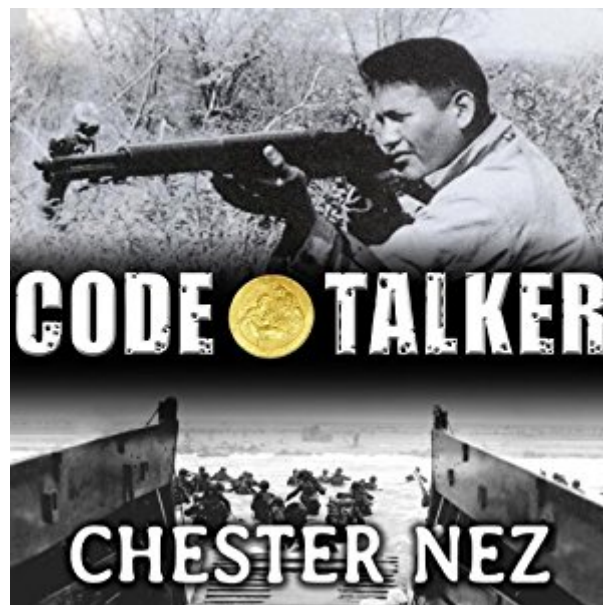




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Code Talker: The First And Only Memoir By One Of The Original Navajo Code Talkers Of WW II



Synopsis

Chester Nez, the only surviving member of the original 29 Navajo code talkers, shares the fascinating inside story of his life and service during World War II.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the best books that I have read in quite a while. It's a first person account of the Navajo Code talkers of WWII. Before they invented the code out of the Navajo language the Japanese broke every code the US. This allowed the Japanese to continually defeat the US in the Pacific. Once the Chester Nez and the code talkers created the code the fortunes of the US Pacific fleet changed. He was so essential to the war effort he did 3 consecutive tours of duty in the South Pacific. The Armed Forces couldn't communicate and couldn't move without the Code Talkers. Because it's a first person account makes you feel that you're right in the middle of the Battle of Guadalcanal and other Island hopping battles. Chester Nez talked about Navajo culture and traditions but weaved it into the story of his life. He grew up tending sheep when he was young but if the Coyotes were to kill a sheep they couldn't eat it because Coyotes were the embodiment of evil. He describes the funeral arrangements when his mother died. How he went to boarding school and he was punished for speaking Navajo but less than 10 years later then government needed them to become a Navajo Code talker for the War effort.

This is definitely a must-read for anyone interested in this topic or certainly the history of the war.

The code talkers were neglected for so many years - and one could certainly digress as to why, but that is fodder for another day. This memoir is a good start on the road to rectifying that wrong. The memoir could have concentrated just on the war years, but that would have been a mistake. Any good historian knows, as the late R.G.L. Waite used to say, that in order to study World War II you must look back as far as possible. And in order to look back at the late Mr. Nez's experience in the war, it is imperative that he fully discuss his life with the reader- which he wisely did in this volume. We are introduced to his life before the war - beginning as a young child, including when he was forced to attend boarding school for many years, away from his family, where English was rammed down his throat and his native language was forbidden. If you are unfamiliar with the legalized repression of the Navajo culture in American history, this is yet another reason why you absolutely must read this book. It is perfectly understandable why it was co-written by a professional writer, who spent countless hours interviewing him in depth. Our code talker never pretended to be a professional writer, nor should he have spent years writing a memoir at his advanced age. I am sure he had better things to do. His co-writer was smart in that she allowed him to retain his voice almost always throughout the book. You note that I said "almost always." There are times in the book - even sentences and paragraphs - where it is clear that the writing is in an entirely different voice, and as an experienced reader that may jangle your nerves. Their editors should have caught that and fixed it. However, any memoir that is cowritten with a professional writer usually has this as an Achilles heel, and one must suppress one's perfectionism as a reader because the story itself is so compelling. Certainly the story within Code Talkers is extraordinarily compelling and the writing, quite good. I read it very quickly within a couple of days - and you probably will as well. I recommend it highly.

Sorry! No time to write a review. I must get back to my Kindle where this book is keeping me totally engrossed. I am at a critical time when the Marines have landed in the Pacific and the Code Talkers....wait! I am going to stop talking now as I really can't wait to know what happens next. I might come back here later, much later when I have to charge my Kindle! But not a moment before I am forced to stop reading.

Judith Avila does a wonderful job telling the life story of an American hero who passed away on June 4, 2014. needs to update their review of this book as Chester Nez is no longer living but you can learn about his life by reading this wonderful book. It begins with his life on the reservation herding sheep. He goes on to boarding school where he receives his English name and is punished

for speaking his native Navajo language. In 1942, he was recruited by the Marines and enlisted to develop a code based on the unwritten Navajo language, a code that is revealed at the end of the book. His encounters during the war, which would haunt him in later life, are revealed. Of the 29 original code talkers, only one was killed during WW II and that was by friendly fire when he was mistaken for a Japanese soldier. While each of the code talkers had been assigned body guards who were instructed not to let them fall into enemy hands, none were killed by the body guards, unlike the event in the movie Windtalkers. When Nez returns to the United States he is told by a government worker that he is not a full citizen and would not be allowed to vote. He would go on to work at the VA hospital in Albuquerque for 25 years before he retired. At a ceremony in 2001, five of the remaining living code talkers received the gold congressional medal from President Bush. Nez was the last to get the award from the president and unlike the previous four, he didn't shake his hand but instead he snapped a salute which was returned by the commander in chief. This book does an excellent job in telling the difficulties endured by the Navajo people and the heroic efforts made by the code talkers that helped the Americans win the war against the Japanese.

Great book. There are dozens of books written about this subject, with this one easily being one of the better ones. Goes beyond just the war experiences and shows what life on the reservations were as well. A very historical book that could be classified into several categories: military history, Native American studies, ethnic studies, combat history or biography. A very well written book, this is the definitive book on Navajo Code Talkers

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