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James F. Downs

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The Navajo

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With a blend of description and theory, this classic case study by James F. Downs (1923-1999) focuses on the pastoral aspects of Nez Ch'ii society and culture. The tribe still holds to a pastoral herding ecology that has characterized some of the Navajo for at least 250 years. Downs outlines the important themes of the culture (including the importance of females, the inviolability of the individual, the prestige of age, and the reciprocity principle), and discusses, in detail, the relationships between the Nez Ch'ii families and their sheep herds as well as their relationship to the dominant culture surrounding them.

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