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# Return Of The Bones: Inspired By A True Native American Indian Story



## Synopsis

An award winning book about a little-known chapter of Native-American history! Generations collide when a woman agrees to drive her grandfather across the country to bring home the remains of their fallen Native American ancestors. A dazzling, family epic of love, massacre, mystery, and forgiveness. In 1915, 2,067 skeletons were stolen from the ghost pueblo of Pecos. The bones were transported from the American West to Harvard University and held captive for medical research. In present day and across thousands of miles to the reservation, the wind carries their cries to Grandfather who hears the bones longing for home. Hollow-Woman and Grandfather are the last of the Pecos people, but she is not interested in early Indian life, war, stories, or tales. She works at a Native American casino and is of the modern ways of America, while Grandfather is a chief who values tradition. Hollow-Woman hopes the road trip will heal their broken hearts. He wants her to love the missing bones, as he does and value their culture. Grandfather is a powerful shaman. He fashions a magical dream catcher that will sometimes hurl his granddaughter into the past to experience the days of her ancestors. While driving a ratty, old pickup-camper, Hollow-Woman and Grandfather bicker from New Mexico to the Peabody Museum in Boston. The pages are filled with Grandfather's comical wisdom while embracing the heartbreak and spirituality of the Native Americans. Did you know that President George W. Bush's grandfather, Prescott Bush, dug up Geronimo's grave and stole his skull to be used as initiation into the Skull and Bones Society at Yale? You may know these famous bones on which landmark studies proved that exercise prevents osteoporosis! The desecration of these Indians' graves was the beginning of American Archaeology. Return of the Bones won Best Historical Fiction for the New Mexico / Arizona Book Awards, a Best ebook, and a Best Audio Book award.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This was an emotionally difficult book to read -- a harsh if fictionalized indictment of the Spanish who treated the Pueblo peoples so abominably, and then the American scientists who saw their holy bones as treasure to be dug up and stored in museum basements in their dusty thousands. But the characters of Hollow Woman and her grandfather make the book sparkle, even through long discourses on the history of the Pecos. This is ultimately a story of love and devotion, and the reader who sticks with it will be rewarded.

At first I didn't know what to make of this book. The beginning started slow but I understand now that the author was adding layer upon layer of history and making it personal and interesting. Soon I was fully involved with this book and could not put it down. I live in New Mexico.... this is a piece of New Mexico history skillfully woven from the fabric of an old shaman's tales about his Pueblo ancestors. It is worth your time to read this very interesting story!

I thought this was a good book, but it made me sad at times to relive the past and remember how bad the Native Americans were treated. I think the book takes the reader from feelings of seeing the injustices against Native Americans to feelings of forgiveness that the characters find in the end.

From the beginning, Belinda Vasquez Garcia captures the reader & draws her into the chilling story of the People of Pecos Pueblo, whose bones were stolen by an early 19th century anthropologist. Numerous Web links add credibility to this tale & provide the interested reader with answers as well as questions about the lives of these ancient peoples. Definitely worth reading.

This book was not always easy to read, but it gave me a lot to think about. I have always been fascinated with archeology, but slightly troubled by the necessity to disturb burial sites. After

reading this book I am even more troubled. I agree that there is much to learn from graves, but I guess I am less willing to consider them as only artifacts. Then there is the secondary story of the relationship between the main characters which it seems can only grow as the cultural and mystical aspects are dealt with. A very thoughtful book.

I loved this story, part fiction, part fantasy, but based on truth. It's all about the bones of ancestors, the gradual loss of tribes and nations of North America's indigenous people and the repatriation of the bones. In this mystical and arduous journey an elderly shaman and his granddaughter, last of their once large tribe, are on a quest for the bones of their ancestors. Travelling physically in an old truck, and paranormally via a dreamcatcher, this story is spellbinding. Belinda Vasquez Garcia has a way of bringing reality to the past and present through images received by the granddaughter, a modern girl who is on this journey of discovery and recovery. Past and present are interwoven in such a way that I truly felt this in my own soul, legend becomes reality as Hollow-Woman begins to open her soul to the past. I found the book memorable and heartwarming as the connection between grandfather and granddaughter, ancient and modern, past and present grew. The author has done a wonderful job of working with history and keeping the truth while writing with a passion for the magical and spiritual feel through the centuries of the indigenous people.

Loved this book, part history and part fantasy and difficult to tell them apart. Elder grandfather and orphaned woman plan to return the bones of over 2000 Native Americans to the ruined Pueblo from which they were taken by an American archeologist. Grandfather is a medicine man of great power and granddaughter is a modern woman but closely linked to native tradition, who's great pain is related to loss of parents as an infant and inability to bear children. Travel with this family through the trials of tracking the bones to finding and reclaiming them; relish the magic inherent in the beliefs of the Native People and explore the land that is their heritage, won through blood, loss and tears. The writing is very good, Garcia takes you in almost from the beginning, and you begin a love/fear relationship with Grandfather, and empathy for Granddaughter.

Having read a few of Kent Nerburn's books about Native American culture and History, I've been eager to read others' viewpoints and was very pleased with Belinda Vasquez Garcia's "Return of the Bones". Though the characters are fictional, the story was inspired by real life events. The author has a wonderfully depictive and engrossing literary style... I felt like I was back in New Mexico amongst Pecos ruins in the desert. Beautifully written story.

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