

others involve the co-operation of both genders.

Most highly charged sites are out of bounds to non-initiated people and severe penalties may apply to violators of this rule, though there are many different rules across the continent. Tunbridge provides an excellent summary of the functions of Dreaming stories (Tunbridge, p. xxxvii).

A common feature of all ceremonies, however, is that they entail the re-enactment of important aspects of ancestral Dreamings, and in doing so, re-activate (for the duration of the ceremonies) the spiritual forces that have remained charged but quiescent, as it were, in those particular sites. Human re-enactment through ritual is crucial to connecting with the ancestral beings, but it is not a symbolic act. The effect of properly performed ritual is rather to re-activate, sustain or release the connection, influence and power of the ancestral beings for the general well-being of the living. Indigenous persons of high degree invoking their ancestral heroes in their sacred ceremonies on sacred ground are believed actually to temporarily become those ancestral beings and to fuse with the primeval creative forces. The present merges and becomes one with the past.

As Stanner puts it, there is neither past, nor present, nor future: there is only "everywhen" (Stanner, p. 225). It is in this sense that Aboriginal spirituality is distinguished by its inseparable link between the land, The Dreaming, ancestral beings and the present custodians of the land. The highly charged re-enacting ceremonies performed by initiated persons at special places associated with ancestral beings endorse, perpetuate and ensure the continuity of the bond between the Dreaming heroes and their descendants. The connection between the physical and spiritual attributes of the land and its living custodians thus transcends time: The Dreaming is "everywhen."

Many of the ceremonies performed are specific in their re-enactment and desired outcomes. While their secret nature prevents any detailed rendering, some categorization is possible. So-called "increase" ceremonies are performed mostly by men with a focus on ensuring the sustained fertility and productivity of the environment and individual animal and plant species by invoking and ensuring timely seasonal cycles of rain and plenty. The ceremonies are focused on ensuring a proper balance between humans, the land and cosmic forces believed to be controlled and managed by the