹⁴

Solar Storms portrays water and land as deeply rooted in spiritual associations with the home while emphasizing their necessity as a resource and as a marker of historical and cultural trauma. Hogan uses literature to explore the many forms of **place** that affect her characters' lives. Her work incorporates topics of community, landscape, perceptions of nature, and land use to explore the political and social implications of space and place in contemporary society, determining



Linda Henderson Hogan (Chickasaw), author of Solar Storms and other works.

how our imagination of local place either aides or deters environmental stewardship and community participation.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: THE JAMES BAY PROJECT

The events of the book *Solar Storms* were inspired by the [James Bay Project](#), Hydro-Quebec's 1971 controversial hydrodam construction on the La Grande River in northwestern Quebec. This hydrodam is one of the largest in the world, covering an area the size of New York State. Proponents of the dam contended that it would be a boon to Quebec's economy and would allow for the generation of a large quantity of