



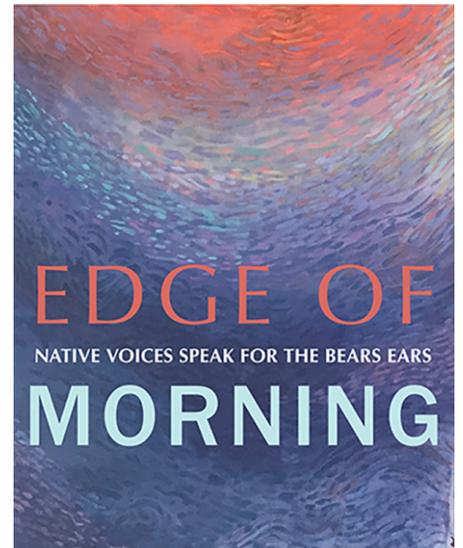
READING GROUP GUIDE

Edge of Morning: Native Voices Speak for the Bears Ears edited by Jacqueline Keeler

Introduction

In the last weeks of his presidency, Barack Obama designated 1.35 million acres in southeastern Utah as the Bears Ears National Monument. The designation comes after a coalition of five tribal governments came together to seek protection for the area, proposing collaborative land management between tribes and the federal government. As this unprecedented mode of management is implemented—and challenged—it is more important than ever that we hear Native voices.

The Bears Ears landscape holds the past of over thirteen Native tribes. It is a land of cultural, spiritual, and ecological significance that records the continuous presence of people for more than ten thousand years. In *Edge of Morning: Native Voices Speak for the Bears Ears*, Native writers bear testimony to the fragile and essential nature of this sacred landscape in America's remote red rock country. Through poems, essays, and interviews, these often-ignored voices explore the ways many Native people derive tradition, sustenance, and cultural history from the Bears Ears. From seasoned writers like Heid E. Erdrich and Oregon Poet Laureate Elizabeth Woody to young activists, the voices in this collection inspire and educate.



EDITED BY JACQUELINE KEELER

"This anthology seeks to tell stories by native writers about the Bears Ears and its importance. Storytelling is a way of making sure the importance of the land is known, and can help spread awareness...a worthy project."

—*THE SEATTLE REVIEW OF BOOKS*

"*Edge of Morning* will...invigorate the public policy details of environmental issues and natural conservation with new voices that not only inspire emotionally but also lay out the significant cultural case that compels a new point of view about the stewardship of public lands."

—*THE UTAH REVIEW*

Edge of Morning

Conversation Starters

- Jonah Yellowman illustrates the differences between Navajo prayers and Christian prayers. To you, what are the major differences and similarities? How does Yellowman describe the role of the environment in Navajo prayers?
- Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk describes the push back against protecting Bears Ears. How does she fight back or deal with this opposition? Do you think her actions and words are a positive solution to those against protecting Bears Ears?
- The first line on pg 63 is, "What is the value of culture compared to the resources that can be extracted from the land?" How do you think Jacqueline Keeler answers this question? To you, is there an acceptable answer?
- What do you think is most important about protecting Bears Ears?
- What is the impact of each individual story coming together to speak for Bears Ears?
- Has your perspective of Bears Ears been changed after reading this book? Describe why using specific details from the book.
- After reading this book do you better understand the history of Native Americans? If so, how has this affected your outlook on early American History?
- Many authors in the book speak of how sacred Bears Ears is to many different Native American tribes. Which story or interview clearly mapped out the importance of protecting Bears Ears? Do you think this is a good reason to preserve and protect Bears Ears?



About Jacqueline Keeler

Jacqueline Keeler is a Navajo/Yankton Dakota Sioux writer living in Portland, Oregon. She has been published in Salon.com, Earth Island Journal and The Nation. Keeler co-founded Eradicating Offensive Native Mascotry, which seeks to end the use of racial groups as mascots. She is finishing a collection of essays called Not Your Disappearing Indian.



Keeler is available to discuss *Edge of Morning* with reading groups in person or via Skype. For more information, email brooke@torreyhouse.com.

Torrey House Press

Voices for the Land

Torrey House Press is an independent nonprofit publisher promoting environmental conservation through literature. We believe that culture is changed through conversation and that lively, contemporary literature is the cutting edge of social change. We strive to identify exceptional writers, nurture their work, and engage the widest possible audience; to publish diverse voices with transformative stories that illuminate important facets of our ever-changing planet; to develop literary resources for the conservation movement, educating and entertaining readers, inspiring action.



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