

# NAVAHO INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD

BY S. H. POSINSKY, Ph.D.

## I

An elaborate study of the Navaho Indians, and of other cultures of the American Southwest, has been going on for the past two decades. Numerous anthropologists and psychologists—aided by specialists in sociology, psychiatry, medicine, linguistics, education, and Indian administration—have been studying Navaho culture and personality, performing physical and psychological tests, making longitudinal and crosscultural studies, and attempting to correlate personality and culture on an abstract theoretical level. Abundant and praiseworthy reports have already appeared; but it is not yet clear if this truly mammoth undertaking will fulfill its initial promise.\*

The breadth and intensity of this multidisciplinary study will increase our knowledge of the relationship between personality and culture. But it is already clear that this research is raising more questions than it is resolving. At any rate, this paper will be addressed to only one topic: the basic aspects of infancy and childhood, as recorded by Kluckhohn among the Ramah Navaho of New Mexico, and the rather surprising theoretical conclusions which Kluckhohn drew from the data.

Among the Ramah Navaho, acculturation is modest, except for their acquisition of some material objects from the peripheral culture; and this Navaho group has been relatively insulated by the linguistic barrier, the absence of missionaries and settlers, and a minimal contact with the Indian Service.

In addition to the physical and psychological tests, and extended observations over several years, interviews were frequently held with the children and their elders; and many drawings and dreams were collected. Observers were in some cases present during pregnancy, at the time of birth, or within twelve to forty-eight hours after birth. Also, to prevent unconscious theoretical biases and preconceptions, several "naïve observers," without any training in anthropology or psychology and with no instruction in the pur-

\*Since these studies were carried on in co-operation with the United States Department of the Interior, they are expected to have a valuable influence on the practical administration of Indian affairs.

poses of the study, were introduced, and these people "supplied some of the most useful observations obtained."<sup>1</sup>

Despite the volume of the statistical material and the preciseness of the testing, the qualities and quantities tested are not easily ascertained. Observations of child-training practice are not so easily standardized as the so-called IQ, for example; and even the intelligence tests are vague and tentative when considered in relation to the nature of intelligence or to the culture in which it operates. In measuring the broader aspects of behavior, however, it is particularly difficult to grade the unconscious aspects of human life, and even overt emotional reactions cannot be measured except in the crudest comparative terms. Thus, as Leighton<sup>2</sup> has pointed out:

... Premature emphasis on testing rather than exploration leads to testing the testable rather than the significant. Emphasis on method rather than problem may be compared to judging a surgeon by his aseptic technique, without regard to whether the operation was needed in the first place.

Anthropological and clinical observations of maternal behavior toward infants are frequently cited to support or refute certain theoretical premises. In general, such practices have been so poorly conceptualized and standardized that they remain uneven, approximate, and insufficient, as Brody<sup>3</sup> has indicated. Though taxonomic studies are addressing themselves to this problem, the methodological difficulties are not yet resolved.

In a larger sense, as Devereux<sup>4</sup> has pointed out, the "enormous amount of data" which Kluckhohn has collected does not lend itself to an easy correlation with psychoanalytic theory:

... This excellent study, though psychoanalytically flavored, is not essentially a psychoanalytic one, perhaps because collective data of great precision, unlike minute studies of separate persons and of institutions, are a handicap to psychoanalytic interpretations, whose essence is the idiosyncratic, or, in Allport's terminology, the idiographic approach, rather than the nomothetic one.

Suspended on this dilemma, Kluckhohn proceeds both statistically and psychoanalytically; but he is ultimately compelled to reject psychoanalysis completely.

## II

It is impossible in a brief paper to document all the relevant aspects of Navaho infancy, but the following topics are basic and

must be described briefly: birth, cradling, nursing, weaning, toilet training, and the child's relations with other members of the family.

Preparations for the coming of the child are minimal, and only the smallest minority of women receive any pre-natal attention from a physician or nurse. And although childbirth among the contemporary Navaho is a hazardous affair, very few women permit delivery away from home:

... First births in particular are often protracted, and the mother may experience excruciating pain unrelieved by sedatives or anaesthetics. . . In the hogan there are no antiseptic precautions, and even elementary hygiene is minimal. Old rags and long-used sheepskins that can be thrown away without economic loss are preferred to clean or new materials. Hence, infections are common. Maternal mortality is high—an estimated 10 per 1,000 births, as against 4 for Arizona and 2.7 for the United States as a whole. In addition, a number of mothers who survive remain invalids or semi-invalids for the rest of their lives, for even major injuries are left to heal without surgical attention.<sup>5</sup>

Immediately upon birth, or as soon as the head has emerged, the infant's head is sprinkled abundantly with corn pollen, for magical purposes; and the umbilical cord is cut with a flint knife, a pair of scissors, or a kitchen knife. Then the infant is shaken, massaged, and suspended by the feet with the head downward:

... It is then wrapped tightly in a woolen blanket or in cotton cloths and a sheepskin and placed near the fire. The head is propped with blankets so that it will not get out of shape.<sup>6</sup>

The infant receives its first bath on the first day, immediately after the placenta has been expelled. There is a great deal of anxiety and superstition connected with the fluids of birth and the first bath. (Thus, if the midwife has been a diviner, she can no longer practise divination after assisting at a childbirth.) The infant is bathed in warm water and soap, and the basin is immediately thrown away. The water of the first bath is carefully disposed of, to prevent witchcraft, as is the sand of the hut on which any water has fallen. After the bath, the infant is dried with a towel, "shaped" from head to toe by the midwife, swathed tightly in cloths from the neck down, wrapped in a sheepskin, and placed at the mother's side.

A constant and close relationship between mother and baby begins after the first bath and does not end until the child has learned to walk capably, when his care is transferred to an older

sibling. Until then, however, day and night, the mother either holds the infant or keeps him very close.

The infant is nursed by the mother each time it cries, and it also receives affectionate attention from other members of the family and from visitors. The tight wrappings are probably a source of frustration, and these are removed only during the daily bath, the daily changing, and for the daily period of unwrapped freedom. The latter period lasts one or two hours but may be prolonged if the child is ill. Skin irritations are very common, and these must add to the frustrations of the bound infant. To prevent scratching during the free period, mittens and a face-covering are used.

These frustrations are apparently compensated by the frequent nursing. The child is fed on his own terms and according to his individual needs, any time of the day or night, and he begins and finishes whenever he wishes. When lactation is insufficient, the baby is fed by bottle, "held on the lap with the face turned toward the mother's breast and the bottle held horizontally—probably to simulate the conditions of breast feeding as closely as possible."

After the fourth week, or as soon as the navel has healed, the child is placed in the permanent "cradle." Cradles are made very carefully and represent a considerable expenditure of labor and ritual. The cradleboard is considered essential to correct posture. The child is again wrapped firmly, as during the precradle period, and he is then lashed to the cradleboard, with free movement of the head alone being possible. The frustration is minimized, not only by the large amount of time spent in sleep, but by the freedom which is available during nursing, changing, and the daily unwrapped period.

The Navaho have a great regard for children. They watch carefully for the first laugh, and they show a warm interest in the succeeding phases of motor development, which, despite the binding and cradling, have about the same range as with white children. Kluckhohn claims that walking appears to begin some weeks later than with white children; but he has two different and contradictory sets of statistics on this subject, and he attributes these discrepancies to the general Navaho indifference to dates and birthdays. The slightly later development of walking is apparently not caused by cradling, nor is the walking impaired in any way:

... On the other hand a white pediatrician (Margaret Fries) suggests that the custom of propping the cradled child in an upright position may

facilitate walking. She points out that the apparatus of balance and vision are then on the same plane as when the child is walking.<sup>8</sup>

It is noteworthy that Dennis,<sup>9</sup> working among the Hopi, where similar binding and cradling are frequently used, confirms the slightly later development of walking—an average retardation of approximately six weeks. Dennis denies that the cradleboard is in any way responsible, because Hopi children raised with or without cradling show the same average deviation from the white mean. Dennis suggests the possibility of a racial difference, which is not indicated, and the more immediate factors of malnutrition and the frequency of infantile disease.

Regardless, from the fourth month on, or as soon as the child can sit up, there is a greater freedom from the cradle; and the child is permitted to explore its own body, to grasp objects, to scoot about in a sitting position, and so on. He is offered and permitted to eat any food which is available, including coffee and tea. The Navaho believe in feeding the child any time he cries, day or night, and allowing him to eat anything he sees other people eating—or, even sand and dirt, if he prefers, without any restriction or denials. The same latitude applies to sleep, and the child is free to sleep at his own pleasure:

... No fuss is made about food or sleep. The child sleeps when and where he chooses. He eats (of what is available) what he pleases and when. "The baby knows what is best for him," the Navahos say.<sup>10</sup>

Because of general undernourishment, lactation begins to diminish somewhat early; but the purely libidinal pleasure of nursing is recognized, and the child is permitted to suck and fondle the breasts whenever he wishes, receiving at the same time a gentle manipulation of the genitals, with the mother showing more favor to male infants. Erotic behavior during nursing is more pronounced in male children, either inherently or as a result of greater stimulation. At any rate, since nursing is constantly available, thumb-sucking is exceedingly rare among both sexes.

Toddlers abandon the cradle during the day, and at night when they are able to walk. As with feeding and sleeping, a wide range of experimentation and exploration is permitted. Restrictions, warnings, and punishment are almost nonexistent for the first two years. Rather, the permissiveness is such that the child moves from person to person and is fondled by each. He persecutes pets (animals take the place of toys); and he explores the fire, learning

his limitations through a series of small accidents. Training is minimal, aggression against siblings or elders is ignored, and only the constant presence of others prevents serious harm from knives and fire.

The positive aspects of training include the love, indulgence, and valuation which the child receives; the absence of threats and arbitrary routines; and the encouragement of motor skills and language, with an early emphasis on kinship terms. The first negative influence, apart from the taboos which the child experiences only slowly, is against the exposure of the genitals by toddlers, stressed more emphatically with little girls than with little boys; but this does not become a stringent taboo until the child is seven or eight.

Two families where there had been much white influence have been noted as exceptions; but toilet training does not ordinarily begin before the second year; and most of the children continue to soil themselves, at least several times a week, until they are six or seven. In the absence of any intestinal or plumbing cults, this training is not training at all as white Americans understand it, but a steady maturation, plus a mild teasing by older children who have their own occasional "accidents." Children who can walk and talk are expected to urinate and defecate outside the hut, and to go further from the hut as they grow older; but no importance is attached to regular toilet habits and these functions are of slight interest unless the child is ill.

However, since in due time the children accompany their elders and observe the uneasiness which is manifested by adults in hiding excreta from witches, some anxiety may be experienced in this connection by the growing child, but perhaps to a lesser degree than in the guilty and anxious scenes which many white children experience during toilet training. Also, because of the fear of witches, sphincter-control comes to be an aspect of caution and self-protection rather than an attempt to please an arbitrary and outer authority; and this may have certain influences on the personality, because adult Navahos are heavily burdened with guilt and fear.

In his relations with siblings and elders, the child is an important member of the family; and, in the absence of a sudden dethronement by a younger arrival, he moves easily and sociably in the world until he is subdued by the mores and mythos of Navaho

culture. Apart from a mild teasing for lapses of bowel and bladder, and the negative attitude which comes close to sadism when the child is permitted to cut or burn itself or to grasp the wrong end of a lighted cigarette, the first real denial comes to most Navaho children with weaning, which is more severe with boys—apparently because of their greater previous stimulation.

Children are permitted immediate access to the breasts for the first two or three years and sometimes for a year or two longer. They wean themselves in about one-third of the cases observed; weaning is gradual and late, usually beginning after the second year. Denial and teasing are used, however, when the child bites, when the mother's health is particularly poor, or when a younger child is born. Also, with the improvement of walking after the second year, the child is in the care of an older sibling and has less immediate access to the mother.

The weaned child apparently accepts his new position in the group. Aggression against a younger or newborn child is very rare; rather, it is displaced toward animals and older siblings. Since it is a culture where children are highly valued, aggression against a newborn child is *the* unpardonable sin. According to Kluckhohn, even the *unconscious* rejection of a new child by the parents or siblings is not detectable.\* Weaned children lose sphincter-control and language abilities, not at the birth of a younger child, which is so common among us, but in case of its death, when the youngest surviving child may revert to nursing and other infantile behavior. Since the rate of infant mortality is very high, this brief regression is rather common. However, even in the few cases of forced weaning, when the child acutely feels the loss of his mother's affection and of his monopolistic claim on her, he runs about to other women and receives petting and affection. By this time his ties to the group are almost as strong as to his mother, for every phase of development is socially recognized and rewarded as an achievement. Some mild and uncompulsive household duties are gradually placed on him, and these seem to increase his self-esteem and independence.

Despite the occasional shock of weaning, a wide latitude is permitted in most matters. Routine, hygiene, and manners are not

\*This appears to be an impossibly idyllic picture of Navaho childhood and family life. The overt and perhaps excessive permissiveness suggests some unconscious guilt and rejection. This problem will be turned to presently.

stressed; the child eats, sleeps, and washes whenever he wishes; and dressing and undressing, except for the removal of shoes at bedtime, is a weekly rather than a daily problem. In most cases, relations with the mother have been warm and positive; and there is little evidence of hostility toward the father, who seldom disciplines but often coddles the weaned child and supplies candy and other rewards.\* Nor is the maternal uncle as important as among the Hopi.

Taboos begin to become stronger after the third and fourth years, and this fact also affects relations with the parents:

... In other words the number of interferences and prohibitions to the child's activity in the form "I don't want you to do that" is relatively small, but the number in the form "Such and such will happen to you if you do that" is fairly high. If parents are not ultimately responsible for denials and restrictions, then it is no use for a child to coax and cajole them.<sup>11</sup>

Despite the distinction which Kluckhohn establishes between authoritarian and negative discipline, it would seem that even discipline by threat (of a taboo) or indirection must color the parent-child relationship.

### III

At any rate, according to Kluckhohn, the child's relations with his own family and the larger social group are friendly and secure; but even young children begin to manifest anxiety, insecurity, and reserve toward strangers:

... Although commonly unwashed and uncombed, the average Navaho child of six is found to be winsome by most white observers. Lively, curious, relatively free and easy with his familiars, he is apt to be silent, shy, and diffident with strangers. He has been taught to believe that one is safer with relatives than anywhere else. Whereas children of a year will accept friendly overtures from any visitor, Navaho or white, older ones often cry at the appearance of a new face, especially if it be white. ... If a group of children from, for example, four to ten, happen to be left alone at home, they will almost invariably run off to hide in the brush if they hear horses or an automobile approach. Nor will they emerge unless some one of the arrivals is a known and trusted figure.<sup>12</sup>

This incipient anxiety or insecurity is probably intensified by the increasingly heavy weight of taboo, superstition, and the fear of witches and evil spirits; but it has its roots in the infantile situation. In view of the frustrations (of aggression and sexuality)

\*This, again, seems impossibly idyllic; and it is clear that any significant manifestations of the Oedipus complex (positive and negative) cannot be documented from Kluckhohn's reports.

which every child must experience in every culture, it is doubtful if any childhood could be as idyllic as Kluckhohn reports. Adult permissiveness may be an outlet for guilt or ambivalence, or an evasion of mature responsibility. The increasing fear and distrust of strangers, especially within a culture marked by unusual amounts of guilt and anxiety, may reveal an incapacity to tolerate frustration and an inability to cope with reality after an unusually permissive childhood. At any rate, the projection of aggression onto strangers, witches, and the like is especially revealing; it presupposes a previous repression, which is not clarified in Kluckhohn's reports; and it represents a displacement, from kinsmen to strangers and supernaturals.

There is also a reality aspect to the anxiety manifested by adult Navahos. That is, they tend to "live between two worlds." They were considerably more aggressive and mobile in times past, until they were forcibly subdued by the United States Army. They have given up much of their old culture, including its emotional outlets, but they have not been accepted into the white culture.

It is of interest that the Navaho and the Hopi, despite their historical antipathy, practise similar methods of childhood training; yet, according to Dennis, neither the Hopi child nor adult manifests the anxiety and insecurity which becomes progressively characteristic of the mature Navaho. Dennis' study of the Hopi child indicates the same amount of early mothering and tolerance which the Navaho child receives:

... The binding of the infant on the cradleboard, the constant presence of an attendant, the frequent and long-continued breast feeding, the lack of early avoidance training and the unwillingness to let the infant cry.<sup>13</sup>

There is the same free and easy attitude toward diet, hygiene, and sleep. On the other hand, Hopi training, according to Dennis, is now more restrictive but less subject to taboo. There is a little more punishment and scolding, and less of the extreme tolerance which the Navaho display toward their children. The Hopi child is warned against such dangers as fire, weapons, and playing near the steep cliffs. He is often permitted to maltreat pets, but he must respect the life, property, and animals of others; he must respect his elders; and he is specifically warned not to "injure the gardens, the fields of beans and corn, and the fruit trees."<sup>14</sup>

It is also relevant that the Hopi whom Dennis studied are even less acculturated than the Navaho. They were originally more

pacific and sedentary, and they have been protected from the Navaho rather than forcibly subdued. They are more secure culturally and economically; and it is even possible that the milieu of the fortress-like and communal pueblo makes for more psychological security than the shabby and individual hogans of the Navaho, as does the general weakness of taboo and fear among the particular Hopi whom Dennis observed. Also, there is probably a little less coddling after the first year, and a healthy adjustment to reality and authority in the person of the maternal uncle.

Though there are marked similarities in the Navaho and Hopi methods of childhood training, these need not (and should not be expected to) result in similar personalities. As the writer has pointed out in another paper,<sup>15</sup> methods of infant training can influence only the substratum of personality and are not solely and directly causative of the adult personality.

At any rate, Kluckhohn cuts the ground from under his thesis by several contradictory conclusions. Thus, Kluckhohn concedes that the Navaho are in many ways the worst favored group of American Indians and that they "live between two worlds." He indicates also that their defensive religious orientation and their exaggerated superstitions are not the causes of anxiety but the results (this need not be put in either-or terms, since some degree of circular causality exists); and he admits that they have a good outlet in the spirit world for otherwise unmanageable aggressions:

... Under the present conditions of Navaho life it is inevitable that there should be a high anxiety level, a large amount of worry and uneasiness, in the society. ... Witchcraft lore provides a means of defining and personalizing his anxiety which will be accepted by others.<sup>16</sup>

As Kluckhohn points out, many of their psychological tensions and problems have an economic "basis," or are reinforced by economic distress:

... Much of the tension among The People may actually be traced to the uncertainties of making a living in a difficult environment with the technological means at their disposal. Since the caprices of the environment are not controllable by the society, the worry related to this is attributed to witches who, as living individuals, can be dealt with.<sup>17</sup>

In view of these economic and cultural factors, the scarcity of food and water, erosion, etc., the psychological difficulties appear to be infinitely compounded. Nevertheless, Kluckhohn confronts psychoanalysis with an all-or-nothing choice about its role in the investigation of a multi-faceted problem:

... Inasmuch as the Navaho infant has no sphincter discipline for a year or more and only very gentle discipline thereafter and yet emerges with roughly the distortions and fears common to children in every culture where they have been investigated, it may be surmised that psychoanalysis has placed undue emphasis upon the results of infant disciplining. . . .

The most striking theoretical question which emerges from this consideration of some of the main aspects of Navaho infancy is this: how can this picture be reconciled with the facts on Navaho witchcraft, on the states of morbid melancholia and endemic uneasiness which have been well documented for adult Navaho? How can the anxiety level be so high among a people where childhood disciplines are so permissive, where there is so much genuine affection for children? If the writings of certain psychoanalysts were literally true (and the whole truth), adult Navahos ought to have calm and beautifully adjusted personalities. However, this is most certainly not the case. In spite of the fact that Navaho infants receive a maximum of protection and gratification, they tend to be moody and to worry a great deal when they become adults.<sup>18</sup>

Being himself a distinguished member of the baker's dozen of American anthropologists who possessed a sophisticated knowledge of psychoanalysis, Kluckhohn probably knew better than most that the writings of "certain psychoanalysts," otherwise unidentified, are *not* "literally true (and the whole truth)," and that few of the behavioral sciences have experienced such an outbreak of factionalism and cultism, intuitive and dogmatic authoritarianism, as that which has characterized the history of psychoanalysis. To gloss over these facts, is to perform a disservice to psychoanalysis.

Nevertheless a significant and hard-won body of knowledge clarifies the importance of infantile experiences. It is not necessary to ascribe a monolithic causality to every infantile experience; and our knowledge of the *overdetermined* processes and facts of mental life puts even the infantile traumata in their proper perspective. It is even more clear as time goes by that a psychoanalytically-flavored ethnography which ignores the Oedipal and pre-Oedipal dilemmas of infantile life is sadly deficient in a significant area. In brief, Navaho infancy is probably less idyllic than Kluckhohn indicates.

Kluckhohn's denial of the importance of psychoanalytic hypotheses rests on the previous and erroneous assumption of a monolithic causality. He also seems to confuse the substratum of personality with the superstructure, for personality is shaped in a

sociocultural milieu. Even a healthy and happy infancy, if such the Navaho have, can be thwarted by poverty, insecurity, and social tensions—as Kluckhohn has himself demonstrated among the Navaho.

Devereux, in a most insightful paper,<sup>19</sup> has defined normality as the ability to *readapt*. Since Navaho infancy precludes even a simple adaptation, it is clear, among other things, that the permissiveness and gratification which Kluckhohn records so eloquently are serving maladaptive and dysfunctional processes—that what appears to be an excessive permissiveness or gratification is really functionally akin to its opposite, excessive frustration, and that each results in an infantile *fixation* or a tendency to regression which precludes both mature growth and an acceptance of reality. At any rate, the causal formula which Kluckhohn “suggests” (and refutes) is patently inadequate. If survival, adaptation, and readaptation depended merely on permissive nursing, then the mastodons might still be flourishing. With man, the problem is infinitely more complex.

As Axelrad<sup>20</sup> has pointed out:

... Dr. Kluckhohn has not stated the case quite fairly, for no type of child training can banish adult anxiety forever; it can only affect the anxiety threshold. Further, a distinction should be made between real anxiety, and what, for want of a better term, may be called neurotic anxiety. Adult Navahos have much of the latter kind. The point is not whether they have anxiety, but whether they show more than might be expected in the light of the pressures of reality and of childhood experience. Dr. Kluckhohn implies that they do. Infancy and childhood, however, may not be the idyllic series of episodes that the material seems to suggest, for among the Navahos, while there is genuine permissiveness in infancy, the demands of reality appear suddenly and harshly.

The demands of reality *must* appear suddenly and harshly after such prolonged permissiveness, and especially at this moment of their history, when the Navaho understand at least the economic aspects of their insecurity.

Writing in another context, Axelrad points out that weaning, though gradual, is most commonly occasioned by the mother's next pregnancy, that toilet training is imposed at the time of weaning, and that the child is now separated from the mother and must sleep with older siblings:

... Temper tantrums are frequent. There is intense sibling rivalry. The family itself is rather unstable, because of the high death rate, the fre-

quency of separations, and the subsequent formation of other unions. Unfortunately, Kluckhohn and Leighton have made few attempts to relate systematically Navaho adult personality and culture to the factors mentioned above. Yet, these experiences can be fitted into psychoanalytic personality theory and then related to the national character of the Navaho, to Navaho culture, and the use made of the culture for the solution of unconscious conflicts.<sup>21</sup>

A tentative formulation in this direction was attempted by the late Géza Róheim,<sup>22</sup> and it is to be hoped that a posthumous publication will make available his additional data and interpretations. It is noteworthy, however, that Róheim, after doing field work among the Ramah Navaho, asked:

...how can it be that Navaho are perhaps the most studied primitive tribe on earth—and nobody has mentioned the significance of their Oedipus complex? Is it really so difficult to see or is it not worthwhile mentioning?<sup>23</sup>

It is also noteworthy that Kluckhohn himself, in a discussion of the determinants of Navaho personality, has suggested an idiosyncratic approach to Navaho personality, and one which is completely compatible with Freudian concepts. He points out that those variables which appear to be most crucial are in general "predictable neither from the group's culture nor from the group's situation."<sup>24</sup> These are, in rough order: the idiosyncratic traits of parents and associates; death of a sibling just older or younger; loss of the mother; the individual child's health history; the order of birth and the interval until the birth of the next child; frequency of the child's interaction with others; loss of the father; age of the parents at the time of the child's birth.<sup>25</sup> Such an approach is, again, compatible with psychoanalysis but it is alien to that neo-Freudianism which seeks a "basic personality type" in an always unique cultural matrix.

#### IV

In conclusion, several supplementary points require further amplification. Even the relatively unacculturated Ramah Navaho have been tremendously acculturated or deculturated. At best, as with the rest of the Navaho, they have lost their social and economic integrity without being accepted into the white culture. The relatively inaccessible Ramah Navaho have only the freedom of a cage; while the factor of acculturation through a few material objects alone is misleading, for these objects replace the native crafts and technology and must be acquired on white terms, through

sporadic and ill-paid labor or barter—and, like whisky, at black-market prices and in the face of legal restrictions.

As Rosenzweig has demonstrated,<sup>26</sup> these social factors are productive of intropunitive reactions which can only intensify the pre-existing anxiety and moodiness; and, as Halliday has indicated, these reactions are common not only among acculturated primitive peoples but are also typical, for example, of those English mining communities which have been disturbed by declining employment, technological changes, foreign competition and other circumstances which have altered their previous way of life.<sup>27</sup> The attendant increase in anxiety states and in psychosomatic ailments is paralleled by the hypochondriacal emphasis of Navaho religion on “curing.”<sup>28</sup> Since Navaho illness is moral and supernatural in etiology, and since it touches off guilt and anxiety, it serves as an instrument of social control. A religion oriented around “curing” is a supernatural therapy which intensifies neurotic and dysfunctional symptoms while attempting to deal with, or ward off, somatic disease.

Interestingly enough, the maladaptive behavior of the Navaho is comparable to that found among the members of minority groups in general, which Kurt Lewin describes as being “between two groups.” The maladjustive behavior which follows is characterized by high tension, high sensitivity, shifts between extremes of behavior, the rejection of low-status members of either group, and so on.<sup>29</sup>

In the light of such psychic and social instability, it is notable that even the permissive nursing is partially related to the fear of a supernatural visitation. In other words, infants and young children must not be permitted to cry during the night lest a supernatural enemy be alerted:

... The constant availability of the breast should perhaps really be construed as a measure by which to ward off vital dangers to the group rather than as a special service to the infant. It seems unlikely that there would not be an element of anxiety in such maternal giving.<sup>30</sup>

At any rate, it is conspicuously clear that an infancy and childhood which are marked by such unusual permissiveness and gratification may themselves be dysfunctional in their consequences. Apart from the negative aspects of this permissiveness—the maternal anxiety, and the negativism in matters of discipline when the child’s safety is concerned—it would seem that such permis-

siveness must generate an enormous amount of ambivalence. Since this ambivalence runs counter to extended kinship ties, it is obsessively manifested in the fear of strangers, witches, illness, and so on. The consequent compromise is unsatisfactory because one must love one's kinsmen in order to survive; yet witchcraft is a typical in-group form of aggression which is disguised by supernatural referents. At the same time, the siphoning off of aggression by wars, raids, hunting, looting, and so on is no longer possible, and has not been possible for several generations.

It has been indicated that the reality sense is probably impaired by excessive permissiveness or gratification, which is akin to excessive frustration, in that each makes for an infantile fixation or a tendency toward easy regression. Such infantile permissiveness must make reality and maturity seem especially difficult, if not intolerable. Added to this basic psychic dilemma are severe economic and social pressures, and only minimal and maladaptive outlets for ambivalence and aggression.

In brief, Kluckhohn's idyll of Navaho infancy and childhood requires a counter-balance.

P. O. Box 48  
Highbridge Station  
New York 52, N. Y.

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