dogs in American culture: Schwartz has a knack for dispassionate analysis. Through the chapter, she presents the case for dog eating as nothing more than a logical outgrowth of either food scarcity or—more often than not—a ritualistic embrace of pre-war superstition. Clearly, Schwartz is a focused researcher who can find the right source to present a cogent argument in defense of a reasoned hypothesis.

Most of the fourth chapter, "Dogs in the Land of the Dead," deals with the importance of dogs as a metaphysical force bridging life and death, and the mundane world of reality versus the murky waters of eschatology. Of all the sections in *A History of Dogs in the Early Americas,* this is the most interesting to read and the most compelling to study. It would be of interest not only to scholars who have an interest in canine divinity, but also to scholars simply interested in divinity in general. This section is of particular interest to researchers looking to disinter information about the role of dogs in the Mayan underworld and those trying to get a better grasp of the Aztec world-view as seen through the canine factor.

The final two sections—the first on dogs depicted in early American art (chapter 5) and the second on the effect of colonization on the treatment and socialization of dogs (the epilogue)—are interesting to read; however, they to offer less insight into the overall understanding of dogs as symbols of culture and civilization than does the rest of the book.

I recommend this book to every librarian whose book collections focus on Native American cultures and issues. In addition, any scholar with even the remotest interest in the connection between animals and Native American culture and the distinct religious and social beliefs endemic to the true settlers of the Americas should pick up *A History of Dogs in Early America.* Finally, any course on the Americas, be it focused on history, religion, or culture, could be improved by the inclusion of this meticulous study.

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In the Beginning: The Navajo Genesis. By Jerrold E. Levy. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998. 265 pages. $45.00 cloth; $16.95 paper.

With *In the Beginning,* Jerrold Levy consolidates his reputation as a revisionist anthropologist working in the classic tradition of social science. Like his earlier monograph, *Orayvi Revisited* (1992), in which he skillfully takes apart the ethnographic myth of Pueblo egalitarianism, *In the Beginning* offers a broad reinterpretation of Navajo culture, religion, and mythology. It provides a long-needed synthetic analysis of a corpus of primary sources that have never received the critical attention they merit. As revisionist anthropology, *In the Beginning* is first-rate social science and should not be ignored by anyone with an interest in the Navajo specifically or the study of American Indian religion and mythology generally. It represents another in a long line of scholarly achievements for its writer, an emeritus professor at the University of Arizona

who has authored or co-authored four other monographs and innumerable articles on Pueblo and Navajo peoples.

Essentially Levy's thesis is that Navajo traditional culture is an uneasy combination of a Pueblo influence on an Athabaskan core, initiated with the Navajo migration into the Southwest sometime between 1300 and 1525. Levy is by no means the first to view Navajo culture this way—what he does do is add extensive evidence from Navajo mythology and ceremonials to the historical, archaeological, and glottochronological linguistic evidence pointing toward the Canadian origins and southward migration of the Navajo. As such, *In the Beginning* is the most developed version of the what we might call the "ethnographic origin story" of the Navajo. Of course, this should not to be confused with the Navajo's own story of their origins, which like the Pueblo one, traces descent upward through multiple worlds into the present world.

For Levy, the Navajo's version of events is important data for analysis, but it remains just that. There is no question as to the truth of the Western social-scientific explanations of Navajo origins, only the question of how the Navajo version of events can be mined for further evidence supporting the academic view. Levy has never been reluctant to take an unpopular position and *In the Beginning* may also incur ire from both Navajos and Levy's fellow academics. It goes against conventional contemporary approaches to Navajo studies, which tend to downplay differences between academic scholarship and the Navajo view, giving primacy to the latter whenever possible. Unlike John Farella, James Faris, and other scholars, Levy makes no bones about positioning himself as a detached objective observer employing traditional ethnographic concepts in his pursuit of knowable truths about Navajo culture. If one can get past this premise, *In the Beginning* offers a fascinating and rewarding study of Navajo ethnohistory.

The book is divided into three sections that are further subdivided into ten chapters. An introduction outlines Levy's approach and provides a brief overview of the remainder of the volume. Quoting Morton Klass, Levy claims that no theoretical advances have been made in the study of religion in the last half century, largely for two reasons: the difficulties of conducting cross cultural study and the availability of evidence. Levy feels that the Navajo case may provide a way to overcome these barriers, and he seeks to demonstrate that Navajo traditional religion is as comprehensive and sophisticated as the so-called "great" religious traditions, such as Christianity. In order to do this, he includes comparative analysis of Christianity as a religious and mythological system in the latter part of the volume, ultimately concluding in the closing chapter that Navajo religion is not only equal to the Christian religion, but also more similar to Western science than Christianity is. Although it seems hastily included and is not theoretically remarkable, this attempt does help to balance Levy's disregard for emic perspective.

Between the introduction and the concluding chapter of *In the Beginning* are eight well-written chapters analyzing various aspects of Navajo religion. Levy follows several other scholars, most notably Karl Luckert, who have asserted that certain aspects of Navajo culture and religion represent enduring vestiges from the older Athabaskan way of life. However he goes further

than other authors by not simply seeing the more recent Pueblo influences as a replacement of the previous culture, but instead viewing the two traditions as in a continuous, dynamic process of conflict and accommodation. The book's second chapter provides an ethnohistorical overview of the development of Navajo culture from prehistory to the present, focusing on the effects of their two- to five-hundred-year migration southward from their original home in the western sub-arctic. These effects brought changes to Navajo subsistence and social organization, which evolved from the bilateral descent system shared by Northern Athabaskans to the matrilineal system the Navajos have today. Levy also asserts that this period saw a change from a religion based on shamanism to one based on a priesthood, like the Pueblos. In this chapter, Levy covers the more recent period of Navajo history more quickly since it is less relevant to his thesis. The chapter concludes with the introduction of the Native American Church (peyote) and Christianity, as well as a brief discussion of the recent decline of traditional religious practice.

The second and third chapters present the Navajo origin stories. Levy includes lengthy selections from the origin story told in 1928 by Sandoval to Aileen O'Bryan, though for comparative purposes he also contrasts this version to several others, including a second telling by Sandoval to Ives Goddard, two tellings by Gishin Biye' to Alexander Stephen in 1885 and Berard Haile in 1908, and one published in 1897 by Washington Matthews, among others. The major events of the underworlds include the activities of First Man and First Woman, the well-known separation of the sexes episode, and Coyote's theft of Water Monster's baby, which eventually forced the abandonment of the third world. The third chapter continues to draw on these sources, giving additional attention to the events of the present, or fifth, world. The fifth world includes the birth and growth of Changing Woman, the creation of the present-day Navajo people, and the birth and maturation of the Hero Twins who slay the monsters plaguing the humans and make the present world safe to inhabit. In these two chapters, Levy's comparative analysis is fascinating. Rather than seeing the version variations as a result of individual differences among narrators, he asserts that the differences can be explained by affiliations each has with various chantway ceremonials. In other words, the majority of the narrators are also medicine men who specialize in a given ceremonial or set of ceremonials and Levy shows that these associations influence key episodes in the origin story. Throughout the rest of the volume he presents additional evidence supporting the proposition that there are two distinct traditions in Navajo culture, that different ceremonials belong to one or the other of these traditions, that comparative mythological analysis shows important distinctions in how Navajo origins are viewed, and that the coexistence of the two traditions is manifested in the Navajo social order.

In chapter four, "Tricksters North and South," Levy asserts that the Navajo must have obtained Coyote as a trickster-creator figure during their southward migration either from the Plains Indians, the Great Basin groups or both. These groups all view Coyote ambivalently, but among his more positive exploits was his role in getting game animals released for hunting. The Navajo also have story about the release of game, though Coyote plays no role in it.

Comparing stories from the Plains, the Great Basin, the Pueblos, and the various Apachean groups, Levy concludes that "those Apachean tribes with the most Pueblo contacts ... are the ones that denied Coyote the role of hero who releases the game" (p. 91). Following Luckert, Levy goes on to show that in Navajo stories, Coyote is a kind of "defamed deity" associated with witchcraft, incest, and transformation-possession. In Navajo mythology, the positive aspects of Coyote's character have been transformed and credited to other figures, primarily the trickster-creator Begochidi, who figures prominently in some versions of the origin story but is completely absent from others. Levy claims that as the Pueblo influence on Navajo religion increased, especially after the Pueblo revolts, "those practitioners who still adhered to the hunting tradition adopted a trickster figure from the Pueblo pantheon that could not be as easily 'defamed' as Coyote," a figure named Paiyetemu who ultimately became Begochidi among the Navajo (p. 103). Levy concludes the chapter by revealing the many similarities between the two trickster-creators.

Chapter six, "Two Traditions," reexamines Navajo ceremonial classification in light of the two traditions Levy identifies—one he calls the Blessingway tradition. This subject has received frequent attention from Navajo studies scholars in the past and Levy includes the most thorough classificatory system, Leland Wyman and Clyde Kluckhohn's 1938 classification, as an appendix at the end of his book. Levy asserts that a different division of chants could be formed according to the relative strength of each chant's association with Blessingway. Levy writes, "The ceremonies most closely related to Blessingway should give prominence to Changing Woman and the masked gods, place less emphasis on the First Man group, and not attribute the diseases they aim to cure to possession" (p. 126). He finds this is the case with those ceremonials Wyman and Kluckhohn classified as the "God impersonator subgroup" (because they include masked dancers)—Nightway, Plumeway, and Big Godway—as well as Beautyway, Monsterway, Eagleway, and possibly Mountainway. Several other chants occupy a transitional category because Begochidi occupies a central place in the chantway origin stories. These include the Coyoteway ceremonial as well as Gameway, Mothway, and Frenzy Witchcraftway. In Levy's revised ceremonial taxonomy, all other chants would occupy a third category. After making a brief argument that the shamanic healers of the Navajo hunter tradition were transformed into the diagnosticians of today, Levy concludes the chapter by asserting that the effects of Pueblo influence, especially between 1680 and 1790, resulted in a suppression of shamanism and a reduction in the role of possession in Navajo religion.

The last section of *In the Beginning* includes two chapters that introduce comparative material from Christianity and modern science and discuss similarities and differences between these two systems and the Navajo one. In chapter seven, Levy shows that the Navajo creation story has more in common with science than Christianity does. A discussion of beliefs about the nature of human beings leads Levy to a review of Navajo understandings about the afterlife. Interestingly, these beliefs are not uniform and dichotomize between those who believe in an afterlife, usually in an underworld, and those who do not. Levy sees this polarity as underscoring the dual antecedents of Navajo cul-

ture. Chapter eight, "Good and Evil, Order and Chaos" examines these dyadic pairs in scientific, Christian, and Navajo traditions. Here the comparative analysis is the strongest, and Levy shows how Navajo ideas exemplify a complementary opposition that accepts the co-presence of both of the dyadic pairs in all things.

Chapter nine, "Men, Women and Men-Women" abandons the comparative perspective of the previous two chapters and looks at gender in Navajo culture. It is in this area that Levy finds some of the most important changes occurring in Navajo culture. Evidence from the Navajo origin stories shows the changing status of women after Pueblo contact. First, the possibility of an earlier practice of patrilocal residence may be shown by the fact that in the previous world, First Man asked First Woman to live with him, not the other way around. Second, several recorded stories make reference to the practice of a man's mutilation of his wife in the case of adultery. While this was actually a practice among some Apache groups, it seems to have only been known to the Navajos by tradition and was unknown among the Pueblos, suggesting that the Pueblo influence led the Navajo away from this tradition. Levy's analysis throughout this chapter is commendable, though he seems to see Navajo men's difficulties as resulting from their marginalized position in a matrilineal culture and not from the effects of colonialism, which, it might just as easily be argued, impacts matrilineal cultures more adversely.

Chapter nine concludes with a discussion of the Navajo berdache, or *nádleeh*. For Levy the *nádleeh* embodies the conflict between the Blessingway and Coyote-Begochidi traditions. In addition to Begochidi himself, considered a *nádleeh*, Navajo berdache figure in several important places in the Navajo origin story. In many versions, the first children born to First Man and First Woman are a pair of *nádleeh* twins, and it is they who mediate during the separation of the sexes, accompanying the men and performing the work of women. Again, Levy shows how narrators from the different traditions depict the *nádleeh* differently in their stories, with Blessingway singers downplaying or demonizing Begochidi and associating the *nádleeh* with death, incest, barrenness, and witchcraft. Levy's conclusion differs from previous scholarship of American Indian berdache, which tend to claim that the role played by the *nádleeh* in the origin story proves that this role was accepted by the Navajo. Levy on the other hand, asserts that "we find that the hermaphrodite is not the unequivocal symbol of perfection that combines the attributes of the male and female and serves as a mediator between polarities" (p. 210). While Levy cautions against projecting the more negative views of the *nádleeh* in the Blessingway versions of the origin story onto Navajo society at large, he notes that it is equally problematic to assert that the more positive portrayals found in the Coyote-Begochidi tradition show an acceptance such a third gender category.

Levy ends *In the Beginning* with a brief discussion of the use of the Navajo origin story in Diné College's school curriculum. He asserts that the version of the origin story used there, a product of a committee effort, includes only the Blessingway version of events and "represents a step toward an acceptance of this version as an officially endorsed interpretation of Navajo philosophy"

(p. 232). Once again, Levy takes what could be a rather unpopular opinion, but one that is well-supported by his thorough and thoughtful scholarship. Interestingly, Levy doesn't believe that the Blessingway version will ever fully replace that of the Coyote-Begochidi tradition, "if only because so many readily-available published works on the subject encourage a variety of other interpretations" (p. 231). In saying this, he may be overestimating the importance of published ethnographic works for Navajos. The evidence here suggests that the dual cultural tradition Levy identifies is not at all salient to Navajos themselves, who do not view their culture as the product of Pueblo influence on an older Athabaskan heritage. In any case, Levy is quite successful in demonstrating the ongoing coexistence of (and to some extent, conflict between) the two traditions. *In the Beginning* is among the most important analyses of Navajo myths and culture to appear in years. Whether one agrees with all of Levy's opinions or not, he has produced a provocative work that is not to be missed.

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The Indian Reform Letters of Helen Hunt Jackson, 1879–1885. Edited by Valerie Sherer Mathes. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998. 372 pages. $39.95 cloth.

Rather than allow readers to rely solely on her previous biography of Helen Hunt Jackson, *Helen Hunt Jackson and her Indian Reform Legacy* (1997), Valerie Sherer Mathes has compiled Jackson's letters "to provide a readable document reflecting the intensity of Jackson's passion for Indian reform" (p. xix). Mathes and the University of Oklahoma Press are to be commended for making these primary documents available to researchers and other interested readers. Mathes has combed dozens of manuscript collections and conducted thorough research on her subject to provide necessary background. A cumbersome format, a perplexing selection and editing process, and a lack of critical distance from her subject slightly mars Mathes' collection, but the book will undoubtedly help researchers concerned with Indian affairs and reform in the last half of the nineteenth century.

Mathes divides her book in half. The first section includes letters related to Jackson's interest in the Poncas' removal and to the writing of Jackson's major non-fiction work, *A Century of Dishonor.* The second half of the book contains letters related to Jackson's campaign on behalf of the Mission Indians of California and the publication of Jackson's most famous fictional work, *Ramona.* The letters included in this volume do indeed reveal Jackson's growing passion for justice for Native Americans as well as her adept writing skills. For example, her letter to the editor of *The Tribune* in 1879, written in the form of ten questions, all beginning with "How many of the American people know...?," represents a brilliant critique of federal Indian policy (pp. 32–37). Similarly, Jackson's letter to the editor of the *New York Times* in 1879 regarding the situation of the Utes in Colorado serves as