

Collected Book Works here in Santa Fe sponsors Native American writers' lectures during the Indian market week in August. Last year, N. Scott Momaday, the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, a Kiowa, spoke one evening. This summer, a Navaho photographer and a couple of Mohawk poets showed and read their work.

The Navajo, a graduate of New Mexico University, based his book on a month he spent on the reservation visiting his people. He allowed one hundred dollars a week for all his expenses.

Highlighted in the collection is a shot of his 71 year-old grandmother shearing a big Navaho sheep with hand shears. She also dyes and weaves the wool into rugs and blankets.

She lives alone; supports herself. She makes her grandson's point that the Navajos today range from college graduates to the edge of the old ways. He thinks the photographs of Edward Curtis are fantastic, yet his times need to be filmed, the now.

At the next lecture, two Mohawks read their poetry. The lady dressed in a miniskirt was quite attractive, hardly the image of old. She had read her material as far away as New Zealand.

The man dressed in blue jeans and tee shirt with a conventional haircut looked like part of the audience. Forget about a brave with all but a streak in the middle of his head shaved for a style called Mohawk, or a squaw dressed in beaded buckskin with braided hair.

She, in particular, was most expressive and dramatic reading her poetry. Each spoke the flawless English expected from college graduates and writers. Momaday's writing and speaking prepares you for those characteristics. He is a gifted man, articulate to a fault.

Any savagery or wildness has to be sought during the visit out and about town. The other night, as I was leaving an unlighted parking lot, two women sprawled on the pavement by a car eating box lunches and sharing a drink straight from the jug in dim light.

Now whether these little asphalt chickadees stemmed from a sorority of the sisters to picnic halfway out on driveways in the dark, or expected protection from a saint to save their hind legs from tire treads, nothing previous in my experience explains this behavior, except beverage alcohol might be to blame.

Next morning over at a laundry, a tall comely lass came striding across the street in lace boots, after hanging white clothes to dry on a tree limb. She plopped

down on the laundry's bench out front. Two companions joined her in a loud animated conversation - in twitter jargon, I think.

Inside, a couple waited by the front door. I asked them to watch this tree hanger to see her intentions. Like was this a sign of surrender, or the white clothes hanging on the limb protested the laundry's dryers, or a mere prank by a street kid?

The couple refused, based on a long policy of minding their own business around laundries and leaving young people alone, they said. They really shut up when I explained that one way I stayed alive was writing for a newspaper. You'd have thought I'd asked them to appear as stand-ins for a police lineup.

Two 1960 model hippies seated in the next seats at the concerts aroused further suspicion, dressed in blue jeans and wearing pigtails. At intermission, the ol' gal didn't fool me the way she walked up and down in front below the stage. You could tell by the way she looked at the microphone that she longed for the days at Berkley or some other unrest where she could stage "sit-ins" or "stand-ups" or "lie downs" against the establishment.

At the gas pump she might still flash back to the days when she swore she wouldn't give her blood to Standard Oil or allow Du Pont to poison her air space.

Once she shook her long gray hair in the exact way the Big Boss' hot-headed mare Clementine shook her head before she bucked and fell over in a gate or jerked loose to run over fences in a way too crazy to describe. Clementine was never broke. Safe bet puts this old gal in the same category.

Had Collected Book Works been around in the 1650s, (so I read the other night), they could have featured two Indian graduates from Harvard among the first graduation class of that university for speakers. Nobody ever told us out at Mertzon High School that Indians read books in English or had an alphabet like the Cherokees.

Next trip to pick up the laundry, the tree limbs hung bare. The long-legged kid might have descended from buffalo hunters. Oldtime bison slaughterers always marked their kill.

The hippies missed the last concert. Sellouts hardly fit their style. You need more than a program and a ticket stub to analyze the audience.