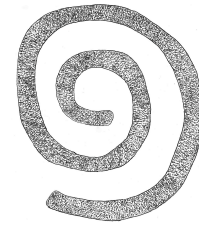


Ascending.



Descending.

## Reading the Rock Writings

### Cryptanalysis

Cryptanalysis is the science by which a system of communication is deciphered from only the symbols, characters or letters of the communication itself. Cryptanalysis is organized on the principles of consistency (symbols having the same meaning each time used) and affinity (the relationship in meaning one symbol has to associated symbols). This science has been a major means in deciphering Egyptian, Cuneiform, Mayan, and other writing systems.

In the mid 1900s, cryptanalysis was employed by LaVan Martineau in order to learn more about American Indian rock writings. He learned through extensive field work and study that most of the pictographs and petroglyphs were an efficient pictography based to some extent on American Indian sign language. In 1973, he published his findings in *The Rocks Begin to Speak*.

Martineau's work is utilized here in translating a number of rock writing panels, especially the remaining legible writings of Medicine Rock. Cultural knowledge of native people as well as a close scrutiny of the geographic location are necessary to understand what rock writings are telling their readers.

### Topics and Interests

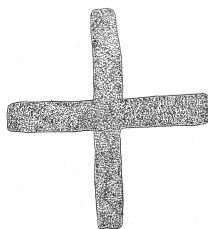
Rock writings tell stories. They also share information about dangers, give directions, locate water sources and safe shelters. They describe tragedies and other historical events, relate everyday wisdoms as well as important myths and legends, cultural anecdotes and beliefs. Like the "Kilroy was here" motif in modern American graffiti, they can express emotions, feelings such as pride, happiness, sadness and a loving sense of place. They shout across the centuries: "I was here! This is what I did! Here is one story about our world view that must not be forgotten!"

These same needs and concerns bond us to these early Americans. We are grateful to learn what they say, and we are more excited to discover how alike and enduring is the spirit of humankind throughout time.

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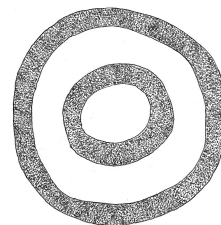
Near, close.



Cross over.



Look ahead.



Hollow place.



Far, distant.