Journal of Family Violence, Vol. 20, No. 2, April 2005 (© 2005)
DOI: 10.1007/s10896-005-3171-x

Navajo Women and Abuse: The Context for Their Troubled Relationships

Mary J. Rivers[1,2]

In this article, on the basis of interviews with seven Navajo women, the author discusses the Navajo woman's perspective on domestic violence. These discussions reveal several factors that distinguish the Navajo woman's experience of abuse from that of the Anglo[3] woman. These factors are examined in light of historical and contemporary understandings of the Navajo world. Three cultural elements can help us understand the Navajo woman's experience of abuse: the cultural concept of hózhó, the searing tale (in the Creation Story) of the quarrel between First Man and First Woman, a quarrel that brought great tragedy to the people; and the Kinaáldá, the female puberty rite. It is the author's argument that these facets of the Navajo culture, in addition to Western explanations for women's staying with abusive partners, are powerful contributors to the Navajo woman's understanding of abuse in her life and if we are to develop successful techniques for intervention, we must consider these elements as well as those of the dominant culture.

KEY WORDS: Navajo; cultural narratives; female puberty rites; women; abusive relationships; kinaáldá.

One of the more depressing consequences of Anglo and 21st century intrusion into Native American culture is the rise of domestic abuse. The traditions of many native cultures in the United States have strong taboos against spouse, child or elder abuse, but a variety of circumstances—the gap in generational teaching caused by forced attendance at boarding schools, the rise of alcohol and drug abuse, rampant unemployment, the growing presence of TV and radio, and the migration of family members away from the homeland—has at least partially contributed to a breakdown in these traditions (Zion and Zion, 1993; Pierpoint, 2000; McEachern *et al*., 1998). One consequence is a frightening rise in the amount of violence against women and children among many Native American families.

All too often the statistics related to domestic violence, alcoholism, teenage pregnancies and other ills of 21st century reservation life are seen through an Anglo filter. Such experiences are understood through the Anglo understanding of power, domination, and people-as-property. Attempts at intervention, the search for solutions, and efforts to divert the patterns then emerge from a faulty knowledge of what the experience means to those experiencing the violence. In other words, the frequent Anglo response to rape on the reservation, for instance, might focus on empowerment of the woman, efforts to minimize alcohol abuse, and re-education of men, strategies used with varying degrees of success on white college campuses. While these strategies may meet with some success with native peoples, other strategies that draw on their unique perspectives may be more suitable and more easily accepted.

The Navajo culture is vastly different from the Euro-descended culture of the mainstream United States. Thus we need to understand these experiences in the Navajo context if our responses are to have any legitimacy (Dawson, 1994). This paper is an attempt to understand the Navajo woman's sense making in the face of abuse.

[1]Department of Communication, 411 Shilling Hall, Millikin University, Decatur, Illinois.
[2]To whom correspondence should be addressed at Department of Communication, 411 Shilling Hall Millikin University, Decatur, Illinois 62522; e-mail: Mrivers@mail.millikin.edu.
[3]"Anglo" is the term used by the Navajo to describe anyone who is not Navajo or "Indian." It is used here to describe the westernized, non-native United States culture.

The Navajo are among the tribes who have seen their traditional values of harmony and peace crumble with the 20th and 21st centuries. For 500 years, the Navajo value of hózhó, usually translated as beauty but referring more to harmony and peace, was the explicit principle by which tribal members lived their lives. Domestic violence was rare among the tribe and when it did occur, it was handled swiftly and summarily by the male members of the woman's family (in the case of wife battering). Her uncles took the battered woman home and the family ostracized her husband until he changed his ways. (Kluckhohn and Leighton, 1974; Zion and Zion, 1993) Since husbands lived in their wives' compounds (the Diné are a matrilocal tribe), such ostracism was both easy and painful. If necessary, a ceremonial sing was held to heal the imbalance in his spirit. The message was clear: wife abuse will not be tolerated.

But changes in the Navajo world, beginning in the 1500s with the Spanish invasion but most directly affected by Anglo encroachment onto the reservation beginning in the late 1800s, have shattered that balance (Braveheart-Jordan and Debruyn, 1995). Today, not only is domestic violence rampant across the reservation, but the ability of families to intervene has been damaged by distance and the deterioration of tradition. Thus Navajo women have had to develop a new system of relationship understanding and self-evaluation in order to make sense of their circumstances and evolve a method of coping with their life.

In 1998, the author spent 7 months living and teaching in Crownpoint, New Mexico, a Navajo community in the Four Corners area of the Navajo Nation. Towards the end of her stay, she interviewed seven Navajo women about their lives on the reservation and their understanding of what it meant to be a Navajo woman. These interviews averaged an hour in length and generated 90 pages of transcript

The women ranged from 20 to 60 years of age and were recruited to participate in the project through Diné College. All were in or had been in committed relationships and all had children. Four of the seven were students at the college; the other three were employees. They all had been born on the reservation and were currently living there. However, their employment status varied, as well as number of committed relationships,[4] their educations and their economic status.

[4]Two women were widowed, three divorced and remarried, and two were in their first marriages. However, I should note that at least two respondents considered themselves married though without benefit of any legal or religious ceremony. One woman had a masters degree, three had some college, three had high school diplomas. One woman was not employed outside the home while three were employed full-time and two held part-time jobs.

The interviews were recorded and later transcribed for narrative content. The interview protocol focused on their childhoods, their adult lives, and their own sense of being a Navajo woman [Appendix A]. All women were asked the same questions, but given great latitude in their answers. Probing questions that explored interesting topics were sometimes included. However, the goal was never to explore some of the darker areas of reservation life (alcoholism, teenage pregnancies, unemployment, suicide, abuse) and none of the questions even indirectly led in that direction. Thus it is surprising that one of the themes that pervaded these interviews was that of domestic violence.

Six of the seven women in the subject pool told stories of domestic violence: her own abuse at the hands of a father or male partner, her parents' abuse of one another and/or of the children, and her children's abuse (including sexual abuse) by family members. For example, Respondent 1 told how her first husband beat her repeatedly during a stormy 10-year marriage, including one beating that hospitalized her for 3 weeks.

> It got to the point where I ended up in the hospital for three weeks. I had a concussion, a contusion, I had to have liquid drained out of my brain to survive and so I stayed in the hospital for three weeks.

Respondent 2 described her father whipping her with a clothes hanger, along with the lecture she received from the tribal police officer about the virtues of being an obedient daughter.

> The guy he got a wire and he whipped my face. And then, I guess my mom got scared and she called the cops and we were still fighting. And the cop took my dad's side and I told the lady, she goes you're not raised here, you're not raised right. You don't obey your dad.

Respondent 3 described her first husband's violence, explained that she left him, and then recounted the violence she'd received at the hands of her second partner (who also molested her daughter).

> . . . about three years later I met my first husband. And we got married, we had a church wedding and everything. And I was about three months pregnant when I, when we got married. So it didn't last long, he was real abusive, so it got worse, it wasn't getting any better so I just left.
>
> God, all this, we were together for thirteen years and this is what happened [he molests her daughter], and I told him before when we were together, long time ago, when we first met, I told him that that was what happened to me when I was young [her uncle molested her]. . . . after that a couple months went by and then I don't know how it happened, where we started, he started coming over again, and he moved back in. [They were apart at the time of the interview]

Respondent 4 talked of her father beating her mother and brothers.

> My mom was always getting abused she never fought back and then we couldn't help her, because my dad really abused us, you know. He would just whip us and whip us until we were crouched in a corner. The two people out of our family that got it worst was my sister Carol and Pete. My mom told me one time that my dad didn't think Pat was his. So that's why he treated him differently and abused him more.

Her first husband, too, beat Respondent 5.

> He would go on alcohol binges and then he would stop. Everyone told us to stay together, especially his family. They encouraged him to stay with me because I think they figured I can maybe tame him. . . . When he left with that woman, I figured it was probably for the best because alcohol was really . . . he was getting abusive.

And the mother of Respondent 7 was beaten by her husband until he left scars, physical and emotional.

> I guess he was the type of person that did that to her, she was, um, he scarred her face by hitting her in the face? . . . My mom I think she's very bitter about that. She'd always be angry and say mean things to us.

Violence is taboo in the Navajo tribe. It violates the principle of hózhó and, as mentioned earlier, was not tolerated by members of the tribe. But domestic violence is a serious problem in the Navajo Nation, one that may well be getting worse. Official information regarding the incidence of domestic violence on the reservation is almost impossible to obtain. The Navajo Nation has its own government and keeps its own statistics; requests for information were unanswered. Additionally, the policing of the Nation is complex. The tribe has its own police force, and they are reluctant to share their statistics with Anglo inquirers. Police off the reservation, in cities like Gallup and Farmington, are more forthcoming, but life circumstances in cities are radically different from those on the reservation and what happens there is ungeneralizable to the population of interest here.

However, anecdotal information, from a trusted source, indicates that Crownpoint, NM, where most of the informants lived and/or worked, a tribal town of 2850 people (250 Anglo), had about 300 domestic abuse calls a month. Lending some support to this data is a study in which Navajo women seeking care at a health care facility were interviewed regarding domestic abuse. Over 52% of the women responding reported at least one incidence of domestic abuse (Fairchild *et al*., 1998). Zion and Zion (1993) projected that, by 1995, domestic violence cases would rise from 1.5% to 1.8% of the adult Navajo population (currently, in 2002, over 220,000). Articles in community papers (Pierpoint, 2000; Schurtz, 2000) regularly report on the increased incidence of domestic violence, and recently the Navajo Nation appointed a Women's Commission; one of its charges is to address the epidemic of family abuse.

Many of the reasons that account for domestic violence in general are applicable among the Navajo. Alcoholism, in spite of tribal regulations prohibiting the sale of alcohol on the reservation, is an enormous problem, and many informants reported their abusers had alcohol problems. While the strength of the relationship between alcohol and abuse is in dispute, most scholars agree that alcohol is, at minimum, a mediating factor in domestic violence. (Flanzer, 2000; Bennett, 2000) Unemployment, a second correlate of domestic violence, is over 55%; among men, it is closer to 70% (Division of Community Development, 1995). Finally, almost 58% of Navajo families live below the poverty line. The combination of alcohol, unemployment and poverty undoubtedly fuels a good deal of the violence at home.

Other factors are at work as well. The delicate balance of power between men and women is disappearing. The Navajo tribe is historically matrilineal; property is owned by and passed on to women. However, involvement of the United States government in establishing the tribe as a nation has led to a patriarchal government; the tribal government, from Window Rock, the Nation's capital, to chapter houses, is almost entirely male. And property ownership has shifted. Men have traditionally owned the family's horses and cattle while women owned the property and sheep. Horses and cattle have risen in value in this century, while sheep and property values have declined. In addition, when the U.S. government began allotting portions of land to members of the tribe, the land was given to the men. Men now own businesses and may work jobs for which they earn a paycheck. Power, in the form of material ownership, has shifted to men (Zion and Zion, 1993).

Another important factor is the disruption in the transmission of cultural values and lore created by the U.S. government's efforts from 1930 to 1970 to "Anglicize" the Native American. A policy that in some areas forced native children to attend Anglo schools away from their families, and in all cases emphasized the obliteration of the native culture, has created a break in the oral tradition (Kluckhohn and Leighton, 1974; Zion and Zion, 1993; Locke, 1992). None of the women in this sample had parents who taught them about their culture. Only two women learned to speak Navajo at home. All seven of them learned what they knew of the language and the culture from grandparents or by studying the culture in school as adults. This gap in oral history resulted in generations

of Navajo who were lost in a no-man's land—rejected by Anglo society and unfamiliar with the byways of their own. Thus, not only is knowledge of the taboos weakened but also the traditional methods for dealing with violations are not taught.

In summary, the increase in domestic violence on the Navajo reservation is at least partly the result of some of the twentieth century's ills: unemployment, alcoholism and a shift to an unequal balance of power between the sexes, as well as a breakdown in cultural knowledge. However, while the causes of the rise in domestic violence are worth investigating more thoroughly, they are not the subject of this paper. The focus here is upon the women who suffer this abuse, in how they understand it, explain it, and survive it.

While there is no clear agreement among scholars as to why women will stay with abusive partners, several reasons occur repeatedly in the literature. Women often stay because they have low self-esteem; they feel this relationship, this partner, is the best they can do. They may stay to protect the children or to give them an "intact" home. They may also stay for fear they will lose child custody in a court battle. Many women stay because they have no means of support and no skills to enable them to get jobs to support themselves and their families. Some women stay because they have no place to go; families may be unable to take them in or disapprove women leaving their partners. (McCue, 1995)

In many cases of domestic violence on the reservation, the women stay with their abusive partners for the same reasons Anglo women stay. Low self-esteem undoubtedly plays a significant role. Fifty-nine percent of Navajo over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma (Division of Community Development, 1995). Teenage pregnancy is, and has, been of epidemic proportions on the reservation. A lack of education and early motherhood can contribute to a woman's poor self-esteem. And a small number of the Navajo women simply have no place to go and no ability to support themselves should they leave.

However, while some of the Navajo women stay for the same reasons women everywhere stay, there are some important differences. While Anglo women may have nowhere else to go, this is not true for most of the Navajo women. Support for family is still one of the strongest of the Navajo values. Families are extremely close, both in proximity and attachment, among the Navajo; many of the abused women have family who would take them in. The women interviewed for this project who stayed with abusive spouses had family nearby who would have provided for them had they moved in.

Furthermore, while Anglo women who stay are often un- or under-employed, Navajo women, with and without children, are more likely to be employed, sometimes with better jobs, than men. And they are more likely to have fairly stable employment in the service industry that dominates reservation employment opportunities. In addition, they often weave, bead, and raise sheep, giving them additional (though very small) incomes. Reliance upon the male's support is less likely to be a reason for staying.

Finally, the cultural system privileges the mother–child bond. The children are unequivocally hers. While she may chose to have one or more stay with their father, tribal courts will not demand it. Fear of losing the children does not usually drive her decision to stay.

Among this project's informants, women with education, family, and jobs, the pattern was to stay with abusive partners. While three women terminated abusive relationships, two of them stepped into equally violent second marriages. Several of the women with abusive fathers reconciled with their dads as adults. More tellingly, the talk of their abusive men showed little anger, hate, resentment, or desire for retribution. They raised the children of adulterous husbands, gave abusers second, third and tenth chances, and reconciled with violent fathers and molesting uncles.

The following is the author's understanding of at least some of the reasons behind the strong Navajo woman, succeeding in a difficult situation, raising her family, and remaining faithful to tribe and, sometimes, oftentimes, her man.

The key to understanding the women's strength lies in part in understanding the principle of hózhó and grasping its pervasiveness into all aspects of the culture. Hózhó is typically translated into English as "beauty," but the Anglo definition doesn't capture the full Navajo meaning. In this case, beauty refers to balance, to harmony, to inner peace, to a cooperative existence of opposites. It is the mantra of the tribe: road signs exhort drivers to "walk in beauty." Friends sign their letters with that phrase. When something goes wrong, when someone is ill or has an accident, lack of hozhó, or disruption of hózhó is blamed. It is the core of the culture.

Hózhó refers to balance of seeming opposites. There is a balance between earth and people, between earth and sky, between animal and human, and between male and female. The Navajo believe that every man has a bit of the female in him, and every female has a bit of male in her. Both men and women must honor both sides of themselves; they must not deny one or reject it. Beyond this is the demand that men and women must live together, in harmony.

Hózhó helps us understand the Navajo woman's response to abuse in two ways: first it explains her reluctance to leave her partner. It is disruptive of the essence of hozhó. Leaving her partner disobeys the injunction that

man and woman stay together. Second, it offers a plausible explanation for her partner's aberrant behavior; he is out of balance, his hozhó is disrupted, and he needs a sing to restore harmony. This is not to say that the abuser is a victim or ill. He is generally presumed to be responsible for his state. It is merely offered as an explanation for his actions and offers a solution: a sing.

The lesson of hózhó is taught in many different ways, all to reinforce the message that balance, family, and tolerance are more valued than personal happiness, wealth, or fame. This includes balancing each person's male and female sides and maintaining the balance and interdependence of the male–female relationship.

This message is conveyed and reinforced in at least three ways: the lesson of Diné Bahané (the Navajo story), the lesson of the environment, and the lessons of the Kinaáldá.

Dine Bahané is the body of oral tradition (well-translated by Paul Zolbrod, 1984) that tells the Navajo story. Numerous examples in this body of work reinforce the principle of hózhó; two stories follow.

> First Man became a great hunter, bringing home much meat for First Woman to prepare and eat. One day, after a very good meal, First Woman leaned back and said, "Thank you, my vagina, for this wonderful meal." And First Man was offended. He asked, "Why don't you thank me? Your vagina did not stalk or kill or skin this fine deer." First Woman replied that, "without my vagina, you would not do these things." And First Man became very angry at her arrogance and her pride. He called all the men together and told them what had happened. He said, "We must teach the women they cannot live without us." And so the men took their tools and their weapons and they moved across the broad river.
>
> The women laughed at the men and said they could live very well without them, and for the first year, with their crops and stores to sustain them, they did do well. The first year the men were hungry since they had no crops to harvest. But the men used their tools to prepare and plant the fields, while the women, who had no tools, did nothing.
>
> The men and women remained apart for three years and each year saw the women starve more and the men increasingly prosper. But the women missed their men and the men missed their women. To ease their frustration, they engaged in selfish sexual practices, the men using the organs of animals to satisfy their needs, and the women using stones, and cactus, and animal bones to satisfy their needs.
>
> After three years, the men came to First Man and said they didn't like living apart from the women. They missed their wives and they begged that the women rejoin them. First Man and First Woman agreed, and so the women went across the river to rejoin their men. And there was great celebration upon their reunion.
>
> However, later the women gave birth to all manner of monsters as a result of their aberrant sexual practices. These monsters came and maimed and killed the People. It was Monster Slayer and Child Born for Water, born to the Sun and Changing Woman, who came to slay the monsters and save the people. [Adapted by the author from Zolbrod, 1984]

The message is abundantly clear. Men and women who leave one another bring disaster upon the world. They must stay together; they must not be proud or selfish; they should not lose their tempers. A second story reinforces this message.

> After setting the Sun and Moon in the heavens, some of the brilliant quartz remained. They say it was First Woman (or maybe it was First Man) who placed the stars in the skies. This was so that the rules for life would have a permanent place for all to see so they would be reminded of them. First Woman carefully designed the position of the pieces, laying them on the ground and then she had them placed in the sky. The constellations to be placed were those of Whirling Man (the Big Dipper), Whirling Woman (Cassiopeia) and the Hearth Fire (the North Star). Whirling Man and Whirling Woman never leave the night sky, and they endlessly circle the hearth fire, reminding men and women to stay with one another, and not to stray from home. [Adapted by the author from Zolbrod, 1984]

These stories are still part of the Navajo tradition. All of the informants told of nights spent by a fire listening to stories (Coyote stories in the winter), told by grandparents and other relatives. They heard them at pow-wows, at Enemy Way dances, and in school. Thus from the beginning of their lives, the evening stories and frequent ceremonies are telling men and women to stay together.

The environment also carries a message about the importance of staying with one's partner. The story of Whirling Man and Whirling Woman reinforces the message, as does the hogan, the traditional Navajo dwelling (Griffin-Pierce, 1992). The hogan may be an ancient form of dwelling, but it is ever-present on the reservation, dotting the landscape and constantly in use, as home and ceremonial center. While the design may vary (there are male and female hogans, round, six-sided, and eight-sided), there is a basic pattern. This is a single room structure, with one door that always faces east. In the center of the room is a wood burning stove or a fire with a stovepipe snaking to roof. The first hogan was built by First Man and First Woman and became the prototype for all others. Anthropologist John Farella explains, "All knowledge is contained within the hogan. It's a master encoding, a place to begin to understand the Navajo World view." (Thybony, p. 13) The roof represents Father Sky and the dirt floor is Mother Earth. The four poles supporting the roof represent the four sacred mountains. The fire is home, the magnet that keeps a Navajo centered. To enter the hogan, one must

circle from left (south, the male side) to right (the north or female side). The circular nature of the hogan, centered upon the fire core, reiterates the rule to the Navajo. "You belong at home, with your mate." It is a powerful message. Many Navajo, this project's informants among them, relate to the hogan as a central part of their lives and their sense of who they are.

There is a third element of the culture that accounts for the Navajo woman's understanding of her situation in life. It centers in the message of the kinaáldá, the female puberty ceremony. This unique ceremony (there is no counterpart for the males) is traditionally held as soon as possible after a girl's first menses. Generally a four-day ceremony, it is an ordeal for the girl, one that teaches her that she will survive only by being strong, respectful and doing her duty to her family and her tribe.

None of these informants had had a kinaáldá, but each held one for daughters and/or granddaughters. These women were recipients of the government school policy and missed this piece of their traditional training, but they felt it was important to re-institute tribal traditions.

For guests, the kinaáldá is a celebration of a young girl's passage into womanhood. For the girl, it is pure drudge, a lesson in the hard life she faces. For 4 days, she is up at dawn to dress in traditional clothes and jewelry, and then run miles to the east, with children, adults and dogs racing at her heals. She will repeat this once or twice during the day. During the rest of the day, she works, quietly and respectfully, doing the bidding of everyone in attendance. She does the cooking, the cleaning, and the grinding of the corn for the kinaáldá cake. She fetches and carries for others. She may herd the sheep, butcher a lamb, or haul water to the garden or fields. In between her labors, she must listen respectfully to her elders as they criticize her comportment and offer her advice in raising a family, preserving her virginity, surviving childbirth. At night she struggles to stay awake while the Medicine Man conducts the appropriate ceremonies. On the last day, exhausted beyond belief, she stirs the batter for the cake, helps lower it into the cooking pit, piles the layers of wet papers and corn leaves on top and builds the fire above it all to bake the cake. With the formal cutting of the cake (offering the heart or center pieces to the Medicine Man and the honored guests), she is done (Charles-Lutz, 1998; Frisbie, 1967; Poessel, 1993).

The lesson is a serious one: A woman's life is a hard one. She must have endurance, patience, an even temper, and respect to survive. Listen to the informants as they explain what it means to be a Navajo woman:

Respondent 1:

> It means that I'm a very strong person. I had to look out for myself. I had to be schizophrenic going between two cultures all the time. To be Navajo I have to be able to be a Navajo in physical appearance, but in my thinking I have to be in this other portion of my world to be able to survive.

Respondent 5:

> For me I think it's just a kind of life that I was brought up with. My pride and at least knowing some traditional stories, knowing my language and passing it on to my children. My interest in the weaving and keeping it going, this just literally surviving. And at the same time having a lot of respect for my traditional ways.

Respondent 7:

> It means that you have to work hard to get somewhere on or off the reservation. It means you'll be considered different from everybody else. If you do become a mother, it's going to be hard.

Respondent 2:

> It means not giving up on your children. If they struggle learning their culture, don't put them down on that. Keep the stories, keep the stories, and these are the traditions. Pass on traditions [to] your daughter.

Respondent 3:

> I think my daughter is like me, she's strong, she's in a lot of ways, she's, I think she's prepared for life. But it's going to be hard for her.

Respondent 4:

> I would say, to be a Navajo woman you need to be strong. I know that caring for a lot of things that you took for granted. Having respect for yourself.

It is tempting to view the Navajo woman's response to the violence in her life as an example of victimization. But it is a disservice to the women to simplify their situation thusly. To be a victim, one must feel helpless. The women in this project do not feel helpless. When they talk of being a Navajo woman, they are describing themselves, and the words they use, "strong," "respect," "hard work," "pride," are not descriptive of the downtrodden. The women who collaborated in this study may not be representative of the entire Nation of women, but they provide a good picture of one segment of the population. They show us, that for some women, it is possible to straddle two worlds, to embrace both one's cultural roots and MTV, to live with the detritus of the Anglo culture and transform the experience into a triumph of will. In order to collaborate successfully with the Navajo to eradicate domestic violence among the tribe and to offer the abused the form of support they need, understanding this point is essential.

APPENDIX A: Navajo Women Project

Mary Rivers, PhD
Principle Investigator

Basic information

1. What is your clan affiliation? (Have them write it in English and Navajo.)
2. Where were you born? (Place and place type.)
3. Describe the family into which you were born (living arrangements, family members, situation, members' employment).
4. What is:
   a. Your age
   b. Marital status
   c. Number of children, if any
   d. Education
   e. Occupation
5. What language was used in your home while you were growing up?
6. Can you speak Navajo? If so, how did you learn?
7. Tell me about your siblings and other household members.
8. Can you give me a rough overview of your childhood years (a chronology of important events)?

General Prompts

1. What are some of your earliest memories?
2. What kinds of special events were celebrated in your home? How were they celebrated? Did you have a Kinaáldá? Would you tell me about it?
3. How did an ordinary day go when you were growing up?
4. Tell me about your father.
5. Tell me about your father.
6. What kinds of responsibilities did you have as a child?
7. How did you have fun? With whom?
8. We often model our parenting on how we were raised. What have you/will you copy when/if you are a parent? What might you do differently?
9. Did childhood prepare you for the life you have now?
10. What does it mean to be a Navajo woman? How did you learn to be a woman?
11. How do you think Navajo women differ from the men?
12. What else would you like to tell me?

REFERENCES

Bennett, L. (2000). Alcohol abuse does not cause domestic violence. In Roleff, T. (ed.) *Domestic Violence: Opposing Viewpoints*, Greenhaven Press, San Diego, CA.

Braveheart-Jordan, M., and Debruyn, L. (1995). So she may walk in the balance: Integrating the impact of historical trauma in the treatment of Native American women. In Braveheart, M. and Debruyn, L. (eds.). *Racism in the Lives of Women,* Haworth Press, New York, pp. 345–368.

Charles-Lutz, I. (1998). *Personal communication*.

Dawson, S. (1994). Fieldwork among the Navajo: Implications for social work research and practice. *J. Multicultur. Soc. Work* 3(1): 101–111.

Division of Community Development (1995). *Navajo Nation Profile*.

Fairchild, D., Fairchild, M., and Stoner, S. (1998). Prevalence of adult domestic violence among women seeking routine care in a Native American health care facility, *Am. J. Public Health* 10: 1515–1517.

Flanzer, J. (2000). Alcohol abuse causes domestic violence. In Roleff, T. (ed.), *Domestic Violence: Opposing Viewpoints*, Greenhaven Press, San Diego, CA.

Frisbie, C. J. (1967). *Kin aáld á: A Study of the Navajo Girl's Puberty Ceremony*, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, CN.

Griffin-Pierce, T. (1992). *Mother Earth, Father Sky: Space, Time and Astronomy in Navajo Sandpainting*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, NM.

Kluckhohn, C., and Leighton, D. (1974). *The Navajo* (revised edition), Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

Locke, R. F. (1992). *The Book of the Navajo* (5th edn.), Mankind Publishing Co., Los Angeles.

McCue, M. L. (1995). *Domestic Violence*, ABC-CLIO, Inc. San Francisco, CA.

McEachern, D., Van Winkle, M., and Steiner, S. (1998). Domestic violence among the Navajo: a legacy of colonization, *J. Poverty* 2 (4): 31–46.

Pierpoint, M. (2000). Are more Native women abused or more reporting abuse?, *Indian Country Today*, May 3, 2000, LT.3

Poessel, M. (1993). *Kinaáld á: A Navajo Girl Grows Up*, Learner Publications, Minneapolis, MN.

Schurtz, C. (2000). Domestic attacks more violent on the reservation. *Gallup Independent*, August 3, 2000.

Thybony, S. (1999). *The Hogan: The Traditional Navajo Home*, Southwest Parks and Monuments Association, Tucson, AZ.

Zion, J., and Zion, E., (1993). "Hozhó Sokeé – stay together nicely": domestic violence under Navajo common Law. *Arizona State Law J.* 25: 407–426.

Zolbrod, Paul (1984). *Diné Bahané: The Navajo Creation Story*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, NM.