



A Bilagáana Boy among the Navajo

How did a white kid like me come to live on the Navajo Reservation in the 1960s?

In 1965, six-year-old Jay is witness to his mother's affair and mental breakdown after his father's lengthy military deployment. After his parents' divorce, Jay must unwillingly live with his mother and new stepfather, a Bureau of Indian Affairs employee, on the Navajo Nation Reservation in Arizona.

From 1967 to 1971, Jay is a "bilagáana," the Navajo term for white boy, to his new friends and bullies alike on the reservation. While trying to avoid his stepfather's abuse and pending adoption he dreams of moving back to live with his father. His neighbors, the Begay's, welcome and immerse him in Navajo culture and visits to their elders at their remote Hogan, while the Jackson family teaches Jay to become a real cowboy on a Navajo ranch. As he searches for a purpose and attempts to find a path back to his father, Jay knows that he will have to grow up fast on the reservation.

Multiple Readers' Favorite Five Star Reviews!



2025 Book Awards

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Non-Fiction Southwest
Young Adult Non-Fiction
- Winner Positive Impact Award
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- 2x Winner International Impact Awards
Memoir-Cultural Identity
Life Experiences-Cultural & Immigration

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About the Author

Jay Jones is the author of the book, A Bilagáana Boy among the Navajo. In this true story, he chronicles his four years living as a white kid on the Navajo Indian Reservation in Window Rock, Arizona. As the son of two Air Force veterans, he was born in Tachikawa, Japan, and lived across the United States. After a turbulent childhood, Jay grew up quickly and joined the Marine Corps at 17 and served in Bermuda before receiving an honorable discharge. His career path includes roles from cook, professional photographer, security guard, headhunter, drugstore manager trainee, hotel front desk clerk, bar & restaurant manager, DJ, beauty pageant MC, financial advisor, volunteer, and more. While working, Jay obtained his degree in Business Management and retired after 33 years as a Chartered Financial Consultant executive. He lives at Dove Mountain near Tucson.



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