

Diné Woman's Role in Society

It was in the Black World that the spirit in yellow mist and blue mist formed into a female mind. Where the mist hovered, there grew a yellow corn. Life came into the mind, and ever since female mind represents beauty that breeds beauty in all things; therefore, a woman's characteristics leave trails of beauty. She represents beauty in all types of happiness in all forms of lives. She brings forth life just as Mother Earth does.

The Holy People performed the first Kinaaldá Ceremony so that the Diné People would continue to give the ceremony for all the Diné girls as they reach puberty. It is a blessing ceremony that every mother wants for their daughter(s). By modeling the traditional beliefs and values of the Diné women's role at home and in society, a Mother grooms and teaches her daughter as she lovingly brushes her hair and softly chats words of encouragement and life of beauty. The daughter patiently listens and asks questions where it deemed necessary, as she also develops love and great respect for her mother in return.

From the earliest age of her upbringing to the puberty stage she will have absorbed, attained or acquired the many intricacies and etiquettes of development in womanhood from her mother, becoming well disciplined and aware of the many responsibilities from thereafter. As the young woman listens to her parents and grandparents' teachings of wisdom, she becomes aware that the roots of mental strength and physical endurance are found in the spiritual realm of one's life. At dawn to the Holy People, she offers corn pollen or white cornmeal, and with her outstretched hand, she asks for guidance and courage to find the pollen path of beauty. Before the Sun rises, she runs at dawn to keep physically fit and to uplift her spirits for that day's journey. In the past, she would busy herself by weaving a basket, a water jug, or a rug, grinding corn or berries, hiking for berries, or tending a garden. Today she would be in school learning, and at home she would have a hobby which could include activities anywhere from weaving a rug to learning to be an airplane pilot. The beauty she represents unchangingly exists throughout the changing times.

A woman respects her Diné traditional values and beliefs, and by using that as her strength she endeavors new opportunities in her life. As she knows her roots: her name, her clans, and her land, she also will envision her goals just as easily. Her intelligence, the female mind of blue and yellow mist, destines her to a

life of happiness. Happiness is compassion, love, freedom, honor and loyalty to oneself and to other lives. This the power that shapes the characteristics of a young woman in society. Finally, a woman is the warmth of love in her home just as a fire gives warmth in a Hogan. As she becomes a mother she wraps her loving arms around her children and her home. In each seed she plants, she passes on her wisdom of beauty. Through her knowledge of sacred life's elements, she practices her role in her home as a mother, a grandmother, an aunt, or a friend. In society she leads with confidence as a woman with many skills and motivations. By leading a life of happiness, she is seen glowing on the pollen path of Changing Woman where others see and follow in her steps.