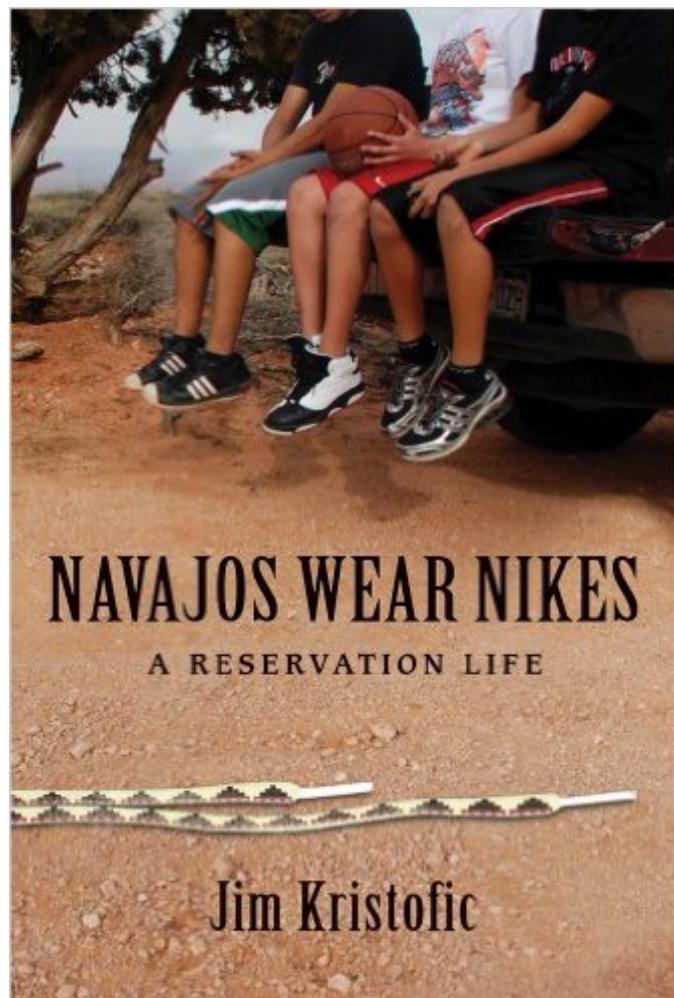


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# Navajos Wear Nikes: A Reservation Life



## **Synopsis**

Just before starting second grade, Jim Kristofic moved from Pittsburgh across the country to Ganado, Arizona, when his mother took a job at a hospital on the Navajo Reservation. Navajos Wear Nikes reveals the complexity of modern life on the Navajo Reservation, a world where Anglo and Navajo coexisted in a tenuous truce. After the births of his Navajo half-siblings, Jim and his family moved off the Reservation to an Arizona border town where they struggled to readapt to an Anglo world that no longer felt like home. With tales of gangs and skinwalkers, an Indian Boy Scout troop, a fanatical Sunday school teacher, and the author's own experience of sincere friendships that lead to ho?zho? (beautiful harmony), Kristofic's memoir is an honest portrait of growing up on--and growing to love--the Reservation.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Having briefly lived on a Navajo reservation as a twenty-something I would like to comment on this book's resonance with a fellow biligaana. Since, however, few people have likely shared the experiences Mr. Kristofic writes about, I'm sure my comments about its authenticity will be of little use to many readers, so I will keep these comments brief. I would simply like to say that this book poignantly captures the naivete of a modern man brought up on a steady diet of cartoons and John Ford. Though it's a familiar (but never cliche) coming-of-age story line, NWN takes us through the pains of wanting to belong matched only by a striving to be unique. The chapter when young Jimmy finally goes to college and is surrounded by his own WASP heritage is a situation that should

resonate with anyone who has wrestled with reconciling the truths and platitudes of their heritage. Regardless of your own experience with N. Americans or life on the Rez, I would recommend this book because of its great pacing, subtle comedy and a light-handed treatment of learning how to grow up. I read this book quite quickly, due in large part because I didn't put it down. It was a different sort of page-turner in that I wasn't on edge, or worried for the characters. Instead, it was more like getting caught up in a grandfather's story where there is a great balance of details and story. By "subtle comedy," I mean that I wasn't laughing out loud but there was a tender treatment of childhood friendship and world view that causes one to appreciate such simplicity as well as laugh at the brashness of youth. I don't know if the author would think this is a compliment but his ability to authentically write children, their dialogue and their thought process, reminds me of King in Different Seasons and IT.

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