

Paper 228-25

Envisioning Kinaalda: Navaho Magic, Mystery, and Myth
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Abstract

This project focuses on historical data collected by Frisbie (1963) from the Navaho girls' puberty ritual, Kinaalda, which is part of the Blessingway. Frisbie conducted a comparative study of the Kinaalda ritual utilizing accounts from 19 different anthropologists. Frisbie then constructed a grid chart to compile the anthropologists and themes mentioned by each account. The purpose of this study is to conduct a secondary analysis of this historical database; then utilize cutting-edge visual information techniques to display results and communicate ideas to a new generation of scholars. This study incorporates the data collected by Frisbie, et al., with current, icon-driven graphing algorithms to produce a more efficient (and aesthetically appealing) visual data display.

Introduction

Native American ceremonies (Navaho) were observed and recorded by a Spanish expedition in 1653, and it is quite possible that impermanent art portrayals (drypaintings) were being made in connection with the ceremonies even then (Dutton, 1976, p. 7). Each Navaho chant (song) usually has a particular sandpainting associated with it.

Sandpaintings are more accurately called drypaintings, "for pollen, meal, and other vegetal material, as well as pulverized clay and certain minerals may be used in addition to sand: occasionally, the paintings are made on buckskin...usually, the paintings are made on a background of clean sand. Different colors are made by crushing rock, charcoal, or other material into fine powders and mixing them with sand or dirt for easier handling" (Dutton, 1976, p. 27). The organic material is used as the basis of the desired color (pigment), while the sand is used as the medium or vehicle to transfer and transport the color to create patterns.

"Sandpaintings are not something of and for themselves, but they are part of a performance which continues for a period varying from one to nine days which commonly referred to as a "Chant" or "Sing." These words simply mean a combination of many ritualistic acts carried out in a fixed order (Newcomb & Reichard, n.d., p. 6).

There are many reasons, both explicit and implied, for the creation and performance of ritualistic acts by the Navaho people. Rituals can be viewed as a form of response to events in the life

of a person. "According to the Navaho view, the dangers of the world are caused by lack of harmony; illness, unhappiness, and drought, for example, all result from disharmony. The compulsive power of ritual, including the songs, paintings, and prayers which are parts of the whole, brings everything in the vicinity into line; harmonious, under control, and therefore healthy" (Hatcher, 1974, p. 27).

The idea of ritual as a behavioral response to external stimuli was advanced by Kluckhohn, who wrote "...myths are rituals which constitute a series of highly adaptive responses from the point of view of the society. Recital of or reference to the myths affirms the solidarity of the Navaho sentiment system. Performance of the rituals likewise heightens awareness of the common system of sentiments. Myths and rituals jointly provide systematic protection against supernatural dangers, the threats of ill-health and of the physical environment, antisocial tensions, and the pressures of a more powerful society. The all-pervasive configurations of word-symbols (myths) and of act-symbols (rituals) preserve the cohesion of the society and sustain the individual." (Kluckhohn, 1942, *passim*).

Every Navaho chant has a corresponding sandpainting which is made inside the hogan where the ceremony is to be held; or if it is to be performed outside, the painting is done out-of-doors. Navaho chants (also referred to as 'ways') are divided by mythological associations, ritual aspects they may have in common, and the forces or related forces they are addressed to within the ritual itself (Dutton, 1976). Table 1 shows the major divisions of ceremonial songs. Each rite had a particular group of songs and reason to support the ceremony. Appendix A contains the Blue Mule Song text.

Frisbie stated, "The Kinaalda is typical of the Navaho ceremonial pattern in its use of songs, prayers, taboos, purification rites, and a final night of singing. Being part of the Blessingway complex, the Kinaalda is prophylactic, rather than curative; it ushers the girl into society, invokes positive blessing on her, insures her health, prosperity, and well-being, and protects her from potential misfortune" (Frisbie, 1967, pp. 8-9). Shown in Table 1 are the major and minor divisions of the Navaho Ceremonies.

Table 1

Major and Minor Divisions of Navaho Ceremonies, per Dutton, 1976, pp. 27-28

Name of Rite	Reason Performed
Blessingway	To approve a newly selected headman For expectant mothers For men going away Girls' puberty rites Marriage ceremonies
War	(Obsolete)
Gameway	Hunting
Holyway	Employed for the attraction of good
	3 minor divisions:
	Beautyway
	Shootingway
	Mountaintopway
Evilway	Ghostway For exorcism of evil
Lifeway	Curing bodily injuries
Nightway	Introduce boys and girls to full participation in ceremonial life

Meaning of the word "Kinaalda"

"Kinaalda" refers to the group of rituals and practices associated with the Navaho girls' puberty ceremony. According to Frisbie, "The term for the puberty ceremony is "kinaalda" or kinaaldah." Most Navaho use this word to refer to the first menses, alluding to the ceremonial rather than the physiological event" (1967, p. 8). However, Mitchell states "the term kinaalda refers to the girl and the to the house in which she was formerly isolated during that period" (Frisbie, 1967, p. 8). According to Sandoval, (referencing Sapir), "kinaalda was an Athabascan term," which was used in Alaska where the people live in ice house;" and "sida" means sitting alone."

Purpose

This project focuses on historical data collected by Frisbie (1963) from the Navaho girls' puberty ritual, Kinaalda, which is part of the Blessingway. Frisbie conducted a comparative study of the Kinaalda ritual utilizing accounts from 19 different anthropologists. Frisbie then constructed a grid chart to compile the anthropologists and themes mentioned by each account. A portion of the original grid data chart is shown in Appendix B. The purpose of this study is to conduct a secondary analysis of this historical database; then utilize cutting-edge visual information techniques to display results and

communicate ideas to a new generation of scholars.

The capacity to produce more efficient and easily understood graphic displays of information exists today. Historically, this has not been the case. The expense and lack of access to computer hardware and software severely restricted the use of PC's in graphic applications. This project updates archival, qualitative data so it can be disseminated and appreciated by the educational community of today and tomorrow.

Method

This study incorporates the data collected by Frisbie, et al., with current, icon-driven graphing algorithms to produce a more efficient (and aesthetically appealing) visual data display. For this secondary analysis, the original data were examined, cleaned, and sorted by the researcher during the pre-algorithmic phase. Binary coding of the anthropologists' observations was utilized. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each observed Kinaalda ritual per anthropologist. The resultant data were then called into the graphing algorithm, and post-algorithmic interpretative activities conducted on the display images. SAS 6.1 programming techniques were used to create star graphs for each of the anthropologists' data observations. The structure of the Kinaalda mythological ordering is shown in Table 2; while the events for a second Kinaalda are shown in Table 3.

Table 2

Mythological Ordering of Events

Day	Ritual Activities
<i>First Day</i>	Comb Dress Mold Run
<i>Second Day</i>	Grind Corn Run
<i>Third Day</i>	Grind Corn Run Grind Corn Dig pit; build fire Make mush Put batter in pit; bless it Cover pit
<i>Fourth Day</i>	Dawn Run to east while four songs are sung. One Twelve Word song, unless the ceremony is the first Kinaalda, when this song is omitted. Make offering to Mother Earth.

From Frisbie, 1967, Kinaalda

Table 3

Events for a Second Kinaalda

Day	Ritual Activities
<i>First Day</i>	Put pot of wheat near outdoor cooking fire (after the molding).
<i>Second Day</i>	Spread wheat in the sun to dry (after digging the pit). Soak cornhusks (while working on the batter).
<i>Third Day</i>	Gather soapweed root and white clay for morning (during the singing).
<i>Fourth Day</i>	Prepare white-clay basket (during the Racing Songs). Lift children (after the molding). Girl goes back into hogan (after returning goods). Retie girl's hair.

From Frisbie, 1967, Kinaalda

Results

Both the original data chart (Frisbie, 1967) and the new data display are presented. A portion of the original data grid is shown in Appendix B. Additionally, the programming structures are shown and discussed; and the decision-making process documented with a schematic diagram. Aesthetic qualities and communication of

information were utilized in the graph construction process (per Tufte, Klee, Cleveland, and Kohler). Star graphs are shown in the poster display. Frequencies and means for each variable are shown in Table 5.

Educational Importance

The capacity to produce more efficient and easily understood graphical information displays exists today. Historically, this has not been the case. The expense and lack of access to computer hardware and software severely restricted the use of PC's in graphing applications. This study updates

archival, qualitative data so it can be disseminated and appreciated by a new generation of scholars. In 1967, Frisbie, et al., learned and recorded directly from Navaho voices. Today, this study provides a cross-cultural vehicle for those valuable stories. The future of the Kinaalda ritual is shown in Table 4.

Table 4

The Future of Kinaalda

Item	Old Way	Present Way
1. Timing of ceremony	Within a few days of puberty	Can be postponed due to school in some regions.
2. Pony tail	Only used for Kinaalda	Anyone can wear hair in this style.
3. Hair string	Tied only with appropriate string.	Rubber band put on first.
4. Race	Competition	No competition.
5. Grinding	Done to singing. Use only Grinding stones.	No singing Use core grinders bought at the store as well.
6. Taboos	Mentioned	Many not mentioned
7. Food taboos	Allow sugar	Not allow sugar
8. Cake	Ferment and sweeten by Chewing sprouted wheat and spitting it into batter	No longer do this.
9. Cake size	Regular size	Bigger than before
10. Measuring the pit	Horn implements used	Shovel used
11. Pit lining	A kind of plant	Cornhusks
12. Drinking	None	Much
13. Police	Not present	Presence requested
14. Cake-cutting	Wood or stone implements used	Knives used.

From Frisbie, 1967, Kinaalda, p. 385.

Table 5 . Variable Frequencies

Variable	N	Mean	Frequency
CHANGE	19	0.84	16.0
DRESSING	19	0.68	13.0
RACE	19	0.68	13.0
MUSIC	19	0.63	12.0
MOLDING	19	0.58	11.0
NUMSONGS	19	0.57	10.0
NOTIFIED	19	0.47	9.0
PARTOFBW	19	0.42	8.0
SPECTIME	19	0.42	8.0
SECOND	19	0.42	8.0
FIRSTMAN	19	0.39	7.0
REFUTURE	19	0.37	7.0
REQEARTH	19	0.37	7.0
CORNCAKE	19	0.37	7.0
BWSONGS	19	0.37	7.0
CMONY	19	0.32	6.0
MUSDIF	19	0.32	6.0
HOGAN	19	0.26	5.0
COMBING	19	0.26	5.0
CONCEPT	19	0.26	5.0
RACING	19	0.26	5.0
NAMING	19	0.21	4.0
SONGDIF	19	0.21	4.0
SUNMOON	19	0.16	3.0
RETURN	19	0.16	3.0
FOLLOW	19	0.16	3.0
GRINDING	19	0.16	3.0
SONGTEXT	19	0.16	3.0
PAINT	19	0.16	3.0
HAIRWASH	19	0.16	3.0

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Appendix A

Chiih Song

BLUE MULE
Sole Recording, 1963

heye neye yaza
 She has prepared her child,
 She has prepared her child,
 She has prepared her child, ho'aghei.

Turquoise Girl,
 she has prepared her,
 With her turquoise shoestrings,
 she has prepared her,
 With her dark seamed, turquoise moccasins,
 she has prepared her.
 With her turquoise shoestrings,
 she has prepared her, With her turquoise leggings,
 she has prepared her,
 With her turquoise garters,
 she has prepared her,
 With her turquoise skirt,
 she has prepared her,
 With her turquoise skirt sash,
 she has prepared her,
 With her turquoise bracelet,
 she has prepared her,
 With her turquoise collar,
 she has prepared her,
 Now the pollen of all kinds of jewels has been
 placed in her mouth for her speech,
 with it
 she has prepared her,
 With her turquoise ear pendant,
 she has prepared her,
 With her turquoise head plume,
 she has prepared her.

Changing Woman, she has prepared her,
 With all kinds of jewels following her in one
 direction,
 she has prepared her,
 With all kinds of soft fabrics following her in one
 direction,
 she has prepared her,
 With the face of the read ocher of old age,
 she has prepared her,

Now the girl of long life and everlasting beauty,
 with these things she has prepared her,
 All kinds of soft fabrics, all kinds of jewels,
 with her, spread out; with her, increase

without a blemish;with these things, she has
 prepared her.
 Behind her, it is blessed,
 with these things she has prepared her, Before her
 it is blessed, with these things she has prepared her.

She has prepared her child,
 She has prepared her child, it is said.

Appendix B.

Portion of Original Kinaalda Data

Theme Mentioned	Curtis	Franciscan Fathers	Wayne & Bailey	Richard	Wheelwright	Matthews	Haile	Godard	A. Leighton	D. Leighton (TS)	Keith (AM, 1963)	Haile (FM, 1932)
Kinaalda as part of the Blessing Way			X		X		X		X			X
Kinaalda as part of the Emergence Myth			X									
Ceremony originated by Changing Women				X								X
Instigated by First Man and First Women	X		X				X	X			X	
Given for Changing Woman	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Conducted on Changing Woman's trip to west						X						
Given for White Shell Woman				X			X					
Not given for the mother of Enemy Slayer		X										
Related to conception										X		
Related to birth of future generations			X				X			X	X	
Given to benefit the Sun and Moon				X			X					
Correlated with the disappearance of the gods								X				
Required on this earth				X		X						
Specific time of occurrence			X		X			X		X	X	X
Given at the time of coming of age 14		X										
Gods notified of events	X				X		X	X				X