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American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

Navajo Nation Peacemaking: Living Traditional Justice. By Marianne O. Nielsen and James W. Zion.

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5j79j8cw>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 30(3)

ISSN

0161-6463

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Publication Date

2006-06-01

DOI

10.17953

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I think about how much has been written about the dropout rates, achievement gaps, and so forth, along with a myriad of cited related data, and the money it takes to do this work, and still the children are used up and spit out in the schooling system. Ward has worked with the tribe, provides useful and workable information, extends a workable model, and, most conspicuously, pays serious attention to the tribal worldview; that is, her approach is holistic instead of the customary linear approach used by most scholars working and writing in education. An important finding in her study is that Cheyenne culture has a positive effect on goals for schooling as noted by educator Juanita Lonebear (xii).

The quick and easily understandable expected research findings or hypotheses provided from time to time throughout the chapters assist in understanding the rest of the text. She has provided what she set out to do and in the process will educate the reader on the importance of social structure and cultural orientation affecting schooling outcomes as well as the form and content of social relations within school settings (232). And in the end she reminds us that tightly integrated families graduate!

Quoting literature on school attainment, Ward remarks that American Indians and Alaskan Natives are better educated than their elders (5). The sentence is a difficult one in that for many of us our elders know more than we do and always will. Although I know it is meant to inform us that the younger people are getting better in the white man's form of education, I think we need to be careful about how we define education and who has it.

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Navajo Nation Peacemaking: Living Traditional Justice. By Marianne O. Nielsen and James W. Zion. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005. 223 pages. \$35.00 paper.

There are, at least, two different ways to read this book. One way is to complain about the redundancy in the twelve articles in the book and the reliance on many already published articles. The other way is to remember the path that all indigenous peoples throughout the world have taken—through the oral transmission of knowledge—and that the (often ignored) precision of oral knowledge is created by very carefully telling the stories over and over again. Our ancient ancestors were precise in orally recounting those stories. If nothing else, this will help remind us of the increasing problems in the written forms of law where legal specialists argue over contradictions in legal statutes or the exact meaning of written law. In other words, some of the redundancy in this book can be useful. The twelve articles by individuals involved in the Navajo tribal court system in diverse ways discuss the foundations of the peacemaking process, its modern origins, its evolution as a reaction to the shortcomings of other legal systems, and the benefits of engaging in the peacemaking process rather than federal or state criminal justice systems.

The book provides numerous poignant examples of how Navajo peacemaking has been successful in a range of cases from paternity disputes to property damage to kinship abuse. Protection of the victim generally is privileged over punishment of the offender. A common theme across the articles is that, while the process shares some characteristics with reparative and participatory justice programs being instituted in some non-Navajo courts, Navajo peacemaking is not another type of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) or mediation. The peacemaking process differs because court-sponsored ADR programs are based in a "vertical" and adversarial system, where participants are treated as "plaintiff" and "defendant" or "offender" and "victim," and a presumably neutral arbitrator metes out decisions. In contrast, the peacemaking process is grounded in a "horizontal" system of justice in which parties are not labeled as adversaries, and the peacemaker is not presumed to be neutral but is selected from within the community based upon her or his abilities to restore peace. The Navajo peacemaking process also is one in which, in contrast to state and federal justice systems, community members related to both parties are frequently involved in dispute resolution.

The introduction by Nielsen and Zion provides some interesting and illuminating vignettes about the type of cases brought before the peacemaking process. It also includes useful information on the role of colonial history and the attempts to destroy the foundations of peacemaking and the people. It would profit from more precise research on the unintentional as well as intentional killings as a result of disease and related attempts to destroy American Indians as explicated by Russell Thornton in *American Indian Holocaust and Survival* (1987). Moreover, while there are references to the work of Vine Deloria Jr., it probably would have been more enlightening to summarize his points from *God Is Red* (1992, 2nd ed.). And, the provocative part on the meaning of the word *Navajo* is incomplete because some traditional Diné suggest that the various meanings have been very negative.

In a related chapter Zion and Nielsen note that Diné peacemaking is not a sentencing consideration in serious offenses such as aggravated assault and arson. Interested readers might consider the traditional methods that other American Indians have used when confronted by even more serious problems; for example, see *Crow Dog's Case* (1994) by Sidney Haring and related research (Pat Lauderdale, "Indigenous North American Jurisprudence," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 1997). Zion and Nielsen correctly note that Diné peacemaking is highly adaptable, as have been the people who have survived the ravages of colonization. The language of the Diné, as well as the oral complexities of most indigenous peoples, is indeed very sophisticated, and the relevant meanings rarely have been translated into English. The explication of the importance of central concepts and meanings related to peacemaking are mentioned in the book, especially in the foundational chapter by Tom Tso.

The chapter by Tso, a former chief justice of the Navajo tribal court, also examines how Navajo peacemaking has been attempting to incorporate more Native cultural values and is becoming more professionalized. He discusses how certain non-Indian features such as jails have been incorporated into the Navajo legal system. His analysis and a few others in this book raise the

timely issue of why so many different North American Indian nations did not employ jailers and jails. Why and how did they do it? Once again, we might learn invaluable lessons from considering the wisdom of the elders, rather than leaving their knowledge on the shelves of our bookcases or minds. And when Tso talks about beauty in the peacemaking process and points out that it means harmony, we might see that useful New Age ideas often emerge from old-age wisdom (for example, Indian-derived concepts such as caucus or powwow and the relevance of onomatopoeic research).

Tso also notes that the peacemaking system has retained features such as an emphasis on decentralized grassroots government that can be traced back through Diné oral history. He emphasizes that Navajos do not seek assimilation into the broader criminal justice system. Diné peacemaking is a unique process that still can be adaptable into the broader criminal justice framework in specific ways. These themes are continued throughout the book and highlighted, especially in Sandra Day O'Connor's chapter that discusses how "lessons" from tribal courts, such as community embeddedness, de-emphasis on the adversarial nature of proceedings, and proximity to people served, may be helpful in the criminal justice system of the United States.

Other key portions of the book include Robert Yazzie's analysis that contrasts US "law," and its emphasis on power and social control dictated by elites, with Navajo "law," which is perceived as moral or natural law extending from the beginning of time. Yazzie correctly stresses that while Navajo law is about problem solving, community participation, and sharing of resources, US law too often concentrates on punishment by the state rather than providing space for victims and offenders to give voice to their concerns. This analysis is echoed by Eric Gross when he discusses issues of procedural justice in the peacemaking process. His review of participants' data find peacemakers "significantly more helpful" than judges because the peacemaking process is perceived as procedurally more open than the larger criminal justice system where the experiences of participants are afforded more value. Gross notes, citing Donald Black, that people are likely to feel they have received a bit more justice when they are able to express their own experiences, since having the right to tell our own story affects perceptions of justice and possibly reduces injustice. Another chapter by Jon'a Meyer extends Gross's analysis by providing data, which suggest that the peacemaking process has had success in reducing juvenile rates of recidivism.

In other chapters, James Zion outlines the history of the peacemaker court from the early 1980s and provides a brief survey of surviving Navajo common law. He discusses the peacemaking process as a version of restorative justice that provides an alternative to models of retributive justice. As other authors stress in the text, the Navajo system tries to engage in a "teaching" process during peacemaking in which a nonneutral arbitrator from the community, the offender, and the offender's family engage in an attempt to reach a new conception of shared reality and responsibility that moves beyond excuses. Justice is viewed in these cases as akin to a "ceremony" in which the peacemaker tries to help offenders understand their current circumstance in light of traditional values, mutual respect, and community well-being.

The chapter by Philmer Bluehouse and Zion brings us back to the relevance of old-age wisdom. It is short yet sweet. The old story about Lightning and Horned Toad says volumes about the genesis of the destruction of harmony, especially in the context of a deep concern with harmony ceremonies.

The book also offers a helpful comparison of peacemaking and restorative justice, and demonstrates why the peacemaking process may not be adaptable easily to ADR or mediation processes, while the restorative justice perspective shares a focus on restoring relations and community with peacemaking. However, there are key distinctions. Mediation is often a one-time service; peacemaking is a way of life. Mediation typically ignores cultural values; spirituality is central to peacemaking. Mediation is based on the decisions of one decision maker; peacemaking is based on consensus.

The editors invite people to suggest additional research for their "Peacemaking Reading List" located at the end of the book. Let me begin here by suggesting the relevance of the work by John Braithwaite, the ideas of Quannah Parker, and additional thoughts of Philmer Bluehouse.

Overall, this book provides a cogent overview of the peacemaking process and documents advancements made by tribal courts in the relatively short time since the institution of "modern" peacemaking in the early 1980s. It also acknowledges problems in addressing serious "criminal" justice concerns within the community. There are many other reasons to read this book, including the fact that it also brings clear meaning to the deep potential of civil law and the reasons to be civil, which is a project that Vine Deloria Jr. began for all our relations.

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Paths to a Middle Ground: The Diplomacy of Natchez, Boukhouka, Nogales, and San Fernando de las Barrancas, 1791–1795. By Charles A. Weeks. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2005. 304 pages. \$45.00 cloth.

Paths to a Middle Ground reads like a breath of fresh air. The growth of Southeastern Indian scholarship in the last several decades is a welcome trend in the field of Native American history, but that does not mean all subfields have received proper examination. On the contrary, many areas of Southeastern Indian history remain unexplored, particularly those in the Yazoo Valley. Charles Weeks's book helps repair this unfortunate situation by examining the pivotal role that Fort Nogales and the surrounding region along the confluence of the Mississippi and Yazoo rivers played in the history of Southeastern Native/Spanish relations. Due to the later growth of Vicksburg, Mississippi (near Fort Nogales), the area's importance in the Civil War overshadows its Spanish period for many historians, but Weeks turns the idea that this region only gained significance during the mid-1800s on its head. Indeed, he shows that the "Gibraltar of the West" was in many ways as vital a part of diplomatic relations in the Spanish colonial period as it would