Pueblo Overview: New Mexico’s Pueblo People: Our History, Our Culture, Our Legacy

➢ Today, the United States government through the Bureau of Indian Affairs recognizes 573 Native American groups or ‘federally recognized tribes.’ 21 of these groups are referred to using the term ‘Pueblo’ or ‘Pueblos’.

➢ The term ‘pueblo’ is a Spanish word which means ‘town or people’. Its use began in the 1600’s by the Spanish as a characterization of the stable Indigenous agrarian communities they encountered in the US Southwest.

➢ Although these Indigenous communities have been and are collectively referred to as ‘Pueblo’, each is distinctly unique, with its own origin stories, spiritual constructs, governing structure, culture, history, and language.

➢ Today in State of New Mexico, there are 23 federally recognized tribes. 19 are referred to as ‘Pueblo’. The other non-Pueblo tribes are: the Navajo Nation and the 3 Apache tribes; Jicarilla, Mescalero, and Fort Sill.

➢ The 8 northern Pueblos are; Nambe, Picuris, Ohkay Owingeh, Pojoaque, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Taos, and Tesuque. The 11 southern Pueblos are; Cochiti, Jemez, Zia, Santo Domingo, Santa Ana, San Felipe, Sandia, Isleta, Laguna, Acoma and Zuni. They northern Pueblos are identified as they are located north of the City of Santa Fe.

➢ 2 other Pueblos not in New Mexico are the Hopi Tribe in Arizona and the Pueblo of Ysleta del Sur in Texas.

➢ Names of the Pueblos seen on a map today were assigned by the Spanish. Since then, some Pueblos have reverted back to their traditional names in their own language: i.e., Ohkay Owingeh previously known as San Juan Pueblo.

➢ All 19 Pueblo are sovereign entities recognized by the US federal government. Each Pueblo has authority over its territory, possesses the right to make laws, enforce those laws, govern according to their core values, and provide support and infrastructure components for their citizens. Pueblo core values include the authority to be and live as humans beings, reside on their ancestral homelands, and to govern themselves, bestowed to them by their Creator.

➢ There are 5 distinct, different languages groups spoken among the 19 New Mexico Pueblo people. They have been identified as solely unique, without linguistic evidence of evolving from a base language. They are Zuni, Keres, Tewa, Towa and Tiwa. Zuni is spoken only by the people of Zuni. The people of Jemez speak only Towa. The people of Acoma, Laguna, Zia, Santa Ana, San Felipe, Santo Domingo and Cochiti speak Keres. The people of Taos, Picuris, Sandia and Isleta speak Tiwa. The people of Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Ohkay Owingeh, Pojuaque, Nambe and Tesuque speak Tewa.

➢ Tourism spending contributes significantly to New Mexico’s overall economy. This revenue stems from the public’s attraction and interest in the culture and heritage of New Mexico’s Pueblo people. The Indian Pueblo Cultural Center takes ownership in creating a respectful, authentic, and credible narrative, on behalf of our Pueblo people to “preserves and perpetuate” our legacy as Pueblo people and that ‘We Are Of This Place’.
January 2022

‘Acoma: Pueblo in the Sky’
by Ward Allen Minge and Simon Ortiz/Acoma 2000

First book of the year offers a unique view into and the history of the most visited and iconic of New Mexico’s Pueblo communities.

Haaku, in the Keres language, more commonly known as ‘Acoma’, has and continues to draw tourists from around the world, to be awed and impressed by this ‘city in the sky. ‘Acoma: Pueblo In The Sky’ by Ward Allen Minge and the foreword by Acoma author and poet Simon Ortiz, provide an in-depth and multifaceted perspective of this celestial community. Sanctioned by the Acoma Tribal Council, this publication chronicles the societal structure, the history and the challenges the Acoma peoples have encountered and have had to endure, to be the society guests view today.

February 2022

‘The Tewa World: Space, Time Being and Being in a Pueblo Society’
by Alfonso Ortiz/Acoma 1972

The distinctive and diverse Pueblo communities of New Mexico have existed before time began. Stories of emergence and being is the focus of this month’s book by a prominent Acoma author.

Incursion onto the homelands of the Indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere was an impetus to monumental changes which affected countless generations. Policies from monarchies across the Atlantic Ocean, policies from the Mexican government, then subsequently from the US government, have had an impact on Pueblo people. This month’s reading, ‘The Tewa World: Space, Time Being and Being in a Pueblo Society’ by Acoma Pueblo author Alfonso Ortiz draws attention to the evolving existential sense of being a Pueblo human being, experience by one Pueblo man, perhaps experienced by others as well.

March 2022

‘Song of the Lion: A Leaphorn, Chee & Manuelito Novel (A Leaphorn and Chee Novel Book 21)’
by Anne Hillerman (invited guest)

March is designated Women’s History Month acknowledging the contributions of women in our Native communities. This month’s book introduces us to a Diné policewoman.

Countless readers have been introduced to the creatively written crime novels of Tony Hillerman. The duo of Diné, Navajo law enforcement officers, have intrigued and entertained readers since they first solved their first crime. The enhanced role of Officer Bernadette Manuelito, partner and now a spouse, is an intriguing addition to the mystery and ‘who done it’ saga of solving crimes on the Navajo Nation. Commemorating Women’s History Month, ‘Song of the Lion: A Leaphorn, Chee and Manuelito Novel’ is our reading for March 2022.

April 2022

‘Without Reservations: The Cartoons of Ricardo Caté’
by Ricardo Caté Kewa (invited guest)

“Á picture is worth a thousand words.” So goes the saying. For some gifted artisans, a picture can be a giggle or fall off a chair gut-buster laugh. Our April Fool’s book!

Why take life so seriously? This past year, perhaps many of us have had to do so or even ask this of ourselves. The COVID virus has certainly thrown our country a curveball, spitball and inside pitch all at once. As some argue against immunizations, testing, and wearing masks, what we all need is a good belly-laugh. This month’s reading, ‘Without Reservations: The Cartoons of Ricardo Caté’ by Kewa/Santo Domingo artist/cartoonist Ricardo Cate, contradicts the stereotype of ‘stoic Indian’, with a satirical, if not irreverent, perspective of contemporary Indian experience. Get you laugh on!
**2022 IPCC Book Club List**

**May 2022**

*Foods of the Southwest Indian Nations*
*Native American Recipes*
by Lois Ellen Frank  Kiowa  (invited guest)

One essential experience of Pueblo Feast Days is the food. However, it isn’t just foods from vendors or food-trucks. What make feast days solely unique is being invited into someone home, invited to sit at the family dinner table and indulge in tradition foods. *Foods of the Southwest Indian Nations: Native American Recipes*, by Lois Ellen Frank, this month’s book is chosen to help one in preparing a gastric experience for guests, enhancing one’s own recipes, and get cooking advice from our special guest, Chef Ariston Yazzie, from the Indian Pueblo Culture Center Indian Pueblo Kitchen.

**June 2022**

*In Search of Chaco: New Approaches to an Archaeological Enigma (A School for Advanced Research Popular Archaeology)*  Edited by David Grant Noble

One of the Southwest’s enigmatic past Indigenous civilizations, has and continues to challenge what is known of the people who built and inhabited the Chaco Cultural National Historic Park. *In Search of Chaco: New Approaches to an Archaeological Enigma* by David Grant Noble, is an updated interpretation of previous research materials. The series of essays, maps, and perspectives from contributors, including Native thinkers, in an effort to understand the ‘Chaco Phenomenon’. Whether you have visited Chaco or still planning your first visit, this could be your way to ‘search for Chaco.’

**July 2022**

*The Last Conquistador: Juan de Oñate and the Settling of the Far Southwest (Volume 2)*
by Marc Simmons  (invited guest)

The passage of 50 years had not erased the memory of the carnage nor the loss of life Spanish soldiers and mercenaries inflicted upon the Pueblo people. The Coronado invasion of 1540 CE into Pueblo homelands was a prelude to Spain’s efforts of expand and colonize tierra nueva, or the ‘new land.’ *The Last Conquistador: Juan de Oñate and the Settling of the Far Southwest* is a thoroughly researched exposé of the history and outcomes, of one Spaniard, who’s impact upon the Pueblo peoples and the descendants of those Spanish colonists, is still a contentious NM topic even today.

**August 2022**

*The Pueblo Indian Revolt of 1696 and the Franciscan Missions in New Mexico: Letters of the Missionaries and Related Documents*  by J. Manuel Espinosa  1988

For Pueblo people, August is an event held in infamy. The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 is that pivotal point. Yet, other unknown acts of resistance occurred.

The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 is perceived by the Pueblo people as a pivotal historic human event. It wasn’t merely a rebellion or revolt, but an act of defiance against the extermination of their societies. Although this resulted in the Spanish being banished, it wasn’t the end of Spanish colonization. *The Pueblo Indian Revolt of 1696 and the Franciscan Missions in New Mexico: Letters of the Missionaries and Related Documents* by J. Manuel Espinosa recounts the ‘entrada’, the return of Spanish colonists in tierra nueva, why they returned, what they encountered, and Pueblo resistance to their return.
September 2022

‘Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fate of Human Societies’
by Jared Diamond

Another well-known novel begins with “It was the best of times, it was worst of times.” In the fall of 1492 CE, the Indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere, this could have been what they may have been thinking. Their worlds and of their descendants were about to be changed for the next 500 years. This month’s reading, ‘Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fate of Human Societies’, by Jared Diamond chronicles the events of 1492 as well as other human events, created by invasion, imperialism, colonialization, war, the slave trades, and the Doctrine of Discovery.

October 2022

‘Nee Hemish: A History of Jemez Pueblo’
Joe S. Sando  Jemez  2008

Native Americans are sometimes asked of their languages, “Are any of their language written?” Although many different Indigenous nations have their unique languages, few have any formal grammatical rules for writing their languages. Thus, few have written forms of their history, in their own words. ‘Nee Hemish: A History of Jemez Pueblo’ by Joe S. Sando, well-known Pueblo academic, historian, author, and inspiration for the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center took on the task of putting into writing the history of the Jemez people.

November 2022

‘American Indians in World War 1: At War and At Home’
by Thomas A. Britten  1998

November is designated as Native American Alaska Native Heritage Month acknowledges the contributions of Native even before citizenship was granted. It is a time when the untold history and legacy of the Indigenous peoples of the US is highlighted. As self-proclaimed conquerors, Europeans have recorded history from their perspectives. ‘American Indians in World War 1: At War and at Home’ by Thomas A. Britten is a well-researched project, exploring documents and recorded accounts of Native Americans and their contributions at home and aboard in the World’s first Great War. These are stories of Native men and women during this time before being granted US citizenship.

December 2022

‘The Night Watchman: A Novel’ (invited guest)
by Louise Erdrich 2021  Turtle Mountain Chippewa

Storytelling has long been a human behavior, using the oral narrative of passing along history, skill-sets and knowledge. It is also a way of reminding others of those who have come before. With the written form, few people possess that unique gift of being exceptional storytellers. ‘The Night Watchman: A Novel Portrayals’ by Turtle Mountain Chippewa tribal member Louise Erdrich, is an example of ‘a storyteller’s storyteller, such that her latest novel has been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. What a unique opportunity to read a book and share in the life of her grandfather’s experience.
Legacy of the US Southwestern Pueblo People: Bibliography (Alphabetical)

Items listed are excellent learning resources related to the history of New Mexico’s Pueblo peoples and the impact of colonization on the Indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere.


3. Dozier, Edward P (Santa Clara). *The Pueblo Indians of North America*. Waveland Publisher Inc. 1983. (An academic publication, however, is very informative.)


