

**Native Being ↔ Being Native:
Identity and Difference**

**Proceedings of the
Fifth Native American Symposium**

Edited by

Mark B. Spencer and Lucretia Scoufos

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CONTENTS

Foreword Chad E. Litton	v
Acknowledgements	vii
Introduction Mark B. Spencer	1
The Legacy of Pashofa: Ceremony, Society, Women, and Chickasaw Life Matt Despain	5
Between Doorstep Barter Economy and Industrial Wages: Mobility and Adaptability of Coast Salish Female Laborers in Coastal British Columbia, 1858-1890 Carol Williams	16
The Evolution of Beaded Baskets Carole McAllister and Carlon R. Andre	28
Communities as both Ecological and Social Entities in Native American Thought Raymond Pierotti	35
Scientific Dogma or Indigenous Geographic Knowledge: Was America a Land Without History Prior to European Contact? Joseph A. P. Wilson	46
Being and Becoming "New Indians": Identity and Indian Youth Councils of the 1950s and 1960s Sterling Fluharty	54
Cherokee in My Blood: A Personal Project in Affirmation of African American and Native American Relations Charlene Graham	62
The Other Side of the Story: The Importance James Welch's <i>Fools Crow</i> Novel Patricia DiMond	70
Recovering Ritual: A Brief Comparison of the Ancient Greek <i>Oresteia</i> and the Apache <i>Na'ii'ees</i> as Performance Marla Dean	77

FOREWORD

Chad E. Litton
University of Mary

The Fifth Native American Symposium was my last as chair of the Native American Symposium Committee (NASC). For the past seven years I have been involved in the NASC, and I served as Chair or Co-Chair for the past four years. There were many highlights of the Fifth Symposium, of which I am extremely proud. We had the largest turnout for a keynote in my memory. Dr. Momaday was spectacular and entertaining. A large group of students from Durant High School attended, and it made for a truly enjoyable evening. We had the largest number of presenters in the history of the symposium and the papers were of high academic quality, as is evidenced by this volume. One of the bright spots for the students of Southeastern was the presence of Kim Norris Guerrero. She added a pleasant and powerful voice to the younger generation of Native American artists. I personally enjoyed the discussion with three of the previous Chairs/Co-Chairs of the Symposium Committee. The presence of these people made the event come alive. William Means gave a strong voice to issues of importance for not only our campus community but for the whole Native community.

Once again, I was able to meet some quality people and form positive relationships with academics and students from throughout the country. The personal nature and cordial atmosphere of the Native American Symposium make for easy discussion of important topics by and about Native Americans. The addition of extra time at the end of each session for a salon-style discussion increased the likelihood that ideas and comments could be shared and made the entire event more productive for all involved.

On a sad note, I will miss all of the wonderful people who worked so hard to make this event a success. Every member of this committee is integral to the success of both the Symposium and Insights. I shall miss working with all of you. As for the authors of the papers in this volume, I look forward to the day when we shall meet again to discuss and expand on these important issues.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Putting together the conference every other year is a large undertaking requiring the assistance of many here in the Southeastern community, including faculty, staff, students, and local residents. Happily, the symposium continues to grow each time it is held, rising to new heights of success, which is highly gratifying all around. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all who have contributed to this success in any way large or small.

Topping the list of our distinguished guests this year was N. Scott Momaday, but we were also delighted to have the actress and filmmaker Kim Norris Guerrero and the prominent Native American activist William Means as additional featured speakers. Norma Howard, a Choctaw-Chickasaw painter and native of Oklahoma, discussed her work, as did Donald and Cathy Cole of Denison, Texas, who make authentic and fully researched Native American artifacts. Hugh Foley of Rogers State University presented a slide and video presentation on Native American mascots in Oklahoma high school football, and over forty-five papers on wide variety of Native American topics were delivered by professors, graduate students, and independent scholars from across the United States and Canada. Our gratitude and appreciation extend to each and every one of them.

Special thanks are in order for the members of the Native American Symposium Committee, including our former chair Chad Litton, and in alphabetical order Daniel Althoff, Betty Andrews, Gleny Beach, Corie Delashaw, Glynda Herndon, Sharon Morrison, Jack Ousey, Camille Phelps, Lucretia Scoufos, Mark Spencer, Claire Stubblefield, Susan Webb, and Shari Williams. Institutional support was generous and enthusiastic, for which we thank Glen Johnson, President of the University, C.W Mangrum, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, Joseph Licata, Dean of the School of Education and Behavioral Sciences, and the SOSU Cultural and Scholastic Lectureship Committee.

Further financial support was graciously and generously provided by the Chickasaw nation, the Oklahoma Theta Chapter of the Alpha Chi Honor Society, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Ken L. Delashaw, Jr., Red River Rural Electric Association, Curtis Jewelry, Nichols Dollar Saver, McGehee and Associates, Texoma Truss Systems, Billy Mickle, Pat Phelps, Burrage Law Office, Jeff's Madill Flower Shop, Bake-Line Group, and Texoma Ford of Durant. We would also like to acknowledge grants from the Oklahoma Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as the useful assistance of Jason Hicks, Composition & Graphics Specialist of Southeastern Printing Services.

M.S and L.S.

INTRODUCTION

Mark B. Spencer
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More papers than ever before were presented at the Fifth Native American Symposium on November 13-15, 2003, a trend we hope will continue with the sixth symposium later this year. The present volume is only the third collection of published proceedings, however, as those from the conferences in 1996/1997 and 1999/2001 were combined together. Henceforth, we will publish the proceedings from each symposium separately in our current biennial format, albeit in a rather more timely fashion. Another new development is our application for ISBN numbers to assign this and all future volumes, thereby assuring that they will be duly listed in *Books in Print* and become more accessible to the scholarly world. The papers included here are intended as merely a sampling of those read at the symposium, and they range from the work of established scholars holding professorships at major universities to the initial efforts of aspiring graduate students. Undoubtedly, many of the other excellent papers delivered at the conference have been further developed by their authors and published elsewhere.

The first paper, "The Legacy of Pashofa: Ceremony, Society, Women, and Chickasaw Life" by **Matt Despain** from the University of Oklahoma, explores the history and enduring cultural significance of the traditional Chickasaw dish known as *pashofa*. More than merely a time-honored source of nourishment, the story of pashofa serves as a metaphor of evolving Chickasaw values and identity in the face of such traumatic pressures as the initial European contact, the removal to Oklahoma, and the forced assimilation into mainstream Euro-American society during the first half of the 20th century. Since the preparation of pashofa has always been the responsibility of Chickasaw women, its history highlights their unique contribution to the preservation and adaptation of traditional Chickasaw culture.

Carol Williams from the University of Lethbridge in Alberta investigates the changing roles of Native American women in "Between Doorstep Barter Economy and Industrial Wages: Mobility and Adaptability of Coast Salish Female Laborers in Coastal British Columbia, 1858-1890." The economic contribution of Native women had been substantial on a variety of levels in the early days of white settlement. But the arrival of large numbers of Euro-American women supplanted much of that former activity, and Coast Salish women responded by adopting surprisingly resourceful entrepreneurial strategies on the margins of the Euro-American economy as a way of making a living for themselves and their families.

2 Introduction

Carole McAllister and **Carlton R. Andre** of Southeastern Louisiana University sketch the evolution of beaded basket making among the Miwoks of the Yosemite valley and the Paiutes of the Great Basin. A uniquely 20th-century art form, beaded baskets drew upon traditional Native American designs and skills to create a new and entirely original aesthetic product appealing to the tastes of the Euro-American tourists, who formed their principal market. McAllister and Andre also root the development of the beaded basket tradition in the Miwoks' and Paiutes' deeply nurtured sense of place on their respective sides of the Sierra Nevada.

The importance of place and the environment are further emphasized by **Raymond Pierotti** from the University of Kansas. His paper "Communities as both Ecological and Social Entities in Native American Thought" argues that the inclusion of nonhuman entities in the environmental communities of indigenous peoples creates a far more viable paradigm for human interaction with the rest of the natural world than the alienation and exploitation characteristic of the European tradition. In particular, he examines the concept of personhood as it extends not only to animals, but even to plants and landforms in Native American beliefs.

Another form of indigenous knowledge often dismissed by scholars trained in European methods is that of history. **Joseph A. P. Wilson** of Michigan Technological University offers some alternative possibilities for the early peopling of the Americas in "Scientific Dogma or Indigenous Geographic Knowledge: Was America a Land Without History Prior to European Contact?" Wilson explores a number of intriguing similarities between the Athabaskan and Tibetan languages and culture, which suggest that Native American memories of relatively recent waves of emigration from Asia and much later continued contacts between the two continents may have more validity than has been generally supposed.

Sterling Fluharty from the University of Oklahoma in "Being and Becoming 'New Indians': Identity and Indian Youth Councils of the 1950s and 1960s" applies the racial identity development theories of William Cross and Devon Mishesuah to the changes in identity that took place among young Native Americans participating in the early Indian youth council movement. His analysis offers insights into the complex process whereby young Native Americans have negotiated a reconciliation between affirming their Native heritage and successfully responding to the demands of modern Anglo-American society.

Issues of identity are also central to "Cherokee in My Blood: A Personal Project in Affirmation of African American and Native American Relations" by **Charlene Graham** of Georgia State University. Graham is planning a study of the interaction of African slaves and freedmen with the Cherokee and Seminole tribes of the southeastern United States. Her project is partly inspired by her own Cherokee ancestry and heritage, kept alive in the stories handed down and lovingly recounted to her as a child by her mother and other family members.

Patricia DiMond from the University of South Dakota offers the first of two papers with literary themes in "The Other Side of the Story: The Importance of James Welch's *Fools Crow* Novel." DiMond explores how Welch's work exposes pernicious Euro-American stereotypes regarding Indian barbarism by allowing readers to see "the human side of an Indian warrior," who is sickened by the horrors of war that he encounters. She also discusses how Welch, as a Native American writing about fellow Native Americans, is able to overcome the exclusiveness, essentialism, and imperialism posited as inherent in the novel as a genre by Edward Said.

Finally, in "Recovering Ritual: A Brief Comparison of the Ancient Greek *Oresteia* and the Apache *Na'ii'ees* as Performance," **Marla Dean** of Louisiana State University challenges the way in which ancient Greek enactments of Dionysian myth have been enshrined as monuments of high culture, while the living dramatic rituals of indigenous peoples have been all too often disparaged or ignored. By resituating both on the plane of pure performance, Dean strips away the prejudice that privileges written texts over oral culture, thereby allowing the two dramatic traditions to be viewed and compared from a fresh perspective.