

Monitoring, Charting, and Modeling the Lone Ranger and Tonto

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Dictated to and Transcribed by Kim Graf-Grisdale

Growing up in Seven Mile, a small town in southwestern Ohio in the late 1940s, I don't recall my very first Lone Ranger experience, but it was probably hearing the radio broadcast (Figure 1 shows Lone Ranger radio broadcasts on a yearly standard celeration chart by Steve – DEK). I wasn't a regular radio listener at that time of day since during the summer it was still daylight at 7:30 P.M. when The Lone Ranger aired.

We didn't have a television yet, but I saw the 2nd TV show when my family was shopping at a Kenny Neal's General Store in Jacksonburg, Ohio. This would have been on September 22, 1949 since that's when the show aired. I clearly recall the segment – it was the struggle with Collins on the cliff after the Lone Ranger had recovered from his wounds and donned his mask.

The other sources for the Lone Ranger accessible to me were the daily newspaper comic strip, comic books, and the library. The library offering was limited to a single volume, a fairly Whitman book that rehashes a radio story. Our newspaper, the Hamilton Journal, was published six times a week and it was years before I realized that there was a Lone Ranger Sunday strip with an independent story line. I'm not sure when I first started being able to read the daily strip, but once started, it often compelled my attention when the action was intense and I would eagerly await delivery from my front porch. I also wondered if "Fran" Striker, author of the strip, was a female.

I was shopping with my grandmother in Middletown when I spotted a Lone Ranger comic book. She bought it for me, and I recall it was number 27 for September 1953 in the Dell series. It was, I would later learn, a reprint from the Sunday

strip from 1943. I believe my next comic was March of 1953 and when I realized you could subscribe monthly, I convinced my mom to let me and began to collect the comics.

Exposed to a number of different media early on, the Lone Ranger stories have been my greatest interest over the years. The large number of products documented in Lee Felbinger's great books were not something available to our area. I recall a Lone Ranger shirt and kerchief which doubled as a mask as about the only items from the Lone Ranger line that I possessed. The shirt was yellow with a black top and the mask/bandanna was poorly constructed from the mask standpoint – too flexible to stay put and the yellow stitching around the eyes was unrealistic. I physically outgrew the shirt rather quickly.

I did enjoy creating my own stories and did this through three venues: drawings, dolls, and cutouts. I loved to draw on small pads and would create my own Lone Ranger adventures. I recall spending more time on the Lone Ranger drawing than on the "bad guys" and the varying quality showed up as a result.

"Dolls" had not yet become part of a young boy's toy-things in this time frame, and I think there was some good-natured ribbing from my folks for engaging in non-traditional play. I had found or been given a rag-doll cowboy type whose hat, and holster were separate pieces but sewed on. The hands were just thumb and mitten-like and the feet were just turned-out extensions. The nicest part of the outfit was a dye-cast green pistol very intricate in detail. The figure served as my Lone Ranger character and I had a more traditional doll as a "Tonto," using a lot of imagination for a slightly outsized boy doll

with a loincloth my dad had helped fashion for it.

Cutouts were initially appealing because they were quality drawings and seemed to require less imagination, but I soon realized that in viewing the strip choosing the rendition that my imagination was filling in the full body of what in the panel was just a portion of the whole.

When cut out, the resulting piece was less attractive with missing arms and legs. The cutouts were another way of putting together my own storyline of characters. Another downside was that it permanently messed up the book if was cut from. A Better Little Book based on a Lone Ranger comic story, "The Secret of Sombre Cavern," suffered this fate.

As my school skills increased, the Lone Ranger novels became a prime target for my collection and I found a bookstore where the few available were my purchases. Several of these were rarely seen in later years and have been a steady and valuable part of my collection.

After moving to Washington, D.C. in 1953, I lost access to the Lone Ranger dailies but still bought the monthly comic and watched the TV show. By the time the *Wrather* movie came out in 1956, there weren't too many of my friends who were as interested in westerns of any type, although one friend went to the theater with me when I caught the Lone Ranger movie. I recall seeing the *Lost City of Gold* with my brother and parents in a drive-in at my pleading. The rest of the family was not so thrilled at the opportunity.

For a period of time between high school and graduate school, from 1961-1970, there weren't many Lone Ranger moments. Finishing graduate school with a Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology, I took a job at Youngstown State University in northeast Ohio and began a teaching career there.

One concern I had as a professor and researcher was that I was overly influenced by social rewards that were part of sticking with the mainstream. From my perspective, most of the big jumps in science had been made by individuals who had managed to separate themselves from the mainstream and buck the flow.

I hadn't made any big discoveries but I wanted to be prepared if any opportunities came my way.

I had noticed several features that set the Lone Ranger apart from other so-called super heroes. He had no "superhuman" talents - all his skills were simply well practiced behaviors. An even more distinctive feature was that he was the Lone Ranger in every day life, rather than some alter-ego who would change characters when necessity arose. Wearing a mask created a socially unpleasant situation because a mask generally accompanied evil intentions. So the Lone Ranger put himself in socially awkward situations. True, some writers would have the masked man put on a disguise in order to avoid the awkwardness, but in many cases wearing the mask brought immediate social condemnation from people who did not know him.

It seemed to me that putting oneself in this type of situation could strengthen one's character and give one practice in experiencing socially awkward situations. In looking at my own situation, I needed to choose something other than a mask. What I wound up with was length of tie. So I would dress appropriately in all respects except that my tie would be unconventionally short! This was readily observable whether I was in the classroom or out in public in places like fast food restaurants. The strategy worked really well as I could often detect snickering and comments regarding my ties. I extended this behavior even to presentations at national conventions such as the Association for Behavior Analysis and International Precision Teaching Conferences. So thanks to the Lone Ranger, I was able to make myself impervious to the social condemnation that occurred. I should point out that over the course of several years the situation changed. People whom I had never met would walk up at conventions and call me by name. The "fellow with the short ties" became my trademark.

During this period I became interested in demonstrating how behaviors surrounding a fictional character such as the Lone Ranger could be summarized and charted on Standard Celeration Charts. The Standard Celeration Chart was a uniquely powerful measurement and projection tool developed by Ogden Lindsley. Celeration was a measure of change that was universal to any behavior. The power and utility of this type of chart was recognized and embraced by some but also rejected by many in the scientific community. Here

was an example of the type of situation I had seen historically: a new tool was rejected for political reasons even though it provided valuable features not possible with the old tools. Standard Celeration Charts were typically used in educational situations to monitor learning progress. My goal was to show that their use could be extended outside education to behaviors – even fictional behaviors – that occurred over time. I presented a proposal to the University’s Arts and Science College to obtain a one-year sabbatical to study the correlations between fictitious behavior that occurred in the Lone Ranger stories and similar behaviors in the “real world”. I was awarded the sabbatical and spent the next year continuing the research that I had started. In order to do the research I collected all the Lone Ranger novels, Big Little Books, comic books, TV shows, and a large number of Sunday and daily comics. I wrote an article for the Big Little Times summarizing all the Lone Ranger Big Little Books that included a pictorial quiz on different artists’ concepts of the Lone Ranger. I also corresponded a lot with Dave Holland and he made a number of references to my research in his magnificent book “From Out of the Past...” (published in 1989).

One of the behaviors that I chose to monitor was gunplay. This was broken down into “hits”, “misses”, and some time frame over which the behavior occurred (Figure 2 provides one example – DEK). Standard Celeration Charts have daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly versions. Yearly charts proved the most valuable because there were United States and world pinpoints on these behaviors. In 1988 I gave the keynote address at the International Precision Teaching Conference in Orlando, FL on the topic of “Hi Yo Precision Teacher”! My main point was that Precision Teachers needed to be “Lone Rangers” in order to push forward a technology not commonly accepted. A few years later at Jackson Hole, WY, at the International Precision Teaching Conference, I gave a presentation entitled “The Lone Ranger Rides Again” on Standard Celeration Charts. In this talk I summarized frequency and celeration measures on Lone Ranger stories in the various media, demonstrating that one could analyze fictitious behavior with a Standard Celeration approach.

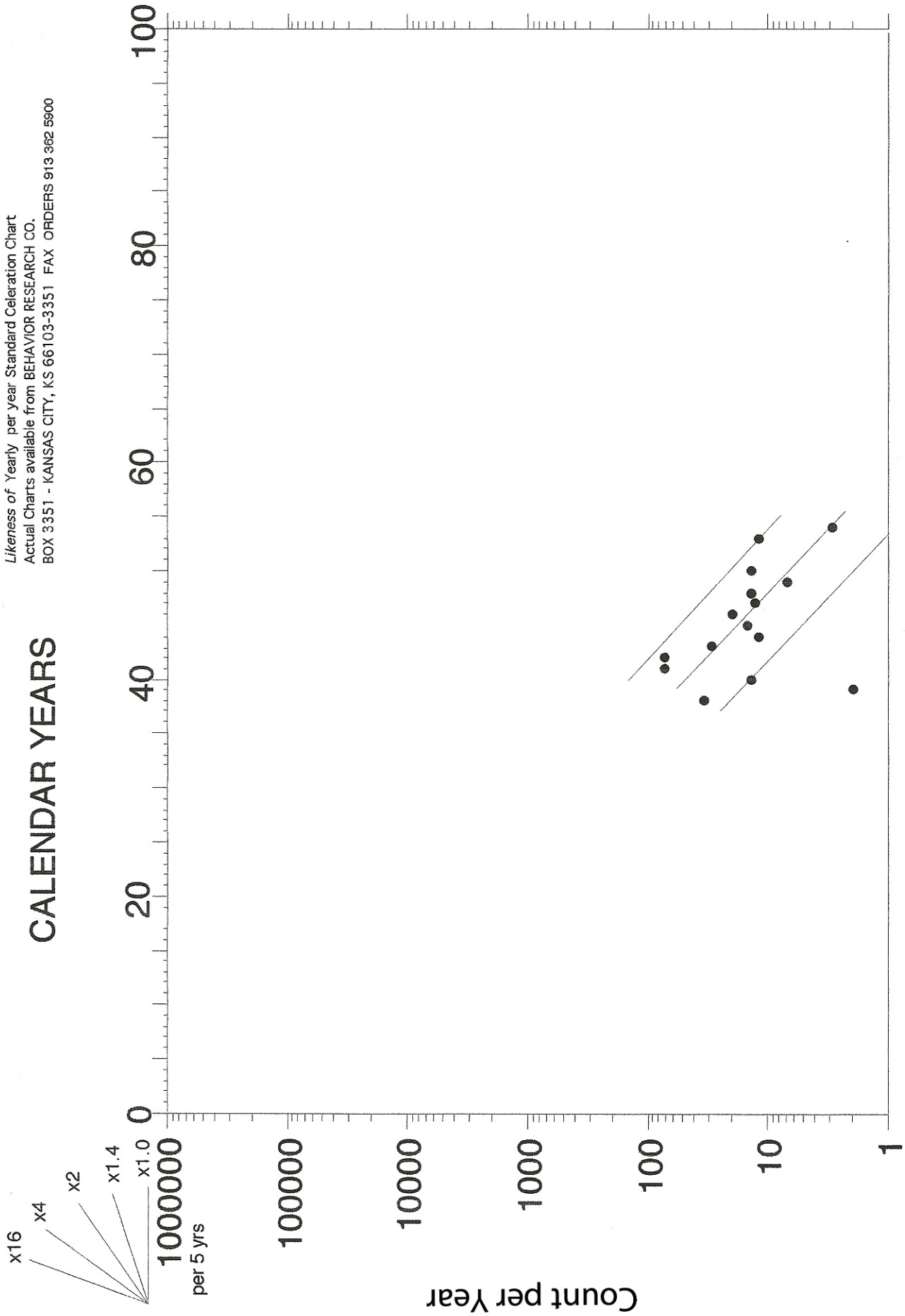
There were also opportunities to model Tonto’s behavior as a loyal helper. So while I was

a “Lone Ranger” in some situations, in others I was helping to support a “Lone Ranger” with my efforts. Examples of this included helping Og Lindsley in promoting the Standard Celeration Chart and more recently Steve Greer in his efforts to seek out free energy options in the Orion Project and make known the Extraterrestrial presence by using close encounters of the fifth kind (CE-5).

In summary, I was able to incorporate principles of the Lone Ranger character into my professional development. I was also able to promote Standard Celeration Charting by using examples from Lone Ranger stories across various media. In 2010 I received the Ogden R. Lindsley Lifetime Achievement Award presented by the Standard Celeration Society. Thanks, Lone Ranger!

Likeness of Yearly per Year Standard Celeration Chart
 Actual Charts available from BEHAVIOR RESEARCH CO.
 BOX 3351 - KANSAS CITY, KS 66103-3351 FAX ORDERS 913.362.5900

CALENDAR YEARS



1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000
 Year
 The Lone Ranger Radio Broadcast from 1933-1955
 Lone Ranger Radio Shows on Tape
 Steve Graf 29 Jr 2001

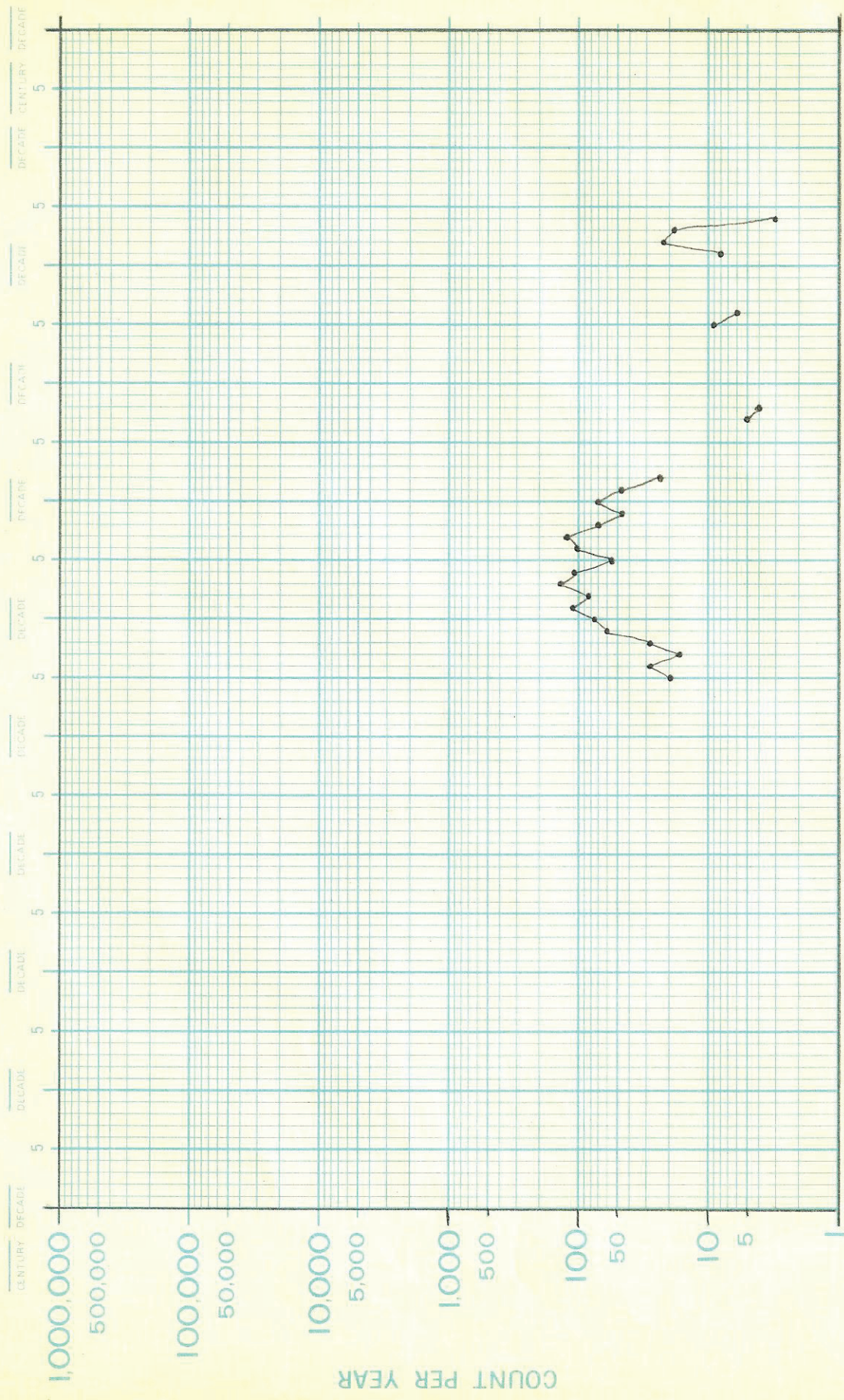


CALENDAR DECADES

10

5

0



0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

SUCCESSIVE CALENDAR YEARS

Fires Shots
COUNTED

AGE LABEL

Lone Ranger
BEHAVIOR CHARTER

MANAGER

ADVISER

SUPERVISOR

AGENCY

DEPOSITOR

Graf (1984)
COUNTER

Graf (May 84)
CHARTER

TIMER