



Thunder Rides a Black Horse: Mescalero Apaches and the Mythic Present

Claire R. Farrer

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Thunder's focus on the ways in which old myths and legends inform actions and beliefs on a contemporary Indian reservation in the American Southwest has established it as an ideal supplement for introductory classes in Native American studies, anthropology, cross-cultural religion, folklore, and discourse analysis. After nearly two-dozen printings in two editions and the garnering of hundreds of undergraduate classroom adoptions, the latest edition of *Thunder* includes valuable updates of reservation life and the author's fictive family members at Mescalero.

The compelling four-day and four-night Mescalero Apache girls puberty ceremonial remains the backdrop of Farrer's interpretive, introductory discussion of time and the mythic present. The oral traditions and instructions given to Farrer by the late Bernard Second, her longtime Apache teacher, provide insight into the importance of narrative not just in ceremonials but also in daily life.

Farrer neither romanticizes nor patronizes the Apachean people, who are presented as people with foibles as well as possessing much worthy of admiration. The Third Edition incorporates a fully developed concluding chapter *Returning* and furnishes thoughtful, end-of-chapter questions to prompt readers to explore their own reactions to the text.

Title of related interest from Waveland Press: Basso, *The Cibecue Apache* (ISBN 9780881332148).

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