



Beware of Companies is a thoughtful memoir about a trusting employee's exploitation at the hands of a powerful casino and the tremendous impact that this had in shaping his worldview. -CLARION REVIEWS

Beware of Companies That Rip Off Their Employees

How I recovered from injurious employment practices—so can you!

PASCALE BATIEUFAYE

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How I Recovered from Injurious
Employment Practices—So Can You!

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2022909515

ISBN: Hardcover 978-1-954647-04-6

Softcover 978-1-954647-05-3

eBook 978-1-954647-06-0

Also available for Kindle.

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This book is based on actual events based on the author's present recollections of experiences over time. Some names and identifying characteristics have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals or locations—for example, the names used for the casino, its buildings and restaurants, and its governing tribe are all pseudonyms. Some events have been compressed, and some dialogue has been re-created.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to my mother, my dearest inspiration in everything that I've tried. I owe her all that I have today or could ever think of procuring due to her unceasing encouragement. So, to my mother, I say thank you for tirelessly standing by me when others didn't. You never ceased to have faith that something good would come from all that I undertook. First and foremost, I love you. Second, I'm sorry it took forever, stretching a span of over half my life before I procured a little more than a dollar a day.

My father died too early, at age forty-five, from a fatal blow to the head when an unnamed assailant hit him from behind as he was coming down the stairs—a mystery to this day. He was a skillful carpenter who, at only twenty years old, built all the furniture in the cozy apartment from scrap pieces of wood. He, too, never stopped supporting us despite his alcohol addiction, carrying the unwavering belief that there would someday be one small reassuring upshot in our favor.

By sharing the trials and tribulations I've experienced with the gaming industry, I hope to muster some courage to make my mother proud. There were seven siblings in our household. I would've been unwittingly far behind, unable to grasp anything within inches of my reach, if it hadn't been for my mother cheering me on. I often wonder what would have taken place if I had remained at a standstill, stuck in a decent-paying occupation while being spaced out, achieving no goal.

It is also dedicated to all the hardworking animal activists and Lady Freethinker, who have a genuine ethos to bestow to the wildlife so that nature is left on more solid footing for the ecosystem.

PREFACE

There was once a time when I worked for the biggest gambling den in the country.

The gallantly termed Employee Suggestion Program (ESP) solicited six thousand personnel in an attempt to increase employee involvement. The tribal leaders wouldn't have been able to produce extra hundreds of millions every year had it not been for the ideas I supplied through the ESP, which they used to lift themselves off the reservation.

Then came the treason, which I wish I could forget.

I write this book to forewarn others in any industry who may face what I went through. This book reveals my work life before and after the treachery. I experienced such an unpleasant occurrence right after the tribal leaders and the upper inner circle of my former casino employer—which I will call Knossos for the purpose of this book (the names of the buildings, restaurants, and governing tribe have been changed, too)—conveniently implemented what I submitted via the ESP, ignoring the source of these ideas.

It is, sadly, often the norm for an organization to break the law without being penalized for it. The behavior of the Parthenon Tribe (pseudonym for the casino's governing tribal council) defies today's expectations for business transparency, a cornerstone of American democracy.

We are ready to explore Knossos's smoky gambling history for innumerable untruths, which were previously nameless because no one suspected anything like them existed.

We'll also address how to reverse depression outside the reaches of the pharmaceutical world. This was an integral part of my life after Knossos because I was told to seek counseling after I refused to cease my inquiries.

My evidence vigorously supports the claim that my former employer engaged in unsavory practices. I aim to establish this book's assertions as a doer compelled to act, not just a talker. I'm at a point where my temerity has given me this belief that I must do this now or never. I hope it will assist hardworking folks out there to play their cards right if they find themselves in a similar situation.

This book allows readers a front-row seat to my twenty-year-long cloak-and-dagger episode with a diabolical employer from 1996 to 2014. When in doubt about your employers, there are some red flags to look for, which I'll point out along the way.

Letting the cat out of the bag feels as if I have woken up from a terrifying nightmare. In this memoir/exposé, I tackle two major obstacles: the theft of intellectual property by an employer I trusted and the loss of the job I loved. Stay tuned for this fascinating journey, wrought with pain, betrayal, and perseverance.

AN EXPLANATION OF QUOTED MATERIALS

I am in possession of my correspondence through memos and emails with Knossos during my participation in the ESP (Employee Suggestion Program). Might they one day refute its content because I caught them using my ideas and not giving me the bonuses promised? Time will tell. The computer containing the files of all the proposals related to supporting my case is no longer in my ownership. It was stolen from the video/grocery store I owned, along with the cash register.

I continue to stand by everything I've stated here because I possess many files to show as evidence that they used several of my submitted proposals without upholding their end of the ESP agreement. Each time, I included an accounting proposition with my complete first and last name signed on the bottom and my employee badge number displayed in the upper-left corner. My preserved documents bear the initials of Knossos's vice presidents and other officeholders.

I'm a little concerned that if I put all the evidence in this book, it could backfire against me in such a way that would enable my former employer to attack this from a legal standpoint, then use it against me in a defamation lawsuit. And so, I am careful not to disclose every piece of proof in my possession.

Knossos's best-kept secret (until now) is its Employee Suggestion Program (ESP) and its resultant explosion in earnings that returned the casino to profitability after an eight- to ten-year slump. It turned out that my submissions were implemented on a grand scale, which assuredly affected the gambling business for a few good years.

Let's get into what wasn't exactly a marriage made in heaven. I wrote this book from a deep sense of self-confidence as I expose what transpired with Knossos Inc. throughout my employment there. As I narrate the particulars of the instances, I hope to build a solid case for employees facing similar dilemmas. Many shall come to discover what could be one of America's most scandalous burglaries of an employee's ideas by an employer.

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CHAPTER 1

A Little Background—How Native American Casinos Became So Popular

I believe the success of Native American casinos has come about, in part, because of “White Guilt.” Many European-Americans are aware of the true history of the Native American people and now feel that spending their money in a Native American casino is, in some small way, an act of retribution. In many states where gambling is not allowed, the Native Americans realized they were a sovereign nation and could not be stopped from operating a business otherwise not permissible in their state.

Let’s not deprive the Native Americans of what’s duly theirs. For example, there’s the Narragansett Tribe, whose members only want to provide for their families, just like anybody else, with their own efforts, instead of being dependent on government agencies. They feel as if they’re not treated as adults and are considered below par, incapable of earning their own bread.

What’s the holdup for the members of the Narragansett Tribe and their long-dispossessed constitutional rights? They would prefer not to rely on humiliating public windfalls known as handouts, which only

pointlessly degrade their honored image further. Why is it that the Native Americans must request permission from some states, or any high court, to open a lawful casino business on their own land? When, and if, they do, it will be with the usual strings attached and conditions written all over the settlement: 30 percent of this, 30 percent of that, goes to the state.

If Patrick Kennedy or an unbiased Congress would have gotten involved, the results might have been different. But the tribe's rights were illegitimately snatched from them by a powerful governor and his questionable cliques, calling for votes that looked down on the Narragansett ancestors' wishes, painting them as unconstrained, risk-taking, self-determination seekers.

Are Washington's powers and the nation's state governments seen as oppressors to Native Americans? What do such unlearned lessons tell us, with respect to what they did to the displaced Native Americans? Isn't such one-party regulation absurd, no matter how one looks at it? Today's Native Americans' indomitable spirit is something their descendants will always be proud of.

Do we care how these tribes wind up? These lands already belong to Native Americans. The fact is, they were on this continent way before European vanquishers. Haven't these interlopers been enough of a pain in the neck, having laid claims in Native homelands? The many Native kinsfolk nationwide only want to independently go about the business of surviving, but instead are denied, reviving deep-rooted issues of colonialism. But isn't it quite a double standard for some state-sponsored casinos, which I won't name here, to be allowed to enlarge their facilities, when tribes are prohibited from doing the same?

Back in the old days, this land-grabbing was done by the US Army's bluecoats. Do we still want more? When will we be satisfied? Could the answer be never?

How much longer will our political leaders continue to make Native peoples endure this ordeal? They shouldn't be deprived of a normal life, continuing the injustice of how their ancestors were treated by the settlers who forcefully took their lands.

I repeat, their native lands were taken away until wholly occupied. The taking of tribal land is still occurring even now in Utah and elsewhere, by the fossil-fuel industry for use in oil drilling and for uranium mining. How shameful to the core for our elected leaders to insidiously keep abusing the unarmed Indigenous folks just because they can, as if past genocides weren't enough. It's beyond belief to still endorse such horrific policies in the name of excess greed. It's something no educated person would be proud of.

Native American land agreements, recognizing the cultural and spiritual meanings thereof, are ignored while the oil industry refuses to stop building the Dakota Access Pipeline. A larger number of containers of crude oil—570,000—will be moved across the pipeline each day, risking the contamination of drinking water of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's reservation a mile away.¹

There is no telling *when* any pipeline might break; past events have proven, time and time again, that it's never *if*. For instance, recall the 2016 incident in which a Shell oil flow line slopped ninety thousand gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico. Or the time a Keystone pipeline discharged 383,000 gallons of crude oil in North Dakota, coinciding with a period in which three hundred oil pipeline breaks were recorded from 2012 to 2013 alone.

It's not my job to be bitter about how the Native populations must feel but to do something about it in a helpful way. I pray to God to someday acquire such means because Congress wouldn't like it if the tables were turned, and their land was forcibly seized. I'm not trying to say that

¹ climatesentral.org/news/Dakota-pipeline/greenlighted-fossil-fuels

I would take land back from Congress if I had the means to do so. I mean that I would simply use such resources to help Native Americans.

Do I owe an open apology to those who might disagree with me for bringing up the past, about Native Americans being driven from their way of life, like wounded coyotes on the run, bleeding to death? I don't think so! I am simply stating facts.

Native Americans' ancestors historically endured torment for the sole reason of frantically trying to hold onto what was indisputably theirs. Is it hypocritical for me, as an American citizen, to favor their casinos flourishing over other gambling houses because of their brutal historical treatment by interventionist incomers because their populations were decimated by the British/French/Dutch settlers disembarking from their ships?

In my attempts to accentuate the miseries of Native Americans further, I could be inaccurate in some of my observations—I'm only human. The parallel to the gaming industry of the land-grabbing profiteers from the Old West outlines how unprepared, ill-equipped, and poorly armed the conquered ones were.

After all, they stood no real chance despite being the fiercest warriors—Navajo, Apache, Cherokee, Lakota Sioux, Mohican, Mohawk, Seminole, Cheyenne, and Comanche—in countless battles, when facing cannons, grenades, and all sorts of artillery versus mere spears, bows and arrows, tomahawks, and knives. Unable to repel and deter endless aggressions, Native Americans were exploited; they were confined to unwholesome, ill-equipped reservations lacking rudimentary health care. Women were raped and enslaved; the merciless murder of countless offspring was not ruled out so that settlers wouldn't have to deal with a new headache or fight the next generation.

After all, why fight the next generation when it could be stripped of existence by conquering and stamping out every living soul that still

annoyingly stood in the way of the fateful, final transaction? Some unlucky Natives were offered blankets infected with smallpox as gifts, under the falsehearted disguise of an armistice, to finish them off. Not to mention that they were nearly annihilated by all sorts of diseases brought in by these same Europeans, who further inundated them with hard liquor.

Payback Time?

Why are so many casinos run by Native Americans? What is this history?

As history has proven, Native Americans, although unduly detribalized, have been able to find financial success and a certain level of autonomy through the gaming business. Could it be one way that Native groups are getting back at us, by taking money through our gaming losses in return for the sins of our Bluecoat great-great-grandfathers, who have never faced justice for having taken their lands after outgunning the earliest Natives?

In some states where it's most needed, and where they were discriminatorily prevented from lawfully owning a gambling establishment in their own terrain so that they might be able to provide for their impoverished families, Natives are enabled to further pursue their chosen endeavors and become self-reliant in their restricted reservations rather than relying on humiliating regime charities. Many of those affected say "thanks but no thanks" to the state's miserly handouts through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, often putting them at the mercy of low-paying work.

As the facts indicate, Native populations are not lazy and never were. The common goal appears to be for their people to live free, not blocked from pursuing whatever legal entity may be on their sacred grounds, obtained via a peace treaty. The survivors were divided and dispersed, and yet, against all odds, they came through unvanquished, with a solid commitment to upholding their survival in a tough economy.

Naturally, in the present, we must learn to live in peace, side by side, leaving primordial mayhem behind. In the final stage of reconciliation, a law was created that prohibited states or private individuals from buying or selling their lands without the endorsement of the Federal government. I guess that is better than nothing. Still, I call this a pitiful improvement because, heck, the US government has a long way to go to duly return what was theirs. Some people assume that because certain Native American reservations have done well for themselves via the casinos, all have prospered. Many other tribes have inestimably demonstrated, time and time again, how proficient they can be at running fruitful casinos.

The Knossos Parthenon Tribe is mostly one-eighth rarefied bloodline. Native Americans all over America have a high unemployment rate of approximately forty percent and per capita income nowhere close to \$13,000, about what a Knossos tribe member spends for a scooter. I have always wanted to extend aid to Indigenous peoples if I could because they have not had the good fortune to be wealthy landed gentry like this particular casino clan. I wasn't a happy camper when they didn't receive the ten percent cut of the twelve-month returns from the re-named Fortuna Tower.

It would have been part of the Parthenon Tribe vision so that, in the end of it all, there'd be fewer of them being dependent on the Bureau of Indian Affairs' (BIA) funding. If I was sure they would not give anything to the Parthenon Tribe or the Cheyenne of the high plains in Wyoming, among others. I wouldn't have proffered this many ideas for them to stand tall before all rival casinos, because I was the intellectual property initiator.

The East Coast tribes like the Parthenons were among the first to bump into the Europeans' colonization when they were up against unmatched firepower. There should be more schooling in Indigenous dialects. There are only eight such languages left between the United

States and Canada, spoken by the elders, which shall die out when their vacillating youths are unaligned with learning them. Pretty soon, there won't be any people left to speak their tongues.

There is a sizeable diabetic population on the reservations, partly a result of a diet consisting of unhealthy foods that are high in carbohydrates and sugar, which also drives up obesity rates. Health clinics are often a great distance away, which constrains tribe members from accessing health care. This results in a dismal life expectancy of forty-eight years for men and fifty-two for women.

Historically, the US government has tended to trick Native Americans, convincing them that once they let go of vast quantities of their lands, Washington will agree to provide adequate medical care in return. One hundred million killings might've taken place in North, Central, and South America, going back fourteen hundred years because the Vikings came five hundred years before Columbus's ship reached the coastal United States. The history I learned is that the Native American population of disunited tribes that once lived in North America alone was around twenty million before Columbus and the European colonizers came, with the current total being two million surviving Native Americans living in the continental United States. Sacagawea was the only woman on the Lewis and Clark expedition into the American West. She acted as a Shoshone interpreter during the excursion, traveling thousands of miles from North Dakota to the Pacific Ocean and establishing cultural contacts with Native American populations.

Early History

In the beginning, Native Americans were meagerly armed and outgunned by all war criteria, up against weapons of mass destruction, such as explosive devices used by British invaders and, later, American bluecoats. Native populations used tomahawks and bows and arrows to fight their

oppressors. The lucky ones might get their hands on some rifles, fighting uneven battles until total conquest was achieved by the US cavalry.

The wise elders would have wanted them to be self-contained. Watch *The Sand Creek Massacre*, a film from 2006 that documents the time soldiers attacked a peaceful settlement of Cheyenne and Arapahos in southeastern Colorado. This is the film I'm referencing in this discussion.

We can never make up for the countless unprovoked war crimes that went unpunished, atrocities the white men from the previous generations committed against them. Didn't the US soldiers find the Native Americans here? Didn't our great-great-grandfathers come to colonize this land uninvited? Now it's owned by the officials in Washington, DC.

No one can ever turn the clock back to atone for all the injustice done to the still-breathing Native Americans, who are on the breadlines, among the many others out there who unambiguously deserve better. In addition, no amends were made except flimsy US government disbursements to fund out-of-the-way reservations.

When the French, British, and other permanent settlers were fighting to win this continent, France lost a few districts. But following a period of repercussions, the French conclusively gave up colonization by returning their remaining, defeated troops back to France. Meanwhile, a territorial army of British continued the migration as settlers; the next generation became righteous American patriots who were born here. It's only logical these patriots made such homeland claims next to the indigenous people, which became the basis of what civilization today knows as America. France interceded again when Great Britain sought to perpetually collect taxes from its own citizens' subsequent generations, who renounced their allegiance to Great Britain and became patriots in the States, now their new home.

Unfortunately, after the French and the British came, the carnage never ceased, and the Native population was nearly decimated across the

nation until their culture, living traditions, dialects, and so many other irreplaceable and rich ancestral principles were close to being totally defunct. It is obvious that such immoral liquidations will never be paid back, regardless of the concessions they receive today.

All the subsequent annihilations of native groups were far-reaching conquests. Aren't we still dictating the balance of dominance to these various pockets of tribes nationwide, condensed from twenty million in the fourteenth century to two million today, by curbing them from their own zones, based on political subjugation? The casino business is inextricably linked to the centuries-long struggles of this country's native populations.

Oppression of Native Americans is Still Happening

Energy Transfer Partners (ETP) has mercenaries. The call for security squads to use pepper spray and attack dogs on Native American tribes echoes how their ancestors were once treated, albeit the historical treatment was much worse. They pepper sprayed adults and kids alike when they gathered at the Standing Rock Sioux reservation to serenely protest the destruction of sacred sites and safe drinking water.

Then, the bulldozing commenced at a sacred burial site while the governor and local governments turned a blind eye, even as the public seemed to wholeheartedly believe in their conviction to address and tackle the most sensitive issues affecting the Native Americans' sacred land. I, for one, concede that all who have supported the Native Americans' cause merit high praise.

Thus, we should have the courage to uphold what is being jeopardized and relentlessly pursue the fight toward balancing the scale by providing the crucial resources to enable Native Americans to obtain a fair opportunity to venture successfully with their endeavors based on self-ambition. Growing the green economy is an element to detour from

contamination, not the use of attack dogs, rubber bullets, concussion grenades, tasers, and mace against unarmed Native Americans. There have even been reports of people being locked up naked or crammed, without food and warmth, into dog kennel-type containers, in which hundreds of them were injured.

This attempt to send a loud message is being silenced by forcing down their throats this last pipeline, which will cause drinking-water risks, being the only supply, which they depend on to survive toward the path of Native American land. A CBS web article noted on December 28, 2016, “A group of indigenous youths is walking from Saskatchewan, Canada, to raise awareness about the fight to protect our water. They were motivated by a devastating oil spill that sent almost sixty thousand gallons into the North Saskatchewan River near their community. They’ve walked eight hundred miles by hiking through snow and below-freezing temperatures to reach their supporters.”

I stood with them when they condemned pipeline projects and fracking sites with pins and needles under unrepentant Trump, which recklessly degraded the risks of triggering earthquakes.

Please, consider donating to the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), a nonprofit organization that is assisting in showing how the bill negatively affected Native Americans and why it should be repealed. The name of the specific bill is H.R. 4532, a Bill to Codify the Repeal and Replacement of Bears Ears National Monument.

So, Why is Knossos Different?

Knossos (the fictitious name I am using throughout this book to identify the casino I worked for) is an unscrupulous double-edged sword, but they did not denigrate and dismantle my devotion to the Native Americans.

The Knossos officials don’t want to lose face and appear as pompous opportunists, prompting them to act in a somewhat timely fashion

before their tens of thousands of daily guests, if their contradictions can sound easily believable by those kept in the dark. The height of their insidiousness is visible in their own view of their superior, upper-class status, which they see as necessary toward other Native Americans they feel are inferiors, when Knossos is no different from corrupt conglomerates that will do anything in their power to shield any revelation of their past indignant disgraces.

The Parthenon Tribe and their cronies must be nervously shaking in their boots after hearing the news emerging about the state's future casinos, trying to figure out how to strategize before they start losing thousands of regular gamblers who will no longer be obliged to fly or drive that far. A few short miles from the capital city's metropolitan area, there will be three local casinos in less than two years, pulling sizable percentages from Knossos's usual fiscal earnings.

Millions would be rolling in from additional gaming at a not-too-distant site run by a different tribe, wasting no time in tenaciously shoving for a second momentum to get a piece of the action! The casino that won the referendum had vied to knock off others, all having thrown their hats on the table. That casino opened in June 2019. First, Knossos execs didn't anticipate competing tribal casinos opening so soon. Second, they will be facing fiercer competition as more casinos are built not far from theirs.

So, they did everything in their power and whatever it took to get a bigger piece of the pie from the state's casinos, even if it would cause other rival gambling dens to tumble down the hill, losing it all, because the opportunity to doggedly pursue such unique apologist billions may never come again. Whatever it takes is to drop their competitors, leaving them with breadcrumbs, they won't think twice and will push the furthest.

If my calculations are spot-on, smaller gaming houses in a nearby state would be just as wounded business-wise, if not more, when one evaluates these bordering three states' geographical distances. By the time this is done, no one will be baffled about why other casinos were so up in arms to force their way through at all legal means in hopes to come out as the conqueror after perhaps squeezing every Las Vegas bidder out. Who will get the most out of whatever the state's future in gambling is in this plan for three future casinos is anybody's guess? I don't have a license to even dream it. I wonder whether there'll be a day I'll be glued to the TV news, seeing them grilled with grueling questions to get to the bottom of things.