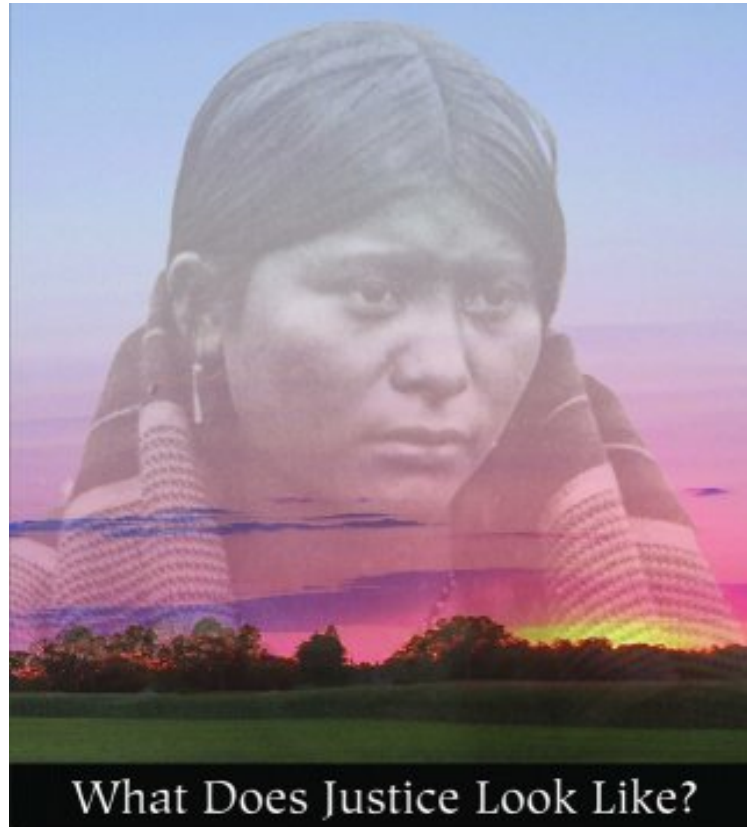


(Download) What Does Justice Look Like?: The Struggle for Liberation in Dakota Homeland

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Waziyatawin, Ph.D. : What Does Justice Look Like?: The Struggle for Liberation in Dakota Homeland before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What Does Justice Look Like?: The Struggle for Liberation in Dakota Homeland:

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helpful. What Does Justice Look Like?: The Struggle for Liberation in Dakota Homeland By David J. Murray This book reveals the true history of the state of Minnesota from the perspective of the Dakota Oyate which, of course, differs from the conqueror version taught in the public schools. Wayziatawin does a spectacular job of revealing the truth about the state's history and both Alexander Ramsey and Henry Sibley with not only their conscious intent to defraud the Dakota People of their land and the resources for their survival, but also their part in 1862 Dakota War, the hanging of the 38 Dakota patriots in Mankato, and the forced removal of the Dakota and Hochunk People from the state. This book enables the reader to clearly see not only the past, but also the present transgressions directed toward the Dakota People in Minnesota. You cannot know what you need to know about the history of Minnesota without reading this revealing book. It should be mandatory reading for all schools in Minnesota and beyond.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. An alternate history pleading for justice... By ewomack Recent observations of the 150th anniversaries of Minnesota statehood and the the US-Dakota War have unearthed some rather unpleasant facts about the past. Statehood didn't just happen as the sun rises, it happened at the expense of others who already inhabited the land. No one familiar with the history could justifiably claim that the United States government treated its inhabitants fairly. Broken treaties with native populations litter United States history. Most, if not all, of the land now called the United States was once swindled away from its original inhabitants. Non-natives now live on this land in a state of semi-awareness mixed with self-imposed obliviousness. Many probably see these long past events as something hopelessly in the past and beyond their control or even their concern. But for native populations this history still openly haunts the living present, though their voice hasn't typically rung above the din of the culture currently inhabiting the land some of them call Mnisota. One of these voices, that of Waziyatawin, fills the pages of "What Does Justice Look Like?" a short book that offers an alternate history and outlines a potential program of reparative justice. Many amongst the Wasicu, or white population, may find some of her claims outrageous, unfounded or even offensive. Others may completely agree but find themselves stultified by inaction. After all, what do people do when someone accuses their ancestors of perpetrating genocide and ethnic cleansing? Waziyatawin does not mince words, though she openly admits that she remains a single voice and does not speak for all Dakota people. Her basic argument involves outstanding injustices against Dakota people that require addressing if the people of the United States want to claim that they live in a just society. And she openly states that the Dakota were victims of intentional and planned genocide and that these policies continue today. She begins with the Dakota creation story, which occurs at the meeting of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers, a place sacred to the Dakota known as Bdote. This place isn't difficult to find today because Fort Snelling, or at least a reproduction of it, overlooks the site. She then briefly traces the history of land cessation treaties starting with an 1805 treaty negotiated by Zebulon Pike. Numerous others followed until the Dakota occupied only a tiny parcel of their original land, mostly resulting from the signing of the treaty of Traverse des Sioux in 1851. Then things get very serious. First, the book outlines the international standards of genocide in five points. Next, Waziyatawin argues that the treatment of Dakota people by the Minnesota and United States government more than meet all of these points. Well known facts of Minnesota history, such as Alexander Ramsey's infamous quote that "The Sioux Indians of Minnesota must be exterminated or forever driven beyond the borders of the State," the 1862 trials and mass hanging of 38 Dakota in Mankato, the eventual internment and exile of numerous Dakota from Minnesota, bounties placed on the killing of Dakota, boarding schools which attempted to erase Dakota culture from children all get cited, amongst other things, as examples that meet the international standards of genocide. The text focuses in particular on the internment of almost two thousand Dakota, including women, children, and elderly on Pike Island by Fort Snelling. Many died from disease and exposure until those that remained were shipped outside state borders. Waziyatawin calls the internment a "concentration camp," evoking the European camps of the Holocaust that Americans helped liberate in World War II. This may stir the ire of many non-natives, but those who enter Pike Island visitors' center today, located within Fort Snelling State Park, will find an exhibit entitled "Dakota Conflict Concentration Camp" and see a list of the names of the interred. A call for education and truth telling follows, similar to that which occurred in South Africa after the fall of apartheid. The book claims that many Minnesotans wallow in denial about their state's history, either intentionally or unintentionally. And depicting Fort Snelling as a "fun-filled tourist destination," according to the chapter "Taking Down the Fort," symbolizes this denial. And this chapter suggests dismantling the current structure and returning the sacred site of Bdote to the Dakota people. The book's longest chapter outlines a plan to restore justice to the Dakota. Following truth telling and openness about Minnesota's past, the Dakota could then inhabit "public land" without displacing any white populations. Precedents of Nunavut in Canada and Israel get cited as examples of people returning to their homelands. But returning to the land isn't enough, Minnesota must first clean up the environmental damage done by industrialization so the returning Dakota can live a more traditional and sustainable lifestyle. The Mohawk community of Kanatsiohareke in New York is cited as a precedent. "What Does Justice Look Like?" aims to find a solution to the historical problem of Minnesota by finding a solution that both sides may find workable. But Waziyatawin remains steadfast that any solution must involve an opportunity for Dakota people to return to an unsullied homeland. The inherent difficulty in this solution is manifest by the story she tells of a well-intentioned white man in New Ulm who, after walking and talking with the author on topics outlined in this book finally asks, "what do you want, the land back?" The book's final chapter nonetheless

appeals to people's sense of justice. The topics covered in this book remain largely unsettled. Though the US-Dakota War sesquicentennial year has seen some forms of truth telling emerge, including placards on the path to Fort Snelling concerning the internment and executions of Dakota leaders there, as well as the Pike Island exhibit. Numerous books have also appeared which tell the story of the conflict from both sides. Still, a brick wall seems to remain in that both sides claim that the other side committed atrocities. Some on the non-native side seem to take reports of Dakota atrocities, included in controversial books such as "Over the Earth I Come," as justification for their resulting treatment. Dakota did kill whites and some whites can't seem to get past this to the larger picture. Breaching this wall, whether these claims remain justified or not, seems key for bringing about an atmosphere of mutual understanding between both sides. And whether or not the plan outlined in this book can succeed remains to be seen. In the end, those looking for a Dakota perspective on Minnesota and United States history will find it here. Some may take offense at this book's claims while others may find them completely convincing. This often passionate and uncompromising book deserves a read in either case.

During the past 150 years, the majority of Minnesotans have not acknowledged the immense and ongoing harms suffered by the Dakota People ever since their homelands were invaded over 200 years ago. Many Dakota people say that the wounds incurred have never healed, and it is clear that the injustices: genocide, ethnic cleansing, mass executions, death marches, broken treaties, and land theft; have not been made right. The Dakota People paid and continue to pay the ultimate price for Minnesota's statehood. This book explores how we can embark on a path of transformation on the way to respectful coexistence with those whose ancestral homeland this is. Doing justice is central to this process. Without justice, many Dakota say, healing and transformation on both sides cannot occur, and good, authentic relations cannot develop between our Peoples. Written by Wahpetunwan Dakota scholar and activist Waziyatawin of Pezihutazizi Otunwe, *What Does Justice Look Like?* offers an opportunity now and for future generations to learn the long-untold history and what it has meant for the Dakota People. On that basis, the book offers the further opportunity to explore what we can do between us as Peoples to reverse the patterns of genocide and oppression, and instead to do justice with a depth of good faith, commitment, and action that would be genuinely new for Native and non-Native relations.

This is important text not only because it asks the right questions, but because it suggests that actions are as inevitable as scholarship. We must act, says this native historian, in the context of today's possibilities. In answer to the central question it poses, what is required?, there is no doubt that the overturning of racist and ineffectual systems and institutions is mandatory. In addition, in order to get public support for what is required, Waziyatawin was one of the leaders of the first Dakota Commemorative March in 2002, which means that she believes in action as well as scholarship. This commemorative March asks that the struggle for liberation in the Dakota homeland be joined by all who believe in human rights and justice. And this text asks that a de-colonized Dakota Nation take its place in the world with its own fabulous and flawed history told by its own people. --Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Dakota/Sissetowan, enrolled member: Crow Creek Sioux Tribe. eminent scholar and writer. Waziyatawin . . . offers a hard-hitting analysis of Dakota-White relations and challenges us to reject the benign narratives that have dominated writings on Minnesota history. The book moves beyond recounting the state's tragic past to offering what needs to be done to put things right today. --Amy Lonetree, Ho-Chunk, assistant professor of American Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz This book is an invitation to deep truth-telling as a first step toward healing the legacy of genocide suffered by the Dakota people. . . . [It] is essential reading for all Americans who love their country enough to remember and repair the harm caused by its misdeeds. --Howard Vogel, Professor of restorative justice, Hamline Law School, St. Paul, MN. About the Author Waziyatawin is a Wahpetunwan Dakota from the Pezihutazizi Otunwe (Yellow Medicine Village) in southwestern Minnesota. She received her Ph.D. in American history from Cornell University in 2000 and spent seven years teaching in the history department at Arizona State University. After earning tenure and an associate professorship at ASU, she left the academy in 2007 to work as an independent scholar. Waziyatawin is the author of *Remember This!: Dakota Decolonization and the Eli Taylor Narratives* (University of Nebraska Press, 2005) and co-editor of *Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities* (University of Nebraska Press, 2004) and *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook* (School of America Research Press, 2005). Her most recent volume, *In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors* (St. Paul: Living Justice Press, 2006), is an edited collection that tells the stories, both in words and pictures, of the Dakota Death Marches of 1862 and the commemorative walks that have been held in recent years to honor the memory of those Dakota people who endured the 1862 forced removals. That volume was the recipient of the 2007 Independent Publisher's Silver Book Award for Adult Multicultural Non-fiction. She is founder and director of Oyate Nipi Kte, a non-profit dedicated to the recovery of Dakota traditional knowledge, sustainable ways of being, and Dakota liberation. Waziyatawin is living, working and writing on her home reservation with her husband and three children.