Zia Symbol: Iconography & Appropriation

Zia Sun Symbol Resource Guide
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About Zia Symbol Counter-Narrative
The lecture event, “Zia Symbol: Iconography & Appropriation,” was held on June 20, 2018. In this quarterly counter-narrative session, the panelists discussed the historical and contemporary issues surrounding one of the most iconic symbols in the U.S.: the sun symbol of Zia Pueblo. Topics discussed also include the iconography of the symbol, history of the appropriation by the state of New Mexico, and tribal concerns over its usage.

Panelists:
Senator Michael Padilla is a member of the New Mexico State Senate, representing District 14 since January 2013. Senator Padilla was elected to leadership in his second year in office as the Senate Majority Whip, and serves on nine legislative committees, including as the chairman of the science, technology, and telecommunications committee. Padilla grew up in Los Padillas, a rural farming community that his family helped settle over 150 years ago, located inside of the district he represents. Padilla has always been involved in the Democratic Party of New Mexico, serving as a precinct chairman, ward chairman, county central member, and state central committee member. He has also served on numerous boards and commissions prior to becoming a senator, including Youth Development Incorporated, Special Olympics New Mexico, Junior Achievement of New Mexico, Association of Commerce and Industry of New Mexico, New Mexico Workforce Development, and several others. Padilla has successfully passed multiple pieces of legislation to improve job creation and economic development, access to broadband internet, child food security, child protective services, and education reform and funding.

Rob Martinez is Deputy State Historian and a native New Mexican, born and raised in Albuquerque. A graduate of the University of New Mexico with a B.B.A. in International Business Management, Mr. Martinez went on to pursue his interest in New Mexican culture and history at U.N.M., earning an M.A. in Latin American history, with an emphasis on church, cultural, and social practices of the Spanish colonial period in New Mexico. During his tenure as a graduate student, he was a research assistant for four years at the Vargas Project, learning research skills and paleography – abilities that would serve him well as a historian. Upon graduating, Martinez pursued a teaching license and also worked for 14 years as a research historian for the Sephardic Legacy Project, scouring civil and church archives in New Mexico, Mexico, Spain, France, Italy, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, analyzing documents for a research and publishing project about the Crypto-Jewish phenomenon in New Mexico and the Caribbean. Martinez has presented papers and lectures on his research at the University of New Mexico, as well as history conferences throughout the southwestern United States. He has also spoken to historical groups in New Mexico such as the Hispanic Genealogical Research Center of New Mexico, the Albuquerque Historical Society, and the Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies about research methodology, unique findings, New Mexico Hispanic culture, and general history of New Mexico. Martinez was a teacher at Rio Rancho High School for 10 years, educating young New Mexicans about world history, New Mexico history, and language arts.
Peter Pino is a former governor of the Pueblo of Zia. Mr. Pino has been a Tribal Council member since 1967, and since 1977 has served as the tribal administrator and treasurer. Pino is a traditional spiritual leader, holding a lifetime appointment as one of the tribe's Keeper of Songs. He is also a traditional craftsman who tans deer hides and makes moccasins, bows, arrows, digging sticks, rabbit sticks, and bone tools, using the same techniques employed by his Puebloan ancestors. His archaeological and outdoor interests have led him to committee and board commitments with Crow Canyon Archaeological Center and Mesa Verde National Park, and he is the first Native American to serve as a Commissioner for the New Mexico Game and Fish Commission; his term ended in January 2007. Mr. Pino holds an M.B.A from the University of New Mexico in Business Administration, a B.A in Industrial Education, and an A.S in Electronics from New Mexico Highlands University.

The following resources were used to assist museum staff in preparation for the “Zia Symbol: Iconography & Appropriation” lecture.

IPCC Library and Archives:

Euler, Robert C. “Environmental Adaption at Sia [sic] Pueblo” Human Organization, Winter 1954. Vertical Files of the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center Library & Archives

McSherry, Erin. General Counsel, Report to the Indian Affairs Committee of the New Mexico Legislature, New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, August 30, 2014.


Books:


Turner, Stephanie B. “The Case of the Zia: Looking Beyond Trademark Law to Protect Sacred Symbols.” Yale Law School, Yale Law School Legal Scholarly Repository, Student Scholarship Papers, March 1, 2012,


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