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American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

Ceremony, Spirituality, and Ritual in Native American Performance: A Creative Notebook. By Hanay Geiogamah.

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7fn9n8jk>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 38(4)

ISSN

0161-6463

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Publication Date

2014-09-01

DOI

10.17953

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that in the globalized, multicultural, and transnational world we inhabit, the nomenclatures and typologies of historiographical convention seem almost incapable of capturing the mixed subjects that we study and the blurred lives that they lead.

James Taylor Carson
Queen's University

Ceremony, Spirituality, and Ritual in Native American Performance: A Creative Notebook. By Hanay Geiogamah. Los Angeles: UCLA American Indian Studies Center, 2011. 144 pages. \$30.00 cloth; \$13.00 paper.

The structure of Hanay Geiogamah's book reveals how an indigenous ceremonial methodology and a theater practice can create new theatrical spaces that are embedded within indigenous cosmologies. As the author suggests, if ceremonial elements are infused in the methodology as the piece is being directed, acted, and produced, the live theater event has the potential to be a transformative experience for viewers, critics, players, technicians, and designers—basically anyone who experiences, or works on, the production. This method is a shift away from artifice, yet still a staging: through creative expression that exists within the realm of spirit and actions on stage, it combines the real, the imagined, and spirit as a way to carry out the making of storytelling. "Spirit" is the key operative word. The action to involve a spiritual intention is conducted by the ceremonial director, who is also an intercessor between the physical and the spiritual. The lines of the profane and the mundane are blurred and crossed. Spirit is invited into the performance. The methodology seems to combine approaches to a spiritual life with that of actual mundane theater-making, and combining the two sparks the mundane into the realm of spirit.

American Indian creative expression can enter into the realm of spirit, ceremony, and ritual, and this book clearly articulates the possibilities of this through a combination of cultural beliefs, actions, words, songs, and drumming. Drumming in many American Indian cultures is an intercessor of sorts that calls through and to the spiritual realm. And combined with chanting and singing songs with words, the spirit world and world of the ancestors are beckoned, harkened, and honored. Key to the success of this handbook is that the author is giving the reader a glimpse of what his American Indian theater is, and how to access it through ceremony. Art as ceremony: it's a tricky place to be. The imaginary fourth wall collapses, and one is left with the real, and sometimes the raw.

The book offers a very rare inside view into the author-director's working methodology. His style of making a "play" resides within indigenous imperatives of generosity, wisdom, fortitude, and courage, and, deeply, with spiritual intention. The intention of his method resides in the spiritual. The unique style of combining theater-making with real-life tribal beliefs and practices is peppered throughout the notebook. And upon completion of reading the book readers realize they have been on a journey that brings ceremony, spirituality and ritual (CSR) right into the structure of the book itself.

After defining terms of reference on how to ceremonially produce theater, the author breaks down "49," a play he has written that is a contemporary, urban, real-life American Indian experience with ties to the ancestors and cultural practices. The play was written and staged in 1975, which was the height of the American Indian movement's identity-building, with both urban Indians and relocation Indians articulating their histories and injustices. "49" reveals experiences lived by Native people that range from the spiritual to the continued colonial violence Native Americans are subjected to. Urban tribal life is fraught with joy and lingering stereotypes. The play gives the reader an authentic experience, as opposed to the imperialist colonial gaze.

In many ways, so little has changed for American Indians and Canadian First Nations. This type of social, and perhaps political, theater reveals much about the conditions of ancient tribal peoples on their ancient homelands. As *Ceremony, Spirituality, and Ritual* unpacks and rearticulates the author's work, forty years later in 2014 "49" retains its potency as well as its relevance. This is seen not only in the play's storytelling, but also as a significant foundational contribution to Native American playwriting at large. "49" is a classic Indian tale, with classic foundational teachings that cross tribal communities—not pan-Indianism, but rather a shared experience of oppression, joy, and spirit. It is a tale that should be mounted over and over again. Further, the play itself is within the realm of sacred text; words and images are spoken and shown. There is a healing taking place in the words through repetition, lighting, sound, and movement. The actions in the play maintain both Western theatrical tropes and indigenous ceremonial magic.

One has to pay attention when reading this notebook so not to miss all that is being offered. Indeed, the book is an offering, an offering for readers, scholars, and students to understand a way of working with live bodies, actions, sound, and lighting to create ceremonial space. If you get lost reading this book, that might be a good thing. As with live performance, the book takes you somewhere, to different places of pondering and creativity.

What is the difference between Western and indigenous theater? How does the spirit exist in both these places? When I reflect back on seeing Diana Rigg as *Mother Courage* at the St. Albert Hall in London in the mid 1990s,

and I recall the lighting upon her dress as she struggled and pushed the cart forward and the spirit of that moment, I conclude that the spirit of theater in different communities is accessed in different ways. But ceremonial theater is about a spiritual intention, and Geiogamah's "creative notebook" gives practitioners methods to achieve this kind of theater-making.

Is all American Indian theater ceremonial? No, but Geiogamah is offering and suggesting a type of ceremonial theater that is uniquely Indian. What makes this book so useful is how it articulates a Native American theater genre and demonstrates that the praxis is embedded in the spiritual. And it's the spiritual intention that makes American Indian ceremonial theater different from other forms of theater-making. The book reveals how to make "Indian" ceremony within the realm of "Western" theater. And through the process, theater-makers uplift and transform the actual space of theater-making, by way of holding a ceremony within the very function of theater-making—it's slippery. The profane and the mundane are very different places to dwell, and dwelling in the profane for too long can be dangerous! And the author is aware that "the audience simply can't endure prolonged intensity," whether spirituality, rage, or any intense emotion or action (34). The movement of voices, bodies, lights, and sounds can take us out of a concrete reality and into invisible magic. Or the visible magic. Should I be calling spirit magic? Spirit is spirit and magic is magic—they are cousins.

In addition to unpacking the experience of "49," the book offers a variety of workshops to achieve this particular type of theater-making. "49" is an urban story with all the highs and lows of urban tribal life: there are cops, dancing, spirits, violence, shamans, and traditional cultural teachings. But you have to pay attention, for sacred teachings are not just given out casually: one must be alert and open to receive. Even though in this case the teachings are words printed on paper, there is something more going on in this book's format which is in tension with oral traditions of tribal nations. One is reading the teachings as opposed to hearing them orally. And it takes a while, as it begins to wash over you, to realize the oral teachings throughout the text. By the end, hopefully readers realize what they have read. From teachings of the natural world, to its prayer songs, Night Walker's storytelling, and play and workshop notes, this book makes a valuable contribution to indigenous theater methods, and how to incorporate indigenous cosmologies right into the very foundation of ceremonial theater-making. "Ancestors we greet you, we greet you."

Wopila, pila maya, Mitakuye Oyasin

To the east

Wopila—I give thanks

Pila maya—you have honoured me
Mitakuye Oyasin—everything is related
To the east—where the sun begins the day.

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Connecticut's Indigenous Peoples: What Archaeology, History and Oral Traditions Teach Us about Their Communities and Cultures. By Lucianne Lavin. New Haven: Yale University Press. 528 pages. \$50.00 cloth; \$25.00 paper.

This book is a timely and significant addition to New England archaeology. Not only does this book provide an in-depth discussion of Connecticut's prehistoric and historic records, but also provides an overview for interpreting all of southern New England archaeology. While *Connecticut's Indigenous Peoples* does not purport to cover this entire region, bear in mind that the last major regional synthesis was done in 1980 by Dean Snow; this book is sorely overdue!

Very readable, *Connecticut's Indigenous Peoples* contains plenty of materials for both scholars and the general public. Chronicling from the Paleo-Indian period over 12,000 years ago through the contact cultural time periods in the early-seventeenth century, Lucianne Lavin's book also touches on current times to show the continuity between Connecticut's past natives and its present-day tribes. Each chapter begins with a chapter overview, discusses important events and artifacts for each cultural time period, and then adds an encyclopedic discussion of every site in Connecticut associated with that time period. A peek at the chapters will give the reader a context for understanding it.

Lavin begins with an overview of the history of archaeology in Connecticut that pays homage to predecessors such as Irving Rouse and Bert Salwen. As she points out, Connecticut's archaeological record is very much illuminated by both academics and "amateur" archaeologists. The author uses "amateur" as a term of the highest esteem; if it were not for the work of Ned Swigart, who founded the American Indian Archaeological Institute (now Institute for American Indian Studies), together with Lyent Russell, Dave Cooke, and many other advocates, Connecticut's prehistory would not be as well-known. This introductory chapter goes on to explain what it is that archaeologists do. Information about radiocarbon dating, palynology, dendrochronology, and geo-archaeology are discussed as methods for helping archaeologists interpret the sites.