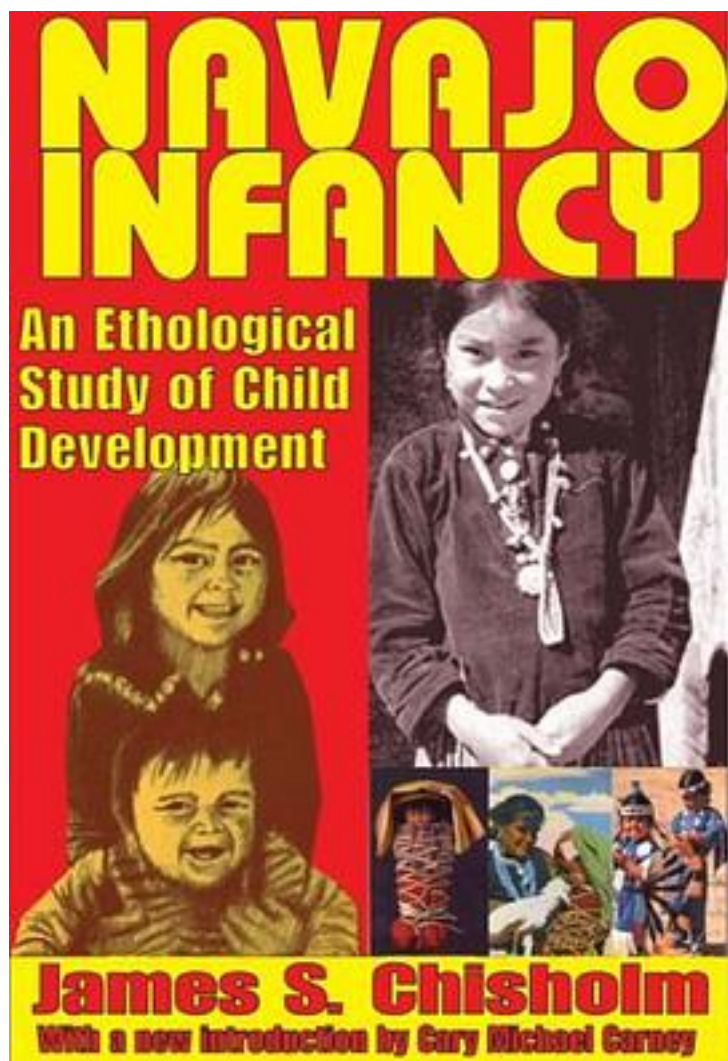


Navajo Infancy



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Navajo Infancy describes the major sources of change and continuity in Navajo infant development. It does so by combining concepts and methods of classical ethology with those of social-cultural anthropology. The goal is to establish the relationships between human nature and culture. By considering the nature of adaptation, and the evolution of human developmental patterns, and through analyses of the determinants of change and continuity in Navajo infant development, Navajo Infancy outlines how the process of development itself may bridge nature and culture. With its special focus on the effect of the cradleboard on Navajo mother-infant interaction, Navajo Infancy raises important developmental issues in its analyses of why the effects of the cradleboard do not last. Incorporating the Brazelton Neonatal Behavioral Assessment Scale into its ethological-anthropological methods, Navajo Infancy demonstrates significant Navajo-Anglo-American differences in newborn temperament. It finds a strong correlation between newborn behavior and prenatal environmental factors, arguing that racial and ethnic differences in behavior at birth go well beyond simple gene pool differences. Navajo Infancy also describes the individual and group differences in the development of Navajo and Anglo- American children's fear of strangers and patterns of mother-infant interaction. Aspects of attachment theory, transactional theories of development, and anthropological theories of socialization are related to this broad new evolutionary approach to the process of development and nature-culture interaction.

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