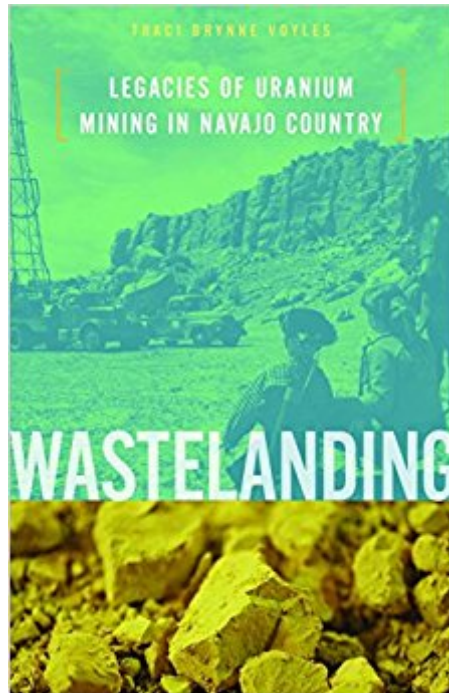




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# Wastelanding: Legacies Of Uranium Mining In Navajo Country



## Synopsis

Wastelanding tells the history of the uranium industry on Navajo land in the U.S. Southwest, asking why certain landscapes and the peoples who inhabit them come to be targeted for disproportionate exposure to environmental harm. Uranium mines and mills on the Navajo Nation land have long supplied U.S. nuclear weapons and energy programs. By 1942, mines on the reservation were the main source of uranium for the top-secret Manhattan Project. Today, the Navajo Nation is home to more than a thousand abandoned uranium sites. Radiation-related diseases are endemic, claiming the health and lives of former miners and nonminers alike. Traci Brynne Voyles argues that the presence of uranium mining on Dináʼé (Navajo) land constitutes a clear case of environmental racism. Looking at discursive constructions of landscapes, she explores how environmental racism develops over time. For Voyles, the “wasteland,” where toxic materials are excavated, exploited, and dumped, is both a racial and a spatial signifier that renders an environment and the bodies that inhabit it pollutable. Because environmental inequality is inherent in the way industrialism operates, the wasteland is the “other” through which modern industrialism is established. In examining the history of wastelanding in Navajo country, Voyles provides “an environmental justice history” of uranium mining, revealing how just as “civilization” has been defined on and through “savagery,” environmental privilege is produced by portraying other landscapes as marginal, worthless, and pollutable.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Wastelanding" is simply a brilliant book. It is at once a beautifully written, rigorously researched and hauntingly moving account of U.S. settler colonialism's violent making of racialized bodies and degraded landscapes in the U.S. Southwest. Traci Brynne Voyles draws together a rich set of critical approaches and weaves them into what will be the new bar for environmental politics." • Jake Kosek, University of California, Berkeley

"This groundbreaking book examines how race, gender, and nature coproduce one another through 'wastelanding.' Voyles's masterful account explains how colonization, racialization, and resource extraction work together to produce sacrifice zones. She connects history, geography, Native American Studies, ethnic studies, and women and gender studies in a truly unique contribution to the literature of environmental studies and environmental justice." • Julie Sze, University of California, Davis

"Wastelanding is meticulously researched, covers extremely complex events that continue to have dire consequences for Native peoples on the Colorado Plateau in a well-organized discourse, and draws on the work of dozens of other historians and professionals as well as a multitude of source documents." • Indian Country Today

"There is a gap in geography in and around meaningfully engagements with Indigenous feminism. There is also a failure amongst radical scholars to place themselves within the landscapes they inhabit. This context of erasure makes Traci Brynne Voyles's contribution all the more valuable and worthy of a thorough read." • Antipode

"Thought-provoking and challenging." • Tribal College Journal of American Indian Higher Education

"Wastelanding is an often thought-provoking examination of settler colonialism's impact on the Navajo people and their lands and should appeal to students of Native American history, geography, mining, gender studies, and the environment." • Western Historical Quarterly

"Sophisticated and insightful." • Journal of American History

"A timely and innovative work that applies a multitude of theoretical perspectives with remarkable elasticity to illuminate a critical instance of environmental injustice that is far from isolated." • The American Historical Review

Traci Brynne Voyles is assistant professor of women's studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

I enjoyed this book, though I have to think through her theoretical framework more to see if I really think it is effective in what she wants it to do? Otherwise I think it's a creative way of thinking through these issues, and does good work in linking larger narratives of the height of nuclear

activity. The chapter on gender was really great, especially in the ways it linked the perceived femininity of the past and the future as imagined by DinĀfĀ© women, but I think that really was the linchpin of the book and should have been pulled throughout the book rather than being relegated to a single chapter

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