

Speed 1 7/8 ips

AMERICAN INDIAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH PROJECT

University of New Mexico

Tape Number:

17 #778 Side I

Tribe: Navajo

Informant: #2

Informant's home address: Tuba City, ARIZ

Band or Clan: Red Ass.

Date and location of interview: Tuba City, Feb. 6/1971

Field Worker: Martin D. Topper

Date of transcription: March 4, 1971

Contents:

Side 1, A. Butchering a sheep  
B. shearing a sheep.

Side 2, A. Preparing sheep intestines  
B. feather flocks  
C. plastering a room.

C. Building the sheep shearing shack.

D. Sheep shearing

Evaluation of Interview:

Future Prospects:

Butchering a sheep  
Shearing a sheep

Tape #778  
Anonymous (2)  
Red Ass Clan  
Tuba City Arizona  
Interviewer - Martin D. Topper  
Side 1, tape 17

Analysis of past interviews.

Q. Go ahead with the November 9th interview....we are again, going to work for more detail in very simple frames that we developed earlier in the program. Like....I am on the November 9th interview, and on page 5 of the sequence of butchering sheep..... Now what I want to..... let's go through the plan... first step here is that we have cut the legs off..... let's see what the previous step on page 4 was..... Yeah, you have cut off the chest muscles and cut off the forelegs....now the next thing, the next step on page 5 is hang him up.... You hang the chest muscles up.... so how would you say that? In Navajo.

A. Navajo language. That is hang them up, the chest muscles....

Q. Can you describe the little steps involved in hanging the muscles up? Are there little steps involved in doing that?

A. Just grab it and put it over something....

Q. You pick them up and you hold them in your hand right? And then you lay them over a wire, right?

A. Yeah, whatever you are going to hang it over.

Q. Well usually....well let's say that is a wire... Alright, so the first one is hold it in your hand.....how would you say that in Navajo?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Okay, how would you say, lay them over a wire?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Let's see, the next one is to cut through the sternum, which is actually the breast bone, right?

A. Is that on a sheep?

Q. Yeah.

A.

Q. Okay, I am going to add a little correction here.... we are actually on the far end of page 5, instead of the beginning on the January 31st interview.....which was one that will be sent.... We're going back to that interview....talking about taking out the intestines... and there were two steps. One is when the intestines come out fast, and then you catch them before they hit the ground....how do you say that in Navajo? This is step 23, in which they are talking about the intestines... let's go back here for a minute.... Step 22 is open the sheep, step 23 is pull out the intestines....so step 21 is to cut through the sternum which we already have.... and step 20 would be to hang the chest muscles up.....so now.....we can go on.....

Q. How do you say catch them before they hit the ground in Navajo?

A. Navajo language.

Q. And the 3rd part of that....is to pull out those that remain behind.....how do you say that....you know the intestines....that stayed behind.....?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Now we just finished up with January 31 interview. We cleaned up the rest of them.... Now we are back to February 6th and we will go ahead.... with step 24 which is lay them on the sheepskin.... Step 24 is to lay the intestines on the sheepskin.....I want you to say that in Navajo.

A. Navajo language.

- Q. Can you give me the little bitty steps in there, about how you do that? How do you lay them on the sheepskin or all there smaller steps.....?
- A. Put your arms out to catch them, carry them to the sheepskin and lay them down....
- Q. So that it would be what.....carry it....carry the intestines to the sheepskin. And do you lay them or drop them down?
- A. You lay them down....if you drop them, the stomach will pop open....and then you 'll get the shit all over the place....
- Q. Aha, thats not nice....
- A. Or one of the intestines might break and you will still have shitall over the place....
- Q. Well you know how to cut them, that is for sure..... Now carrying the intestines to the sheepskin, how do you say that?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q.
- A. Yeah, this is one is almost like it....
- Q.
- A. The intestines, right here we are talking about the intestines here.....
- Q. How do you say it?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. As you were saying, carry the intestines to the sheepskin....
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Lay them down...lay them down slowly or carefully.... how would you say that?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Okay, lets go to step 25....which is remove the hear and the liver...step 25 is remove the heart and the liver....how would you say that in Navajo?

A. Remove the heart and the liver?

Q. Yeah.... Take the heart and liver out.

A. Navajo language.

Q. Now what are the steps in removing the heart and the liver? If there are any, do you know....? How would you describe the whole process.... pulling the heart and liver out....

A. Well.....

Q. Now we have the chest opened....he is laying there, how would you describe that....

A. Get the intestines out...you cut it down there, where that thing goes over there.....

Q. You cut it here?

A. You pull it out....you pull the throat out first....and then it will come out and then you grab the throat and then you cut on that, on the inside of the back...and then you pull them out.....

Q. So you pull out the windpipe, and the second step would be to cut behind the windpipe...cut between the windpipe and the backbone right....?

A. Yeah.....

Q. Cut between the windpipe and the spine. And then the 3rd step would be to pull them all out, right? Pull the organs out? Can you believe all of those little organs in there...small gap playing then....

A. You believe in that?

Q. No silly its a joke. How do you say pull the windpipe out?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Now you cut between the windpipe and the spine..... that is the second step, how would say that? You are cutting in the windpipe away from the spine, that is what you are doing? And how do you say that? Cut between the windpipe and the spine.....?

A. There is no Navajo word for "organs".

Q. Okay, now pull the organs out.....

A. Navajo language.

Q. So what did you say, what does this mean?

A. Take them out....

Q. Take them out right? That means organs.....Now, the next step which will be 26, is hang them up..... how would you say that? You would say that the same way, right?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Now how would you describe, hangingtthem up.....would that be the same way as before for the....would it be just hold them in your hands.....and lay them over the wire.....

A. You don't hold it, you carry it.... In another minute I'll make more money.

Q. You already got the money for this....so it isn't like you are doing this for free, right?

A. Yeah....

Q. Go ahead, how do you say, carry them in your hands? .....to the wire?

A. To the wire?

Q. Yeah, those are hard sounds for a white man to say....

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- Q. Now we were talking about, before we were so rudly interrupted about hanging up the heart and the lungs .....carrying them in your hands to the wire, and then laying them over the wire.....how do you say, lay them over the wire.....?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Is that one word?
- A. Yeah.....
- Q. Now step 27 is to untie one of the rear legs..... How do you say that in Navajo?
- A. The rear legs.....?
- Q. Yeah, how do you say that?
- A. That is after you cut the arms off first.....?
- Q. No, they are cut off already...well we are on step 27.....
- A. God what a jump?
- Q. So how do you say that in Navajo?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. What are the little steps involved in cutting off one of the rear legs?
- A. First you are going to have to untie the leg and then you are going to have...
- Q. Oh yeah, the next step is cut it off.... What are the steps in untying it? The little steps....
- A. You undo the knot...
- Q. Is that it?
- A. Just like untying a rope....
- Q. Just remove the knot and that is it..... Okay step 28 is cut it off along with one side of ribs, all right....

- A. Cut if off.....
- Q. Yeah, they cut the legs and the ribs off together....  
cut the leg and one side of the ribs off....how do you  
say that?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Is that it....? Okay describe how you do that?
- A. Well get one of the leg after you have tied it, you  
cut it, at the joint. And then you cut it down the  
side, the backbone, which is connected to the neck-  
bone.....
- Q. Cut along the backbone?
- A. Yeah...you cut along that and then up to the ribs....  
you chop the ribs, if you have a sharp knife, well  
you have a sharp knife, you chop it anyway, you can't  
cut the ribs.....
- Q. Do you chop them with a hatchet, did you say?
- A. A hatchet or a butcher knife....yeah...
- Q. And that is it....
- A. If it is young it is easy, you just get the knife  
and.....
- Q. Well anyway cut the leg at the joint.....
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Now cut along the backbone to the ribs?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Is this one word?
- A. No.
- Q. Now say the whole thing for the mike.
- A. Navajo language.



Q. Now 3, chop the ribs away from the backbone....

A. Chop the ribs from the backbone?

Q. Yeah....go ahead and say it once....

A. Navajo language.

Q. Untie one of the rear legs, chop it off along with one side of ribs..... Now the next step which is step no. 29....is .....the next step is to cut off the spine, right?

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Q. Now cut off the spine, how do you say that in Navajo?

A. Spine?

Q. The backbone....the spine....like those little things, those little bones that run down your back....?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Okay what are the steps in cutting off the spine?

A.

Q. How would you go about cutting off the spine?

A. Well, I would.....

Q. You would.....?

A. Cut from the thighs again, close to the hips down to the joints...

Q. You would cut through the hip joint, right....

A. And down close to the backbone...spine to the ribs.... And then you chop the ribs...

Q. You chop the backbone away from the ribs, right?

A. Yeah..... or chop the ribs away from the backbone.....

- A. Yeah....or chop the ribs away from the backbone....
- Q. Oh....
- A. One time me and Harry got into an argument....
- Q. About what?
- A. About dogs... I said it was black and white, and he said it was white and black.... So we got into an argument. I said, the dog is black and white and he said, no it ain't, it is white and black.....
- Q. Only you two could fight about that.....
- A. And one time when I was still on placement...my foster brother wrote me a letter about a guniea pig you know had babies....well my mama pig had about 4 babies and one is a black one, one is a white one, and one is black and white and the other one is white and black.....
- Q. Silly cut through the hip joint to the ribs.....cut through the hip joints to the ribs.....
- A. Okay, you cut..... in Navajo?
- Q. No, in Swahili!
- A. Through the hip joint to the ribs.....
- Q. Okay....now chop the backbone away from the ribs.... How do you say that?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Now step no. 30 is to break the spine in half..... Well we will break it in two.... How do you say that?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Okay....how would you describe breaking the backbone?
- A. Break the backbone? Well.....you don't break them into two pieces, you break it in half, yeah...you fold it over the.....

- Q. Okay....how do you say that..... What do you do, just grab it in both hands and....
- A. Yeah.....take it out to the woodpile and.... and chop it down half way.... Or say chop it....with the hatchet.....which you just used on the rib....
- Q. And then the 3rd is just to break it...just...wait a minute....you chop it first, and then you grab it with both hands and then you snap it right?
- A. Yeah...you grab it with both hands...
- Q. First you chop it half way...then you grab it with both hands....
- A. Grab it with both hands, and then chop it, and then put it in your mouth.....
- Q. Right.... How do you say, chop it half ways with the hatchet?
- A. Chop it half ways with the hatchet... I said it. Oh in Navajo....
- Q. No in pidgin English.
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Alright...now how do you say grab it in both hands?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Now how do you say, snap it in two....?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Can you describe the little parts of chopping it with the hatchet....? How is it done.....?
- A. You get the hatchet and then you hit down....you only need oneslash at it.....
- Q. Bring it down on the backbone.....which side do you chop.....do you chop the top side, or the bottom?
- A. Don't matter.

- Q. So you lift the hatchet...how do you say that....  
in Navajo?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Okay now how do you say, bring it down on the backbone?
- A. Navajo language. I have to leave soon.
- Q. Then you will pick me up.....
- A. Grandpa will come back down.....
- Q. Obviously if he wants me to come and help with the  
chores, he will come and get me..... Step no. 31,  
hang up the remaining rib leg segment....the part  
that is still hanging from butchering or would it be  
hanging somewhere else.....?
- A. Anyway, we got a part that is still hanging, right...?
- Q. Actually what you are going to do is rehang.....
- A. Untie it and hang it someplace else...by the other  
meat...
- Q. So that it will....step 1 is.....
- A. Put it with the other meat....
- Q. So how would you say it in Navajo? Rehang the remaining...  
rib segment, you know hang it up somewhere else, how  
would you say that.....?
- A. Rehang.....
- Q. Just hang up the remaining meat....you know what I mean,  
how would you say that in Navajo?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Okay how do you say untie it?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Now hang it with the other meat.
- A. Navajo language.

- Q. Step no. 32 finally, this is the last step....for butchering the sheep....is to clean the fecal material from the intestines...how do you say that....?
- A. Clean the shit from the intestines....clean the manure....?
- Q. How do you say that....?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Now what are the small steps here involved....? You know the steps in cleaning it out.... how do you clean the crap out of the intestines....?
- A. Oh no....that is another story....
- Q. Is it another story....? Good! Let's start it. Well do you want to ask grandpa about that tonight...or do you want to .....
- A. You have to separate all the different shits....
- Q. You want to wait and ask grandpa then tonight.....?
- A. Cut the stomach off from the other intestines and then you tie it real good, you know....and make sure that you don't get shit all over it.....and then there is other little hunks of shit down there...in the stomach and you got to cut them off too....
- Q. Well do you want to wait and ask grandpa? Or are you.... to get his story about how to do it.....? And then we can start adding details..... He is really going to be interested in that.....
- A. He is.....
- Q. You know what he is going to say don't you?
- A. He is going to laugh....
- Q. He is going to say, why in the hell do you want to know about cleaning intestines, you know what I mean?
- A. He didn't tell us that...he just said that he took the intestines out. And he didn't tell us how he did it.....

Q. That will be the first thing we talked about....so we are going to leave this for the next interview....

A. You have a couple of guys there and when someone is cleaning the intestines... I mean when he is butchering the....

Q. Oh...an extra person....I see....

A. Now grandma is cleaning the intestines, grandpa..... is over here.....chopping up with the beef.....

Q. It is usually grandma?

A. Yeah... I don't know if dad knows how to chop, I mean butcher with the sheep, gosh grandpa is never out there .....by the time that he gets involved he eats it....

Q. Well he must have done it sometime.....

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Q. Let's see what else we can look at ..... Well we have shearing sheep, this is November 11th, shearing sheep and cooking pinon and picking pinon.... November 11th. We have all sorts of pinon recipes.... So we will have a diagram here on November 11th for shearing the sheep.

A. And pinon too?

Q. Yeah, I think that we have a diagram for pinon nut gathering .....yeah....we have one for eating pinon nuts....eating nuts with corn.....

A. With corn?

Q. With corn.....?

A. God damn how did you...first time I ever heard of it...

Q. You told me...making the candy bars...you roast the corn and put the pinon nuts and roast them in a pan and grind the corn in your metate and you grind the pinon nuts on the grease on the metate and then you mix the two and make it into a candy bar, and you make coffee and you eat and drink..... That is what

you told me....Maybe...no....let's see....no.....  
that is the one that Roy told me.... That came out  
of Roy, remember....that time....?

A. I sure in the hell don't remember.... Oh November 11th,  
that is when I was  
yeah it was November 10th, when I got thrown in the  
chicken coop.....

Q. Yeah, I went out looking for you and Roy and all of  
this other jazz.....

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Q. Shearing the sheep....how do you say that in Navajo,  
shearing sheep.....?

A. Navajo language. You see it is just the  
opposite in Navajo...like saying sheep shearing....

Q. Well you can say that in English, but usually shearing  
the sheep is better ..... Shearing the sheep.....  
although you could say...sheep shearing.... That sounds  
like an English name....hyphenated...like Sir Reginald  
Sheep Shearing..... That sounds.....They have  
names with hyphens..... Step 1 put 10 or 15 sheep  
in the corral.....10 or 15 in....well actually it  
is a pen....sheep live in a pen and horses live in a  
corral.....

A. You could call him a corral too..... Well the sheep  
pen....you know the horse pen.....

Q. No.....that is a horse corral.....

A. How about cattle?

Q. They usually don't keep cattle in corrals...those  
are pens.....

A. Cattle.....

Q. Yeah, they have no word for it....

A. Cattle fence.....

- Q. No, they usually fence off an area so big that they don't have any room for it.....
- A. Yeah, but what if you have that corral with the hay there, every day.....we used to do that....
- Q. Well they usually don't ....they used to call them cattle pens when they had them in the railroad..... you know where the railroad comes.....then they are called stockpens.....
- A. How about rabbits? Rabbit pens?
- Q. Hutch.....
- A. They have a hutch...how about a dog? You can have a dog pen too?
- Q. Not usually, cage....
- A. Hell.... the dog pen....
- Q. It is cage...you never put a dog in a pen.....
- A. Over there in the eastern part, you easterners....
- Q. Okay....you are out there, and you put 10 or 15 sheep in the corral.....
- A. They'll crawl through the horse corral...
- Q. Okay...you are out there, and 10 or 15 sheep in the pen...
- A. That is better...
- Q. Without a trial? Anyway.... 10 or 15 sheep in the pen..
- A.
- Q. I won't even ask the steps... Maybe I'd better. How do you manage to lead 10 to 15 sheep in a pen?
- A. Just leave 10 or 15 sheep in the pen....
- Q. You don't give them pardons?



A. No....you just leave them.....

Q. Page 5.....

A. That took us 15 minutes.....

Q. Okay, drive out 1 or 2 sheep at a time.... How do you say it in Navajo?

A. 1 or 2.....if there are alot you can bring them all out.....

Q. Well I know that you can drive out more than 1 or 2 sheep at a time.....but let's drive out one or two at a time....how do you say it in Navajo?

A. Well first you....

Q. What would you do, what are the steps in driving them out.....

A.

Q. Okay....now what are the steps.....

A. First of all.....they don't drive too well..... so you are going to have to grab them and carry them over there.....or you are going to have to drag that son-of-a-bitch somehow.....

Q. Grab the sheep and let's say.....

A. See you put up a shade over there in the corral... and people sit under it.

Q. Drag him over to shade, right.

A. To the shade....there is a little shack there.....

Q. And that is another topic that we can talk about..... building a sheep shearing shack.....

A. Oh no! Another story.....

Q. You want tokkeep working?

A. You want to get everything?

- Q. How do you say grab the sheep?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. How do you say drag him over to the shack?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. How do you say drag them over to the shack?
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. Okay....drive out 1 or 2 at a time, which is really grab out 1 or 2 at a time....Okay...tie them up.... that is step 3..... Tie the sheep up.....
- A. Navajo language.
- Q. How do you tie them up.....what are the steps?
- A. You get him down.....
- Q. What do you do, trip the sheep or tackle them..... right?
- A. Throw them down.....
- Q. Throw them down, alright.....
- A.
- Q. What is the 2nd step.....?
- A. Tie the sheep up, tie the legs up....
- Q. How do you tie them up....are there little steps in that.....?
- A. Well let's see...get a rope...and you need some hands...
- Q. Get two hands to pick them up..... Now you the rope and what do you do with the rope?
- A. Well...lay that rope across the stomach...then you get the arm and the legs and put them together and put the rope through ..... They criss-cross like that, the arms and legs.....and the rope comes like that...

and you put them out that way.....and we tie both of them up like that.....tie it right there....

Q. So you lay the rope across the stomach and you cross the forelegs with the hindlegs.....

A. Criss-cross.....so that the legs criss-cross.....

Q. You tie the legs together.....you tie them on right.....

A. A screw knot.....a square knot.....

Q. Throw the sheep down, how do you say that?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Now get a rope.....?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Lay the rope across his stomach? Across the sheeps stomach?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Okay.....cross the legs...criss-cross the legs?

A. Navajo language.

Q. Now finally tie a square knot.....probably be some more tonight.....

End of first part of February 6th interview...probably be some more tonight.....

Q. Continue Feb. 6th interview...we are no longer working with No. 2. We are working with both 1 and 2, and we are going to start listening to the information now rather than the analysis..... So..... I guess we can just go along and start talking..... Why don't you ask him, Doanld, about cleaning out the intestines.... remember we were talking about the sheep.... ask him how they clean out the intestines.....?

A. Speaking Navajo (male translator)

Navajo (1)

A. Grandma is the only one that knows how.....

Q. Ask him if he thinks that grandma would like to  
say how she.....

Speaking Navajo (male translator)

Navajo (1)

END OF TAPE