



Peacemaking in Tribal Communities: Role of Tribal Law Enforcement



Moderators:

BJ Jones, Director

Tribal Judicial Institute, UND School of Law

Brian Kauffman, Director

Western Community Policing Institute





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Opening Remarks: Welcome from the Bureau of Justice Assistance

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Introduction

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Francis is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation and a career Indian Country Peacekeeper with over 42 years of service. Chief Bradley currently works for the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, is a former Chief of Police for the Hualapai and Navajo Nation and has served as a Director of Tribal Police and Criminal Investigation programs for over 18 years, he is a graduate of the FBI National Academy Session 232 and has represented Indian Country law enforcement at the Local, State, and National levels to help develop polices and practices that advocate for the betterment of public safety in Indian Country and enhance the quality of life for native people.

Overview

Today we will be discussing law enforcement's role in peacekeeping within Tribal communities through the lens of tradition, beliefs, practices, and relationships and offer a perspective on how modern approaches compare to historical methods.

Identity

In working in Indian Country regardless of what Nation or Community you're in or serving, your identity is one of the most important pieces of your role as a Peacekeeper of the people.

- Who are you?
- Where do you come from?
- How are you related to the people?
- What is your role in the community?
- Why are we here with you?



Relationships

- Relationships were central to traditional peacekeeping practices.
- Law enforcement officers were often members of the community, deeply familiar with its dynamics and intricacies.
- Trust and mutual respect between law enforcement and community members were cultivated over time through ongoing engagement and collaboration.



Relationships (cont.)

Example:

How I was taught to look at my role traditionally was that of a Warrior. The philosophy of the **Warrior** is that you are a:

- **Protector**
- **Provider**
- **Peacekeeper**

All three are what we as law enforcement officers do in service to our people and communities.

It is from traditional teachings that we based these three roles from and how they incorporate the Beauty Way and Protection Way of my people into the way police services are provided to the people.



Relational Policing

- Peacekeeping is unique to Tribal Law Enforcement in that most of the team are easily identified and often related to the communities they serve.
- This creates what is known as ***Relational Policing*** and that is unique to community policing in Tribal communities.
- Through Kinship, Clanship, Banding, or Society most officers of the department are related to the community in these ways.

Relational Policing (cont.)

- These relationships identifies the officer as a relative which traditionally creates K'é (which are relationships between family, clans, and kinship systems) and an immediate recognition with the people in the community or those being served.
- K'é encompasses extensive responsibilities to others and respect for them. K'é prescribe etiquettes that Navajos follow when interacting with all relatives in creation and underlies traditional Navajo political ways, notions of equality, and individual and community rights.
- See Raymond Austin, *Navajo Courts and Navajo Common Law: A Tradition of Tribal Self-Governance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009) 83.

Tradition

- Traditionally, peacekeeping in Tribal Communities was deeply rooted in cultural values, customs, and traditions.
- Law enforcement wasn't necessarily seen as a separate entity but rather as an integral part of the community.
- Elders and leaders often played key roles in conflict resolution, emphasizing restoration and harmony over punishment.



Tradition (cont.)

- Practices such as circle sentencing, where community members gather to discuss offenses and agree on appropriate consequences, highlight the importance of community involvement and consensus-building.



Traditional Peacekeeping

- Comparing these traditional practices to modern community policing reveals both similarities and differences.
- Like traditional peacekeeping, community policing emphasizes collaboration, problem-solving, and building trust between law enforcement and the community.
- Officers in community policing models often work closely with community members, local organizations, and stakeholders to address underlying issues and prevent crime.

Traditional Peacekeeping (cont.)

Example:

Each police officer is seen in the traditional light as a “**Protector, Provider, and a *Peacekeeper***” for the people, the Nation or Tribe, whomever he or she is serving and is here to serve people first and be a leader who has *humility, valor, honesty, integrity, and generosity*.

Beliefs and Spirituality

- Beliefs and spirituality also played a significant role in traditional peacekeeping.
- Many Indigenous cultures view the interconnectedness of all living beings and emphasize the importance of maintaining balance and harmony.
- This holistic approach to justice considers not only the immediate consequences of an offense but also its broader impact on individuals, families, and the community as a whole.

Beliefs and Spirituality (cont.)

Examples:

- What are our past, present, and future teachings and beliefs in Public Safety for our tribes and Nations?
 - Principles of service
 - Teamwork
 - Compassion
 - Using and having the appropriate tools
 - Goal Setting
 - Compassion
 - Beliefs
 - Consistency

Beliefs and Spirituality (cont.)

Examples:

- What are our Mission, Visions, and Values for our departments, and does it incorporate the beliefs and culture of our community?
 - Culturally relevant service delivery that mirrors the **protecting**, **providing**, and **peacekeeping** as the core of public safety for the community and people.
- Think of Traditional law, Customary Law, Natural law, and Common law.

Naabaahii

- The Police Officer is the modern day Naabaahii - a man or woman who fought an enemy and/or an illness/disease.
- These individuals worked bravely and tirelessly to protect their family and communities.
- When in battle they used their mind, body, and spirit.

Naabaahii (cont.)

- To begin to realize what it means to be a Warrior (Police Officer) who is **protector**, **provider**, and a **peacekeeper** each of must see the Vision of the Nat'áanii (Leader).
- That vision must be embraced by all and to do so all must learn and understand the Tribe or Nation they serve and what the Nat'áanii believe, serve the People first, rather than the individual.

Modern Community Policing

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Modern Community Policing (cont.)

Examples:

- Service vs. Enforcement vs. Restorative justice and *Peacekeeping*.
- Is there a Crime or not a crime?
- Why are we here?
- How do we know each other and where are we policing?
- How are we related or what is our relationship?
- What is our Cultural Relevancy level?

Remembering those who came **before** you, those who came **with** you.
And those who come **after** you.



Law Enforcement's Role in Peacekeeping

Our Efforts to bridge this gap involve incorporating traditional Indigenous knowledge and practices into law enforcement training and policy development.

This could include:

- Cultural competency training for officers
- Establishing advisory boards comprised of tribal elders and leaders
- Supporting initiatives that promote healing and restoration within tribal communities.



Law Enforcement's Role in Peacekeeping (cont.)

- Ultimately, recognizing the strengths of both traditional and modern approaches to peacekeeping can inform more holistic and effective strategies for promoting safety and well-being in Tribal Communities.
- By honoring Indigenous traditions and fostering meaningful relationships between law enforcement and the community, we can work towards a future where justice is not only served but also rooted in respect, understanding, and shared values.

Law Enforcement's Role in Peacekeeping (cont.)

Modern policing and technology are commonplace in our tribal communities and with our people today, however, incorporation of **tradition, belief**, and the **philosophy of peacekeeping** are the pillar of maintaining **balance, peace** and **harmony**.

Building and having a Relationship with our community and its members is our role.

Promoting resolution through other ways rather than Punitive ways is our goal.



Law Enforcement's Role in Peacekeeping (cont.)

- Do we have a crime? if we do, then what are we doing to resolve that crime?
- Is there alternative to enforcement such as traditional resolutions or restorative justice?
- If there is no crime, then how do we restore peace and resolve the issue?



Conclusion

- It's evident that the principles of Protecting, Providing, and Peacekeeping remain deeply rooted in tribal communities, reflecting longstanding values and traditions.
- While contemporary challenges like violence and substance misuse persist, the essence of maintaining peace and order within Indian Country remains constant.
- Tribal law enforcement plays a pivotal role in upholding these principles, serving as a cornerstone for peacekeeping efforts.
- Through their dedication and commitment, they strive to safeguard their communities, provide essential services, and ensure a sense of security for all members.

Conclusion (cont.)

In navigating these challenges, it's crucial to acknowledge the resilience and strength of tribal communities, drawing upon their rich cultural heritage and collective wisdom to address contemporary issues.

By recognizing the importance of traditional beliefs and incorporating them into modern peacekeeping strategies, tribal law enforcement can effectively meet the evolving needs of their communities while preserving their cultural identity and values.

Questions & Answers



**Thank you all for allowing me
to be here with you today and
thank you for your service.**

Be safe and be well!

