



Blackfoot Physics: A Journey into the Native American Worldview

F. David Peat

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One summer in the 1980s, theoretical physicist F. David Peat went to a Blackfoot Sun Dance ceremony. Having spent all of his life steeped in and influenced by linear Western science, he was entranced by the Native American worldview and, through dialogue circles between scientists and native elders, he began to explore it in greater depth. Blackfoot Physics is the account of his discoveries. In an edifying synthesis of anthropology, history, metaphysics, cosmology, and quantum theory, Peat compares the medicines, the myths, the languages--the entire perceptions of reality of the Western and indigenous peoples. What becomes apparent is the amazing resemblance between indigenous teachings and some of the insights that are emerging from modern science, a congruence that is as enlightening about the physical universe as it is about the circular evolution of humanity's understanding. Through Peat's insightful observations, he extends our understanding of ourselves, our understanding of the universe, and how the two intersect in a meaningful vision of human life in relation to a greater reality.

Blackfoot Physics: A Journey into the Native American Worldview Details

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Author : F. David Peat

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Sss Book says

4 of 4

Marjorie says

So far this is an awesome book!!

Tami says

When I found this book, as an archaeologist who works primarily with Plains First Nations, I was thrilled that someone had written an in-depth book about the worldview of the Blackfoot. Through my own experiences, I have gained some outsider insight into the wealth of Blackfoot culture and was eager to learn more.

Unfortunately, the title Blackfoot Physics is a misnomer. Though the author describes his experiences while waiting for the Sun Dance to begin in the first few chapters, most of the book discusses various traditional belief systems and world views ranging from various North America First Nations to various cultures, past and present, around the world. Much of this material is either very general in nature or is intended for those without any prior knowledge of these traditions, basically illustrating the point that all world views have value.

Although I thought that the author did a very good job of illustrating that other cultures have different (and just as valid) ways of viewing the world, I am concerned that people will believe that all aboriginal world views are the same. This erroneous perception could further strengthen the common "primitive societies" stereotypes that the author was trying to break down.

Chris Perley says

Second time. This book rocked my world when I first read it. It's contextually better this time. It has more meaning for me because I've had more experiences that align with what Peat is saying: a challenge to how we see the world. Since I read it way back in the 90s I've come across a range of writers that question our 'ways of seeing' - Berger, Scott. Even resonates with Aristotle's ideas of 'knowing' and practical wisdom (phronesis).

Alexa Cascade says

Explores Native American science and culture, and compares them to Western science and culture. Completely different viewpoint. Everyone should read this book.

Eddie Oakwell says

For anyone who is open minded enough, to put aside the western religious or scientific view of the world we live in. This is a must read book. It's Native American (an inadequate term as they don't see themselves as one people) rather just Blackfoot, it compares the beliefs of western science and culture to its own, but it mainly helps give you a completely different viewpoint, not so much carving a canoe but finding it in the tree.

Jeff says

This book came recommended by a Aboriginal man to anyone that was raised in a western society with an interest in the ways and worldviews of indigenous peoples. The author does a really good job breaking down the fundamental differences in the way humans interact with their environment and society, while acknowledging that indigenous and western sciences will never be able to completely explain or fully understand one another. A very enlightening and highly recommended book. Hard to find without buying online.

Ajai Narendran says

After Tao of Physics, Dancing Wu Li Masters and a whole lot in that series....here comes a beautiful attempt at understanding and elucidating Native American cosmology.

Rhys Butler says

Gives an great incite into the differences between native and western sciences. As someone who's not previously given native anything a lot of credence, it's been a really valuable read! Especially easy to interpret given the authors scientific background, as he's able to guide you down the same paths of understanding he himself had to take.

Katie Lynn says

There were a number of editing errors; enough that it was distracting.

I appreciate what the author was trying to do, but I got a little tired of him TELLING me what he was trying to facilitate for his readers other than just getting down and doing it.

While I wouldn't recommend it necessarily, there were definitely some great nuggets in these pages.

Also, not sure why it's called BLACKFOOT physics considering it was about many, many indigenous and aboriginal nations and tribes.

Meghan says

Poorly written but great content.

Sunpreet says

A mode of thinking I have never encountered before and challenged a lot of uncritical beliefs I've held.

Nanci says

I re-read this book this year and was surprised it didn't delve quite as much into Native American viewpoints as I'd previously thought. Still, an interesting read.

Rachel says

This book was good, but I feel like there were a lot of topics presented on which the author barely skimmed the surface. It has definitely lit a fire in myself to devour as much information on this topic as I can.

//edit

I'm editing this. The above is still true, and this book left me with more questions than answers I might say, but that is ok. What I did get out of this book was a better understanding of Native Culture, and I have become much more aware of my relationship with the Universe. And I like it.
