

All Nations Hope AIDS Network

Written by :

Ron Horsefall

Pasqua First Nation, Saulteaux Nation

Outreach Coordinator, All Nations Hope

Technical :

Lana Holinaty

Health Promotions Coordinator, All Nations Hope

2735 5th Ave.

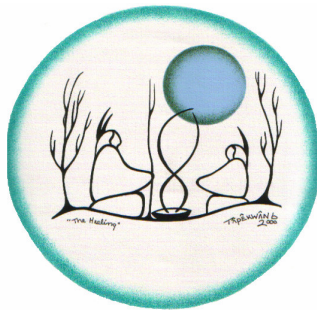
Regina, SK S4T 0L2

Phone: (306) 924-8424

Toll Free: 1-877-210-7622

Fax: (306) 525-3698

Website: www.allnationshope.ca



The making of this pamphlet was sponsored by:



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de santé
publique du Canada

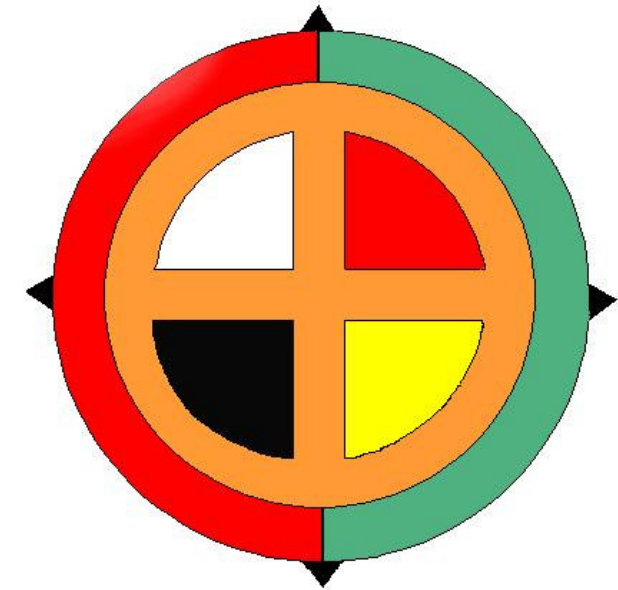


Weiwha 1849–1896

Two-spirited person from
the Zuni Nation in
Southwest United States
and was recognized for his
contributions to the life of
his village and to the
outside world.



TWO SPIRIT PEOPLE



Two Spirit People

Long before any European set foot on North

America (Turtle Island), there was a way of life

where Two Spirit People played an integral role in

most First Nations. The word Two Spirit is a recent

term that was coined by an Elder from Winnipeg in

1990 and it encompasses Aboriginal Gay, Lesbian,

Bisexual, Transgender and Intersexed People.

Two Spirit is much more than just sexual

orientation, it goes deeper into spirituality, roles

and gender. Two Spirits traditionally were Medicine

People, Healers, Teacher, Seers, Artists, Spiritual

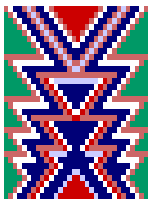
Guides and Mediators. There was great respect

and honor for Two Spirits and they held important

spiritual and ceremonial responsibilities.

Two Spirits have both the male and the female spir-

its and are the balance between man and woman.



Each Nation had specific roles for Two Spirit People that differed from nation to nation.

Most First Nations have a word for Two Spirits in their languages:

- **Cree:** Ayekkwe or A'yahkwew Male
- **Ojibway:** Ogokwe Female
Agokwa Male
- **Lakota:** Lila witkowin Female
Winkte Male

Since the arrival of Europeans the Two Spirit traditions have been oppressed and as a result of this oppression, mainstream society as well as Aboriginal communities have little or no knowledge about Two Spirit traditions.

Two Spirits were at a place of honor when our culture and spirituality was intact and now they are at a place of shame.

The Two Spirit Movement started because there were numerous Two Spirits looking for healing, in recovery from addictions and infected with HIV. Today, there is an International Two Spirit Gathering held each year,

sites alternating between Canada and the United States. The first Gathering was held at

Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1988 and has been going for 17 years. There are also Two Spirit groups in Canada and the United States.

Two Spirits are the last aspect of Native culture and spirituality to come back into the Circle to make it complete, and take their rightful place of honor in the Circle.

All MY RELATIONS



Osh Tisch (in Crow language translates to “Finds them and kills them”) - 19th Century

Male to female transgendered warrior, healer, and ritual artist. After his death no one among the Crow openly took up the transgendered role and the ceremonial role was lost.