Weaving Women's Lives: Three Generations in a Navajo Family. By Louise Lamphere with Eva Price, Carole Cadman, and Valerie Darwin. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007. 314 pages. $24.95 paper.

In 1965 Louise Lamphere met Eva Sandman Price while she was conducting fieldwork as a graduate student in Navajo land. Price invited Lamphere to her home, participated in Lamphere's study, and then remained in contact with her for more than forty years. The study was published in 1977 as *To Run after Them: Cultural and Social Bases of Cooperation in a Navajo Community*, which examined Navajo practices of cooperation and reciprocity. Thirty years later, anthropologist Louise Lamphere, in collaboration with the Price family, creates *Weaving Women's Lives: Three Generations in a Navajo Family*, which traces a Navajo family's cultural practices across grandmother, mother, and daughter. Against some of the starkest economic and living conditions in the United States, Navajo families like Eva Price's have relied on traditional beliefs, attitudes, and practices to sustain themselves. The Navajo women's stories reflect a still vital matrilineal society where women wield a measurable amount of authority and autonomy within clan kin systems and local communities.

Grandmother Eva Price begins her narrative with her grandmother's return from Hwéeldi in 1868. Navajo narratives often begin with the ancestors' return to their homeland after four years of captivity at the Bosque Redondo Reservation whereupon they determined to reestablish their lives following the teachings set down in *Sa'ah naagháí bik'eh hózhóón*—the path to beauty and old age. Stories connect extended family to land where at named places grandmothers and mothers rebuilt their homes, maintained matrilineal kin systems, and moved about the land with the determination to continue a distinct way of life. Price's life story reflects the centrality of matrilineal clans to Diné identity, which structures all other relationships.

Although Eva Price offers stories about the positive influences of her mother and father's teachings on her own life, they are overshadowed by her experiences with deprivation, violence, and losses that accompany chronic economic poverty. In 1868 Navajo leaders signed a last treaty with American officials. For Navajos, the treaty meant that they could return to their homeland, which had been reduced to at least one-fourth of its former size. Other treaty provisions included agreements that Navajo children would be educated at American schools and learn the English language. Navajo adults were to embrace American ideology about nuclear families, monogamy, patriarchy, and Victorian notions about sexuality. These mandates are a part of the violence that Navajos have endured under American colonialism beginning in the nineteenth century. Price's stories illustrate that violence institutionalized has become normalized in Navajo society.

Eva's memories include periods of hunger where she and her siblings gathered wild edible plants and killed small animals to eat. Her narrative does not impart the usual wisdoms about Navajo parents' affection for their children; rather, whenever there was a sheep butchering, the children received only a portion of the intestines and little meat. Her marriage was arranged, as was traditional among Navajos, but her husband turned out to be abusive.

She eventually raised her children alone, struggling to provide for them. She turned to drinking alcohol for relief but was able to overcome alcohol abuse when she sought healing in traditional remedies and joined the Native American Church. Eva emerges on the other side of her narrative as a woman whose embrace of Navajo cultural teachings established her as a respected matriarch who possessed sacred knowledge. Her daughter's and granddaughter's narratives, revealing similar struggles of living with institutionalized violence, testify to Eva's resourcefulness and determination to convey Navajo teachings to the next generations.

Weaving Women's Lives also provides glimpses of Eva's daughter's and granddaughter's lives. Lamphere met the teenage Carole when she gave her a ride back to Wingate boarding school near Gallup, New Mexico in the 1960s. Like her mother, Carole entered an arranged marriage to a man who also proved to be violent and indifferent to his growing family. Eventually divorced from her husband, Carole struggled to raise her family by combining seasonal wage work with welfare benefits. At times she disappeared into the urban landscape outside of her Navajo community, and Eva was left in charge of her grandchildren. Eventually, Carole took her place as a mother and grandmother. Like her mother, Carole shares her participation in ceremonies meant to heal and bring her into balance with her world.

Carole's daughter, Valerie, focuses on her experiences in local and regional schools. Today, federal, state, and Navajo Nation institutions oversee education on Navajoland, and all of them have failed to mandate any sort of Navajo-centered curriculum. Rather, education is meant to integrate Navajos into the working class of American society. Hence, formal education not only remains alien but also certainly does not prepare Navajo students to join the ranks of the highly educated or the professional class in this country. Instead, Valerie finds inspiration in traditional teachings and shares her experiences with the Kinaaldaá, the puberty rite for Navajo girls who have come into womanhood. As a close friend of the family, Lamphere is selected as "Salt Woman" for the ceremony, a high honor bestowed on a woman whom Navajo women might emulate. Valerie's narrative presents a shift in the stories told, for while her childhood memories relate absences and losses, her ability to navigate the urban landscape and earn a college degree has provided her with more choices than those of her grandmother and mother. There is irony in presenting a university as a place of opportunities for Native students; rather, it should be said that students like Valerie succeed in spite of indifference and even intolerance to Native students and Native-centered studies at American universities. Moreover, we should be critical about what we consider "success." Is "success" the ability to take one's place in the American labor force through education?

This ethnography reflects the state of white feminist anthropology in the Southwest and certainly the shifts in the discipline. White feminist anthropologists have attempted to respond to sustained critiques from Native peoples and their allies about scholarship that perpetuates stereotypes of Native women and non-Indian scholars' refusal to acknowledge the structures of inequalities and injustices that have dispossessed Native peoples, including how their

scholarship perpetuates inequalities and injustices. Their responses include a sense of ethics and responsibility to the people they purport to represent.

Like her white foremothers, Lamphere claims a unique relationship with Navajos that is based on friendship, respect, and compassion. Further, to move away from a position of hierarchy between researcher and informants, non-Indians and Native peoples, Lamphere names the Navajo women coauthors and intersperses her own life narrative into the ethnography to draw parallels about how larger historical, political, and cultural forces have shaped American lives. Against a Navajo family's claim to cultural integrity in the face of crushing poverty, patriarchal violence, and a sustained racism and injustices that are still Native people's experiences, Lamphere notes that her own great-grandfather, a German immigrant, came West to make his fortune in speculating for oil on the Navajo Reservation. She does not indicate whether her grandfather was successful so that she was able to enjoy a middle-class existence. In another instance, she comments on Navajo drinking patterns in the early twentieth century and then notes drinking behavior in her own white middle-class neighborhood in Denver. Prohibition resulted in white folks drinking in private spaces and white women drinking as a mark of independence from the drudgery of domesticity. Lamphere shares a secret—there was at least one alcoholic in her family. Unfortunately, the insertion of her own stories into the study erases the differences created through histories of the ethnic cleansing of Native peoples, the ruthless exploitation of Navajo natural resources, and the relentless appropriation of their labor for the benefit of dominant American society. Her handling of the narratives also erases the coercive forces that have imposed Western ideologies about proper gender roles, sexuality, education, and political values onto Navajos.

As a Navajo woman who grew up on Navajo land, I am all too familiar with the harshness of life on the reservation. In many cases, Navajo families spend much of their energy on the matter of daily survival. Eva Price and her family's narratives remind me of my appreciation for our ancestors who struggled to remain Diné in the face of incredibly oppressive conditions that prevail to the present. At the same time, I am troubled by the state of feminist anthropology, for it seems that non-Indian scholars have yet to listen to Native scholars like Elizabeth Cook-Lynn who insist that scholarship on Native peoples must historicize their studies by illuminating the consequences of colonialism for Native peoples and insist on justice for Native peoples, for only then can we begin the healing process to the recovery of our Native communities, families, and nations.

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