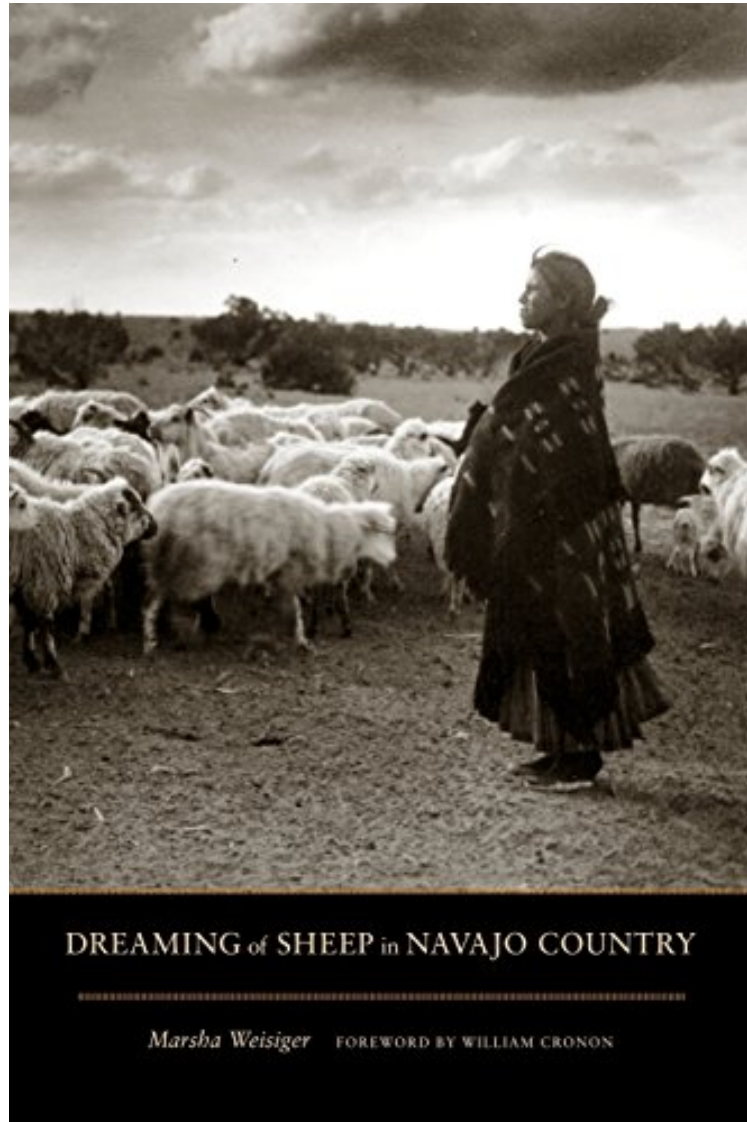


[Free read ebook] Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country (Weyerhaeuser Environmental Books)

## Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country (Weyerhaeuser Environmental Books)

*Marsha Weisiger*

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#1069586 in Books University of Washington Press 2011-10-24 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.02 x .94 x 5.981, 1.30 #File Name: 0295991410418 pages | File size: 30.Mb

**Marsha Weisiger : Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country (Weyerhaeuser Environmental Books)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country (Weyerhaeuser Environmental Books):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Gendered grazing and governmentality on the Navajo Res By Eric P. Perramond Weisiger's new book on Navajo sheep grazing politics breaks ground in areas others have rarely touched.

She brings the usual tools, as an environmental historian, of archival analysis and deep readings to shed light on an era that re-shaped Navajo culture, politics, and livelihoods in the Four Corners region of the U.S. Southwest. What is not "typical" for this treatment, however, is the sensitivity and focus on how grazing and de-stocking policies by the BIA and USFS affected the gendered relationships on the reservation. Like most federal moves aimed at "householders," it was assumed that men would be the locus for Navajo society when the de-stocking of the range was suggested, enforced, and policed. And yet women were central to the range activities of the tribe, in control of most of the flocks, but were never consulted (surprise). While this story parallels to some degree other de-stocking stories in the Southwest, for the Navajo the results were devastating -- their symbolic and material capital on the hoof evaporated quickly. This is a great book, easily read in a couple of days, but has great detailed material for those wanting to "geek out" on the examples and particularities of Navajo grazing practices, and the consequences of U.S. federal policy. The results are still visible today.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Environmental History and Natural Resource Management  
By Nichlas Emmons  
I used this book in my Ecological Perspectives of Native Americans course. This text is an environmental history of livestock management of the Navajo Nation during the 1930s and 1940s. This book is so well-written and presents the Diné perspective about the livestock reduction that took place following the implementation of New Deal policies.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful insight  
By HypnoToad.  
A wonderful insight on stock reduction, and the figurative corner the United States has put the Native populations in.

*Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country* offers a fresh interpretation of the history of Navajo (Diné) pastoralism. The dramatic reduction of livestock on the Navajo Reservation in the 1930s -- when hundreds of thousands of sheep, goats, and horses were killed -- was an ambitious attempt by the federal government to eliminate overgrazing on an arid landscape and to better the lives of the people who lived there. Instead, the policy was a disaster, resulting in the loss of livelihood for Navajos -- especially women, the primary owners and tenders of the animals -- without significant improvement of the grazing lands. Livestock on the reservation increased exponentially after the late 1860s as more and more people and animals, hemmed in on all sides by Anglo and Hispanic ranchers, tried to feed themselves on an increasingly barren landscape. At the beginning of the twentieth century, grazing lands were showing signs of distress. As soil conditions worsened, weeds unpalatable for livestock pushed out nutritious native grasses, until by the 1930s federal officials believed conditions had reached a critical point. Well-intentioned New Dealers made serious errors in anticipating the human and environmental consequences of removing or killing tens of thousands of animals. Environmental historian Marsha Weisiger examines the factors that led to the poor condition of the range and explains how the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Navajos, and climate change contributed to it. Using archival sources and oral accounts, she describes the importance of land and stock animals in Navajo culture. By positioning women at the center of the story, she demonstrates the place they hold as significant actors in Native American and environmental history. *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country* is a compelling and important story that looks at the people and conditions that contributed to a botched policy whose legacy is still felt by the Navajos and their lands today.

"A nuanced analysis of archival documents, extant historiography, and cultural memory. . . . This is a first-rate history by one of our premier western and environmental historians."?Jeffrey P. Shepherd, *The Journal of Arizona History*, Summer 2011  
"*Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country* joins a growing list of environmental histories that take the intersection of human culture and nonhuman imperatives seriously . . . What emerges is a compelling story, complicated in detail but clear in explication. The work is suited to both the uninitiated and knowledgeable reader, offering important insights on the cultural challenges of ecological restoration."?New Mexico Historical Society  
"*Weisiger's* focus on Navajo women, in her examination into the overgrazing of tribal land and the reduction of livestock as a solution, is distinct from other literature. . . . Weisiger's analysis on the implementation of the conservation program is very insightful and also disheartening, particularly for Navajo women, who were completely ignored both by the Navajo tribal council at the time and by the federal government. . . . The information is eye-opening . . ."?Western Historical Society  
"*Dreaming of Sheep* makes a significant contribution to scholarship on the American West. It effectively weaves together several neglected strands central to increasing our understanding of how climate change, periodic drought, land-use patterns, government interventions, and above all, the disregard of the importance of female husbandry intersected to create conditions that led to Collier's greatest failure during his tenure as commissioner of Indian Affairs (1933-45). . . . With great sensitivity and insight, Weisiger evocatively demonstrates why stock reduction continues to be indelibly seared into Navajos' collective memory."?American Indian Quarterly  
"*The history of Navajo livestock reduction in the 1930s is well known, yet Marsha L. Weisiger offers a sophisticated reevaluation that is satisfying in both its telling and its complexity.*"?The Journal of American History  
"*Weisiger demonstrates that Navajo rangeland management needs both an ecosystem approach and a cultural understanding. Summing up: Recommended.*"?Choice  
"*Marsha Weisiger recounts a past example of scientists predicting an environmental catastrophe to a skeptical audience. Although this episode played out on the remote Colorado Plateau in the 1930s and*

early 1940s, it remains relevant today.... Weisiger takes great pains to understand each side's point of view, and her account deftly joins the cultural and the ecological.... Weisiger's analysis of the conflict is the first to explain the interplay of gender and ecology.... Surely, there is a lesson here for the present day."?American Scientist" In reading this book, fiber artists will gain respect for the Navajo weavers in their efforts to weave and for their challenge in being forced to use wool that they felt was unsuitable for their work. Gardeners and botanists will surely recognize the references to plant life in the Southwestern desert, and the struggle in not allowing the pervasive plants to gain control. And those of us who love to examine history will recognize that this heartbreak could surely have been avoided through understanding, communication, and respect for nature and for the culture that thrives within it."?Shuttle, Spindle Dyepot "While past accounts have either emphasized the view of the New Dealers or the Dine, Marsha Weisiger uses both fresh and refreshed data, adds layers of gender and ecological analyses, and brings a variety of interpretive lenses to this history. . . . Her work is the most comprehensive examination of this episode to date, and her use of interdisciplinary techniques to see an issue from a multitude of perspectives makes this book a new model for environmental history."?Agricultural History, Agricultural History" I cannot think of any book that weaves a more compelling narrative from the collision of Indian, American, and scientific understandings of nature. Weisiger's painstaking reconstruction of the region's biotic communities and her careful attention to biologists' thinking and their meanings for historians places this book in a class by itself."?Louis Warren, University of California, Davis" An ambitious, masterful work that addresses fundamental issues about relationships of power between the state and the people it attempts to control, the relationship between nature and cultures, and conflicts between different ways of narrating stories."?Sherry L. Smith, Southern Methodist University" Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country ultimately presents a tragedy that could have been largely avoided. In this important book, Marsha Weisiger leaves us with an enhanced appreciation of victories and victims. She portrays resilient people who will do all they can to remain on the land and a persisting sadness nourished by dreams of a time gone by and a world to which sheep are unlikely to return."?Peter Iverson, Regents Professor of History, Arizona State University From the Publisher" Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country ultimately presents a tragedy that could have been largely avoided. In this important book, Marsha Weisiger leaves us with an enhanced appreciation of victories and victims. She portrays resilient people who will do all they can to remain on the land and a persisting sadness nourished by dreams of a time gone by and a world to which sheep are unlikely to return." - Peter Iverson, Regents Professor of History, Arizona State University