

(This is February 22, 1970. Today, I was privileged to attend a False Face or Medicine Dance of the Seneca-Cayuga. Originally planned to be held outside at Kellyville back of the community building, it had to be taken inside because of rain. The False is an old old ceremony of the Seneca-Cayuga, but this is the first time in fifty years that it has occurred within the Oklahoma tribe. It is an effort on the part of some of the ceremonial leaders to restore some of the old customs so that children of today may realize how the old folks did it as they say of old times. Robert, or Bob White, the first speaker for the ceremonial council was the doctor. He wore a false face that has been kept and handed down, or so I was told although it did not appear to be made of wood as they originally were. However, it was very awesome and in perfect quiet, he entered the room with a wierd cry of Ooooo-Oooooo or sometimes Oooo-Ooooo-Ooooo in a guttural voice. He was accompanied by a turtle shell rattle. Dutch, or Reuben White, his brother, accompanied the whole ceremony by beating two boards together. The whole scene was strangely reminiscent of latin services of the Catholic Church. That is, the board clapping and the ashes put on the heads and hands of those who were to be doctored. Only members of a certain clan--I believe, it was the Bear Clan this time, were permitted to be doctored. They danced--first the man, then the women, to the board clapping, then knelt or stooped over before the False Face to receive the ashes. Originally, these ashes would have been distributed from camp fires. In this case, because of the rain, they were put in a aluminum kettle and set in the center of the dance circle. It--to me, destroyed the effects somewhat, but after all, these are modern times. After the ashes had been distributed to the men and the boys, the False Face chased them around the