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Contact Information

For additional subscription or submission information, contact the Indigenous Nations Studies Program at the University of Kansas.

Mailing Address:

Center for Indigenous Nations Studies
INS Journal
The University of Kansas,
Lippincott Hall
1410 Jayhawk Blvd., Rm. 105
Lawrence, KS 66045-2114

Telephone/Fax:

785-864-2660 (t)
785-864-0370 (f)
E-mail: insp@ukans.edu
Web page:
<http://www.ukans.edu/~insp>

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

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Notes On Contributors

Steven C. Dinero received his Ph.D. in Urban Planning and Policy Development at Rutgers University and currently serves as an Associate Professor of Human Geography at Philadelphia University, in Pennsylvania. Prof. Dinero has conducted research in Arctic Village, Alaska, since 1999, concerning social and economic changes and has written extensively with the Negev bedouin nomadic community of southern Israel. He is also the Project Director of the Bishop Rowe Chapel Restoration project, of which the goal is to convert the chapel into the *Gwich'in Cultural Heritage Center*.

Gary Johnson is a member of the Lake Superior Band of Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibway Indians. He earned his M.Ed. degree at the University of Wisconsin-Superior and currently serves as the Director of the First Nations Center at the same university. He studies in a doctoral program at the University of Minnesota in Educational Policy and Administration and is writing his doctoral dissertation on Act 31, the Wisconsin public law that requires American Indian history, sovereignty, and treaty rights be taught in public schools.

Timothy Lintner received his master's degree from Northern Arizona University and his doctorate in Social Studies and Comparative Education from University of California, Los Angeles. He is presently an Assistant Professor of Education at the University of South Carolina in Aiken. His current research examines historical documents in relation to establishment of federal programs that facilitated the professional growth of American Indian educators. Dr. Lintner currently serves as the editor of *Essays in Education*, an on-line journal, as well as the *Teacher Education Journal of South Carolina*.

Peter L. Morris completed his first master's degree in Applied History at the University of New South Wales, in Sydney, Australia, analyzing Australian policy conflicts from a historical perspective. He completed another master's degree in the American Indian Studies program at the University of Arizona concentrating on both Australian and U.S. urban Indigenous organizations. He currently works in the field of public policy as a doctoral candidate in the Eller College of Management and an employee of the University of Arizona.

Marianne O. Nielsen received her doctorate in Sociology at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at Northern Arizona University, in Flagstaff, Arizona. She is the co-editor with Robert A. Silverman of *Native Americans, Crime, and Justice* and *Aboriginal Peoples and Canadian Criminal Justice*. Her current work focuses on the comparative impacts of colonialism on the structures, processes, and survival of Indigenous-operated justice organizations.

Linda Robyn is from the Anishinabe (Chippewa) nation. She received her Ph.D. from Western Michigan University, in Kalamazoo, Michigan. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at Northern Arizona University, in Flagstaff, Arizona. Her current research and interests include American Indians and the justice system, environmental justice, wrongful convictions of American Indians, and the effects of state/corporate crime on American Indian nations.

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“The Lord Will Provide”: The History and Role of Episcopalian Christianity in Nets’aii Gwich’in Social Development - Arctic Village, Alaska¹

Steven C. Dinero

Abstract

This paper addresses the history and development of Episcopalianism in the Nets’aii Gwich’in community of Arctic Village, Alaska. It is argued that Christianity in the village well represents communal *resistance* to colonial domination, as well as the ability to blend past and present traditions. This development is due largely to the role played by the Gwich’in Reverend Albert E. Tritt, whose efforts, including his building of the community’s first church, were central to the community’s embracing of Christianity. The paper concludes with a discussion of Gwich’in Episcopalianism in the twenty-first century, and its role in the battle against oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Introduction: Christian Evangelism in Native America

The conversion of virtually all of Native America to Christianity has attracted new interest over the past decade. The role that the Christian churches played in the attempt to assimilate and westernize Native American society is well known and has been discussed for several years. Recent literature, however, has emphasized the political role which the evangelizing churches played in the