

THE MAINTENANCE OF TRADITIONAL METHODS AND SYMBOLISM IN
SOUTHWESTERN NATIVE AMERICAN ART

by

STEVEN JOSEPH HARRISON

(Under the Direction of CAROLE HENRY)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study of contributing factors to the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in the production of Native American artwork in the Southwest United States. Interviews were conducted with Navajo and Hopi artists, as well as with traders/art dealers, to collect data for analysis of why and how Native American artists continue to produce art by methods and utilizing traditional materials and symbolism dating back centuries, in some cases. The research questions for this study were: 1.) What are the attributes of art versus craft in the Native American culture of the Southwest? 2.) How and by whom are they taught traditional methods and symbolism? and, 3.) How does commercialism affect their art? Interview questions were designed to elicit information about how art making techniques are passed from generation to generation, how art is assessed and valued, what threatens the production of traditional art, and how mentorship by artists and traders influences art production. The commercial aspects of collecting are also explored.

INDEX WORDS: Native American art, American Indian art, traditional, arts and crafts, traders, mentoring, Navajo art, Hopi art

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my younger son, Christopher S. Harrison. And to the memory of my older son, Timothy S. Harrison.

In beauty, I shall walk.

In beauty, you shall be my picture.

In beauty, you shall be my song.

In beauty, you shall be my medicine.

In beauty, my holy medicine.

From Navajo ceremony, the “Night Way” (Matthews)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The arts and crafts of the Native American have a long and proud history, as do their creators. Whether produced for ceremonial or utilitarian purposes, many forms of Native American art continue to be produced as they have been for centuries. There is little doubt that economic factors associated with the collecting of Native American arts and crafts have helped to maintain this tradition and even accelerate the production of art by American Indians. In recent decades, popularity of Native American art and an increase in the number of collectors has brought about an increase in Indian art dealers, publications about Native American art, coverage by the media, and even governmental regulation of Indian art production and marketing. More Native Americans have turned to the production of arts and crafts for a living, especially as governmental assistance programs have diminished and the nation's economy has flourished. While much has been published on Native American arts and crafts production, products, and collecting, little material is available on the pedagogical methods and influences on the instruction of and the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in Native American (American Indian) art. It should be noted that throughout this dissertation, references will be made by me and by the study participants (artists and traders) to "Native American(s)," "American Indian(s)," "Indians(s)," and /or "Native(s)." These terms are interchangeable and are used to describe the indigenous, aboriginal peoples in the tribes and on the reservations of the Southwestern United States. These terms are used by the Native Americans in my study and are acceptable to them. The terms are not meant to be condescending, derogatory, or offensive to

these or any other group of native peoples. Similarly, the terms “Anglo” and “Belagana” are alternately used to refer to the Caucasian (white) race.

Societal, technological and economic changes have greatly influenced the tribal, family, and individual lives of Native Americans. Eurocentric ideas and ideals have influenced the way that Native Americans are educated and the way and rationale for why they produce art. Many Native American artists have adopted transitional and transformative, contemporary methods of art production and expression. Many who employ traditional symbolism in their artwork do not employ it in a traditional manner. However, there are still a significant number of artists who maintain traditional forms, methods, and symbolism in their artwork. I have observed, and spoken with others who have observed, that there is an increased desire among Native Americans to learn more about their heritage and in particular about the history of their tribal art production. In most Native American tribes, “art” has been produced for both ceremonial and utilitarian purposes and their culture is much more “art-centered” than that of Anglos and other immigrants to America.

However, it seems almost inevitable that the Native American culture will be influenced and changed by the Eurocentric culture of the United States. Perhaps in the production of art, there will be a method to slow or even prevent the loss of cultural identity among Native Americans.

When one looks at the production of artwork among Native American tribes, it is important to realize that there are literally hundreds of Indian tribes in continental North America. While there are common reasons that artists within these tribes produce art, there is much diversity in art production between, and also within, these tribal ethnic entities. Native American artists have always produced their art for ceremonial and utilitarian purposes, and the

Native American cultures can truly be described as “art-centered.” Such diversity among art forms and cultures within “Native America” makes it essential to study a segment of this population and gather data from a smaller region of Native American tribes. This is one reason I have chosen to study Native American artists in the southwestern region of the United States. There are distinct traits, styles, and forms of art produced in this region. The geographic expanse of this part of the country and the wide distribution of inhabitant artists makes it necessary to seek out informant artists, rather than access a large number in a confined “cultural center” such as might be found in Eurocentric art centers (i.e. Paris, Florence, New York).

Statement of the Problem

There has been little research and documentation to show how traditional Native American art is taught and how traditional art methods and symbolism are maintained in the Southwest American Indian cultures. How Native American artists mature and gain the necessary skills and knowledge and from whom artistic influence and creative mentorship comes is an area of art education not well understood or chronicled. The article by Peter Smith (1999), “The Unexplored: Art Education Historians’ Failure to Consider the Southwest,” brings the issue of lack of documentation to light and will be discussed in Chapter II.

The intent of this study is to analyze how traditional art methods and symbolism are maintained in the Native American tribes of the Southwest, particularly the Navajo and Hopi tribes. Contributing factors and threats to the continuation of traditional American Indian art will be analyzed.

Research Questions

1. What are the attributes and definitions of “art” (versus “craft”) in the Native American culture (specifically among Southwestern tribes and cultures)?
2. How and by whom are Native American artists taught traditional methods and symbolism?
3. How does commercialism (collecting and marketing of art objects) affect the production of traditional Native American art?

Rationale for the Study

One could consider art production on Native American “reservations” as taking place in a “classroom.” Just as in the art classroom, the elements of mentorship, historical relevance, observation, production, and criticism are all key to the education of the Native American artist. This would be akin to the DBAE (discipline-based art education) approach so recently espoused by the Getty Institute which became an approach in contemporary art education in American public schools in the late 20th century (Greer, 1984).

Direct observational fieldwork is an important data collection modality as it applies to pedagogical methods employed in the “training” of individual Native American artists. The dissemination of traditional art methods to and among Native American artists is often done within the family and from generation to generation. This is particularly true in such art forms as weaving (Navajo), pottery making, and carving (Hopi). The setting is often intratribal and may encompass both ceremonial and commercial settings important to the individual arts and the tribal culture. Mentorship is important to the production and individual gains of the artists. Traditional symbolism and methods in art forms is a significant aspect of this art training.

Cultural and tribal identity is becoming more important in art production as various Native American tribes are trying to “recapture” their cultural heritage through art. Many public

school systems are beginning to integrate cultural history through art instruction in their school curricula. Individual artists are gathering together to exchange traditional cultural and artistic ideas in societies of Indian artists and at larger cultural gatherings (powwows). These gatherings are important to the growth of the individual artists and maintenance of an artistic cultural identity and are best studied by direct field observation and discourse with the artists by the researcher.

In many art cultures (particularly those that are Eurocentric), forms and styles of art production go through constant transitions and evolution from style to style, period to period. Often, in art, these style changes are dramatic and bear little relationship to each other except that change and independence is important to each one. Such an example would be the transition from Impressionism to Cubism in Europe during the early twentieth century.

The Native American culture seems to have realized the importance of traditional forms of art to their culture and the significance art has to their life style and “religious” and spiritual beliefs. Through the individual artists, and their art production, the spirituality of Native American tribes and their culture has been rekindled. The data gathered is not only important for current and future artists, but to the individual tribes and Native American culture as a whole. However, it is important to realize that there are significant differences from artist to artist, art form to art form, and from tribe to tribe, even within a distinct region such as the southwestern United States.

Many Native American artists who employ a more contemporary approach to their artwork still employ traditional symbolism in their work. But contemporary, Eurocentric-influenced art is not the focus of this dissertation. There are many American Indian artists who attempt to maintain a cultural and spiritual heritage in their artwork in an attempt at something

more than an “Indian look” to the final piece. The context and “correctness” of the symbolism and the traditional production methods and materials are important to them. Pride, and a competitive nature, compound to drive the individual artist’s craftsmanship to produce a final product that expresses the tradition of the culture as well as the authenticity of the construction that adds value to the artwork. This individuality, I believe, is what distinguishes art from craft. Combined with the unique culture of the Native Americans of the Southwest, the art of these peoples has spirituality capable of crossing cultures. That is one reason why it has increased in popularity in my opinion. Even as the art itself becomes more transitional and even transformative, it maintains the flavor of the Southwest and evokes a spirituality that is Native American.

Limitations of the Study

This is an ethnographic qualitative study with a subject pool of eleven participants. Because it is a small sample, it cannot necessarily be generalized to a larger population. However, the data collected from the interviews is rich in descriptive information. While a survey might add important general information, the lifestyles and geographic distribution of Native American artists make it difficult to use survey research as a method of data collection. The rural nature of Native American cultures and the vast expanse of geographic territory are problematic for the distribution and collection of survey data. The culture is also less governed by deadlines and less likely to be interested in academic research utilizing a written survey. Native American artists and other Indian informants have expressed to me the unimportance of time, schedules, and deadlines in the Native American culture. One must keep in mind that some of the artists being studied are not able to read or write English and therefore the process of interview is much more acceptable to this population.

Historical data are available to supplement and enhance the collection of data for this study. Much of this data are in the form of newspaper and magazine articles, as well as books on Native American arts. These are a valuable resource to form ideas and approaches for informant observation and interviews, although much of the written information is based on commercial aspects of art production. Museums and other archives dealing with Native American arts and culture are also a valuable resource of non-commercial historical data on Native American art.

Since survey data would be inadequate to the purpose of the study and perhaps impossible to gather, and historical data might have limited contextual value, observational fieldwork appears to be the best means available to gather information about how and why Native American artists produce traditional forms of artwork.

Southwestern Indian Art Forms

There are several forms of art that are most widely known and produced by American Indian artists of the Southwest. These include, in no particular order, jewelry, carving, weaving, sandpainting, and pottery; all of which are still created using traditional methods and materials. Many Native American artists producing these pieces of art have gone beyond tradition and create pieces that could be considered transitional or transformative in style, even though traditional symbolism and motifs may be incorporated in their artwork. Contemporary Southwestern Native American artists also produce significant amounts of paintings and sculpture, although much of this work has been greatly influenced by Eurocentric, twentieth century pedagogy, materials, and methods. However, many regional painters do incorporate Southwestern motifs and symbolism derived from older traditional arts and culture.

Jewelry

One of the earliest jewelry makers chronicled was a Cherokee artist, Sequoyah, who made trade silver from the 1790s through 1843 (Schaaf, 2003). In the Southwest, the first Navajo credited with making jewelry was Atsisi Sani, who trained with a Mexican blacksmith in 1863 (Penney, 1996). While Navajo artists are predominant in Indian jewelry production (See Figure 1.1), several Pueblo tribes are known for their unique styles and high quality jewelry making. Among these are the Zuni (Figure 1.2) and Hopi. In fact, in the 1950s, Hopi jeweler Charles Loloma helped to change the course of Native Southwestern jewelry design by introducing modern elements of style and design (Penney, 1996). During the twentieth century, as a whole, Southwest Indian jewelry has maintained an “Indian” look, even though more modern styles and materials have been employed. Early twentieth century jewelry designs and motifs are still popular in contemporary fashion and among collectors of Native American art.

Kachina Carving

The primary examples of Southwest Native American carving involve the production of Hopi Kachinas (also spelled “Katcinas” or Katsinas”) and, in recent years, Navajo folk art. According to Fewkes (1985), the Hopi Indians represent their gods in several ways. More precisely, a Kachina is a supernatural being (Lomahquahu, W.B. McGee, personal communication, November 1, 1996) that is represented in three aspects: the supernatural that exists in the minds of the Hopis and lives on the San Francisco Peaks in Northern Arizona; the masked impersonator of a supernatural being that appears in ritual dances in the kiva or pueblo plaza; and the carved dolls, called Kachina *dolls* (Figure 1.3), that are likenesses of the supernaturals and the human impersonators (Colton, 1995/1959). The Hopis believe it is essential to keep harmony with the world, not only with man, but also with animals as well as

objects such as the sky, rocks, and other natural objects which the Hopis believe are possessed of life. To maintain this harmony, Hopi men perform a yearly cycle of religious ceremonial dances composed of rhythmic chants by tribal members impersonating Kachina supernaturals. In these dances, the men who impersonate the Kachinas actually *become* the supernaturals and thus may cure disease, grow crops by bringing clouds and rain, watch over ceremonies and reinforce discipline and order in the world of the Hopis (Wright, 1973). At any one time, there may be as many as 300 Kachinas that are “active” and at least another 200 that are known but make sporadic appearances (Figure 1.4). Thus, one will see different Kachinas represented in ceremonies as the needs of the Hopis change (Wright, 1973). Since the 1880s, when they first were carved for sale or trade, Kachina dolls have been popular among collectors as an art form. There are six distinct periods or styles of carvings (Day, 2000). The *Early Traditional* style, from 1880 to roughly 1910, were flat or cylindrical shaped and were simply painted. Hands, arms, and feet were simply represented, if at all. From around 1910 into the 1930s, *Late Traditional* style dolls exhibited similar cylindrical shapes, but incorporated more complex carving techniques and the addition of limbs on the figures. After World War II, Hopi artists began to carve figures that were more representational and exhibited the animation of their ceremonial dances. Thus, the *Early Action* style was born, with figures exhibiting raised arms, bent legs, and twisted torsos. Refinement of these carving techniques combined with added detail led to the *Late Action* style into the 1970s. Transition to more intricate carving techniques and extreme attention to detail in the mid to late 1970s has led to the *Modern Contemporary* style, which exists to this day and is becoming more transformative as an art form.

Concurrently, with the emergence of the Modern Contemporary style, a sense of a loss of traditional symbolism, style, and meaning was felt by a small group of Hopi carvers (Day, 2000).

These men returned to the simplistic carving and painting methods of their ancestors and have created a *New Traditional* style, mimicking the Kachina doll carvings from 1880 to 1930.

Regardless of style, over the years Kachina dolls have always been carved from cottonwood roots, collected in the washes on and around the Hopi Reservation. While other Pueblo Indian tribes employ Kachinas in religious ceremonies, it is the Hopi who have refined and made the art form popular among collectors.

Many Navajos carve Kachina-style dolls (Figure 1.5), and this phenomenon will be discussed later in this dissertation. These “non-authentic” Kachinas are perhaps the impetus for the development of an increasingly popular and creative form of carving style – Navajo Folk Art. Portraying aspects of everyday Navajo life to political satire (Anglo and Indian), these folk art carvings have a range of craftsmanship from primitive to intricately detailed and highly finished. Although Navajo Folk Art is becoming increasingly popular among collectors, its lack of traditional methods and symbolism leads me to do no more than give it mention.

Weaving

Another art form dominated by the Navajo Indians is the textile art of weaving. Whether for wearing or other utilitarian use such as a floor rug, Southwest Indian tribes have been weaving for centuries. Weaving in North America has been recorded as far back as 1000 B.C., but is thought to go back as far as 7500 B.C. Early weavers utilized materials such as plant fibers, cotton, yucca, hemp, milkweed, tree bark, animal hair (including human hair), and, certainly most popular throughout the years, sheep’s wool. Early textiles were undecorated (Figure 1.6), but some early examples demonstrate decoration from dyes applied to materials before and after the weaving process (Dockstader, 1961).

The traditional art of American Indian weaving has been made significant by the weaving art and the craftsmanship of Navajo women, dating back to the seventeenth century (Campbell & Kopp, 1991). As chronicled by Schaaf (2001) in *American Indian Textiles*, Spider Woman, a Spiritual Being in Navajo religious lore, is credited by many as responsible for teaching their ancient ancestors how to weave. She and Spider Boy, who created the first loom, helped weave the world into existence.

Navajo weaving as an art form began with pictorial designs of the 1860s and 1870s, which varied from the traditional symmetry of earlier designs by utilizing asymmetrical representations of natural object and everyday life, in a radical departure from the classical designs of the previous two centuries (Campbell & Kopp, 1991). The influence by early traders, who provided materials design ideas, and a market for the finished product, cannot be underestimated.

It should be noted that weaving was a utilitarian craft of many of the Pueblo Indian tribes of the Southwest, including the Hopi, Jemez, and Acoma tribes. Since the Pueblo tribes survived by farming, it is logical that much of their textile work was made of cotton. Also, since the use of the weaving was often ceremonial, weavings were most often done in the kiva (an underground ceremonial chamber in the pueblo) by men. The Navajo men, being hunters, gatherers, and later sheep herders, left the weaving to women. Gender specification in weaving has changed in recent years, but the Navajo art of weaving is still dominated by women. This phenomenon is a part of my research which will be discussed later.

Regional styles in Navajo weaving of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries began to develop. Common to an area of the Navajo Reservation, these styles, roughly eighteen in number, were distinctive in design motif, symbolism, and combinations of colors (Figure 1.7).

Although many regional styles are still attributed to that area, most styles are created by weavers in various areas of the region without regard to traditional location of that style (Dockstader, 1993).

Sandpainting

Sandpainting, or “drypainting” as it is often referred, is now an almost exclusively Navajo art form which most likely was appropriated from the Pueblo tribes. As with weaving, the Navajo took the art form and carried it a step beyond what Pueblo artists had been doing since prehistoric times (Dockstader, 1993).

Sandpaintings are produced for both ceremonial and commercial purposes. Ceremonial drypaintings are created as a ritual means of bringing health, prosperity, and well-being to an individual, and there are more than 500 different drypainting designs that have been recorded (Kluckhohn & Leighton, 1948). They are also utilized in curing ceremonies, serving as impermanent altars where ritual healing can take place. They may contain imagery of exact representations of supernaturals with their purpose being to attract the “Holy People” who assist with the curing process. The paintings are not considered art by the Navajo, as they are not spontaneous, but are prescribed designs that are destroyed after the ceremony (Parezo, 1991). Backgrounds for the ceremonial drypaintings may be of several materials. Often fresh dirt is brought into the Hogan (traditional Navajo home) and spread evenly on the floor for a smooth “painting” surface; or, a large piece of buckskin or even an old door might be utilized. Sand is rarely used, but vegetable matter such as pollen, cornmeal, crushed flowers, and charcoal are used frequently (Kluckhohn & Leighton, 1948).

Commercial sandpaintings are secular objects made by the Navajo for sale in the international market as luxury items in the form of fine and decorative art, and as souvenirs

(Figure 1.8). They are permanent paintings made with colored sand and other minerals glued to a wood backing. These commercial paintings were introduced in the early twentieth century and gained much popularity on the open market in the 1960s. Generally, they are not bought or used by the Navajo (Parezo, 1991).

Pottery

Pottery is the art form most common to the tribes of the Southwest. Created for tens of thousands of years as a utilitarian object, pottery has been beautifully decorated for centuries by Native Americans. Most pieces were hand-built, coil pottery, although some contemporary pieces are thrown on a wheel. Some pottery of lesser quality is slip poured into molds which are later decorated, often by another artist for sale to tourists. The Pueblo tribes are best known for their beautiful, high quality pottery (Figure 1.9), although many Navajo potters also produce pieces of collectable quality.

Traders and Posts

The significance of the trading posts and the *Belagana* (white) traders to the existence, and the art, of the Native Americans of the Southwest cannot be underestimated. Most of the trading posts in the Southwest are located on the Navajo Reservation, and the traders have had an influence on the *Dineh* (Navajo “People”) for more than a century. Traders were and are much more than businessmen as far as the Navajo are concerned. They became influential on the daily lives of the Navajo by arbitrating conflicts within families or between tribal entities and unrelated groups. Traders introduced the Navajo to technology, assisted with letter writing and legal affairs, and acted as custodians of family jewelry and pawn when the Navajo were either moving or in need of funds (Lindig & Teiwes, 1991). Traders were often called upon to bury the dead or shoot a horse after a Navajo died, a ritual belief of property rights further enhanced by

the Navajos' fear of the ghosts of the dead. If a Navajo dies in a building, such as their Hogan, the structure and all their belongings are burned (Malone, personal communication, May 19, 1997).

Upon return to their homelands after exile at Bosque Redondo, New Mexico (1863-68) and according to a treaty with the U.S. Government, the Navajo were supplied sheep and other goods through a supply system at Ft. Defiance, Arizona. Peddlers and other businessmen followed government cavalry troops into the territory and dealt goods to the Indian population from horseback or covered wagon (Bruce Burnham, personal communication, May 20, 1997). Some, such as Lorenzo Hubbell (in 1878) and J.B. Moore (in 1903) established larger, permanent buildings on or adjacent to the Reservation for the purpose of trade with the Native population (James, 1976). These trading posts are historical sites today. However, Charles Crary opened and operated the first trading post on the Navajo Reservation in 1871 or 1872 (Kluckhong & Leighton, 1948).

As captives at Bosque Redondo, the Navajo had the time and raw materials to learn how to weave and become proficient and creative in that art. They also picked up techniques and design ideas from the Rio Grande Valley tribes (B. Burnham, personal communication May 20, 1997). Early on, the traders' first thought was to get the Navajo to weave as much as possible for them, since the market for Indian art was beginning to grow in the East. They realized that their mission was to buy everything that the Navajo had to sell and to sell to the Navajo all that they needed (Williams, 2007).

Prior to their exile at Bosque Redondo, the Navajo homeland stretched from Western Arizona into central New Mexico, and they survived by raising sheep and raiding their neighbors' homes for useful objects. The experience of exile by Kit Carson and his troops and

more than four years of forced farm labor turned out to be an expensive failure by white politicians (Williams, 2007). The release of the Navajo with a treaty dictating that the *Dineh* no longer practice their previous lifestyle allowed them time and support in terms of supplies from trading posts. This allowed the Navajo the ability and raw materials to create and trade their crafts, primarily weavings and jewelry.

Brigham Young's pilgrimage into the Southwest brought many followers who were adventurers and readily accepted the difficult and lonely life of a trader. One of those hardy souls was Seth Tanner, known to the Indians as "The Bear." Tanner started what would be a very successful trading business by developing a close relationship with the Navajo based on respect and reverence for both cultures. To this day, the name Tanner is synonymous with success and longevity in the business of Native American arts and crafts in the Southwest.

Another individual who was significant to the successful marketing of the Navajo culture, and by association, their artwork, was Harry Goulding. Goulding and his wife, both featured in the Jonathon Williams DVD "Old West Trading Posts," homesteaded 650 acres north of Kayenta, Arizona, Big Rock Door Mesa in 1923. They built a trading post and a motel to help bring visitors to Monument Valley (most of which is in Utah). When the Great Depression hit, it affected the Navajo greatly. In order to boost the economy in the area and thus help the economic suffering of the Navajo, the Gouldings traveled to Hollywood to convince the film industry to utilize "Navajo land" and the backdrop of Monument Valley for the film "Stagecoach," starring John Wayne. It was the first of seven films that director John Ford shot in Monument Valley, and Goulding convinced Ford to hire the Navajo for his crew and to pay them Hollywood wages (Williams, 2007).

Isolation, lack of transportation, and a lack of education all played an important role in the relationship between the Native American and the trader. The Indian artists and their families grew to rely on the trader, not only to market their work, but to assist with problems that arose in everyday life. Mutual trust and respect were created between the individuals, to the benefit of both. This relationship is significant to my research and the presentation and analysis of my data.

Definition of Terms

Several key words are of great import to this study and significant with respect to the research questions and the interview questions posed to the participants in the study. Four terms are reflected over and over in the questions posed and the answers compiled during the interviews and are an integral part of the data analysis. The terms are: *art*, *symbolism*, *teaching methods*, and *traditional*.

Art – by definition (Merriam-Webster, 2006), the conscious production or arrangement of sounds, colors, forms, movements, or other elements in a manner that affects the sense of beauty; specifically, the production of the beautiful in a graphic or plastic medium. In this study, a weaving, piece(s) of pottery, carving, painting, jewelry, or similar item. One focus of the study will be to gain insight as to what Native Americans' points of view are as to which constitutes art versus a "craft," which has usually had the connotation of a cheaper, mass produced item for commercial purposes.

Symbolism – traditional icons/graphic images having specific religious, cultural, or tribal meanings used as decoration on art and craft pieces of both functional and ceremonial use. Icons and repetitive graphic images are used to identify certain styles, periods, and uses of traditional artwork.

Teaching methods – direct instruction (methodology) or critical influence by others resulting in the creation of an art product.

Traditional – having the visual and structural characteristics of similar art forms produced prior to the dominant influence by Western (Anglo) civilization.

Of my list of terms significant to this study, “tradition” and the creation of “traditional” art forms stand out in importance and bear further discussion. Tradition is central to the culture of the American Indian and the tribes of the Southwest and goes beyond the dictionary definition.

For the purpose of categorizing Native American artwork, the dictionary (*American Heritage*, 1985 and *Merriam-Webster’s*, 2006) definitions of “tradition (al)” are less than specific. Generally, “tradition” infers a passing along of cultural elements from generation to generation, especially by word of mouth or example (which could include demonstration). Tradition is also defined by characteristic manner, method, or style. However, one must keep in mind the difficulty in categorizing a part of a culture that is non-Eurocentric by means of Anglo-European values and terms. Many indigenous peoples, and specifically Native American tribes, have been art-centered cultures for centuries. Until recent times, the vast majority of American Indian tribal members have been producers of art, albeit for utilitarian and religious purposes. No word exists in the hundreds of Native American languages that come close to our Western definition of art. Throughout the centuries Indians have not set out to create art for art’s sake. Anna Lee Walters (1989) in her book *Beauty and Mysticism in American Indian Art* says,

In traditional Indian thinking, there is no separation between art and life or between what is beautiful and what is functional. Art, beauty, and spirituality are so firmly intertwined in the routine of living that no words are needed, or allowed, to separate them... ‘The

Indians' way with words surely stems from their exclusively oral tradition – a tradition difficult to grasp these days when so much is written and so little remembered. They had no written language until the white man came along and told them they needed one,' (p. 33).

Frederick Dockstader (1961) feels that “true tradition, then, should be regarded as that which custom has developed and handed down from one generation to another over a period of time, rather than the short-lived stylistic development which can come and go with a single generation. Tradition can only be used in referring to tribal art, never to the generic ‘Indian art’ form (p. 26).

As a “working model” for establishing an identity and assessing the aesthetic and commercial value of Native American art, the definitions and categories defined by Neperud and Stuhr (1993) are most useful and straightforward. In Patricia Stuhr's (1987) original ethnographic studies with Wisconsin Indian artists, three categories of art production were constructed and termed: “Traditional,” “Derivative,” and “Modern” (p. 2226). These categories were later changed to “Traditional,” “Transitional,” and “Transformative.” *Traditional* artwork would include works whose form, materials, and functions have changed very little over time. Minor changes in form would be allowable for creativity and individuality, but distinctive aspects would remain and allow identification and specification from like objects. *Transitional* artwork is primarily traditional in form, but substitution of contemporary materials such as yarn for natural vegetable fibers or plastic beads for trade beads or natural bone may be utilized. *Transformative* artwork differs in form from traditional Native American art and is often figurative. Even though traditional symbolism may be used, it is incorporated into methods which more closely align to Western, Eurocentric traditions of art production such as painting, sculpture, and printmaking.

Generally, in contrast to Native American art, contemporary Eurocentric art is judged on a different value system and is praised for its approach to creativity through a unique style, approach, or presentation. The context is often given more weight than the content; a presentation may accentuate form over substance or meaning.’

The Traditional and Transitional visual culture produced by Native Americans is based on long held tribal beliefs and functions, rather than on inventiveness and formal ingenuity. Traditional forms and values are thought to be contained within a family resemblance (Rosch & Mervis, 1975) rather than emphasizing individual expressiveness (p. 586).

Although Rosch and Mervis used the phrase ‘a family resemblance’ in relation to semantic categories, we believe that a parallel can be drawn to art forms within the context of cultural values (Neperud & Stuhr, 1993 p. 246).” Family resemblances differ from styles in that *style* refers to formal visual structural similarities, whereas *family resemblance* refers to functional and ideational similarities in addition to visual similarities.

Traditional Native American art can be said to include works whose defining features of form, iconography (decoration), production materials and technique, as well as function, have changed very little over a long period of time. What could be considered traditional works of Native American art produced today are alike in form and iconography from those produced a century or more ago. Individual traditional art disciplines have varying degrees of chronological history within Native American cultures. For example, weaving, pottery, and basketweaving go back for many centuries, while Navajo silversmithing in its “traditional” form dates back only to the mid-nineteenth century with influence from Mexican artists. Pueblo style watercolors are now deemed “traditional” by dealers and collectors, but originated in the Indian Schools of the

1920s (Dockstader, 1961). While many Indian artists are now utilizing more modern and easily available materials and methods, there are still Native American artists who maintain traditional methodology in their work. Some Navajo weavers still shear, card, spin and vegetable dye their own wool before weaving it on hand-built looms. Many Acoma potters mine their own clay and build magnificently symmetrical coil pots intricately decorated with centuries old designs. Papago basketweavers still gather native grasses and other fibers and follow age old styles and methods of construction. What makes certain contemporary Native American artists maintain or stray from “traditional Indian art” is an interesting question, but one that exceeds the scope of this research.

Many groups of individuals have influenced and helped to maintain traditional forms, methods, and symbolism in Native American art. Among these groups are dealers and traders, patrons/collectors of Indian art, and museums and other governmental agencies. These influences could be viewed as positive in some respects and negative in others. There are indeed selfish aspects that some individuals might promote, often in the name of selflessness. Certainly, commercial profit is a motivation for dealers and collectors alike to influence, maintain, and refine the quality and quantity of Native American art. The commercialization of Indian art has lead to “identity theft” and cross-tribal production of replicated “styles” and “forms” of tribal art (e.g. Navajo Katsinas and Zapotec “Navajo” rugs). Mass production of crafts representing tribal art forms has led to aesthetic devaluing of some art forms (e.g. jewelry, beadwork, and pottery) while at the same time inflating the value of quality, “high-end,” traditional art forms. The trader has proved to be a positive influence in the maintenance of quality and traditional methods and symbolism in Native American artwork. They have also served as mentors, teachers, and quality control experts to young, aspiring Indian artists (Lomahquahu, B. McGee, personal

communication, November 1, 1996). Bruce McGee also confesses that there is an increasing loss of traditional symbolism knowledge by young artists and that tribal elders (in addition to traders) should be responsible for the maintenance and dissemination of this traditional information.

Patrons of art and collectors of Native American art are certainly responsible for the valuation, and thus, production of Indian art-particularly “high end” items and “artifactual” specimens. With only the recent advent of many museums dedicated to the preservation and display of Native art, it has long been the domain of private collectors to acquire and maintain a large cross section of Native American art of the Americas. Much as the Church was the patron of art in the Middle Ages and provided a living for many artists, collectors of Native American art have provided an economic boost for indigent Native American communities and Native American artists. They have also created a greater recognition and appreciation of the Native American tribal cultures, although unfortunately, it is often from a unidimensional perspective.

Certainly the museum and other “exhibition” venues have had a tremendous impact on our perception of Native American culture, much of it through the exhibition of Native American tribal artwork. In his description of Native America’s (and Native Americans’) involvement and important role in the 1893 World’s Columbian Exhibition, Evan M. Maurer (2000) explained:

Native Americans played a very important role in the World’s Columbia Exhibition, with greater representation than any other cultural group. Each building and display approached the representation of the American Indian from a different point of view. For instance, the Women’s Building, which was devoted to the accomplishments of women of the world, exhibited photographs and sculptures of American Indian women, as well as many types of beadwork, weaving, ceramics, and other traditional Indian women’s crafts.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs had the largest single display of contemporary Native American life at the 1893 exposition... The largest collection of Native American displays was in the anthropology building. Exhibitions in this building also featured mannequins dressed in traditional clothing, and statues of famous Indian leaders.

Hundreds of Native American men, women, and children dressed in Native clothing to act as guides in the popular Indian villages and other exhibition areas. Talented Native American artists were also employed to demonstrate traditional Indian arts and crafts.

Generally, the international fairs and expositions, as well as the great nineteenth century anthropology museums, viewed Native American objects as cultural artifacts without any particular aesthetic value or spiritual significance for the Native American peoples who made and used them. The first American art museum to present objects from Native American cultures as serious art was the Brooklyn Museum, which, as early as 1910, devoted major exhibition areas to the arts of Native America (Fane, et al, 1991). Museum exhibits and other exhibitions of Native American art were generally rhetorical, and presented the Indian cultures in the authoritative manner in which our Western society wished them to be viewed. Native American art was generally criticized by what would be considered “universal art values” which were actually twentieth century Eurocentric aesthetic values. Postmodern theory promised a more comprehensive approach to criticism from the Indian viewpoint, but even this has failed to materialize until recently. In fact, most exhibitions of Native American art have largely ignored the consultative participation of Native Americans with respect to curatorial and cultural matters.

Government schools and other governmental programs developed for Indians have helped to integrate the Native American into our society, but have done little to preserve or

promote a cultural awareness in Indian way of life. As Michael Yellowbear Holloman (1996) explained:

I recall the comments of a non-Native regarding the ‘real’ Indians. They were the ones who lived the ‘traditional’ way. He made reference to a popular book, *Black Elk Speaks*, and how most of the Indians today know very little of the way of elders, therefore he negated their rightful sovereign identity. His attitude was alarming; he surmised that Native Americans today should either live like ‘authentic Indians’ off the land, or concede their status, to finally join and contribute to America like ‘everyone else.’ The Southwest and Plains Indian art schools of the early 1900s exemplify this dilemma. Both were started under the best philanthropic conceptions.”

Holloman goes on to describe the objectives of the U.S. Indian School in Santa Fe, one of which was to “study and explore *traditional* Indian art methods and productions. It became evident that, sincere interests aside, the commodity value (decreed by non-Indian patrons) of the created work immediately influenced the styles and techniques that were taught (p. 52).

It remains to be seen whether traditional Native American art will be passed along with tribes, as they continue to be assimilated into Anglo, Eurocentric society. Young artists are still being taught and influenced by their elders as is evidenced by the still large number of young weavers, carvers, potters and jewelry makers on the reservations of the southwestern United States. Navajo mothers still teach their daughters (and occasionally sons) to weave in traditional style and manner. Hopi fathers still initiate their sons into the Kachina Society and teach them to carve. Pueblo potters still give clay to their children and, along with their own work, fire their children’s creations in dung or wood fueled kilns.

Native Americans have recently begun to question the notion that self-determination in the area of arts and art education is adequate for the long term health of their communities (Holloman, 1996). Too often, art becomes separated from the unique environment that influenced its creation and development. Taken out of the tribal context and interpreted solely in terms of the dominant society's understanding of it, the most important perspective of all is conspicuously absent (Walters, 1989). One also has to question whether the removal of a traditional art object from the tribal setting doesn't carry some of the tribal beauty, spirit, and mysticism along with it.



Figure 1.1 – Navajo jewelry. (From left and top to bottom). Concho belt, silver with turquoise. Hammered silver bead necklace. Bolo tie with turquoise and coral. Squash blossom necklace with turquoise. Men's bracelet (keto) with turquoise. Women's / child's bracelet with turquoise. Belt buckle, silver with turquoise and coral, signed "ALW," reportedly made for Navajo artist Harrison Begay.



Figure 1.2 – Zuni jewelry and fetishes. Bolo tie with inlay in silver. Frog fetish attributed to “Poncho.” Tadpole fetish attributed to Todd Poncho. Snake fetish attributed to Alex Poncho.



Figure 1.3 – Hopi Kachina dolls. (Left) Hano Clown by M. Cleveland (Hopi), 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " height; (right) Great Horned Owl ("Mongwa") Kachina by Rod Phillips (Hopi), 12" height; both figures carved from cottonwood root.



Figure 1.4 – Hopi Kachina doll (“retired”). Fish Kachina (“Pakiokwik”) by Tom Collateta (Hopi/ Navajo), 18” height, carved from cottonwood root; note: the mask is removable exposing identity as an impersonator, thus this kachina is not to be displayed without mask.



Figure 1.5 – Navajo kachina doll. Mudhead kachina, carver unknown, 8 ½” height; note: the mask is removable to expose identity of figure, thus this kachina is not to be displayed without mask.

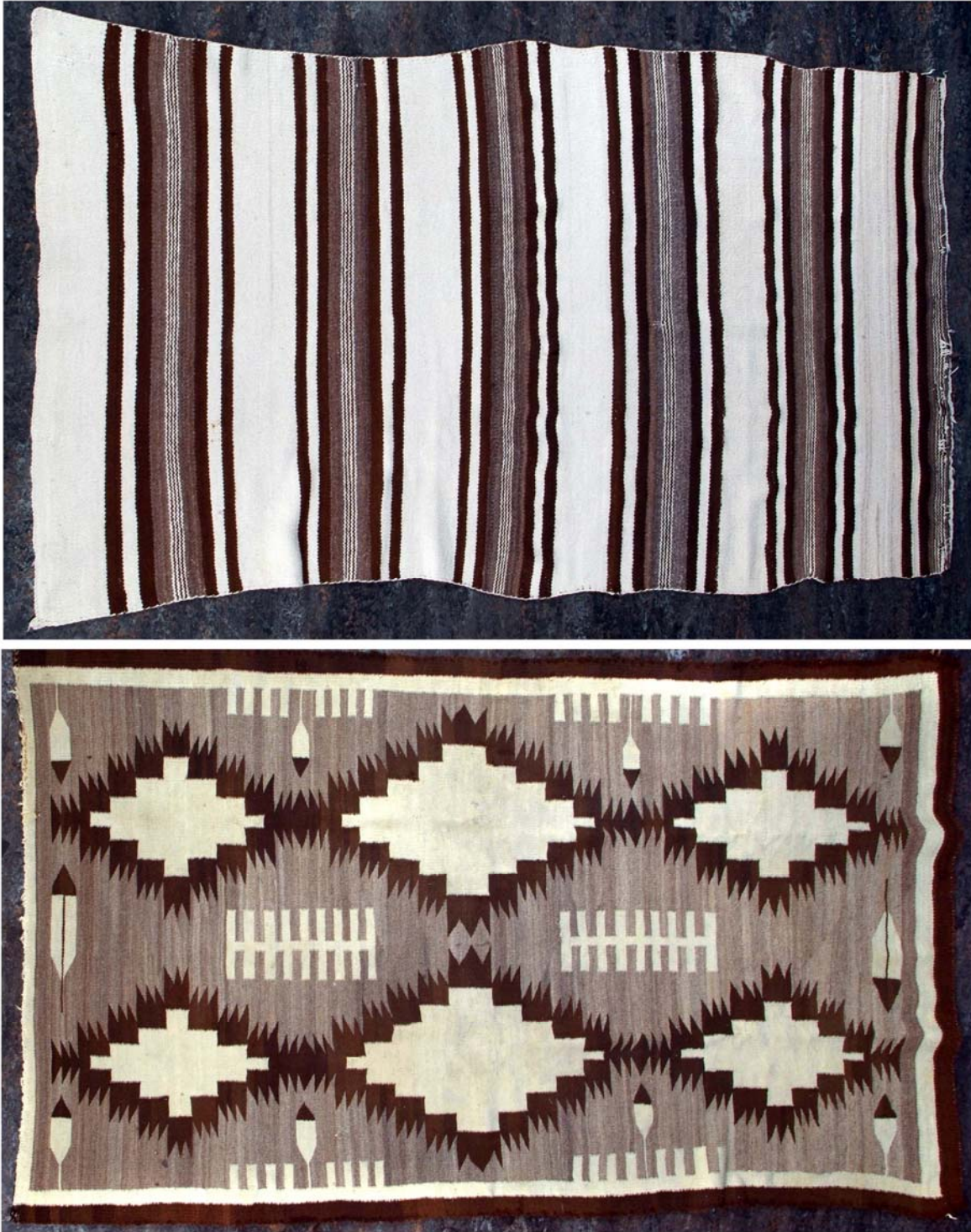


Figure 1.6 – Early Navajo weavings. (Top) Chinle wearing blanket, weaver unknown, 36" x 56," circa 1880. (Bottom) Two Grey Hills transitional rug, 44" x 72," circa 1930

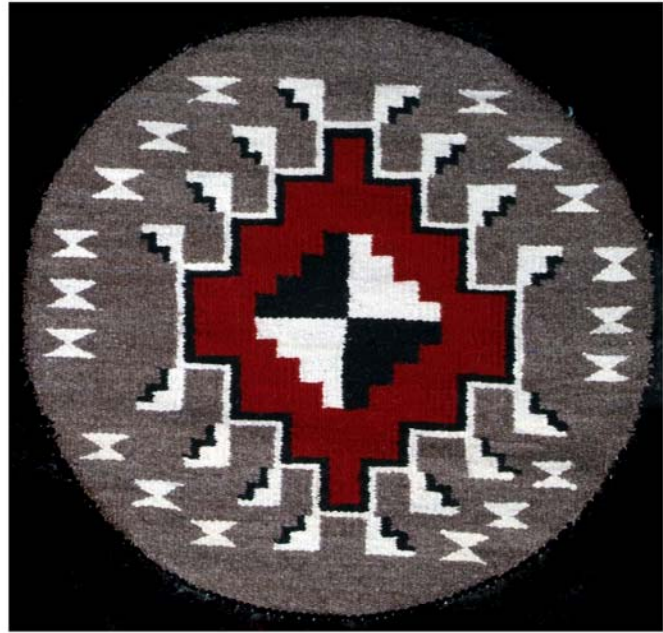


Figure 1.7 – Contemporary (regional) Navajo weavings. (Clockwise, from upper left). Wide Ruins with border by Georgia Billie, 33" x 51," 1987. Round Ganado by Julie Treason, 21 ½" diameter, 1987. Two Grey Hills (tapestry) by Sarah W. Begay, 18" x 26," 1987. Double Twill (Two Face) by Rosinda Wilson, 22" x 34," circa 1995.

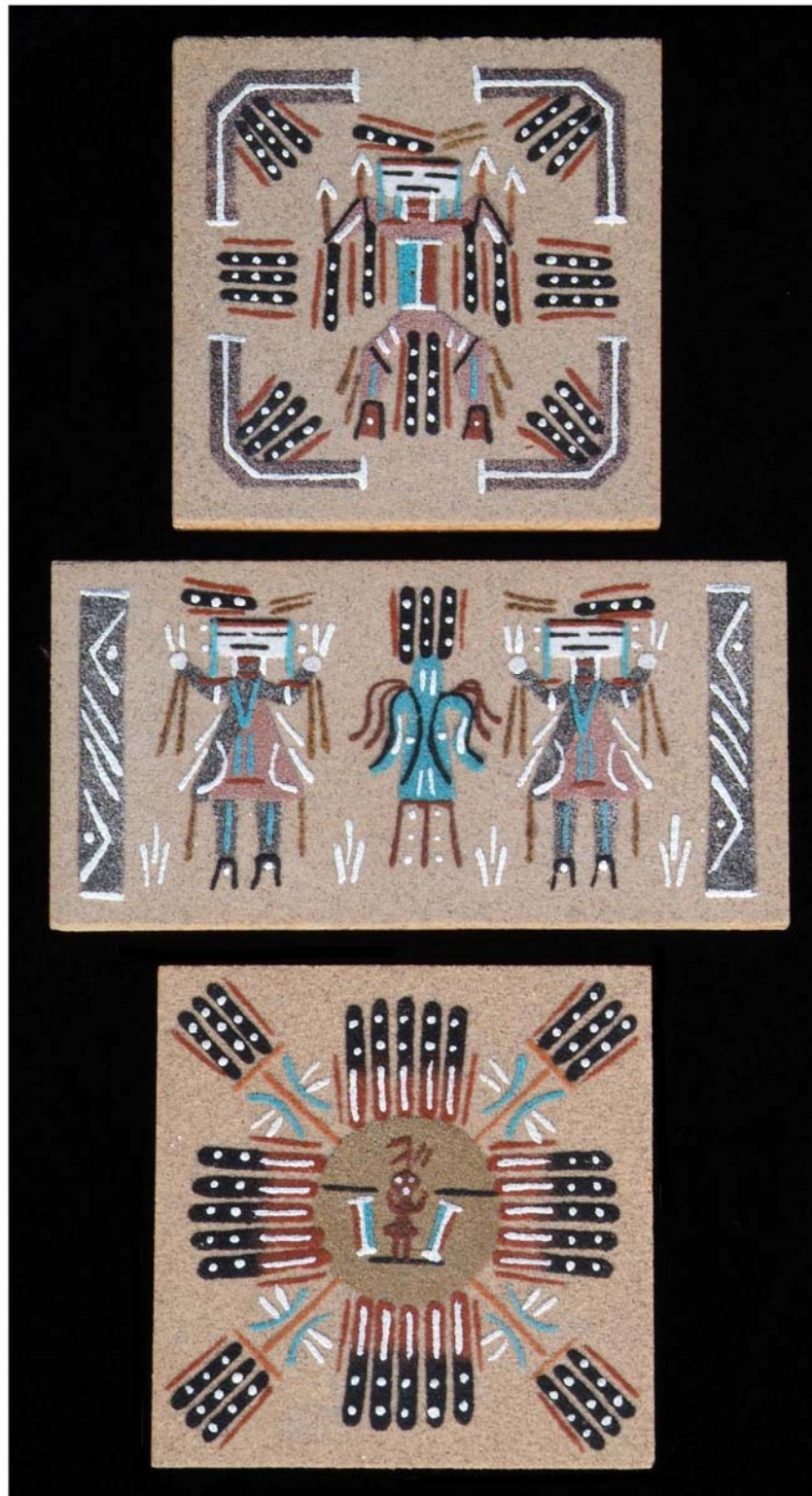


Figure 1.8 – Commercial sandpaintings. (Top) “ThunderBird,” 4” x 4”; (Center) “Seed Blessing,” 6” x 3”; (Bottom) “Sun,” 4” x 4,” all by C. Doster (Navajo), 1998.



Figure 1.9 – Pueblo and Navajo pottery. (From left) San Ildefonso vase signed Lusita Martinez, 5 ½” height and 5” diameter, circa 1920. Acoma pot (marked, unsigned), 4” diameter, circa 1970. Hopi wedding vase by Pauline Setalla, 10 ¾” height and 6” diameter, circa 1988. Navajo pot (black glaze) by Adakai, Blanding, Utah, 6 ½” height by 7” diameter, circa 1990.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Over the past decade, the writings of several other individuals have influenced my research in the areas of traditional Native American art, its production and uses of symbolism, and the socio-economic aspects of multiculturalism surrounding the making of art by Native Americans. I must admit that the majority of my reading in these subject areas has been the writings of W. Jackson Rushing, who is an author and professor at St. Louis University. Jack Rushing's publications deal with Native American art and its relationship to, and influence upon, modernist and postmodern artists, especially the early abstract expressionists. He also has focused his expertise on the "traditionalists" among Native American artists trained at the Santa Fe Indian School from the 1920s through its transition to the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in the 1960s. Additionally, the works of Mary Stokrocki and Mary Erickson, from Arizona State University, who have conducted research and observations among the Native tribes of the Southwest, particularly the Navajo, have influenced this work. As much as the work of these individuals has influenced my thinking and the perceptions I have developed of the Native American artists of the Southwest, it is the culture of the Southwest and its uncertain future that holds much curiosity for me and fertile ground for educational research in the arts.

"Change" is an often used word nowadays, whether in reference to politics or managers and head coaches of professional sports teams. Also, "change" is an appropriate term when discussing aspects of this research study and the review of literature dealing with the research questions and the persons, culture, and the art under scrutiny.

If change is to occur, it must have a setting, and I picture the reservation of the Southwest as huge combination “classroom/art production studios.” With an art-centered society and so many artists among the Native American population, the opportunity for art education research and pedagogy leading to the production of high quality artwork is significant. The societal structure with families or clans of living in small compounds and villages, coupled with the relative geographical isolation in the Southwest, creates an atmosphere conducive to the passing on of techniques and symbolism from family member to family member.

The title of this dissertation would suggest that I might not be searching for change, but for continuity in the maintenance of tradition in Southwest Native American art. That would be true to some extent, although this study is directed at determining what factors influence traditional art production. Whether these factors are changing the art forms themselves may or may not be determined. In the art-centered society found in the American Indian tribes of the Southwest, one might expect changes in the culture precipitated by external factors from a larger and increasingly invasive Eurocentric society. A collector of Native American art might not be looking for “change,” but might expect an evolving refinement in art production techniques, style, and aesthetics. Changes and refinements to works of art should be of great interest to art educators and researchers, as well as to government officials and lawmakers who share fiscal and legal concerns related to a changing market, and to the Indian artists and traders who share a vested interest in a commercial livelihood which could be greatly affected by change.

Failure to Consider the Southwest

An extensive search revealed little in the way of published materials on art education in the Southwest United States, particularly in regard to pedagogical influences on the production of art by Native Americans.

Peter Smith's (1999) article "The Unexplored: Art Education Historians' Failure to Consider the Southwest" points to a distinct "absence of accounts of art education in the Southwest" (p. 114). He focuses on the state of New Mexico, with its rich cultural and artistic heritage, to explore art education and art production (resultant from education) in that region, and the "curious" (p. 114) omission of documentation by art educators. His research uncovers the fact that much of the art and art education historical documentation in the Southwest has been by archeologists and anthropologists looking at ancient cultures, and by Eurocentric-oriented art historians drawing comparisons with more modern styles, periods, and symbolism in art history.

To further the inclusion of Southwest art education history, Smith (1999) highlights the work of one art educator, Dorothy Dunn. A graduate of the Art Institute of Chicago, Dunn influenced a generation of Native American painters and helped to develop a distinct Indian painting style while teaching at the Santa Fe Indian School in the 1930s. This "Studio Style" of painting, as it came to be known, had great influence in the art world during a time when tourism to the Southwest was first becoming popular. The commercial aspects of Dunn's art pedagogy and the transitional influence to her successors and the Institute for American Indian Art are discussed by Smith.

He concludes with criticism of art educators in New Mexico for their seeming lack of attention to the rich heritage begun by Kiva artists and continued by educators like Dorothy Dunn. Smith notes ineffective attempts at reaching and teaching a multicultural society that is New Mexico, and criticizes his colleagues and art historians for the "ghettoized" (p. 126) approach to the discussion of Southwest art. He calls for a more introspective examination of the art culture of the Southwest and a turning away from the art education pedagogy of the "dominant cultural origins of Northeast centers of art education" (p. 126).

The purpose of Smith's article was to analyze, through examination of published documents, the methods utilized to further art education and production in the Southwest, specifically, New Mexico. It further identified some individuals responsible for teaching art and developing styles prevalent among Southwest artists.

The article addressed research questions similar in content and scope to those employed by myself, in this study: 1. Who was/is responsible for education of the contemporary Southwest artist? 2. Who was/is responsible for the study and documentation of this pedagogical phenomenon? and; 3. What impact has this pedagogy had upon the styles and aesthetic development of Southwest artists?

Smith's study is significant for art educators, art historians, and for me in particular, because it presents an area of opportunity for additional research in a region that is extremely rich in art history, art culture, and art production. The mixed cultures of the Southwest have always been art-centered, usually for ceremonial reasons. Interest in and extended travel to this region of the United States in the twentieth century has exposed more people to the art culture of the Southwest and has expanded and enhanced the commercial markets for artists. Art educators and historians have been reluctant to explore the development of the arts in the Southwest and the significance of the region to art history as a whole.

I feel that Smith must have been influenced by the changes he witnessed in the Southwest, particularly due to the booming growth of the population in the region. This growth could be seen as encroaching upon and threatening the traditional culture, including the art, of the American Indians in the region. However, it could also be looked upon as an expansion and renovation of the "art classroom" creating more opportunities for research by art educators.

Smith's paper was very relevant to my area of research - traditional methods and symbolism in Southwest Native American art. A search of dissertation abstracts showed no titles that pertained directly to my research and very few that concentrated on the Southwest. This would bolster Smith's assertion that there has been a lack of consideration to the art and art education of this region.

Smith centers his article on the art educator Dorothy Dunn, and while he cites many references of her significant impact upon Southwest Indian art, he also is critical of the narrow scope of her students' painting styles. He (and others cited) compare her art education impact with that of Vienna's Franz Cizek, who is known for his development of creative self-expression in children's art. While both Cizek and Dunn had dramatic results with their students' art, only Dunn's students gained notoriety in the contemporary art world. However, there is criticism of their narrow scope of painting style and thus a criticism of Dunn for her lack of influence on a more broad scale and time line. I believe the criticism of Dunn and the comparison with Cizek by Smith (and others) is not well founded. Dunn was teaching in a different environment to students of a different culture, yet still had remarkable success and influence. Additionally, Dunn's teaching career at the Santa Fe Indian School covered a span of only five years, compared to more than a forty-year teaching career by Cizek. Smith's attention to the teachings of Dunn and her "descendants" focuses on Native American artists. He seems to drop this subject after her influence and never returns to it, although Native Americans still have a strong influence on the art of the Southwest. He then jumps into discussions and comparisons of Hispanic architecture. While this broke the continuity of flow in the paper, I believe Smith was trying to maintain a balance of discussion between Native American and Hispanic cultures in New Mexico.

This article provides a wealth of references for my research, as well as a springboard from which to launch discussion of art education initiatives and methods in the Southwest.

Places of Memory

A committee member introduced me to the book *Places of Memory: Whiteman's Schools and Native American Communities* by Alan Peshkin (1997), and I found many parallels between his studies and mine. Not the least of least was the geographical setting – the Pueblo Indian communities of the Southwestern United States, and specifically the tribes of northwestern New Mexico. My study takes the artwork of the Pueblo people into consideration, while focusing on the artwork of the more highly populated and artistically prolific tribes in the region – the Navajo and Hopi tribes. Another parallel involves Peshkin's observations in the governmental school systems of the area, where Eurocentric pedagogy coexists with Native American culture and ideology. This was an objective of my research during my pilot study where classroom observation was a major focus (see Appendix B). The influence of the Eurocentric "Anglo" culture on the American Indian communities cannot be overlooked as a direct influence on the production of artwork by Native American artists and artisans. Where and how this occurs are the central themes and ever present questions of my research.

The independence and interdependence of the Pueblo tribes is explored by Peshkin – both from the standpoint of political and social communication between the ten Pueblo communities in New Mexico, as well as the dependence upon Anglo, Eurocentric culture, language, and economic means of doing business. This includes the education of Native American youth, as a means of survival, and prosperity, in the white man's world. However, Peshkin discovered that the Pueblo culture still maintains its secrets and is guarded in discussions about rituals and the ceremonial/religious side of their lives. Much of the reasoning behind this is attributed to the

Spanish influence and dominance of the 16th and 17th centuries, although one of my research participants laid much of the blame for exclusion of Anglos from ceremonial events to rude and thoughtless intrusion by Anglos in the late 19th and early 20th century (personal communication, November 1, 1996). Pueblo tribes hold their land as the foundation of sovereignty and culture, and in combination with their religion and structures of governance view each tribal community as a theocracy (Peshkin, 1997, also see Ball 1990, Goldfrank 1952, Hawley 1937, Gutierrez 1991). The community center for religious activity and formal socialization is the “kiva,” a large, windowless room generally entered by ladder from an opening in the roof of the round building. It is a sacred center, closed to non-Indian outsiders, and used for instruction and ritual practice and preparation. This is generally the place where art-making for ceremonial purposes and preparation for ceremonies takes place. Weaving, carving of Kachinas, and assembly of costumes for religious ceremonies and seasonal dances often takes place in the kiva.

Although religion is not the focus of my research, it is important to note that a majority of New Mexico’s population practices Catholicism. In the “Living in Two Worlds” section of his book, Peshkin (1997) discusses the “lines of change” (p. 66) from external religious, political, and economic factors that “impinge on Pueblo culture” (p. 66). He further states:

The penetration of Pueblo culture has been accomplished by government agents, the purveyors and enforcers of federal policies; by non-Catholic missionaries, so that now Protestantism completes with established Catholic and traditional religious forms, by traders, salesmen, and shopkeepers who bring a splendor of goods to the attention of people who once lived almost self-sufficiently off the land;... All this and more has encouraged social change (p. 66).

I found it interesting that all the traders who were responsible for the “social change” previously mentioned were of the Mormon religion. However, one of my participant artist respondents told me that the Mormons had an extremely difficult task in convincing the Hopi (a Pueblo tribe) to convert because the structure and beliefs of the church of Latter Day Saints was remarkably similar to traditional Hopi religion. “Why should we change, when it is the same,” he said (Lomahquahu, personal communication, November 1, 1996).

One area of particular interest and parallel to my research was Peshkin’s chapter on “Pueblo Ideals” (p. 51). Grandparents (elders) teach Pueblo children the traditional ways of Indian life. Although varying from tribe to tribe, a common core of beliefs and practices are rooted in these Pueblo ideals and help maintain a continuity of life practices that produce balance and harmony. These “ideals” are nearly identical to the concept of *hózhó* or “harmony” which is a Navajo term that I first ran across in a description of the ceremonial aspects of art in the book *Caliope’s Sisters* (Anderson, 1990) and again in *Navajo: Tradition and Change in the Southwest* (Lindig & Tiewes, 1991). In my interviews, the concept of *hózhó* (harmony and balance in life) was discussed by several of my artist participants as well as by at least one trader, and will be discussed in some detail in the data analysis and interpretation chapter.

An interesting “ideal” covered by Peshkin (p. 53) was that of a Pueblo individual “standing in.” In the Anglo world, there is a tendency to celebrate the individual by “standing out” from the crowd. This is certainly true of artists. One student told researcher Anne Smith, “When any Pueblo Indian is asked questions about himself as an individual, the thing that pops into my mind is always, ‘group.’ To me, the word individual still does not exist” (Smith, 1966, p. 83).

“Standing in” as a Pueblo value allows individuals to excel in traditional ways, while establishing the group as the most important entity. A sense of egalitarianism invites Pueblo tribe members not to “strut” or “trumpet” one’s talents and successes. This “group” mentality was evident in responses I received from my artists research respondents. They certainly appeared comfortable and proud of their abilities and talent, but gave enormous credit to their mentors and teachers as a means of supporting and establishing their success as that of the tribe. Likewise, any criticism of tribal policies or government was borne by the tribal elders. This traditional approach shows some signs of being threatened by the influence of two conflicting societies – Indian and Anglo. Mentorship is celebrated by talented people who pay homage to their group by uncoerced teaching and sharing of talent with others.

Several of my study group respondents were in the military (U.S. Army and U.S. Marines), and both mentioned that the important thing they received from their military experience was “attention to detail” (Lomahquahu and Jim, personal communication, November 1, 1996 and November 2, 1999). Peshkin (p. 54) mentions that “stress on harmony” includes observing the details of an act (such as the art of carving or throwing a pot on a potter’s wheel) or an event and “harmonizing all the particulars” by not taking shortcuts towards the final outcome (be it a piece of art or the practice of a religious ceremony). Showing proper respect is another means of keeping harmony in the community. Those who show respect for tribal elders, leaders, and religious persons help to maintain balance and harmony. As one acquires more knowledge of their traditional culture, one becomes “whole” and is personally rewarded for their efforts. My own experiences in dealing with Native Americans (artists and non-artists) are that they have been an open and sharing society. There are of course limitations to the sharing of knowledge about religious, ceremonial, or other “taboo” information. Several of my study

participants (Lomahquahu, Jim, B. McGee, personal communications, November 1, 1996; November 2, 1999; May 19, 1997) have expressed to me the shy nature of Native Americans, and the difficulty of gaining eye contact with an Indian, let alone gaining their trust.

Peshkin (1997) discussed issues of gender and age, particularly with respect to ceremonial activities, but concluded that, “When it comes to traditional ceremonial things, all the women don’t just take responsibility for their own family; they take responsibility for the whole tribe” (p. 56). More will be discussed regarding gender and its traditional and non-traditional role in Native American life and artwork, as it is becoming a more significant issue in both the Indian and Anglo worlds.

Finally, Peshkin has a recurring discussion of Native American aboriginal language. To maintain a traditional and ideal life, it is important that the native language be spoken in all ceremonial and tribal affairs. Something on the order of 80% of Navajo Indians living on the Reservation (Navajo Nation) speak Navajo (Grahame et al, 2002). When dealing with the “two worlds” (p. 70) that Peshkin analyzed, it is imperative for Indians to use proper language skills in a variety of social situations.

Even though there is not a great deal of mention about art making or pedagogy in Peshkin’s book, it is rich in discussion of social and individual issues and areas of interest which bolster arguments and areas of discussion about Native American art.

Multiculturalism and Cross-culturalism

When I look back at my readings which are closely associated with my research into Native American art and traditional methods/symbolism, I find that a recurring theme in current literature which fits closely with my research is multiculturalism and its relationship to modernist and postmodern art criticism and pedagogy. In this area, the work of Patricia Stuhr from Ohio

State University has been influential in this study. Some of Stuhr's writings have been in collaboration with Ronald Neperud, and she has given credit to not only Neperud, but also to Eugene Grigsby and June McFee for their influence on her thinking in the area of multicultural art education (Stuhr, 1999). In her review of Dr. Graeme Chalmers book *Celebrating pluralism: Art, education, and cultural diversity*, Stuhr (1999) states that her point-of-view as a reviewer is from a feminist, postmodern critical standpoint. She also was pointed in voicing her position as not being an advocate of discipline-based art education (DBAE) and the Getty Institute. I find her viewpoints interesting to my research, as the artistic culture I am exploring is historically gender specific, and many of the artists I have spoken with either grew up in school curricula that employed DBAE or were exposed through their children's school systems in which they serve as mentors in the fine arts. Stuhr (1999) also describes herself as a "social reconstructionist" (p. 182) and I will explore her work in this area, as well as attempt to tie it to at least one of my case studies.

My initial exposure to Stuhr's published work was the article that she co-authored with Ronald Neperud on "Cross-Cultural Valuing of Wisconsin Indian Art by Indians and Non-Indians" (1993). I have adopted her descriptions of *traditional, transitional, and transformative* forms of Native American art as a basis for how I look at the art forms produced by artists in this study. Also, the "valuing" and valuation methods utilized in this publication are applicable to my view of southwestern Native American art, even though the studies involved Wisconsin Indian tribes.

Neperud and Stuhr's (1993) paper explores the valuing of art forms by Indian and non-Indian subjects and looks at the possibility of cultural diversity as a factor in the valuing of art images. Is there a "universal aesthetic" or do different cultures and societies have specific

aesthetic values? What factors constitute aesthetic forms which may be perceived as “good art;” in this case, “good Indian art?” My study participant, Eugene V. Thaw, an art dealer and collector of American Indian art, had the following to say when questioned about art versus craft and the valuation of Native American art.

Art cannot be made without craftsmanship, without facility, and without ingenuity; however, in American Indian art, what would be considered *craft* in Anglo work, can be considered *art* when you are collecting American Indian art. For instance, basketry would not be considered a “fine art” in an American museum; however, in an Indian facility, baskets are definitely high works of art. The reason for this is, in our culture, utilitarian objects are *craft*, whereas, to the American Indian, utilitarian objects are most often also for ceremonies or as a gift. (Personal communication, February 9, 1999, Santa Fe, NM)

Mr. Thaw definitely feels there are cultural differences between how different ethnic groups value artwork. Spirituality and emotional value both play a role in the valuation. I would argue that this is also true in Neperud and Stuhr’s study among Wisconsin Indians and non-Indians.

Neperud and Stuhr’s (1993) study took place on the Menominee Indian Reservation in east-central Wisconsin; Red Cliff Reservation (Chippewa Indian tribe); and in Ashland, Wisconsin, home of Northland College. The subjects were students, ranging from middle school through college level, and from 16 to 60 years of age. There were 31 Indians and 19 non-Indians in the classes; 28 females and 22 males took part in the study. Each student was asked to give a quantitative valuation from 1-5 (highest) on each of 30 slides of Indian art viewed for 4 seconds each. Additionally, the students were asked to fill out a questionnaire on their valuations to determine subjective reasons for their ratings. These questionnaires generally derived feelings of

poor to excellent examples of Indian art and indicated three categories accounting for most responses to the slides of the artwork: general appearance, construction, and Indian characteristics.

There were three forms of Indian art which were evaluated: Traditional, Transitional, and Transformative. Both Indians and non-Indians were included in the study to gain insight into the valuing of art forms by different cultural groups. After the ratings were tabulated, means and standard deviations for the groups were computed using the variables of age, gender, and ethnicity. The Indians rated all forms of their art higher than non-Indians, while rating transitional art highest, then traditional and then transformative. Non-Indians valued traditional Indian art highest. Both groups rated transformative art as at least good Indian art. Transitional forms of Indian art were associated with powwows, traditional ceremonies, and everyday life, so it is not surprising that Indians rated this form highest as it is the most familiar.

The variable of age was most definite in the valuation of transformative works of art, with a greater preference by older persons. This could be due to the fact that more experience and exposure to art forms produce more tolerance to transformative art forms and the symbolism they might contain. Since the younger study group had been exposed to Indian culture classes, it was reasonable that they would prefer traditional and transitional art forms. A variation was found between ratings of transitional art by Indian and non-Indian women, but not in men. This could be due to greater exposure to transitional art forms in powwows and other cultural gatherings by Indian women.

It was anticipated that Indians would value traditional art forms more highly than either transitional or transformative. This was not found to be true, possibly because traditional objects may be significant to Indians only in ceremonial or religious ways and not as art objects.

Socialization and increased exposure to transitional objects may enhance their valuation. A significant fact which could account for the skewing of data could be the close proximity of the non-Indians to Indians in the communities and the heterogeneous nature of the classes.

My personal response and reaction to Neperud and Stuhr's paper is that the somewhat abnormal homology of the cultural groups studied might account for the comparable valuing of different forms of Indian art. It would be interesting to reproduce this study in various geographic/cultural settings to see if the results were similar. I suspect they would not be, particularly in areas where Indian culture is not as well understood or where there are not classes in Indian culture available to non-Indians, as was true in this study.

I also question how the length of time that each slide was viewed and the sequence in which forms were viewed (which was not mentioned) might influence the valuation of the Indian art forms. This would certainly allow more time for the study of construction, whose quality might influence a value judgment. No rationale was given for the choices of objects or how they were presented to the study groups.

I certainly believe that the more informed the group is to traditional art forms, customs and beliefs, the more appreciative they are likely to be for the value of a piece and its aesthetic significance as an art form. Being a collector of Indian art, I know firsthand how an appreciation for and knowledge of the reasons an object is created, the circumstance surrounding its production, and the process of creation can increase the object's aesthetic significance and worth.

I tend to agree with Eugene Thaw that different cultures perceive the value of objects in different ways and to different degrees. Cultural differences may be due to factors within the society or affected by outside sources (other cultures), and this would be a recommended area for further study since some data and research models exist.

In one of her earlier publications, in collaboration with Robyn F. Wasson and Lois Petrovich-Mwaniki (1990), Dr. Stuhr and her coauthors discuss and explore the socio-anthropological aspects of multicultural art education in “Teaching Art in the Multicultural Classroom: Six Position Statements.” There is an attempt to encourage teachers of art to not only recognize cultural diversity in the classroom, but to design culturally and socially based curricula, including art making and art learning, for the classroom.

The six position statements, as taken directly from the article (in italics), are:

1. We advocate a socio-anthropologic basis for studying the aesthetic production and experience of cultures, which means focusing on knowledge of the makers of art, as well as the socio-cultural context in which art is produced.

The fields of sociology and anthropology focus on studying of cultures and societies and many of the processes peculiar to a culture, including the making of art. “Culture” is defined as a people’s way of perceiving, feeling, believing, evaluating, and behaving (Goodenough, 1976). Culture can be affected by the environment, economics, and modes of production (Harris, 1979). There are four characteristics of culture: (1) it is learned through enculturation and socialization, (2) it is shared by most of its members, (3) it is adaptive, and (4) it is dynamic (Gollnick & Chinn, 1986). Culture also creates a value system which becomes a “world view” accepted by a majority of a culture/society. This certainly explains the value placed upon art objects, whether that view is for economic, religious, or utilitarian reasons. Stuhr, et al. contend that study of art and makers of art provide a deeper understanding of the cultural values of a society.

2. We acknowledge teaching as cultural and social intervention and therefore, in any teaching endeavor, it is imperative that teachers not only confront, but also constantly be aware of their own cultural and social biases.

Dominant cultures must realize that their interventions in classroom situations impose a bias, either negative or positive, upon various ethnic and social groups, and thus develop culturally and socially conditioned “assumptions.” These assumptions must be properly challenged by the teachers (and students) in order to establish “real communication” and intercultural understanding.

3. We support a student/community-centered educational process in which the teacher must access and utilize the students’ socio-cultural values and beliefs and those of the cultures of the community, when planning art curricula.

Stuhr, et al. advise teachers that they must draw the ethnic diversity and experiences from the community and introduce them into the classroom, because these sources are the most common to the students, although they may often be foreign to the culture of the teacher. Teachers are reminded that students are often influenced by several aspects of culture other than their own ethnic origin, and that dominant cultures and subcultures are important to how students function among their peers.

4. We support anthropologically based methods for identifying these socio-cultural groups and their accompanying values and practices which influence aesthetic production.

This view stresses the importance of the environment to a multicultural art education and encourages both students and teachers to become ethnographers and study artifacts and “visual sign making” within the cultures of the classroom and within the community. This requires dynamic exploration of cultures, rather than book knowledge that may be fed by the dominant culture. In a criticism of DBAE, Stuhr and her colleagues contend that this model (DBAE) was often inappropriate for conveying a total art experience as it was often opined through the voice of the dominant culture.

5. We advocate the identification and discriminating use of culturally responsive pedagogy that more democratically represents the socio-cultural and ethnic diversity existing in the classroom, the community, and the nation.

This position advocates looking to the knowledge and skills existing within the community related to aesthetic production and then bringing this into the classroom curriculum. Students should respond more positively to a culturally responsive approach to learning and art production and thus feel less alienated in the school environment. The teacher must ensure that art education is truly multicultural and takes a more worldly view of a culture rather than just being a cross-cultural experience of teaching the art forms of another country or ethnic group with no relevance to the culture of that society.

6. We want to focus on the dynamic complexity of the factors that affect all human interaction: physical and mental ability, class, gender, age, politics, religion, and ethnicity. We see a more democratic approach whereby the disenfranchised are also given a voice in the art education process, and the disenfranchised, as well as the franchised, are sensitized to the taken-for-granted assumptions implicit in the dominant ideology.

This position recognizes that certain individuals and groups have been exposed to prejudice and discrimination, and teachers need to be sensitive to prejudices which have been encountered and historically preserved. This can be incorporated into the art curricula by the study of prejudices and discrimination encountered in the art world in venues as religious discrimination, physical and mental handicaps, gender bias, and the politics of power and economics.

In conclusion, Stuhr and her colleagues ask art educators to approach the teaching of art in the multicultural classroom as both a challenge and an opportunity. As our culture becomes more dynamic and mobile, the ethnography of many communities is in flux and many

“minorities” will no longer be quantitatively such. How will former dominant groups play a role in multicultural education and also maintain their identity? This paper poses many questions that have a direct correlation to my research among Southwestern Native American artists.

In 1992, Patricia Stuhr and her same two colleagues published a paper on “Curriculum Guidelines for the Multicultural Art Classroom.” This paper revisits the six positions of their 1990 paper previously discussed, with the addition of some specific practical guidelines and resources for the development of multicultural art curricula. The paper mentions the creation of effective art learning environments and strategies for implementing multicultural art curricula. It also discusses the role of art in promoting social action and cultural (multicultural) awareness, and sites specific resources within the community (in this case, a Wisconsin town with a large Native American population) with which to gather material for the implementation of a multicultural art curriculum.

In her article on “Multicultural Art Education and Social Reconstruction” Stuhr (1994) recognizes that general education acts as social intervention and thus multicultural art education reconstructs society in some ways. She discusses the five approaches to multicultural education as described by curriculum theorists Sleeter and Grant (1988, 1993) and their applications to art education.

The first approach is *teaching the exceptional and culturally different*. This approach places responsibility on the teacher for the preparation of “minority” students to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to be integrated within the existing society in the classroom and later in adult life. It is a discipline-based approach based on content appropriate to the Western European and North American majority culture. White, male, middle-class students are the standard for which the curriculum is aimed as a means for them to prepare for jobs in art or

participation in cultural events. Negative aspects of this educational approach are a loss of the development of democracy and a loss of diversity in socio-cultural study of art.

The *human relations approach* is the second educational approach discussed. Its major focus is to help students of different backgrounds to get along better and learn in a harmonious, tolerant social system. Oneness, the elimination of prejudice, and social accord are stressed to hopefully bring about group unity and shared qualities and characteristics in the process and products of art making. A shortcoming of this approach is that it does not deal with cultural conflict and seems to gloss over the surface of cultural knowledge and understanding. To be successful, this approach calls upon collaboration between teachers in the curriculum as well as participation from outside community “experts” who are familiar with or represent cultures being studied. Ideally, cultures other than those of the students would be added to the curriculum.

The *single group studies* approach constructs courses based on the accomplishments and perspectives of one particular cultural group, such as Native Americans, African-Americans, or women. It is an approach more often found in higher education than in elementary or secondary schools. It may focus on many aspects of a culture including its relationship to art, whether or not members of the group are considered to be in the mainstream of the art world. Since it studies aspects of a group which may have been ignored or given little credence, it acknowledges cultural conflicts and attempts to raise the consciousness of individuals about other cultures and individual groups.

The *multicultural education* approach is described as a “cultural democracy” (p. 175) and promotes equity and pluralism by a reform of the educational programs in the schools. This may be accomplished by the hiring of teachers and personnel from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and various cultures in non-stereotypical roles. Perspectives of individuals from

groups being studied are sought afterward and students may interact with these individuals in the classroom or, in the case of artists, in their studio environment. This type of educational approach advocates school reform with open discussion of cultural diversity without subjective, sexist or chauvinistic structuring of education.

The final approach is *education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist*. The student is prepared to challenge social, structural inequality and promote social and cultural diversity. In social reconstruction, art education should adopt four practices: democracy, analysis by students of their own situations, social action skills, and group coalescence. Art is taught in conjunction with other courses, especially social studies.

Logically, multicultural and social reconstructionist approaches to art education would be desirable because not only do they promote democracy, social skills and coalescence, but they are more diverse, well rounded, and just plain interesting. I believe that students respond better to a diverse curriculum because it sparks their interest and curiosity. An integrated curriculum with relevance from subject to subject bolstered by an enthusiastic faculty and community cannot help but spark a greater excitement from students. During my classroom observation (see Appendix B) at the Indian high school in Arizona, I did not notice the influence of a true multicultural curriculum. In a school with 450 students, there were three full-time art teachers and three large, well-equipped classrooms dedicated to art production. I met two of the three art teachers and they were engaging, dedicated people. However, as dedicated as the teachers are, there seemed to be no allowance for study of the Native American culture, let alone a multicultural curriculum. Art projects, and the students' interests seemed to revolve around the "hip hop" culture. A study of Indian high school curricula would be an interesting research project. The world is changing, and I believe the curricula of schools need to keep pace, but

some time dedicated to traditional Native American art methods, techniques, and culture would be beneficial, in my opinion. Stuhr's position statements would make a good model or foundation upon which to build a curriculum for these Native American students.

Stuhr's chapter, "Social Reconstructionist Multicultural Art Curriculum Design: Using the powwow as an Example" in Ronald Neperud's book Context, Content, and Community in Art Education: Beyond Postmodernism (1995) utilizes much of the information found in her earlier publication on "Teaching Art in the Multicultural Classroom: Six Position Statements" (Wasson, 1990), including the positions advocating a socio-anthropological basis for studying art production, cultural and social interventional pedagogy, student/community-centered education, an anthropological approach to identifying socio-cultural groups and their values and practices, culturally responsive pedagogy, and a democratic approach to multicultural art education. She advocates a new, postmodern anthropology and outlines social reconstructionist effects on art programs with a goal of social change and reform. Stuhr discusses the uniqueness of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art pedagogy centered on four practices: (1) the active practice of democracy in schools, (2) student analysis of their own circumstances, (3) learning social action skills to increase chances of success, and (4) coalescing, or getting disadvantaged groups to work together for the good of all society. She admits that this last practice is a process whose goals will never be fully realized because of prejudice and discrimination.

Her chapter goes on to list and discuss the characteristics of *culture* and *society*, as well as *enculturation*, *acculturation*, and *assimilation*; all important aspects for consideration in a multicultural classroom. She expanded on her "Curriculum Guidelines..." paper (Stuhr, 1992) to

help students, through instruction, to study various socio-cultural groups, including their own, and sources of data gathering or the implementation of multicultural art curricula.

Stuhr's chapter ends with an in-depth description of her research on Native American powwows including their historical background, her specific experiences in gathering data (interviews) at powwows she had attended, and implications for art education curricula. Even though some gender biases are identified and there is strong evidence of dominant culture assimilation in the socialization of the powwow, I believe that Stuhr feels that they are a politically correct democracy and a beneficial model for study in a multicultural art curriculum.

Stuhr's contributions to Arthur Efland's book Postmodern Art Education: An Approach to Curriculum (1991) provided an additional perspective to material that she had previously published in her papers and book chapter that I had read. Her focus in Chapter Four ("Multicultural Art Education as It Relates to Modernism and Postmodernism") is still on the recurrent themes of multiculturalism, socio-anthropology, the five approaches to multicultural education, and social reconstructionist education. What I found new and interesting was her approach to comparing modernist and postmodernist views and definitions/comparisons to these areas. Her notions of the interrelationship of "power" and "knowledge" were interesting and cultural valuing of "high" and "low" art reminded me of my research queries to Native Americans about their definitions of "art" versus "craft." For a student who had not read her body of work, her contributions in this book would provide an excellent and well organized cross-section of her research and areas of expertise.

Stuhr's themes of *multiculturalism* and *social reconstruction* bring to mind most, if not all, of the subjects I have interviewed. The fact that her research has dealt primarily with *pedagogy* and *curriculum design* makes me think that identifying the threads that reinforce

teaching would be a significant comparison and discussion. This would certainly apply to the traders that I have interviewed, as my research shows that they play a significant role in developing and marketing art talent and “traditional authenticity,” as well as serving as mentors and advisors. All of these are attributes of a good teacher, in my opinion.

Several of the Native American artists that I have interviewed perform some minimal teaching duties at local schools by giving demonstrations or working as mentors in their children’s classrooms. However, one of them, Mr. Alan Jim, has really left a career as an artist behind to pursue a full-time career as a high school ceramics teacher. I think he is the most logical person to relate to Stuhr’s studies in multicultural art education.

Alan Jim is a Navajo Indian and native of northern Arizona, who teaches at a high school in Tuba City, Arizona. I interviewed him in 1999 and, as previously mentioned, also did an observational study of his ceramics classroom for a portion of a “typical” school day. Before I discuss any parallels to Mr. Jim’s and Stuhr’s approaches to teaching art in a multicultural classroom, I think it is important (and hopefully interesting) to share the observations of Alan Jim’s classroom.

Alan Jim’s classroom at Greyhills Academy High School is truly a multicultural setting, even though the student population is Native American, as is the majority of the community of Tuba City, Arizona. A survey of demographic structure in the United States reveals the existence of 170 Native American groups (Gollnick & Chinn, 1986). There were at least four Native American tribes represented in Mr. Jim’s class, all with distinctly different socio-cultural histories. While the group of students could not be described as “multiracial” or “cross-cultural,” the politics, religious culture, and tribal governments of the different tribes were non-homogenous.

Sleeter and Grant's (1993) *single group study approach* to multicultural education described by Stuhr (1994) would seem the best "fit" for a description of Alan Jim's classroom, this would not necessarily be the case. While his coursework emphasized contributions and perspectives from one particular cultural group (Native American), and pluralism and social equity were promoted, there were aspects of his pedagogical approach that could fit into a *multicultural education approach* and/or a *human relations approach*. It should be noted that many of the teaching methods were discipline-based and allowed Mr. Jim to integrate some art history and criticism with a majority of art production.

The socio-economic factors within the community would probably have prevented Alan Jim from taking a more postmodern, social reconstructionist approach to teaching his students. In the *exceptional and culturally different approach*, the teacher's responsibility is to prepare students with cognitive skills, technical efficiency, conceptual information, and aesthetic values of the dominant culture (Anglo), so that they might gain jobs in the arts and participate in fine art cultural events. The *multicultural and social reconstructionist approach* promotes critical thinking and social action skills so that the students are prepared to work together for reform and to fight social oppression. Unfortunately, these children come from a milieu of poverty and isolation on a reservation not in close proximity to the seat of power of the dominant culture. In the then seven years of teaching art at Greyhills Academy, Alan Jim related having seen only a handful of his students go to college, and even fewer major in art. Most students have no motivation or parental/family support to do more than gain employment in highway construction or retail sales. Alcoholism and other health problems are a tremendous problem on the Indian reservations of the Southwest. Art does provide a "release" for the students, and occasionally one of them will find a career in art or craft production.

In Wasson, Stuhr, and Petrovich-Mwaniki's (1990) position statement (number 3) supporting a student/community centered educational process, they explain that it is up to the teacher to provide examples from cultural experiences familiar to the students, even if different from the teacher's. Alan Jim tries very hard to establish discipline in his classroom, while maintaining a fair and even hand. He stresses the practice of technical skills in art, but mediates this with creative freedom in project design and theme. To help inspire the students, he regularly brings in local artists to demonstrate their production skills and share their artwork with the students. In art production, the students are allowed and encouraged to choose themes in popular culture. Mr. Jim also regularly discusses Native American traditional art symbolism with his students and has shared his cultural experiences during the American Indian Movement of the 1970s, in which he was active. He feels that this type of enculturation (or "reculturation") is beneficial not only to their art production, but to their self-esteem and family pride.

To me, the Navajo, Hopi, and Pueblo reservations are similar to a multicultural classroom. Unfortunately, for too many Native American students, the Reservation has become a vast socioeconomic and cultural wasteland. It is refreshing to see someone like Alan Jim trying to make a difference. Patricia Stuhr's research and methodologies can be valuable in such circumstances.

The Indian Arts and Crafts Act

Introduction

The Federal Government occasionally will enact legislation in response to changes in the economic markets and/or social attitudes in response to a real or perceived negative situation.

There have been several Congressional acts which have influenced the regulation of American Indian arts and crafts - these occurred in 1935 (ch. 748, 49 Stat. 891 - Title 25, Sec.

305 et seq.), 1961 (Pub. L. 87-23, Sec. 1, 75 Stat. 45) and in 1990 (Pub. L. 101-644, title I, Sec. 102, 1034, 105, 104 Stat. 4662, 4664).

The most recent and thereby the most influential is the *Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990*. Passed by the 101st Congress on November 29, 1990, this Act (H.R. 2006), produced the most sweeping and controversial measures regulating the production and marketing of Native American arts and crafts in the United States.

H.R. 2006 expanded the powers of the existing Indian Arts and Crafts Board under the Secretary of the Interior and in Section 107 provided for the certification of “Indian Artisans”. Under section 1159 of title 18, United States Code, and section 6 of the Act (it) entitled “An Act to promote the development of Indian arts and crafts and to create a board to assist therein, and for other purposes’ (25 U.S.C. 305 et seq.) an Indian tribe may not impose a fee in certifying an individual as an Indian artisan.”

The Act also describes an ‘Indian tribe’ as “(A) any Indian tribe, band, nation, Alaska native village, or other organized group or community which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians: or (B) any Indian group that has been formally recognized as an Indian tribe by a State legislature or by a State commission or similar organization legislatively vested with State tribal recognition authority.”

The term ‘Indian’ means any individual who is a member of any Indian tribe, or ...is certified as an Indian artisan by an Indian tribe.

For the purposes of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act the terms ‘Indian product’ and ‘product of a particular Indian tribe or Indian arts and crafts organization’, has the meaning given such term in regulations which may be promulgated by the Secretary of the Interior.

Title 18 also deals with crimes and criminal procedure dealing with the misrepresentation of Indian produced goods and products. It states that “it is unlawful to offer or display for sale or sell any good, with or without a Government trademark, in a manner that falsely suggests it is an ‘Indian’ product, ‘Indian’ produced, or the product of a particular Indian or Indian tribe or Indian arts and crafts organization, resident within the United States.

Violations of this section provide for criminal punishment in the case of a first violation (by an individual) of not more than \$1,000,000.00 or imprisonment of not more than fifteen years, or both; and if a person other than an individual, not more than \$5,000,000.00.

The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 specifically provides for protection of products by American Indian tribes in the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii. It specifically excludes products manufactured outside the United States, to include Mexico and Canada. Counterfeiting of Indian arts and crafts and any trademarks designating those products is also specifically prohibited.

Artists’ and Collectors’ Interests

Collectors of Native American traditional arts have realized a profit from their investments with a steady increase in the value of their investments of between five and fifteen percent per annum throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In the later 1980s into the 1990s, retail prices for Native American traditional arts showed a marked rise in valuation of as much as 100% to 200% due to a “frenzied” collector’s interest resulting from an unusually strong economy and market recognition of a valuable collectible item. As an example, the sale price of the Best of Show Navajo weaving at the Santa Fe Indian Market auction, went from below \$20,000 in 1990 to a staggering \$60,000 in 1991 (McGee, 1991). The influence of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act cannot be figured in this increase, but the sharp rise in valuation is

undeniable, and has had a hugely positive economic impact upon Indians and Indian tribes.

Collectors' interest in Native American arts and crafts and the resulting "bull market" is a staggering reality.

Along with an increased market and valuation for Indian art comes the inevitable increase in forgeries and the misrepresentation of American Indian tribal art products. There has also been an increase in thefts, robbery of collections and tribal burial grounds, and questionable sales of art and artifacts at public auction.

As a collector of Southwestern Native American art, I have seen numerous misrepresentations of Navajo weavings, Hopi Kachina carvings, and other American Indian arts and crafts by "knock-offs" and other misrepresented goods from Mexico and overseas nations. Recently, on a trip to a Scottsdale, Arizona antique shop, I observed two separate dealers who were representing Mexican weavings for sale as "authentic Navajo rugs". A novice would probably "fall" for this misrepresentation, and I wondered whether or not the antique dealer fully realized the misrepresentation.

Navajo weaver Brenda Spencer acknowledges that Indian weavings from Mexico, which are mass-produced, have cut into the market for authentic weavings by her tribe. Fortunately, she has other employment at a trading post and does not rely fully on income from her weaving (Spencer). Also, she is a "high-end" weaver and there always seems to be a good market for the "best" in art.

Trading post operator Bill Malone of the Hubbell Trading Post, a national historic site in Ganado, Arizona, points to the fact that even old, established art dealers such as J.B. Tanner's in Gallup, New Mexico, have fallen victim to the economics of the "fast tourist buck" and are marketing Mexican rugs in their store alongside Navajo weavings. He is concerned about this

trend and the denigration of authentic American Indian art products by reputable dealers (Malone).

Even McGee's Arts & Crafts in Keams Canyon, Arizona, has begun to sell Mexican Indian arts (mostly weavings) in their shop. They are however, conspicuously marked as being made in Mexico and do not share a common area with authentic Navajo weavings.

One can only imagine what scenarios could arise with intertribal marriages. In his article, Richard Shiff (p. 75) points to a potential case of a person born to a Hopi father and Salish mother, anywhere outside the Salish reservation. Such a child would have no tribal affiliation, and thus could not be a "certifiably authentic" Native American artist, since the Salish require birth on tribal land and membership in the Hopi tribe is matrilineal.

Contemporary Native American artists have also fallen "victim" to the intent of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act. Successful and well recognized Native American artists, such as Kay Walkingstick and Jimmie Durham have been negatively influenced by the language of the Act. (Many Indians and their ancestors refused to be "registered" with the Federal Government early in this century because of their opposition to Federal statutes and banishment to Indian reservations). Jimmie Durham, a full-blooded Cherokee, has enjoyed enormous notoriety as a contemporary artist and painter. However, he has never been "registered" as a member of the Cherokee tribe. In 1991, shortly after the passage of the Indian arts and Crafts Act, two of his exhibitions were cancelled due to the fact that the gallery owners were concerned over liability they might face from the Act, if they displayed his paintings as "Indian art" (Shiff). This "knee-jerk" reaction subsided and in subsequent years his art has been exhibited; in part because Durham considers himself and markets his art as "contemporary" rather than "Indian".

Implications for Educators

Multicultural art education is currently in vogue amongst art educators. While this pedagogical approach to the education of students in art from around the world encompasses many races and cultures, one of the more popular cultures for art study and production is that of the Native American. The maintenance and teaching of traditional American Indian cultures and semiology is quite popular, both to Indian and non-Indian students. Will the teaching of these cultural traditions and art forms conflict with the law as outlined in the Indian Arts and Crafts Act? More than likely it will not; however, growing interest in teaching, and production of Native American art forms could bring about some interesting scenarios.

Summary

While the Indian Arts and Crafts Act has provided some protection and an apparent stability to the market for Indian art products and the marketing of such, it also has created some potential loopholes which might provide future avenues for litigation.

No law can make someone Indian who is not, or prevent one who is from using their native talents and offering them to the world. For these decisions, all are allowed due process.

Perhaps no tests of this Act will be forthcoming, but maybe the ambiguity of who is or has been considered an Indian will provide a test for our courts of law. Our Native American ancestors may well be watching for a decision from the land that no person may own.

The Navajo Storyteller

In grounded theory qualitative analysis, two beneficial means of gathering data for comparison are film/video media and the Internet. Recently, I was given a video on DVD, “Old West Trading Posts: 100 Years of Barter and Trade,” produced by Jonathon Williams (2007), which chronicles the history of trade with the Indians, particularly the Navajo, in the Southwest. It

contains historical photographs and film clips, as well as interviews with some prominent trading post operators.

One of the interviews was with Paul Begay and another with Bill Malone, who manages the Hubbell Trading Post in Ganado, AZ. Yet another interview was with Virginia Burnham, wife of study participant, Bruce Burnham. Begay's readily opened himself up to the camera. After viewing the entire DVD, I went to the Internet to search for additional information on some of the traders. That is where I found an oral history page from the Cline Library at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. The Library has over 1300 oral histories, among them many of the traders portrayed on the previously mentioned DVD (Williams, 2007). There I found Paul Begay's interview, which was similar to that on the DVD.

Begay was interesting and informative and the text and audio he shared was extremely valuable to my dissertation data. Since I did not obtain a consent form from him, and because his information was discovered on an electronic publication medium, I will share his opinions and experiences here.

Paul Begay was born near Page, Arizona around January 3, 1952. Navajo record-keeping was non-existent since there is no written language. His mother recalls that "the snow was deep" so he is quite certain he was born in January. The day and the year he is less sure about. Begay is a Navajo interpreter, Elderhostel lecturer, and storyteller, and has been employed by Elijah Blair at the Dinnebito Trading Post in Page.

Begay talked about the Navajo people and some of the changes they have made to get to where they are today.

Well, history tells us that back in the old days in the 1860s, the Navajo people – my grandfather used to mention in his stories – that his parents and people in his parent's age

group were known as savages, raiders, thieves, murderers, and he sadly says it is true – this was the lifestyle...back then. And this caused the government...to send out a man by the name of Kit Carson. And so the roundup of the Navajo...because of their lifestyle...their renegading...they were placed in a prison for four more years.

Prison at Fort Sumer, New Mexico, is where many of the women learned to weave. They also got used to the goods they could acquire from the traders, which began to change their lifestyle.

The Navajo realize the trader's there to make money, and there was always a little animosity. But then we understood we cannot live without the trader. He offers things to make it convenient and easy for us to live. And that's why even the person who got mad at the paper will be back.

Paul Begay continues by talking about weaving and its importance to the Navajo way of life.

In each hogan, there is always a weaver. This is a part of life. It was always done year-round when you know when the trip to the trading post is scheduled. When I go down to visit my mother in Tuba City, there seems to be always a rug on the loom...and so the rug weaving is carried down, - at least in my family, to even the granddaughters, the younger generation. And so it's important to my mother, in her way of thinking, that this tradition, this art – it's not more or less an art, it's a tradition, it's a culture – that it be carried on and be maintained, not to let it die. And so I feel that she's got this great appreciation in her heart, knowing that its still being carried down. A lot of Navajo people don't carry on the tradition...because of changing times. I consider myself a traditionalist. I live in a changing time, a world that is constantly changing. But, I have

great pride in my language...my history...my culture, and I hope that it carries on...that it never dies.

As a traditionalist, Begay is a bit guarded about his tribal life and said that the Navajo did not initially trust the traders.

The Navajo way, you are told you don't talk about your culture, language, history, religion, your taboos, especially your religion to a non-Navajo. It's very hard for a Navajo person to do that (talk to non-Navajos). You have to make an Indian person very comfortable in order to gain his trust. The way (the traders) did it first was to learn the language...and you begin to gain the Navajo's trust. I think the main thing, (the traders) are there because they love the Indians and they want to help the Indians....they now have become part of the family. I think the traders feel, "I belong to the Indian people." As a traditionalist, I hope that will never change. When our times began to change, it seems to be because we wanted to be like everybody else.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This qualitative study explores the evolution and continuity of art methods and the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in the production, marketing, and pedagogical dissemination of traditional art among the Native American tribes of the Southwestern United States. Particular emphasis and analysis is centered towards the Native American (American Indian) tribes of the Southwest “Four Corners” region including Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado - specifically the Navajo nation and Pueblo tribes including the Hopi, Zuni, Acoma, and other regional tribes and art styles.

When one looks at the production of artwork among Native American tribes, it is important to realize that there are literally hundreds of Indian tribes in continental North America. While there are common reasons that artists within these tribes produce art, there is much diversity in art production between and also within, these tribal ethnic entities. Native American artists have always produced their art for ceremonial and utilitarian purposes, and the Native American cultures can truly be described as “art-centered.” Such diversity among art forms and cultures within “Native America” makes it essential to study a segment of this population and gather data from a smaller region of Native American tribes. I have chosen to study Native American artists in the southwestern region of the United States. There are distinct traits, styles, and forms of art produced in this region. The geographic expanse of this part of the country and the wide distribution of inhabitant artists makes it necessary to seek out informant

artists, rather than access a large number in a confined “cultural center” such as might be found in Eurocentric art centers (i.e. Paris, Florence, New York). For these reasons, observational fieldwork and on-site interviews were a logical method for data collection.

As previously discussed, one could consider art production on Native American “reservations” as taking place in a “classroom.” Just as in the art classroom, the elements of mentorship, historical relevance, observation, production, and criticism are all key to the education of the Native American artist. Direct observational fieldwork is an important data collection modality as it applies to pedagogical methods employed in the “training” of individual Native American artists. The dissemination of traditional art methods to and among Native American artists is often done within the family and from generation to generation. This is particularly true in such art forms as weaving (Navajo), pottery making, and carving (Hopi). The setting is often intratribal and may encompass both ceremonial and commercial settings important to the individual arts and the tribal culture. Mentorship is important to the production and individual gains of the artists. Traditional symbolism and methods in art forms is a significant aspect of this art training. One must keep in mind that in most Native American tribes there is no written language, so symbolism, the production of art images (as a communication medium), and the verbal passing of information through generations, are the few means of maintaining tradition and history.

Cultural and tribal identities are becoming more important in art production as various Native American tribes are trying to “recapture” their cultural heritage through art. Many public school systems are beginning to integrate cultural history through art instruction in their school curricula. Individual artists are gathering together to exchange traditional cultural and artistic ideas in societies of Indian artists and at larger cultural gatherings (powwows). These are

important to the growth of the individual artists and maintenance of an artistic cultural identity and are best studied by direct field observation and discourse with the artists by the researcher.

Societal, technological and economic changes have greatly influenced the tribal, family, and individual lives of Native Americans. Eurocentric ideas and ideals have influenced the way that Native Americans are educated and the way and rationale for why they produce art. Many Native American artists have adopted transitional and transformative, contemporary methods of art production and expression. Many who employ traditional symbolism in their artwork do not employ it in a traditional manner. However, there are still a significant number of artists who maintain traditional forms, methods, and symbolism in their artwork. I have observed, and spoken with others who have observed, that there is an increased desire among Native Americans to learn more about their heritage and in particular about the history of their tribal art production. In most Native American tribes, “art” has been produced for both ceremonial and utilitarian purposes and their culture is much more “art centered” than that of Anglos and other immigrants to America.

However, it seems almost inevitable that the Native American culture will be influenced and changed by the Eurocentric culture of the United States. Perhaps in the production of art there will be a method to slow or even prevent the loss of cultural identity among Native Americans.

To develop the research question and theories surrounding the question, it was important to find out how Native American artists feel about their artwork and what they value in its form, symbolism, and the production of various art forms and styles. It was also necessary to know how and by whom Native American artists are taught traditional methods and symbolism. Since the collecting and marketing of Native American art objects has become greater and more

widespread, it is important to determine in what ways commercialism has influenced Native American art in general, and specifically any influences that might be attributed to the rise or decline of traditional art forms.

Research Questions

Since there has been little documented research on how traditional Native American art is taught and how traditional art methods, materials, and symbolism are maintained by the Southwestern Indian tribes, the following research questions were the focus of this qualitative study.

- 1.) What are the attributes and definitions of “art” versus “craft” in the Native American culture of the Southwest?
- 2.) How and by whom are Native American artists taught traditional methods and symbolism?
- 3.) How does commercialism (collecting and marketing of art objects) affect the production of traditional Native American art?

Pilot Study

A pilot study (Appendix A) evolved from several interviews. I had conducted interviews of Indian artists and Anglo traders, but had yet to shadow an individual as they went about their daily routine. Also, I had not had an opportunity to observe student art being produced in a classroom setting on the Navajo Reservation. When I met Mr. Alan Jim at the National Art Education Association meeting in Washington, DC, he showed a deep interest in my study of traditional American Indian art. After discussing my research interests, he invited me to spend a day observing him teach pottery at an Indian high school in Arizona. I am not sure if the fact that we are both teachers interested in educational research contributed to the rapport between us, but I certainly felt welcome at his school and in Mr. Jim’s home, where we had lunch. Alan Jim

was very open and responded in great detail to my questions about his students and the approaches he employs in teaching them about art and many of the traditions in Native American culture. He even reflected on his participation in the American Indian Movement (AIM) in the 1970s and the influence it had on Native American culture, and thus, its art. I will briefly discuss the Movement in my data analysis and interpretation chapter. AIM definitely affected the culture and its art; however, this is neither ethnography nor an anthropological study, so discussion will be limited to my informant's recollections of the Movement.

My interview day with Alan Jim began with an early morning drive from Phoenix to northern Arizona. Then, I spent several hours observing Mr. Jim's pottery class and taking copious notes about classroom activities and the student participants. I refrained from videotaping the classroom observation fearing it would be too obtrusive a distraction to the students. After the class and lunch, I prepared for my videotaped interview with Alan Jim, which was interrupted by a bomb threat telephoned to the high school. I spent over an hour interviewing Alan Jim and found his answers to my questions were full of rich data.

The observational study of the classroom was written up as a class assignment and also may be found in Appendix B.

The Interviews and Selection of Participants

I decided to narrow my sampling of individuals from which to collect data to the Southwestern United States; particularly Arizona and New Mexico. Since I lived in that area of the country for seventeen years, I am more familiar with the Native American cultures of that region, have collected their art, and have made contacts with artists and dealers/traders of Native American artwork.

The sample of study participants was purposeful and came from two groups of people: Native American artists of the Southwest, and, trading post operators/art dealers who had experience with the commercial aspects of Navajo and Pueblo Indian arts and crafts. The sample size was small for convenience and due to the expansive travel area between participants. I utilized “snowball” sampling (Bogdan & Biklan; 1998 Merriam, 1998) methods, as some referrals to both artists and traders came from a key informant, Mr. W. Bruce McGee, who was also a participant in the study. McGee either made the initial contacts at my request or advised the individual that I was going to be calling them. He arranged and attended the initial interview in this study, which was with Alfred “Bo” Lomahquahu. McGee also gave me contact information for his father and older brother and advised them that I would be calling to arrange an interview. Bruce McGee suggested that I contact Bruce Burnham, who it turned out gave me an enormous amount of valuable information.

My first meeting with Bruce McGee was in 1987 at one of his family’s trading posts in Keams Canyon, on the Hopi Reservation. I was referred to him by a dealer in Native American art in Santa Fe. I first met Bill Malone at the Hubbell Trading Post in Ganado, Arizona, in the late 1980s. Eugene Victor Thaw, at the time of the interview, was a colleague of my sister, Helen Harrison, who is director of the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center, while Mr. Thaw was President of the Pollock-Krasner Foundation on Long Island, New York. The “traders” were chosen for their expertise and longevity in the field. They all had extensive knowledge of Native American art, particularly that of the Southwest.

The selection of the artists was purposeful and based upon recommendations of the traders. Bruce McGee’s gallery is one of the outlets for Alfred Lomahquahu, Jr’s Kachina dolls,

and McGee considers Lomahquahu as one of the top young carvers in the profession, as well as one of the best carvers of miniature Kachinas and a master at repairs of damaged Kachinas.

Brenda Spencer is an employee of Bill Malone's at Hubbell, but both Bruces (McGee and Burnham) are familiar with her weavings. Michaelis Burnham is the son of Virginia and Bruce Burnham and I was assured prior to contacting him that he was a serious artist and art student.

I learned of Hosteen Etsitty from one of my professors, Michael Orey, Ph.D., who had given me a CD of Etsitty's commercial sandpainting and ceremonial drypainting.

Alan Jim attended the National Art Education Association meeting in Washington, DC, and attended one of my presentations. He agreed to an interview after I described my research to him.

All of the interviews were approved by the University's Institutional Review Board and the participants were given, and signed, Consent forms. All of the study participants agreed to the lack of anonymity. Only one of the participants (Etsitty) modified the Consent form to allow for copyright control over use of his name and images.

Interview Questions

Two sets of interview questions were constructed; one for each of the two sample groups – the Native American artists and the traders/art dealers. A third set was constructed for artist Alan Jim, with several unique questions dealing with his role as a teacher of art (ceramics). The questions are listed in Table 1 (for Native American Artists); Table 2 (for Traders/Art Dealers) and Table 3 (for Navajo Artist/Teacher Alan Jim) and can be found in Appendix C. Whenever possible, the questions were given to the interviewees in advance (by mail), but all of the participants were given at least one-half hour to review the questions prior to the videotaped interview. Since the interview format was semi-structured, the order of the questions would vary

depending upon related conversations or questions to me from the interviewee. The participants were advised that they did not have to answer any or all of the questions. However, I found all of the participants to be comfortable with the questions and forthright with their answers.

Research Design

When considering a choice of methodologies for my research, I turned to several of the ideas of scholars in qualitative research such as Creswell, (1997), Merriam, (1998), Patton, (1990), Creswell, (1997), Merriam, (1998), Bogdan and Biklen, (1998), Fraenkel and Wallen (1996). Elements of my research subject and its design led me to focus on the methodologies of case study, phenomenology, and grounded theory. Of the qualitative traditions of inquiry for this research study, I took into consideration the methodologies of case study, ethnography, phenomenology, and grounded theory. My approach to the problem involved looking at the multiple methods in terms of answering the research questions; 1.) What is the difference between “art” and “craft” in the opinion of the two groups of participants – Native American artists and traders/art dealers; 2.) How and by whom are Native American artists taught traditional methods and symbolism; and, 3.) How does commercialism affect the production of traditional Native American art?

In the analysis of case studies, Patton (1990) recommends organizing the data by specific cases for individual analysis, while cases can be individuals, programs, institutions, or groups (p. 384). Creswell (1998) discusses exploration of a “bounded system” (p. 61). When dealing with case studies, they are bounded by time and place, and the cases in this study, involve an activity contextually bounded by cultural, historical (traditional), and economic settings. The participants in this research study represent two distinct groups of individuals – artists and traders – and the data gathered from the subjects by interview is bounded by the research

questions, the interview questions, and the context of their employment experiences and their geographic location.

Another method of inquiry under consideration was ethnography, which focuses on the question, “What is the culture of this group of people”? (Patton, 1990, p. 67). Fraenkel and Wallen (1997) states that ethnographic research may be optimal for observation of a particular society, group, or situation. It lends itself well to research topics that are not easily quantified. Because ethnography is anthropological in nature and requires intensive and lengthy field work, it was not my choice for consideration of a method of inquiry. However, I did realize that my research was focusing on at least one key aspect of a culture – its artwork – and that this aspect was perhaps made more significant by the culture’s “art-centered” practices.

Phenomenology emphasizes the subjective aspects of peoples’ behavior. With a phenomenological point of view, it all depends on where you are sitting, and how things look to you, the researcher, according to Bogdan and Biklen (1998). While this study involves observation of the phenomenon of traditional art production by Native Americans of the Southwest, this methodology seemed less definitive and more suited for a psychology or sociology-based study.

Grounded theory has seemed like the most suitable methodology for this study of the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in art forms by Native Americans. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1997), the first step in a qualitative study is the identification of a phenomenon or phenomena for study by the researcher. The phenomenon raises questions and leads to a statement of the problem, which suggests what are known as foreshadowed problems which serve as a guide to the research and data collection. Merriam (1998) states the need for the investigator to take an inductive stance to derive meaning from the data and

emphasis upon theory development. A constant comparative method of data analysis is employed which involves comparing one segment of data with another to determine similarities and differences in the data. This constant comparative method leads to the development of substantive theory with specificity and hence “usefulness to practice” lacking in more global or “grand” theories (p. 17).

Grounded theory methodology is marked with descriptive data rich in information which can provide a constant comparison. The interview questions in this study provide such rich, substantive data and the two groups of informants provide similarities, and differences, in experiences and opinion regarding issues brought forward by the research questions.

Methodology Traditions

Since I viewed my research task as the observation and study of a phenomenon using interviews to gather and analyze data in order to develop theory grounded in the data, I planned to draw on the analysis applicable to the methodologies of phenomenology and grounded theory.

Tesch (1990) lists 45 approaches to qualitative research incorporating a mix of designs. There are three basic orientations: language oriented, descriptive interpretive, and theory-building. She acknowledges that these distinctions are not rigid and that overlap occurs. In art, and in this specific case, research into the maintenance of traditional art methods and symbolism, descriptive interpretations by artists are the basis for building inductive theories about the making, valuing, and continuation of traditional art forms.

Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) state the need to identify a phenomenon prior to beginning a study. The phenomenon in this research study is the production of traditional art forms using traditional methods and symbolism over a continuum by Native American artists (in this case, the study is specific to the production of traditional art by American Indian artists of the

Southwestern United States). This phenomenon is somewhat unique to Western, Eurocentric societies, where in recent history art production in terms of modernist critical paradigms has seen continuous transition and transformation from decade to decade. Many factors may influence “traditionism” in the artmaking of indigenous peoples, and it is the search for answers to these mechanisms that sparks interest in this inquiry. Assumptions, motives, reasons, goals, and values are all of interest and likely to be the focus of the researcher’s questions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). Other questions key to my research design have to do with why Native American artists are influenced to produce traditional work and how they value and feel (in a societal-cultural sense) about their work and other traditional, tribal creations of art. Additionally, the influence of commercialism and politics (within and outside of the tribal setting) on the production of traditional artwork was studied.

The Interview Settings

The video taping of the interviews, with two exceptions, were recorded in the venue where the informant worked, either producing the fine art or selling it. One of the exceptions was my last interview at the home of Eugene and Clare Thaw in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The Thaws retired to Santa Fe from New York City where Gene Thaw had been a successful dealer of contemporary artwork, particularly abstract expressionism. A call to appraise the Georgia O’Keeffe estate after her death in 1986 brought the Thaws to New Mexico. Their home is a beautiful adobe ranch-style house that I reached by crossing a small arroyo running with water from winter rains. The day was warm and bright with the sky that indescribable blue, only found in New Mexico.

I carried my camera and recording gear into their home and Gene suggested that we conduct the interview in their living room. I had previously met the Thaws, and had been to their

home, but never in their living room. I hunted for an electrical outlet to plug in external power for the video camera (I don't trust batteries) amidst beautiful, yet understated furnishings where I knew that each piece had a "story." On the wall to the right of a chair I had placed for my use behind the video camera, hung a small, original Mondrian painting. Yes, I asked.

For my video interviews, it would normally take about 10 minutes to set up the tripod and camera, connect the electrical power, and position the portable audio recorder that I usually brought along for emergencies. Prior to set up, I would supply the study participant with a copy of the interview questions that could be read prior to the camera being turned on. Since I did not carry lights with me, I always tried to find a seat near a good light source, such as a window. All of my interviews were during daylight hours, usually late in the morning.

I seated Mr. Thaw on his living room sofa, made sure he was comfortable, and began the interview. The interviews I conducted were semi-structured to keep the atmosphere "light" and the participant "at ease." I realized early on that most of the participants had never been interviewed on camera before, so I felt it was important to keep them comfortable. I followed the order of the questions as best I could, beginning with biographical information as an "icebreaker."

Eugene Thaw had been interviewed on camera many times, so he was quite comfortable and the interview, which lasted about 1 hour and 15 minutes, went quickly and smoothly. With several interviews, it was necessary to change video and/or audio tapes, which usually delayed the proceedings by about a minute. Most of the time, I left the camera at a stationery setting, but occasionally I would break the monotony of a "talking Head" with a zoom, reverse zoom, or a compound movement. Since it was usually just the participant and myself, I found little time to do extensive camera work.

About half way thru the Thaw interview I finally noticed the large original Georgia O'Keeffe painting hanging behind Eugene Thaw. I recognized the viewpoint of the painting as a place I had stood about three months prior during a visit to and tour of her studio in Abiquiu.

After the interviews were completed, I generally packed up my gear immediately and departed so as not to be too intrusive. In this case, I stayed about another 45 minutes and enjoyed a cup of coffee with the Thaws.

I interviewed Cliff McGee, also a retiree, at his home in Mesa, Arizona. It was located in a nice subdivision and was a single level ranch-style house. I set up my gear in his family room which was comfortably furnished and decorated with Indian art. Particularly memorable were the large, transformative sandpaintings. I had never met Cliff McGee prior to the interview and after the camera was turned off, I spent about 15 to 20 minutes examining his Indian art before I left his home.

Michaelis Burnham's home was an efficiency apartment in East Central Phoenix, allowing for the dining area to double as a studio for art production. It was small, but full of his work – some partially or recently finished, some matted, with a few framed pieces on the wall. The overall theme was Southwestern and Hopi. Michaelis was a bit shy and acted intimidated or nervous about being videotaped, although he was cooperative and answered all the questions that were posed. As the interview progressed, he appeared more at ease.

Alfred "Bo" Lomahquahu, Jr. was also interviewed at his home/studio in Holbrook, Arizona – on Lizard Lane, no less. His was my first interview, and I was somewhat expecting the stereotypical image of the Indian and his horse standing beside a Hogan or tepee. Well, the hogan has been replaced by a double-wide mobile home and the horse by a Chevy pickup. Bruce McGee accompanied me to give an introduction as Bruce had made the arrangements for the

interview with Bo. Bruce stayed for the interview, but offered little commentary until I had completed my questions. We videotaped the interview at Lomahquahu's dining room table, because of space and lighting considerations. He has a room in the trailer where he does his carving, painting, and finishing work, but the dining table gave the opportunity to display several Kachina dolls that Bo was repairing. All of his carvings were sold except for one that was waiting at McGee's for payment and shipping. There was some minimal disruption during the interview as several of Lomahquahu's children passed through the dining room on several occasions. The camera and my inexperience as an interviewer must have put Lomahquahu at ease, because after the interview Bruce McGee remarked to me at how unexpectedly open Bo had been. I had been direct with Bo at the beginning of the interview to stop me if I asked any questions that he was not comfortable answering, and he did so on one or two occasions when I touched on the Kachina Society and some of the ceremonial and symbolic aspects of the Kachina dances. Bo did show me a doll that he was repairing for one of McGee's customers. According to Bruce McGee, Bo Lomahquahu is one of the best in the business at repairs (which necessitates carving in someone else's style) and in carving miniatures, which by definition are figures no more than three inches high. The interview lasted a little over one hour, and then Bruce and I went back to McGee's gallery, Beyond Native Tradition, so that I could interview him.

I set up my camera in Bruce McGee's office in the rear of the gallery, as it gave us the most quietness and privacy. He sat across his desk from me and was wearing a western shirt and denim jeans, which is what the other traders all wore when they were interviewed. As previously mentioned, I did not bring any lighting equipment to the interviews. Other than the obvious transportation problems created by the equipment, I did not want to bring any unnecessary presence into the process that might make for anxiety to the participant.

McGee's office was full of items waiting to be shipped, so it made for an interesting background. The interview itself lasted about 40 minutes, and was both video and audio taped. When he had answered the final question, he asked that I turn off the camera, and he walked over to a huge, walk-in vault located adjacent to the office area. This was his opportunity to show off what he and I, laughingly, refer to as "No-No" Kachinas. Some are just figures where the mask is removable, revealing the identity of an impersonator. Displaying these dolls where children might see them is forbidden, analogous to revealing the true identity of Santa Claus to a six year old on Christmas Eve. Bruce also produced a horned deity, which are rarely carved and never displayed on the Hopi Reservation. Superstition has said that whomever carves a figure of a deity will lose the use of his legs. McGee also shared a look at several other high-end Kachinas as well as a beautifully carved and politically controversial, piece of Navajo folk art awaiting shipment to a customer.

Six months later, I returned to the same office to interview Bruce and his older brother, Ferron McGee. I set up my equipment in a similar fashion and when the session was over I learned a valuable lesson – two people, two microphones! Ferron speaks much more softly than Bruce. I had realized this and asked Ferron to speak louder; however, there were many sections of the tape where his voice was difficult to transcribe.

I interviewed both Bill Malone and Brenda Spencer at the Hubbell Trading Post, although nearly one year apart. Many of the buildings at Hubbell date back to the 1880s. The trading post is a National Historic Site. The buildings are a mixture of construction materials ranging from sandstone and fieldstone to hewn logs and cut lumber. It is eclectic, but has some visual continuity, probably because it is all one-story tall, is built primarily in one row (there are a few "out" buildings), and is connected by walls, fences, and gates.

Bill Malone was interviewed in his office, off the general store area of the trading post. Nearly a year later, I interviewed Brenda Spencer in an open warehouse dock area near the stables. Both locations afford a quiet, comfortable atmosphere, but neither had good lighting which I did have some control over with the camera's iris. Neither Bill nor Brenda are very gregarious, so although they gave good answers, the interviews lasted less than 45 minutes each.

After my interviews with Bill Malone, I made a nearly two hour drive to Sanders, Ariizona for an interview with Bruce Burnham on the following day. I should note that I nearly missed my appointment with Bill Malone because I had not realized that the Navajo Reservation was on Mountain Daylight Time and Arizona never changes from Mountain Standard Time.

I arrived at Bruce Burnham's trading post midmorning and spent more than 3 ½ hours there. He was absolutely fascinating, and as outgoing as bill Malone was introverted, although both had a world of experience and were willing to share their stories. I used almost two full 90-minute video cassettes for the Burnham interview. We chose to do the interview in his "rugroom," which was isolated from the rest of the store, offered good lighting, and had a decorative background of magnificent Navajo weavings. My only disappointment was that I did not walk out of the store with a Newlands Outline style rug, which Bruce Burnham is credited with developing.

Hosteen Etsitty definitely had the most eclectic studio of any of the participants. His property in Shiprock, New Mexico shared a modest clapboard house, a small mobile home, and a framed, plywood and tar-papered building about 25 feet square that he used for his studio. The finishing was better on the inside, and the whole effect of the building was solid and utilitarian. Etsitty was in the midst of a sandpainting project when I arrived, and he continued to gather materials and work while I set up my camera. To my dismay, not only had the camera battery

died, but the tripod I had borrowed in Phoenix did not have the proper fitting for the camera. So I was forced to hard-wire and to hand-hold the camera during the interview. For the first portion of the interview, which was primarily biographical, I decided to audio record only with the cassette recorder I had brought along.

Alan Jim proved to be a wonderful interview and was a very open and honest participant. I spent a full day with him (from around 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.), observing his classes in the morning; having lunch at his home adjacent to the campus; standing outside the high school for an hour and a half because of a bomb threat; and then interviewing him in the classroom after the students had departed. The written description of the classroom observation is in Appendix B.

Data Collection

Data for this study was collected by means of interviews which were videotaped, and in some cases, simultaneously audio taped. The subjects were initially contacted by telephone to arrange the interview either at their studio or place of business (e.g. studio, trading post, school). Usually within a week or two of the interview, the subject was sent a confirmation letter which in most cases included the list of questions which would comprise the interview data. The day before or day of the interview, the subject was again contacted by phone to confirm the interview time. A follow up letter was sent to the subjects following the interview thanking them for their participation.

There are two main groups of subjects – Native American artists and art dealers/trading post operators. One “non-trading post operator” was included because of his extensive personal collection and experience with dealing in Native American art. The two subject groups were given different, but similar lists of questions. When I became aware of a particular expertise or interest-area of the subject, additional questions pertinent to this area were added or substituted

in the list of questions. Samples of the question lists for both groups are included (Tables 1, 2, and 3 in Appendix C).

After the initial meeting and introduction to the subject, I provided the participants with a “fresh” copy of the questions to study while I set up my recording equipment. I chose to interview the subjects in a setting familiar to them in order to provide a level of comfort. The interviews were intended to be semi-structured, in that the main list of questions would be followed with digression on other related topics as they occurred.

The subjects were videotaped using a VHS Camcorder or a digital video recorder (mini-DV cassette recorder), both of which were relatively easy to transport and set up (or hand held in some cases). A tripod was borrowed from a colleague in Phoenix, Arizona, since the interviews were all conducted in the Southwest and air transport of a tripod was cumbersome, at best. An audio cassette recorder was always available at the interviews as a backup, although it was only necessary to use on one occasion. In general, there was little trepidation expressed by the subjects with respect to having the interview videotaped. As expected, the traders appeared more comfortable and open to the medium than the artists did. However, both groups were responsive to my questions and did not seem to be disturbed by the presence of a camera/recorder. A table listing the subject in the two groups, the location and date of the interviews, and the interview length is included (Table 4).

The data was stored on the original audio and video cassettes, and copies have been made of some of the early interviews for backup and anticipated deterioration of the media over time. All of the videotape narratives were converted to audio cassette and transcribed to paper for easier analysis and coding. From the eleven subjects interviewed, a total of more than 13 hours

of data was collected for transcription. I also collected several pages of field notes and approximately one hour of audio recorded field notes and observations.

My original decision to choose videotape as a means of interview data gathering was in part due to my familiarity and experience with the medium. I also believed that since I was conducting interviews dealing directly with visual arts, that motion images of the art forms themselves, as they were being described by their creators, would be a valuable and interesting means of data analysis. Videotape also opens up the possibility of analyzing facial expressions and body language, although in the variable taping conditions that I was exposed to, any analysis is not very scientific. The tapes have proven to be valuable to pull excerpts for presentations to art education groups. For data analysis, only the textual transcripts were utilized.

Research Ethics

With respect to ethical safeguards in the data analysis to protect the informants from harm, I gave initial consideration of this aspect of data collection when developing my interview consent form. While no harm is anticipated from the publication of this data, I did inform my interview subjects that the information gathered would be neither anonymous nor confidential. I also told them that their name might be used. All participants were aware that they were being audio/videotaped and that these tapes were being used to compile data and would be kept indefinitely. Only one artist, Hosteen Etsitty, a Navajo sandpainter, made modifications to the consent form, and these were related to copyright consent for any commercialization of the data.

My coding of the data will not involve assignment of an identification code for each informant, so the data will not be kept anonymous. Each participant agreed, in writing, to the use of their name in any publication of the data. While most of the data would not be considered controversial, there was some information collected in the field after the recording apparatus was

turned off. Any potentially controversial or “damaging” information is verified for accuracy with the informant.

Coding the Data

After transcription of the video interviews to a paper format for coding, I observed some central themes and issues which recur from informant to informant. These comparable experiences and attitudes should provide commonality which can be generalized from the data base. My analysis of the data will be inductive, going from the generalization of the data to specific theories about how and why traditional methods and forms of art are perpetuated by Indian artists. A constant comparison of the data will be made between the Native American artists and the traders, as I feel this will not only enrich the narrative, but add external validity to the analysis of the data and any theories which arise from it. Interview data indicates that the traders have had a strong influence and effect on the production of traditional art and also in the “evolution” of art products and refinement of technique. The trading post operator appears to function as a teacher in “bringing along” younger artists and in providing the materials, market, and most importantly, criticism of their work so as to improve technique and maintain authenticity to traditional forms and symbolism.

Following the tenants of Creswell (1997) for coding grounded theory analysis, *open coding* was employed, where initial categories of information about the phenomenon are developed by segmenting the information. Subcategories of properties found in the data dimensionalize or show extremes in the data. Next is *axial coding*, where the data will be assembled to identify the “central phenomenon” and develop a coding paradigm or logic diagram to establish any relationships between the data of the two groups of informants. This is where comparisons of the data from the two groups (artists and traders) are initially compared. Finally,

with *selective coding* and organization of specific interview data, a storyline will be identified and a narrative developed to present propositions or hypotheses about and around the central phenomenon. Creswell also mentions a *conditional matrix*, where the researcher may develop a “visual matrix” (p. 57) that elucidates the social, historical, and economic conditions influencing the central phenomenon. Although not frequently employed in grounded theory studies, this is where historical textual information, corroboration with other “experts,” and triangulation of factual material comes into play. Certainly, this presents a great opportunity for future exploration of my subject and should make corroboration with other “experts” easier to obtain.

The categories which will be coded and analyzed revolve around the central phenomenon and the research questions. The definition of *traditional art production* by Native American artists is a central theme key to the phenomenon. The category of *valuation* as defined by what is looked upon as *art versus craft* (or “high” and “low” art) is a key element to this research analysis, because I believe it has a strong influence on the continuity of production of high end, authentic, Native American art. Another category defined by the research questions is how *commercialism* affects the production, valuation, and authenticity (of traditional method and symbolism) of Native American art. Subcategories of this commercialism would be *politics* (such as activism displayed through the American Indian Movement) and related issues of *gender specificity* and *cultural/religious “taboos”* associated with the making of artwork. My interview questions focused partially upon *education* (schooling, introduction to art, family experiences); however, there does not seem to be a strong thread of analysis with respect to how and why an Indian practices art. A better explanation would be the art-centered nature of the culture and commercial aspects of earning a living. Particularly with the interaction between artist and trader, any data relative to the “*teacher/mentor*” relationship would be strongly related

to the phenomenon. There is a strong, although friendly, competition among artists for technical and aesthetic superiority and recognition within and outside of their tribe. The interaction and collaboration by artists with the traders is of paramount importance outside and within the realms of pure art making.

Data Analysis

Creswell (1998) mentions the use of open, axial, and selective coding to build categories of information, interconnect these categories, and then end with a set of theoretical propositions. My approach to coding my interview data was to designate categories of data based upon the research questions and consisting of the participant responses to the interview questions. The interview data was supplemented by data from publications, other media including film and the Internet, and personal communication with study participants.

Fifteen categories of data/information were designated after the interviews were transcribed. These broad categories were: artist education/interest, “art” versus “craft,” art-centered culture/society, collecting, commercialism, cross-tribal art/counterfeits, gender, language, mentors production/pricing, symbolism, teachers, trader influence/criticism, tradition, and valuation/”good art.” Several less significant categories, where the subject was mentioned by more than one participant during the semi-structured interviews, were added to the categories for analysis. These were: American Indian Movement/politics, tribal taboos related to art, and religion.

The transcripts of each participant were coded by the above categories and then edited together by category. The Native American artists’ categories were segregated from those of the traders/art dealers for ease of comparison. Significant phrases were highlighted and notes were made in the margin of the transcripts. The transcripts were checked against the videotaped

interviews in cases where there were blank spaces in the text. A copy of each “pre-edited” transcript was available for reference to maintain the context of the categories.

The phenomenon studied is the production of “traditional” artwork by Native Americans. The relatively small sample groups were interviewed and studied in relation to their production of artwork could be considered “cases.” The research questions being explored appear to be specific to areas of art production, education, and cultural anthropology where coding and comparison of data could produce some generalized theory using inductive analysis.

The arts and crafts of the Native American have a long and proud history, as do their creators. Whether produced for ceremonial or utilitarian purposes, many forms of Native American art continue to be produced as they have been for centuries. There is little doubt that economic factors associated with the collecting of Native American arts and crafts have helped to maintain this tradition and even accelerate the production of art by American Indians. In recent decades, popularity of Native American art and an increase in the number of collectors has brought about an increase in Indian art dealers, publications about Native American art, coverage by the media, and even governmental regulation of Indian art production and marketing. More Native Americans have turned to the production of arts and crafts for a living, especially as governmental assistance programs have diminished and the nation’s economy has flourished. While much has been published on Native American arts and crafts production, products, and collecting, little material is available on the pedagogical methods and influences on the instruction of and the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in Native American (American Indian) art.

For this study, the primary research question is, “What factors influence and maintain the production of traditional Native American artwork”? From the five traditions of qualitative

research described by Cresswell (1997), the one which best fits this study would be that of *grounded theory*. I will attempt to generate or discover a theory, or theories, which surround the production of artwork by Native Americans. Interviews will be conducted to elicit concepts of how and why Native Americans produce artwork in a traditional sense, when artists around them and within their area of influence produce art in a more transformative, contemporary style. Data collected will be coded and categorized in an attempt to define theories for observed phenomena related to the traditional making of art objects by Native Americans.

I concluded that interpretive fieldwork comprised of on-site interviews and observation of the artist-informants in their home setting, as well as interviews with traders/art dealers where these artists are intimately involved with commercial and pedagogical aspects of their art was the most beneficial way to gather data. Language barriers among some Native American artists, noncompliance with survey completion, and social/ethnic diversity among tribes were several reasons why observational fieldwork in the form of interviews was chosen over survey research.

Data Interpretation and Validity

In order to develop theory relative to the factors that contribute to Native American artists of the Southwest maintaining the methods, style and materials of their forefathers, it was necessary to examine a large amount of rich narrative from the artists and traders who were interviewed. After separating the interview narrative into groupings based upon answers to the interview questions, I found it more relevant to group the narrative of the artists with that of the other artists, and likewise with the traders. Because Mr. Eugene Thaw would normally and naturally fit with the traders, I decided to correlate his data with that of the other traders, but to deal with most of his answers separately, for the most part, since he represented the quintessential patron of Native American art. Thaw is a dealer in contemporary art who amassed

a collection of over 700 Native American art objects which he and his wife donated to the New York State Historical Association in Cooperstown. However, Thaw had not interacted with Native Americans in the capacity of a dealer or wholesale buyer of their art. My concerns were unfounded as his dialogue did not presume to be more than a collector of Indian arts.

There was some concern from my perspective as to whether or not my sample size was adequate. Both artists and traders represent “high-end,” experienced and knowledgeable persons who have been in the field for a number of years. Both artists and traders were well known by others in my study. All of these factors added to the validity of the study.

My interview strategy was that of an “interview guide approach” (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996), whereby the interviews were driven by a specific set of questions designed for each group and delivered in advance. The participants were “guided” through the interviews with care taken not to prompt specific answers or carry the interview in a direction the interviewee overtly desired. The artists and traders were allowed to give extended answers and diverge from the subject of the specific question, while at the same time being kept within the boundaries of the research questions. The interviews were kept conversational and situational with a desire and attempt to gain a systematic approach to data collection.

Most of the interviews and data collection progressed in the order of the questions, which as mentioned were supplied in written form which the participants had during the session. Several of the traders digressed from the questions and extended the length of the interview, but these digressions often produced rich and interesting narrative. Generally, the traders offered a greater amount of information than the Native American artists. This, I attribute to the differences in culture, and the fact that the traders are “salesmen” at heart.

I relied on the videotaped interviews to verify the accuracy of my data. The tapes are valuable not only for verifying the accuracy of the narrative, but for observing facial expressions and body language.

The interview questions were designed to cover the types and differentiation described by Fraenkel and Wallen (1996), and which add to the validity of the study. These types include background or demographic questions, knowledge questions, experience or behavior questions, opinions or values questions. Feelings questions and, sensory questions.

My intent will be to compare the data between the individual artists as well as between the artists and traders. These comparisons and corroborations between subjects should yield substantive theories as to why and how traditional artwork continues to be produced by members of Native American tribes of the Southwest.

Subjectivity Statement

It is relevant to this research study to mention that I was a resident of Arizona for nearly 17 years, and to discuss my longtime interest in Southwest Native American art which evolved into my becoming a knowledgeable collector of art from the region. Upon moving to Phoenix in 1971, I took every opportunity to travel around the Southwest to observe and study the beautiful landscapes and vistas, the native people, and the art created by these inhabitants. The stark grandeur of the stone silhouettes in the landscapes was punctuated by a broad palette with subtle variation in hue and value, further enhanced by the changing daylight. I found that the Native American artwork possessed many of these same qualities of the landscapes – particularly the weavings by the Navajo.

I began to visit some of the trading posts and, as a result, became more familiar with the various art forms and what attributes to look for in a piece of Native American art. I was

fascinated by the craftsmanship in the artwork, and particularly in the Navajo rugs that I saw and handled. One quality that I noticed was the maintenance of similar materials, methods, and design in contemporary weavings as I saw in a Navajo rug dating back to the 1920s. I became curious as to how the weaving techniques were passed along from weaver to weaver within the tribe.

Having met and befriended several trading post operators, I was able to gain insight into art and craft techniques employed by the Native American artists who gave me valuable information regarding the valuation and valuing of Native American art objects. I was also able to see many high-end art pieces, both contemporary and antique. This knowledge was beneficial when I started collecting Southwestern Native American art in 1986. I now have over 100 pieces in my collection of Navajo rugs, Hopi Kachinas, Indian jewelry, pottery, and sandpaintings.

Being a professional medical illustrator has helped me to identify with the Native American artists when it comes to the craftsmanship in their artwork. I know what they mean when they discuss various techniques of production, and can identify with their attention to detail. Being an artist, I believe, helped me to gain the trust of the study participants and put the Indian artists more at ease when talking “artist to artist.”

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

One can theorize that contributions and threats to the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in Native American art evolve from many directions, both internal and external to the American Indian culture. Native American tribes are truly “art-centered” societies, with the production of various art forms an integral part of everyday life for a majority of tribal members. Historically, art forms have been utilitarian in nature since aboriginals first settled these lands. Utilitarian objects became decorative and have been used in religious and cultural ceremonies for thousands of years. Art became used for communication and self-decoration by Native Americans centuries ago. And in recent times, art has achieved commercial appeal and value as a commodity and economic stimulator within tribal communities.

Cultural awareness by the American Indian of the southwestern United States has taken on an increasing importance to both individuals and the tribal structure as a whole. Traditional arts and crafts have become a factor in the self-awareness by Native Americans and the recognition they receive from other cultures. Economic factors play no small part in this phenomenon, and what art forms used to be utilized solely within the tribal societies are now appreciated and prized by collectors worldwide. Aside from the recognition that individual artists receive for their artwork, the high visibility and uniqueness of Native American art forms has helped to create pride and a strong interest in their culture by Native Americans. I was a witness to this several years ago when I was in Phoenix, Arizona for a visit. I learned of a book

sale to reduce inventory at the Heard Museum's library. The Heard Museum is one of the premium museums of Native American art with comprehensive collections of Indian art from the North, Central, and South Americas, as well as an extensive library. The book sale was to begin at 8:00 a.m., and upon my arrival at 9:00 a.m., I discovered that the section on "Native American Culture," which had contained over 100 titles, was nearly empty. When I inquired with one of the volunteers as to what had happened, she informed me that Native Americans started lining up for the sale at 7:00 a.m., and they had almost completely picked over the books in the first half hour of the sale. She told me that recently there had been a strong, renewed interest in Native American traditional culture, particularly by younger Native Americans in their 20s and 30s. Her last remarks were, "I've never seen anything like it before." This renewed interest in tribal history and culture was certainly shared by my research participants, particularly by the traders who interact with hundreds of Native artists.

The Native American tribes of the Southwestern United States can be considered "art-centered" societies in comparison to the dominant Eurocentric cultures of America. Many tribal members incorporate art making into their everyday lives whether or not they are involved in the commercial sale of their art. When asked about this phenomenon, Hopi carver Alfred Lomahquahu, Jr. replied,

I grew up in a family that carved. My father divorced my mother when I was around 3 and she remarried when I was around 6 or 7. My stepfather was a carver and he carved at home all the time so I just sat and watched him, but most of the time I wasn't really interested in doing any carving. I have a lot of uncles that carve. They are known carvers. I have a lot of cousins that carve. Almost every Hopi that I know carves in some form or another, some really just for the ceremonies and then there are others, like

me that do it for a living. So, it is all around us. We are all brothers and sisters too, so we can go to another village and we have a brother or somebody that is related to you and you can sit there and carve with them, so it is pretty much all around us out there. My stepfather learned (to carve) from his father and his father from his father.

Navajo weaver Brenda Spencer told me that her mother, Margie Spencer, and her three sisters are all weavers who specialize in Wide Ruins and Burntwater style rugs. Her brother, who is deceased, “did a little bit of paintings.”

When asked about tribal and cultural influences upon his artwork, Michaelis Burnham said, “...I found that there are a lot of Hopis doing exactly what I’m doing.” Burnham’s artwork reflects his Hopi heritage; his representational style often portrays ceremonial dances of the Kachinas. His paintings also mirror the landscapes and motifs of the Southwest, echoing his Navajo ancestry as well.

Two of the traders mentioned the art-centered society that is the Native America of the Southwest. Cliff McGee said, “Well, in 1945 when I went out to Keams Canyon (to one of the McGee family trading posts), it was just a matter of livelihood for the Hopi Indians and the Navajo to make their crafts. It was just a way of their life.” His son, Bruce McGee, when asked about his exposure to art while growing up on the Reservation,

You know, with the Native American culture, their entire life is centered around art. So I certainly had exposure to that and it seems like everything we did in the classroom was either drawing, prior to the regular math, so that (art) was an integral part of instruction out there (in the Reservation school).

The subject of the Native American culture being “art-centered” was unsolicited and not a part of the interview questions supplied to the study participants.

Another unsolicited subject which arose in the interviews was the American Indian Movement (AIM) of the 1970s. The movement was significant enough to warrant a brief explanation even though AIM had no direct relationship to Native American art production.

AIM is the Indian activist organization which burst onto the international scene in 1972 with the seizure of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in Washington, DC, and the standoff at Wounded Knee in 1973. AIM was founded in 1968 in Minneapolis, MN, as a patrol to address issues of police brutality against American Indians. The first national AIM conference was in 1970. The movement was founded to turn the attention of Indian people toward a renewal of spirituality which would impart the strength of resolve needed to reverse the ruinous policies of the United States, Canada, and other colonialist governments of Central and South America. At the heart of AIM is deep spirituality and a belief in connectedness of all Indian people (AIM Website: www.aimovement.org/).

AIM has repeatedly brought successful suits against the Federal government for the protection of the rights of Native Nations as guaranteed in treaties, sovereignty, the United States Constitution, and laws. The philosophy of self-determination upon which the movement is built is deeply rooted in traditional spirituality, culture, language, and history.

Before the formation of AIM, culture had been weakened in most Indian communities due to U.S. government policy, the American Indian boarding schools, and other efforts to extinguish Indian secular and spiritual life. Now, many groups of Native Americans cannot remember a time without a close tie to their culture. This great cultural revival has also helped to restore spiritual leaders and elders to their former positions of esteem for the wisdom they hold. Tribal elders are often held responsible for the maintenance, or lack thereof, of tradition and symbolism portrayed in Native American art and passed along from generation to generation.

Several of the artists and traders interviewed made those observations, which will be discussed further later in this dissertation.

Introduction to Interview Participants

There were eleven individuals who agreed to participate in videotaped interviews for this study exploring how traditional methods and symbolism are maintained in Native American art of the Southwest. They comprised two major groups of individuals – artists and art dealers/traders. The artists were all either Hopi or Navajo, except for one individual who is Hopi-Navajo/Anglo. The traders were all Anglo. Following is a brief introduction to each person.

Hosteen Etsitty – Navajo Sandpainter

Of all the Native American artists that I have met over the years, including the five individuals that I interviewed for this study, Hosteen Etsitty produces some of the most “traditional” and symbolic artwork, while at the same time being the embodiment of the modern, transformative Indian artist.

Etsitty, aka Daniel E. Smith, was interviewed in August 1997 at his home studio near Shiprock, New Mexico. At the time of the interview, Mr. Etsitty was a 34 year-old Navajo who had recently retired as chief of the Shiprock volunteer fire department. He is a local tribal leader, and had successfully established himself as an artist doing sandpainting. Mr. Etsitty’s home and studio were modest by Anglo standards with the studio being a separate structure, and a third structure on the property being a trailer housing his mother. On the inside of his studio door, in graffiti-style lettering was the phrase “There is no shortcut to your spirit. H. Etsitty.” His next door neighbor is a medicine-man, who he admits is a great source of research material for his sandpaintings. Among all those I have interviewed, Etsitty is the savviest with regard to artist

rights, marketing, and commercialism. He has developed complex methods for marketing his sandpaintings and takes full advantage of current communication technologies.

Sandpainting is a ceremonial, religious art practiced for centuries by the Navajo, Papago, Apache and some of the Pueblo tribes. It is the prerogative of the male, and falls within the province of the medicine-man, since sandpaintings possess not only a religious but a curative purpose (White, 1979). It is generally believed that the Navajo borrowed the idea of drypainting from the Puebloan people, along with other ritualistic paraphernalia and mythology and then elaborated on it to fit their religious system. Stylistic similarities have been observed between Navajo sandpaintings and pictographs and murals found on walls of kivas in pre-1700 pueblos. Evidence of sandpainting pigments have been discovered in pre-1800 Navajo sites. There is also some evidence that many early Navajo sandpaintings were meant to be permanent, while modern ceremonial sandpainting is meant to be destroyed after completion of the religious or healing rites (Parezo, 1991).

The development of commercial sandpainting was not an isolated event, but the last in a series of developments among Anglo-Americans and Navajos. Two major steps were prerequisites to the making of commercial sandpaintings. First sandpaintings had to be put in permanent form and second, removed from the ceremonial context for reasons which had nothing to do with their ritual use but which served interests of the entire community. Both steps had to be accomplished without bringing misfortune to the community. The change was accomplished by two groups - Navajo singers (medicine-men) and Anglo scholars who were trying to preserve Navajo culture while advancing scholarly knowledge of indigenous peoples and their religion before they died out; and a second group consisting of traders, entrepreneurs, and artisans who were trying to expand and exploit the Anglo market for Navajo art and crafts.

Both groups provided the all important rationalization which allowed the shift from sacred to secular realms to occur, while demands from the Anglo group helped create a market for sandpainting motifs in crafts long before commercial sandpaintings were invented (Parezo, 1991).

The first use of permanent sandpaintings was as reproductions of ceremonial sandpaintings collected by scholars as a means of studying Navajo religion and mythology. This practice was sporadically accomplished by anthropologists and scholars from the 1880s thru the 1920s, oftentimes to the horror of Navajos present. The first record of permanent sandpaintings being produced for a commercial market was in the 1930s. In response to criticism, as well as to lessen apprehension and fear of supernatural sanctions, Navajo singers and weavers (who also produced religious symbolism in their work) altered their ideas about the use of sacred sandpaintings by gradually developing a rationalization which allowed them to break the prohibition against rendering the sacred designs in a permanent form. Simultaneously, this allowed singers to continue using sandpaintings in their sacred context without questioning their efficacy. This involved intentional changes or omissions to at least one element in the design, color symbolism, or composition (Reichard, 1963). This rationalization stemmed from the concept that completeness and accuracy were the keys to the sanctification and healing powers of sandpaintings. There was, and continues to be, a lack of consensus and ambiguity on whether removal of elements or changes in symbolism design permits the reproduction of permanent sandpaintings from their sacred, ceremonial counterpart.

Hosteen Etsitty's commercial sandpaintings are traditional in that they follow the symbolism utilized in sacred sandpainting ceremonies performed by singers (medicine-men and medicine-women). His permanent sandpaintings are produced on particle board, plywood, or

Masonite®, and the majority of his work ranges in size from 2 feet by 2 feet to 3 feet square. Occasionally, he will do larger, custom work, and often he produces smaller pieces (approximately 14 inches square) since it is less costly for the consumer and less time consuming. He states that his average production is around 40 larger pieces per year. Compared to many of his colleagues producing commercial sandpaintings, Hosteen Etsitty's work tends to be more detail oriented with complex and intricate use of a full palette of colors. He maintains an extensive supply of multicolored sand, crushed marble, and other pigments in his studio.

While many Navajo sandpainters produce works incorporating traditional symbolism, there are quite an increasing number who have transformed the medium into a more modern and contemporary application of the art. Some sandpainters are using representational subject matter of Navajo life, including landscapes, still life of Indian objects such as pottery and/or jewelry, or even animals and people. More modern methods of application of pigment to the sand, including airbrushing, are being employed by commercial sandpainting artists. Mr. Etsitty prides himself on his knowledge and use of traditional symbolism. Not only does he rely on his medicine-man/neighbor for research, but he regularly attends ceremonies of traditional, healing sandpainting, and seeks out tribal elders and other medicine-men from whom he gathers knowledge for his designs. He first learned the importance of traditional symbolism and many of the ancient symbolic myths from his father.

Several people have played an important role in his traditional artistic life, according to Hosteen Etsitty. Hosteen's passion was evident when he spoke of the respect and love he had for his father. Because of a great age difference (his father was 52 when Hosteen was born), he stated that he looked upon his father more as "holy man and teacher" than a biological father and friend. The elder Mr. Smith was the first person to take Hosteen to a traditional sandpainting

ceremony. He also took Hosteen to many sacred places, including Navajo Mountain in Utah, where he recounted much of the spirit and mythology of the Dineh (the Navajo “people”) and the land that is so much a part of their life. Hosteen recounted that his father had seen a variety of life changes and had experienced “a full spectrum” during his 91 years on earth. Mr. Smith was a Methodist, but placed a great deal of weight on the traditional values of his culture, and emphasized that discipline of belief and action was of paramount importance to his son’s future. It was evident that Hosteen Etsitty still remembers and lives by the discipline instilled within him by his father. It is evident in his artwork.

A second person of importance to Hosteen Etsitty, particularly with respect to his artistic life, was his junior high school art teacher, Mrs. Amber Wilcott. She taught him for 3 years in junior high school and then again for a year in high school (at age 16, Mr. Etsitty left school after his parents divorced). Hosteen recounted, and still remembers, his first day in art class with her. She was very direct with the students that any who were only in the class to earn a grade were welcome to sit on the “sideline,” read books, and help with the cleanup. Only about four students, including Hosteen, remained on the art side. He said that she was a creative and inspiring teacher. Only three weeks into the semester, nearly all the students had rejoined the “art side” of the classroom. She had quietly gotten her point across. Hosteen recounted that he learned the basics of drawing, shading and perspective from Mrs. Wilcott. He said he did a lot of drawing and sketching, and developed many themes and ideas portraying Navajo life, culture, and mysticism. He also was very much into drawing wildlife, and he studied the correct structure of animals very precisely. He said that Mrs. Wilcott provided an “outlet for his art,” and he was able to transfer back into her class after a less than rewarding stint with another art teacher.

Another person of paramount importance to Hosteen Etsitty's life is his mother, Bessie Smith. She is a weaver who lives in the house adjacent to his. It was evident that he highly respects her and that they talk on a daily basis about life and art. When asked what his mother thought of him being an artist, Hosteen replied, "She would probably say 'art saved him...if he wasn't an artist he'd probably be dead now.' "

Hosteen acknowledges that he was very militant as a youth and was active in the American Indian Movement. He admits that his mother's idea of his death was not farfetched, and that many of his friends in younger days were either dead, or were leading disrupted lives as alcoholics. Hosteen feels that not only has art saved his life, but it also "has saved my conscience." He is very astute and philosophical about his people (the Dineh), and has made it a point to travel to sacred areas of the Navajo nation (*Dinetaah*) to increase his spirituality and observe the actual landmarks that appear as symbols in Navajo sandpainting. He laments that "Anglos don't have the true sense of what the land really is" and that that is necessary to be "accepted" (by your land and people) to be truly happy. He admits that now he is very happy as an artist and "we (he and his family) just go with the pace of the seasons."

I found his interest in and knowledge of the business and marketing of art to be enormous. Given his intense feelings towards traditionalism in both art and life, I found this to be quite curious. He is knowledgeable of copyright and artists rights, as well as marketing methods, and various forms of media technology. Hosteen Etsitty has an agent working on both book and television "deals," as well as several dealers who represent him in many states within the U.S.A. He also has a CD Rom and videotape featuring his work and describing the ceremony and art of sandpainting. His work is also marketed on the Internet. Hosteen does find the time to work with his children and teach them sandpainting, in much the same way as he said his father

contributed to his knowledge. He says he treats his collector clients well, and provides them with his home telephone number, as well as a percentage if they steer buyers to purchase his art. You can tell that he feels of them as if they were part of his extended family (a very traditional Navajo trait). While he is much attuned to the marketing and sale of his work, he at the same time expresses a reluctance to produce images just for monetary reward. It is evident that he is “comfortable” with his life, family, religion and particularly with his artwork. I feel he could be considered a true “contemporary traditionalist.”

Alfred Lomahquahu, Jr. – Hopi Carver

My initial interview was with Alfred “Bo” Lomahquahu, Jr., at his home in Holbrook, Arizona. Mr. Lomahquahu, Jr. is a member of the Hopi tribe and makes his living as a carver of Kachina figures. I was accompanied by Mr. W. Bruce McGee, a trader and fine arts dealer who arranged the interview with Bo Lomahquahu. Because of his skill and attention to detail, McGee also utilizes Mr. Lomahquahu as one of the few carvers to perform repairs on damaged Kachinas carved by other artists. McGee also considers Lomahquahu as one of the upper echelon, or “high end” carvers of Kachinas in the Hopi tribe (McGee, personal communication).

Alfred Lomahquahu, Jr. was born in 1964 in the Village of Bacavi, Third Mesa, on the Hopi Reservation in northeast Arizona. He is the oldest male and second oldest of six children (3 male, 3 female; one sister with the remaining four siblings being step-brothers and step-sisters). His education consisted of schooling in the public school system, while he went to an “all Indian high school” (Sherman Indian High School) in Riverside, California. He recalls his art education in high school as being from an Anglo teacher who taught him the basics of art (drawing and painting). Lomahquahu recalled,

I think he was kind of learning a little bit of our type of forms of art, and then teaching us a lot. He was mainly teaching us basics of art shading and then like scale and form, proportion, and perspective. That is what he was teaching and then we could use that to our own art form.

Lomahquahu recalls painting and drawing (shading) a lot as a child, although he did not carve until around age 25 or 26 because “I knew you could make money with it.”

Bo Lomahquahu is married to a Navajo woman who has worked for Bruce McGee at his trading post in Keams Canyon, Arizona. He and his wife have three children of their own, and there are two children that are hers from a previous marriage.

Lomahquahu has worked extensively in the construction industry as a heavy equipment operator. He is a veteran of the United State Marine Corps, which he credits with instilling his “attention to detail.” His artwork can be seen on the “ancient Nations” Website (www.ancientnations.com/AlfredLomahquahu/bio.html).

Michaelis Burnham – Navajo/Hopi/Anglo Painter

Michaelis Burnham was interviewed at his apartment in Phoenix. He is a painter and works in various media including acrylics, water color, and pen and ink. Burnham is one of two of the interview subjects who have a formal educational background in fine art, graphic design, and art education at the baccalaureate level. He was born in 1968 and grew up near Sanders, in Northeast Arizona. His father is the well-known and highly respected trader, Bruce Burham; while his mother, Virginia Burham, works in their trading post and also is a jewelry maker. She is one-half Navajo and one-half Hopi.

Brenda Spencer – Navajo Weaver

Brenda Spencer is a Navajo weaver who was interviewed at the Hubbell Trading Post (a national historic site) in Ganado, Arizona, where she is employed. She was born in 1962 in Gallup, New Mexico and resides in Wide Ruins, near Ganado. Her mother, Margie Spencer, is a weaver of some renown, as are her three sisters and Brenda herself. Brenda's weavings sell in the thousands of dollars, although she only produces several per year.

Alan Jim – Navajo Potter/Teacher

The last artist that I interviewed was Alan Jim, who teaches art (specifically, pottery) at a high school on the Navajo Reservation. He was born in 1954 in the small town of Valemound (now called Camp Navajo), about 8 miles west of Flagstaff, Arizona.

He attended public school near Flagstaff, and is openly grateful that he did not have to attend any of the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) schools. After serving his country in the U.S. Army, he worked in a law practice as a research paralegal for about eight years before going back to college. In 1990, he received his baccalaureate degree and then in 1992, he received his Masters degree in Multicultural Education with emphasis in ceramics from Northern Arizona University. He professes a strong interest in educational research.

At the time of the interview, he had been teaching at the high school for seven years. I observed him throw on the potter's wheel and he is very adept, although he no longer is a production or fine arts potter. Alan Jim has three brothers, 2 of them older, and one sister. He also has three children – 2 boys and a girl. There will be some discussion of artistic talent in his family in the data analysis chapter.

Art Dealers/Traders

Of the six art dealers/trading post operations who were interviewed, three were from the same family, although they did provide diverse and rich information.

W. Bruce McGee

The first interview was with Mr. W. Bruce McGee. I have known Mr. McGee since the Spring of 1987, when I purchased several Navajo weavings from his trading post/gallery in Keams Canyon, Arizona. Subsequently, he opened a gallery in Holbrook, Arizona, before becoming the gift shop manager at the Heard Museum in Phoenix. He is now Director of Retail Sales at the Heard Museum. The McGee family still owns the previously mentioned trading post and gallery as well as a trading post in Piñon, Arizona. The first interview with Bruce McGee was conducted in Holbrook at McGee's Beyond Native Tradition. Earlier the same day, Mr. McGee had accompanied me to the interview with Hopi carver, Alfred Lomahquahu, Jr. McGee arranged the meeting with Lomahquahu and participated in the later stages of that interview.

W. Bruce McGee was born in Ganado, Arizona in 1945 and raised on the Hopi Reservation, but completed high school in Holbrook. He attended Brigham Young University and Arizona State University, majoring in business management, but not completing the degree. Bruce McGee has one older and one younger brother and a younger sister. He and his siblings are third generation traders/fine art dealers.

Clifton F. McGee

Bruce's father, Clifton F. ("CF") McGee was interviewed at his home in Mesa, Arizona. The Navajo call him "dagasheen," "man with mustache." He was born in 1920 in Kirtland, New Mexico – one of eleven children. CF McGee's father's family moved to New Mexico from Cherokee Mission, Oklahoma, where his father met and married his mother in Waterflow, New

Mexico, and where they resided for most of their lives. CF started his career as a trader when he was a teenager and would work for some of his brothers and one sister (Stella Tanner) on the Navajo Reservation. At age 25, he went into partnership with his brother, Bill, and purchased the trading post at Keams Canyon. They later bought the trading post in Polacca and Piñon, Arizona, and with Keams Canyon owned three trading posts on the Hopi Reservation.

Ferron McGee

Ferron McGee, the oldest son of CF McGee, was born in New Mexico in 1941. He grew up in Keams Canyon, on the Hopi Reservation, and graduated from Holbrook High School. Ferron attended Arizona State University in Tempe and summer sessions at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. He is owner/manager of the McGee trading post in Piñon, Arizona.

Billy Malone

The next of the traders to be interviewed was Billy Malone who was born in Gallup, New Mexico in 1939. He attended school in Durango, Colorado, and served his country in the U.S. Army with discharge in 1961. Soon afterward, Malone began working at the Lupton Trading Post before being hired at Piñon by Bill and Cliff McGee. In 1981, he became the manager of the Hubbell Trading Post, a national historic site.

Bruce Burnham

The last trading post operator that I interviewed was Bruce Burnham. The interview was conducted at R.B. Burnham Trading Post in Sanders, Arizona. Mr. Burnham was born in Farmington, New Mexico in 1940. He, too, was in the U.S. Army, and he was discharged in 1960. After several menial jobs, he was employed at the Red Rock Trading Post; then at the Aneth and Dinnebito Trading Posts. Mr. Burnham is married to Virginia Kishkoli Begay

Burnham, a jewelry maker. Together, they own and operate R.B. Burnham Trading Post in Sanders, Arizona.

Eugene Victor Thaw

Finally, an interview was conducted with Mr. Eugene Victor Thaw, an art dealer and collector, at his home in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Although Mr. Thaw does not deal directly in Native American art (his specialty is contemporary American art, including experience and expertise with the work of Georgia O’Keeffe and Jackson Pollock), he has a significant collection of American Indian artwork. The American Indian art collection which was given to the New York State Historical Association by Eugene and Clare Thaw is the most significant of its type donated to the American public since the depression era (Coe, 1995). The collection of over 700 pieces of Indian art represents every region of the United States and the fact that the objects are almost wholly of known makers or histories of ownership make it one of the most quintessential collection of its kind. Certainly, Mr. Thaw’s experiences as a dealer of art and in amassing this huge collection make him a valuable member of my research sample and add to the validity of my data.

Art versus Craft

In order to develop theories about the phenomenon of traditional art production among Native Americans of the Southwest, it is necessary to define what “art” is to the artists who produce it and what they feel constitutes quality in a piece of art, or what is “good art.” The term “arts and crafts” is copiously utilized to attract consumers to venues which specialize in anything from Native American made (or assembled) trinkets and souvenirs to one-of-a-kind creations of varying intricacy and quality.

Traders on Art Versus Craft

Says Bruce Burnham, 4th generation trader from Sanders, AZ, on the subject of *arts and crafts*:

Back in the 1960s and 70s, the majority of the arts and crafts and the majority of the Indian crafted items were sold right along Interstate 40, or Yellowstone Park, or Yosemite... Well, then it was like, 'let's just buy this rug and take it to the South as a souvenir of our trip to the Southwest...' If you think in terms of where the market place is, our market place for a \$5,000 rug is not out there on Interstate 40 at one of these tourist oriented operations. They want something for under \$20 to take home and put on a shelf and say this is what I got from the Southwest. There was a time when Indian art would fill that, but just as a matter of economics we priced ourselves into a different market. We can't expect the weaver to go on weaving for less than 80 cents an hour so that she can sell to somebody and they can go home and say I picked this rug up for \$75, it's an Indian rug. That's what these tourist places are selling; Mexican rugs." I see a floor rug as being a craft. I see a saddle blanket as a craft. Crochet or knitted items or cross-stitching would be a craft. Art is the higher levels of rug weaving. The creativity of doing a new design and taking pride to try to do a better rug every time. We have reached a new level in rug weaving.

When asked about the valuation and purchase of crafts from Indian crafters in the 1940s and 50s, Cliff McGee, a retired 3rd generation trader, made mention of mass produced pieces of varying quality. Rugs and blankets were often purchased by the pound or by size, and pottery was purchased by the piece after a determination of construction quality. Said McGee,

We would just put the pottery on the floor and take a pencil and tap it and if it rang a certain way then we would say it was a good piece of pottery. We were looking for a high pitch, the ones without a high pitch ring weren't made right. We would encourage the lady to bake it a little more. They would just pile that pottery up, oh, 4ft high. They would find the potter and he would come look at it and would average it out so much per piece. They'd run from .25 cents to \$3.50 per piece. A .25 cent piece of pottery at that time would sell for .45 cents in the store. If you wholesale it, a .25 cent piece, you would probably get .35 cents for it. You would pack it up in the wooden barrels, keg barrels, and ship it off. Today, they take it piece by piece and analyze it by the value of it and the craftsmanship of it. It's entirely different.

When asked for an example of "art," Cliff McGee continued:

The Nampeyo sisters, they have very fine art. It was different from all others. Because they had their own design and no one else could copy that design and they stuck to it. That was in Hopi laws that nobody would copy any of it. Nampeyo had their name and wherever you would see that design you knew it was Nampeyo pottery.

Bill Malone, manager of the Hubbell Trading Post in Ganado, Arizona, had the following to say:

Well, there didn't use to be a distinction but now the price on certain items – there surely is a distinction between something that would be artwork and something that is craftwork now. The price and quality (make it art). There are things that you just look at today and you know it's not a typical rug or a typical piece of jewelry or it's a really fantastic basket that has nothing to do with craft work, it's artwork. Well, I think when you go way beyond where the work is, you can just look at a piece and say, Oh my gosh! Look at

that! That's artwork! Even a novice would be able to pick that up and understand that it is something beyond what is normally done whether it's pottery, or jewelry, or weaving.

The following was expressed by Bruce McGee, then managing owner of McGee's

Beyond Native Tradition in Holbrook, AZ:

Well, as far as I am concerned, my opinion is that, you talk about *crafts*, taking about things that are being made to turn a dollar. When you are talking about *art*, you are creating a piece of history, a piece that is significant enough to be owned by an avid collector. An example of *craft* would be say, a flat doll, which is nothing more than a thin piece of wood that is perhaps an inch and half to two inches in width and maybe six inches in length. The Hopis use them. They hurl them like the aborigines would and they make a thunder sound. They were putting those out by the droves, that is *craft*.

That is easy money. That is something that really is not significant among the Hopis, but it is a form for making money, or as a fine-tuned Kachina that perhaps Cecil

Calnimptewa would make, where the detail work has taken weeks and months. That is *art*. The same thing is said about pottery with just a traditional pattern on it. That's *craft*.

It is something we all do. All the girls maybe get into the *art form*, which is something Thomas Polacca was doing, where there is a precise method of putting a distinct design that only he could do, that's *art*.

Ferron McGee, manager/owner of the Piñon (AZ) Trading Post, added:

Well, it is like Bruce said, it depends on the degree of commercialism. You know if you mass produce simple things, then that is just commercial art. When you get into the Fine Arts, Navajo or Hopi, it means that it is usually a one of a kind type piece. Just like your Navajo Kachinas, I don't consider those art, you know, it is just commercial art. It is

produced because of monetary reasons. To the Hopis, that is very precise art. It is original.

Native American Artists on Art Versus Craft

When the Native American artists were asked about differentiations between what is “art” and what is “craft,” they supplied the following opinions.

Michaelis Burnham was asked about his own pieces and he stated:

I think it’s all arts, probably because it’s my own creations and my own hands. It’s one of a kind. Craft to me means like a hobby whereas the art, it’s what puts food on the table. It’s just something that I love to do.

Brenda Spencer, interviewed at Hubbell Trading Post, said: “I think an art is something that- as a weaver - trying to be creative and trying to do something different - very fine quality. I think there are quite a few weavers who are making their weaving as an art and are trying to do something unusual - something nice, almost like a painting. Then the crafting people are doing it for money. It’s not as fine, it’s not as intricate. I think a lot of them are really just crafts.”

When asked about his artwork, Alfred Lomahquahu, Jr. talked about being a successful artist. He tried to separate “craft” from “art” by describing his personal feelings about why he does what he does. “But, it all comes down to your technique, your ability, that would limit you, not all the tools you got or are available to you now, but your ability is what would limit you to how well you are going to be, he stated.

Bruce McGee, who was in attendance at the interview, and is a strong advocate for Mr. Lomahquahu’s artwork and artistic abilities, interjected his feelings about Lomahquahu’s prowess for carving miniature Kachinas. “Let’s get down to the nitty gritty, he started miniatures because it was a challenge.” Lomahquahu responded:

I went to a doll show about two years ago and I was down there in Tucson. That was one of the first times that I went to a show and sat there, because usually I go to shows and enter my doll and then pick it up and take it home. This time I actually had to sit there, and I did not know what to do. I sat there and this one guy next to me was doing a little bit of an entry in this. I said, 'Let me look at that' and we just passed it around in our booth area and I say, 'hey this would be fun.' About a month later, I did my first miniature and brought it in, and he liked it and I was really like- 'I think I can do this' and then I started doing the miniatures. But it was a challenge. I wanted to see if I could do it just like how a big one would look like, but not to scale. See, a lot of people do miniatures, but they leave out the detail, where it doesn't look like it is to scale, where it doesn't look like you could blow it up and it would look just like a Kachina doll.

Hosteen Etsitty, the Navajo sandpainter from Shiprock, New Mexico, talked more about the qualities of an artist, a rather roundabout way of a description of art.

I think it's more a self need, and I think when you go for that extra, to make sure you're completely satisfied. When I look at a piece, I want to be satisfied with it. Pieces like this small piece (points to his work), it deals with communication between people and animals. It's the correlation of the song shared between the two.

Etsitty, being a consummate self-marketer, continued by discussing his economics of pricing his work and then offered the following:

This is how the painting is done; it's just like the earth, the sand is great. Basically you are making money out of the earth, so it's like mother earth takes care of you including business. But there are properties that can kill you like the dirt, the exposure to your lungs. Unless you take the proper precautions, and have common sense." He then adds,

“I just keep on reminding the people its only sand, it’s the same sand that you walk on. All you are paying for is the way the sand is arranged, and you’re paying for a piece of history, so you have bought a piece of history.

When asked his definitions of and feelings about art, Alan Jim replied:

One of the things that I talk to my students about is art and craft. I tell them you always hear “Come to the Fair, Arts and Crafts,” and I try to get them to understand that there is a little bit of a difference between the two, even though there is a lot of overlapping in those two areas, mainly dealing with art. I think that crafts, somebody would discover me by chance or just to know that two colors seep through have a harmony to it. So whatever it is that they made, they have these colors that they really brought out to be what they couldn’t, from an artistic point of view, they can’t explain how color works, how the other elements and principles of artwork to make that particular piece they made successful. I think an artist who is an artist, as he looks at the canvas, or this block of stone, or the clump of clay, starts to think about the theme and how the elements such as line, maybe form, and shape or texture would work together to make the piece successful and not just doing it by chance, almost like a gambling thing. I know that in the dictionary that Webster defines “craft” in with the dexterity and motor skills that develop to manipulate tools and the motor skills needed to make something; whereas Webster’s definition of art is to create something beautiful, but if you take it a step further, again the dividing line is that an artist can explain this art through the use of the elements of arts; it is almost like being a mechanic, if you will, and you know if you put a bigger cam in the engine, it increases the horse power by opening up or keeping the valves open longer, so that more air and gas gets into the firing cylinders, whereas maybe somebody goes out

and gets a new paint job for the car, and a craft is almost similar to that or they just happen to have a friend who knows what's needed to make the car a little more stronger in horsepower, or it may be better gas mileage, but they themselves cannot explain how that piece that was put in the car functions and how it increases the horsepower or increase of mileage. That is how I see art versus craft. An artist is more of a mechanic and craft is more of the beauty of backyard mechanic. You have some understanding of art but not enough to breakout a piece of art, to say line works this way, and I see how texture and its pattern really makes the piece work.

Native American Artists on "Good" Art

The interview participants were asked what they considered the attributes of "good" art to be. Aside from the subjective views and opinions of "good" versus "bad" artwork, the interviewees had the opportunity to be specific about what aspects of art production are important to the valuation, both objective and subjective, of Native American art of the Southwest.

When asked about how he feels about his art and how he determines if it is good artwork, Michaelis Burnham said, "I tend to do it where it touches somebody. I know it's good because I'm satisfied with it. I like to do it so I can see people's reactions. Sometimes I've done things where I think it's no good, because I receive a little bit of criticism over it." When questioned about the type of criticism he received, and whether it dealt with symbolism in his art or draftsmanship/craftsmanship of the finished piece, he answered that criticism would be varied and oftentimes different from person to person.

Navajo weaver, Brenda Spencer, thought good art was, “Something that is very fine, something that is unusually different from most of the rugs and most of the original styles. I think the weaver wants to be creative in her own way.”

Both Hosteen Etsitty and Alfred “Bo” Lomahquahu mentioned “attention to detail” as an attribute of good art. Lomahquahu credits his time in the U.S. Marine Corps with this trait, which enables him to complete incredibly intricate carvings.

Since Alan Jim teaches both Navajo and Hopi students, he is familiar with the artwork of both tribes and offered the following assessment.

I am a little bit familiar with it. I can't say that I am expert at it. But to me, I think a real successful Native American art piece would be something that incorporates being successful in that it not only brings across those five elements in a combination that makes the piece successful, but also that the piece has something to say. Something that really reflects the cultural essence of that particular tribe, or the particular cultural background of that individual artist. A real clear example is, if you go over to Northern Arizona University, on their North Campus, the Navajo artist, I won't say his name, but he is a real famous Navajo artist, and he did a bust of his father's head from the neck and it is supposed to be attributed to Navajo code talkers, but when you drive by there and you look at the piece, you think “Oh a nice bust of a male head” and you just drive, and there's no connections. To me, that would be a travesty of Native American art. A real successful piece of art would be something like Shonto Begay, his art, because it really celebrates what color represents. Symbolology, in the Navajo way. When I interviewed Shonto Begay, his art is very similar to Vincent Van Gogh. One of Vincent's famous paintings is called “Starry Night” and the little dashes that are done in brush strokes, this

Navajo artist follows that same technique, basically, but he considers those brush strokes, like the drum beat. It really reflects a lot of Navajo culture and Navajo lifestyle. I see that as a real successful piece of Native American art, as opposed to just a bronze bust of a Navajo Indian male head and then say “okay, that represents the Navajo and the code talkers; to me that’s not art.

Traders on “Good” Art

The traders were questioned about what the attributes of “good” Native American art were from their perspective. When asked about the maintenance of quality by acknowledged “high-end” weavers, Bill Malone (whose expertise is primarily in Navajo weavings) had the following to say:

I think they have their ups and downs. They could make three rugs that really stand out and you might see a couple that don’t - maybe they are just tired or worn out or something just happened that the way they put their weaving or their pottery together that it just didn’t come out even the way they wanted or liked it to be. It happens with everybody.

I think your artists are either at the top of their class or, as you say, in the middle of their class and some are just above and beyond and just doing middle of the road things and you just know which artist has the best or which one has average work. I always try to buy a little bit from everybody. You always have people that are looking for the best and then you have people that say, ‘Well I can’t afford that,’ so I just want some of the things that are of lesser value.

Malone was then asked about artists who produce art particularly for exhibition or to win awards at Indian art shows. He replied:

I think there are artists that just do showpieces. They are the ones that are programmed to be direct with the public. Most of those are the best of the best probably don't even have to go to an art gallery or a trading post to sell their things. They can just sell it direct."

And, how would this affect the economics of the Indian art market? "They would certainly - say if Bill is going to get 30 or 40 percent on an item, I should be able to move my item up to that price and get what he gets or Bruce or anybody else gets."

Cliff McGee, a second generation trader, was asked what attributes he looks for in good Native American art. He responded:

The design of it and the way it was molded, formed there would be no nicks on it. The same way in a Navajo rug, the fineness of it, the tightness of it. Well, the carding of the wool had a lot to do with the value of the rug. If the carding was done properly and tight and clean and of course in the weaving if they hammer it down to make the right tightness it would make the rug worth more money.

Cliff McGee also volunteered that often traders would supply the Navajo weavers with commercial wools in return for the opportunity to buy and sell the completed weaving. Often, according to McGee, the weavers were encouraged to mix the commercial wools with their "homespun" wools. The better wool was often kept for weaving, while excess wool was often sold back to brokers and sent back East to make suits, blankets and other clothing. McGee then discussed valuation and desirable attributes of Kachina dolls.

If it's a one piece and it's carved out. For instance the nose it wasn't pinned on, it's carved out. The eyes, the mouth, the ears, everything carved out from the wood, within the wood. Before, they would glue on the nose or the ears and the arms and the legs make them look more like the olden time way; the way they dressed. The cottonwood,

they would go out and gather the cottonwood from washes and a lot of them go to New Mexico to get wood. The San Juan River, there's a lot of cottonwood up there. (Kachina dolls are traditionally carved from the root of the cottonwood tree, native to the Southwest.)

Bruce McGee and his older brother Ferron offered the following views on the attributes of good Native American art. Bruce stated:

Well, first of all, every good artist that is involved in art starts out with a craft first, because that is just the normal thing to do. You begin at the very infant level of doing the very basics. Now you end up with a Cecil Calnimpewa. The first piece I ever bought from him, the wood was better off before he started carving on it. (Chuckles), and then he began to carve more for himself than he did for the general public and that is where art took over, because now he is working against the worst critic there could possibly be and that is yourself. Now, as far as pottery goes, initially they all flip out that single bowl and they go out in front of their little adobe house and they sell it to the tourists, 'Come buy my pottery,' this is so nice, and they sell it. Then they decide there is something beyond that. There is a show in Santa Fe, and if I win a Blue Ribbon my art will grow in value. Also, as far as pottery is concerned, it is the way the design flows. What it has as far as a statement to you, 'Does it trip your trigger'? Well sure it does. The reason for it is, everything seems to flow together on that particular pot, where as the other just says 'Hey, I'm Hopi.' The real artist will make that pot actually come to life and speak to you, and that is why it will get the Blue Ribbon, and that is why it will get top dollar. Ferron McGee interjected with his opinion on good weaving art.

You know, a lot of times they start out at the infant stage. They have to work just like a child. Same thing with art. You start at this very immature level and they may go on for ten years. It seems to get better until they get to the point where they no longer can see that well, or their hands tremble. When this happens, it is natural the arts would be affected in (some) way, but, we seem to get better with age, just like everybody else does. There is even a blind weaver, James Sherman. "...when I look at rugs, when I buy the rug, I look at the straightness of the rug...and how crudely it's woven.

I asked Bruce McGee about excellence in art based on his experiences as a judge (he has judged in the Santa Fe Indian Arts Exhibition, who many acknowledge as the premier Indian arts exhibition in the Southwest. The show takes place in August of each year in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Bruce McGee replied:

I think in judging, and this is the criteria that I have always used, when you get a group of Kachinas together and say at the Indian Market you may have 50 to 100 dolls to judge from. The first thing you look at is the character. How well does it portray the figure that he is trying to carve? That's the first thing you look at from a distance. To begin to separate those out. The next thing I go to is I zoom in on the hands and if a carver can do hands, he can do anything, because that is one of the most difficult thing that I see is when the carver is trying to do those hands.

As a follow-up to Ferron's discussion on an artist's "deterioration," Bruce was asked his opinion:

There are two sides to this story about whether or not their art deteriorates. I don't think it deteriorates, but what happens is the art around it. Some of the younger artists come in and they begin to see things a little different. For instance, Alvin James Mockett who did

carvings in the 70s that really brought Kachinas to the forefront. He was the best there ever was. Today, he is still as good as he was, to a certain point, other than getting old, but compared with what the younger carvers, like Cecil (Calnimptewa) or Loren Phillips. They come in and they begin to do the strands of hair, very finely. They begin to do the beads, flowing out. Well, Alvin doesn't do that. So, where do you judge the quality? Alvin's hasn't deteriorated, what it has done, it has stayed the "best he can do," and he is using the tools that he always used. Whereas these young carvers are coming in, now they see things a little better, differently. They see the Kachina in action, so they are actually carving it, actually in motion, where the piece looks like it just walked off the stand. Antron was a good example of that. His pieces looked like they are just the dancer that is out of their environment and all they need is a little shot of H₂O and off the base they run. They are that detailed.

As a matter of fact, Alvin James, Sr. (a.k.a. "Makya") produces lifelike features on his Kachinas, and was one of the first to produce bronze casts of his work (Reno, p. 85). And, as a compliment to a colleague, Bruce McGee continued:

That's one thing that set Bruce Burnham apart from anybody else, that one thing, you never tell Bruce that it can't be done, and I think it is the same way with Ferron, and his style of rug, he is creating the Newlands and the same with Kachina doll carving, when I told them to carve feathers, they said, 'No, I can't do that.' Well, oh, you can have a knife and you have a design, you can't do that? And Bruce has turned out some fabulous rugs. I think he has probably turned out some of the best rugs that has ever been (woven by Navajos).

Bruce Burnham, interviewed at his trading post in Sanders, AZ, was asked what attributes were attached to good Indian art. Burnham commented:

Well, I would say that in critiquing any artwork whether it be Native American or just anybody's artwork first of all, it has the overall "buy appeal" of colors and contour or whatever. Whether you're looking at a painting or you're looking at a Kachina doll, a carving of a mask, the weaving of a basket the overall application. You just have to be able to remove yourself from the level of looking at it as a consumer and become objective about the piece itself. I may not like the colors of a certain rug, but that doesn't mean that it is not a fantastic piece of work. You kind of have to become a little impersonal. Sure, you're naturally inclined to pay more for what really trips your trigger, but you don't want to get in a position where it's got to be your favorite colors or it's got to be your favorite style or it has to be your favorite anything. At some point when dealing with the artist and the art, you need to be able to separate yourself from your personal likes and dislikes and be objective about the technical application and the technique involved in any kind of art, whether it be pottery, rugs or jewelry. And you know we have reached a new level, we're not selling crafts to the tourists, we're selling artwork to a collector type of clientele.

We offer classes in Navajo weaving here to non-Navajos, but there's nothing that makes a better collector than a wealthy lady that learned to weave a Navajo rug. She then appreciates what goes into the piece. The Navajos, now here, where I say the Navajos are the Japanese of this continent. There is far better beadwork being done here now than there is in Montana and Wyoming by the Indians up there, which is where the good beadwork always came from.

Finally, I asked Burnham about perfection in Navajo weaving.

Well, I learned one thing in particular is that almost every rug has a flaw in it somewhere. Those flaws are not intentional. Don't believe it if someone tells you that in order to keep from doing something perfect they will put a flaw in it. Every weaver that I know tries to do a perfect rug every time she sits down. It doesn't take a trader to find that flaw and bring it to the weaver's attention. She already knows where it's at; you don't need to point it out to her. You might make mention of it but you're not showing her something she doesn't already know it's there. In fact, she is hoping you don't see it.

Analysis of Art Versus Craft

When one analyzes the responses and opinions of the artists and traders to the research question of "What is art and what is a craft"? a comparison can be made which mirrors the interests of the two groups. The Native American artists have an investment of their creative selves into a piece of artwork. They also have their cultural heritage to consider, perhaps as an interest and reason to be creative in the first place. In order to make art, they have to give due consideration to its accuracy, symbolism, and ceremonial meaning, regardless of what materials and craftsmanship have to be considered. The Eurocentric influenced painter, for example, may be concerned with modernist elements of design, color, texture and may well be expressing a feeling they have; or, perhaps a postmodernist approach to a "message" or social comment. To the Native American artist of the Southwest, the aforementioned elements may influence the art product, but the Indian artist's relationship with the Earth, Mother Nature, and his or her culture are an element that is perhaps non-existent in work of the Eurocentric artist.

The expressions of what constitutes “art,” and in particular “good art,” that were common between the artist and trader had to do with being “one of a kind” and of “high quality.” As one artist put it though, there is a “lot of overlapping.”

The Native American artists Etsitty and Burnham said “self need” and “self satisfaction” were qualities of art, and this was strengthened by the expression of art as a “challenge” by Lomahquahu. Other elements of “art” according to the artists were “very fine quality,” “something unusual,” “a piece of history,” and something that demonstrates “technical difficulty.” Alan Jim feels that art is “success by design and not by chance.” Michaelis Burnham, in the only mention of economics by the artists on this subject, said, “Craft is a hobby, whereas art puts bread on the table.”

The traders’ view of “art” echoed the essential theme of “quality” mentioned by the artists. Not surprisingly, there was mention of “price” and “value” to differentiate between art and craft. Another indicator is the intended use of the art, whether it be for utilitarian purposes, or for a collector or museum. The term “technical quality” will go hand in hand with the methods and design that the Native artists employ. Both trader and artist evaluate quality artwork (“good” artwork) by such indicators as proportion, continuity of style, texture, and balance, and color, as well as a work that is skillfully crafted. Different forms of art may be judged by different indicators of value. For instance, a Navajo weaving, regardless of its intended use, would have a value placed upon it based on the quality of the wool, the tightness and continuity of the weave, regularity of the warp and selvage threads, and pattern with use of color as major points. A Kachina doll would be judged and valued by originality and authenticity of the supernatural character, proportion of the figure, amount of detail, and technical difficulty (including whether the piece is carved from a single piece of wood). As with

any art, the reputation and stature of the artist have a bearing on the value. However, to most, a saddle blanket would be considered a craft, while a Navajo Two Grey Hills tapestry is art. As Ferron McGee expressed, “if you mass produce simple things, then that is just commercial art. When you get into fine arts, Navajo or Hopi, means that it is usually one of- a-kind.

The popularity of Native American art of the Southwest has grown dramatically since the 1970s, among both serious collectors and tourists seeking a remembrance of their trip to the Four Corners. With this growth in popularity comes a market for art and craft; good and bad. The artists and traders in my study have documented the competition between artists, the challenge of creating a one-of-a-kind piece, and a piece of culture and history. Traders are looking for a broader market and new and unique styles to satisfy customers. These factors combine to offer opportunities and create threats to the continued production of traditional art by Native Americans in the Southwestern United States.

Tradition and Symbolism

Traditional methods and symbolism utilized in Native American art forms can be characterized today as maintaining a look, style, and construction that is similar or identical to the art forms of a century or longer ago. This maintenance of tradition in art forms may be due to many reasons, including cultural, religious (ceremonial), and economic factors. Responses from the research participants will be examined to establish relationships that support this phenomenon in art production among Native American artists in the Southwest.

For the Native American artist, tradition may and usually does take several forms. First, tradition has to do with everyday life and how they, as artists, fit into the ceremonial, religious and spiritual realm of their culture. This is particularly true when their art is an integral part of tribal rites and ceremony. Such is the case with Kachina dancers and the artists that create these

art forms. It is also applicable to sandpainters who produce images as art forms and also perform ceremonial or healing paintings.

Alfred “Bo” Lomahquahu, Jr. is a high-end carver of Kachina dolls who also is a participant as a caretaker during ceremonial dances on the Hopi Reservation. Although there was much he was not allowed to tell me about the ceremonial aspects of Kachina dances, he did share some of the facts and misconceptions surrounding the Kachinas. Lomahquahu stated:

Many people thought we were worshiping them as Gods, but that is not the case, they were actually teachers. A lot of Hopis nowadays have that misconception, too, because when the Spanish came, they tried to out rule our type of religion and the Kachinas were part of it and they know how the Christianity and the Catholic Christianity, you are not supposed to worship any other think, just the Lord Jesus Christ, and they forced the Hopis to go underground with their Kachinas and to keep it secret. But before that, it was open. Everybody was invited to come and see them, but when they were forced to go underground, that is where the Hopis themselves started thinking that it was really not for everybody, even after the Spanish war ended in 1680, they still kept it underground, and because of that, I think that a lot of the new Hopi people think that the Kachinas are just for the Hopi themselves and they are not supposed to do all this and that, but this is not really true. When they first started out, the Kachinas were really their teachers, because they fill a whole new role in day to day life and they depict everything that there is in this world, the stars and everything.

He continues by discussing his role in the traditional dances.

Yeah, I go and participate. I help. There are two kinds of initiations. The people to get to portray, they are those ones that really actually participate in the dances and then there

are the helpers, which I am, who are the caretakers of the Kachinas, which can also participate, but our major role is to take care of the Kachinas and the friends that you call them, through life and then pass it down.

I began to ask Lomahquahu about the care of the initiations and the Kachina regalia, including the masks, and I quickly discovered I was treading on sensitive territory about which he was not comfortable talking. He did volunteer,

Mainly, I take care of the Kachinas, when they come to the dances and wear the traditional regalia, and I take care of them, but I try to participate as much as I can. I still go up there (to the villages where the dances take place) and do all of that stuff.

Bruce McGee, who attended the interview with Lomahquahu, later told me that he was amazed at how open Bo was to answering my questions and providing “delicate” information about the Kachina ceremonies.

Bo Lomahquahu also utilizes traditional materials in his Kachina doll carvings. The style of his carvings is a bit transformative, as he carves an intricate “action” doll with the figure appearing to be in the middle of a ceremonial dance situation. When asked about his materials, he replied,

We use all cottonwood roots that have been seasoned - where they are exposed by the banks and then they break off and they get washed away and they get seasoned by constantly becoming wet and dry, wet and dry, and then they become soft. No, I used to (gather my own wood), but I usually just messed around and went sightseeing. So, now I just buy all my wood. There are people that still go out and pick it. Besides now I have to go further and further off to find good wood. There are people that buy it and sell it and that is where I get my wood from.

Even though his style of carving the Kachinas is not traditional, he is careful to research the correct objects and symbols associated with the character he is carving. When the interview was complete and the recording mechanisms were shut down, he was openly critical of the tribal elders for their failure to teach traditional symbolism and make sure it was passed on to future generations of Hopis. I encountered several similar sentiments from other artists that I interviewed.

Lomahquahu also spent some time discussing his tools utilized in his carvings. He employs a Dremel® tool to do much of his carving as well as the traditional pocket knife, which is still used today by many carvers of Kachina dolls. Lomahquahu commented on his choice of tools and finishing materials.

I carve with a Dremel® tool. It is a rotary tool and knife. Basically, I use the Dremel® tool to get the shape and everything down and then I use a knife to put in the detail work. I don't like X-Actos (Exacto), because every time you try to cut, it depends on the wood too, you try to cut something and then there may be a rock in it and you have to change your blade, so it is just not feasible for me to use an Exacto. They are sharp tools, but I think I would be spending too much money on overhead (chuckles). I look at that too. I see some of these carvers with all kinds of tools and I go 'How come they need all those tools when they have knife there'? And besides you have to buy blades and this and that, and they have these real expensive power tools, the big ones. I just get mine from Wal-Mart, because if it breaks down, I can take it in and get another one if I keep my receipts. So I kind of keep my overhead down. Yeah, I use a rotary tool. I have been to several shows where they say 'Oh, you are cheating,' and I say 'No, I just make it easier for me, you know.' A lot of people think that we should just carve with a knife and that's it.

Yeah, yeah, that is the main reason (older dolls are not as intricate). Because, the variety of tools you have now, you can do just about anything you want with the doll and it is just the technical skill of the carver themselves that limits you.

I use oil paints. I use a Minwax, polyurethane stain to finish my wood and to preserve it. Then after it dries, I use oil because it adheres to Minwax better than water colors.

When asked more about traditions, Lomahquahu responded,

It is really sad to see a lot of cultures disappear and along with that your arts and art has a lot, it is kind of like a history book where you see certain art forms going up to a certain part of history, your culture and if you look at a piece of wood, a doll like this, and you say that that came in the 80s or 90s and if you looked at another piece, you could already tell which time it came in and it showed what the people were like and in their thinking.

It kind of gives you a window, and any kind of art does that for you, gives you a window to look back at all the Renaissance arts and stuff like that. People look at them. They go to museums and look at them to see what the people were living like back then.

Hostten Etsitty is an artist who also practices the ceremony of sandpainting as a healing art in the Navajo tribe. When asked how he acquired the knowledge of the traditional ceremonies, he credits both his father and brother-in-law, but compares the two in the following statement.

Mainly from my father because my brother-in-law was more a modern educated person.

Kind of like respected in a way. He would have a traditional vs. a modern day urban Navajo. The urban ones are looking from the outside in; they are supposed to be on the inside but they don't practice enough culture to be with the in crowd. It's like you can be

my friend but you're not our friend. It's kind of like that. I can see where the politics of knowing these things are very balanced so he didn't really see the inside of it. So just being around my dad being - all those years. He was 52 when I was born. He was pretty old. He was 91 or 92 when he died; he was born in 1903.

He gave it (education about traditional values) to me in 1980; we first started getting into to some ceremonial and traditional beliefs.

Michaelis Burnham credits his lineage as Hopi/Navajo/Anglo with the ability to receive different points of view regarding the criticism of his work. He specializes in drawing and painting with the subject matter primarily being ceremonial and secular activities of the Hopi people (mainly portrayals of Kachinas) and landscape motifs of the Southwest. He told me that when he goes to art shows,

I display my Hopi art. If somebody sees something wrong, I have had a lot of people that have told me the correct way to do things. I get a lot of positive (input from) people.

Hopis like what I'm doing.

In his own way, he is attempting to preserve and pass along traditional symbolism and his heritage as a Native American.

When questioned about the traditional methods of weaving among the Navajos, Brenda Spencer said,

I know quite a few weavers that still go through the whole process of weaving and mainly those are the older weavers; I can't imagine the younger generation going through the whole process. Oh, yes, that's likely to be something that's lost?

Spencer was asked if this loss would be a shame, and whether she would consider going through the whole process (sharing, carding and spinning the wool prior to the dying of it.) for a result that might be considered more traditional.

I don't think so. I don't think I would try to go through the whole process of weaving and the whole technique because I, myself, didn't learn how to do those things and if you want to do something fine it takes a lot of practice to get into a process as intricate and what not. If I were to do something like that and go through the process, nobody would believe me. Even for the money attribute, they would not be willing to pay that much.

She went on to tell me that there are few weavers who produce Burntwater style rugs with vegetal dyes made by the weaver, but that the style of rug is most widely produced with commercially available wools in the subtle, pastel colors most popular among collectors. Brenda Spencer admitted that she probably varied her designs somewhat from the "traditional" patterns associated with the Burntwater style; just as traditional symbolism might be used in a more contemporary adaptation of a Kachina doll or piece of pottery. She added that there were some younger weavers who were incorporating "very bold colors and stripes" into more modern examples of Navajo weaving.

As a high school teacher on the Navajo Reservation, Alan Jim had some interesting perspectives on the maintenance of traditional values in the Navajo culture.

I realized that they were really lacking something and it was like a design class which broke art down to fine elements. And then I just became more and more involved and I thought, there is no research out there on native students and art education and what there is, is very limited and there is not very much on Navajos and so I thought I would start finding out what I should do and then start keeping journals and doing some research, and

I will find some traditional behavior modifications in this class such as handshaking is one of them. And then giving them nicknames is another Navajo cultural thing that I do, and they really enjoy it. I really like some of the nicknames I give them, so I really like working with young high school students. It is a lot of fun, and they have a lot of energy and a whole lot of ideas. So that is how my educational career got going, working with young Navajo kids and just enjoying the rapport I have with them. So now I get paid for spending all day with them.

When asked if he had seen an increasing interest in cultural or ethnic heritage by Native Americans, Alan Jim said,

Unfortunately, no. In fact, I see a regression. I think part of it is because when the Native American rediscovered themselves in the 70s and started the organization of the American Indian Movement, there has been a slow decline in the interest of Indian issues, Indian culture, the preservation of culture, the preservation of language. Art does have some influence in sustaining the culture. As you went around today, you saw a lot of the students admiring modern music, a lot of them pick hip hop or rap and there is only one girl who did one piece of art on a traditional subject. So you can see that a lot of students were influenced and I think part of it has to do with the even increasing relationship with technology and mass communication. In the old days, I remember cowboy boots, and now a days you are starting to see more 'wannabe' gang bangers and people who dressed up like the movie star idols. So I see a big influence on the culture from the mass media and sadly enough, from what I can see here, there is some loss of culture. There are a few islands of Navajos who still follow traditional religion, or what they call the Native

American Church Way. As you saw, a couple of Tee-Pee and dance scenes up there on the wall but this is not really that strong right now.

When I mentioned the renewed interest I had seen in traditional culture by Native Americans at the book sale I had attended at the Heard Museum in Phoenix and asked Alan Jim about different perceptions of culture by the “urban” Indian and those raised on the Navajo Reservation, he responded,

It could be, because I come from a background where I wasn’t raised on the reservation, nor was I raised around my culture. I was raised in Flagstaff and right outside, in the forest and I see more of the Navajo and natives, who grew up that way, really understand the sense of lost culture. And I see more of those type of Native people who are prone to cultural preservation. There are still some on the reservation who are very strong in the Native way.

From the perspective of the trading post operator, the traditional purpose of the trading post has evolved toward an “arts and crafts center,” where the tourist and collector are more commonly the customer, rather than the Indian family making the pilgrimage to stock up on groceries and dry goods in trade for their arts. Bill Malone, at Hubbell Trading Post, estimates that his arts and crafts business as opposed to groceries and other goods is about 80/20 as compared with 70/30 fifteen years ago. Ferron McGee, at Piñon Trading Post, says his grocery business is almost gone, and he specializes in Navajo art, particularly rugs. Bruce McGee told me that at Keams Canyon, other than their restaurant, their business is almost entirely arts and crafts.

With the focus on arts and crafts, I asked Bill Malone about the importance of tradition to Native American art. In contrast to Cliff McGee, who referred to Navajo rugs of the past as a

“craft,” Malone said, “It goes beyond the traditional and, even in your traditional things, you might have things, something that is of superb quality, that is way beyond a craft, and it’s in the arts.”

I asked Malone whether there was a particular pride or feeling of accomplishment with Native American artists who had their work displayed at a place such as the Hubbell Trading Post. He responded,

I’m sure there is. Just like some of your top Hopi carvers would like to have their (Kachina dolls) represented at Keams Canyon or the Hopi Tribal Art Gallery or anywhere else that has a prestigious name like the Heard Museum or the Museum of Northern Arizona or other places around in the area.

When asked about whether buyers are interested in traditional symbolism, methods, and materials, Malone said,

We have both kinds of things here; we have contemporary stuff and regional stuff so to speak. Contemporary or traditional is a term you could use I think - people come here looking for both. Just this morning, there was a lady here looking at rugs, and she said she had been somewhere else, and everything was too contemporary, and she liked the traditional styles that we had here. We do a little mix of both, but I think in the end the traditional is most popular.

When asked about the openness with which the artists share their technique and designs, Malone explained

I think a lot of artists are sticklers on how to do things. But if you are in the business, just being around the artist, you learn their techniques, but they probably don’t want you going out and telling somebody else how to do a certain thing or how they dye their wool

or what they use to dye their wool with if they are using plant dye or something like that.

They want to kind of keep that in-house - to themselves.

I queried Bill Malone about whether or not he felt there was a resurgence in traditional art, and he replied,

I would say it depends on what part of the reservation you are on - maybe like down around Raymond, where they are doing all handspun things - they have really tried to incorporate the hand spinning back with the carol sheet, but it's been slow and hard because Navajos are acclimated to pre-spun wool. Navajos - we acclimated them in the 1800s when they brought the pre-spun Germantown from Pennsylvania. That started it right there. They got the knowledge that there is pre-spun wool around. When I got out of the trading business in the 60s, Babbitt Brothers came out with the bulk wool, but they had to do their own spinning. It came in a big rope of wool then you had to spin it. You didn't have to dye it. You could get pre-dyed and everybody said, 'Oh, that's the end of rugs there.' It just took off and then the next step was pre-spun wools. The Navajo tribes sold it, and then almost every trading post on the reservation sells pre-spun wool. One of the biggest sellers is Bruce Burnham.

Ferron McGee agreed that there is a resurgence towards the traditional, at least in Navajo weaving, which is what he deals in primarily. When dealing with the weavers, he asks them to "think old." 'I want old designs,' he said. "Because that is what is selling now. I tell them, 'You know, like your mother and grandmother used to do.'"

Bruce McGee, when asked about the traditional, said,

Design wise, there is a resurgent. Method wise there isn't. Because you can't come back and re-shear all the sheep, because they don't raise all the sheep, and you couldn't make a

living at it anyway. Now the new processed wools, you can make a living. There is a resurgent in designs. Some of the rugs that are created in Piñon, those designs are old designs. Once you lose the grassroots, you can't bring them back up here contemporary again. My philosophy, we lost them because we failed to educate the different collectors, and so they start down here, content on contemporary pieces and they lost all that behind so, my philosophy is "get back to the original. That is kind of my starting point with Beyond Native Tradition, everything has a past, everything has its beginning so, if I can bring them back to the beginning, just maybe, just maybe, they will start buying some of those traditional pieces. I could be wrong, but it's worth a chance.

Symbolism

The discussion of *symbolism* with the artists and traders paralleled that of tradition in that the symbols used for decorative and ceremonial purposes have a long, and thus traditional, history. What is of major concern to artist and trader alike is the misappropriation or misunderstanding of symbols, whether their meaning carries ceremonial significance, historical relevance, or decorative continuity. As with *tradition* in Native American art, the context in which a symbol is utilized is important to the accuracy, and thus significance, of its use or misappropriation. For example, a Navajo carved a badger Kachina carrying a tomahawk and sold at a roadside craft emporium on Interstate 40 would not carry the same negative significance as would an inappropriate or incomplete use of materials at a healing sandpainting ceremony on the Navajo Reservation. However, to the serious Native American artist in tune with their culture, or to the avid collector of high-end Native American art, symbolic accuracy and correctness is an important issue.

Bruce McGee previously mentioned some of the positive attributes in a Kachina doll that he looks for when judging at a show, including proportion, an attempt to carve the doll out of one piece of cottonwood, and the detail and structure of the Kachina's hands. He also recalled,

You know, what I find fascinating is the carving, the wood carving themselves, as far as Hopi use, I always found it fascinating growing up out there that the dolls to me were like books. I remember Herman Lewis used to take the doll, it would be no different than my own father taking a book and reading it to me, and he would go over it, and so I found the doll just as important as any novel in the bookcase. That is also one of the challenges that I find with Navajo dolls versus Hopi. The Navajos are just making that doll strictly for the market place and not for their own satisfaction, and they change some of the symbols and that is like taking a novel by Dickens or one of those and changing a paragraph, or even a complete portion of that book and changing the entire meaning of the book. I don't know how Alfred feels about it, but...

Bo Lomahquahu added:

I forgot to mention that these Kachinas, all this stuff that is on them, is on them for a purpose, the symbolism and everything on it. Like Bruce said, it tells the story of the Kachina and what it represents. Certain Kachinas don't wear certain kind of shoes because they provide certain roles, and other Kachinas can't wear this stuff here because those are warriors and others don't wear a buckskin, because they are not animals, and others don't wear tails, and it is just different, different markings. On the head, they are supposed to have all the four cardinal directions on the head piece or somewhere on the body, and the sash just doesn't represent different signs; it's not just a design to be pleasing to the eye, it represents something else. It represents the rain falling on another

Kachina and clouds. The sash represents something. That's what I forgot to mention.

There are only certain ones that can have warrior marks on his face and like the Ogre, it's a disciplinarian Kachina, but it also has friendship marks on its face. That is because it is there to teach you what is going wrong, but it is still your friend, or because it is your friend, that is why it is telling you that you are doing something wrong. There are certain ones that can wear turkey feathers and others that can't, and there is just a difference in symbolism.

Lomahquahu also spends time at the local schools talking about Kachina dolls and their meaning to the Hopi culture.

No, I don't teach them to carve. I just teach them about the Kachinas. When they usually go down in front of the class, there are pieces of wood that I have taken and I sand them down and everything. Then I talk to them about the Kachinas and different symbols that the Kachinas use on their face, and different stuff and I put on a chalk board, all the symbols and I told them to pick out a symbol to draw it on a piece of wood. I began to figure out that Bo Lomahquahu was much more open when explaining "what" rather than "why," as far as the Kachinas were concerned.

Bruce Burnham, in Sanders, AZ, had something else to say regarding Kachina carvings. He stated,

Symbolism and accuracy are foremost because the Hopi Kachina doll is an intricate part of the Hopi religion. It's not just a depiction of the Kachina, it's also their way of, the original purpose of the Kachina doll was to carve that doll and paint it and decorate it and give it to the child so the child would identify with the dancers. Each doll had to be politically correct, it had to have the right sash, the right markings, the right mask,

everything; and so then when you have Navajo Kachina doll carvers taking license in carving anything they want to, then they just start decorating it up good and fancy. So it really loses its meaning. What the Navajos are carving as far as Hopi Kachina dolls, they're carving counterfeit, but if you've got a Navajo with the ability to carve, why not take that Navajo and encourage him to do Navajo folk art and carve something other than a Hopi Kachina doll?

Cliff McGee had many remarks regarding symbolism and Native American art and can base his comments on over fifty years of experience as a trader, as well as having three sons who are also traders with expertise in a variety of art forms. Cliff McGee is also a collector of Indian art in various forms, as evidenced by the décor of his home in Mesa, Arizona.

When asked whether he thought traditional symbolism was as important to the Native American artist as it would be to a collector, McGee replied,

You bet, very much. In the younger generation a lot of the artwork is disappearing but in the family, for instance the Nampeyo family, they are carrying their (pottery) tradition right through the same way that many weavers are teaching their families. But, some of them have just drifted away. There again, the traders try to keep that alive.

McGee was asked whether he influenced the symbolism in Native American art and how he had learned about the symbolism. "Just by seeing it," was his reply.

My boys, Bruce and Ferron are knowledgeable and tell the artists what they want in a doll, and my youngest son Ron, he will do the same thing. He will encourage them (the artists) to make their art better and better. The collector would consider the style of a Kachina and the purpose of it. That would create more value and more desire for that

buyer to purchase it. The symbol (super natural being) of that Kachina means a whole lot to the buyer, (and) the story behind it.

McGee showed me several sandpaintings that were hanging in his home. At first, I thought they were oil paintings on canvas, but upon close examination, I discovered that they were indeed made of colored sands. The content was representational (realistic) depictions of Southwest Native American art (pots, weavings) and animals. McGee told me that the sandpaintings were “traditional,” and when I questioned this (compared to the traditional sandpaintings of Hosteen Etsitty) he replied,

Yes, it is (traditional). Take the pot there—that’s a Navajo pot. I did mention to you about the Navajos making Navajo pots? They bake their pots in dung; it’s an entirely different pot than the Hopi. The animals portray the Navajos and the Hopis who are peaceful people.

So, McGee considered the sandpainting itself “traditional” because of the symbolism in the painting, rather than the method of creating the painting, was “traditional.” McGee has his point of view, and if the creation of a painting in sand by a Navajo utilizes “traditional” methods, materials, and symbolism, then as a phenomenon, it would fit the description of a traditional sandpainting.

I asked Hosteen Etsitty, who produces sandpainted artwork and also performs ceremonial sandpainting, how he began the tradition.

I think I was introduced to it probably when I was about 5 years old. I took a trip to the mountains and I was with a young man who became the first Navajo physicist. He was my brother-in-law, and we were up in the mountains, and he was talking to my dad about the philosophy of power. My dad had some real knowledge about it. He was questioning

my dad about the possibility of how power could have been generated by ancient symbolic figures or were there just like huge amounts of power in there? They were talking about it, and I was really young, but I remember it. My dad started telling him about these sandpaintings he used to create when he was small. So he started painting, and then I started painting too, when I was a child—something like this (shows me one of his paintings).

I took a group out to see the petroglyphs; a group of young kids. I was talking about the different types of rock art, like where the symbolism comes from a lot of different types of Navajo chants that were going on out there and how they varied with the different types of teachings. This was a group of Navajo kids that were from the cities and like urban Navajos that wanted to trace their roots back, so I was hired to take them back there to teach them how the Navajos lived in these stone houses a long time ago.

Etsitty, when asked, described the beginning steps of a ceremonial sandpainting.

I use a measuring stick, and I start by marking the four quadrants, and then I make four more black dots and from those I will make measurements and draw the design with my hand. I probably do something like that (a ceremonial sandpainting) twice a year and I participate in some of the ceremonies because of the ability for me to do that type of painting (ceremonial), and it being called for all the time. ‘Some painters come to me and say, ‘My sister got sick and I need someone to just (do a healing ceremony),’ and I will say, ‘Yes.’

I asked Hosteen about the proper display of a sandpainting artwork, since I had heard that the open side of the design should face to the East. He responded:

No it's supposed to go straight up. I think when the paintings were done on the ground, I think the openings were always done to the East unless it was a reverse chant, then it goes to the West, depending on what kind of chant it was for. You'll see some paintings in a house hanging on a wall like this facing to the East. That's really not the right way to do it. It's really a frame of mind of being respectful to the arts. I think some people carry it too far to copy Navajo surroundings. I know some traders that are dogmatic about that, 'No it's always this way.'

Michaelis Burnham described his approach to the use of symbolism in his work.

Yes, a lot of them (people who buy my work) are educated about (Native American) symbolism. A lot of people like symbolism and things, but they also like traditional, so I try to put those two together. Not a lot of people like the abstract (style). I put my culture into it (my work) too. I like to abstract my Kachina figures with lines and shapes and colors.

Burnham went on to talk about symbolism and Kachinas. "I guess it could be religious because it relates to the gods and symbolizes seeing the people dance, looking at other peoples' art, look at the Kachinas that have been carved, (I use) pictures and a variety of things (references)."

When asked if he had ever sketched at the Hopi ceremonial dances, Burnham replied, No, I've drawn at skits, and I've drawn a lot of dancers. I can sketch at those (the Hopi dances.). (It should be noted that non-Hopis are forbidden from recording the proceedings of Hopi ceremonies by any manner). Now, the Hopi dances are just too involved with the music and everything going on. I can see, and I can remember it. I might get an idea, but it won't turn out exactly like that.

Teachers, Mentors and Art Education

The significance of teachers and other mentors to an artist's or anyone else's, education is undeniable. Whether in a formal, structured system of education or an informal one-to-one setting, other people, knowingly or unknowingly, have an effect on how we learn and how our learning progresses. For the visual artist, mentorship may come directly from other individuals, or from the study of the art of others. Non-artists can gain an appreciation for and knowledge of art forms through interaction with teachers, mentors, and/or exposure to art forms, or a combination of all of these stimuli. The participants in my study all benefitted from the aforementioned means of education in the arts, albeit in different ways. The experiences and viewpoints of the Native American artists and traders in my study will be analyzed and compared with respect to their individual education in visual art, and other experiences or individuals who influenced their knowledge and creativity.

When the five traders in my study were questioned about their interest and prowess in art as a child, they were all self-deprecating with respect to their perceived talents in art. Bill Malone commented, "I couldn't draw or trace or play any musical instruments." Said Bruce Burnham,

I did not have any art education whatsoever. My art education has been my affiliation with weavers." Ferron McGee had an interesting perspective on how his interest in art grew, "I think art, as it begins to balance, you just acquire the taste that you get when you sample certain foods. You try it once, and if you like it ...that is the way art is. Being raised out there (on the Hopi Reservation), Bruce and I grew up with it; an appreciation of art." Ferron was asked if he drew, or carved, or did any other type of artwork. His answer was, No. We (including Bruce in his answer) were bad news. We went to school

with these kids out there, who are now artists – some are famous artists. It just came natural to them.

Bruce McGee, when asked about his art education in the school on the Hopi Reservation, told me,

We were handed sheets of paper and we were told to draw “everyday life,” how we perceived it. Of course, mine was always the trading posts and used the apples and oranges and sacks of flour. Our favorite thing to draw was the blue bird sack that the flour came in. There was always a blue bird on it. That was the only flour the Navajos would buy. Keams Canyon was predominantly a Navajo store, even though it was on the Hopi Reservation, and so we would draw that. I drew it from memory, so no one would recognize that Blue Bird flour sack from my drawing.” Cliff McGee said he had not art education at all. He admitted that his brother, with whom he partnered as a trader, had the love of art, and he (Cliff McGee) was the “businessman.”

Two of the five Native American artists interviewed had artistic training beyond the high school level. Their college teachers could be considered influential to their careers, as were high school and even elementary school art teachers.

Michaelis Burnham obviously had exposure to art through his family’s trading business. He also credits a cousin and an uncle (both Hopis) with input and criticism of the symbolism in his work. Michaelis credits an art teacher and friend of the family, who gave him art lessons at a young age, as well as his sixth grade art teacher in Sanders, Arizona. “I just observed and practiced. My art teacher didn’t try to change my style. He just helped me,” said Burnham, who has undergraduate degrees in advertising and graphic design and was pursuing a degree in art

education at the time of the interview. Burnham told me that he had an interest and “natural talent” in art from the age of three.

Alan Jim attended public schools in the Flagstaff, Arizona area before joining the U.S. Army. In 1992, he graduated with a Masters in Multicultural Education with an emphasis in ceramics. He credits the time in the armed forces as providing him with “attention to detail,” as did Hopi carver Bo Lomahquahu, who was in the U.S. Marine Corps. Alan Jim’s mentor was a college art professor and former art department head at Northern University (NAU) , Dr. Don Bendle. Another mentor was a Hopi associate professor at NAU, Dr. Gilbert. Alan Jim recalled, “He has this really confident, well-organized manner about himself, and his classes are very professional, very stimulating, and that just gets me going. I like that type of class.” Jim is now teaching ceramics to high school students, so he has the opportunity to teach and mentor.

Alfred “Bo” Lomahquahu, Jr. went to an Indian high school in California, where he was exposed to painting and drawing, including scale and perspective. He recalls, “Our art teacher was Anglo, all our teachers were Anglo; I think he was kind of learning a little bit of our forms of art.” Lomahquahu also talked about his beginnings and involvement with carving and Kachinas.

It wasn’t until later years, when I was probably about 10 or 12, was when I really started getting interested in it. That was after I had gotten into shaving. Most kids are not very interested but they can carve. In the Hopi, you are not supposed to start carving until you are initiated into Kachina Society.

Well, I can’t go into the initiation itself. The initiation is more of a time when you go into puberty or when you are ready to take on the manhood, it is around that same time, when you are going through puberty and when you really take on adult

responsibilities. I guess this is actually “a rite” to show that you are becoming an older person, who can take on these different responsibilities, and that is usually around the age of 10, 12, or 15. That is when I started getting interested; I had family that I could start carving for, you know, for ceremonial purposes. I did a few at that age and then when I went to boarding school, I just left it alone and then I went to high school in Riverside, California, and then I went into the military for six years. I got out and I was a heavy equipment operator, and the company that I was working for went out of business. I was probably around 25 or 26, and I knew you could make money with it, it is just that you have to sit down and really try to learn and when I started, I wasn’t really good at it, but I just looked at my Cecil’s doll (Cecil Calnimpewa, a master carver) here and several other carvers that I really liked the way they carve, and I wanted to be like them. I wanted to be the best, so I kept at it, and this helped me to get where I am now.

Brenda Spencer comes from a family of artists. As a child in school on the Navajo Reservation, Spencer said that she did a lot of drawings and that her school did have an art teacher. She was 20 when she started weaving and credits her mother and one of her sisters with teaching her to weave. Today, she only weaves several rugs per year, but her work is sought after by collectors. She told me that she no longer draws or paints.

Hosteen Etsitty explained his early experiences with art education.

My first experience with art was probably with my junior high art teacher. She gave me an outlet for art. Back then, I was heavily involved in the American Indian Movement at a young age. I was heavily into the movement. I wanted more to express my own individual opinion about it through art. The teacher showed me a way to express my feelings through art.

Her interest was only in art. She taught a little bit about art history for the kids who wanted to know more about history. She would kind of pick out the students who were interested in art a little bit more. The ones that were just doing it to get through class, she just said, ‘Okay, you choose your own place, you can either be in here for experience or if you want to be in here for a passing grade.’ So she segregated us by your own choice.

“How many people sat over on your side,” I asked?

Probably about four but by the end of the fourth week, everybody was over on my side. I think it was a good strategy because I think they felt left out after a while. She would say, ‘Okay, you take out your books and read this chapter about this guy.’ She was teaching art history.

When asked what else she covered in her art classes, Etsitty continued,

Yeah, I think she did in own way, she talked about aesthetics. How to get feeling onto a piece, the artist had to be involved with a lot of emotion so he could show emotion off of the piece they were doing. She kind of made art into a craft, and she taught that there’s a fine line between being an artist and being a crafts-person.

She taught all of the regular things you would learn in art class. Kind of like a reviewing and an advance stage; the advance stage she would look out for when people would break out on their own.

“Were you one of those that broke out early”? I asked Hosteen. He responded:

Probably, I was more into wildlife, lots of birds and horses. I grew up on a farm so I was attracted to animals and just watching them that way and their muscle movements and

their body and how they walked. I would look at drawings of animals and say, ‘Oh wait, a horse has never moved in that position.’ So you become an art critic in her class.

I was there for three years from sixth to eighth grade. I took her class and then I took another art class which was supposed to be an advance art class. It was with a guy named Mr. Lloyd. I think he was Jewish. His class was more craft making. We had workshop tables; that’s something I really wanted to do. Eventually, I found my way back to art class. I became sort of like an art helper. I was constantly around art. It was more political/spiritual; me as a youth, that’s pretty interesting.

It became evident during my interviews that the trading post operators generated an enormous amount of influence on the style, form, and quality of art produced by Naïve American artists. The traders could well be described as teachers, mentors, and art directors. They also often assumed the role of judge and jury, at least at art exhibits and shows. The traders could influence the Native American artist to produce what would sell. More often than not, the relationship was symbolic, as the work of both cultures kept the dream alive for artist and trader.

When asked about the amount of influence traders had as a group and as individuals, Bruce McGee answered,

A lot. A lot of influence. In fact if you really look at a Navajo rug in its infancy, it started out a very indistinct rug. The only thing that was different about it was the pastel colors, and then Bruce Burnham got involved in it, and he found colors that he liked elsewhere and other people liked and then he began a program to enhance that rug and he started out by calling all his weavers, master weavers, which all of a sudden put those weavers on a plain and made them stand out and wanted to do whatever he asked them to do and then the rugs took on a whole new light. His direction is design and taking

designs from other areas, bringing them in, changing them. They turn out to be a fantastic rug which we know now as a Burnham rug. He had an eye for the arts. He had an eye for detail.

Bruce Burnham had the following to say about the influence of traders on Navajo weavers.

Well, when they (traders) started encouraging the weavers to get rid of the vivid Germantown colors. They started encouraging them to do black, red, grey, and white, natural tans and natural grays, natural white and natural black wool together, and natural brown and natural white to make the different colors. That was when the traders really came into play and all the sudden; every trader had to have his own character, so to speak, represented in his area rugs. He didn't want them to do the same kind of rug that Lorenzo Hubbell was doing. J.B. Moore was at Crystal Trading Post. It doesn't matter, his personal preference, he liked a particular type of rug. If I liked it, there's got to be a lot of people out there that liked it, so that is what we are going to do, that type of rug.

Hubbell liked red backgrounds, bright rugs. That is as famous as Two Grey Hills pattern. Two Grey Hills and Ganado Red are the two primary rug patterns on the reservation as far as people identifying with the regional style. Then the trader on the western boundaries of the reservation would have them start doing storm patterns and then a trader right down here at Klagetoh Trading Post would have them do just like a Ganado Red, only a grey background instead of a red background. That has become known as a Klagetoh Red. Then right afterwards, Sally Lippincott who had been a ranger at Canyon de Chelly. She was an anthropologist. He and her husband both, and they had come out here to work in Canyon de Chelly as rangers. They were getting ready to go

back to, I believe it was, Baltimore or Philadelphia to further their education, and the trader at Chinle said, 'Oh, why don't you buy a trading post, try that for a little while?' So, they bought Wide Ruins Trading Post, and the first things she did, because of association with them, was she bought a lot of Chinle rug, which were a banded rug that were very simple in design and wide bands - but it was a banded rug - it wasn't a border rug. And, so then she came to Wide Ruins and now see - here's her personality coming out. She said, 'Well, I like these soft pastel colors that we can get from vegetable dye so let's make a rug like this.' And she was showing the weavers that Chinle rug. Let's do one of these with vegetable dye colors and let's get a little more design element - let's get a little fancier. So, all the sudden, the Wide Ruins rug was so much better than the Chinle rug because it had that trader right there pushing the weaver. 'Now, this is great, but this is what I want you to go do next time. See how you did this design? I want you to do more of that. Make it finer and make your bands narrower.'

"Around what year was this?" I asked.

This was about 1940 that this was happening. So, here is Sally Lippincott. She is so caught up in what she was doing and so she went to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and said, 'Give me some funding to hire a teacher. We are going to have a teaching school for all these young girls that are in boarding school. We want to also have a weaving school and teach them the finer points of weaving.' Each weaver has their strengths. So, she isolated about six or eight weavers that had a particular thing that they really did good. So, they came out and taught weaving to all those girls, and they gave them all those pointers on how to do the selvage just right - how to keep your rug the straightest, how to get the best pack, how to dye the wool the best. All those little secrets from about

eight or ten different weavers who were the best in the area. Well, they paid them to teach these girls. Those girls now are grandmothers and great-grandmothers and they have taught their children and grandchildren all these finer points. I always make a brag about this area. If it wasn't for Sally Lippincott, we would not have the level of weaving that we have in this area. Reservation wide, I don't think there's another area on the reservation that has a higher level per capital weaver - a higher level of weaving expertise in this area. It all gets back to that three or four years that she had those young women. See, back then, it wasn't like K-12; it was like a five-year program that they went through. They taught them English, simple arithmetic, how to read and that's it. So, in that five-year program, they had girls that were 15-18 years old, a lot up to 20 years old. Well, these girls took these classes. They already had weaving skills, but then to be able to refine those skills with all of it. It wasn't a voluntary thing, they went to school and then they learned it. Then Sally Lippincott stepped forward. She would buy the rugs, and she would give them a better price for a better rug, and so she is responsible for bringing the weavers up to the level we have.

Bill Malone had a somewhat different philosophy in respect to influencing Native American artists.

I don't influence them unless I think they need to be influenced. If they are really doing something nice, and there is no way that I could see that they could make it better. I don't even try to tell them how to make their artwork better. If I see something they might change up a little bit - deleting something or adding on to something - I might tell them to do that and that it might enhance their work. I think the only time I would influence a weaver is if I thought she could do better by doing a different style or

something, and I would ask her to do something else because of economics - because if they do a better rug they are going to get paid more for it and its going to help them. So, if they are doing something - else I will always tell them, 'Why don't you do this instead of that,' and in the end it is best not to do something else.

Ferron McGee gave several examples of how his brother, Bruce McGee, influenced form, style, and methods in the production of Native American art - in particular Kachina doll carving and Navajo rug weaving.

Being some of the first traders out there (Keams Canyon on the Hopi Reservation), Bruce and I saw that these people had a talent. Over the years, we have developed an eye for the arts, through experience. We can tell if it's great art or if it's bad art. We have learned to love and appreciate art. These people (the Native American artists), they would come in and ask, 'Mr. McGee, what kind of rug do you sell? What do people want?' Because the rug market was slow because it was just pretty well stereotyped. So, Bruce and I come up with these ideas. We are starting with Sara Begay. Put it right here in the shop, a weaving loom. At Beyond Native Traditions here, it took her a whole year on it to weave a rug. He encouraged her. 'We are going to put all new designs on our rugs, historic,' he said. She says 'Bruce, you are crazy.' He says 'Just do it. I think this is something that will sell.' Well, she is now paying us because of the idea that Bruce gave her and her rugs are priceless. So, all we do is give these people the idea.

Bruce McGee was fortunate enough to have entrepreneurial and pedagogical tendencies. On at least two occasions, I saw the results of bringing a weaver into his gallery, not for a short presentation or workshop, but for many months to create a large rug of complex design – perhaps a unique combination of regional styles. This was not only excellent marketing for McGee's

gallery, but greatly enhanced the reputation of, and remuneration to, the weaver. It was not unusual for one of these “McGee rugs” to be an award winner at the prestigious Santa Fe Indian Market, and fetch two or three times market value at the Market auction. Bruce McGee would not only supply the weaver with space and materials, but the unique rug immediately enhanced her reputation and increased the value of future weavings.

Ferron told the story of the gentleman who came to see them in 1972, with what he said was disastrous news of the migratory bird act, which did not allow for the use of eagle feathers. Since these feathers were an integral part of Kachina dolls, it threatened the continued production of a popular art and ceremonial pieces. Well, Bruce, announced, ‘It is not going to be disastrous. ‘The artist can carve the feathers,’ said Bruce, and he was told, ‘This is crazy, you don’t carve feathers, it’s too hard, I can’t do it.’ So they start carving the feathers in the dolls and it actually refined and enhanced the art and became a very strong market - when you see all these feathers carved into the dolls. So this is how we have helped to encourage them.”

Cliff McGee recalls how artistic skills and craftsmanship were passed along to future generation.

A lot of copying. With the Navajos, the mothers would always teach their daughters to weave and what style of rug to make. Then natural colored rugs were good and the red, black, white and grey were the most popular. They would come into the store and say ‘Do you have any pictures we could look at or what type of design would you like’? We would describe things from a different time and style. We watched them; we knew what they were doing. They appreciated us coming out there taking an interest in their weaving. They would start off in their own mind and just go from there. Right from the bottom on up to the end of the rug. Just weave with no diagrams or anything.

Kachina dolls started out being carved into wood and gluing arms on and using feathers, in which feather were outlawed and you can't use migratory feathers anymore, so now they've gone to strictly carving of the wood a one piece item. That's the difference from then until now.

Brenda Spencer, a highly respected and gifted Navajo weaver, talked about those who influenced her weaving and taught her the craft of weaving, which she has made into an art form. She talked about her early experiences learning to weave from her mother. "My mother and sister do a lot of Wide Ruins" (a regional style rug characterized by stripes and chevron-like designs; see figure 1.7, upper left). I am the one that usually does the geometric pattern of the Burntwaters."

Wide Ruins and Burntwater are both villages with trading posts in the Eastern part of the Navajo Reservation. Although geographically close, the regional weaving styles are quite different, so Brenda's venture into weaving Burntwater rugs is somewhat daring and unusual. Her employment at Hubbell Trading Post exposed her to many new and different styles. The assistance of her mother and her sisters, who are also master weavers according to Bill Malone, probably added to the confidence necessary to take on the challenge of weaving a style unfamiliar to her.

I asked Brenda how she got started weaving Burntwaters. She replied, All I really knew how to do was the Wide Ruins. As a weaver, when I started out, my mom had always been weaving and she only does the Wide Ruins. So, I just assumed that it was just Wide Ruins were being woven everywhere, until I started working here about two or three years ago. Hubbell has a lot of original styles and what was popular and what was sold a lot and so when I picked up Burntwaters, Burntwaters was more

popular than Wide Ruins. My mom has always been a weaver, and my sisters were weavers. I really had no interest in weaving but, most of the time, when I started weaving; I found the hardest part is finishing off the rug. That's when I learned how to weave and – helping her to do that on a couple of rugs - I figured maybe I should do it on my own, and so I just started one day and just started weaving.

When asked which other weavers she admired the most, and who motivates her to weave, Brenda replied,

Probably just coming here (Hubbell Trading Post) and seeing other weavers weaving other rugs. There will be a design that I like, and I'll try to copy it. I think a lot of people get motivated to weave or are more involved with traders like Bill or Bruce Burnham or Bruce McGee. They have kind of encouraged me to be more creative. There are a lot of weavers that I know and that I like - it's just so hard to pick just one of them. I admire a lot of weavers and I've seen a lot of their work. For instance, something nice that they've done is very moving.

Brenda was asked if she shared her techniques or did any teaching, and her answer was, Every now and then I do, but not all the time. I try to share my thoughts and my feelings and my colors to different weavers. It is something that feels good. Especially if I can help them balance out the colors - which colors to use.

Bruce Burnham was asked to elaborate on his influence to create a new regional style of Navajo weaving.

As you probably noticed, we haven't been flooded with customers since you have been sitting here. Our customers are a long ways in between. So, I have a long time to sit

around and vegetate. So, what I do is - I'm always thinking about what I can do that will make us stand out from the other trading posts.

The whole issue of relocation has probably been one of the most newsworthy stories nationwide in the history of this nation. And much of it has gone on for so long and it's remaining a constant news item and the people all over the United States are aware of the Navajo-Hopi land dispute. So because of that, you've got a lot of awareness all over the United States of relocation. Now, I hate to say how many times someone has sent me the front page of the *New York Times* with an article about Aribé or Novato. This is where I used to run a trading post at the Novato - right in the heart of FJUA Lake. FJUA stands for, Former Joint Use Area. A lot of these weavers are out here in the Newlands now. I knew them when they were six or eight-year-old little girls. I have known their families that long. We just buried a lady Saturday, a great person; she wasn't a great weaver, but just a great lady and just one of the finest people I have ever known in my lifetime. She has just so much integrity and she was killed in a car wreck... I watched her family grow up. So here they come - they start the relocation period of the settlement of that FJUA - they start relocating people to the cities and that just didn't work.

They started relocation in the late 70s and the people that are here were the resisters. They relocated to Phoenix or Flagstaff or something, and just one hardship after another. Not much good came out of it. Then they purchased all these ranches... and turned them over to the relocation commission to relocate families that had livestock or grazing permits. They wouldn't relocate unless they could relocate them where they

could take their animals and so they were the resisters. My brother-in-law, his name is Percy Deal; he was the head of the resistance for relocation with the Navajo tribe.

Yeah. That's what sells newspapers. So, I called a reporter in Gallup, New Mexico and I said, 'Hey, let's do an article on relocation—the positive side or let's show the up side of it.' And so, that's what we did. At that time, all I could envision was a new style of Burntwater rug in the Newlands in the Coal Mine Mesa-type weave. I had two or three of these weavers weaving this new style of Burntwater. It was evolving into something more than a Burntwater because of the three dimensional effect that the raised outline had. So, about the time we were doing our eighth or tenth rug, it had really evolved into a really great looking rug. Well, about that time H.L. James was rewriting his book, *Posts and Rugs*. He had already sent it to Shivers for publication and he read that article and he called me and he said, 'What is this business about a new style that you've got up there? What do you call that kind of rug?' I was just grasping for names and I said, 'I guess we just call it a Newlands Outline rug.' He said, 'Is that one word or two'? That was the first of the Newlands Outline rug. I write it as one word, and I think he did too. Either way, it has become the latest and most recent style of weaving. It hit the newspapers all over the country. A picture of that beautiful rug and Newlands rug - something great comes out of relocation.

I asked, "How did you work with the weavers? I mean, did you get a select few that you normally worked with or ones you thought would be most accommodating. How did you approach the transition in the arts"? Burnham explained,

There were two key weavers; one was Wanda McGee and the other one was Marie Watson Nez. So, they were both excellent weavers and they both did the Coal Mine

Mesa rugs which was a raised outline rug. About as fancy as they would get would be a storm pattern, but usually it was more of an eye-dazzler - the diagonal lines in a raised outline rug where that raised outline appears in the square.

When questioned about how he handles criticism of a piece of artwork, Burnham recounted the following story.

Yeah, I have never said anything again since that lady told me that my rug was crooked as a dog's hind leg. I found it's just as easy to look for the positive things in a rug as it is the negative. I've changed my approach a little bit. I still and I always have done everything I can to encourage a weaver. I always pick out, if I can, the good side of what she's doing and really point it out to just make her do that much more."

I responded, "That's what Ferron McGee said. 'That even though you needed to correct them, you need to do it in a nice way.' You get a lot more from the artist that way. People respond, I mean I teach illustration and students respond differently to the same criticism. So that's something you have to be careful of.

Burnham continued,

Well, a girl about, oh, 23 or 24 years old, one time brought a 3'x5' Burntwater in and showed it to me trying to sell it to me. I didn't even think about what I was saying until after I said it and she crumbled. I said, 'I'm sorry, I can't buy it; I could never sell this rug.' I said, 'The colors don't match, it's crooked, and the corners curl up.' I said, 'It's an ugly rug.' I was just thinking in terms of what I was looking at I wasn't thinking that this is the first piece this weaver has ever woven, and she did a 3' by 5' when she should have been doing a 12" by 18". I wasn't thinking of that, I was thinking of, can I sell this rug. I said, 'First of all, you can never sell a rug of Burntwater that's got yellow and

black next to each other, then you've got pink in it. That is a very poor choice of color.' She just looked at me, and her face just puckered up and she just started crying. She just cried and cried and she just rolled that rug up and I said, 'I'm not saying that you're a bad weaver.' At that point, there was no salvaging my blunder; I couldn't buy it from her. It was a personal thing at that point.

"Did she keep on weaving? Did she come back with another one"? I asked.

I waited about two or three days. I had followed her all the way out to the truck apologizing and speaking words of encouragement. 'You come in and the next day or two and I will put some wool together and I will give you some wool and I'll help you pick the colors and I will just give you the wool and then I want you to do another one.' Part of her technique was fairly good but overall it was the ugliest rug I have ever seen. It took me a long time to salvage my relationship with her because of that blunder and that was a bad blunder for me to make. It could have ended her weaving career. Now she is a fairly decent weaver, and she did come in, and I gave her some yarn. She wouldn't even come in the store for quite a while and so her sister came in and I asked where her sister was and she said, 'Well, she's outside.' So I went on out to talk to her and said, 'Well, come in and we'll get some yarn together for you. I want to give you some yarn. Really sorry, I wasn't meaning to insult you and I can see how that was really crude of me to say that. I really apologize and to make up for it, I want to give you some wool to weave with.' So I finally talked her into coming in and we picked out some wool and I gave it to her and I gave her a couple of pictures of simpler designs to start on and she went home and wove the rug and she never brought them in but said she sold it. I don't know what she did with that first rug. I kind of think she took it home and took it

apart and re-wove it. I was telling her, ‘Don’t even think about it. If nothing else keep that rug so that you will have your first piece to look back on.’ That was an important lesson learned.

Trader Bruce Burnham, as a person knowledgeable about weaving and marketing Navajo rugs, took the initiative and the time to direct the creation of a new regional style of rug, which enhanced not only his sales but that of the weavers as well. He created a positive situation out of a negative relocation program.

Burnham was also generous and compassionate with the young lady whose feelings he hurt. He persevered and was finally able to supply some yarn to her and “coach” her, so that he could eventually purchase her work when it reached acceptable quality. A good teacher never gives up on a student, and both benefitted from the experience.

Respect plays a large part in dealing with the Native American artist. Bruce and Ferron McGee discuss the “fine art” of purchasing a Navajo rug from the weaver. Bruce began,

I always got a kick out of the weavers. Now I don’t know if this holds true with Ferron, but I was buying a good number of rugs at Keams. If a known weaver walked in and I looked at her and this weaving is just knocking my socks off, and I can’t hardly wait to get my hands on it. You know, it’s exciting. I know she does a straight rug. I still found that I had to go through the “routine,” otherwise, I was not disgracing her, but I wasn’t respecting her. She expected me to hold that rug and she would expect me to fold it over, see if it is square, and go all the way up with it, and that means to bring it up all the way up to here and square it off, and then I will bring it back to square dimensions this way to make sure the design is equal. I knew it was going to be straight. She knew it was going to be straight, and I care enough to check it. Was I that interested in her rug? With an

admirable weaver, I always found that I was doing her a disservice if she spent 12 months working on a rug and I spent 12 minutes buying it; that didn't speak well for me, and I have to go through that. If there is somebody out there waiting for me to wait on them, tough, they have to wait. That is just it! Because I want that weaver back, and she expected me to do that.

Ferron spoke up,

They expect you to critique it and spend some time with that rug and they would like to be praised and also corrected if they do make a mistake. They don't mind being corrected. It is kind of a game with them though. Sometimes there might be a mistake in the rug, and they just sit back and see if you are going to find it. I bought a piece of art the other day, a sandpainting, and Tony (the artist) says there is one little flaw in there, but you are going to have to find it, but I hope you don't see it. Well I found it, eventually and he was glad I did and he wanted to repair it. He wasn't trying to deceive us or anything, he just wanted to see if I was up front and by critiquing that painting, you are appreciating the art.

Alan Jim, a ceramics teacher and mentor to hundreds of Native American high school students discussed how he got into his career path.

Originally, when I was working in ceramics, I thought 'Man, it would be great to be an artist, I could make my hours, etc, etc., and one day my ceramic teacher came up to me and said, 'Hey, what is going to happen if you don't make it in the art field'? There's a lot of good potters already, Maria Martinez, or people like that, very famous artists that do pottery work. What if you don't make it'? Because you are dealing with established artists. And that really never occurred to me. And I started thinking, 'Wholly cow, now I

really see the starving artist concept,' it became clear to me. So, I thought well, maybe, I don't know what I would do. So he suggested, what about teaching. Because you can always 'fall back' to teaching. So I thought that was a good back-up plan.

My discussions with Alan Jim at an NAEA meeting as well as the classroom observation I attended at the high school where he teaches, lead me to believe that he has done more than "fall back" on teaching as a career. He impressed me as an extremely dedicated and talented teacher. By observing him at the potter's wheel, I could tell that he has a great deal of skill as a potter, and as a ceramics teacher. Also, I could tell that he really cares about his students, and their future. However, I could sense the frustration in his voice when he told me how few go on to college and how even fewer pursue art as a career, or even has a hobby. And, generally, the talented and motivated students leave the reservation for the big cities of Phoenix or Tucson.

Alan Jim's pride at being Native American exudes from his person, even with his quiet demeanor and sensitive personality. You can tell that he has concern for his students and enjoys teaching them ceramics, but at the same time, he runs a disciplined classroom.

In his younger days, Jim was an activist, and today believes strongly in maintaining traditional Indian values and customs. He exposes his students to traditional symbolism in their artwork whenever possible, although he admits that the "hip-hop" generation shows little interest in their heritage and in the traditional culture of Native America.

Alan Jim continued his story.

It is no longer about bullets and bows and arrows, it's about pen and paper and the strategy of the mind. So, I decided I better get back into education and basically that is what pushed me to get out of the law firm and going back and pursuing my degree in art education. And then when I was in my senior year, I was getting ready to go home one

evening and the dean and the director of fine arts and my mentor, the ceramic teacher, Dr. Don Bendle came down into my studio on campus, and said, 'You know, we have a whole group of little Navajo kids that are coming in off the reservation tomorrow. We have nobody to show them anything about pottery, do you think you can do something with them, and I said, 'Yes,' leave it to me, I have it covered.' So the next day I brought in my potter's wheel and I laid the canvas down and brought in the clay and the students showed up and I showed them the process of preparing clay and the process of the wheel and they really liked it and really enjoyed it and then when I got done, of course the director, the dean, and the professor were standing behind the kids watching me, and they were impressed with my teaching style and my rapport and when I walked away, my feet weren't touching the ground. By being effective, I am reaching out and touching some children who may never again in their life every see a demonstration like this again. So I think that was the little push I needed to really get my feet into education. I really liked that. I really liked seeing that little light come on and seeing the kid that go 'Wow, I see it now,' it is just a reward thing for me. And so from there I went into education, and right as I was finishing up my final year, the University came to me and said, 'We have a shortage of faculty, how would you like to teach at the University'? And I thought 'Wow,' that is going to look great on my resume, just coming out of college and being good enough to teach right after I graduated. So I jumped in and really enjoyed teaching and I really enjoyed working with the international students.

Then after two years, I realized that the money wasn't really worth it, and teaching at the University. I had a friend who had come from this high school that I am teaching at now, to the city of Tuba City, had brought her kids up and I had a Native

American art workshop and we brought different high schools to the University and we showed them what the University offered and then we did some mini-course with them and again I really enjoyed that and the teacher who brought her student in called me one day and said, 'Hey Alan, you know we need a teacher at Greyhills, come on down, I really will push for you to get hired' and she said, 'Oh, by the way it pays "so many thousands of dollars a year"' and I said 'Wow.' This is about 50 thousand times better than I was getting paid at the University. So I came up here and I interviewed and then Wendy showed me this wonderful ceramic room with all this equipment and I thought how nice it is to have a set up like this.

As an observer in Alan Jim's classroom, I can attest to the excellence of the facilities with a large, spacious classroom and up to date ceramic equipment. The students had plenty of work space as well. The high school, which had a student population of 450, had three large classrooms and three full-time faculty dedicated to art curriculum. (See the classroom observational description in Appendix B).

Part of being an effective teacher or mentor is gaining the respect and building a rapport with your "students." There does not have to be a bond of friendship, necessarily, although this is sometimes the case. Just as the bond exists between ceramics teacher and his students, this bond exists between the traders and the Native American artists, creating an atmosphere, lifestyle, and business relationship which is mutually beneficial to all parties.

It is possible to triangulate and simplify a complex relationship that the traders and artists share between their cultures and lifestyle, their artwork, and their businesses. The two cultures coexist in a rather harsh physical environment. The automobile and greater highway access to remote areas has changed the economy of the region somewhat. According to Cliff McGee,

when asked about loyalty between artist and trader, “The loyalty was there in the olden days of commuting outside the reservation, but when the automobiles came on the reservation those wheels have turned and they are going into town and seeing if they can get better prices.”

The art-centered society of the Native Americans of the Southwest has long had a close alignment with the arts and crafts business emphasis of the trading post. Influences and initiatives of the trader/art dealer have popularized Southwest Indian in the regional, national, and international markets.

Speaking the Language

I theorize that one of the reasons these two different cultures have co-existed and art production and commercialism has prospered, is language. Part of the rapport between the traders and artists results from the fact that the traders have been willing to deal with the artists in their native language. All five of the traders that I interviewed speak Navajo and three of the five speak and/or understand Hopi. When asked about getting better results by speaking the language, Bill Malone answered, “Well, I think it gets better results, and this is with the older people. A lot of the younger people don’t understand a lot of the Navajo or they wouldn’t understand money terms in Navajo. They are just not acclimated to the fullest of their language. The older people understand very little English, so I think they like it when somebody can converse with them in Navajo about their rug or its cost. It’s a two-way street. When people come to sell you something - if they don’t like the price you offer or after negotiations are done - if it’s not to their pleasing, they’re free to go down the road and try the next place. It is quite easy now that everyone has transportation. None of us are locked into any deals out here. If you are not right with the person, then you can just go down the road.”

Trader Bruce Burnham had the following comments on his rapport and interaction with the Navajo and gave some insight into their sense of humor. Said Burnham,

Oh, yes. I have a great rapport with the artists that I work with because it's almost like a romance. I really love the Navajo women - they have so much integrity. They just really have a lot of integrity and character, so I always enjoy my interaction with them. It's easier for me to interact with them in Navajo - it puts everybody to ease. Navajos have a great sense of humor - just little verbal clichés and things that are so funny once you understand their sense of humor and get caught up in it. It's innuendos at each other's expense all the time. Even when you are around the Navajo people you are not around the Navajos very long until they give you a nickname. That nickname has to do with your appearance, or your personality but, more than likely, your physical appearance. So they will pick out something like - I have a tooth missing, so they call me "Snaggletooth." That was my name. It didn't sound real good to me at the time but then later on as I understood that these names are descriptive and the reason they are descriptive is because they don't want to use a person's given name because they may be accused of witchcraft. So people will say, 'Go see that trader - That's snaggletooth at that trading post.' Rather than saying, 'Go see Bruce Burnham, they would say, 'that's "Snaggletooth"' or the guy with the big stomach - or the guy with the big arms - some physical trait that you had that was recognizable. After I bridged the tooth in and I went to a different trading post, they called me "man with the red mustache" and it's not red anymore.

There is no written language in the Navajo and the Hopi nations, although information may be written down phonetically in English. Thus, little or no recognition of artistic methods

and materials is available to educate current and future generations. Thus, word-of-mouth and one-on-one demonstrations are the chief means of disseminating information to family, friends, and acquaintances interested in traditional art of the Southwest. Teaching and mentoring became a way of life for an artist in an art-centered society. Communications in the vast expanses of a semi-arid environment becomes extremely important, and ceremonial events help to keep the Native American culture informed and centered. The Navajo and Hopi peoples rely on a positive relationship with the trading post operators to obtain many of their staple goods and to purchase the art and crafts that the Indians rely upon for a living. Formal and informal pedagogical methods have become an important means of disseminating information about art-making methods and materials. A close family unit, a society centered on art, and an economy based on tourism, collecting, and art production have helped to pass along the methods and symbolism that encompass traditional Indian arts and crafts.

The data collected from the artists and traders indicates that there are many families where multiple members and several generations are involved with art-making and often the active commercial sale of their work. All of the traders have mentioned many examples of multi-artist families, and publications of Native American artists (such as Contemporary Native American Artists by Dawn Reno, Alliance Publishing, 1995) corroborate this fact. Navajo weaver, Brenda Spencer, comes from a family of weavers. She is one of three sisters who weave and they all learned from their mother, who learned from her mother. Hopi carver, Alfred Lomahquahu, Jr., learned to carve from his step-father and will prepare his sons for initiation into the Kachina Society once they have reached puberty. Hosteen Etsitty learned both the ceremonial and artistic forms of sandpainting from his father, and is passing the art on to his sons. There is also a great deal of artistic information exchanged between Indian artists at art

exhibitions, pow-wows, and ceremonial gatherings. Often with a great deal of time to burn, much can be learned through observation of a colleague whittling away time.

As theorized, the trading post operator is a significant individual influencing the production and quality and marketing of Native American art in the Southwest. They have been instrumental in this role for over a century. They monitor the quality and authenticity of traditional art, develop younger artists, and manage the commercial aspects of large number of individual artists. The traders are self described “teachers” and “art directors,” and the artists I have spoken to agree with these titles and admire and trust the traders as friends and “family.” My research confirmed that the traders often have more knowledge of traditional art than the Native artists. Their impact and influence on style and forms of American Indian art is very significant.

Authenticity

Call them “fakes,” “knock-offs,” “copies,” “counterfeits,” “imitations,” “phonies,” or whatever; misappropriation of Native American art forms is a growing problem, and as such, may be considered a threat to the maintenance of methods and symbolism in authentic Southwest Native American art. Authentic Indian art has grown tremendously in popularity, and in price, since the 1970s. Interestingly, so has the amount of counterfeit Native American art. This is a testament to the popularity of Native American art and to the commercial value it represents. Non-authentic artwork can come from multiple sources – from within the tribe; from another tribe, and from outside of the region or the country.

One form these non-authentic items can take is “Navajo-style” or “Indian” rugs/blankets, many of which come from Mexico. There are some good values in these rugs, and many are quite well made, decorative, and a worthwhile purchase. Other than Navajo rugs, perhaps the

most appropriated piece of artwork is the Hopi Kachina doll. Most non-authentic dolls are carvings by Navajo crafters.

The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 addresses the issue of fraudulent marketing and sales of Native American artwork and crafts (see Chapter II). The Act provides for punishment and fines for misrepresentation and/or fraudulent sale of non-Native American arts and crafts as authentic American Indian pieces. In the past five years, I personally have reported misrepresentation (mislabeling) of Indian art to dealers in Arizona and Indiana. This often occurs in antique malls where a Mexican made weaving is labeled as a “Navajo rug,” with a corresponding inflated price tag. Generally, and with few exceptions, if a weaving has a fringe, it is not Navajo. Another common misrepresentation is labeling on a Navajo-carved Kachina doll labeled as a “Hopi Kachina.” Pottery is often misrepresented, as well. My experience has been that, more often, these occurrences have been innocent and naïve on the part of the antique dealer. However, there are enough of these scenarios that it may be considered a threat, as there are some unscrupulous dealers preying on unknowledgeable customers.

Another form of misappropriation is the carving of Kachina dolls by non-Hopi carvers, generally by Navajos. The Kachinas, representations of supernatural beings, are held sacred only by the Hopis and some of the other Pueblo tribes of New Mexico. The Navajos carve and decorate Kachina dolls purely for commercial and monetary reasons. To the knowledgeable buyer, a Hopi Kachina is not difficult to distinguish from a “knock-off.” Often the dolls are signed on the base, and Hopi names are usually distinguishable from Navajo. More often there is finer detailed carving on a Hopi Kachina, and one is less likely to see an excess of feathers (usually chicken), cloth, and leather clothing.

Some Navajo carvers are quite talented, and instead of utilizing their skills carving Kachina dolls, they have begun to carve representational, figurative depictions of everyday Navajo life. Many of these “pictorial” sculptures are quite humorous and political in nature. Navajo Folk Art production has boomed over the last twenty years and has grown in popularity among collectors. It was Bruce Burnham who first introduced me to Navajo Folk Art. At his gallery in Sanders, AZ, he described some of his inventory.

This carver carves a real good Kachina doll, now you see here; you see the fly on her shoulder and the little boy with the fly swatter. Well, what he is doing is he is getting that fly on his mothers shoulder, this is a Navajo family. You can see that that’s a picture of Navajo life. Now with this one, you can see how close to being a Kachina doll this is. The relief carving up in here for the skirt and everything. Well, this is a Navajo basket maiden dancer, this isn’t a Kachina doll. This is what I would consider as being Navajo folk art. Now if I were a collector of sorts, an educated collector, I would definitely not want to buy a counterfeit Kachina doll, but I wouldn’t necessarily want to limit myself to only Hopi carvers. So this gives you the option of buying a Navajo carver’s work without purchasing the counterfeit Kachina doll.

Burnham went on to tell me how there is quite a demand for Navajo folk art as a new form of collectible. According to Burnham, the Beasleys, near Farmington, New Mexico are in the forefront of encouraging Navajo carvers to produce folk art and then marketing their work to collectors.

I recall the first time that I saw a piece of Navajo folk art. It was at Bruce McGee’s gallery in Holbrook, and, once again, it was one of those wonderful pieces that he pulled out from his vault along with the “No-no” Kachinas and the deities. What I remember is that the

carving was an exquisite representation of a leader of the Navajo Nation caught in a compromising position with “his pants down” and “his hand in the till.” It was reflective of recent newspaper reports of corruption within the leadership of the Navajo tribe. The carving, in essence, was a three-dimensional political cartoon. As with nearly everything in the vault the Navajo carving already had a home with a collector.

The satire of the Navajo folk art reminds me of a story that Bruce McGee told of the extreme “political latitude” that the Clowns have at the Hopi Kachina ceremonial dances. Basically, the Clowns have free reign at the dances to mock, cajole, criticize or otherwise harass anyone attending the dances. The story goes that the Hopi tribal president was a victim of their pranks, as they called him out, in public, for questionable financial dealings and other indiscretions while in political office. The Clowns often eat watermelon, and they evidently showered the politician in watermelons seeds. Watermelon seeds denote “wisdom.” The artfully costumed Clowns are, by Hopi tribal custom, immune from any personal retaliation for their actions. I guess that Native American art has its ways of imitating life.

It is important to realize that these actions of the Navajo folk artists and the Hopi Clowns, while light hearted in appearance and basically benign expressions of ridicule are from people who take their spirituality, ceremonies, and religious beliefs very seriously.

Another area of misappropriation is the secular use of sacred items and imagery – the use of items which Native Americans value from a ceremonial or religious standpoint which are appropriated by another society (usually Anglo), often with the knowledge and approval of native Americans. Many people have received a dreamcatcher keychain in the mail from one of those charitable organizations? Legend has it that Native Americans of the Great Plains believe that the air is filled with both good and bad dreams. Good dreams pass through the dreamcatcher

to the sleeping person, while bad dreams are caught in the web, and perish in the light of dawn. According to Alan Jim, the dreamcatcher is a sacred symbol to Native Americans, and trivializing it as a trinket on a keychain, or as a decal on a sliding glass door, is blasphemous (Jim, personal communication, November 1, 1999).

The artists who were interviewed did have concerns about counterfeits of their work, but generally their concerns were along tribal lines. For example, Brenda Spencer, when asked about non-Navajos weaving, stated, “No, I don’t see that in weaving.” Michaelis Burnham, who is Navajo and Hopi, said that he “always notices when something (like a Kachina) is not Hopi carved or Hopi-made.” He also stated that the Hopi are not as eager to share techniques and cultural information. He said, “The Navajos, they’re something, but they share a lot more of their culture than the Hopis do.” Bo Lomahquahu had little to say directly about counterfeits, but he was pretty adamant about the qualifications for being a member of the Kachina Society. Only Hopi males who have reached puberty are eligible for initiation, and as members of the Kachina Society, are allowed to carve Kachinas.

As might be expected, the traders had much to say on the issue of counterfeit Southwestern Native American art. Bruce Burnham provided the following,

The Rio Grande Valley, that’s where weaving came from, that’s where the Navajos learned to weave was from the Mexican weavers. It’s not a knockoff of the Navajo rug, but the attitude of the sales clerk along the Interstate North is, we’ve got these Indian rugs and we can play on words and just point blank misrepresent them.

Burnham continued,

We’ve priced ourselves into a different market level. I think that the person that is looking for a rug, that they can kind of decorate with Southwest décor. I think if they buy

a Zapotec, it keeps that imagery of the Southwest design. Now Santa Fe style in everything we see has Mexican or Zapotec rugs hanging in the room. Very seldom are they Navajos, but that imagery of that weaving being a part of that Santa Fe style does translate into a far broader market for us, because the doctors and the lawyers and the wealthy people, they see that and say, 'We need to pick up some weaving to decorate with in our home...' It doesn't take a very high level to surpass the Zapotec or Mexican weaving in quality. So what we end up with are educated collectors because they're caught up in it. Once they get interested in buying Navajo rugs it's no longer a fashion or a décor that they are into, they're into the art its self. It's a passion... So I'm a little less critical than a lot of traders about the Mexican or the Zapotec rug in the market place. I pick a bone with the people that sell them as "Navajo," because then those people get down the road and find that they gave \$80 for something they could have bought somewhere else for \$25 and bought it as a Mexican or a Zapotec rug for \$25, but they sold them as a Navajo for \$80. Those people been hurt, you think that they have a good feeling about the weaving? So we are never able to sell a good piece then. That's my bone to pick. But I think the Zapotec helps us drive our market.

As a "knowledgeable" collector for nearly 25 years, I have seen the quality, and the price, of rugs from Mexico increase dramatically in the Southwestern states. Many reputable dealers, even some stores that have genuine Navajo rugs, deal in Zapotec and other Mexican, and even Turkish rugs. However, many Mexican rugs are marked "Navajo – style" or even "Navajo." The novice buyer could be easily fooled. In defense of Mexican rugs, I have recently seen some that are beautiful, high quality examples of weaving and worthy of being considered for a collection or for decoration. The old Mexican serapes that were a popular tourist item in the

1960s and 1970s are making a comeback in antique and collectable stores. Most are cotton and have alternating stripes of bright colors, making them popular as decorative table or furniture coverings.

When asked whether he has seen other tribes attempt Navajo style weaving, Burnham answered,

No, nobody's picking up on Navajo style weaving. We even offer classes in Navajo style weaving to non-Navajos. There's nothing that makes a better collector than a wealthy lady that learned to weave a Navajo rug. She then appreciates what goes into the piece.

Finally, when Bruce Burnham was asked about the need for a Kachina carver to be a Society member, he replied, "Yeah. So that automatically eliminates a Navajo as a Kachina doll carver. I have very strong feelings about this. I don't feel any Navajo has any business carving a Hopi Kachina doll."

I posed the following question to Bill Malone, "Have you noticed any increase at all in what I would call a cross tribal art, in essence, a Navajo doing Kachinas perhaps, or other tribal members doing Navajo style weavings"? Malone answered,

I haven't noticed too many cross weavers like another tribe doing Navajo weavings.

There are certainly a lot of Navajos that are learning how to do pottery, how to do Kachinas, and things like that. It seems like Navajos seem to be the ones that are doing the cross over with a lot of different things. There are lots of Navajos that are learning how to be potters and very good ones at that. A lot of Navajos are good at doing Kachinas also.

“Is it for the love of art or do you think or is it more economic? I asked. Malone said, “I think it’s mostly economic with everybody anymore. I mean a weaver has to sit in the welfare line out here and we have to be doing something to earn a living.”

“What the unemployment like in this area”? I asked. “Fifty percent.” He continued,

There are so many knockoffs here in the Southwest. We are getting rugs from Mexico, jewelry from the Philippines, pottery knocked off all around us by the inexpensive line of the lookalike Indian pottery that is usually either painted or airbrushed and it has really hurt the economic civil region by having all these knockoffs coming in. It’s crazy what the world will do for a buck. It certainly hurts the Indian crafts people and the artists.

I posed the question about cross-tribal and counterfeit art to Cliff McGee and got the following answer, including his concerns over penalties from using bird feathers.

The value and the style is entirely different. I noticed down here in the intersections the people with the vans of Kachinas out there with the feathers on them, all kinds of feathers, pigeon feathers, chicken feathers on the Kachina doll.

“Well, the Hopi don’t use eagle feathers and the eagle down, that’s not done anymore”? I asked. Cliff responded,

Not anymore because we as the buyers we just won’t buy anything with feathers on it because of the government found a feather on there they can come I and sue us for it. A lady one time came to the store and looked over the Kachinas and they didn’t find any, but they warned us if they ever caught us, there will be a fine. I didn’t believe in that law. You will see cowboys with feathers on their hats and they don’t say anything about that, but they figure that we would go out and kill these birds to get the feathers and sell them to the Indians and the Indians do the same.

When Bruce and Ferron McGee were questioned about cross-tribal art production, Bruce said,

It is happening, not just in Kachinas, but that has been an obvious one because it has been very news worthy in the art world, but we are also seeing it in jewelry. We are seeing Navajos doing Hopi overlay or by the same token, but not in as great as number, but we are seeing some Hopis now doing inlayed work, kind of combining the Navajo style and the Hopi style together. I don't think they need to copy it. All the young carvers like to be known for their art, their style and so they try to set themselves aside from everybody by doing these things. You also see in pottery. They are copying work from the Hopi. You don't see as much in weaving. I have yet to see Hopi weaving a Navajo rug, that just doesn't happen, the interest isn't there.

When asked about Mexican weavings, Ferron McGee answered,

But why did they do this? Why did they make what I call "replicas"? They try to make replicas so they can sell it cheaper and quicker. This is why Navajos are carving Kachina dolls. That is Hopi art forms, not Navajo. The Navajos say, 'Well, Hopis are making good money off these, so we need to get in on the action,' so they carve. They have got the talent, okay. They will try to get it done as fast as they can, so they can sell it real cheap, so they undercut the market from the Hopis. I always said that the Navajo Kachina dolls make a carver. So I tell people when they ask me to maybe analyze dolls that they have or appraise their collection. Bruce and I both; it breaks our hearts to tell them sometimes these are Navajo made dolls and we know these things. We can tell by the markings and the way it is carved and we insist that our Hopi carvers always put their name on the doll, okay. But if you see the name Begay on a Kachina doll, then it is not

Hopi made. So it is pretty obvious how you can tell. The consumer will buy a Navajo Kachina doll for one reason; they want a replica, just like if you are going to buy a Cobra sports car, if you buy the original thing you are going to pay \$60,000 right, or more. But you can buy a replica, one that was made by some other offbeat company, and only pay a few dollars for it. They look the same. They look similar, but it is not the same thing. The same thing on these Kachina dolls. It is all a matter of quality. People buy it to put in their office, they don't care if it gets broken, they just want that look and if they are going to buy for their home art collection, they are going to get a good piece.

Bruce McGee interjected the following statement when questioned about the problem of cross-tribal art. "We are on the edge of a situation now where it is becoming a little more difficult to draw the lines because we are running into a situation where there are a lot of intermarriage."

Intermarriage may well have an impact on the culture, and thereby the art, of the native American Southwest. There was little direct evidence or opinion on this issue from either the Native American artists or the traders, even though two of the traders are married to Native American women and one Hopi artist is married to a Navajo woman. However, when *gender* is injected into the conversation, there are plenty of opinions from trader and artist alike. Traditionally, certain arts and crafts were the domain of either males or females, with very little cross-gender arts and crafts.

Stereotypically, Navajo weavings were done by Navajo women, who learned the craft of weaving from their mothers, aunts, and/or grandmothers. The same was true, for the most part, with the production of pottery by both Navajos and the Pueblo Indian tribes. Perhaps this was because these crafts were mainly utilitarian, and historically, Navajo men have been in a "hunter-

gatherer” role. In the Hopi tribe, art fills a greater role as a ceremonial instrument. Thus, men are more often the ones who produce art for ceremony in the Hopi tribe. Weaving is often done by Hopi men for ceremonial purposes. Cliff McGee mentioned, “Hopi men weave the wedding sashes.” Hopi men, by ritual and by Hopi law, have the exclusive authority and responsibility to carve, and thus are to be the sole creators of Kachinas, Kachina dolls, and related religious items. Bo Lomahquahu was adamant that only Hopi men who had been initiated into the Kachina Society should be carving Kachina dolls. When asked about his son, who is part Navajo, joining the Society, Lomahquahu said,

Yes. I am the father and I am the male and all the Kachina stuff goes towards the male, everything else goes to the female. The house, the land, and everything else goes to the female, but Kachinas are mostly male oriented. So it was a Hopi woman who married a different Indian then it would be a little bit more difficult for their children to be initiated. One thing that kind of upset some people up in my village was that I had my son, my oldest son initiated and he is full Navajo. It didn’t really cause problems, they didn’t say anything to me, personally, but I knew that some people were not disappointed but a little bit angry. I grew up believing that this is for everybody and if he is going to be in my family, then he’s going to be a part of my family out there, so I believed that it was appropriate for him to get initiated, so he could come and participate with me and learn about it, because he is a part of my family. After I talked to my grandfather; he said okay.

I then asked, “So you are born into it and then at a certain age you can actually start carving and then from then on it is a lifetime of learning.” He answered,

After you are initiated, maybe several years down the road, you will be asked to initiate somebody else and then that is when you will pick up and pass it on, down through your God children. Ever since you are born, they start teaching you about Kachinas and the Hopi way.

Bruce Burnham was the first of my interviewees to bring up the issue of gender in relation to Kachina carving. He told me,

I listened to a kind of a famous Hopi carver and Hopi cultural buff give a lecture. He said that he really resents Navajos carving Kachina dolls but he also resents the few Hopi women that are starting to carve Kachina dolls equally as much because it's equally wrong. The thing of it is, is with Navajo folk art, humor comes into play and it becomes a fun thing, in Navajo folk art.

I later asked Bruce McGee about the phenomenon of females carving Kachinas, and he confirmed that female carvers were quite controversial and causing quite a political ruckus on the Hopi Reservation. Bruce said that there had been several short articles on the subject in the local newspaper. Several years ago, I had the opportunity to add a miniature Kachina doll by Hopi artist Gaylene Tungovia to my collection (Figure 4.1). McGee told me that, as a carver, he would rank her a 7 on a scale of 10, with respect to her technical ability. The quality of miniature Kachinas is judged by the amount of detail, proportion, and how the piece would appear when enlarged.

Bruce Burnham discussed his views on cross-tribal art and issues of gender;

The Navajos are making pottery, they are carving Kachina dolls, they're copying everybody but nobody is copying the Navajos. Another thing that I wanted to touch on that I have strong feelings about Hopi Kachina dolls, not even every Hopi is entitled to

carve a Kachina doll. Carving a Kachina doll was a privilege to the Hopis and no one, no Hopi is to carve a doll until they have been initiated into the Hopi clan system. When they are initiated into the priesthood order or the order that they are in, see the women aren't suppose to carve dolls either. So the Hopi men are entitled to carve those dolls which they're priesthood affiliation is. They can't just do any of the dolls.

There are men weavers now and women doing the Kachinas. So, there is a crossover there from what used to be a tradition. I would say there is a crossover - a bigger crossover. Probably the main thing about men being weavers today is they took the work out of it. With a lot of the pre-spun wool, all the men have to do, they have been sitting around watching their wife for years and they probably feel as if *I can do that*. A lot of it has to do with the pre-spun wool which has taken a lot of the work out of the weaving. I have a lot of yays and nays about pre-spun wool and my thinking about it, it's tedious, it is a lot of hard work and we probably haven't recognized the weaver as much as we should have. The young girls today understand that it is time that they can save, what I'm trying to say is while mom is getting her rug ready doing the cutting, spinning, and dying they've bought the wool, set up the weave and woven a rug and she hasn't even started weaving yet and they're going to weave another rug and get it done by the time she gets her rug done. So there are two rugs together and she is just barely getting one off. I don't think the young girls will ever go back to spinning. The young ladies understand how much work is involved and they're not going to go back to it. It's just like us, I upgraded to we jump in the car and go, we don't hook up the buggy and do all that work anymore.

Burnham went on to discuss male weavers and their involvement with the Newlands Raised Outline rug, which he was instrumental in developing. Burnham continued,

One of the very best of the Newlands Outlines weavers was a fellow named Andrew Yazzie and Andrew and his wife, his wife was still doing the Newlands rugs. They would bring rugs in and every other time every other rug she brought in I noticed was far better than the other. Finally, I started getting suspicious and finally, one day I asked and they came in with kind of a mediocre rug and I said, 'Evelyn, who made this rug'? She said, 'I did' and I said, 'You didn't do it, you didn't make this rug. This rug isn't anywhere as good as the one you brought in last time. Who are you selling this rug for'? She said, 'I made it.' About that time, I noticed her husband standing way off to the side and he was kind of fighting around like he just, soon this conversation would not be happening. So I said, 'Andrew, come here' and he walked over and I said, 'Did you do this rug.' He says, 'No, I didn't make this rug, she did.' I says, 'Andrew, did you make the rug that she sold two weeks ago'? He said, 'Uhhh' and I said, 'Did you? There is nothing wrong with being a weaver.' I said, 'That's an artist. If you did you should be taking credit for it.' He said, 'Yeah, I made it.' but he says, 'I don't want people thinking I'm a sissy'. I said, 'Why did you start weaving.'? He says, 'Well, one time I went up to Peabody Coal to haul some coal for my mother-in-law and while I was there I saw two of those two pieces of heavy equipment come by and both of them had a women driving it. I said, 'Well Heck, if she can drive the heavy equipment and do a man's job then I'm going home to learn how to weave.' So he learned how to weave but he was already an artist doing paintings. He already had that visual coordination.

When asked if Andrew Yazzie (the weaver) had any art training, Brunham said,

Just high school art. He was killed in a car wreck about the time that he came known as ultimately the best in Newlands Outlining. I have a rug woven by his little brother right now. He finally admitted it and then it took me about two or three months to talk him into taking credit for the weaving. As soon as I could tie his name to that rug I could probably get 25 or 30 percent more for it, that was before any of the male weavers came out of the closet. You would be surprised now at how many weavers there are. They were there the whole time. This was about 1983. Those weavers were there the whole time but their wives always sold their rugs and so I really encouraged them to come out of the closet. All the sudden I'm finding there are a lot of men weavers and now they are taking credit for it and they are getting a lot of good positive things as an artist.

Other than the quality difference that you saw there did you see any masculine or feminine traits between the male and female rug?

No, but I kind of have an idea of where you are coming from. The women were taught by their mothers and grandmothers, it was kind of a woman's thing, so the lady weaver isn't near as apt to experiment with design as the male weavers and artist he comes in and just does any kind of design that he can think of. Probably the most creative design, absolute design change in a rug was Andrews's younger brother and his name is Larry Yazzie, and he died recently. He started what is now known as the Blue Canyon rug. So the male weavers have really brought a lot of innovation to go beyond tradition and do something a little different.

When asked about the efforts of traders toward maintaining authenticity in the weavers work, Burnham responded,

I was one of the speakers at a rug seminar at the Heard Museum a couple of years ago. There was a lady there from New York and got up right in front of everybody and asks, 'Well, do you weave'? I was telling people how a trader critiques a rug and demands better performance out of a weaver and that a trader doesn't just accept anything that comes in. If a trader feels like a weaver fell short of her ability then he tells her about it. I was talking about that and she says, 'Well, do you weave'? And I said, 'No, I don't weave.' She said, 'Do you know how to weave'? I said, 'No.' She said, 'What gives you the right to critique somebody's artwork when you can't even do it yourself'? This lady was very abrasive and downright obnoxious. There was nothing that I could say that would satisfy her. Finally, a weaver from Ganado, Sadie Curtis, got up and boy I'll tell you what I could have kissed her. She lit into that lady and said, 'You know what? If it wasn't for traders we wouldn't even be having this seminar right now.' She says, 'All these fine rugs that you see that these ladies have woven. You wouldn't see any of these if it wasn't for traders.' She said, 'Well, you would still be making saddle blankets. It was the trader that always made us do better. You know a trader never was satisfied with just status quo. We always had to do better because the traders we always telling us to be better.' She said, 'And it was the traders that took us to England.' She had just got done talking about going to England and weaving in a seminar over there. 'It's the traders that got us there it was the traders that took us to New York the traders that got us the recognition that we deserve.' She says, 'But don't think the trader hasn't been very important in that development.' So then she sat down and the translator translated into Navajo. About half the participants in this seminar were Navajos and a lot of the older ladies didn't speak English. So they did it in Navajo and when they did all the Navajos

started applauding. I felt great and that was the end of that lady. She never said another word. I have thought about that a lot and so I came home and when I got home I said, 'Weaving can't be that hard so I'm going to work up a rug and weave it.' So I get Noel Bennett's book, "Working with the Wool," sat down and read it. Then I worked up the rug and did my first and only rug.

Burnham continued,

I didn't want someone to accuse me of doing a Navajo rug. So I made it just as wild as I could make it. I started on this end here and came across. When I got to this point here, I was bored with this design so I started doing an Eyedazzler and at the same time I was trying to do somewhat of a Coal Mine Messa, raised outline only without the alternating colors. I did that just so if I ever see that lady again I can tell her that I weaved a rug.

Several others of my research subjects were familiar with the issue of gender specific to some forms of Native American art. Navajo weaver, Brenda Spencer told me, "I know a couple male weavers. Their work is brilliant." Ferron McGee told me, "We see a cross-over. There are the Hopi girls making Kachina dolls now. They are very good. There really isn't any boundary." His brother, Bruce added, "It is bolder. There is a masculine part of it, it just comes out, whereas the feminine is delicate in design; maybe more of a flow to it." Their father, Cliff said, "I've never seen a Hopi weave a Navajo rug. They don't interfere there. Now we have Navajo male weavers; we have a few. We have one who is legally blind. He weaves rugs and they are very expensive. His name is James, out in Sheep Springs, New Mexico."

The issue of authenticity, counterfeiting, and gender in the creation of Southwestern Native American art seems to be more significant to certain individuals and certain tribes, more so than others. Perhaps the religious and cultural importance of the art in question has some

bearing on the intensity of the situation. The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 has helped defray some anxiety on the part of Indian artists (both Navajo and Pueblo) and helps to protect the artwork and its value.

Much of the aforementioned concern, as corroborated by the research participants, is centered on Kachina doll carving, which is a sacred part of Hopi life and culture. To point out and further emphasize the importance of Kachinas and their representations (the dolls) to the Hopi religious life and the associated ceremonial dances, there are some figures of supernaturals which are neither carved nor displayed. When asked if there were any Kachinas that he would not or was not supposed to carve, Bo Lomahquahu answered,

Yes, there are several that you are not supposed to carve and I still go by those guidelines. It is more out of respect than superstition, because a lot of them won't carve certain dolls because of superstition, and because they have seen what happens to you when you carve this one or that. Your fingers will become stone looking and you are going to get sick. There are different ones but I don't carve them because I just want to respect my people and what they want.

Retired trader, Cliff McGee; when asked about the sale of ceremonial masks and other ceremonial relics, explained,

We didn't deal with that because we didn't want to get ourselves in trouble and Hopis didn't want their masks to disappear. Until recently, I hear that they are getting in trouble with it. Yes, the Hopi get in trouble. There are some Hopis that collect them and then take them out and sell them. A lot of times a Hopi would bring in a Kachina doll, a certain type of a religious secret doll, and the chief would come in and say, 'McGee you can't do that.'

After I had turned off the video camera during one of my interviews with Bruce McGee, I was shown a carving of a two-horned deity that was stored away from public view. The superstitious believe that when a carver produces a likeness of a deity, they will lose the use of their legs. In this case, the Hopi carver had lost his legs to a train accident years before, so, according to Bruce, he feels it is his destiny to carve these figures.

Commercialism and Collecting

When I began my research study, I theorized that commercialism had a bearing on the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in Native American art. I just didn't realize how much and to what extent this effect might have. Arthur Efland, in his textbook "A History of Art Education" (1990) presented how the arts have been controlled by means of patronage, education, and censorship. In medieval times, the church was the chief patron of the arts in Europe. In today's world, I would submit that one of the most significant patrons of Native American art of the Southwest are serious collectors. Significant collections of Navajo and Pueblo Indian art exist in all regions of the United States as well as outside the USA in countries such as Germany (B. McGee, personal communication, August 12, 1997). Obviously, there are various audiences for the arts, and various levels or categories of collectors; from the tourist who purchases a remembrance of their vacation travel through the Southwest, to the art enthusiast who decorates their home in "Southwest style," and then to the serious collector with a large number of one or more forms or periods of Southwest Native American art.

It is at this section of my research that I have chosen to introduce the interview data of Mr. Eugene Victor Thaw, an art dealer and significant collector of Native American art. Mr. Thaw's areas of expertise are with contemporary art; specifically abstract expressionism. He

was president of the Pollack-Krasner Foundation, and also was contracted to appraise the estate of Georgia O'Keeffe after her death.

Commercialism and the “economics of art” are important to the Native American artist, as well as the trader/art dealer. The market for Native American art is subject to the same influences as any other period and style of art, as well as by the strength of the economy. Prior to my formal video interview with Bruce McGee, I recall a conversation with him regarding the decline in the volume of Navajo weaving in the late 1970s, during the Carter-era. Bruce told me that he and his father conversed on the decline of the art of Navajo weaving and wondering whether or not the art (and craft) would be lost to future generations. Bruce told me that after Ronald Reagan became President in 1980, the entitlements that the Navajos were receiving were drastically cut, while simultaneously the economy improved stimulating patronage of the arts. There was now an economic reason for the Navajo to weave. McGee credits “Reaganomics” with the rebirth of Navajo art and craft. At the interview, I asked Bruce to recall the scenario.

It happened especially with the Navajo weavers, at least in our area, in Keams Canyon. A lot of the, what I call, give-away-programs were being pulled in at the time and discontinued. Of course Dad was worried about it because that is what most of the trading posts live on is being called “Made in Native America.” They were not going to have any funds to buy our merchandise with, and so, we were in for some hard times. What we had forgotten was, for the most part, Native Americans are survivors. They have been here a lot longer than we have and for instance, the weavers at that time, they were given like ten years and the spinning wheel would be gone, so everyone was predicting. What happened was, they decided to start weaving again, and they had all the money they needed. We saw a couple of things happen. One was, they became a little

more self-sufficient, their confidence went up, and they still shopped with us. Although, we had to push ourselves a little bit on our end to keep up with them. We had to then find new market places for the rugs, which we did. So see it was good for everyone. It made us get off our duffs and start finding homes for the art forms and then they went back to what they used to do.

I asked Brenda Spencer her perception of the future for Native American art, in particular weaving, and she replied,

I think it's staying at the same level. There are a lot of younger weavers and they want to go on working and weaving. I don't see it going down and dying. I do see a lot of younger weavers everywhere I go. I think of past times, I really think weaving isn't a dying art. I think it will always continue on to the next generation. When I first started working here (at Hubbell Trading Post), a lot of people thought weaving was a dying art, and I try to tell the younger weavers to keep on weaving.

I asked her how she felt about competition for sales by an influx of Mexican Indian rugs and some others that are simulating Navajo designs. "I get really upset," she said. "So that's why I always try to do something different on my weaving to be more creative."

Bill Malone, who is the manager at Hubbell Trading Post, was asked about what regard he felt the Indian artist had for traders and how he felt about the future. He answered,

Well, I think if you are a good trader you're traditional in your values and the bad traders never lasted long. If they were not right with their clients - it would be just like owning a business in town - if you weren't right with your clients people won't come back. If you are right with your clients, they will come back. Around here, at Hubbell's, we have people come from up around Gallup, and people come down from Tuba City. We get a

good mix of people coming here. I think that is true with any other trader or trading post out on the reservation, which there aren't too many of anymore. I see the future of rugs being really great. I mean, the younger artists are doing phenomenal things but they are going to be expensive and until there is a mix of what people will pay and what they won't pay - the ones that don't want to go with the lower price will probably say, 'I'm not going to weave anymore' and drop out of the business but there will probably always be somebody weaving rugs. But a lot of younger people expect more (money) for the rugs.

Price is a motivating factor for the artist, says Cliff McGee.

Back in the olden days they did it for their livelihood and for their love of making it and their appreciation of it and our appreciation, but today it's more modern. They do it more today as commercial; the dollar value of it. In the old days any rug would be a good one.

Cliff McGee continued,

The Hopi is more reserved than the Navajo, the Navajo is proud of what they make and that they are out for getting better prices for their material and merchandise. As for the Hopi, they are all about the same today. I can't compare today from yesterday. I strictly deal with the Indians themselves. The outside people that are more educated you say wouldn't bring it to us to sell they would go strictly to the retail and setting up their own store. In Santa Fe they would rent a little place and sell it themselves.

And indeed, the last time I was in Santa Fe, in February 2008, I went to the Square which was packed with Native artists selling their wares. They all had business cards with their address and phone number. Some had an email address and it was not unusual for them to have their own Website, or be represented with other artists on the Internet.

Just about all of my sample of interview participants were collectors of Native American art on some scale. Many told me that Native Americans, including the artists themselves, were collectors as well. Said Bill Malone,

I notice that with quite a few of them. A lot of them are starting to turn into collectors. I just think they have a love for it and I don't know if it's the symbolism or whatever but I have a son that's a silversmith and he's collecting pottery. Of course, he likes old jewelry also. He is collecting some of the older Pueblo pottery. I'm not talking Nampeyo, Martinez or anything like that—but the 1930s or 1940s style pottery.

Michaelis Burnham and Brenda Spencer both admitted to having small collections. Brenda collects Navajo weavings and credited the fineness of the weave, the color combinations, and the fact that she knew one of the artists, with her attachment to the rugs. Michaelis trades some of his work and candidly admits, "I am more interested in people having my artwork than the price."

Bruce Burnham had quite a bit to say about collectors and the artists.

The Native Americans that I come in contact with are not of the collector level. The Native Americans that I deal with are the Native American right here, they are the artists. They are not necessarily into collecting. They're into making a living, and no matter how good you are out here as an artist, you are only going to live a certain level, on a scale of 1-10 you are still going to be priority driven, because of the matriarchal society that they live in. Whatever they make kind of levels out within the clan system. They make payments, car payments for their brother and their sisters and other clan members so everyone has a tendency to live at the same level. I've seen weavers that make \$2500 a month average income, and that's disposable income. I've seen them not live a bit better

than someone that has no disposable income of any kind or maybe a \$160 a month welfare check. By the time that money levels out, you know you talk about something that separates the sheep from the goats; something that really separates a true artist from just a crafts person, just think of the love they must have for being creative or being productive to continue working. I know a family of five weavers. Within this family of five weavers, I will bet you they've got a combined income of over \$150,000 a year in that family group, and they are sweating a car payment just like everybody else every month. I would say that the five people in that family combined together make an excess of \$200,000 a year disposable income from their weaving and yet they are struggling every month to make the car payment. It's a sobering thing to come in contact with that. When asked what he thought Native Americans felt about the interest in their arts, Burnham said,

They love it. That's the one part of success that they don't have to share with everybody. That's the individual achievement and recognition that they don't have to spread around. They love it but they are very conservative and they don't brag about what they are doing. They don't brag about their achievements. They're very conservative; they're very timid about tooting their own horn. What gets people started in buying American Indian art is this romantic idea of a Native American and our debt to the Native American, and I feel sorry for what has happened to the Native American in history and all of the bad treaties and all that. We all share a certain amount of that burden of guilt and that does create a situation where people do have a warm feeling for the people themselves and, in an indirect way, hoping to right some wrongs or whatever. It gives the people the spark of interest to get started. It's like you said a minute ago, it becomes

a passion. After your third or fourth Navajo rug, you don't give a damn if someone else likes it. You bought it because you love it and because you can see and appreciate every fine point. You didn't buy it because it's going to be worth a lot someday, maybe your first or second one, but you're going to find that after your 10th or 12th rug you bought, you're going to be talking to me or Bill Malone or someone and saying, 'Hey, you think I could trade this rug in on this rug'? You're going to start upgrading because you have developed an eye and a taste for the Navajo rug. You truly are appreciative for the rug, at that level then it wouldn't make a whole lot of difference to you whether it was woven by an Indian or a non-Indian because the art form has taken shape and you've truly become interested in it. I speak for rug collecting because that's what I deal in. Bruce McGee speaks just as fervently about Kachina dolls. He and I have discussions; he says 'How in the world can you sell a \$1500 3x5 rug'? And I say, 'Bruce, how can a doll that's 18 inches tall sell for 7 or 8 thousand dollars, how can you sell a Neal David Kachina doll for that kind of money'? or whoever he's representing at the time. He and I for years have had this. If he could convince me of the value of his Kachina dolls and I could convince him of the value of my rugs. He and I would both have a better gallery. I would have a bunch of his Kachina dolls, those \$5000 Kachina dolls and he would have a lot of my 5 or 10 thousand dollar rugs. Business speaking, we would be better off. We would both have a higher level of art in our galleries, but he doesn't have my level of rugs and I don't have his level of dolls. I believe in the rugs and he believes in the dolls, that's a good thing he does because that's what got the dolls to where they are at today and that's what got our rugs to where they are at today because we believe in it. Billy

Malone believes in the rug and he has faith in it and he believes in and he sees the value in it, and I'm the same way.

The Dealer Turned Collector

At this juncture, Eugene Thaw's contribution to my research is valuable as it provides a third point of view to compare the data from the artists and traders. His interview, combined with notes and published textual material should add an interesting perspective to the discussion from the point-of-view of an art historian, art dealer, and art collector.

Eugene Victor Thaw was an art dealer in New York for 48 years before retiring in Santa Fe. He attended St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, where he "learned the history of art," but opted to become a dealer instead of a professor. He recollected,

So when I moved down here, I loved to collect and I had been collecting old master drawings most of my life, which the collection is now at the Morgan Library in New York, so I needed something to collect and I started with American Indian Art, because there were a lot of dealers in that year, and I knew nothing about it. It was here (in Santa Fe) and I fell for the same principles and art history that could be applied. The same principles of design and criticism could be applied to American Indian artists, as to any art, whether some porcelain or, you know, Egyptian antiquities. You just look for the best and learn by them. I have a lot of books and I studied. I went to museums and it became, like any collecting, an obsession. When I got in this very house, in this room, when I got up to 300 pieces, my wife and I decided that we did not have room for a lot more and where would we put it, and what would we do with it, so we decided to give it away and that was when we made our connection with Cooperstown, where I had a Summer home for many years on that farm up there. I know all the people there and they agreed to build

a museum for us. Then the collection grew and grew and grew, until now it is nearly a thousand pieces. A catalogue is going to be published this September 2000. The whole thing will be published, the whole collection. I hope it will be a standard text in this field. We named it the Oswego Institute, based on the name of Oswego Lake in Oswego County. We call it that. It is a group of Indian scholars who are invited and who meet every year in the summer at Cooperstown to discuss one or another aspect of American Indian art.

You asked me in one of your questions about art versus craft. If you look at the dictionary, there is not a lot of difference in the dictionary definition. They are very similar in how they are defined. Art cannot be made without craftsmanship, without facility, and without ingenuity; however, in American Indian art, what would be considered “craft” in Anglo work, on our art can be considered “art” when you are collecting American Indian art. Basketry, for instance. Basketry would not originally come under the rulebook of Fine Art in an American Museum; however, in an Indian facility, baskets are definitely high works of art. Dat-So-La-Lee, the great Washoe basket maker whose work sells for hundreds of thousands of dollars, she certainly is an artist, and a very major artist around the turn of the century. She is America’s greatest Indian basket maker.

I asked, “Why do you think that is, that there is a difference? You mentioned the similarities of collecting and the connoisseur-ship involved.”

Because basketry in our culture, not Indian culture, for the most part is considered a utilitarian object, where as in American Indian art, it is a utilitarian object sometimes, but it is very often a work made for its own sake, for a ceremonial sake, or for the sake of a

wedding gift, or like the Como baskets in California, gift baskets made for special occasions. Baskets of a certain type in American Indian art were always highly prized, where in our culture, baskets are baskets. You know, we fill them full of vegetables or something or if you buy a lot of pasta and olive oil to give for Christmas presents, you put them in a basket and put cellophane around it. Indian baskets are great works of art. The same with pottery. The Southwest pottery that you are aware of. This is all works of art to us, who collect it as art. Some of it is utilitarian but most of it was made by people who had great skill and great expressive sensibilities, and so pottery has a higher rank in the path beyond of the level of the arts, then it does in our culture. Except, if you go back to the 18th century to Meissen porcelain and things like that, where you find it is treated the same way, porcelain becomes art. Tiffany's, you can go to Tiffany's and buy a set of plates, it is expensive, but it is not art.

I posed the question about how he became interested in art. Did he have any drawing ability?

I have always had a facility for drawing. I could draw quite well and I did a little painting and I went to the Art Students League at the age of 14 and I spent Saturday afternoons with the art teacher. I was not good enough to be an artist. I knew early in my life that I did not have a real calling for it.

"Were there any mentors there that you can remember"? I asked.

The college was only a few miles from Washington, DC, and I would take the bus in with friends almost every weekend to go to the New National Gallery; this was in 1943. The National Gallery had opened in 1937, so it was still fairly new. We would go to the Phillips Collection and we would go to other places in Washington to see art and I had

some friends in college who were very much into learning about art and that is where I got my first real look. Then I went to Columbia where I got my Masters in Art History. I did not want to teach and I did not have any money, so I became a dealer so I could build up a nest egg.

“Did you have any dealing at all or any interest in Native American Art prior to coming out here”? I queried.

A little. I had a course with the famous Professor Paul S. Wingert at Columbia. It was called Primitive Art. It was not politically incorrect to call it Primitive Art in those days. I knew some of the names. I knew how to say Tlingit (sounds like) in the Northwest Indian art. I could throw that around. I probably knew a little bit more about African Art, African carvings than I did about American Indian art. I knew nothing at all about bead work, quilt work, basketry, or pottery or any of those things before I came down here (to Santa Fe).

So I asked, “Well, I know that some of the abstract expressionists were influenced by Native American art and the Indian ...”

I worked with a guy named Justin Hollock, who was very influenced by Navajo sandpainting and said so, and by other illustrations and things that he saw of American Indian art. I wrote the catalogue originally of his works for Yale, so that is why Helen (Harrison – the author’s sister) and I were so close. I am President of the Pollack-Krasner Foundation. I knew that that was an important thing and I knew that the other painters of the abstract expressionists period pretended a kinship with the force of expression of the Circle of Primitive Art and especially Native American art. Larnick Newmann was an expert in Northwest Coast art and wrote an essay for a catalogue that

would show Northwest Coast art, but then he lost his gallery before it became one of the leading galleries for Abstract Expressionist Painting. So, there is a tradition in that, among the first post-war, great American painters but I was not up on it until I began to look into it down here. I had a friend, a retired museum director who lives here, named Ralph T. Coe, who heads the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City and worked there for many years. He is a great collector of American Indian art and a great expert. He helped me get started in this field. He advised me over the years. So, I did not go too far wrong.

Next, I asked Gene Thaw, “We talked about art and craft. What are the attributes that you might attach to a collectible or higher value piece”?

I am interested primarily in the older art, in the historic pieces. I have gotten pieces that go back centuries. Particularly anything in American Indian art before 1850 is considered incunabula in antique book collecting, like before Gutenberg. Actually, before 1500, printed books before 1500, around that time of Gutenberg, called incunabula, the earliest printed books. 1850 is the time when we began to see in many parts of the United States where traditional Indian Culture had continued. It was beginning to end at that time and the reservation era was looming. They were being defeated in war after war and the great age, and it wasn't always 1850. For instance, the Navajo blankets before 1863 are considered to be “classic.” 1863, I believe was Bosco Redondo, when they were put into the long walk. So, pre-Bosco Redondo is a kind of time before the Navajo civilization was totally disrupted and almost destroyed. After that, in the later part of the 19th century, they got designs from the Hubbell Trading Post and then later Westernization crept in and they began making rugs in addition to blankets and then finally only rugs and

no more blankets and it began to change, but up until 1863, the weavings from the 1820s or, whenever they took it over from the Spaniards, that technique of fine weaving before they had the commercial dyes. All of that is classic and the same is true with some of the Plains Indians; the early beads, the so-called "Pony Beads," we can tell age, we can tell period by looking at the materials that were used, and quilt work continued for a long time and it is still being done by a few competent artist and crafts people among the Indians, but the early quilt work has a special character. The 18th century quilt work is different and you can tell it is different, even when it is un-faded. So, I was looking for authenticity in age, condition, and quality. There are old things that are no good. Just because they are old that doesn't mean they are wonderful. For the most part, the old things had a special character because they represented a living culture, not a dying culture. American Indian artists are going through a renaissance these days. A lot of artists, a lot of people are trying to recreate and re-vivify the American Indian traditions. This man, Ralph T. Coe, a famous collector and author of *Traditions Lost and Found*. I don't know if you have ever seen that guide. It shows a lot of contemporary artists of that era. It was the American Federation of Artists Exhibition. They were doing wonderful work in the tradition, but making changes and variations on it. An art form must never be static; it has to have an organic kind of growth. So, some of these Northwest carvers that are doing masks today are as good as any that ever lived. They just haven't been buried in tombs or anything yet. So, they are still fresh. The colors are fresh, but some of them are wonderful.

I asked if there were problems with knock-offs and reproductions that are made and trying to be passed on.

There have been a lot in my view. I do not know the details about the pure Indian craftsmanship, about things that are sold on the plaza here and those which come from Hong Kong. That is more commercial kind of things. There are a lot of fakes. A lot of American Indian art that may have been very damaged and finished by restorers. Some of it is just fake, pure and simple. Some of it is the work of European –Indian art lovers who pride themselves on learning the craftsmanship and learning how to do it, Germans especially. They have a club where they meet every year, and they pretend to be Indians and they dress-up in outfits that they have made and some of them are incredible competent. Some of these pieces that get out into the market, where someone dies and the family sells the stuff, it is very hard even for an expert to tell if it is authentic. But you will learn it and you can tell it in the end. But there are problems with forgeries. My next question was, “Are they forging the very old art or even up through the newer pieces”?

They are forging mostly beadwork and quilt works, shirts, and bags, and things like that, which are very tradable items which are the things that the Indian traders deal with. You find some forgeries but fewer in the Northwest coast part which is a different category and in a way, in my view, it is the highest category of American Indian art. It ranks with Egyptian, Greek, or Roman. Some of those carvers were as good as anything that was ever done. The great Northwest coast art is derived a little bit from the Orient. A good Northwest coast piece can easily cost a half a million dollars. A great mask or a house post, or a magnificent chest. Things that are classic in that field and it goes back. A lot of the great pieces are 18th century pieces.

I asked Thaw, “Are there any other tribes or areas that you say either, Plains, East, Southwest, or anywhere that you would value highly because of craftsmanship”?

I think most of the survival, because of the materials used, and because of the recentness of the culture, most of the survivals from the Plains, what people think of with the feathers and the tents, what a school boy considers Indians on horseback. That is a relatively recent culture. They only got horses after the Spanish horses got loose and bred and finally they got horses on the plains, but the materials, the buckskin clothing and quilt work and the bead work, and all of that is basically 19th century and early 20th century. It is very little of that that goes back early much earlier than that. Those are the prehistoric 10th century, 9th century, 12th century cultures. The southwest part that you’re interested in is a little more problematic as to where it comes from. We think of the Anasazi people having left Chaco and other settlements and then becoming the Pueblo people but it’s not absolutely certain. The Navajos came from the North so they came and settled like in the 16th century and they speak a language different from Hopi. The thing that I’m looking for is expressiveness in a piece and authenticity. There can be two pipe bags both from the same period. One can be extraordinarily beautiful and one average. You learn to tell the difference. You pay the price for the extraordinary one because it’s worth the difference as a collector.

“Have you dealt much”? I asked.

I never resold. I’ve traded a few pieces that I bought as mistakes or to upgrade but very little of that. I was trying to buy in every area. The market here has things from different areas too but I also try to buy from North Eastern from the Great Lakes and Canada and Maine. I’ve bought things from all over and I’ve tried to find the

quintessential things that represented that tribe. They're very different. Abalone shell ornaments things in the middle of the continent that they must have got from California from trading. There are trade routes all over America. There was much more contact in the prehistoric times than we know. Certainly the great cultures in the South East United States, the mountain cultures of Mexico; somehow they had to be with the Aztec and pre-Aztec with the platform temples on top. The symbolism they wore around their necks all of that relates to the Mexican civilizations. There is a lot more interplay and we're still learning, there is a lot to learn. Most of the Indian American art that I have collected, most of it is anonymous in the sense that we don't know the names of the craftsmen or the artist but in some cases we do. There are even some 19th century names that have emerged from the Northwest coast. We know some of the names here in the south and in California. We know the names of basket makers; we know the names of great potters. We know Nampeyo from Hopi who revived an antique style herself. She was around 1900 or a little bit thereafter. She saw for the first time the sitaki pots which were pre Hopi which are prehistoric either Hopi or some other people that were there but probably pre hopi and the sitaki design became Nampeyo. She copied them and used them and remolded them and re did them. Now there is a whole family that has continued and there's still Nampeyos there now making pots who are great granddaughters or great grand nieces of the original one. So there are families that continue this thing. The famous Maria of San Ildefonso and her husband Julio Martinez, they took some of her early painted pottery, not the black and black things but the painted things that were very much drawn from traditional Pueblo pottery designs but done with her genius so that they have a new spirit and there are other names. We know somebody from Zia called

Trinidad Medina who was a great potter. Of course today, when I collect things now I have a few contemporary things in the museum that I have for one reason or another.

There is a woman called Joyce Welling Thunderdome, she's Assiniboine Suwal, mixed, and she's the greatest contemporary quilt maker. She wins prizes almost every year at the Santa Fe Indian market.

"How would her work compare to the older work," was my next question"? "It's highly accepted, it looks newer, that's the only difference it doesn't have the worn quality or the age."

"But she uses the traditional techniques"? I said.

She's magnificent; she learned this from her grandmother. And she's passing it on to her daughter. You can tell her work is a Suwal by the colors she uses and her designs that she picks. Some of the potters today, this book on micaceous pottery is one of the current masters called Anthony Durang from the Picuris Pueblo. Picuris is one of the places that only made micaceous pottery, but they didn't make painted pots. Picuris is the smallest pueblo. He is the master; his pots are beautiful.

My next question was, "How do you look at the future of dealing and collecting Native American art"?

The old stuff; the Grey Hills stuff; I'm lucky I made my collection when I did. There isn't enough supply on the market any more. I have things from Italy, from Switzerland, from all over and I really combed the market for great objects, and I don't think you can find them with the contemporary art getting stronger. As they get more and more self confidence in their culture, not as underclass, as Indians they are very politically correct now. It's good politics for the pro Indian. They're still not out of the woods as a civilization or as a culture but as they get stronger the people that are talented among

them will find more and more of a reception for their work. The Indian Market people get up at 5 in the morning to get there and groom the best things that everyone wants to collect. I don't respond as much to the current ways of youth because I'm an antiquarian by nature and that's my old drawings and my old Indian objects but that doesn't mean that there isn't a very lively interest in the current way of Indian art and the new museum in Washington will act to spur. They are going to build that and it will be open in 2004. It is the national Museum of Native American Art.

Purchases by and donations to museums are a form of patronage which takes a different economic road from the commercial highway from Native American artist to collector. One could use Claire and Eugene Thaw's donation of their amassed collection as a true act of philanthropy. Museums such as the Museum of Native American Art are a means to preserve traditional art forms and styles for future generations to enjoy and study. They are also showcases from more contemporary forms of art in transitional and transformative styles.

It is the business of the trading post operator to encourage, direct, manage, and market the art forms that are the economic future for the Native American artist. The trader must maintain the balance between quality, authenticity, and price and be aware of where his customers stand on the economic ladder while keeping the welfare and creativity of his art producers in mind. If the trader fails to tend to these requirements, his or her customers, and the artists will go elsewhere.

Hosteen Etsitty made it quite clear that there are only certain traders that he will deal with when it comes to selling, or even displaying, his sandpaintings.

I cannot work with many traders who are not into art like that. I can work with these two guys because they know art. My only thing with them is that they understand how much

money everybody has to make and be very comfortable with that and it's because they can actually move the art at that price.

Other Native American artists are just as serious about the quality and authenticity of their artwork, but Etsitty is unquestionably the most economically savvy of the Native American artists that I interviewed. However, he is representative of a growing minority of businessmen – artists who utilize a combination of their talent with business acumen and the latest technology for marketing their creative work.

From Eugene Thaw to Brenda Spencer to Michaelis Burnham, there appears to be a desire to collect and enthusiasm to enjoy and share (visually) with others. This enthusiasm was brought to the forefront by Eugene Thaw, and reinforced by Brenda Spencer, who displayed pride for her small Navajo rug collection, and Michaelis Burnham, whose professed highlight of creating art is having the piece purchased and displayed. The traders too enjoy collecting artwork, although the temptation to enjoy the art can interfere with the marketing of the artwork. The loyalty and friendship from all of the parties involved nurtures an understanding of the culture that benefits the economics of the art business. Certainly the physical environment and relative isolation help to solidify the trust and reliance that the traders and Indians have for each other. This atmosphere and the sincere honesty displayed by the traders spur a great deal of customer loyalty, repeat sales, and word-of-mouth marketing.



Figure 4.1 – Hopi Kachina (miniature). “Hano Mana” by Gaylene Tungovia (Tewa / Hopi), 2002, figure 3” high.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Purpose of the Study

This study examines factors which influence the maintenance of traditional art methods and symbolism in the Native American cultures of the Southwest. There has been little research and documentation dealing with art production pedagogy amongst the tribes in this region. Yet, the style and form of the traditional artwork that is produced by the Navajo and Pueblo tribes has demonstrated a consistency of structural methods, design, and symbolism for a century or longer in many cases. When compared to Western European “periods” of art, which might continue for a decade or two between major stylistic alterations, Native American art has a unique longevity.

The study focused on the Native Americans of the Southwest for several reasons. First, the American Indian tribes of the region are relatively segregated and isolated in comparison to the tribes in other regions of the United States. Second, the Native American tribes in this region have maintained a more traditional lifestyle with respect to their culture, religion, livelihood, and governance. And third, the tribes and individuals in this region are well known for their arts and crafts and the work is heavily collected throughout the world.

The research questions for the study were, 1). What are the attributes and definition of “art” versus “craft” in the Native American culture (particularly among tribes of the Southwest)?; 2). How and by whom are Native American artists taught traditional methods and symbolism? 3). How does commercialism (collecting and marketing of art objects) affect the production of traditional Native American art? To answer these questions, interviews with

Native American artists and trading post operators/art dealers were conducted to gather data for the study.

Since I had lived in Phoenix, Arizona for 17 years, and am a collector of Southwest Native American art, I had made some contacts and established friendships with traders/art dealers who assisted me in making contact with study participants. Eleven individuals were interviewed and these data gathering events were videotaped. The videotapes were transcribed to hard copies (digital files) and then coded by category for each of the two groups of informants. The data analysis used the qualitative methodology of grounded theory so data was constantly compared by category for differences and similarities between and within the groups of individual artists and traders.

Examination of the interview data revealed many comparisons between the experiences of the Native American artists and the trading post operators who were interviewed. This constant comparative analysis looked at the experiences and opinions of the participants and compared them to reveal constants, or areas of agreement between artist and trader, and variables, where experiences or opinions might differ between the two groups. In an art-centered society like those of the Native American tribes of the Southwest United States, the production of art and craft for utilitarian, ceremonial, and commercial purposes calls for a definition of *art* and *craft*. This is important so the two groups can communicate an understanding of what is being produced as a baseline for descriptions of transitional and transformative forms of art. One can suppose that traditional materials, methods, and symbolism could be incorporated into more contemporary styles of weaving, carving, jewelry, pottery, drawing and painting or other forms of art; however, that alone would not make these pieces traditional.

“Art” versus “Craft”

The words *art* and *craft*, particularly in a commercial setting, have seemingly been married forever. In the opinion of the artists and the traders, *art*, and particularly *good art*, has craftsmanship as an important element. It is interesting that craftsmanship denotes quality and value to Indian and Anglo, but craft is not considered a high end means of creative visual expression. Both artists and traders used descriptors of art as “unique” or “one-of-a-kind.” The traders’ descriptions attached a higher estimation of value and price to a good piece of art. The Native American artists seemed to be more personally attached to their art, which is not surprising. Art, “...it touches somebody,” and “...the artist wants to be creative in their own way,” were heard from the artists. “Self-satisfaction” by the artist was another attribute of art. “Craft is a hobby; art puts bread on the table.” And good art, “does it trip your trigger”? This is a slang expression that one of the traders used to describe the way a person might feel when they first see a piece of artwork that creates a strong, positive response.

To answer the first research question of the definition of “art” versus “craft” in the Native American culture, I believe it is valid to combine the opinions of both the artists and traders. Both groups have been intimately involved with Native American art for years, albeit from different perspectives, and the art training of both groups is not radically different. Rather than construct a definition for “art,” I believe a set of attributes would be more conducive to establishing what “art” is. Also, toward developing a system for evaluation of artwork, certain attributes could be ranked in order to establish a commercial value to works of “art” and “craft.” These attributes would be: *uniqueness* (one-of-a-kind), *satisfaction* (self-satisfaction for both the producing artist and the viewer), and *craftsmanship*. For the purpose of evaluating artwork for commercial reasons, the terms *quality* and *value* could be added to the attributes.

If one had to develop a definition of “art” based on the data in the study, I believe it would be the following: “A unique visual creation of high quality and craftsmanship that evokes feelings from the viewer and brings self-satisfaction to the artist.”

Tradition

The production of relatively large quantities of traditional art by many different Southwestern Native American artists is a phenomenon unique to this region of the United States. The long tradition by American Indian artists is supported and enhanced by the efforts of Anglo, and some Native American, trading post operators. Often these traders are as, or more, knowledgeable about traditional methods and symbolism employed by the artists than are the artists themselves. This would be reasonable, since the traders deal with many artists every day, and get an education from evaluating many forms of art from knowledgeable persons. Since many Indians in the tribal community pass through the doors of the trading post, it is a natural and convenient location to examine newly produced artwork and exchange ideas and opinions. The post could be likened to a “library” in a society with a relatively low reading literacy level. Much art education is passed from individual to individual and generation to generation on the reservations of the Southwest. This has been the traditional means of passing along knowledge of traditional methods, materials, symbolism, style and form in the visual arts created by American Indians.

The importance of determining definitions and parameters for *traditional*, *transitional*, and *transformative* works of art would be essential in any study attempting to attach valuation and aesthetic comparisons to Native American artwork. This could be a consideration for further study in the future.

Tradition to Transition – Kachina Carving

Competition among artists is beginning to stretch the definition of “tradition” as more artists are attempting to enhance their artworks and use materials and methods more creatively and in a manner which could be described as “transitional,” or even “transformative” in style and design. One example of this would be the trend by Hopi carvers to produce “action dolls” which move away from the stiff, simple design of traditional Kachina dolls. There are magnificent examples of these action Kachinas, and they do capture the realism of the Hopi’s ceremonial dances. Even though they are a visual transition from the older traditional dolls, the artists make every attempt to maintain accuracy in the symbolism and adornment of the doll. In the case of Kachina carving, religious and ceremonial factors exist which assist with the communication of information to the artist that helps assure the maintenance of traditional symbolism, style, and content. In my conversations with Mr. Lomahquahu and several traders, I found the Hopi to be very serious about their customs surrounding the Kachinas, the seasonal dances celebrating the Kachinas, and Mother Earth. They are also protective of and adamant about their beliefs. This attitude and a strong sense of the history of their tribal culture, makes it more likely that traditional methods and symbolism will be preserved in their works of art. However, there are threats from the production of counterfeit art (Navajo – carved Kachinas) and the controversy of female carvers in a gender specific ceremonial art form.

On the positive side, there seems to be a resurgence in traditionalism with respect to carving and a return to traditional looking Kachinas of the Early Traditional style (1880-1910). As described in Jonathan Day’s (2000) book, there are a growing number of contemporary Hopi carvers who have returned to this Early Traditional style.

Tradition - Weaving

Another example of the maintenance of tradition in the production of Southwest Native American art would be the art, and craft, of Navajo weaving. I mention “craft” because there seemed to be a consensus among traders that certain Navajo weavings would fit into that category – for instance, saddle blankets. There are, however, a growing number of talented weavers who are producing magnificent examples of regional style rugs and even fine tapestry weavings in traditional and transitional styles.

Traders have been supplying Navajo weavers with commercial wools for well over a century, so there is no question that these trader-supplied materials are “traditional” as well as color-fast and time saving to the weaving process. There are still a few Navajo women who follow a totally traditional weaving process. They shear the sheep; clean, card, and spin the wool; dye the material with natural vegetal dyes, and then weave the rug. These are older weavers who are set in their ways, and probably will not be replaced when their weaving careers end. Brenda Spencer expressed to me that she had no desire to go to that much trouble to prepare for weaving. Also, her specific styles of weaving (Burntwater and Wide Ruins) were introduced in later years and depend upon colors attained by commercial wools. Vegetal-dyed wool rugs are rarely woven by contemporary weavers, and fine examples of older rugs are becoming scarce.

Threats to Authenticity

Authentic Hopi Kachinas and Navajo rugs are still attributable to these tribes alone. Some counterfeits muddy the waters for the tourist consumer or the collector, but these fakes are generally easy to identify and are not sold by reputable dealers. Actually, there are some counterfeits that are extremely well crafted, but these are the exception rather than the rule.

From these cross-tribal attempts at the copying of Hopi Kachinas, at least one new, recognized art form has arisen – Navajo folk-art. Though not a traditional art, it has been well received as an art form by Native artists, traders, and the collector.

Production of pottery and jewelry maintains the traditional look of decades, and even centuries past. Methods and materials are traditional with some improvements in technology (for example: metal chain replacing sinew in necklaces). Artistic creativity and cross-tribal appropriation of design and style/construction have resulted in very transformative products. For example, in jewelry making, inlay of stone s was traditionally representative of the Zuni Pueblo. Nowadays, it is being incorporated into the work of Hopi and Navajo jewelers. Pottery, long considered a craft by traders like Cliff McGee, has gone from utilitarian to a beautiful, and expensive, art form. As with jewelry, pottery is still produced in traditional form using traditional methods, but transitional and transformative examples are abundant.

Gender is an issue that was brought up in the interviews and was freely discussed by the interviewees. To some, it is a serious and contentious issue - particularly among the Hopi where female carvers are actively producing Kachinas against tribal custom and law. In other tribes, male participation in what had been traditionally female art forms, such as weaving and pottery, is generally well-accepted.

Teachers and Mentors

In answer to the research question regarding how and by whom traditional methods, values, and symbolism are maintained in Southwest Native American art, I discovered that there were multiple sources, and resources, for this phenomenon. The Native American family unit is an extremely important and significant source for learning the methods, and materials necessary for success as a visual artist. Indians in the Southwest have been producing beautifully crafted

works of art for centuries with little outside influence or assistance other than the tribal or family structure. Prior to the 1880s, when the traders began to influence art forms and production, the majority of what was created was craft because of its utilitarian purposes. It continues to be the responsibility of the family, including other tribal members to educate the young about how to weave, build a coil pot and fire it, work silver and turquoise, and carve a piece of cottonwood root. It is the family too that teaches the imagery and symbolism so integral to authentic Native American art. Nearly every person who was interviewed confirmed the importance of family members. This is particularly true among Navajo weavers, but family members are important mentors to artists producing every form of Native American art.

At the interview, Hosteen Etsitty took time to work with one of his young sons on a sandpainting. He plans to teach both of his sons the art form, and then include them in the family business as they grow older. Bo Lomahquahu told me that he plans to teach his son to carve as soon as he reaches puberty and can be initiated into the Kachina Society. Brenda Spencer related to me the importance of her mother's and sister's influence on her weaving. There are many families where more than one member's livelihood is derived from art production and sales.

The traders made no mention of influencing technique or craftsmanship. Thus, traditional craftsmanship and the management of tools and artistic media is left to the more elder Native American working directly with the younger generation of Indian artist.

Even though little time was spent observing in the school system, the physical plant and the education of the faculty are impressive. It does not appear, however, that teaching art production methods and craftsmanship is a priority in the curriculum. Thus, it is important that the Native American family handle this need.

Teachers and mentoring by peers is of great significance to the Native American, and in particular, the Native American artist. The austere environment and isolation experienced on the reservations of the Southwest make a structured, disciplined existence critical for physical and emotional survival. The expansive landscapes, with their mesas, mountains, and dry washes, along with a variety of animal life, are fertile ground for the development of artistic imagery. The Earth is of paramount importance in Native American religious ceremonies, as this is from where imagery and symbolism come. The reservation is a giant classroom. The artist depends on the availability of their family, real or surrogate, in order to learn from all that surrounds them.

The Native American artists that I spoke with did not have extensive or intensive formal schooling in the fundamentals of production (drawing, painting, design, sculpture, etc.). Only two had any college training at all. Two of them (one with college art training) had been in the military, and credit that experience with “attention to detail” which is important for a carver and for a potter. The feedback that I received was that a majority of beneficial input and advice was received from the trading post operators and from peer artists.

Mentorship

Mentorship by other Native American artists is common. All my study participants credit another artist or artists with influence and inspiration to improve their artwork and creativity. Most Indian artists participate in arts and crafts exhibitions, shows, technique demonstrations, and powwows. These venues are another “classroom” opportunity for artists to exchange information and acquire creative inspiration. Competition and criticism are sometimes fierce among the Native artists, and there is much that can be learned from peer suggestions. The high

end artists that I met were very driven toward perfection, but were keenly aware of the economics of art production.

Trading Post Operators

The contributions to the artistic education of the Native American artist by the trading post operator cannot be overestimated. For more than a century, traders have supported the efforts of the Native American artist in a myriad of ways. The trader has gained the trust of and become a friend and advisor to the Native American. Traders provide art materials, design ideas, symbolism content, and aesthetic criticism to the artists. They commission, buy, and sell artwork and market the artist in their store “galleries.” Additionally, the traders serve as advisors, accountants, letter writers, and translators for the Indian. Their role in the production of art places them in the role of teacher and art director. Aside from the commercial aspects of American Indian art, the traders play as significant a role in the look, style, and authenticity of Native American art as anybody in the Southwest.

Public School Systems

My observational study in Mr. Alan Jim’s ceramics classroom gave me a perspective albeit a small one, on how the public school system addresses art education issues and Indian cultural issues related to art. Although Alan Jim admits to an effort to teach traditional aspects of Native American culture, there was no evidence of an official, or unofficial, curriculum component addressing traditional cultural competency. It seems that cultural history, symbolism, and related traditional subjects are being left to the students’ families and/or to the tribal elders. Some parents, like Bo Lomahquahu, are taking an active role in their public school system. They are helping to preserve the culture, and the art, which is an important aspect of the Native American art-centered society. However, from what I observed and heard, tribal elders are often

remiss in emphasizing history and tradition, and there are too few parents as active in the community as people like Bo Lomahquahu, Hosteen Etsitty, and Alan Jim. At the high school where I conducted my classroom observation, the physical plant, equipment, and the qualifications of the teachers were impressive – three huge classrooms, well equipped for pottery, photography, design, and drawing were at the disposal of three full-time art teachers in a school of a mere 450 students. Yet, as Alan Jim told me, only one of his former students in the previous seven years had gone on to attend college. Some of the reasons for this, according to Jim, were a lack of pressure from parents, who themselves had little or no education, and a reasonable number of entry-level jobs for young people. Even though unemployment on the reservation is nearly 50% (Malone, personal communication, May 19, 1997), openings are available at the local convenience stores and with the State Highway Department.

Commercialism

As I had suspected, economics and commercialism play a huge role in the maintenance of tradition in the Native American arts of the Southwest. There are literally thousands of outlets for the sale of artwork to consumers of every level of price and quality. Indian arts and crafts are plentiful in the specialty galleries in Phoenix, Scottsdale, and Tucson; and also at the airport shops in Arizona and New Mexico. Small shops are abundant along Southwestern highways, and Native American manned roadside stands from border to border on the Navajo Reservation. The vibrant economy of the last 25 years has certainly been favorable to the Native American artist. And so have the traders, who also benefitted financially through more creative approaches to Native American art forms.

Technology has been important to the Indian artist as well as to the traders. The Internet has made the marketing of Native American art possible around the world, and communication

between artist-dealer-patron is virtually instantaneous. The down-side to this is that more artists are deciding to self-promote, and some dealers from other regions are bypassing the traders to deal directly with the artist. With their naivety, these “outsiders” have unknowingly inflated prices.

According to Bruce McGee, these naïve dealers believe the Indian artists are ignorant of the market value of their artwork. Most are savvy business persons and charge retail or higher prices when dealing directly. This affects the legitimate trader/art dealer as it drives prices beyond the means of many collectors. I personally have seen Eastern dealers at Navajo rug auctions buy almost every rug on the block, sometimes at twice the retail value. That is how strong the American Indian art market has become.

Discussion of Research Questions

Arts and Crafts

1. *What are the attributes and definitions of “art” versus “craft” in the Southwest Native American culture?*

To understand the complex relationships that affect tradition in the creation of artwork by Native American artists in the Southwest, one needs to define what *art* is and why it is important to the Native cultures in the region. In contrast to the *crafts* so often attributed to the objects that modern Indians create for purchase by tourists, art was defined similarly by both groups of interview participants. One of the chief descriptors of art was its uniqueness, or being “one-of-a-kind.” Art was also something that, during and/or after the creation process, brought satisfaction to the creator. Obviously, there must be strong positive feelings from the consumer, the patron who is willing to pay, in some cases handsomely, for that feeling to continue. One other element important to the definition of art is the valuing of the particular object, which is a variable based

upon detail, craftsmanship, artist reputation, among other criteria. As I discussed earlier in this chapter, a list of attributes of “art” might serve the researcher better than a definition. These attributes are: *uniqueness, satisfaction, craftsmanship, quality, and value*. And there certainly is a market for “craft,” as is evident by the amounts of mass produced, lower quality and less expensive pieces sold to tourists, decorators, and even art collectors. An art-centered society produces a large quantity of both “art” and “craft.”

Teachers and Mentors

2. *How and by whom are Native American artists taught traditional methods and symbolism?*

How and by whom traditional methods and symbolism in art are maintained and passed along by Native Americans was the focus of this research. Information is passed along within the family and tribe as art methods and symbolism are passed along by elders to the young artists. Tribal elders, parents and other family members serve as art educators at religious ceremonies which utilize art forms. A good example is the Hopi ceremonial dances featuring the Kachinas. Hopi boys are initiated into the Kachina Society at puberty and participate as caretakers of the supernatural beings and may even impersonate Kachinas at ceremonial dances. It is after initiation into the Society, that boys are permitted to carve. On the Navajo Reservation, a grandmother teaches her granddaughter to weave. Other than the schools and family members, a significant amount of teaching is done by the people who market Native American art; the trading post operators. Perhaps their input and advice is the single most influential contact the artist receives. With little to no art training, they have observed art forms over the years and have developed not only expertise in art, but a rapport with Native American artists.

The Native American artists themselves have been in large part responsible for their own success. In particular, the Indian artists who have developed and maintained a “spirituality” and participate in tribal religious ceremonies seem to be most focused on their artwork and its accuracy. The two artists that I interviewed who were active in the ceremonial and spiritual aspects of their tribes (one is Hopi, one Navajo) were also active in the community, and both were dedicated to carrying tribal traditions forward by teaching them to their children. The following quotation appears on Hosteen Etsitty’s Website (<http://hosteenetsitty.com>): “I have accumulated a lifetime of spiritual and cultural knowledge and understanding of traditional Navajo sandpaintings.

The amount of talent and training an artist receives in the harsh, expansive reservation environment can be quite variable. Another variable is the access to comprehensive educational programs within and outside the tribal nation. I have previously discussed my experience of observing in an Indian high school (see Appendix B). However, it would not be correct to evaluate the state of art education to Native Americans based on one experience, albeit a good one. Areas of concern in government public school education are associated with facilities, supplies and equipment, teacher training and dedication and parent/community involvement. The latter factor could explain why so few Indian high school graduates go on to college. Jim explained that his students seem content to stay in the community and work at the local convenience store or for the state, usually on a highway construction crew (Alan Jim, personal communication, November 2, 1999). Sometimes, an artist has no choice but to acquire their arts and crafts training by a family member or other mentors. This used to be the chief means by which arts and crafts were taught. The opportunity to learn from a talented relative is a powerful one, unless the relative/teacher is not interested in, or adept at teaching.

Bo Lomahquahu's dedication to teaching art and traditional culture to his children and his visits to local schools to demonstrate carving and traditional symbolism is remarkable. It is indicative, I believe, of a growing trend of renewed interest by Native Americans in their history and tribal traditions. In addition, it was encouraging to see all the Native Americans at the Heard Museum book sale, who were seeking out more references about their tribal culture.

3. *How does commercialism (marketing and collecting of art objects) affect the production of Native American art?*

Economic Factors

The relatively robust economy over the last three decades has certainly been a benefit to Native American artists in the Southwest, as it has allowed collectors to invest heavily in Indian art. As a result, prices have increased dramatically, giving the artists an increasingly comfortable income which benefits the quality and quantity of art production.

With all the aforementioned positive contributions to the maintenance of traditional Indian art in the Southwestern United States, there are some factors to consider which are threats to the continued production of art by Native artists utilizing traditional methods and symbolism.

First of all, more time and effort goes into traditional methods, and materials are often more difficult to find. Since "time is money," an economic incentive is removed from the production equation. Also, the base of knowledge about traditional methods is dwindling as Indians knowledgeable in traditional methods are dying or too elderly and unable to practice their art. While patrons enjoy traditional styles of art, they also like to have something that is unique. This creates a push for more contemporary or less traditional style and designs, and encourages the artists to produce more works that could be considered transitional, or even transformative. Ultimately, it will be up to the artists, traders, and consumers to define what

style and form to produce, as well as to specify the amount of both arts and crafts which are produced. Will “traditional” art survive? That will be up to parents, teachers, artists, and traders, with some input from tribal leaders.

Threats to the Culture

Perhaps the greatest threat to the continued production of traditional art forms is the assimilation of Native Americans into the Eurocentric, Western society. In 1934, Charles Avery Amsden completed his classic study on Navajo weaving by stating:

This brief study of an aboriginal craft which became a modern industry cannot in full conscience close its pages without a glance ahead, for studies of the past have little value unless they serve in some measure to illumine the future. I see the immediate future of Navaho weaving as a race between two forces. One of these is the Americanization of the Navajo; the other is the education of the American to the Indian. They are mutually antagonistic; the first of the them working against the future of our craft, the second for it...How far has our appreciation of the Indian’s art and craft progressed – is it far enough to offset the pull of this force and keep the woman at loom by paying her a fair price for her work?...even in our growing sympathy for the Indian, a danger lurks, for America has ever assimilated most rapidly those alien groups to which the heartiest welcome was extended. Surely the end of it all is clearly enough in view. The only question remaining is: how long? (in James, H. L. 1976, p.v)

James, in his classic book *Rugs and Posts*, (1976) continued, during the Revival Period of Navajo weaving, when a new level of excellence followed a decline in quality. Today, in the Regional Style Period, the craft, though not in a period of decline, is faced with uncertainty, and

the race of Amsden's predicted forces will ultimately be won by the Americanization of the Navajo, which will force its eventual extinction."

Even though James wrote in 1976, prior to a decline in Navajo weaving and prior to the "Reaganomics" era of the 1980s, his works may be prophetic with respect to the eventual extinction of what are considered traditional art forms. Ups and downs in the market are bound to happen and will have some effect upon consumer volume. However, there are other factors which could prove more ominous. Several study participants mentioned the increase in intertribal marriages, which might eventually affect the religious ceremonial aspects of the Navajo and Pueblo Indian cultures. As I mentioned, I believe this "spirituality" within the tribes is a contributor to the maintenance of traditional qualities. These factors are beyond the scope of this study.

Recommendations for Further Study

Native Americans of the Southwest are a fascinating people in an art centered culture. Specifically, among the Hopi carvers, I found two distinct groups of artists. One responds to a call for more intricately carved and detailed "action" dolls, while the second opts for the more rigid traditional dolls reminiscent of late 19th – early 20th century Kachinas. Both groups appear to be equally active in the ceremonial aspects of the Kachina Society and the dances. It would make an interesting comparison to explore the backgrounds and training of these artists, as well as the circumstances which brought them to select their individual style. I have contact information of individuals within both groups.

Based on Neperud and Stuhr's (1993) definitions of traditional, transitional, and transformative art forms, it would be interesting to conduct a study similar to their which evaluates different forms and levels of value in Wisconsin Native American art. Their model

actually could be ready in little time and would not be expensive or logistically difficult to conduct. Their model could be utilized to study artwork from other tribes or regions of the country.

Finally, a study could be made of the Indian high schools to observe any curricular information dealing with curricula or traditional Indian art, symbolism, and color. I am interested to see what and how the school systems address and teach Native American culture to Native American students. This study and Neperud and Stuhr's (1993) evaluation of art objects could be studied at just about any cooperative school system.

A survey of trading posts would be informative in looking at any changes in offerings and the sale of Indian art. Many trading posts are having to compete with chain stores and are beginning to no longer stock many grocery items. Many also have turned to being almost exclusively an outlet for American Indian arts and crafts. The current status and "health" of trading posts would be a significant study from an economic standpoint.

The Future

Both Alan Jim and Bruce Burnham mentioned the fact that a great many younger Indians are leaving the reservations to seek better opportunities in large cities such as Phoenix, Tucson, and Los Angeles. These "Urban Indians," as Alan Jim refers to them, are often the "best and the brightest" Indian youth, and represent a drain on the Native culture and society. As they assimilate into the Western society, they become less aware of, and caring about, tradition and their heritage.

Language, often a barrier off the reservation, is becoming a barrier *on* the reservation, as older Indians may only speak their native tongue, while young Indians may only speak English.

Fortunately, the traders generally are fluent in Navajo or Hopi or both, so communication lines between artist and patron are open.

Technology, particularly the computer and the World Wide Web, is beginning to have a huge impact on the Native American culture. On a recent trip to Santa Fe, I strolled around the downtown square to peruse the Native American arts and crafts lining the sidewalk. Virtually every artist and artisan had a business card with, at the very least, a telephone number. Surprisingly, half or more of the artists had email and/or a Website.

The potential assimilation of Native American cultures and tribes of the Southwest into the dominant, Eurocentric society will be interesting to observe. How traditional art is affected will and should be studied. Regardless of whether or not the Southwest Native American culture is assimilated into the Eurocentric Anglo culture, the impact that Native Americans have had on the art world of the Southwest is significant and unparalleled by any other ethnic group in the region. Native American art from the Southwest is well known and collected world-wide and has taken its rightful place in major collections and museums. Because these Indian tribes are “art centered,” and produce art for utilitarian, spiritual, and commercial purposes, the likelihood is high that traditional art will flourish for a long time into the future. There are many factors that support this statement, including the exceedingly high quality of the artwork, art pedagogy and mentorship within the family and tribe, and innovative and aggressive marketing by traders and art dealers.

Threats to the continued production of “traditional” Native American art do exist, and are from within as well as outside the tribes. They include a transition from many of the traditional forms and styles of Indian art through the encouragement of peer artists and traders/art dealers. The result may be a “new traditional style” of Native American art in the Southwest. There is

already a re-birth of the old-style, “static” Kachina dolls by younger Hopi carvers in response to the increasing transition to the “action” dolls in more sweeping, realistic poses. Navajo weavers are producing rugs with more contemporary designs and color combinations. Pueblo potters’ decorative vessels grow ever more intricate and Zuni jewelers now set their inlay gems in gold instead of the traditional silver.

Maybe all these changes in the Native American art forms will bring about a change in the definition of the “traditional art” created by the American Indian.

The exceptional craftsmanship, unique style, and the continued popularity of traditional Native American art with collectors, should solidify its position in the art world. This research study indicates that there is a viable pedagogical system within the Native American tribes and families to develop young artists with the necessary skills to produce high quality, unique, and authentic pieces. Native American art is further affected by the mentorship of peer artists and from trading post operators. The latter have gained the trust of the Native Americans and thus can be more influential in the production and authenticity of traditional art forms.

With societal and economic changes seemingly inevitable, one must wonder how, when, and if they will affect Native American artists and the traders who deal with their artwork. The trading posts are having to endure difficult economic changes, with competition from grocery and dry goods chain stores. Most trading posts no longer “trade” for goods and, other than their art sales, are little more than a convenience store. Busy interstate highways take tourists away from the back roads and the opportunity to visit the trading posts. Some posts have closed and more are likely to close.

Changes in the culture will probably have less of an effect on the Native American artist, as their traditionally imaged and constructed art has maintained popularity with collector. The

artists' competitive nature may cause evolution in his work; and spirituality and ceremonial traditions are more than adequate motivators.

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APPENDIX A
PILOT STUDY

PILOT STUDY

I. Introduction

The working title of this paper which will become the topic of my doctoral dissertation is The Maintenance of Traditional Methods and Symbolism in Navajo and Pueblo Native American Art. This qualitative study will explore the evolution and continuity of art methods and the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in the production, marketing, and pedagogical dissemination of traditional art among the Native American tribes of the Southwestern United States. Particular emphasis and analysis will be centered towards the Native American (American Indian) tribes of the Southwest (“Four Corners” region including Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado) - specifically the Navajo nation and Pueblo tribes including the Hopi, Zuni, Acoma, and other regional tribes and art styles.

Statement of the Problem

Little has been documented about how traditional symbolism and art methods are passed along to and among Native American artists and sustained in their works. How these artists mature and gain the necessary skills and knowledge and from whom artistic influence and creative mentorship comes is an area of art education not well understood.

Context of the Problem

The arts and crafts of the Native American have a long and proud history, as do their creators. Whether produced for ceremonial or utilitarian purposes, many forms of Native American art continue to be produced as they have been for centuries. There is little doubt that economic factors associated with the collecting of Native American arts and crafts have helped to maintain this tradition and even accelerate the production of art by American Indians. In recent decades, popularity of Native American art and an increase in the numbers of collectors

has brought about an increase in Indian art dealers, publications about Native American art, coverage by the media, and even governmental regulation of Indian art production and marketing. More Native Americans have turned to the production of arts and crafts for a living, especially as governmental assistance programs have diminished and the nation's economy has flourished.

Societal, technological and economic changes have greatly impacted the tribal, family, and individual lives of Native Americans. Eurocentric ideas and ideals have influenced the way that Indians are educated and the way they produce art. Many Native American artists have adopted transitional and transformative, contemporary methods of art production and expression. Many who employ traditional symbolism in their work do not employ it in a traditional manner. However, there are still a significant number of artists who maintain traditional forms, methods, and symbolism in their work.

While much has been published on Native American arts and crafts production, products, and collecting, little material is available on the pedagogical methods and influences on the instruction of and the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in Native American art.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore how traditional art methods and symbolism are maintained in the Navajo and pueblo tribes of the Southwest.

Research Questions

- What are the attributes and definitions of “art” (verses “craft”) in the Native American culture (specifically among Southwestern tribes and cultures)?
- How do Native American artists learn traditional methods and symbolism?

- How does commercialism (collecting and marketing of art objects) affect the production of traditional Native American art?

Significance of the Study

Native American culture and, by association, traditional art production face threats to their continued existence and form due to external influences by an Anglo, Eurocentric society. Conflicting ideologies, technology, and economics produce many negative pressures upon Native Americans to change and conform to a value system and philosophy which is alien to them. Eventually, Native American culture and art will become assimilated into Anglo America's version of multiculturalism, and with that many of the traditional art forms which represent a rich Native American history. Currently, economic factors are the chief reason for the preservation of traditional Native American art forms. An understanding of the way traditional art forms and symbolism are currently maintained and disseminated will help prevent, or at least slow, the destruction of a cultural icon which has a rich aesthetic history. Art educators, dealers, tribal leaders, collectors, and Native American artists themselves can benefit from the knowledge gained in this study. A fresh awareness of the values of maintaining traditions in the making of art will serve to enrich a more art-centered society.

Definition of Terms

Art - production of a highly crafted, unique or limited edition piece of two-dimensional or three-dimensional assemblage; in this study, a weaving, piece(s) of pottery, carving, painting, jewelry, or similar item. One focus of the study will be to gain insight as to what Native Americans' points of view are as to which constitutes art versus a "craft," which has always had the connotation of a cheaper, mass produced item for commercial purposes.

Traditional - having the visual and structural characteristics of similar art forms produced prior to the dominant influence by Western (Anglo) civilization.

Symbolism - traditional icons/graphic images having specific religious, cultural, or tribal meanings used as decoration on art and craft pieces of both functional and ceremonial use. Icons and repetitive graphic images used to identify certain styles, periods, and uses of traditional artwork.

Teaching methods - direct instruction (methodology) or critical influence by others resulting in the creation of an art product.

Southwestern Native American tribes - peoples of the Navajo nation and pueblo tribes, including the Hopi, Zuni, and Acoma who inhabit the Southwestern United States (more specifically Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado). These groups (tribes) were chosen for several reasons. The researcher's experience and knowledge of the subject are concentrated in the Southwest. Also, these tribes are perhaps more isolated from the influences of Anglo culture in comparison to other Native American tribes, and thus are producing more art that is traditional in nature and relatively unchanged over the past century or more.

II. Review of Literature

Historical Perspective

The purpose of this study is to explore how traditional art methods and symbolism are maintained in the Navajo and pueblo tribes of the Southwest. Since the research questions center around Native American artists' feelings about their art and the traditional symbolism contained within and about that art, as well as how they learn and pass along this information, the descriptors in any literature searches were narrowed to: *native american art, Navajo art, Navajo art, Hopi art, pueblo indian art, native american art education, symbolism, and art symbolism.*

A search of the Galileo and Galin programs at the University of Georgia library yielded numerous articles on the collection and production and styles of the Native American art, but no citations on pedagogical considerations of these art forms or within the tribes mentioned above.

A search of dissertation abstracts in March 1999 was conducted using the following descriptors: *native american art*, ((*hopi or navajo or native americans or pueblo indians*) and (*art or crafts or symbolism*)), ((*native american or indian*) and (*art education*)), and ((*navajo or native american or indian*) and (*art education or art or crafts or symbolism*)). While there were 478 citations related to these descriptors, most dealt with the history, physical anthropology, archeology, sociology, political issues, or collecting associated with the art of Southwestern Native Americans. There were no citations directly related to the focus of my study.

It is important to know that Native American art as a significant art form is a 20th century phenomenon and has gained particular popularity and attention in publications and other media in the post-WWII era. There have been books on the influence of Native American art and symbolism on other art styles; the most notable of which is by Rushing (1995). He gives a rich historical description of the teaching efforts of Dorothy Dunn at the Santa Fe Indian School during the 1930s. His extensive review of Ms. Dunn's development of the "pueblo style" of painting at the high school level is significant because Dunn is one of few teachers who had significant influence on the development of a number of Native American artists at the public school level. One must be cognizant of the fact that most Native American schooling (particularly in the Southwest) was done in Anglo-run schools. This was further acknowledged and documented by Smith (1999) in his journal article "The Unexplored: Art Education Historians' Failure to Consider the Southwest." Still in both Rushing's (1995) and Smith's

(1999) publications, the perspective and focus is not on pedagogy, but on style and history respectively.

There are publications too numerous to mention on Native American art and craft production. Some notable ones which have a generous focus on the Southwest are American Indian Art Magazine (published by American Indian Art, Inc., Scottsdale, AZ), Native Artists (published by Media Concepts Group, Inc., Phoenix, AZ), and Native Peoples (also published by Media Concepts Group).

A teaching unit that I produced in 1998 on “A survey of Southwestern Native American Art” has bibliographical resources on traditions, aesthetics and ceremonies (Bergman, Penney, Walters), art production and methods (Carter, Colton, Fewkes, Getzwiler, Kaufman, Mora, Parezo, and Wright), and trading posts and “commercialism” (Eddington, James). While most of these publications are contemporary, some date back to documented information at the turn of the twentieth century (see bibliography).

Further literature searches under the *descriptors muliculturalism* and *multicultural art* yielded numerous citations. Most that dealt with Native American art were cross-cultural and often attached to lesson plans and pedagogical approaches to introducing non-Indians to Native American cultures.

Summary

Since little could be found upon searches of literature on Native American art education, the review of the literature must focus on comparable subject matter on Native American art production, symbolism, and historical documentation of art educators amongst the tribes of the Southwest. Certainly Smith’s (1999) article will be a rich resource for expansion of my literature

review. His bibliography is extensive and could provide further literature resources, which were not originally apparent in earlier reviews of journal articles and dissertation abstracts. The focus must be kept narrow on any review of Native American art production literature, since it is overwhelmingly extensive. Multiculturalism in art education seems to focus primarily on cross-cultural aspects of art education. It will be interesting and important to explore the literature for aspects of aboriginal art education, which are more intra-cultural.

III. Methodology

Background

The purpose of this study is to explore how traditional art methods and symbolism are maintained in the Navajo and pueblo tribes of the Southwest.

The arts and crafts of the Native American have a long and proud history, as do their creators. Whether produced for ceremonial or utilitarian purposes, many forms of Native American art continue to be produced as they have been for centuries. There is little doubt that economic factors associated with the collecting of Native American arts and crafts have helped to maintain this tradition and even accelerate the production of art by American Indians. In recent decades, popularity of Native American art and an increase in the number of collectors has brought about an increase in Indian art dealers, publications about Native American art, coverage by the media, and even governmental regulation of Indian art production and marketing. More Native Americans have turned to the production of arts and crafts for a living, especially as governmental assistance programs have diminished and the nation's economy has flourished. While much has been published on Native American arts and crafts production, products, and collecting, little material is available on the pedagogical methods and influences on the instruction of and the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in Native American art.

For this pilot study, the main research question would be, “*What factors influence and maintain the production of traditional Native American artwork?*” From the five traditions of qualitative research the one which best fits my study would be *grounded theory*. I will attempt to generate or discover a theory, or theories, which surround the production of artwork by Native Americans. Interviews will be conducted to elicit concepts of how and why Native Americans produce artwork in a traditional sense, when artists around them and within their area of influence produce art in a more transformative, contemporary style. Data collected will be coded and categorized in an attempt to define theories for observed phenomena related to the traditional making of art objects by Native Americans.

To develop the research question and theories surrounding the question, it will be important to find out how Native American artists feel about their artwork and what they value in its form, symbolism, and the production of various art forms and styles. It will also be necessary to know how and by whom Native American artists are taught traditional methods and symbolism. Since the collecting and marketing of Native American art objects has become greater and more widespread, it is important to determine in what ways commercialism has influenced Native American art in general, and specifically any influences that might be attributed to the rise or decline of traditional art forms.

Design of Study

Since the purpose of this study is to explore how traditional art methods and symbolism are maintained in Navajo and pueblo tribes of the Southwest, it is true, as in other forms of qualitative research, the investigator as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis assumes an inductive stance and strives to derive the meaning from the data (Merriam). Theoretical ideas of how art methods and symbolism are passed along by Native Americans and

how they emerge in their art forms will be explored. The phenomenon of art production and the concept of how Native American artists feel about their art will be explored. The impact of commercialism on the production of art in this cultural setting will also be explored.

Data will be analyzed from interview transcripts, and threads of similar feelings and experiences will be compared within the narratives of the respondents to develop a theory of why and how art methods are developed and are maintained within this aboriginal culture.

Data Collection

The investigator, through my interviews with Native American artists and traders/dealers in Southwestern Native American art, will gather information through semi-structured interview scenarios and with semi-structured interview questions to gather data for this study.

For this pilot study, I am focusing on one particular interview with a Navajo potter/ceramics teacher. Prior to this data gathering session, I have interviewed ten other individuals whose focus is on Native American art production and marketing. I will explain this further in my section on sampling. Narratives from this (and these) interviews will be induced into a constant comparative study to develop a grounded study to develop a theory (ies) on how traditional art methods and symbolism are preserved and passed along in this culture.

For data collection, members of both groups will be interviewed in an unstructured format utilizing a series of pre-developed questions to assess their attitudes and experiences with art, art education, the commercial aspects of art, and cultural influences that have affected their careers. There will be similar questions for both groups; however the questions for the artists will glean more information about how they feel about their artmaking and what influences/mentorship has shaped their careers. Some questions will be specific and some will be more open-ended, but the interviews will be designed to last approximately 45 minutes to one

hour. A total of approximately 30 individuals will be interviewed with the majority (approximately 20) being Native American artists. (To date, 5 artists and 6 traders/dealers have been interviewed).

Videotape interviewing was selected to make it easier, and more accurate, for the researcher to scan interview data, transcribe meaningful segments and quotations, and code the data. Also, since the nature of the study is visual art, videotaping provides the opportunity to interact with and observe actual objects of art. The actions and “observed feelings” of the artist may enhance the ability of interview data to contribute to developing theories.

Interviewees will be contacted prior to the interviews in time to gain consent and mail a set of the interview topics. This method has produced a better interview than “springing” the questions on the informant at the interview. They will be asked to sign and receive a copy of a consent form previously approved by the UGA Institutional Review Board, Human Subjects Office. No risks are foreseen from this study and the conducted interviews have not created any anxieties or problems with the participants.

Sampling

I have decided to narrow my sampling of individuals from which to collect data to the Southwestern United States; particularly Arizona and New Mexico. Since I lived in that area of the country for seventeen years, I am more familiar with the Native American cultures of that region, have collected their art, and have made contacts with artists and dealers/traders of Native American artwork. My sampling will be purposeful in nature and I will expand my contact from those I know and from others that I interview (“snowball” sampling). Because of availability and scheduling considerations, the sampled population is also based on convenience. I feel it is

important to identify *key informants* or *gatekeepers*, since I am an “outsider” to the culture being studied.

There are two important groups to my sample of research participants. The first, and most logical, are Native American artists of the Southwest. My emphasis will be artists of the Navajo tribe and nearby pueblo tribes (Hopi, Zuni, Acoma, Santa Clara). All have long histories of art production and are still producing traditional artwork as it was produced a century, or centuries, ago. While all Native American tribes have been influenced by the Anglo “invasion,” tribes of the Southwest were among the last to feel the effects and influences of Eurocentric domination. The vast expanses of sparsely inhabited “reservation” land have perhaps helped to isolate the traditional Native American artist.

The second group of research participants will be trading post operators and art dealers in the Southwest. They are intimately familiar with Southwest Native American art and have had a strong influence in the production, sale, and authenticity of traditional and transitional Native American art. They also serve the dual function of key informant as a means of introduction to Native American artists, and as analysts of who are the top artists in various forms of art (weaving, carving, pottery, sandpainting, etc.).

For this pilot study, I chose to interview a Native American artist who is also a teacher of art. Mr. Alan Jim, a Navajo, teaches ceramics at Greyhills Academy High School in Tuba City, Arizona. I met Mr. Jim at the National Art Education Association meeting in Washington, DC, in March 1999. He had given a presentation on Navajo pottery and had attended a presentation of mine on my research at the meeting.

He represented a key informant in my study, as he was both an artist and one who was involved in pedagogy of the focus of my research interest. He seemed to be one who could

provide me with direct data for my research, as well as one who could direct me to other research subjects.

I interviewed Mr. Jim in his high school ceramics classroom on November 2, 1999, and recorded almost two hours of interview questions and collected data during the interview. I was also able to observe two of his classroom sessions and took field notes on those observations.

Attached are the interview questions that I posed to Mr. Jim (Table 1). They are representative of the questions posed to the four other Native American artists already interviewed. Additionally, I have attached (Table 2) questions posed to the traders/art dealers that I have interviewed. I attempted to gather similar information for my grounded study, except that the questions posed to the trader/art dealers group did not go into the depths of personal art production, for obvious reasons.

Ethical Issues/Research Considerations

No risks are foreseen from this study. Interviews have been conducted and videotaped and have not created any anxieties or problems with the participants. All have agreed to the use of the information and interview tapes for research purposes. Only one had concern and requested that notification should be made if any of the research was used for commercial (economic) purposes.

As the principal investigator in this research, I consider myself as an outsider and have to take note of any biases which could occur from an outsider's standpoint. From an "emic" point of view, I have the advantage of being a professional artist and I also have gained the advantage of living in the Southwestern United States for seventeen years. Also, I am a collector and have some expertise in many forms of Southwest Native American art forms, although I tend to judge them from a modernist, structural standpoint rather than from a postmodernist point of view.

Having spent much of my adult life in the Southwestern United State, I find it quite logical and easy to pursue a study in this part of the country. I have collected Native American art for nearly twenty years and have an affinity and certain expertise for/and in the culture of the Southwestern Native American. My knowledge of the Southwest has also afforded me many contacts in and around the Native American and the art community.

IV. Tentative Findings

Since this is a pilot study of a grounded research study, it is difficult to draw any theoretical conclusions at this point in the study. Fortunately, this was not the first interview conducted in the research study, but the eleventh. The sample has included six trading post operators (“traders”) and five Native American (Southwest “Indian”) artists. The latest of these interviews, with Mr. Alan Jim, was somewhat unique in that Mr. Jim is not only a practicing artist (ceramicist/potter), but also a high school teacher of ceramics.

While I have not been able to transcribe and analyze all of the data from the eleven interviews, there are certain “threads” and other data that are common to many of the respondents’ interviews.

Most of the artist informants came from large families and were raised in and around the “reservations” of northern Arizona and New Mexico. Most had experienced public school education and had had a relatively modest experience with art education in their early years. Several had military experience and although they did not equate “discipline” derived from the military to their art experiences, they did mention “attention to detail” as something which they took from their military experience toward their approach to art production.

Art styles and methods of production among Native Americans appear to be driven by influences within the Native American tribe and specifically within the family. This seems to be

independent from art experiences as a child. Most of the informants who were interviewed did their art as a part-time, adjunct “profession,” and held additional jobs in the community. Commercialism seemed to play a role as to how much time was spent pursuing their art production. Several mentioned that if they could not pursue their art production, they would return to more menial jobs including construction or sales and marketing of art. This is particularly interesting since the informants interviewed were considered (by “key informants”) to be “high-end,” highly skilled artists and artisans.

Early art education (drawing and painting) experiences were mixed among the informants and, for the most part, were minimal. There seems to be little correlation between siblings’ influences and participation in the art process, although parental and elder influence in art production seems to be evident.

In the pilot study, several “threads” seemed to arise from the interview. Traditional art production seems to be less important in the generation of current high school students. Of a group of sixteen high school ceramics students, only one had an interest in a theme which would be considered traditional. The influence of modern music and media was evident and overwhelming, even though the teacher (informant) professed to lecture the students on traditional symbolism. Also, the issue of “misappropriation” of traditional, “ceremonial” imagery was discussed with the informant. These “misappropriations” seem to be a commonality in many traditional artists’ views of contemporary Native American art and craft production.

The effects of commercialism and the marketing and collecting of Southwestern Native American artwork are enormous and have continued to grow, particularly over the past twenty years. According to my informants who were traders and native American art dealers, the

market for Native American traditional art forms has grown tremendously - especially the desire by collectors to accumulate high quality (“high-end”) arts, rather than the collection of lower quality crafts which gained popularity after tourism reached the West in the 1930s.

One interesting area of data analysis is the fact that those involved in the commercial aspects of Native American art (the traders) often act as and become teachers as well as critics to the artists. This has helped to maintain traditional art methods and symbolism and accelerate their dissemination within the art producing community. When artists realize that for their artwork to be successfully accepted by collectors, it must be not only well crafted, but well researched and have “authenticity” and accuracy in form and symbolism.

These “threads” of narrative information need to be analyzed and compared in order to generate a grounded theory of how traditional art methods and symbolism are maintained in the Navajo and pueblo tribes of the Southwest.

V. Conclusions

Since there is virtually no published literature directly related to pedagogical methods for maintaining traditional methods and symbolism in Native American art, it will be necessary to draw heavily upon the interviews with Southwestern Indian artists and those that market their work for this grounded theory study. Not enough has been done in the area of art education to offer significant published resources in this area of study. Certainly Peter Smith’s paper (1999) and his bibliography will add some leads to the search for existing research and published data. However, Smith’s paper relates more directly to the historical importance relative to Southwest Native American art, rather than to the pedagogical issues surrounding the maintenance of traditional art forms and styles.

Exploration of the work of Dorothy Dunn at the Santa Fe Indian School (now the Institute of American Indian Art) may shed some light on the art education of a generation of Native American artists. I also plan to search the libraries at the Heard Museum in Phoenix and the School of American Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

It will probably be necessary to hypothesize on my study area from data gathered and published in comparable subject areas of art. As previously mentioned, there is much available reference material in the area of the production and collecting of Native American traditional art. I must be careful not to become overwhelmed by the bulk of literature published on this subject area. It will also be valuable to search references on art and art education in other cultures with particular interest placed upon the meaning and definition that other cultures place on “art.”

To date, I have videotape interviewed five Native American artists (one is also a teacher) and six traders/dealers in Native American traditional artwork. I feel it is necessary to interview at least five additional Native American artists for my grounded theory study. I am attempting to make additional contacts through key informants (“Snowball”) sampling) in order to accomplish this by next summer (2000). The interviews with the traders/art dealers have given me copious amounts of rich and thick data.

I have gained a new perspective on the Native American culture of the Southwest, both from an artistic and an ethnographic, cultural point-of-view. I have reason to be both optimistic and pessimistic about the maintenance of traditional methods and symbolism in Native American art. There is a greater production of traditional, transitional and transformative (contemporary) Native American art than ever before. Certainly, commercialism and a strong art market for collectors have contributed to this phenomenon. However, I have acquired much data, which indicates that there is more fraud and misrepresentation of Native American art - to the point

where it is a great concern to all of the art dealers I spoke with. This also tends to dilute the quality of art production and force many high-end, quality-oriented artists to change their style to a more distinctive transformative and less traditional form.

From my studies of Native American art and art education, I have gained much new knowledge on the Southwest Native American tribal cultures and the individuals within them. For all the opportunities in commercial ventures for artists and non-artists, there has been little increase in the numbers of individuals going on to higher levels of education. This has done little to change the spiral of poverty in the region. Alcoholism continues to be a severe problem within the culture, affecting many artists and, as such, art production. There seems too little motivation for Native American youth to stay on the reservation and grow educationally or culturally, and to help maintain traditional values and ways of life.

I would recommend that there be more similar studies such as mine to look at the effect art, specifically traditional art, has upon a non-Anglo culture. Certainly, art is a high contributor to academic excellence and an increase in student test scores and related academic measures in schools where art programs are an integral part of the curriculum. More integration of art into the Native American cultures (particularly in the educational system) should have many positive effects on the development of cultural strengths in the Native American communities. This needs to be studied further and in more depth.

APPENDIX B
OBSERVATIONAL STUDY

APPENDIX B

OBSERVATIONAL STUDY

Classroom Observation – November 2, 1999

Tuba City, AZ

Public high school,

Earlier in October 1999, I had set up this classroom observation and an interview (later the same day) with Mr. Alan Jim, ceramics teacher at a public (government) high school in Tuba City, Arizona. I had met Mr. Jim at the National Art Education Association meeting in March 1999, where he delivered a presentation on Navajo pottery. Mr. Jim has been teaching ceramics at Greyhills for over seven years, is a self proclaimed art education researcher/presenter, and is a Navajo spiritual leader in Tuba City.

Leaving Phoenix, Arizona shortly after 4:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 2, 1999, I drove North through Flagstaff and arrived at the high school at approximately 9:00 a.m. I was escorted to Mr. Jim's classroom midway through his first period ceramics class. After meeting with him, exchanging pleasantries, and getting a brief tour of the classroom area, we agreed that I could "quietly" observe his second period ceramics class. The second period class met from 9:45 - 11:20 a.m. and was made up mainly of sophomore and junior students, whereas the first period group was mainly freshmen.

The ceramics classroom was approximately 35 foot square. Two of the walls (north and east) were adobe-colored cement brick while the other two were off-white painted sheetrock with a "spattered" texture. The room was "sectioned off" into functional areas: one was a classroom/lecture area with fifteen desks; another was a work area with five 3'x6' tables for working with clay on projects associated with slab and coil pottery; a third area contained four

electric wheels and one kick-wheel for throwing clay pots as well as three electric kilns and a glazing area; a fourth section of the room contained storage and a pug mill for mixing clay - it was also the entry way to Mr. Alan Jim's office. (A sketch of the room layout is available).

The floor of the classroom was painted concrete slab in a medium beige color. It was spattered and smeared with dried remnants of clays used in various student projects. The ceiling was a drop-type acoustic style approximately 8 ½ feet in height. Six foot florescent light fixtures provided plentiful and even lighting in the classroom. There were three doors: an entry double door with windows, an exit/loading dock double door (metal), and a single door to Mr. Jim's office. The entry door would automatically lock when closed leaving tardy students the need to knock for reentry. Mr. Jim's door was left open and the back door would occasionally be left open for fresh air or to allow access by a local potter who would barter kiln time for demonstrating their craft to the students.

The walls of the classroom were eclectically "plastered" with posters in between the occasional storage cabinets and shelving that were interspersed amongst the pottery equipment. The posters were primarily art related from art and design schools and museum shows and programs, to those announcing Native American art fairs and exhibitions. There was a white-board on the southwest corner wall with the clay project assignment parameters. The student assignment was to produce a clay slab construction with the theme, "music." The stated (written) parameters for the project were: memory image (sculptural motion); balance, focal point, 3 types of spatial clues, natural or distorted perspective, unity, implied or psyche (subject matter); and positive/negative shapes. Each student was graded on all of these aspects with respect to his/her project.

Music permeated the room throughout the class periods; not too loud, but loud enough to make one aware that it was a continuous mix of “hip-hop” and progressive rock from a local radio station. Alan Jim told me that he had once tried classical music until the complaints from students persuaded a change of auditory menu.

Most of the students arrived for the class within five minutes before or after the scheduled 9:20 a.m. start. The doors were shut (locked) at 9:30 and late entry could only be attained by Mr. Jim’s critical-eyed permission. (He told me that the school required any student more than 20 minutes tardy to go to the office for a special pass - nobody was that late today). Most of the students arrived in pairs with a friend.

Eleven youths showed up for the second period ceramics class; Alan Jim told me that there should be fifteen or sixteen, but absence is a chronic problem in the school. There were six females and five males in the group. All were Navajo except for two Supai girls, one Hopi boy, and one Winnebago/Navajo boy (Mr. Jim referred to him as “Hochunk”).

Since this was an art production class, there was a little dialogue within the class. Mr. Jim would discuss some of the projects individually, and quietly, with the students. He would joke with and tease them minimally as he moved from student to student. He had nicknames for many of the students. (I later found out that teasing and nicknaming are common among the Navajos as a sign of acceptance, equality, and as a means of keeping situations at ease).

Mr. Jim announced my presence at the beginning of the class and told them that I was there to observe. I sensed that all were curious about my attendance and several, especially the boys, seemed a bit nervous or unsure about my wandering the classroom. (I was taking notes and tried to be as unobtrusive as possible and not “hang” over the artists’ shoulders). Several of the girls asked me directly why I was there and what I did. When I mentioned that I was a

medical illustrator it seemed to pique some added interest. The two Supai girls talked the most to me and asked me the most questions about medical illustration.

As far as class dynamics and student interaction was concerned, there seemed to be several pairings from the time the students entered, through the class period, and then at the end of class. The two Supai girls spent the whole class period together and even went to other areas of the classroom together as they performed tasks such as clay preparation, assembly, and glazing. Two of the Navajo boys palled around together - one seemed more intent on gossip than on art production as he played with a ball of clay in his hands for the first half-hour of the class. He finally settled down and was actually producing a creative and complex project by the end of class. These two Navajos were friendly and sat with the Hopi boy, who spent most of the class in one seat working intently on a clay diorama of a rock concert. Most of the Navajo girls worked independently, although this seemed more because of differing tasks rather than a lack of camaraderie.

All of the students, as expected, were casually dressed; so was Alan Jim, their teacher. (He later told me that he set dress standards for his class that included no T-shirts with “controversial” or “questionable” subject matter printed on them. (He worked in a T-shirt with a Greyhills Academy High School logo on it and blue jeans). Four of the five boys and one of the girls had on sports related outfits (Nike, Fubu). Most were wearing jogging outfits or blue jeans.

I was taken with the beautiful long hair that many of the Native American students displayed. Only the Navajo and Hocunk boys had short hair - a military look with a “buzz-cut” on the sides and a slightly longer “bowl-cut” on the top. One of them had let the top grow longer and combed it back, giving him a somewhat Hispanic look. Several of the Navajo girls tied their

hair up, while the Supai girls wore theirs straight down. The Hopi boy had an incredibly beautiful length of shiny-clean black hair tied in a pony-tail to his waist.

The clay slab projects were carved on and constructed by the students. As previously mentioned, they all had a music theme. Only one of the Navajo girls had a Native American theme - Yeibechei, who are Navajo representations of Gods. She told me that they only show up in ceremonial dances in the winter months, which I had not known. She was reglazing the piece as I observed her and she seemed quite proud, although shy, about working on and discussing her piece of art.

All of the other projects depicted various themes surrounding “hip-hop” music. One student even had the words “hip-hop” displayed in bas-relief- on his construction. One of the Navajo boys had constructed a beautifully detailed car (self described as a 1964 Chevy) which he then cut in half and built into his sculpture along with musical notes and sound speakers.

The students had a short, 10 minute break midway through the period. They were only allowed to leave the room to use the restrooms which had to be unlocked by a faculty member. All returned to their seats in a timely manner and continued to work. (I was “pleasantly amazed” at the fact that art classes were given such an extended length of more than 1 ½ hours.

My experiences with Georgia art educators are in classes as short in duration as 30 minutes and in most cases no longer than 50 minutes). About fifteen minutes after the break, Alan Jim, who had left the classroom to let a student into the restroom, re-entered with a wad of paper towels in his hand. He walked up to me and motioned me to the side. Opening the towels with his other hand, he exposed a “bong” which he had confiscated from two Navajo boys who were caught smoking in the men’s room. (He had had to turn the boys into the principal who called police who took the boys to the juvenile detention center in handcuffs. Later in the day there was a

bomb threat which necessitated evacuation of the high school. There was speculation by Mr. Jim and others as to whether relatives/friends of the boys were involved).

Later in the class period, a young Navajo woman entered the class to speak with Alan Jim. He opened the back doors and she exited, only to return in a few minutes with a large box of pots needing to be kiln-fired. She introduced herself to me as Renee, a local potter in the neighboring community of Moenave. (Alan Jim told me later that he barter time with her and other potters for student demonstrations in return for firing their pottery).

I continued to observe the students at work as the period drew to an end. Most of the Navajo boys made more progress on their projects during the second half of the class; the first half had contained more socialization among them. The Navajo boy I previously mentioned, who had been playing with the ball of clay, finally uncovered his project and made the inanimate ball into small musical notes and objects which he applied to his sculpture. He seemed a little ill at ease and self-conscious about me observing his work.

Finally, the bell rang and the students departed at 11:20 a.m.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Table 1- Interview Questions – NATIVE AMERICAN ARTISTS

1. Name, birthplace / date, education
2. Family - siblings (artists?)
children (artists?)
3. Art education / instruction / interests from childhood to present.
Drawing instruction / lessons / self-taught?
4. How would you define art (vs. a “craft”)?
5. What attributes do you attach to “good” Native American art? Your art? Art of others?
6. Who are your mentors and how / why do they influence you? (Style, reputation, commercial / aesthetic success, etc.)
7. Do you see increasing interest in cultural (ethnic) heritage by Native Americans (your tribe in particular)? Does this relate to art production, methods, and symbolism?
8. Is traditional symbolism important to Native American art? How and what affects the valuation of Native American art (as an artist)?
9. Do you influence the production, symbolism or methods of Native American artists? If so, how?
10. Is there an increase in cross-tribal art (i.e., Navajos carving Kachinas, Hopis weaving Navajo-style rugs) and are there significant (“high-end”) artists doing this work? Or, is it mainly lower-end art for commercial / tourist purposes? How do you feel about this?
11. Is traditional symbolism important to Native American art? Do you influence the use of symbols in art with other artists? How did you learn / acquire knowledge about this symbolism?
12. Is there more cross-gender (from the traditional) art being produced (i.e., men weaving, women carvers)?
13. Does your religion affect the production of your artwork?
14. Traditional art - is there a resurgence of traditional methods and techniques? Transitional - powwow influence and other gatherings.
15. Work habits, self-perception of production speed, perpetuation of creative spirit.
16. Is there any other information you would like to share with me about yourself or your art?

Table 2- Interview Questions – TRADERS / ART DEALERS

1. Personal History: birthplace, siblings, art talent in family.
2. Education: arts in elementary, secondary, etc.
3. Profession: development and relationship to arts.
4. How would you define and compare “art” versus “craft.”
5. What attributes do you attach to “good” Native American art? (Valuation).
6. Is traditional symbolism important to Native American art? How and what affects the valuation of Native American art (as a collector and as a dealer)?
7. How do you establish traditional “authenticity” to Native American art objects? Are reproductions/knockoffs (non-tribal or cross tribal) a significant problem to dealers and collectors?
8. Do you influence the production, symbolism or methods of Native American artists? If so, how?
9. What types/styles/tribes of Native American art do you collect? What attracts you to these and how do they have added value to your collection (or to collectors who buy from you)?
10. Are there particular Native American artists whose work you particularly admire? If so, why?
11. Do you speak/understand any Native American languages? If so, do you use these when dealing with the artists?
12. Are there masculine/feminine styles of arts and crafts that are evident regardless of the gender of the artist? (Can you recognize the gender of the artist by their work?)
13. How do you perceive the future of Native American art dealing/collecting/production?
14. Any other information you would like to share?

Table 3- Interview Questions – NAVAJO ARTIST / TEACHER (Alan Jim)

1. Name, birthplace/date, education
2. Family - siblings (artists?)
children (artists?)
3. Art education/instruction/interests from childhood to present.
4. How would you define “art” (vs. a “craft”)?
5. What attributes do you attach to “good” Native American art? Your art? Art of others?
6. Who are your mentors and how/why do they influence you? (Style, reputation, commercial / aesthetic success, educators, etc.)
7. When and how did you become interested in and start teaching?
8. Do you see increasing interest in cultural (ethnic) heritage by Native Americans (your tribe in particular)? Does this relate to teaching art production, methods, and symbolism?
9. Is traditional symbolism important to Native American art? How and what affects the valuation of Native American art (as an artist)?
10. Do you influence the production, symbolism or methods of Native American artists? If so, how?
11. Is there an increase in cross-tribal art (i.e., Navajos carving Kachinas, Hopis weaving Navajo-style rugs) and are there significant (“high-end”) artists doing this work? Or, is it mainly lower-end art for commercial / tourist purposes? How do you feel about this?
12. Is traditional symbolism important to Native American art? Do you influence the use of symbols in art with other artists? How did you learn/acquire knowledge about this symbolism?
13. Are there masculine/feminine styles of arts and crafts that are evident regardless of the gender of the artist? (Can you recognize the gender of an artist by their work?) Is there more cross-gender (from the traditional) art being produced (i.e., men weaving)?
14. Does your religion affect the production of your artwork?
15. Traditional art - is there a resurgence of traditional methods and techniques? Transitional - powwow influence and other gatherings.

Table 4- Interview Questions – List of Research Participants / Interview Data

ARTISTS

SUBJECT/ SPECIALTY-TRIBE	LOCATION	DATE	FORMAT	LENGTH OF INTERVIEW
Alfred Lomahquahu, Jr. Carver (Hopi)	Holbrook, AZ	11/01/96	Video (VHS)	1:07:30
Hosteen Etsitty (aka Daniel E. Smith) Sandpainter (Navajo)	Shiprock, NM	8/11/97	Video (VHS) Audio (Mini Cassette)	51:40 1:15:00 approx.
Michaelis Burnham Drawing/painting (Navajo-Hopi/Anglo)	Phoenix, AZ	8/13/97	Video (VHS)	51:45
Brenda Spencer Weaver (Navajo)	Ganado, AZ	7/11/98	Video (Mini DV)	45:00
Alan Jim Potter/Teacher (Navajo)	Tuba City, AZ	11/02/99	Video (VHS)	1:42:45*

(*plus classroom – observation approx. 2 hours)

ART DEALERS/TRADING POST OPERATORS

SUBJECT	LOCATION	DATE	FORMAT	LENGTH OF INTERVIEW
W. Bruce McGee Trader	Holbrook, AZ	11/01/96	Video (VHS)	37:45
Cliff McGee Trader	Mesa, AZ	5/17/97	Video (VHS)	1:20:55
Ferron McGee W. Bruce McGee Traders	Holbrook, AZ	5/19/97	Video (VHS) Video (VHS)	1:48:20
Bill Malone Trader	Ganado, AZ	5/19/97	Video (VHS)	37:40
Bruce Burnham Trader	Sanders, AZ	5/20/97	Video (VHS)	2:02:45
Eugene Thaw Art Dealer	Santa Fe, NM	2/09/99	Video (Mini DV)	1:15:00 approx.