



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the Susan Fanshel films of the Navajo, 1982-1986

Film preservation funded by the National Film Preservation Foundation.

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Human Studies Film Archives
Title:	Susan Fanshel films of the Navajo
Date:	1982-1986
Identifier:	HSFA.1987.03
Creator:	Fanshel, Susan
Extent:	Film reels (color sound; 42,199 feet; 16mm)
Language:	Undetermined .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Received from Susan Fanshel in 1987 and 2011.

Processing Information

Titles are supplied by the archivist for untitled films.

Preferred Citation

Susan Fanshel films of the Navajo, Human Studies Film Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The collection is open for research. Please contact the archives for information on availability of access copies of audiovisual recordings. Original audiovisual material in the Human Studies Film Archives may not be played.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

Scope and Contents

Collection consists of full film record and edited film based on anthropologist John Adair's 1938 work among the Navajo. The films explore Navajo life and culture through four generations of a Navajo family. Collection also contains sound recordings and press and publicity materials.

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or Anthropology Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Diné (Navajo)
- Families
- Navajo language
- Religion
- Weaving

Cultures:

- Diné (Navajo)

Types of Materials:

- Sound films

Occupations:

- Silversmiths

Places:

- Arizona
- North America

Container Listing

Navajo Film Project, 1982-1986

Film reels (color sound; 40,000 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Full film record from which A WEAVE OF TIME: The Story of a Navajo Family, 1938-1986 was produced. The film is based on anthropologist John Adair's 1938 work among the Navajo and explores Navajo life and culture through four generations of a Navajo family.

HSFA 1987.3.1

A Weave of Time, 1986

2 Film reels (60 minutes; color sound; 2199 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Edited film examines issues of cultural transition and education, religion and economic survival of a contemporary Navajo family as explored through three generations of the Burnside family living on the Navajo Reservation. Film incorporates historical film footage shot by anthropologist John Adair in 1938 of the Burnside family in Pine Springs, Arizona, including Tom Burnside, a well known silversmith, and Mary Burnside, a well-known weaver of vegetal dye Navajo rugs. Film centers on the the third generation, the Deschinny family (Isabel Burnside, granddaughter of Mary Burnside Meyers, and Daniel Deschinny, Sr. and their four children) as they talk about their time in the Washington, D.C. area while Daniel studied for his law degree, his struggles to build a private law practice, his persistence in learning Navajo rituals, Isabel's education in a parochial school, her struggles to economically support the family through weaving and making dye charts, her desire to return to school to complete her education, the children's further remove from Navajo traditions and the loss of Navajo language. Shown are various scenes on the Navajo Reservation including negotiations for selling rugs at a trading post; a Navajo blessing and a Catholic blessing of the Deschinny's new home and a picnic with the extended Burnside family and John Adair.

HSFA 2011.12.1