

The Native American CANON



By: Cohort 1

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IRLS 550, Patti M Overall

Mission Statement



- ❧ The creation of the "Living Tribal Histories" Collection is the beginning of an ongoing and expansive Native American Canon.
- ❧ We have put our focus on four areas:
 - ❧ Creation stories
 - ❧ Trickster stories
 - ❧ General Indian History
 - ❧ Native American voices and lives in film and media

Defining the CANON



✧ The word comes from the Latin
“canon” or “rule”

Mainstream Authors



Native American authors who have broken into the Canon:

- Michael Dorris
- Louise Erdrich
- Leslie Marmon Silko

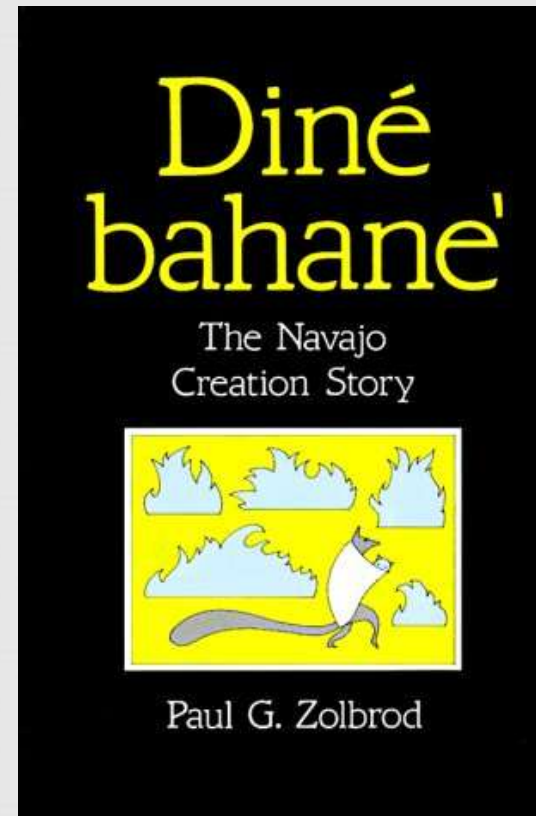
Creation Stories



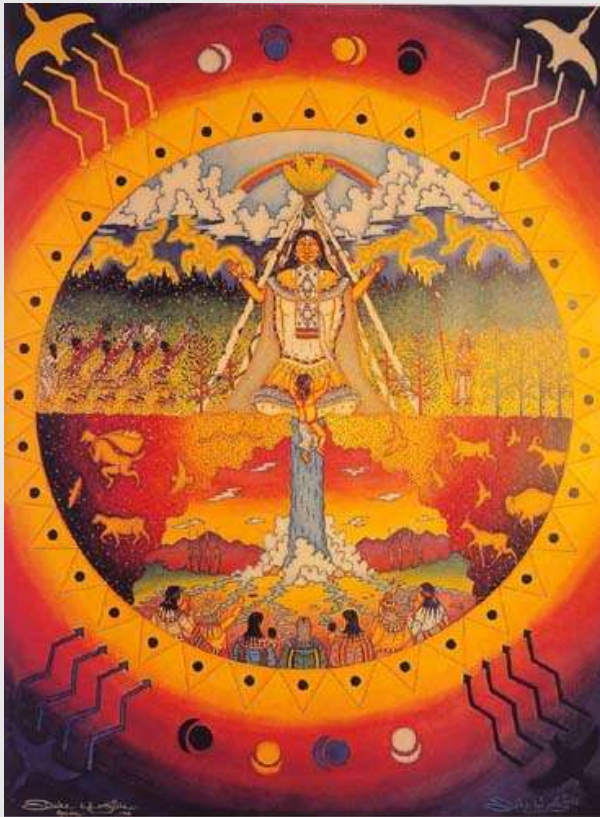
Introduction



- ❧ Naakaii dine' nishli
- ❧ Kinyaa'aanii
bashishchiin
- ❧ Ma'ii Deeshgiizhnii
dashicheii
- ❧ Tachii'nii dashinali



Collection Development



- ❧ How I built my collection
- ❧ Peephole into understanding various tribal cultures
- ❧ What tribes expect of its members since many base their way of life on creation stories

Identity



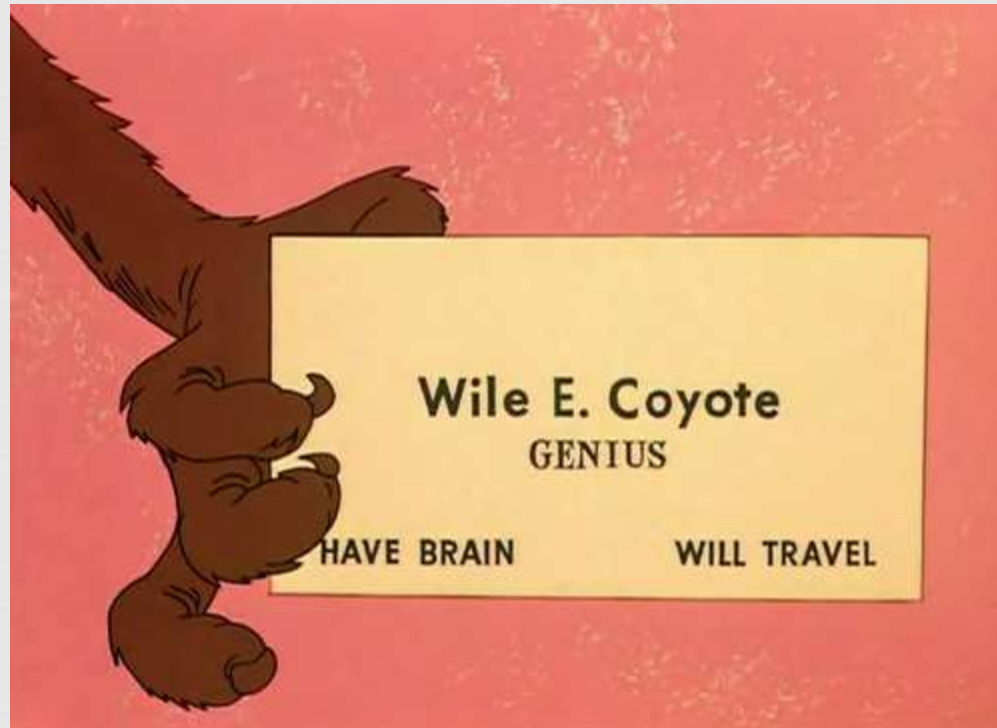
- ❧ Self-Empowerment
- ❧ Traditions & ideas of the creation stories mold individuals
- ❧ Views of life and the relationship between humans and the Earth
- ❧ Creation stories give:
 - ❧ Wisdom, respect, strength, trust & love



Trickster Stories



Coyote Trickster Tales



Coyote



- ❧ the Trickster, teacher, survivor, and fool.
- ❧ Both Creator and Destroyer, Giver and Negater, dupes others and is himself duped.
- ❧ Duality and ambiguity, Culture Hero and DemiGod.



Trickster is a Common Theme Cross-Culturally



- ❧ Navajo Coyote
- ❧ Inuit Raven
- ❧ Hopi Clowns
- ❧ Anasazi Manabozho
(demigod trickster)
- ❧ Winnebago akdjunkaga
(demigod, devil
trickster)
- ❧ Muscogee Hare

Collection Development



- ❧ Memories of Trickster Tales as a child
- ❧ Assistance from the Yavapai library in Prescott
- ❧ The more cultural interpretations of the trickster in the collection, the more voices are heard



Role of Coyote



Ogimakwe, an elder from the Nishnaabe community in Michigan explains the role of the Coyote after telling a story:



[Laughing]

So, you know, to me it was just saying that um,

Don't let someone of somebody pull you off the path that you know is the right one to be on in the first place.

And the second thing is, watch out for those people that are like coyote, cause there's many of them and they'll try to, always want to pull you somewhere else, let you wander around and get a skinned up knee

And then you miss what was at the end of your true path, you know

Coyote & Horned Toad



⌘ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSw80XrENpc>

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Film & Video Resources



DOCUMENTARY FILM

-1-

TITLE: Alcatraz Is Not An Island (2001) [All Audiences]

DIRECTOR: James M. Fortier (Méts-Ojibwe)

PRODUCER: Jon Pluthe

NARRATOR: Benjamin Bratt

RUNTIME: 70 min

SYNOPSIS: In November 1969, a small group of Native American students and urban Indians began the occupation of Alcatraz Island in the San Francisco Bay. Eventually joined by thousands of Native Americans, they reclaimed "Indian land" for the first time since the 1880s, forever changing the way Native Americans viewed themselves, their culture and their sovereign rights.

PREVIEW: <http://www.pbs.org/hvs/alcatrazisnotanisland/preview.html>

DISTRIBUTOR: Berkeley Media LLC, Saul Zaentz Film Center, 2900 Tenth Street, Suite 626, Berkeley, CA 94710, Phone: 510-486-9900, Fax: 510-486-9944

info@berkeleymedia.com www.berkeleymedia.com

-2-

TITLE: Ancient Footprints of the Colorado River [All Audiences]

DIRECTOR: R.G. Vasquez **non-Native filmmaker

RUNTIME: 15 min

SYNOPSIS: Alfredo Acosta Figueroa's fifty-year battle for cultural, environmental, and economic justice along the Lower Colorado River leads to the reclamation of a sacred indigenous landmark in this documentary. The quest for origins of the earliest civilizations of the Americas, often referred to as 'lost', or spoken of more as myth and legend, has resurfaced in the most unlikely of places: the crossroads of Interstate 10 and the Colorado River in the small agricultural town of Blythe, California. Fifteen miles upriver are the Blythe Giant Intaglios, figures carved from the desert pavement, some over 150 feet long. The Giants are part of a network of indigenous landmarks that tell creation stories of an ancient river culture, all of which are threatened by resource development, motorized vehicles, and a lack of federal, state, or local oversight. Restoring the heavily damaged one-mile square site and establishing an "Ancient Footprints" trail to eventually reconnect the river with the Pacific ocean are part of an effort by the La Cuna de Aztlan Sacred Sites Protection Circle to preserve and restore the Giants and other indigenous ceremonial sacred site in the region for future use.

DISTRIBUTOR:

-3-

TITLE: Bad Sugar (Hour 3) / Unnatural Causes ...is inequality making us sick? (2009) [4 part PBS series] [All Audiences]

PRODUCER & DIRECTOR: James M. Fortier (Méts-Ojibwe)

CO-PRODUCER: Sativa January

RUNTIME: 60 min

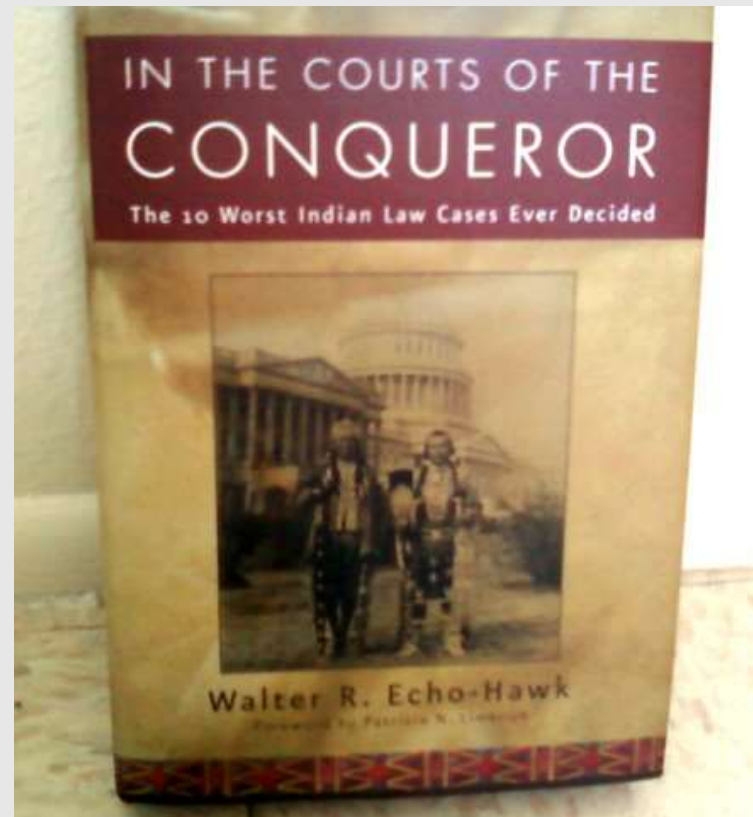
SYNOPSIS: The Pima and Tohono O'odham Indians of southern Arizona have arguably the highest rates of Type 2 diabetes in the world. A century ago, the disease was virtually unknown here, but the subsequent diversion of river water destroyed farms and traditional ways, plunging local tribes into poverty and dependence. A sense of "futurelessness" took hold. And so did diabetes. Decades of medical interventions have not stemmed the tide, not only among Native Americans but globally. In 2004 the Pima finally won back their water rights and are beginning to farm again. Community leaders are cautiously optimistic that community empowerment and sustainable and culturally

List of Film & Video Resources

- ❧ Resources were identified from catalogs from:
 - ❧ imagineNATIVE Film Festival in Toronto
 - ❧ The American Indian Film Festival in San Francisco
 - ❧ The Native American Film + Video Festival in DC through Native Networks at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian
 - ❧ PBS
 - ❧ Native American Public Television (NAPT)
 - ❧ ITVS' POV and Independent Lens programming.

General American Indian History

- ❧ Dominant Society writes history
- ❧ Indigenous people speak history
- ❧ Native Americans are reclaiming history
- ❧ Need to find NA history books



Shawna's Sources to Find Books:



☞ TRAILS

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/olos/toolkits/TRAILS3.pdf>

☞ "I" is for "Inclusion"

<http://www.ailanet.org/publications/I%20IS%20FOR%20INCLUSION-rev%2010-07.pdf>

☞ Amazon <http://www.amazon.com/>

Creating a Workable List

- ❧ Creating a workable list
- ❧ Compiling the NA Canon in Word
- ❧ Spreadsheet vs Database
- ❧ Need to create "pretty" reports

Conclusion



- ❧ We wanted to create a database that could be searched by creator, title, audience, and tribe. Shawna created the database but it is not as searchable as we wanted it to be.
- ❧ Due to Access' inability to sort on a field that has more than one entry the database is only searchable by title and audience.
- ❧ Some preliminary queries and reports have been created. The initial list looks like this and this is the database
- ❧ We will provide copies of the database to Oscar and Melanie for their libraries. Also we are willing to share a copy of the list with others who may find it helpful.
- ❧ Sara in her search for Trickster stories collected many of the books on her part of the list. She is donating these books to the Pascua Yaqui & Ak-Chin tribes.

Thank You



Any questions?