

HARJO, JIMMIE.

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Billie Byrd,  
Journalist,  
Jan. 29, 38.

An Interview With Jimmie Harjo,  
Aged 48; Nuyaka town ( tulwa )  
Okemah, Oklahoma.

## INDIAN DISCIPLINE.

It is true that my father was an old man and a leader in the affairs of his town but I have missed through the discipline ordered and enforced by the older people--those were my parents or others of the older people who had the right to correct me in what they thought right.

I can remember that the young generation was reprimanded for everything by strict discipline. They didn't have much chance of learning anything different for some of them were indifferent and did not take much interest in the schools, thinking the schools to be just another step of the whites in an effort to drive them further away from the ties they had been accustomed to. Many interesting things that could have been known and told will never be known because the older ones stood up for right and strict discipline of their young. Most of those old people are dead and have been buried with the legends of the early life. There are now too many people who

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didn't know anything about what you are now asking. Some do not know their ancestors.

I can remember the times when the older ones of the people would gather and sit together for a time of talking over some of the things they knew about. Then it was that the young men, young women and children would be ordered away from the gathering to keep them from listening to the stories which then seemed to be interesting from the little snatches of stories that could be heard. The children were never allowed to listen and strictly forbidden to join in the everyday talks of the elders even. We could have heard things then that we could know about now. Even at the meal table the children were never permitted to sit in a chair but told to stand and eat without joining in the talk.

Behind all this strict discipline put out by the old people was their strict belief in their elders' encouragement to stand and abide in the treaties of the old as well as their resolve to keep everything dear to their people to themselves. Their belief that elders have control over the children was carried out as they disciplined their young. No young person could dominate in their wisdom or ability for

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that young person had not lived and experienced what the older ones had.

The young were never taken into the confidence of the elders, believing them too young for any serious thinking on things that concerned and would benefit the tribe. That was the stand that my parents took. There are some who have told of many things and it was from those people that we have heard what we know.