

Stories on Stone. Rock Art: Images From the Ancient Ones by Jennifer Owings Dewey. University of New Mexico Press. 2003. 32 pp. \$14.95 hardcover.

At most university presses I'm familiar with, children, if they are thought of at all, are an afterthought. But that is not the case at the University of New Mexico Press, which continues to publish books aimed at young people.

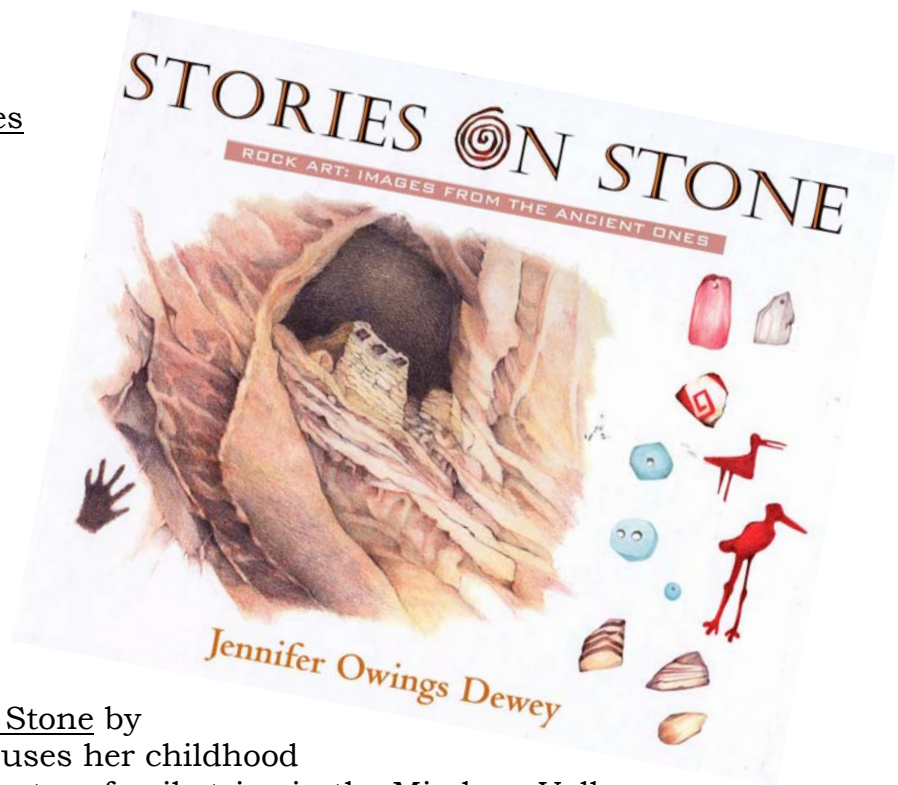
The latest is Stories on Stone by Jennifer Owings Dewey, who uses her childhood experiences discovering rock art on family trips in the Mimbres Valley in New Mexico as the starting point for a history of petroglyphs and pictographs. Dewey's accounts are filled with reverence for what she finds and she imparts this feeling without preaching to her young readers.

For example, she notes that on one of her trips at the age of 12, she found a shooting star carved into the surface of a rock and emphasizes to her readers that someone not only saw a shooting star but then recorded the experience. Children need that kind of touchstone to appreciate what Dewey is writing about and she makes sure the book has many such lessons.

Dewey, a longtime resident of New Mexico, also writes about the people who made the rock art in a way that connects the art and the people, giving young readers an understanding of the ancient culture that produced both. She also provides a map that shows many of the sites in Anasazi Country.

The book is plush with Dewey's illustrations, which add appeal for her audience. The book is recommended for ages 7 and up at a reading level of 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Still, I can imagine some grandparent reading this book to a younger child and pointing out the many illustrations throughout as a way of reinforcing the written word.

Dewey has also written Clem: The Story of a Raven, another children's book published by the same press. The University of New Mexico Press deserves applause for publishing books not only of regional interest, but also for all ages.



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