

NEW MEXICO MAGAZINE'S

The Indian Arts of New Mexico

POTTERY
JEWELRY
RUGS
KACHINAS

Richard C. Sandoval

\$1.00

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Indian Art — what is it?

The turquoise beads, the baskets and the pottery are crafts that are a thousand years old. The Navajo rugs, the silver jewelry are more recent, adapted from Spanish, Moorish, Mexican and American sources. Yet all are unmistakably Indian arts.

What is Indian art? It can be anything from a rag doll in traditional Navajo dress to an elaborate Hopi kachina, from an ancient black-on-white pot to a modern engraved black-and-brown vessel encrusted with silver and turquoise. It can be a Jicarilla Apache basket or a painting by a Ute, a Pueblo dance sash or a Two Gray Hills Navajo rug. It can be drums, jewelry, figurines, baskets, clothing, sand paintings, beadwork, leather work, sculpture, paintings, feather weaving, or a combination of any and all of these.

But it must be handmade, by Indians. And it must be artistic and well executed.

For most visitors to New Mexico, jewelry, pots and Navajo rugs are the eye-catchers. But the uninitiated shopper looks, looks some more, and looks further. So much to see, so much to choose from. But how to tell the good from the bad? Why is one Navajo rug worth only \$35 while a smaller one demands a price of \$600? (Maybe the first one is woven of coarse, uneven wool, or has a cotton string warp, or is uneven and poorly designed. Or maybe it's an import from Mexico!)

And jewelry — how does the unknowing tourist tell the difference between a Taiwan-made, blue plastic-studded, pot metal thunderbird pendant and a genuine Zuni inlay thunderbird paved with shell, jet, coral and turquoise? Especially if the former is offered by an Indian standing on a street corner? (Go to a reputable dealer is always the answer — and if you don't know of one, ask at the nearest museum.

Almost every town of any size in New Mexico has a good museum.)

Pots? Your eye can tell you if the shape is pleasing and symmetrical, the design artistic, the finish smooth. The prices may range from ten dollars to ten thousand. But if you are in any doubt about your purchase, again it is wise to rely on the advice of a good trader — Indian or "Anglo."

Whatever you shop for among Indian arts in New Mexico, remember that old is not necessarily good. Indian artists of today have better tools, better training and often a better sense of themselves and their historic, artistic past than ever before. As a result, their arts are very often of higher quality than in days gone by. There is no special magic in the words "old pawn" except to the novice. Very often old, pawned jewelry is inferior, pawned by an Indian who wanted to get himself something better.

What should you buy? Buy what you like best — what you'll use and enjoy in years to come. Perhaps the pot is a little lopsided and not very expensive — but if it brings back vivid memories of the wrinkled old lady at Picuris Pueblo, your beans will probably always taste better when they're baked in that mica-flecked pot.

Your Navajo rug — whether elegant wall tapestry or colorful hearthside blanket — will be a reminder of a day spent at the annual Indian Market in Santa Fe's old plaza, and of the beautiful young weaver who told you how it was made.

And every time you wear them, the turquoise earrings or watchband will bring visions of a special moment in time under New Mexico's turquoise skies.

The art of the Indians of New Mexico is a part of life — beauty to live with.

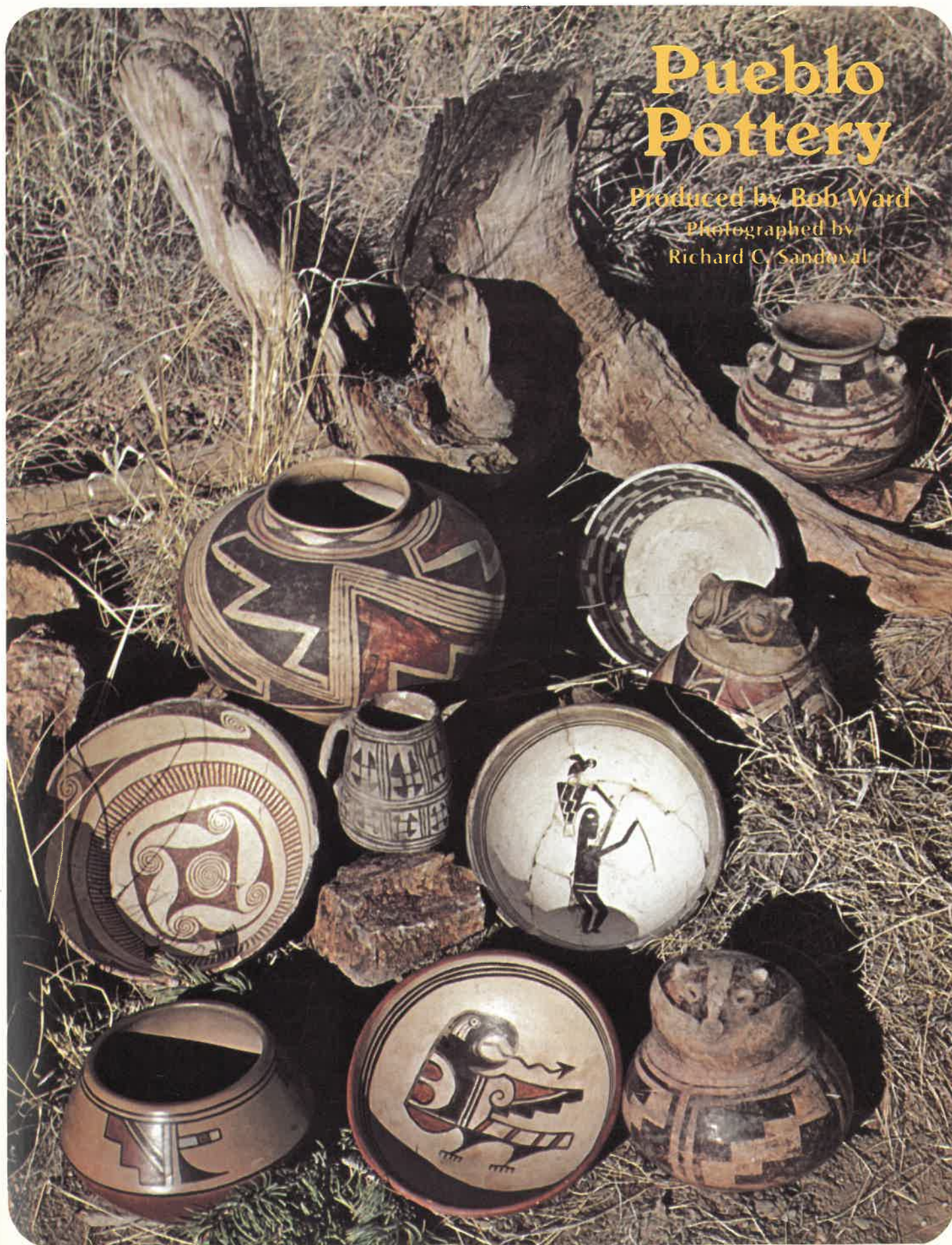
S. T.

Reprinted features from New Mexico Magazine.

Pueblo Pottery

Produced by Bob Ward

Photographed by
Richard C. Sandoval



An Ancient Craft Is a Thriving Art in New Mexico

The most traditional of Pueblo crafts, a product of the earth itself, is thriving in New Mexico. To the delight of connoisseurs, fine pottery is being shaped, designed and fired at many of our 19 pueblos as well as by the Hopis of northeastern Arizona.

Pictured on these pages are the pottery-making techniques, still mainly as of centuries ago, and examples of fine works, ancient to the newest.

Man appeared in the Southwest some 15,000 years ago, anthropologists believe. He was a nomadic spear hunter of the camel, mastodon, giant ground sloth. He cooked this meat over an open fire.

Such big game gradually disappeared—perhaps exterminated by man and/or unable to bear the milder climate after the last Ice Age. By about 6000 B.C., the Southwestern hunter was reduced to taking deer, antelope, smaller game. And he began to glean wild plants. Living in caves and brush shelters, he became semi-nomadic in what is called the Desert Culture.

A need arose for containers. In the Four Corners region—adjacent to the junctures of present-day New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Arizona—the earliest known baskets, a fragile ware, date to about 5000 B.C. Basket-making probably had been brought across the Bering Strait by successive waves of migrants from northeastern Asia.

Beginning about 3000 B.C., corn, squash and beans successively came up from today's Mexico. While the Egyptians were building their pyramids, man hereabouts began settling into pithouses with criblike roofing.

Baskets, woven from wild fiber,

became increasingly refined in the Basket Maker era from about the time of Christ to 500-600 A.D. These baskets were used to store food and water, for winnowing and roasting, in burials with bodies inside or nearby.

About 200-300 A.D., pottery began to supplement baskets. It possibly began as clay linings for them. Whether this craft developed independently or was imported from Mexico is an open question. Pottery-making probably was then, as it is today, primarily a woman's job.

Toward the end of the Basket Maker period, man congregated in ever bigger communities. This initiated the Pueblo era—from the Spanish for *town*. Pithouses evolved into clustered buildings of stone or adobe slabs, some three to four stories high, and cliff dwellings, many of comparable heights.

Pueblos cropped up in the Four Corners region, in today's Gila Wilderness of southwestern New Mexico, in what was to become northern Chihuahua, Mexico. Hundreds emerged over the centuries.

As architecture became more sophisticated, so, too, did pottery. The molding techniques, coil upon coil of clay, were uniform (the potter's wheel has never been used by traditional Pueblo artisans), but differences in design proliferated throughout the Southwest. Differences in color, pattern, surface manipulations with fingers, sticks, grass. Colors were obtained from the bee plant and from iron and related minerals.

These pots were primarily utilitarian, but it's a truism that "primitive" crafts often are objects of beauty from our perspective. Perhaps the most highly regarded prehistoric pottery today is from the Mimbres River culture of southwestern New Mexico that flourished in the 12th century. Mimbrenño designs embodied animals, insects, fish, human figures—the only illustrative pottery of that time, the rest being of geometric design. They depicted planting, mining, ceremonial dancing.

No matter the design, Pueblo pottery was so well fired that thousand-year-old pieces retain their characteristics to this day. Through these characteristics, in fact, archeologists are able to date when various pueblos

existed and to trace the trade among them.

Sometime in the 13th century came an upheaval. The Four Corners pueblos were abandoned. War? Forest destruction? Drouth? Whatever, their inhabitants migrated to Hopi, Zuni, Acoma and scores of sites along or near the Rio Grande.

Around 1300 appeared glazed pottery. The glaze was a paint, a decorative binder, of green or dark brown. Its base was lead or copper.

After explorations by Coronado and other conquistadores, the Spaniards began colonizing New Mexico in 1598. In warfare and by consolidation, they gradually reduced the pueblos to about the number existing today. To Pueblo potters, the Spaniards provided such new forms as plates, candlesticks, chalices, possibly cups. Not potters themselves, the Spaniards became a market for Pueblo output.

In 1680, the Pueblos mobilized to drive the some 4,000 Spaniards back to Mexico. The Spaniards returned in force—and to stay—in 1693. Seeking to escape retribution, some Pueblos fled about 250 miles west to set up Hano village in Hopiland. Hano women are still master potters.

Glazed pottery abruptly vanished as a craft. The Spaniards removed Pueblos from their mining sources in the Galisteo Basin, some 20 miles south of the capital Santa Fe. How to make such glazed pottery has not been rediscovered to this day. To replace the glaze, the northern pueblos reverted to the bee plant, the southern pueblos to iron.

Bowls became larger, perhaps to accommodate Spanish-introduced wheat. For unknown reason, *ollas* (storage jars) became more globular, with shorter necks.

The United States seized New Mexico in 1846. In 1880 came the first trains. With the first trains came tourists. With the tourists came a major shift in Pueblo pottery-making.

The tourists demanded pottery that was cheap and small enough to carry—typically, figurines. U.S. Army Captain John G. Bourke tells us that Laguna Pueblo peddlers gathered at a nearby depot in 1881. Perhaps with tongue in cheek, Bourke noted:

The sugar bowls and salt cellars were bric-a-brac that would have set Eastern collectors crazy with envy...

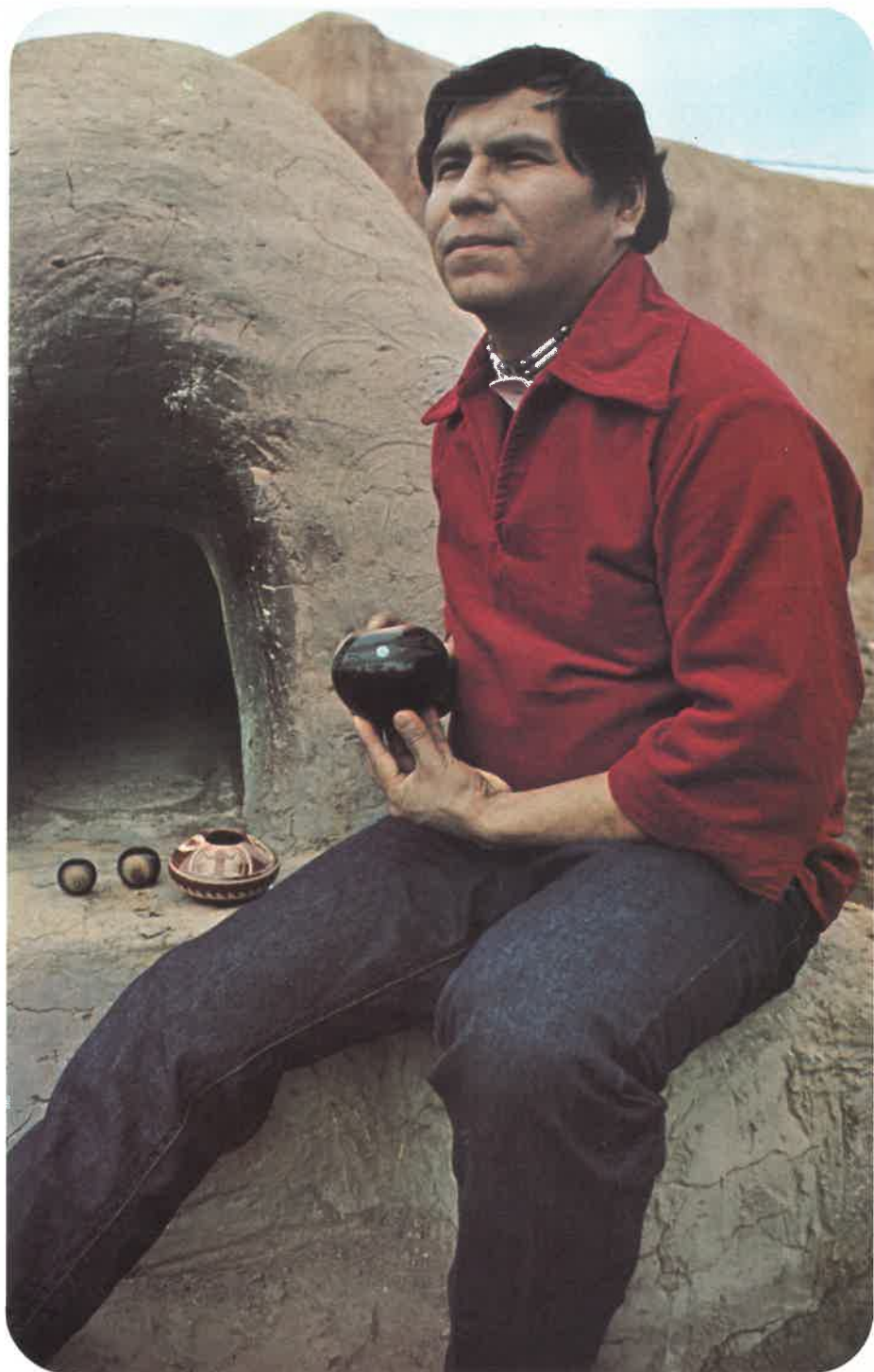
As they did indeed. The Pueblos responded resoundingly to the new

Preceding page—

Centuries of Southwest Indian Pottery—Left to right, front row: *Contemporary polychrome bowl by Lela and Van of Santa Clara*; *San Ildefonso plate, circa 1905*; *raccoon effigy, 12th century, from Casas Grandes*, huge ruins in Chihuahua, northern Mexico. Middle row: *shallow bowl, 12th century, from Mimbres culture of southwestern New Mexico (a departure from the usual Mimbres black-on-white)*; *mug, 13th century, from what is now Mesa Verde National Park in southwestern Colorado*; *Mimbres bowl, 12th century, woman with parrot*. Back row: *Casas Grandes olla, 14th century*; *Mesa Verde bowl, 14th century*; *Casas Grandes badger effigy, 13th century*; *hanging olla, 15th century, from Salado culture of southeastern Arizona*.



Right, Art Cody of Santa Clara, an innovator and one of the few male potters. Behind Cody is an horno, used for baking bread and not, as some believe, for firing pottery. Above, Cody's work: the small bowls deeply etched with bear claw and kachina (spirit dancer), the larger ones with turquoise-decorated water serpents and vignettes of kachinas. Below, works of three of the main male potters, left to right: an etched wedding vase, with dancers reflecting Mayan influence, by Cody; bowl with etched water serpent by Tony Da of San Ildefonso; perfume vial, its stopper a bear fetish adorned with coral and turquoise, by Joseph Lonewolf of Santa Clara.



regime's cash economy, replacing Mexican barter, to supply curios for shipment to the East Coast. They took far less care producing these, even entering into primitive mass production.

To their credit, though, the Pueblos still turned out quality pottery as well. For their own use. For trade among pueblos. For continued sale to the Hispanos. Imported crockery and enamelware might be convenient, but beans tasted richer and water sweeter coming from clay containers.

In the early 20th century, one Julian Martinez of San Ildefonso Pueblo, working under archeologists at nearby ruins, came across pottery of a black sheen. His wife Maria already was a skilled potter. Through experiments, they learned how to reproduce such a sheen through firing her pottery with dung rather than wood. Julian produced geometric designs. Thus was born their still-supreme black-on-black pottery.

Aided by such eminent anthropologists as Drs. Kenneth L. Chapman

and Edgar L. Hewett, the Martinez couple began selling pottery through museum and other outlets in Santa Fe. Gradually, a popular demand grew for quality pottery of their own and other designs—a demand that is constantly increasing.

There are over 250 acknowledged potters in New Mexico today. They are responsible for a lion's share of their families' income—derived from an ancient art form of fashioning receptacles from the earth, someday to return to the earth.



Clay to Pot

The scene is Santa Clara Pueblo. The principals are Mrs. Petra Gutierrez and her daughters Minnie Vigil and Lois Gutierrez. All pottery is molded and decorated indoors. This work was photographed outdoors for visual clarity.

1—Gathering Clay Minnie selects choice chunks. At Santa Clara, as at all pueblos, the source of its clay is a well-kept secret.

2—Mixing Clay To obtain a proper base for their pottery, Petra and Lois blend clays of various consistencies.

3, 4—Shaping the Pot Minnie applies a coil of kneaded clay as a pot takes form. All pueblo pottery is molded from coils. After molding, Minnie further shapes—and smooths—a pot's surfaces with a piece of gourd. This piece is considered highly personal and never even loaned to another potter.

5—Applying the Slip With a rag, Petra daubs on the slip, a coating of red clay as fine as flour. The slip is always red; the pot's eventual color will be determined by the firing.

6—Polishing Petra rubs a piece of agate on the wet slip. Chalcedony and other stones also are used. As with the gourd, such a stone is as private to a potter as one's toothbrush.

7—Decorating Lois paints the bowl with an artist's brush. Santa Clara designs are commonly geometric. Lois responds to the inspiration of the moment; no two designs are completely the same. The paints are not commercial, but all of vegetable or mineral substances.

8, 9—Firing The decorated pots are put in the bed of a child's wagon and covered with tin. There's kindling beneath; pine slabs are heaped around and atop the wagon. The firing takes about an hour. If a black finish is desired, dung is burned instead of wood because it produces a lower temperature and smolders rather than flames up.

10—Finished Product Firing has just been completed. After about 20 minutes' cooling, these pots will turn red. If a pot cracks in the firing or is scratched, perhaps by one that explodes nearby, hours of work will have gone to naught. On the pot with the bear claws at upper left, a hairline flaw can be seen to the right of its mouth. Its commercial value destroyed, it probably will be given to a friend. About one-fourth of all pots are ruined in the firing.







← HOPILAND

← Gallup

← ZUNI



Contemporary Creations

The various pueblos produce pottery of distinctive form and style. Shown on these pages are some of their representative works.

1. From Cochiti, an effigy of a storyteller entertaining five children and a bowl of geometric design, both by Frances Suina.

2. Left to right, a bowl of natural colors from Jemez; a wedding vase by Leonidas Tapia of San Juan; a poster-paint pot from Tesuque. Tesuque and Jemez create such varieties for the casual tourist. They are the only pueblo pottery painted after firing.

3. From the Hano village of Hopi come these ollas by Priscilla Namingha Nampeyo, left, and Caroline Talayumptewa.

4. Zuni craftswomen produced this jar—the arrow connecting the deer's vital organs is related to the pueblo's mythology—and owl effigy. Only a handful of potters still practice their craft at Zuni—which, though, is a fountainhead for silver-and-turquoise jewelry.

5. Acoma contributes an effigy owl by Jessie Garcia and jar by Rose Chino. The latter combines Acoma's fine-line designs with the Zuni deer motif. The Acomas have borrowed from Zuni's shapes and motifs.

6. From Santa Clara, a "squash bowl" by Angela Baca and long-necked vase by Santanita Suazo, both illustrating the deep incisions traditional to this pueblo's style.

7. San Ildefonso is appropriately represented here with a dinner plate by Maria Martinez and her late son Popovi Da and a vase by Barbara Gonzales, Maria's great-granddaughter. The cutout in the Gonzales vase is a rarity in Pueblo pottery.





Petra Gutierrez and her daughter Minnie Vigil sell pottery to Bob Ward at his Santa Fe trading post. Mrs. Gutierrez' mother and grandmother sold pottery at the same location when it was known as Candelario's Curio Store.

Men Now Bring Flair To a Woman's World

There's a new element in Pueblo pottery. Men. And these men are blazing new trails.

Julian Martinez (see page 25) might be said to have been the first of these, though he restricted himself to rendering designs on pottery formed by his wife Maria.

By the mid-1950s, their late son Popovi Da was more than holding his own in both respects.

His son, Tony Da (pronounced *Day*), became a pacemaker in the late '60s. Tony uses multiple firing to bring forth a variety of color. In a secret process, he etches each pot after the successive firings. Another Da innovation: inlaying turquoise stones on shiny black or earthy buff.

As recently as 1971, the name Joseph Lonewolf came into currency after he won firsts at several major shows. Lonewolf, 42, of Santa Clara, specializes in what he calls "pottery jewels"—one-half to less than three inches in diameter—of finely etched designs. He uses materials and has devised firings that radiate greens and blues.

Also of Santa Clara, Juan Gonzales (Tse-pe) and his wife Dora ride the

Tony Da wave both in firings and use of turquoise.

Newest of the top male Pueblo potter is, of all things, a Kiowa from Oklahoma. Art Cody's heritage goes back to famed Chief Satanta; he signs his pottery *Haun-gooah* for his grandfather Silverhorn, a U.S. Army scout in the late 19th century.

In 1969, Art, now 31, married potter Martha Suazo of Santa Clara. Moving to that pueblo in 1971, he learned the craft from watching Martha and others. He started at the top by winning a first place at the famed Heard Museum in Phoenix in 1972. He combines facets of Tony Da's techniques with an inspired personal dexterity.

How to Buy Pueblo Pottery

More than any Indian art or craft, pottery is a matter of personal taste. Its variety is immense. There's almost no utility to it, beauty being its own reward. If it's authentic, what pleases you is what to buy.

Many collectors demand the potter's signature at the bottom of each creation. All too many assume that a respected name assures value. Yet even respected names have produced duds (and signatures have been faked).

In the past, pots were unsigned. Many beautiful pots remain unsigned today because their young creators feel that "I'm not yet good enough." Actually, your criteria should be shape, color, design.

The quality of Pueblo pottery is higher than ever . . . better tools, enhanced expertise. But some potters will slap together anything simply because anything sells. This trend, also seen in jewelry, could destroy the market for Indian goods. Against this, some traders spend long, hard hours encouraging the artisans to produce fewer articles of better quality for higher prices.

As for prices, traditional pottery has been appreciating at about 20 per cent a year. For some of the potters cited here, you can multiply that percentage.

How to size up quality pottery? On this page is a bibliography. Reputable traders and dealers will level with you. Those closest to the source of production often offer the best quality—for example, the Popovi Da shop at San Ildefonso. For variety, you can't beat Santa Fe, at the heart of Puebloland.

Also, good buys generally can be made at such public events as Santa Fe's Indian Market (mid-August), the Eight Northern Pueblos Show (mid-July) and Gallup's Indian Ceremonial.

Once you have bought a piece, handle it deftly, ship it with utmost care. A caution: It should never be used as a vase. Dampness expands it, causing it to break. A modern pot makes a handsome container for a dry arrangement, but it is not the all-purpose vessel of old.



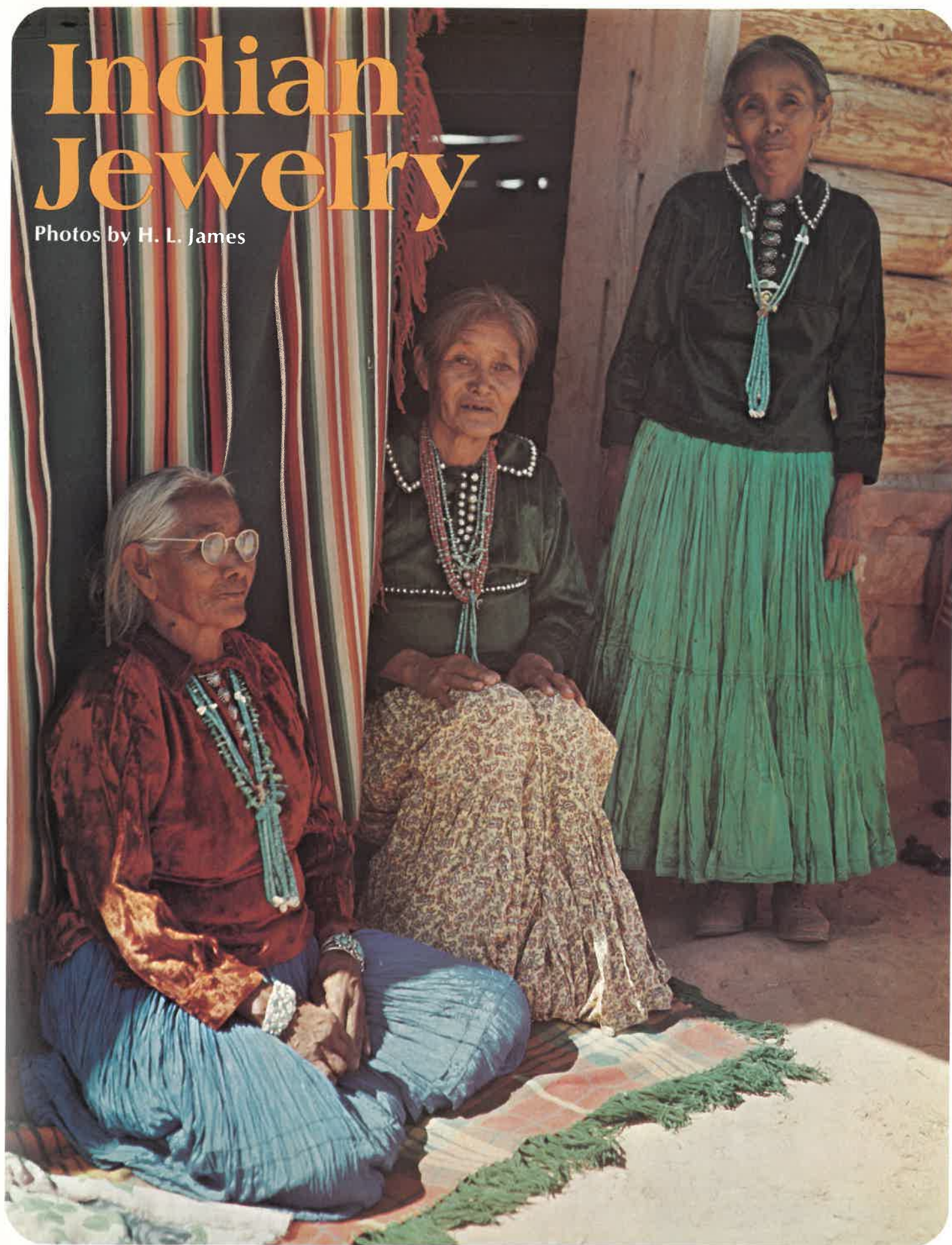
These Are Our Authorities

Southwestern Indian Tribes and Southwestern Indian Arts and Crafts, both by Tom Bahti; *Indian Pottery*, Kenneth M. Chapman; *Indians of Today*, Marion E. Gridley; *Maria Making Pottery*, Hazel Hyde; *Matte-Paint Pottery of the Tewa, Keres and Zuni Pueblos*, Francis H. Harlow; *Contemporary Pueblo Indian Pottery*, Francis H. Harlow and John V. Young; *The American Indian* (juvenile) and *Introduction to American Indian Art*, both by Oliver La Farge.

On prehistoric pottery, David H. Snow, curator of archeology, Museum of New Mexico, has given freely of his expertise. Among Pueblo potters, Petra and Lois Gutierrez, Minnie Vigil and Art and Martha Cody, all of whom are cited on these pages, and Derek de la Luz, Cruz, have been of invaluable assistance.

Indian Jewelry

Photos by H. L. James





Preceding Page—Navajo women in jeweled regalia as seen on their reservation by famed photographer Laura Gilpin. Above—Like Sam Yazzie, no Navajo medicine man is ceremonially accoutered without turquoise.

The Mystique of Turquoise, the Luster of Silver

The sheen of turquoise penetrates the murk of prehistory among Southwestern Indians. Typically, a necklace of 2,500 hand-drilled turquoise beads was found under 15 feet of sand at the Chaco Canyon ruins in northwestern New Mexico.

Silverwork awaited the coming of the Spanish. In fact, its luster failed to arouse Indian craftsmanship hereabouts until the 1850s.

These Indians long have revered turquoise for religious ceremony and prized it for adornment of themselves, their horses, even their dwellings.

Medicine men of Santo Domingo Pueblo beckon rain with a turquoise-eyed fetish. To the Apache medicine man, wrote a U.S. Army observer in the '80s, turquoise is a "badge of office, his medical diploma . . ." In the *Mountain Chant*, Navajos drop turquoise onto their sandpaintings to represent the blue of the Upper World. Throughout the Southwest,

turquoise amulets are found in ancient burials.

Seldom are Southwestern Indians, male or female, seen without turquoise. For ceremonials, they are laden with beads, rings, ear pendants, bracelets, necklaces, belts, buttons. This semiprecious stone is generally their most prized possession.

It is related that Cortez, invading Mexico in 1519, was met by Indians wearing "Turkese-stones which weighed so much that their lips hung over their chins leaving their teeth bare." In 1540, conquistador Coronado found abundant "earrings, combs and tablets set with turquoises" in New Mexico.

The turquoise that caught the eyes of Cortez and Coronado may well have come from the environs of Cerrillos (*Little Hills*), some 20 miles southwest of present-day Santa Fe. In these hills was the most extensive prehistoric mining known in

North America. At one mine, a Yankee visitor noted in 1858, the whole side of a hill had been quarried to 200 feet wide and 300 deep. The debris, covering "at least 20 acres," was overgrown by evergreens that "must be reckoned by centuries" in age, wrote another. Picks of antler were found amidst it.

Turquoise from such Southwestern mines was traded as far away as today's Panama, Canada, California, the Mississippi. For this, their most valuable trade item, the Indians received such valuables as seashells and parrot plumes.

Navajos learned silverworking from itinerant Hispano smiths. By 1853, the first recognized Navajo silverworker, known as the Old Smith, had emerged. Navajos taught Zuni silver craft in the '70s. Hopis, Santo Domingos and some other Pueblos picked it up in the next two decades.

The forms of Southwestern Indian

silverwork grew out of early jewelry traded to eastern Indians by explorers and colonists and from exposure to Hispano costume regalia and bridle trappings.

Ornaments of brass, copper and "German silver" (an amalgam of copper, zinc and nickel) filtered west to Plains and mountain Indians. Navajos got them by trade and as battle booty. They included rings, bow guards, some styles of earrings, plain belt conchas (*shells*, for their shape) and bracelets that were variously round, fluted wide and triangular in cross-section.

From Hispanos, Navajos derived "teardrop" earrings, pomegranate beads (to the Indians representing "squash blossom") and round, flat, fluted and bell-shaped buttons. Silver-mounted bridles and the *naja* — the Moorish crescent — seem to have reached them from Mexico via southern Plains Indians.

Early Navajo work was hammered, plain or engraved. Stamped designs appeared in the late 1870s, copied from Spanish leather patterns stamped with crude punches. Southwestern Indians soon blended their own designs with these. Their tool kits grew to include dies, scores of sizes, for forming beads and buttons, for embossing, for repoussage.

Colored glass garnished some ornaments derived from Plains Indians and Hispanos. This probably set the precedent for the Navajos to mate turquoise with silver beginning about 1878.

Southwestern Indians used U.S. dollars until melting them down was outlawed in 1890. They turned to Mexican pesos until their export was banned in 1930. Slug, sheet and wire silver, furnished by white traders, is used today.

As for turquoise, New Mexico used to produce more than any state, mainly at mines, besides those near Cerrillos, in the Burro and Hachita mountains of the state's southwest and the south-central Jarilla Hills. A little poor quality turquoise still comes from the Cerrillos and Silver City areas.

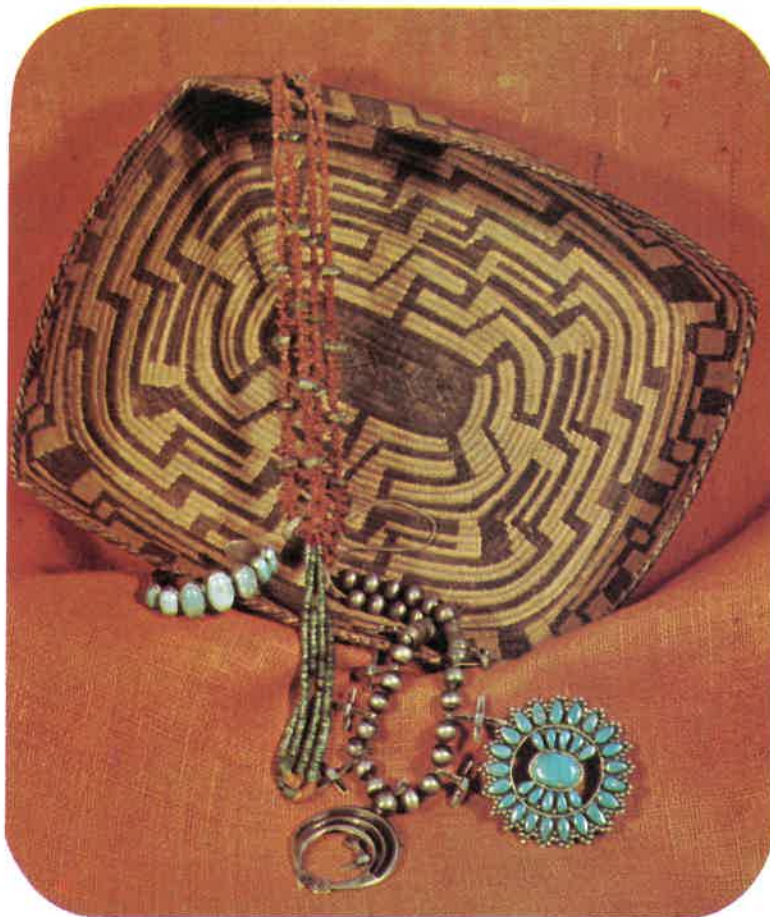
Nevada and Arizona are today's chief producers, with Colorado also providing a little. About 10 per cent of turquoise used in these parts is "Persian": from Iran, India and Afghanistan. Turquoise, too, is provided by traders.

The Indians buy or trade for their turquoise, some already cut and



Pieces From the Past

Above—Left to right, turquoise necklace strung on cactus fiber, Basketmaker Period (400 A.D.), from Cañon de Chelly; prehistoric turquoise pendant, strung on early historic-era disc bead necklace, from cave in New Mexico's Tularosa Basin; Navajo nugget necklace, circa 1900, its turquoise drilled with primitive bow. Below—Against Pima basket, c. 1920, Navajo turquoise bracelet, c. 1930, Navajo necklace of turquoise and coral (imported by white traders from Mediterranean sources), c. 1910; Navajo plain silver squash blossom necklace with *naja* (crescent) pendant, 1892; Zuni turquoise pin, c. 1925.



polished, some in the rough. The Zunis are known as lapidarists, but there also are skilled gem workers

among the Navajos, Hopis and Santo Domingos.

The Facets of Handcrafting Silver



Above—Newly sandcast buckle, left, and bracelets. The bracelet in foreground has been left unpolished to show the texture of the cast silver. Below—Cochiti Pueblo craftsman Cre Suina sandcasts a bracelet at Packard's Chaparral Trading Post, Santa Fe.

Sandcasting

Two slabs of pumice or other soft stone are ground smooth. The design is carved into one with a knife or file. Melted silver must be able to flow into all incisions; vents are scratched on the surface to prevent air pockets. Both mold and the other slab are heated to permit the silver to flow freely. The slabs are banded together. The silver is poured into an orifice between. The casting is filed and polished. Bracelets are shaped by hammering.

PACKARD'S CHAPARRAL TRADING POST, SANTA FE



Inlay

This is a basically Zuni technique in which a mosaic of stones is placed in depressions on a silver bezel, or crown. Each piece is ground to fit its given space. The bezel is soldered onto silver plate. Inlay apparently grew out of the prehistoric setting of turquoise, shell and jet in wood, bone and shell. Piñon pitch fixed the stones. Aluminum filler is used today.



Against a Navajo blanket, examples of turquoise inlay: the bracelet at left includes coral, the pin jet, mother-of-pearl and coral.

Overlay

The craftsman begins work with two silver sheets of the same shape. The design is cut in one sheet with a jeweler's saw. It is overlaid on the solid piece, giving it depth. The two are sweated together with a torch. The bottom piece is then turned black with liver of sulfur to make the design stand out more. Polishing makes the object appear to have been created from a single sheet of heavy silver.



PACKARD'S CHAPARRAL TRADING POST, SANTA FE



Overlays, the bolo tie set with turquoise, the bracelets unadorned.

Telling the Good From the Bad

The other day a couple came in to show me a bargain they'd bought in a concha belt, only \$250. They got very upset when I told them the conchas had been machine-pressed, probably taken about 20 minutes. A hand-stamped belt would have taken 20 hours and been worth \$500. People are getting taken like that all the time.

Speaking is Al Packard, a second-generation Indian trader from Santa Fe. Packard can spot phony jewelry as fast as a T-man can bogus bills.

Indian jewelry attracts imitators as Rembrandt and Renoir attract counterfeiters. With the growing popularity of Indian crafts, the attraction is growing.

Hand-made, a piece of Indian jewelry is "unique" in the precise sense of the word. One and only, as is each Rembrandt and Renoir.

Yet much "Indian" jewelry is produced on mechanized assembly lines, some by Indian factory workers' so the manufacturer can claim "Indian made." And some has been imported from such countries as Japan and Mexico.

And much "turquoise" is faked from plastic and produced in the United States and abroad.

Some genuine turquoise of soft, porous grade (3 to 4 on a scale that measures a diamond 10) is "treated." Heat and pressure harden it. Plastic is impregnated to give it a permanent blue, simulating quality natural turquoise.

Pure turquoise — of a hardness of 6 to 7 — comes in all shades of green and blue. The harder the turquoise, the less likely to change color. Indians themselves prefer blue, but the color choice is yours. There is no "best" type. Some buyers like stones without webbed and spotted matrixes, others incline toward matrix shades of brown, red, gray, yellow, black or white.

Pure turquoise that has been cut and polished is worth up to \$250 and more a pound; the treated, \$6 to \$30.

Reputable dealers sell treated turquoise, but tell you what you're getting. If you like a piece, buy it. The thing is, know what you're buying.

Silver worked by Southwestern Indian craftsmen is about 92 per cent pure, 8 per cent copper alloy. But some "craftsmen" and their dealers try to pass off "pot metal" — tin and lead base, but no silver — as the real thing.

The New Mexico Legislature, in its 1973 session, made it illegal to sell "authentic Indian arts and crafts" unless they are indeed such and

decreed that machine-made Indian products must be labeled "imitation."

You can't become an instant expert in Indian jewelry. How to find a reputable dealer? In New Mexico, go for advice to one of our many museums or to the chamber of commerce in the community where you're shopping. If buying elsewhere, check a museum that maintains a curator of Indian arts and crafts.



What Is 'Pawn'?

Trading posts that abound on Southwestern Indian reservations are general store, social center, post-office, job agency. And they are the local banks.

Many Indians convert cash into jewelry. When they need money or credit, they bring a ring or necklace, say, to the trader. This collateral is "pawn."

To collectors, "old pawn" denotes fine early pieces obtained from trading posts as "dead," or unredeemed, security. While of historic interest, old pawn does not guarantee high quality.

What to Look For In Indian Jewelry

Quality of handcrafted Indian jewelry has never been higher.

Quantity to meet the public demand has never been lower.

These are the esthetics and economics of a rising market.

Forms and designs have gone through as many metamorphoses as a butterfly. Quality has fluctuated with these changes.

We have traced the early evolution of Southwestern Indian jewelry. Came the advent of tourism and of outlets elsewhere in the late 19th century. New forms emerged: ash trays, salad sets, cuff links, tie bars, cigarette boxes, money clips, along with ornaments mounted with commercial jeweler's pins. There was nothing intrinsically wrong with producing these new forms: craftsmen of any age have reacted to demand. But quality fell as some craftsmen found they could earn more by selling more.

Designs also were affected by buyers' wishes. Thunderbirds and crossed arrows proliferated. The average tourist seemed to reflect bad taste.

But Indian good taste and that of enlightened traders were to prevail. Recent decades have seen reversion to age-old motifs — from ancient pottery designs, symbols on Navajo sandpaintings and the like... clouds, rain, lightning, birds...

Incidentally, while some designs are borrowed from ceremonial figures, they do not reflect Indian religion. That the Indians incorporate the cross does not reflect Christian adherence. Nor, as widely believed, are naja and squash blossom symbols of fertility. If a dealer tells you so, beware!

The quantity of quality jewelry is falling because better paying jobs are opening up to Indians in such fields as construction and roadwork as well, with their nimble fingers, as electronics and drafting. Natural artists though Indians may be, many are not willing to sacrifice economic well-being for their craft. Those who stick to it are demanding more for their time and skill.

The trend is toward further Indianization of design, increasing stylization, smoother finish.



Superb Navajo Work

Modern Navajo earring, squash blossom necklace with naja, bracelets and ring.



PACKARD'S CHAPARRAL TRADING POST, SANTA FE

How to Care For Indian Jewelry

A hard turquoise will stand such abuses as do gemstones. Softer turquoise should be handled as you would treat a fine painting. It should never be allowed to strike or rub against any object. It should never be exposed to sweat, body oils, lather, acids, grease, hand creams, even perfumes. All pieces should be wiped with chamois after handling; rings should be removed before washing hands.

As for old silver, tarnish is part of its value. For other silver, a jeweler's rouge cloth should restore its luster. If badly tarnished, it may be cleaned with ammonia and a toothbrush or buffer. Rinse well after scrubbing. Paste polishes and liquid dips destroy blackness that is meant to be there. If by chance this oxidation is removed, it may be restored by brushing on dissolved liver of sulfur, available at most drugstores. Polish after the surface has dried.



New and Valued

Upper—Navajo cuff links, plain silver squash blossom necklace, bracelet, belt buckle, ring, bolo tie, pin. Navajos stress mass and simplicity. Turquoise sets—large stones and few—are designed to enhance the beauty of the silver. Middle—Zuni belt buckle, ring, earrings, pins, watchband, cuff links, money clip. Zunis emphasize stones rather than silver, using many in one piece. Lower—Traditional kachina surrounded by Hopi belt buckle, watchband, cuff links, pin, necklace with cross. Hopis base much jewelry on their distinctive pottery designs which they executed in overlay.



ARROWSMITH-FENN GALLERIES, SANTA FE



Above—Santo Domingo jewelry (with San Juan pot), left to right, disc shell bead choker with tubular silver beads; shell bolo tie inlaid with turquoise, jet, coral, shell; necklace strung with nondescript fetishes and olivella shell heishe (disc beads); bracelet inlaid with turquoise and coral; ring inlaid with turquoise; plain silver sandcast belt buckle; necklace of

serpentine beads. While their work resembles Navajo, Santo Domingos have excelled since prehistoric times in heishe used alone or with turquoise. Below—Navajo concha belts, the two at left c. 1930, the others modern, from collection at Arrowsmith-Fenn Galleries, Santa Fe.



ARROWSMITH-FENN GALLERIES, SANTA FE

The Romance of Navajo Weaving

Produced and
Photographed by H. L. James



Pueblo Looms, Spanish Sheep,

Navajo is synonymous with weaving wool.

The Navajos, numbering about 130,000, are the largest tribe in the United States. They live on the largest reservation, larger than West Virginia, that takes in chunks of New Mexico, Utah and Arizona. They are relative newcomers to the Southwest, having arrived from the north perhaps as recently as the 17th century.

The Pueblo Indians along New Mexico's Rio Grande were weaving cotton some seven centuries before conquistador Coronado reached the Southwest in 1540. Cultivated cotton had come up from today's Mexico. It was woven on upright looms into muslin-like *mantas* for wraps and blankets.

Coronado and other early Spaniards brought Spain's *churro* sheep for meat and wool. Colonists taught the Pueblos to use the churro's long, straight fleece on their cotton looms.

The Navajos were nomadic hunters and gatherers of wild foods. From their isolation, they raided the Spaniards and Pueblos for sheep and other livestock. They thus became herders and sometime farmers.

During this era, the Pueblos in 1680 drove the Spaniards south out of New Mexico. In 1692-93, the Spaniards reconquered much of the kingdom, sending some Pueblos fleeing. Pueblo refugees settled among the unconquered Navajos. The Pueblos taught the Navajos weaving. It became — and has remained — woman's work . . . woman's art.

The Navajos wove blankets, clothing, belts. Patterns were plain, mainly narrow stripes. Colors were mostly of natural wools and their blends: white, black, gray, brown, tan. Eventually indigo plant crystals were imported by the Spaniards and quickly became popular for blue.

By 1795, a New Mexico governor reported that the Navajos "work their wool with more delicacy and taste than the Spaniards."

Output soared. The Navajos wove blankets not only for themselves but for sale or trade to other Indians, to Spaniards and, with the United States seizing the Southwest in 1845, to Anglo soldiers and settlers.

Meantime, English baize — called here the more romantic Spanish

bayeta — had arrived via Mexico to supply brilliant yarn, mainly red, when unraveled by the Navajos. Down the 800-mile Santa Fe Trail now came German Saxony and U.S. flannel to broaden the color spectrum. Checks, diamonds and the like emerged, but patterns remained relatively simple.

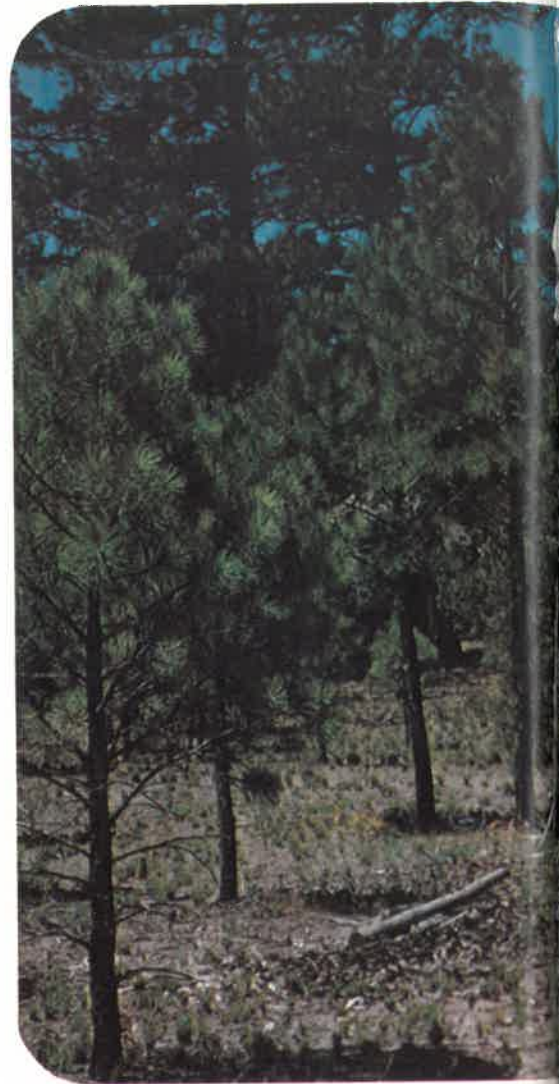
What's termed the Classic Period of Navajo weaving ended abruptly. The Spaniards never could tame the Navajos, though the Navajos long had raided settlements (often in reprisal for New Mexican raids). In 1863-64, U.S. troops led by Kit Carson rounded up some 8,000 Navajos. They were marched about 400 miles and interned near Ft. Sumner along the Pecos River in east-central New Mexico.

Four years later, the Navajos, considered pacified, were permitted to return to their beloved homeland. Weaving gradually picked up. About 1880, Germantown yarn (named for a Pennsylvania textile city) appeared in gaudy hues created by aniline, or chemical, dyes. Cheap dyes themselves also showed up. "Eye dazzler" blankets became the rule. Workmanship, too, declined. This period represented a nadir in morale among a subdued people once free as the winds that howl across their plateaus.

After the Civil War, government-licensed, Anglo-operated trading posts had cropped up throughout the reservation. Navajoland was flooded with machine-made Pendleton (Ore.) blankets. They were a bargain compared with the time put into weaving blankets for Navajo use. Happily, traders began at this juncture to advocate the public's use of Navajo blankets as rugs.

To meet public response, some traders accepted from the Navajos almost any design and texture that would sell. Other traders insisted on quality, thus probably saving the craft. Thicker weaving suitable for rugs, yet closer strands. Styles typifying the Classic Period, though almost all rugs with boxed borders that appealed to the Eastern clientele. Natural dyes: yellow from rabbit brush, black from sumac, piñon pitch and ocher ore, red from mountain mahogany root.

Weavers gradually regained pride. They were pressed to keep up with



Preceding page—Louise Begay of Ganado at her loom. Opposite—Mrs. Begay and son tending their family's sheep. The herding life is strenuous, especially when snow blankets the sparse grasslands.

demand. Through Juan Lorenzo Hubbell of Ganado, Ariz., the Fred Harvey Company (of "Harvey girls" fame) sold hundreds of "Ganado reds" at tourist outlets along the Santa Fe Railroad.

About 1910, U.S. Indian agents, seeking to increase tribal meat supplies, introduced flocks of French Rambouillet sheep. Their fleece, short and oily, was hard to work. Resultant rugs were coarse, their whites a dirty gray. Prices fell. Weavers lost interest.

To stimulate them, some traders tried buying rugs by the pound. Many weavers then left in dirt — even rubbed in more — and grease.

But neither the Navajos nor quality-minded traders gave up. A

Anglo Stimulus, Navajo Craftsmanship



new stimulus came from L. H. McSparron of the trading post at Chinle, Ariz. McSparron encouraged nearby weavers to return to the old vegetal dyes and Classic Period stripes and bands, without borders.

A Navajo Sheep Breeding Laboratory was set up at Ft. Wingate, east of Gallup. The Rambouillet was improved to yield not only finer fleece but more mutton.

A need was felt across the reservation for a wider, subtler color range for the refined textures now coming off the looms.

Lucy C. Cabot, a Boston dye expert, got Du Pont to test and bring out anilines that provided a broad flexibility of tones. Other companies followed.

Vegetable dyes came under intensive study in 1930 by Nonabah G. Bryan, a Navajo woman who taught weaving at a Ft. Wingate high school.

Mrs. Bryan eventually created 84 separate dyes — that could be combined in a virtual infinity of hues — from a wide variety of regional plants, berries, bark, fruit and flowers.

So pleasing did customers find the new vegetal shades that authority Gilbert S. Maxwell calls their development "the most important and far-reaching *modern* innovation in Navajo textile art."

With the evolution in fleece and revolution in color, Navajo weavers were ready by the 1940s to innovate new patterns in their resurgence of pride. From at least nine Navajoland weaving centers now come designs and colors so distinctive as to be recognized at a glance.

While the regional style is the dominant textile force in Navajoland today, it accounts for only about 40 per cent of rugs woven. Weavers

like to experiment. In decades of dealing with them, Maxwell found only three matching rugs. Even within a region, a weaver may create something entirely different from its style. Such is categorized a "general rug." Then there are such specialties as the two-faced, pictorial, twill, tufted saddle throw and sandpainting.

Nor is the product of a regional-style weaver found only in trading posts of that region. In search for the highest price, she will drive the ubiquitous pickup from one post to another. This is called "roaming about" of rugs. It's an unpardonable sin to label a type for the trading post where it is bought. These days, posts offer a wide selection of regional and other types. This goes for urban dealers as well.

If hand-created by Navajos, they are all Navajo rugs.

1



Sheep to Rug

1—Shearing This is usually done in the spring when the fleece is thickest. A small part of the flock is corralled. A sheep is flanked. Using crude metal shears, a skillful worker clips from neck to tail, trying to keep the fleece in one piece. Select wool is from back, shoulders and flanks. Shorter fibers are bagged for sale at a trading post.

2—Cleaning The shorn wool is picked of burrs, twigs and other debris. If it's exceptionally dirty, a washing is required. After a fluffing, the wool is set out for airing and the drying of its animal oils. At the same time, some weavers sprinkle white clay or gypsum on the fleece as a whitener.

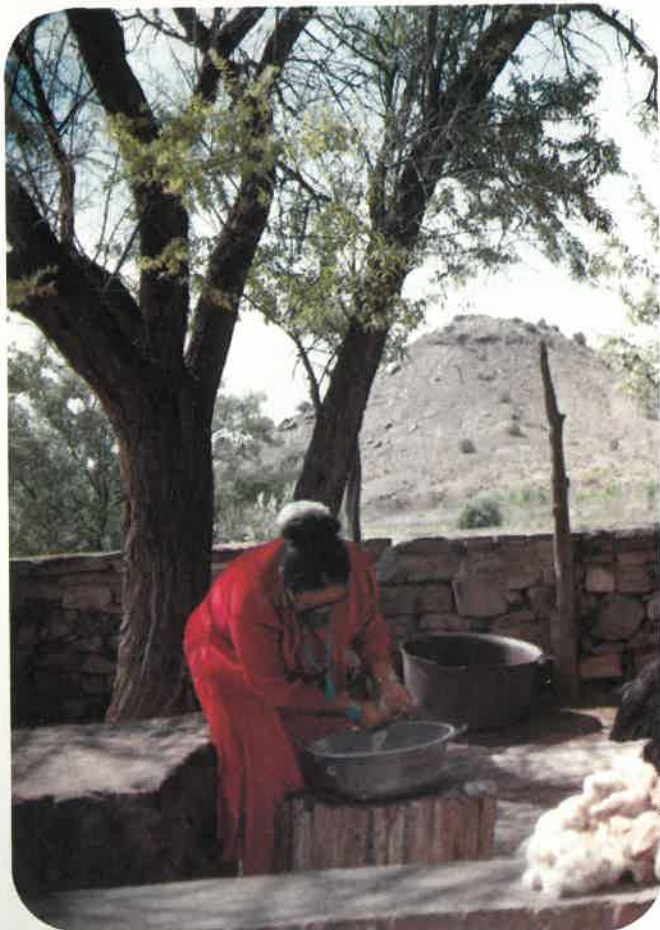
3—Carding A handful of tangled fiber is raked by two hand-held, metal-toothed tow cards. This leaves the wool in long, loose rolls of fairly uniform strands. It also serves, from the forward-backward towing, as a second cleaning. Carding is the hardest task in the rug-making process. Many weavers have thus turned to precarded skeins, bought from traders.

4—Spinning The spindle resembles a miniature ski pole. It is twirled with the right hand while carded wool is fed onto it with the left. The wool fibers cling to each other as they are twirled, stretched and jerked. Less spinning is required for the heavier vertical warp, which might be called the rug's chassis. More twirling will produce finer threads for the horizontal weft, the rug's painted, chromium-plated body.

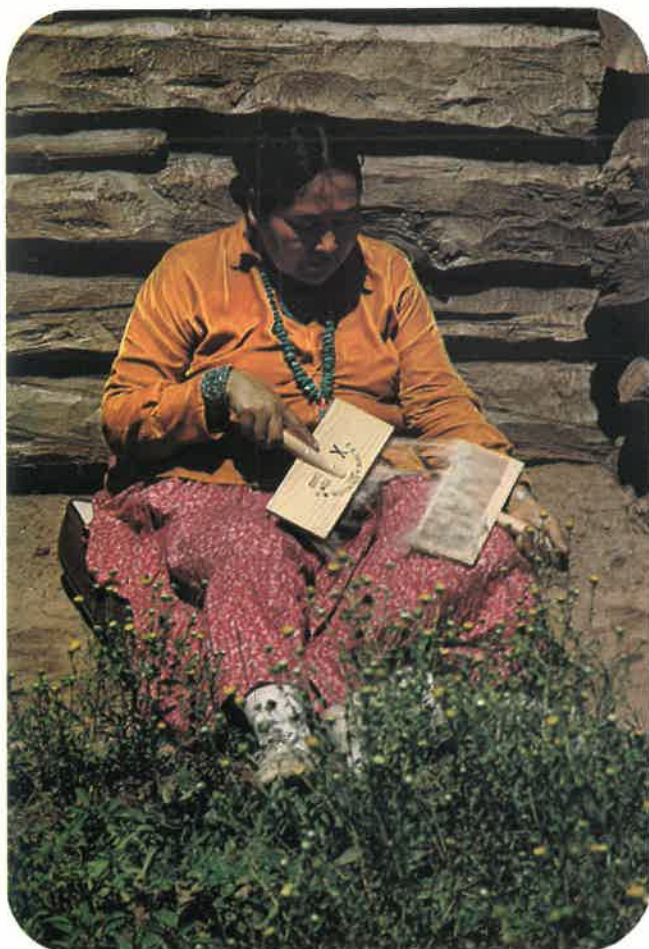
5—Dyeing The yarn must be washed. Some Navajos still prefer roots of yucca, plants of the lily family common in the Southwest, to commercial soap. The dye bath is an enamel kettle filled with boiling water. For anilines, a few dips are enough. For vegetal, the weaver rubs the liquid dye into the yarn many times daily for as long as a week. Some weavers neglect to wash the dyed yarn anew, which deters fading.

6—Weaving The Navajos' vertical loom consists of two upright and two crosspiece logs, usually of cedar. The warp threads are strung vertically and separated alternately by heddle rods. Color changes required to weave designs generally are made by reversing the direction of a weft by looping it around a warp. The wefts are tamped into place with a fork, a wood-toothed comb.

2



3



5



4



6





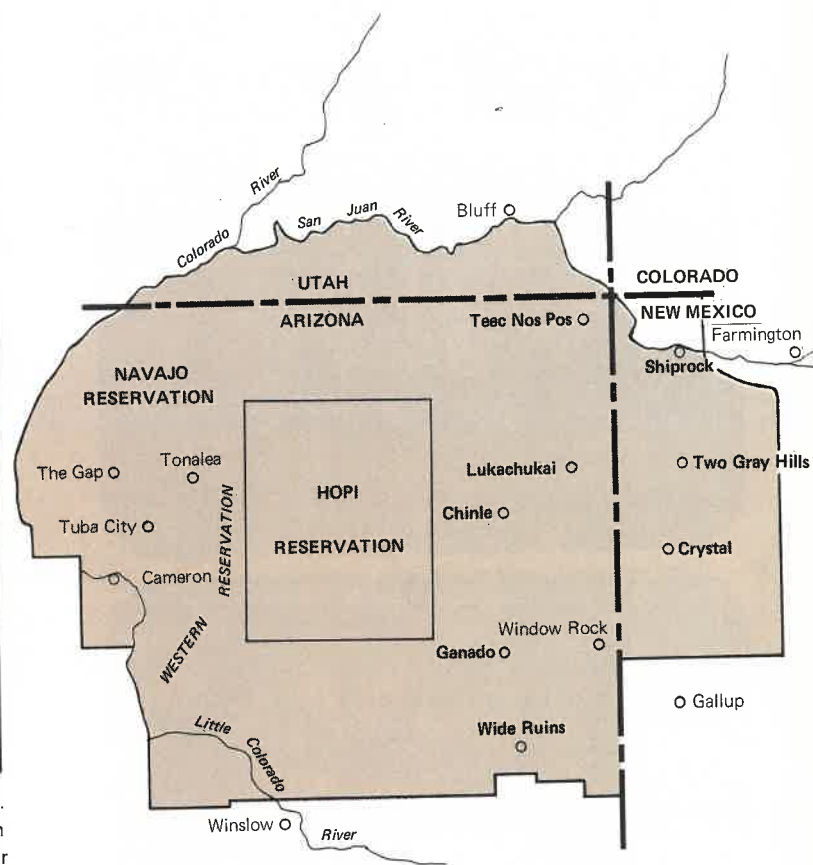
Shiprock is named for a nearby volcanic mass sacred to the Navajos as **Winged Rock**. Its rug style was developed about the turn of the century from representations of supernatural beings called **Yei** on ceremonial sandpaintings. The Shiprock region also produces **Yei-bichai**, depicting a line of Navajo dancers representing Yei. The rugs have no religious significance. Comparable to fine paintings, Shiprock Yeis make admirable wall hangings.



Lukachukai (Place of Slender Reeds) is a second source of Yei rugs. Compared with Shiprock's, these are larger, contain only hand-spun yarn and, rather than white, are of vegetal-dyed beige, gray, red or black background. Their figures are less lustrous, less detailed. Of heavier weave, most Lukachukai Yeis are normally used as rugs.



Major Regional Styles



Teec Nos Pos (Circle of Cottonwoods) produces tightly-woven rugs that have been called the "least Navajo" of all regional styles. They have an intricate Persian flair; every design is outlined in contrasting color. They embody mainly commercial yarn. Their flamboyance makes them difficult to blend into home decorating, so Teec Nos Pos are mainly for the serious collector.



Two Gray Hills gives its name to the reservation's most prized rug. Within a black aniline border, fibers of natural color, blended to produce grays and browns, are used in a symmetrical balance of geometrical design. A Two Gray Hills is the finest Navajo textile, from intensive carding and high thread count: up to 110 wefts per inch, as in fine cashmere, compared with 30-50 elsewhere. Small tapestries have sold for \$5,000.



Chinle (It Flows From the Canyon) reflects a style revived from the 1850s. Chinle rugs, unbordered, give one a feeling of balance and spaciousness from broad bands separating terraced designs. Their backgrounds usually are natural white, their colors mainly vegetable with some aniline to outline or accent designs. Their weave is somewhat less delicate than other regional work.



Ganado (Spanish for **herd**) was created by Juan Lorenzo Hubbell, who ran a trading post there from 1878 to 1930 that is now a National Historic Site. The rug is often known as "Ganado red" from its strong background. Ganados combine grays and whites with aniline reds and blacks that are woven into bold crosses and diamonds. While usually of rug size, some Ganados are being woven smaller for tapestries.



Crystal (from Navajo meaning **Crystal Water Flows Out**) weaves the most distinctive of all Navajo styles. Its motif is straight and "wavy line" panels—the latter alternating two or three wefts of contrasting color — with simple designs between. Hues are mainly earthen, from vegetable dyes; there is no border. The Crystal lends itself to modern home decorating.



Wide Ruins (named for a nearby prehistoric site) is the reservation's main center for all-vegetable dyes — these blended in subtle shades. Some fiber of natural color also is used. Wide Ruins rugs, while outwardly spare, are complex in ornamentation, without borders. In sum, they represent perhaps the finest artistic expression found in any Navajo rugs.



Storm Pattern is produced at such western Navajo centers as Tuba City, Cameron, Tonalea and The Gap. Storm Pattern rugs are highly symmetrical yet profuse in such elements as zigzags, diamonds, arrows and boxes. Weaving is mainly in aniline red, black, gray and white combinations.



Louise Begay's daughter Elsie delivers a completed rug to Bill Young at Hubbell's Trading Post, Ganado, for inspection and possible sale.

How to Buy a Navajo Rug

- Buy only from reputable dealers. Get recommendations from museums and chambers of commerce.
- Being handmade, a Navajo rug is not perfect. Slight flaws are acceptable if they don't detract from its over-all charm.
- To catch serious flaws and built-in wrinkles, insist that a rug be laid out fully.
- Check the weave for tightness, uniform design, straight edges. Don't accept untied cords and exposed warp threads.
- Examine the texture for smoothness—for lumps and thin areas.
- Each color should be of consistent hue. Guard against gray casts in the natural white.
- Consider the size and motif in terms of intended use: rug, tapestry, furniture drape, etc.
- If the above criteria are met, buy the rug if the price is right. No prices are cited herein for individual rugs because they fluctuate constantly. A rug worth \$100 in 1968 brings \$500

today, a rise of about 20 per cent a year. For the right price, you'll perhaps depend on your reliable dealer. Generally, a quality Navajo rug is a good investment.

How to Care for Your Rug

- Use a foam mat beneath.
- Rotate and turn over every six months or so to attain uniformity of wear and mellowing of color.
- Never shake out: the snapping can loosen end cords, causing threads to unravel. Normal vacuum cleaning is enough.
- Never wash. Commercial removers usually will take care of spots. For major cleaning, ask your rug dealer to recommend a specialist.
- If water is spilled, blot at once to minimize running of colors. Aniline-dyed rugs are most apt to run.
- Moth-proof at least annually, tapes-tries on both sides. Moths are a bigger threat to these and stored rugs.
- To store, moth-proof, roll and put in a cedar chest. Folding may create permanent creases.

- When curling occurs at ends, untie tasseled cords, pull to the outside, smooth the surface and retie.
- Properly cared for, a Navajo rug will last 30, 40 or more years.

What It Costs to Make a Rug

From shearing through weaving, the Navajo woman puts in an average 388 hours—or 48½ eight-hour days—on a vegetable-dyed three-by-five-foot rug. This includes about 40 hours for carding, 90 spinning, 160 weaving, the rest for related efforts.

At a possible wholesale price of \$500, this works out to about \$1.30 an hour. This compares with about 15 cents as recently as a decade ago.

Al Packard, a Santa Fe trader who has been in the business since boyhood, sums it up: "If the weaver's income hadn't increased tremendously, there would be few, if any rugs, on the market today."

For a time, fewer girls each year were learning to weave from their mothers, with more and better-paying jobs opening up on the reservation, in nearby communities and elsewhere. With weaving income now closing in on the federal minimum wage, says Packard, there seems to be some reverse in this trend.

"The future of the Navajo rug depends on how much the public is willing to pay for this object of art," Packard says. "If the rug buyer looks at a Navajo rug simply as a floor covering, he should go to the chain store."

"Navajo rug sales slowed on the retail level in 1973, which must indicate that the Navajo rug market is almost saturated in terms of rug costs. The squeeze is on. It will be a race to see whether the weaver or the buyer will give."



These Are Our Authorities

Much research for this article was carried out over many years in Navajoland. Among valuable published sources are *Navajo Rugs, Past, Present and Future* by Gilbert S. Maxwell, Best-West Publications, Palm Desert, Calif., *Navaho Weaving, Its Technic and History* by Charles Avery Amsden, Rio Grande Press, Glorieta, N.M., and *Southwestern Indian Arts and Crafts* by Tom Bahti, KC Publications, Las Vegas, Nev.

A Pantheon of Kachinas

by
Florence Hawley
Ellis

photographs by Mark Nohl





Previous page — A Hopi Mastof — a very old Hopi spirit rarely represented today by performing kachina dancers — is still depicted in dolls. **Above** — left — a mocking kachina, who makes fun of people and other spirits. Note his blue jeans and brogans, popular at the time the kachina was made. Center — War God. Right — Apache kachina, representing a spirit of the Apache people. All three from Hopi. Girard Foundation Collection.

Much has been written about kachinas — religion, dancers, dolls. And much that has been written has been inaccurate, specious and deeply offensive to the Pueblo Indians. This, after all, is part of their religion — often a very private part. Here at New Mexico Magazine, we are attempting to set the record straight, correcting the reams of printed misinformation with this accurate picture of kachinas, written by an eminent and respected authority.

There, materializing out of the shadows as dawn begins to open over the mesas, stands Crow Mother in her dark costume — mother of the Hu kachinas and some say mother to all of the Hopi water and fertility spirits. Quietly she chants over the plaque of prayer plumes that she will place at a shrine at the edge of the village. What is lovelier than the soft fluff and color of a perfectly tied prayer plume — feathers to become



Several Hopi Mudheads perform the kiva ceremony for water and fertility, bringing the sacred horned or plumed serpent out of a big jar. Girard Foundation Collection.

clothing for the gods after they have carried the message that filled the heart as the feathers were tied? What more fully wraps one in peace and beauty than this quiet proof that kachinas still are of and with the world?

The pantheon of kachinas is not

originally of Hopi conception, though it is from these Pueblo people that those of us who similarly love the spirit-personifications have learned the most. The 19 Pueblo tribes of New Mexico also carry the belief that their ancestors came up from the underworld womb of Mother Earth



A group of Acoma-Laguna kachinas. Spruce twigs are tied around the body of the figurine at ritual periods as a prayer and a representation of everlasting life. Girard Foundation Collection.

and that kachinas came with them. The opening through which they emerged, variously placed by different tribes, is symbolized by a cave, a crevice, a lake or a spring, which is venerated as their most important and secret shrine. Here they are closest to the Mother. That feeling is worth even a long pilgrimage except when, by mischance, whites acquire the land or move so close that offerings are unsafe and prayers cannot be said in the privacy required for communication between man and the supernatural beings.

The Hopi, except for a few individuals who may have been soured by unpleasant contacts, still

intend that their prayers and presentations shall bring good to all peoples. Ceremonies, say they, are even more effective if whites join in praying with a good heart. On the other hand, visitors must not forget that space may become a problem in small native plazas when busloads of outsiders arrive.

The Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Arizona were friendly and curious when the early Spaniards arrived in the 16th and 17th centuries. But these outsiders soon created and left a never-ending trauma in the psyches of their hosts. The two main goals of the Spanish conquerors were acquisition of riches

for themselves and king, and conversion to Catholicism of all whose religion appeared different from their own.

When material gain obviously was not forthcoming, concentration on the saving of souls was reemphasized, presumably for the benefit of native peoples. The eventual result was a mingling of Catholicism and native religion. But after repeated burning of masks and strenuous punishment of religious leaders (who originally also handled secular administration in the pueblos), the most sacred native practices understandably went underground. Kachina dances were held outside the

village or in a kiva or a plaza with guards posted.

Even today Lagunas will politely explain to a trusted friend that although they wish they might invite him to a masked dance, any white person who saw a kachina would automatically have his own face marked for life. Only recently I strayed into Santo Domingo to buy Christmas jewelry from old friends, only to be ejected with angry shouts from a mass of moving people who had been summoned to the plaza to ritually greet returned hunters. How should I — or they — know that for once some official had forgotten to post guards?

According to the old Pueblo concept, the pantheon of supernatural beings was dominated by a somewhat vaguely conceived sexless or male Sky God, sometimes more or less confused with Sun and eventual-

ly identified as the primary deity of the whites. Sun definitely was male, powerful, greatly revered and associated with such manly pursuits as warfare, though not with the same closeness as that of his two sons, the Twin War Gods — symbolized by the Morning and the Evening stars.

In New Mexico the beloved Earth or Corn Mother, who has continued to live by the sacred lake in the underworld to which the spirits of the dead will return, has been more or less identified with the Catholic Virgin Mary. The patron saints conferred on each pueblo by the Spanish religious officials have been moved into the ranks of kachinas and receive their cross-marked prayer plumes on appropriate occasions. The Hopi, so distant from Spanish centers, successfully repelled the initial efforts at proselytization and, except for a few who have accepted

the later efforts of missionaries, continue in their own faith.

How many kachinas are there? One cannot really count them because as time has passed some have been lost or intentionally retired and others added, especially at Hopi. As everything which exists has an inner spirit or soul, a kachina form with man-like body and mask-type head can be made to symbolize anything in which the people have interest. Kachinas, like the higher gods, are neither all good nor all bad but, like ourselves, enjoy moments of each. Neither are they all-serious: the Pueblos long have believed in the efficacy of laughter as a life force. The Hopi do not hesitate to dress a male dancer as an opulently endowed pregnant Navajo female or a ludicrously made-up white tourist with bare legs and fake camera. Mickey Mouse is one of



Above — The ever-popular Mudheads come as many individualistic personages. Their capers are intended to lighten the heart but also to discourage by ridicule any behavior considered unseemly in the culture. **Right** — Left — Messy Hair Boy kachina. Center — Grandmother of the Powamu (bean ceremony) kachinas. Right — Owl kachina. All from Hopi. Girard Foundation Collection.





Richard C. Sandoval



Top Left — Center — Hemis [Jemez] kachina. The wearing of *tablitas* [headdresses] is common in Rio Grande ceremonialism but not at Hopi. This kachina is said to have been brought westward by migrants from New Mexico. The Hemis kachina appears in the Hopi home-going ceremony that dismisses the kachinas to their rest at the close of the crop season. Two versions of Butterfly Maiden are at the sides of the Hemis kachina. Bottom Left — A Butterfly Maiden [left] and two Shalako Maidens. These are not properly kachinas because they are not masked. All from Hopi. Bottom Right — Left to right — Owl, Squirrel, Bird, Dog and Squash kachinas from Hopi. Girard Foundation Collection.

their latest additions.

In general kachinas are thought of in two categories — there are the specific powerful or chief kachinas who are grouped into named families but who also have their own particular names, attributes of appearance, and personal interests and idiosyncrasies, and there are the more generalized kachinas who are represented in groups rather than as individuals in public performances and into whose ranks man moves at death.

Details vary by pueblo. Some place the most important deities among the chief kachinas; some think of them as of another category. All rivers, lakes and springs are considered to be outlets (or inlets) to the sacred lake under the earth. They can be used by kachinas in their goings and comings and are in themselves sacred. According to native theology the kachinas, like the spirits of the sacred curing animals, originally visited with the people of the very early villages, but after a time the people became jealous of kachina power. According to some, a battle ended the visits of actual kachinas but those spirits remained kind enough to promise that if the Pueblo people would call them with offerings and correct impersonations in dance and drama when needed, they would continue to confer their blessings.

Before tribal initiation, formerly conferred on youngsters from six to eight years of age but now often delayed until they are well into their teens, children are supposed to be kept ignorant of the fact that the kachinas seen in pueblo celebrations are costumed men of the village. In some pueblos girls never are officially given this secret. Only in Zia, Santa Ana and Jemez were



Above — A group of Zuni kachinas. Left — Two Warriors. Right — Zuni Shalako. Foreground — Bee kachina. Girard Foundation Collection.

women permitted to perform. As in Shakespearean days, men took female parts. Masked performers actually are supposed to be suffused with the spirit of the supernatural being who is being represented and hence should not be closely approached. In most cases they may not speak but must convey messages by gestures, although Hopi kachinas sing through their masks.

In New Mexico a number of the dances given on saints' days in the pueblos have been identified as maskless kachina dances. The loss of the mask in this case has resulted from early Spanish efforts, and the permission for whites to attend such

performances stems from the fact that the saints belonged to whites before they were known to the Indians. Native spirits and deities, however, share with the saints in the offerings and prayers on saints' days.

Most Hopi kachina "dolls" originally were made to be given by the kachinas to children so that they could learn to identify individual personages. Certain images at Hopi and in the Rio Grande area were handed to women who desired children. The early Hopi kachina dolls were small, flat painted boards. When sharp implements were more easily available, arms, legs and feet were depicted in simple form and



Top — Left — Cross-Legged kachina and his Mana [female version of the kachina], along with two other very old Hopi kachinas. **Bottom** — The Star kachina on the right and the one on the left are from Zuni — note the articulated arms. The center two are old Hopi kachinas. Girard Foundation Collection.



bodies were rounded. Feather and yarn decorations were attached. Finally realistic carving was attempted, and very successfully. Zuni kachina dolls differed from the Hopi in being provided with movable arms and cloth or buckskin clothing. Clothing also appeared on some Hopi dolls.

Other New Mexico pueblos continued in their old convention of making female dolls in tabular type and male dolls as rods with a cut delineating the division between head and body. Few of these or of the Zuni figures are seen because sale to outsiders and even general viewing has been allowed only by the Hopi. One best appreciates Zuni kachinas in the glorious array in which the Council of the Gods appears at the Shalako, that public indoor night dance late in November or early in December which is part of the succession of observances leading up to the winter solstice.

At Hopi or Zuni, visitors who watch one of the open summer dances glance now and again at the thunderheads billowing over the edge of the horizon. The sun is warm, the air is dry, but the kachinas are rain spirits and old-timers have raincoats in their cars.

One may struggle onto the Hopi mesas for the February Bean Dance in a driving snowstorm and find a welcome invitation to come in and get warm.

Is this your first visit? In the dusky light we watch a family of ogre kachinas going from house to house threatening naughty children with being carried off to be eaten. But the frightened tots are always successfully ransomed by fond mothers who trade haunches of meat and ground corn and pinkly iced cakes for the safety of their little ones. For a time the offspring will remember to mind their manners!

Where do the kachinas come from? According to Hopi lore they sleep the winter away on top of the San Francisco Peaks 80 miles distant. The Pueblo peoples of New Mexico place them on the sacred mountains

The Snake Dancer. This is not a true kachina because he doesn't have a mask. Girard Foundation Collection. —>



all photos this page
by Richard C. Sandoval



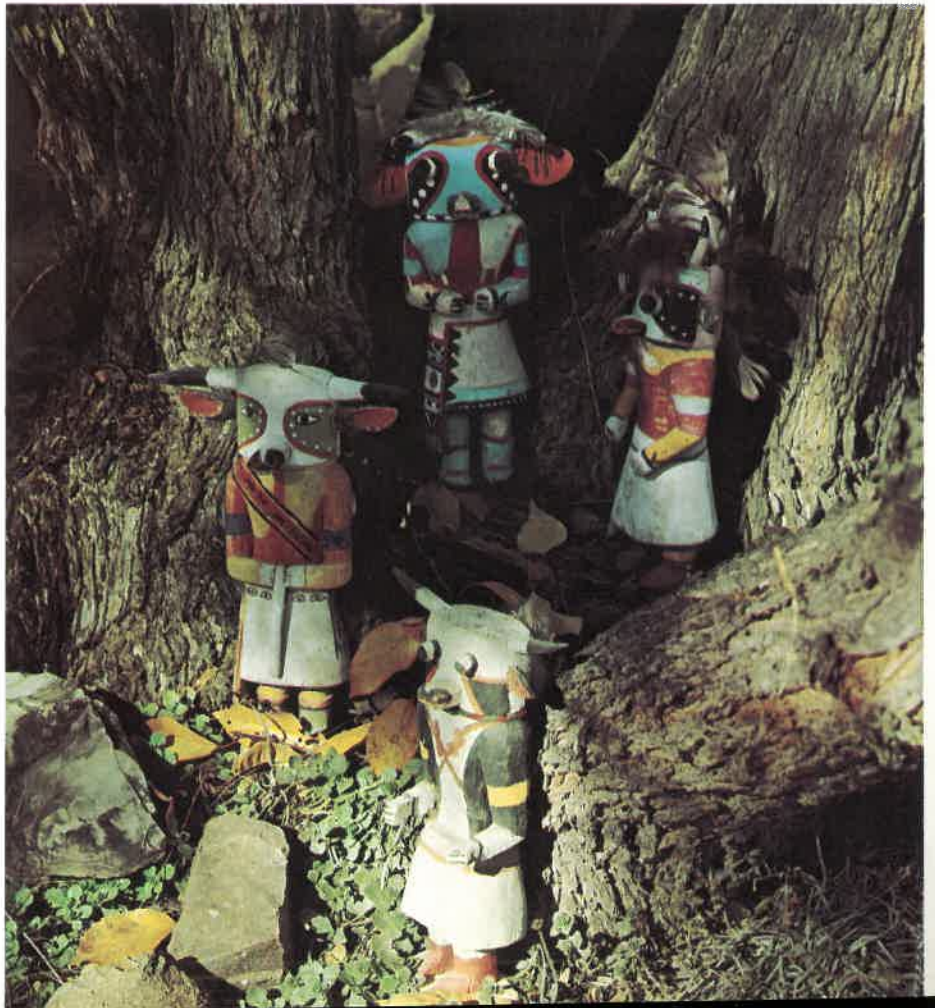
Top Left — Jumping jack kachinas from Second Mesa, Hopi. These may serve as toys for Hopi children, but the Hopi have long been adept at making and manipulating puppets for some of their ceremonies. **Bottom Left** — Hopi Koshare at play. Like the Mudheads, these spirits specialize in fertility and in cheering the people, thereby improving their general health. The Koshare, often called Tesa clowns in Hopi, were introduced into northern Arizona by one of the eastern Pueblo groups that moved west around 1700 to avoid some of the problems that resulted from Spanish settlement in the Rio Grande Valley. **Top Right** — Zuni kachinas wearing woven squaw dresses. Left — Hemokatsiki or Ahea, the much loved great-great-great-grandmother of the kachinas and nurse of the Zuni horned water serpent, Kolowisi. She cooks for the other major kachinas. As the only elderly kachina, she comes to tribal initiations of young persons to bring long life. Right — Maiden. Note the whorls of hair at each side of the head to indicate a young woman ready for marriage. **Bottom Right** — Four Hopi animal kachinas. Left rear — Bighorn. Right rear — Lizard. Front left — Hummingbird. Front right — Eagle. Girard Foundation Collection.



Top — A group of Zuni kachinas. Left — Salimopiya Warrior. Next right — Fire God. These two figures are familiar to those who have attended the Zuni Shalako festivities. Next — two fertility spirits. Far right — Anahoho, one of the many who come for the initiation ceremony of young people. **Bottom** — Four variants of the Hopi Cow or Steer kachina, a relatively late addition to their pantheon. Girard Foundation Collection.

of the cardinal directions. When summoned by ceremonialists, they ride the clouds, following the set route recounted in the chants. Their season for aiding mankind begins in November with the first of a long sequence of public performances that lead up to the final private deposition of offerings to Sun at the winter solstice by the main priests of the village. Sun must be persuaded not to linger unduly in his warm southern home; his turning at the solstice marks the opening of the ceremonial new year.

A few kachinas appear in that New Year's celebration. More come for the Hopi Bean Dance in February, a pre-planting ceremony approximately paralleled in all of the other pueblos that hold the traditional sequence of ceremonial activities.





Left — Soyoka, the Hopi Ogre Woman, appears on the evening after the Bean Dance, when she asks boys to catch game for her — rats and mice, once considered a delicacy! Four days later she returns, and if they have not done as they were bid, she catches them with her crook, kills them with her butcher knife and eats the boys themselves. An effective way to keep lazy boys in line! Girls must make the Ogre Woman piki bread, or suffer the same fate. Right — a male Black Ogre. From a private collection.

After this first spring ritual others take place in close succession, inside the kivas at night and in the plazas during the day. Later, when planting the fields has been started, there is little time for dancing. But throughout the summer the religious societies make their successively scheduled retreats and put on public costumed dances so that the

kachinas will not forget the fertility and rain required by the widespread little farm plots in the valleys, along the washes, among the sandhills and on the mesas.

By the end of July the harvest has begun and the kachinas are dismissed to their rest by the Hopi in a big Niman or Home-Going Dance with first fruits piled in the plazas

and kachina impersonators, like kindly Santa Clauses, seeking out every uninitiated child to present the gifts secretly supplied by his relatives. And let the child beware if he has built up a reputation for misbehavior or he will be last to receive his kachina doll, rattle or brightly tinted rolls of paper bread.

What do we know of the history of the kachina cult?

The pantheon of kachinas is smaller in the Rio Grande pueblos than at Zuni and much smaller than at Hopi, though the specific individuals represented in the eastern pueblos also are to be found among the many others in the western towns. There is some evidence that the kachina cult may have existed in the Upper Rio Grande area earlier than elsewhere in the Southwest, but this is not certain. Certainly it became more elaborate as it spread. Depictions of kachina masks in petroglyphs and pictographs of Pueblo IV (A.D. 1300-1700) in the Galisteo Basin south of Santa Fe and on dark cliffs and boulders bordering the Santa Fe and Rio Grande valleys are numerous. Others recognizable not only as kachinas but as those still being used are found in southern New Mexico. Five early style kachina dolls were found in a ceremonial cache in Double Butte Cave near Phoenix in southern Arizona. The only other item of this general type known to have been excavated is a tabular figure in wood, about 20 inches high, from a cave near Monticello, New Mexico. A cloud-terrace headdress, multi-strand necklace, pendant and ear loops, and small opening in the top where a feather presumably was inserted suggest that this represented one of the rain figures.

Paintings of kachinas and other ceremonial figures have been found on walls of kivas in Hopi area ruins in northern Arizona, at Kuana (Coronado State Monument) near Bernalillo in the Middle Rio Grande, and at Pottery Mound 30 miles southwest of Albuquerque on the Rio Puerco. All of these evidences of the kachina cult date from the 14th or 15th century, but some drawings which definitely appear to be of masks appear on Mimbres pictorial black-on-white bowls of Pueblo III (A.D. 1100-1300). In the Chaco Canyon site known as Bc 50, the profile of a head painted in heavy blue-green pigment



on a cutout tabular piece of wood was uncovered. Its date would have approximated or been slightly earlier than that of the Mimbres examples.

That no actual masks have been found in prehistoric sites usually is explained in relation to the ease with which they would have decayed. A more realistic viewpoint is that as all such objects are believed to embody inherent power. And, as masks must receive exacting care during their entire period of existence or they may retaliate, the masks would be moved whenever their owners moved. We know that masks made for individuals at the time of their initiation are buried in a river or other wet spot at the death of their owner — thus he would have their use in the afterworld. Important masks belonging to religious societies were “fed,” “smoked” and repaired until they became hopelessly dilapidated — then they were set aside to decay (“returned to earth”) or buried in water.

The Southwest was heavily influenced by Mexican culture at various times during the long prehistoric period, though it kept its own flavor. The carriers of influence quite certainly were traders. The most important trade goods probably were macaws, from which feathers were plucked for the use of Pueblo ceremonials.

What did the traders take back to Mexico? We are becoming ever more convinced that it was turquoise, rare south of the present border and highly valued.

Native trading was not something to be concluded in a day, and all conversations between traders and hosts would not have been shop talk. It is easy to picture the men relaxing in one of the kivas that served as their clubhouse when ritual activities were not scheduled. The local farmers listen intently to the visitor from Post-Classic Mexico (A.D. 900-1520):

Top Left — Masau, the Hopi god of death and new growth, holds out a simple Kachina Mother doll, which is usually the first kachina given to a small child.

Top Right — Two modern humorous Hopi kachinas. Warrior Mouse and a University of Arizona basketball player.

Bottom Left — A group of Hopi Mudheads. All from a private collection.





Top — An unusual group from one of the Rio Grande pueblos. Santiago, the patron saint of Spain, was so popular when he was introduced in New Mexico that he was instantly adopted into the pantheon of kachinas. In this group, Santiago —always on horseback —is accompanied by a drummer carrying a Spanish type drum, and one of the “grandfathers” —a sort of ogre who enforces children’s behavior and general propriety.
Bottom — Three Hopi animal kachinas. Left to right — Eagle, Deer and Owl kachinas. From a private collection.



...and just before the rainy season opens I tell you there is a long festival that we must celebrate before we plant. We call it the festival-when-we-eat-bean-food. It is the chief festival of Tlaloc, our earth god of rain and fertility. Every year dancers put on costumes to represent birds, beasts and insects, and perform in front of the temple of Tlaloc to entertain the busy maize and water spirits. If you fellows up here would honor Tlaloc as we do, your corn would grow twice the ears!

The scene is imaginary, of course, but the Mexican festival which ushered in the May planting season was real. Planting begins earlier in our Southwest, but can it be a coincidence that every eight years the Hopi Bean Dance, which today introduces that planting season, is followed by the Pachava, in which some 200 kachinas dressed to represent birds, animals and insects — as well as personifications of several tribes and even some distinctive individuals of the past — concentrate in one plaza to parade and perform? Eototo, the Hopi Tlaloc, carries a symbolic gourd of sacred water when he arrives to take charge of this celebration.

From this easy parallel, the student can go on to numerous others.

Just as the Pueblo leaders of the historic period were without embarrassment in borrowing Catholic saints to insert into their native pantheon, so their ancestors generations before had borrowed, touched up and made their own a modification of many of the supernatural beings and cult practices of Mexico — acquired through trade contacts.

Today the cults of the so-called medicine men's societies, which may be the older component in the local religious scheme, are disappearing. But the cult of the kachinas, beautiful and beneficent, is a combination of art, drama, poetry and religion. And this continues to flourish.



Top Right — Two Acoma-Laguna kachinas. From a private collection. **Bottom Right** — A modern Hopi Bear kachina. Courtesy Packard's Chaparral Trading Post. **Next Page** — A modern Hopi Black Ogre. Courtesy Packard's Chaparral Trading Post.

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THE GREAT FEATHER CONTROVERSY

Originally, all kachina dolls were made for educational and religious purposes and were not designed to be sold. Inevitably, however, many of the figures were sold or traded, and some were made specifically for the tourist trade.

As this issue goes to press, collectors are finding it difficult to purchase kachina dolls. The problem lies in the feathers that are part of so many of the kachina costumes.

Under several U.S. laws designed to protect our birds, feathers of eagles and migratory birds cannot be sold. In effect, the laws include all feathers except those of domestic fowl. The laws apply to all feather-decorated kachinas and ornaments made after 1940. However, the burden of proof of age lies on the seller. Thus, if an Indian, a trader or a collector tries to sell an old feather-decorated kachina, headdress or prayer plume, he can be arrested by an agent of the Department of Interior and be subject to a heavy fine or imprisonment or both.

Ornithologists say it is often quite difficult to identify individual feathers on a kachina. But, from all reports, federal agents, many of them posing as prospective customers, are making the arrests regardless of the identity of the feathers or the purported age of the kachina.

Many Indian traders, including all members of the Indian Arts and Crafts Association, have voluntarily withdrawn all kachinas and other feather-decorated objects from sale until the law is clarified or new legislation passed.

Needless to say, the kachinas in our photographs, most of them from the Girard Foundation Collection, are not for sale.

Walter Briggs, who wrote the article on Indian jewelry and then modestly left off his name, is the former editor of **New Mexico Magazine** and now fulltime writer of books about the Western scene. Walter, a former wartime correspondent in the Far East and editor of the Santa Fe **New Mexican**, also supervised the production of the features on pottery and weaving.

Florence Hawley Ellis is a well-known and highly respected authority on Southwestern archeology and anthropology, and is Professor Emeritus of the Department of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico. A museum named in her honor is being built at Ghost Ranch, north of Abiquiú.

Laura Gilpin is an eminent photographer whose work among the Navajos is world-renowned.

H. L. James is an engineering geologist whose avocations are photography and Navajo rug collecting — and writing and lecturing on Navajo weaving. His work with the New Mexico Highway

Department has taken him into every corner of the state, including the Indian reservations, where he has made many friends among the weavers.

Mark Nohl, a recent art photography graduate of the University of New Mexico, is the staff photographer for the New Mexico Tourist Division.

Richard Sandoval, art director of **New Mexico Magazine**, is responsible for the total layout of the magazine. A fine arts graduate of the University of New Mexico and a notable painter (New Mexico landscapes are his forte), Richard also uses his talents as a color photographer.

Bob Ward, the owner of a trading post, says he began collecting Indian artifacts in Oklahoma when he was three years old. A California native, he has owned shops there and in Arizona and New Mexico, and is an enthusiastic advocate of recognition for Indian artists.

