SELLING AUTHENTICITY: THE ROLE OF ZUNI KNIFEWINGS AND RAINBOW GODS IN TOURISM OF THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... 4
List of Illustrations ........................................................................................................... 6
Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 7
Tourism and Primitivism .................................................................................................. 10
Knifewings and Rainbow Gods: History and Attraction .................................................... 19
Signifieds, Signifiers, and Markers .................................................................................. 23
Traders, Knowledge, Power ............................................................................................. 31
The Post: Design, Social Hierarchy, and the Performance of Authenticity ...................... 41
Interior Display: Cabinet of Curiosities and “Commercial Conquest” ......................... 47
Pawn and Authenticity ..................................................................................................... 50
Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 56
Bibliography ................................................................................................................... 60
Illustrations

Figures

1. Teddy Weahkee, Knifewing Belt Buckle .......................................................... 13
2. Annalee Tekala, Rainbow God Bolo Tie ............................................................. 20
3. Thunderbird, Bright Angel Lodge, Grand Canyon, Arizona .......................... 21
4. Fred Harvey Indian Building, c. 1912, Albuquerque, New Mexico .................. 22
5. Letterhead from C.G. Wallace, Indian Trader .................................................. 25
6. Tuba City Trading Post ...................................................................................... 26
7. Juan DeDios, Knifewing Pin and Pendant .......................................................... 30
8. Hallmark Detail, Benjamin Tzuni, Jr., Bolo Tie .................................................. 30
9. Hallmark Detail, Benjamin Tzuni, Jr., Bolo Tie .................................................. 30
10. Ida Poblano and Mary Morgan, Koyemshi Figure .......................................... 31
11. Hallmark Detail, Mary Morgan, Koyemshi Figure ............................................ 31
12. Interior “bull pen,” Unidentified Trading Post .................................................. 43
13. Advertisement, Babbitt Brothers Trading Post, 1920 ......................................... 48
14. Ole Worm, Cabinet of Curiosities, Detail, Museum Wormanium .................... 48
15. Perry Null Trading Post, Gallup, New Mexico .................................................. 56
16. Interior, Perry Null Trading Post, Gallup, New Mexico .................................... 58
Until now, much of what has been written about Southwest Native American jewelry has been written from an ethnographic or connoisseurial perspective that often includes a discussion of developmental stages, techniques and significant artists.\(^1\) Meanwhile, nineteenth and twentieth century ethnographic art of North America has been the subject of much thorough theoretical and analytical examination. These scholarly studies have lead to a better understanding of ethnographic art as it has affected postcolonial North America and its Native American population.\(^2\) I propose here that it is necessary to examine Southwest Native American jewelry and its production from a theoretical perspective as well, using concepts developed in postcolonial and semiotic theory. It is my intention that this scholarly study might contribute to an understanding of our postcolonial culture in the same way previous scholarship of ethnographic art has by exploring the effects of the interaction between traders and the Southwest Native American population in the context of twentieth century tourism.

Since its bequest, the Edwin L. and Ruth E. Kennedy Southwest Native American Jewelry Collection has not been given the scholarly attention it deserves. As a superior sample of jewelry collected from traders in the Southwest, this collection helps to expose an aspect of modernity that has otherwise been ignored in favor of other objects associated with the more desirable notion of “primitive authentic Indianness.” I will show


\(^2\) Ethnographic art in North America is a visual representation of how European Americans viewed the Native American “other.” More importantly for this study, nineteenth century ethnographic artistic production spawned a new generation of twentieth century tourism in the United States on which I have chosen to focus.
that, by using and encouraging the artists they employed at their trading posts to use what traders considered “traditional” forms like the Zuni Knifewing and the Rainbow god, traders attempted to mark themselves and their stores as institutions, or sites, of primitive, authentic Indianness for tourists. Furthermore, this aided in the construction of fictional histories of Native Americans through the sale of their souvenir arts, and subsequently maintained a positioning of North American Indians as inhabitants of an unchanging and primitive past. This construction of fictional histories through the sale of souvenir arts was something that began, as Ruth Phillips has shown, mainly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, with the Kennedy collection, I will be able to show that such construction has managed to persist throughout the twentieth century due to traders, their stores, and the souvenir art they sold. This study will not only discuss how traders established their dominant position in the Indian arts and crafts business; it will also reveal information about social class within the trading post, especially outlining the hierarchy established among trader, artist, and tourist, and how the design of the store functioned in a way that contributed to this hierarchy. I will also explain how the display of the arts and crafts inside the trading post contributed to the notion of “commercial conquest,” as discussed by Carey Snyder. Lastly, I will discuss how “dead pawn” jewelry, which comprises a large part of this jewelry collection, became an object of authentic Indianness in the touristic context, and how traders contributed to that concept. “Dead pawn” (also referred to as “old pawn”) is a term given to jewelry that was pawned

4 Snyder, Carey, “‘When the Indian Was in Vogue’: D.H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, and Ethnological Tourism in the Southwest.” Forthcoming in Modern Fiction Studies, 2007.
and never redeemed by its original owner. The details and problematic nature of this process is addressed later in this paper. In general, I am especially concerned with the effects of non-Native influences in the production of Native American jewelry, and how these influences have affected the tourist market and the construction by the tourist (and dominant culture) of the Native American “Other.”

It’s also important to acknowledge the problematic nature of the concept of “authenticity.” As a perplexing term that’s difficult to define, I must be clear about its use in this study. Earlier, I mentioned the notion of “primitive authentic Indianness,” which, in this paper, is synonymous with “authenticity.” For Indian arts and crafts, authenticity has remained the most important factor of production. But how is authenticity defined in Southwest Native American jewelry? In a study of the sale, production, and authenticity of Indian jewelry in the Portal of the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe, Deirdre Evans-Pritchard suggests that the factors which constitute authenticity are not decided upon by the artists; rather, they are determined by tourists, as well as museums. She cites New Mexico’s Indian Arts and Crafts Sales Act (1978) which defines authentic Indian arts and crafts by the following: the piece must be handmade with no use of a machine, it must use all natural materials (with the exception of stabilized turquoise), and the maker must be enrolled in an Indian tribe. Later in 1983, Karen Duffeck, who wrote about Northwest Coast arts and crafts, insisted that authenticity included a factor described as

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6 Ibid., 291-292.
“the degree to which the item may be considered traditional.”7 These factors – ethnicity, an absence of technology, natural materials, and traditional appearance – have long been what defined authenticity in Indian arts and crafts. Unfortunately, these same elements are based on stereotypes invented and relied upon by tourists (and museums), both of whom make up the majority of the buyers in the Indian arts and crafts market. There are two sides to this coin, however; some argue that this emphasis on tradition, natural materials, and machine-free techniques have preserved cultural traditions that would have otherwise been eroded, and others argue that such expectations have been what limited Native artists in their trades. I will address these factors individually throughout this paper, and discuss how traders marketed this notion of authenticity to tourists and collectors.

Tourism and Primitivism

The tourist’s fascination with the exotic other has been the focus of postcolonial studies which have looked at how a dominant class is rendered superior to the minority class/es, and has subsequently been used as a justification for colonialist expansion.8 In the case of Native American art and representation, it has been suggested by Pohl and others that the kind of fascination that has occurred in North America is that of “imperialist nostalgia,” or longing for something that one has helped to destroy (directly or indirectly).9 This longing, nostalgia, or fascination experienced by tourists has acted to

7 Karen Duffeck, “‘Authenticity’ and the Contemporary Northwest Coast Indian Art Market,” BC Studies 57 (1983) 99-111.
8 Consider especially the early World’s Fairs of Paris, Chicago, and New York.
confirm or reinforce the myth of the disappearance of the Native American culture. However, the economic effects of that fascination prove otherwise, as it has spawned an entire genre of Native cultural art production, often referred to as “tourist art.”

In his discussion of tourism and authenticity, Dean MacCannell astutely suggests that people tend to reach outside themselves and their own lives in search of an authentic experience, and further, that this authenticity is, “thought to be elsewhere: in other historical periods and other cultures, in purer, simpler lifestyles.”\textsuperscript{10} In the search for Native American arts and crafts, purity is constantly emphasized, and characterized by those forms, techniques, and materials that are considered “pre-contact.” Furthermore, as Phillips argues, “contact is tightly linked to an inevitable cultural decline leading toward a vanishing point….”\textsuperscript{11} In other words, the more contact is stylistically evident in the jewelry, the closer the “pure” or pre-contact Indian is to extinction. These notions of pre-contact purity make up what was considered authentic and therefore valuable in Indian arts and crafts during the twentieth century. Because higher value was bestowed upon only the most “authentic” Indian jewelry and crafts, many artists found themselves “working outside modernism,”\textsuperscript{12} relegated to either the kitschy world of touristic consumption, or restricted to making art that was analyzed only within the realm of anthropological study.

Take, for instance, this excerpt from *Arizona Highways*, a popular tourist

\textsuperscript{11} Phillips, *Trading Identities*, 51.
\textsuperscript{12} Seneca artist and curator Tom Hill argued, “I was tired of working outside modernism, of being the ‘authentic’ Indian artist making anthropology or tourist mementos while white artists made serious art.” From “Towards the Millennium.” *Wadrihwa* 7 (1): 8.
magazine during the mid to late twentieth century that focused mainly, as it does today, on the Indian arts and crafts market:

[T]he modern Indian jewelry, whether consciously or subconsciously, continues in the spirit of his ancestors [which is proven by the fact that] Zuni inlay of turquoise, shell, and jet can be matched by Saladoan craftsmanship. By still utilizing so many of the local materials of his environment, the modern Indian craftsman evidences his closeness to nature, a concern apparent in the many naturalistic elements incorporated into prehistoric jewelry. Thus a continuity of tradition between the old and new is one of the outstanding features of Indian jewelry.  

First, the ideas that Indian jewelry “continues in the spirit of his ancestors,” the artists’ “closeness to nature,” and lastly, the connection drawn between prehistoric jewelry and modern jewelry are all ideas constructed for collectors and tourists, all which, moreover, conform to Native American stereotypes. Second, the irony behind the “continuity of tradition” is that native artists were encouraged, and sometimes even required to use particular techniques and designs in their jewelry by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board (IACB) and traders – all who, at that time, were members of Anglo and non-Indian culture.

Traders and collectors alike have been known to encourage, and even instruct Native artists on exactly how to create their artworks. Phillips recalls an example from a letter written by ethnologist Edward Sapir in 1912 in which he had commissioned a birchbark canoe from “native agent” Chief Paul also known as James Paul. He wrote to Chief Paul that, “‘There are to be no nails or other white man’s materials used in the canoe, but…it is to be made exactly of the style that the Indians used long ago before

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they knew anything about white man’s ways.’” This passage demonstrates how this ethnologist aided in constructing the fictional histories of Native Americans through their arts, while also managing to maintain the position of American Indians in an unchanging and primitive past. Yet another example is given by Sikorski who writes that, “[i]nlay appeared as a rebirth of a prehistoric technique, stimulated by an archaeologist’s interest.” She later explains that it was Dr. F. W. Hodge who, inspired by an “ancient mosaic,” asked Teddy Weahkee to implement the inlay technique once again in 1935 (fig. 1).

Decades later, traders employed a very similar approach. As Deborah Slaney has established, traders such as C.G. Wallace and Tobe Turpen, Jr. urged their Native artists to use particular techniques and “traditional” motifs, such as the Zuni Knifewing and Rainbow god, in their jewelry designs. We see evidence of this type of encouragement by traders in the Kennedy jewelry collection, and in the fact that both the Knifewing and the Rainbow god were two of the most popular and sought after designs collected by tourists and serious collectors during the twentieth century.

Traditional motifs were not the only feature bearing the influence of the trader.

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14 Phillips, Trading Identities, 58.
16 Ibid., 11.
Despite that, earlier on in the same interview, he denies his own influence on artists he employed, Tobe Turpen, Jr. remembers when,

[...] a Zuni came in…with a Sunface\textsuperscript{19}…And I looked at that thing and I asked him to put it in silver. [sic] and he brought it back and the silver was real flimsy, it wasn’t very good. I tried another Zuni and he did the same thing…. So I had a Navajo mount it, and it mounted heavy and it came out really beautiful…. I’ll tell you, for about three years, I could not make enough of those things. I had about three silversmiths makin’ ‘em, and they could make about three or four a day….\textsuperscript{20}

John Adair confirms that the designs in Zuni jewelry were so often chosen by the trader while explaining the collaborative nature of the jewelry making process.

While the work is done by the two Indian craftsman, these pieces are really the result of the labor of three men, the lapidary, the smith [who was often Navajo], and the trader, for the trader is the one who suggests the form of the finished piece to the craftsmen. Some of the designs have been copied from the illustrations in the annual reports of the Bureau of American Ethnology.\textsuperscript{21}

Perhaps unknowingly, Adair identifies for us the very problematic aspect of this process. First, one cannot simply assume that deferring to Zuni artists would result in the most accurate knowledge of traditional designs and techniques. As director of aesthetic forms, however, the trader favored traditional designs and techniques which were considered to be more primitive, and therefore authentic. This preference for traditional designs denied Native artists artistic autonomy in their work, and removed them from the creative process. Demonstrated here is evidence of the concept of absence described by Timothy Mitchell, who argues that the non-West, or Other, is characterized and represented by the

\textsuperscript{19} The Sunface was another very popular design in not just Zuni jewelry, but all Southwest Native American jewelry.

\textsuperscript{20} Tobe Turpen, interview by Brad Cole, December 13, 1998, transcript, Traders: Voices From the Trading Post, United Indian Trader Association Oral History Project, Cline Library, Northern Arizona University.

West in three ways, all of which are direct opposites of the colonial West: essentialism, otherness, and absence. For this paper, absence will be the most recurrent of Mitchell’s concepts of the Other, and I will later explain how those absences have manifested themselves in the context of the trading post and Southwest tourism of the twentieth century.

In order to attract tourists and sell merchandise, several attempts were made to communicate the idea of authenticity in Indian jewelry of the Southwest, and many of those attempts were implemented by traders under completely false pretenses. For example, C.G. Wallace had artist Edna Leki making Zuni fetishes for him, but before he sold them, he would “dirty them up,” wrap medicine bundles around them, and sell them as “sacred fetishes.” This concept of sacredness was no doubt a high selling point for the tourist or collector, as it not only connotes authenticity, but gives the piece especially high value for its connection to intimate religious practices. During the 1990s, some traders were selling jewelry that was made specifically to look like old pawn, a special and highly valued genre of Indian jewelry which I will discuss later. While these traders did this in an attempt to appeal to the primitivist sensibilities of the tourist, or as they claim, to simply make a profit, they also perpetuated the myth of the vanished and primitively authentic Indian, and in addition, commercialized sacred Zuni concepts and imagery.

Another attempt to establish authenticity was the standard passed in 1938 by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board (IACB) that “disqualified the use of machinery such as rollers as inappropriate equipment for working silver.”25 This standard implies that authentic Indianness is represented only by more primitive handmade techniques, which again evokes concepts of essentialism, and moreover, designates Native American arts and crafts as anything but “modern.” To begin with, it is unlikely that such decisions were made by tribal representatives, as it was not until 1942 that a Native American was appointed as a member of the Board, which constitutes Mitchell’s concept of the absence of the Other. In fact, until 1942, the IACB had only one person who “served as a liaison between the board and Indian artisans” – Lorenzo Hubbell, Jr., owner of and trader at the Hubbell Trading Post in New Mexico.26 Moreover, these limitations enforced by the IACB severely limited the production of Native jewelry, preventing the Native artist from any chance of really profiting from his or her trade. Additionally, this limiting of production rarifies, or as Igor Kopytoff would have it, singularizes the product, which truly only benefits the collector.27

The notion of singularization is important here especially because of its connection with value, rarity, and particularly the concept of the “vanishing” Indian. The myth of the “vanishing race” predates the time period in which I am working by about fifty years; nonetheless, it contributed immensely to the commoditization of Indian arts and crafts, and to the way tourists purchased these items. Trading posts and curio dealers

stressed the importance and urgency with which Indian arts and crafts should be regarded and purchased. Take, for instance, this 1991 brochure for Cameron Trading Post in Arizona:

Cameron Trading Post gallery offers only the finest authentic Indian artwork – artwork that is treasured now, priceless later as fewer and fewer craftsmen take up the work of their ancestors. This quest for the finest works of art assures that you buy more than a piece of art, you buy a piece of history.28

This brochure not only emphasizes the aspect of purity associated with pre-contact “ancestors,” but also admonishes that this art form is soon to vanish, and it’s imperative that the collector purchase these wares soon, before they’re gone. On the surface, this may simply sound like clever advertising; unfortunately, however, the language sounds all too familiar for anyone informed by postcolonial discourse and scholarly work on the myth of the “vanishing race” that was used as a justification for westward expansion, as well as the subjugation and elimination of the Native Americans of the United States.29

This was a popular theme in Southwestern tourist literature about Indian arts and crafts, especially in issues of Arizona Highways. In an effort to promote tourism, the magazine Arizona Highways was published first in 1925 by engineers of the Arizona Highway Department, or what is now known as the Arizona Department of Transportation. Until 1938, the magazine focused mainly on the construction of highways in the state of Arizona, and was accompanied by landscape photographs. After 1938, a new editor brought several changes to the magazine, and focused more on tourism. From its

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29 For a good example of a discussion of the myth of the “vanishing race,” see Kathryn S. Hight, “‘Doomed to Perish’: George Catlin's Depictions of the Mandan,” Art Journal, (Summer 1990) 119-124.
From an *Arizona Highways* article entitled “The New Traders: New Art Forms, New Silversmiths, New Markets,” from 1975, work by Edward Sheriff Curtis is included alongside the text as representations of authentic Native Americans. One such example includes an image of a nineteenth century squash blossom necklace superimposed over an unnamed portrait by Curtis. While the article claims to summarize the “new” characteristics of trading in the Southwest, it aligns the magazine’s perception of Native American jewelry with the “old” concepts behind the work of Curtis, which includes the concept of the “vanishing race.” The by now “extinct” and romanticized Native American culture is here made manifest in the necklace itself, instilling a value that is always already unattainable by modern Native artists.

One may justifiably wonder which came first: the touristic trend toward religious forms or the encouragement by traders to reproduce them? The answer, I would speculate, is the former, aided by the latter. The curiosity of Anglo tourists and collectors has been rooted in the desire to see and experience Native American culture in a particular and primitive context, one that restricts the artistic evolution of form and technique, and in addition reduces Native American culture to its religious and mythical forms. Traders like C.G. Wallace, Lorenzo Hubbell, Tobe Turpen, Sr. and Tobe Turpen, Jr. seemed to understand this, and used it to their advantage, whether they were selling to curio dealers or directly to tourists themselves.

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Knifewings and Rainbow Gods: History and Attraction

Two examples of the aforementioned religious and mythical forms are the Zuni Knifewing and Rainbow god figures. These became two of the most popular designs in Southwest Native American jewelry during the twentieth century, and are today some of the most prized and highly valued pieces from that period. As mythical and religious forms, the Knifewing and Rainbow god both have a long history in Zuni culture. It was Frank Cushing who documented their forms as they appeared together in the shield of the Bow Priesthood or Bow Priest Society. During the 1880s, the members of this priesthood were warriors who scalped enemies and were responsible for protecting the Pueblo. Their power declined when warfare in Zuni declined. Soon after, the priesthood became protectors against “Zuni witches, who were believed to cause drought, sickness, and death,” and would beat the “witches” until they confessed to their crimes. When the United States government learned of these occurrences, they ordered the arrest of all members of the Bow Priesthood, whose power in Zuni essentially ended afterward.32

By the time anthropologist John Adair wrote his comprehensive study, The Navajo and Pueblo Silversmiths (1944), the Knifewing figure had gained much popularity among tourists and collectors of Southwest Indian arts and crafts, especially jewelry.33 In Adair’s book, Zuni artist Horace Iule gives a demonstration for the author, in which a Knifewing is being made. Adair points out that the Knifewing is, “a god of the

33 Adair provides evidence of the popularity of the Knifewing figure as early as the forties, and this continued on through the 1970s and 1980s, as the pieces in my exhibit make clear. The prolonged popularity of this figure may demonstrate a trend in touristic desires, and/or indicates the sustained efforts of the trader to encourage artists to utilize the Knifewing and other similar forms for five decades.
zenith, is one of the Zuñi animal spirits. However, when his image is made in silver, it has no religious significance, but becomes merely decorative,” and perhaps most important, the Knifewing was “ordered by one of the traders to be sold to a white man.” Adair goes on to describe the more mythical background of the Knifewing, that it was represented possessing a human form, furnished with flint knife-feathered pinions, and tail. His dress consists of the conventional terraced cap (representative of his dwelling place among the clouds)….His weapons are the great Flint-Knife of War, the Bow of the Skies (the Rain-bow), and the arrow of lightning, and his guardians or warriors are the Great Mountain Lion of the North and Upper regions. He was doubtless the original War God of the Zuñis, although now secondary in the order of war, to the two Children of the Sun….Anciently he was inimical to man, stealing and carrying away to his city in the skies the women of all nations until subdued by other gods and men of magic powers.

It’s very likely that tourists and collectors were drawn to such a romantic myth, with obvious connections to the archaic perception of Indian as savage. It’s interesting to note that almost all of the jewelry in the Kennedy jewelry collection containing the figure of a Knifewing are men’s jewelry pieces: bolo ties, belt buckles, men’s rings (fig. 2).

Although the Knifewing may have lost its original mythic meaning for tourists today, I would speculate that during the twentieth century, at the height of its popularity, Anglo men (likely informed by traders)

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34 Adair, *The Navajo and Pueblo Silversmiths*, 139.
35 Ibid.
were drawn to the Knifewing’s mythic status as warrior and abductor of “women of all nations,” a being who dwelled in the sky amongst his weapons while looking down on the world. Much of the popularity of the Knifewing and Rainbow god also was due largely to the Fred Harvey Company’s appropriation of the same design drawn by Cushing in the 1880s. Harvey’s original interest was in the image of the Thunderbird, an icon used all over North America by various tribes for various reasons, including tribes of the Plains and Pacific Northwest. The Harvey Company began using the Thunderbird in 1908 and went so far as to have it copyrighted in 1909. Later, the Thunderbird became the logo for the Fred Harvey Company and it was used throughout their hotels as well as on the jewelry they sold (fig. 3). The Harvey Company came across the image of the Zuni Knifewing, recognized the similarities between the Thunderbird image and the Zuni Knifewing, and began replicating it on their Indian Buildings (fig. 4), and even a set of their playing cards. The appropriation of the Zuni Knifewing by the Harvey Company is likely one of the reasons that there is so much confusion among non-Indians between the Thunderbird and the Zuni Knifewing.

37 Ibid., 98.
The success of the Harvey Company could have influenced traders’ decisions to use the Knifewing design in their products. Of the Knifewing figure’s use in Zuni jewelry, Adair says that, “Horace was the first smith in the village to represent Knife-Wing in silver, in 1928. The first one he made was cut and filed out of wrought silver. The traders liked it so much that they asked him to make more.” However, Adair notes that he later received contrary evidence in a letter from Mrs. Lewis, of Zuñi, who said: ‘In 1932 Kelsey [of Kelsey’s Trading Post in Zuni] had Ike Wilson (Navajo) make the first Knife bird. It was taken from a design from a letterhead of Fred Harvey’s. The first ones were plain and later on he began to inlay them with turquoise.’

This poses an interesting issue, because, if it’s true, it was originally Kelsey, a trader, who proposed the idea of utilizing the Knifewing in jewelry produced for touristic consumption. This was done, of course, after the success of the Fred Harvey Company, and could have been an attempt to attain similar success. Moreover, the fact that a Navajo was asked to replicate a Zuni form further supports and recapitulates my claim that traders intentionally appropriated cultural motifs in order to profit from the tourist trade in the Southwest. Because traders, as well as the Fred Harvey

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38 Adair, *The Navajo and Pueblo Silversmiths*, 139.  
39 Ibid., 140.
Company, appropriated the Knifewing without the input of the Zuni, we see evidence of the postcolonial/orientalist absence described by Mitchell. This also occurred on another level with particular traders like C.G. Wallace and Lorenzo Hubbell who chose particular motifs to replicate that could be found in prehistoric Native American art. This only perpetuated the myth of the disappearing Indian, and placed Native Americans and their cultures in that primitive past to which they are so often relegated.

**Signifiers, Signifieds, and Markers**

Appropriation of Native American cultural forms occurred on a number of levels, and, as I’ve mentioned earlier, Zuni icons were no exception. As Phillips astutely points out, icons derived from Native American culture were successful subjects in tourist art “because their iconographic features…led buyers to identify them as specifically Indian. Their marketability, in other words, depended on their success in conveying recognizable – and acceptable – concepts of difference.” Both the Knifewing and Rainbow god have very identifiable characteristics, the former displayed wearing a high, terraced cap with his arms or wings stretched outward, and the latter always depicted with an arched body forming the shape to suit its name. Because of their connotative interpretations as authentically Indian and Zuni, Knifewing and Rainbow god designs in particular were appropriated in a number of ways by traders. This appropriation fortified the semiotic function of these forms as representations of authentic Indianness for the dominant

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42 While the Knifewing design has changed over the years, the Rainbow god has virtually maintained its original design. Originally, Knifewings were depicted with wings straight out, as it is in Cushing’s drawing, but during the 1950s, jewelry began to show Knifewings with their wings up. This may have been done to fit specific jewelry shapes, like cufflinks (KMA 89.016.822).
culture. Both the Knifewing and the Rainbow god became identifiably Zuni, and therefore truly authentic.

The notion of otherness is demonstrated by the fascination with what Americans and our history have already constructed as “other,” or “primitive,” which sparks the curiosity that enables tourism. In the paintings of George Catlin, the “ethnographic” photography of Edward Curtis, and the tourist art containing the icons of Native American culture, we can see a clear attempt by the dominant culture to represent, essentialize, and capture the “spirit” of the North American Indian. In the case of tourist art, it is a chance for the dominant white culture to capture, or in our capitalist economy, consume that spirit by purchasing the tourist object. It is then necessary that this object contain only the authentic mark of Indianness, which is represented in the form of native iconography, such as the Zuni Knifewing and the Zuni Rainbow god. This tourist object then becomes a souvenir, or reminder of that particular experience. Dean MacCannell utilizes Peirce’s semiotic model,

\[
\text{sign: representation / something / someone}
\]

which MacCannell then translates to fit tourism phenomenon,

\[
\text{tourist attraction: marker / sight / tourist.}^{43}
\]

This model, however, does not incorporate the commercial object, or souvenir, obtained from such an experience, which is often the case. Could the souvenir, then, become the “marker/representation” of “something / sight” to “someone / the tourist”? I propose the model,

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\]

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43 MacCannell, The Tourist, 110.
tourist attraction: souvenir / site / tourist.\textsuperscript{44}

In this model, the souvenir is something the tourist actively consumes so they can continue that appropriation of “essence” or “spirit” over and over, even long after they have left the tourist attraction behind. That being said, the construction of otherness, therefore, is perpetuated in a semiotic cycle of object as reminder / of place or experience / for the tourist. The souvenir, jewelry in this case, plays an imperative role in tourism as the marker or signifier of the site (the signified), and is thus interchangeable with the site (for the tourist). MacCannell illustrates this process or “transformation” as

\[
\text{sight} \rightarrow \text{marker} \rightarrow \text{sight}. \text{\textsuperscript{45}}
\]

As an “essential element” of sightseeing and tourism, MacCannell argues that this process allows souvenirs to become for the site (or sight) “one of its markers and as a little sight in its own right.”\textsuperscript{46}

The “authentic” object or experience is something every tourist strives to appropriate.\textsuperscript{47} Jonathan Culler points out that authenticity is “not something unmarked or undifferentiated,” and that “authenticity is a sign relation. Even the sights in which the most snobbish tourists take

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{figure5.png}
\caption{Letterhead from C.G. Wallace, Indian Trader. Zuni, New Mexico.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{44} Also notice that I’ve replaced “sight” with “site” only because, in this case, the tourist not only gazes upon the tourist attraction, or the trading post and surrounding area, but also actively engages with it by purchasing a souvenir. In other words, “site” offers a more comprehensive definition of the context in which an interaction/transaction (with the trader) takes place.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 121.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 124.
pleasure are not unmarked; they have become for these tourists the ‘real’ [thing] by a
process of semiotic articulation.48 This is the second type of authenticity which Culler
describes, the kind of authenticity that a sight (or site) gets from its markers which results
in the attraction of tourists.49 The markers, or signs, that the traders employ are the
mythological icons appropriated for reproduction in not just jewelry they sold to tourists,
but also in their company letterheads and in the architectural structure of their stores.
These markers or signs of Indianness lend their sites, the trading posts, the authenticity
that Culler describes. Examples of such
markers include the aforementioned letterhead
used by the Fred Harvey Company, as well as
the letterhead used by C.G. Wallace which
included both a Knifewing and a Rainbow god
(fig. 5). The Tuba Trading Post in Arizona
provides yet another example (fig. 6). Jim
Babbitt, grandson of the famous Arizona traders,
the Babbitt Brothers, remembers that the Tuba
Trading Post was built in the shape of a hogan:

> What it was was a great big six-sided building that faced to
> the east, to the rising sun. And of course *that would mark it
> as a hogan structure, the structure of the Navajo
> people*....50

49 Ibid.
United Indian Trader Association Oral History Project, Cline Library, Northern Arizona University, my
emphasis.
Babbitt acknowledges here that the store was “marked” as a hogan structure, noting that that architectural structure connotes Navajo or Navajo-ness. A tourist brochure from the Tuba Trading Post attributes the hogan design to the increase in tourism in the Southwest:

Tourism in northern Arizona began to boom around the turn of the century. And in 1905, the Babbitts purchased the Tuba Trading Post, which at that time, was little more than a shed. A year later, a new and quite unique building was added. The building had eight sides and an east-facing door, duplicating the style of the traditional Navajo dwelling known as a hogan.51

Other stores followed Tuba City Trading Post’s example and built trading posts that mimicked hogans, including a store that was built in 1978 near Kayenta, called Tse Awe or “Baby Rocks,” a trading post that “catered primarily to the tourist trade that was beginning to grow at the end of the 1970s.”52

The Zuni Knifewing and Rainbow god, and the Navajo hogan all function for tourists as what MacCannell describes as the “symbolic marker.”53 All are symbolically representative of authentic Southwest Native American wares and experience, something which Southwestern traders were adamant about establishing ownership. Moreover, the Knifewing, Rainbow god, or the hogan function here metonymically, as each is used to represent a certain culture, and are regarded as interchangeable in the tourist’s mind as authentically Indian. MacCannell points out an important point which is that, “touristic symbolism does not involve a simple cutting off of a part to represent the whole. Care is

51 Tourist brochure from Tuba Trading Post, Tourist Trade, Pamphlet Collection, Heard Museum Library, Phoenix.
53 MacCannell, The Tourist, 112.
exercised in the matter of what part of the whole is selected.”54 In the case of Southwest Native American jewelry, these selections are often made by the traders, as they were often the people who dictated the design for the artists.55 Again, in this case, the native artists are removed from this process, illustrating yet another example of Mitchell’s absence of the Other.

Culler makes clear that, “[t]o be truly satisfying the sight needs to be certified, marked as authentic. Without these markers, it could not be experienced as authentic…”56 This is one reason for the inception of the hallmark, a signature of the artist often either stamped, engraved or etched into the surface of a piece of jewelry. As a Western artistic tradition not practiced before the increased popularity of Southwestern Native American jewelry among Anglo tourists, the function of the hallmark was two-fold: artistically, they represented who produced the piece, but in a touristic context, they were signs of authentic Indian craftsmanship. Additionally, an article from Arizona Highways insisted that “[h]allmarks are a stamp of quality in modern Indian jewelry.”57 Therefore, those pieces that lacked this western artistic tradition of the genius signing his or her work were lower quality and less valuable.

There were a number of different attempts to hallmark Indian jewelry, not only by the hand of the artist, but by affiliate groups like the Indian Arts and Crafts Board (IACB) and the United Indian Traders Association (UITA). The IACB’s first attempt to hallmark jewelry was when “[b]oard officers had to examine each piece before judging it eligible

54 Ibid., 131.
56 Culler, Framing the Sign, 164.
for marking with its stamp (which read ‘U.S. Navajo’ or ‘U.S. Zuni,’ and included a number indicating the trading post or Indian school where the piece had been made),” which proved to be “a slow and cumbersome system,” resulting in its demise in 1943.58 Later, the UITA made a similar attempt.

The stamp (an arrowhead) was licensed to UITA member traders who sold a substantial quantity of hand-made silver purchased directly from Navajo or Pueblo silversmiths. Each trader who paid an annual fee for membership was assigned a specific number, and the UITA had to approve their use of the UITA stamp.59

In addition, the UITA also marked their pieces with the phrase “Indian Handmade Silver.”60 The arrow was a design chosen by the UITA as an image that would connote Indianness, and, much like the Fred Harvey Company copyrighting the Thunderbird, the misappropriation and assignment of the arrow as authentically Indian was both shortsighted and stereotypical; this authenticating marking of Indian jewelry proved to exclude artists who did not sell through traders, who, by this marking process, named themselves and their stores as the premier location to find authentic Indian jewelry.61 The arrow, moreover, conjures up images of the stereotypical Indian from Westerns of the 1950s that glorified the cowboy and his heroic battle against Indians of the West.

58 Powers, Navajo Trading, 78.
59 Ibid., 79.
60 Deb Slaney, Consultation, September 5-9, 2006, Kennedy Museum of Art, Athens, Ohio.
61 Traders like C.G. Wallace and Tobe Turpen, Jr., to name a couple, developed an elaborate marking code that would indicate where the piece was made as well as how much it was worth. (See Slaney, Blue Gem, White Metal for Wallace’s pricing code.) Tobe Turpen, Jr. marked “TT” on the back of jewelry pieces made in his workshop, which often appears alongside the artist’s hallmark.
While the attempts by both the IACB and the UITA excluded the artists from the authentication process, the artists began stamping their own hallmarks during the 1950s. One of the first to begin hallmarking was Juan Dedios, who used his initials, “JD,” which was a common practice. Dedios hallmarked his pieces somewhat inconsistently (fig. 7), and some other Zuni artists used various hallmarks, or even signed their entire names. Benjamin Tzuni, for example, often signed his entire name which was, in this piece, accompanied by a representational depiction of rain (fig. 8, 9).

Despite artists’ attempts to cite ownership of their handiwork by signing their pieces, exclusion still remained a possibility. In collaborative work, such as the Koyemshi (or Mudhead) figure (fig. 10), the Zuni were hired for their exquisite lapidary work, and a Navajo was often hired to do the silverwork. In the case of the Koyemshi figure, as in many other cases of collaborative work facilitated by traders, the nature of the lapidary work – in this case, mosaic inlay – does not allow for any hallmark. The silverwork, however, does, and is hallmarked by the Navajo artist, Mary.
Morgan (fig. 11). The Zuni artist, in this instance and many others, is artistically marginalized because of the lack of a visible hallmark.

Other markers of authenticity include documentation that undoubtedly contributed to the value of each piece. Edwin Kennedy kept organized records, and endeavored to keep all available documentation with each piece – including pawn slips, provenance, appraisals, so-called “certifications” of authenticity provided by the trader, and the carefully recorded ledger books written by the collector and his son – because he knew such documentation would contribute to its authenticity and value. But for our purposes, this kind of documentation provides a record of “‘authentic’ social history,” as Phillips calls it, and can be seen as the record of the interaction between cultures – albeit with the trader as middle man – or a record of social history. 62 It reveals information about social class, the strain of the capitalist economy on Native peoples, and the intricacies of the relationships between the traders, their native employees, and the tourists.

**Traders, Knowledge, Power**

From the beginning of the arrival of Europeans to North America, there has been an evolution of the traveler in the Southwest:

Within this model exists the common goal of possession of authoritative knowledge ("I know because I’ve been there"), and the consumption of artifacts or souvenirs ("Here is my proof"), both of which constitute ownership and therefore conquest. So for the collector, the tourist, and even (or especially) the trader, the most significant part of their Southwestern experience is the knowledge they’ve gained about Native peoples, and the souvenir that acts as proof of that knowledge. Willow Powers explained the role of the trader as a beneficial one for the tourist, claiming that,

> Buyers had to want to own a particular blanket not only because it appealed to their aesthetic sense, but also because it showed how much they knew about Navajo weaving. Traders played a role, among others, in making Navajo arts and crafts visible, known, and appreciated; more than this, they were responsible for subtly changing them for market and making them available for purchase.\(^{63}\)

Furthermore, she argues, “if [a Native American tourist object] is to be sold…it must also be given a meaning of some kind.”\(^{64}\) Although Powers rightly suggests that traders in the Southwest helped create a market for Indian arts and crafts, she fails to recognize the problematic nature of the situation; it’s exactly that meaning that traders took upon themselves to attribute to Indian arts and crafts. Again, we see the Indian artists being silenced in this process of production and sale.

Traders in the Southwest enjoyed a monopoly over the regional market for quite some time, and this old boys’ network continued to thrive into the 1990s, largely due to familial and marital relations. In Gallup, New Mexico, a city in which Edwin Kennedy

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\(^{63}\) Powers, *Navajo Trading*, 64.
\(^{64}\) Ibid., 63, my emphasis.
did a significant amount of his collecting, Bill Richardson (son of C.D. Richardson) and Mattie Richardson ran the Richardson store with their daughter Frances, who is married to Perry Null. Perry Null is now the owner the store previously owned by Tobe Turpen, Jr., who, as Perry Null told me, sold Null the store for a “very reasonable price.”65 Tobe Turpen, Sr. learned the “trade” from C.D. Richardson, who was also Tobe’s brother-in-law.66 This complex web of family and store ownership was not unusual in the Southwest during the twentieth century and, indubitably, it strengthened traders’ roles as powerful and authoritative experts in the Indian arts and crafts market.

And that role of “expert” was granted. Traders were the first to be consulted on numerous issues by various groups regarding the Native Americans of the Southwest. Willow Powers wrote that,

> [t]raders were often connoisseurs in their own right, and some had their own collections. Curators, as well as private collectors, forged relationships with traders and visited them to see and purchase specific items: C.G. Wallace at Zuni, Lorenzo Hubbell at Ganado, and many lesser-known traders, often became links between collectors, curators, and the local artisans with whom traders worked.67

Rather than consulting the artists directly, curators, collectors, ethnologists writing for the government68, and even agents from the Bureau of Indian Affairs69 preferred to deal with traders instead, which instilled them with the authority of an expert.

67 Powers, Navajo Trading, 66.
68 Often, ethnologists made trading posts the focal point of their ethnological studies, which resulted in close relationships with the traders. One example is William Y. Adams at Shonto Trading Post, and another is Alexander Stephen who performed his study at Thomas Keam’s trading post in Keam’s Canyon – “It was from Stephen’s notes that Cosmos Mindellef prepared the introductory chapter of Hopi traditionary history for the 8th Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology.” From Marjel De Lauer, “A Century of Indian Traders and Trading Posts,” Arizona Highways, (March 1975), 12.
69 Powers, Navajo Trading, 33.
The advice and products provided by the Kelsey Trading Post in Zuni (John) Lorenzo Hubbell and Tobe Turpen, Sr., who were both traders from New Mexico, were often sought by the Fred Harvey Company, at one time the nation’s largest retailer of Native American arts and crafts. Because the Fred Harvey Company chose to consult traders for Native American products and information, it encouraged and helped fortify the authoritative role of the trader, and moreover, it removed the role of the native artisan completely.

As I mentioned earlier, big name retailers were not the only people coming to the traders in search of authentic Indian arts and crafts. During the mid- to late-twentieth century, tourists flocked to the American Southwest, and trading posts were, at that time, virtually the only place to see and purchase Native American wares. The trader was able to take advantage of his expert role and authoritative knowledge he was granted in the touristic context, and that knowledge sometimes worked to the detriment of both the collector/tourist as well as the tribe. An interview with former trader J.D. Kennedy of the Salina, Chinle, and Rock Springs Trading Posts (of which Edwin Kennedy—no relation—was a frequent customer) reveals an aspect of the power the trader enjoyed because of this knowledge he was expected to possess. J.D. Kennedy recalls an instance in which tourists stopped by the trading post at Lukachukai, Arizona, and asked the owner, Earl Kennedy (no relation) if he had Navajo rugs. J.D. Kennedy explains in the interview that,

[...] Some tourists came in and said, “Do you have any Navajo rugs?” He said, “No.” And there’s the stack sittin’ over there, so they’re standin’
around. After a while they said, “Well, what about those?” He said, “Oh, those are prayer rugs.” “Really?!” They were god-awful rugs. Like Dad said, they were the dog rugs. And so pretty soon they’re rootin’ through ‘em and everything else. They walked out, and I remember we said, “Earl, what the hell’s a prayer rug?” He says, “Those are rugs I’m just prayin’ somebody’ll come and buy.”\footnote{J.D. Kennedy, interview by Karen Underhill, December 16, 1998, transcript, \textit{Traders: Voices From the Trading Post}, United Indian Trader Association Oral History Project, Cline Library, Northern Arizona University.}

Evidently, the very notion that these rugs were associated with the religious rituals of the Navajo was enticing to the tourists, and, much like the traders’ encouragement of artists to produce religious iconography in their jewelry, traders were aware of this attraction and attempted to profit from it. Another example can be found in Adair’s book, in which he wrote that,

\begin{quote}
Some traders will accept silver with any kind of design. A silversmith may stamp his jewelry with designs copied from cigarette packages, candy bar wrappers, or wallpaper designs in the mail order catalogue. If the trader thinks that he can sell the silver to someone who doesn’t know Navajo or Zuñi design, he will only be too glad to buy such silver.\footnote{Adair, \textit{The Navajo and Pueblo Silversmiths}, 153-154.}
\end{quote}

One may insist that this is simply a matter of business – of knowing what sells, and, in the context of our capitalistic society, it was only a way for the traders (and some may argue, the artists) to make money. The trouble with this claim, however, lies in the fact that many traders had a tendency to misinform their Anglo patrons by giving them false information (as evidenced in the aforementioned anecdotes), and to disrespect their Native artists. According to a study done at Shonto Trading Post by William Yewdale Adams, the trader was believed to possess superior knowledge regarding Indians, especially of the particular tribe that contributed to his clientele. Adams wrote that,

\begin{quote}
[Traders] understandably feel themselves to be better qualified than anyone
\end{quote}
else to characterize the Navaho. At the same time they find today that many of their White visitors have opinions of the Indian’s nature which are as stubbornly held as their own. The superiority of their knowledge and experience is therefore established by contradicting whatever idea the visitor has as a matter of principle.  

Adams demonstrates for us how traders have asserted themselves as sources of authentic knowledge regarding Native Americans. As “experts” on Native American culture, they have been able to manipulate and construct the knowledge that is received by tourists, collectors, and anyone else who sought their counsel.

What is perhaps worse, Adams wrote that traders often treated their Indian customers with great disrespect by infantilizing them, “as if they were children, and he and not they knew what was good for them.” Additionally, “[i]n the case of tourists […] normal reserve in business dealings is augmented by the suspicion that they are probably ‘Indian lovers,’ who will go home and vilify the trader.” Despite the disrespect received by Indian patrons in some trading posts, many artists also considered the trader an expert on the arts and crafts market, and would consult them on their designs, and alter those designs to meet the suggestions of the trader.

Both the location and environment in which the trading post was located contributed greatly to the concept of authenticity. Traders used both of these to their advantage to attract tourists, and to lend authority to their roles in the Indian arts and crafts market. Molly Lee addresses an intriguing issue of ensuring the authenticity of a souvenir, pointing out that purchasing souvenirs at an actual Indian village or a

74 Adams, *Shonto*, 212.
75 Ibid., 211-212.
reservation ensures the authenticity of the souvenir.\footnote{Molly Lee, “Appropriating the Primitive: Turn-of-the-Century Collection and Display of Native Alaskan Art,” \textit{Arctic Anthropology} 28 (1): 6-15, 1991.} Because these traders “lived among the locals,” as MacCannell might say, tourists and collectors automatically accepted that traders were imbued with the authoritative knowledge of an “expert.”

Tourist literature from the Southwest illuminates this aspect of the attraction to trading post and trader. As Jonathan Culler has noted, “tourists do set out in quest of the authentic. Proof of that desire is that authenticity is a major selling point in advertisements and travel writing.”\footnote{Culler, \textit{Framing the Sign}, 158.} John Neary, in \textit{Travel and Leisure} (1989), wrote of his trip to the Southwest. “We scuttle along beneath that Big Empty like Cousteau exploring the ocean bottom…. Look at the incredible ruin! That fantastic hogan!”\footnote{John Neary, “Trade Secret: In Arizona, no-frills Navajo Shopping,” \textit{Travel and Leisure}, (June 1989), 4.} The rhetoric of eighteenth and nineteenth century travel writing, exploration, discovery and conquest discussed by Mary Louise Pratt are recalled in his descriptions.\footnote{Mary Louise Pratt, \textit{Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation}, (London: Routledge, 1992).} He goes on to speak of trading posts and their products, assuring the reader that “[t]his is the folk art of an old pre-American nation, the real stuff,” and that trading posts are the place to find such “stuff.”\footnote{Ibid., 6-7.} More than simply being the source of “the real stuff,” trading posts and their traders are romanticized and even valorized by tourists. In an \textit{Arizona Highways} article, the author, DeLauer, provides a series of heroic anecdotes as he briefly summarizes the history of Indian traders in the American Southwest. Among these anecdotes is an account of the Navajo trader Joe Tanner “Chuska Yazzie…meaning
‘Little Bear.’ **82 The author notes that the nickname wasn’t derived from Tanner’s physical appearance – barely 5’5” tall with facial hair and, “a superior masculine growth of hair on his arms and body”; rather, DeLauer claims that the nickname was given because, “[t]he bear was a symbol of strength and fear among the Navajo, and perhaps in the beginning they were in awe of the man.”**83 It likely, however, that the nickname was a result of the humor and wit often demonstrated by the Navajo. Magazine articles like these were the type of tourist literature that was circulating during the mid- to late-twentieth century, and it often portrayed traders in a favorable, if not heroic light, which lent authority and knowledge to the position of the trader. As for any negative accusations of traders and their roles, De Lauer argues that, “the bad reputation of the trader was established hundreds of years before the ‘modern’ trader came into existence,” and he attributes that “bad reputation” to a central Mexican “Aztec trading clan.”**84 Moreover, he notes, “this same debasing attitude was brought into our own Southwest by the Spaniards,” and was perpetuated in their greedy, “never ending search for riches, and in the quest of the mythical Cibola.”**85 But, he contends, “[t]he ‘modern’ trader believed that for him to prosper, the Indian must prosper.”**86 Heroism of the trader is made obvious in one story regarding trader John Wetherill, whose brother was, “murdered by a whiskey-crazed Navajo,”**87 and another, rather bizarre story about William McAdams, an employee of the Babbitt Brothers, who, “was challenged by Yellow Hand, the undefeated

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83 Ibid.
84 Ibid., 6
85 Ibid., 6, 11.
86 Ibid., 11.
87 Ibid.
champion of the Navajos, to wrestle Navajo style. The traditional costume was a G-string and moccasins. McAdams added his own tradition, came greased from head to ankle, and promptly won the match.\textsuperscript{88} While the bemusing sight of a white man dressed in a “G-string and moccasins” and “greased from head to ankle” would likely force anyone into submission, it’s most important to remember that this romanticized, albeit sometimes strange, perspective from which writers of tourist literature were writing enabled the continued (and, at times, negative) perception of Native Americans as the exotic other living in the context of a distant past. One could even go as far to say that many of these stories served as justification for their subjugated roles in society.

Because of this type of tourist literature described above, trading posts and traders became historical sites in and of themselves, places in which tourists can relive the days of the Wild West. One trading post, Lorenzo Hubbell’s in Ganado, Arizona, has even become a national monument. In fact, after the 1950s, all trading posts began to claim themselves as “the last of the old-time trading posts,” or the last of their kind.\textsuperscript{89} They did, and still do this in an attempt not only to set themselves apart from other stores, but to name themselves sites of authentic experience, so that their post becomes the place to experience authentic Southwest culture. In reference to Ellis Tanner’s Trading Post in Gallup, an author wrote in an in-flight magazine that,

\begin{quote}
except for the Tanner family members, most of the staff are Navajos, and most conversations in the post take place in melodious Navajo. These soft sounds, the mouth-watering aroma of lamb meat roasting in the butcher’s rotisserie, the weasel and coyote hides hanging on the walls and the old-fashioned zinc washtubs waiting to be sold all blend to foster nostalgia for
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{89} Hazen-Hammond, “…Gallup Now,” 8.
days long past.90

This author criticizes trading posts owned by other families including “the Richardsonsons, Turpens, Atkinsons” because they “have modernized so much that their shops no longer resemble the old trading posts.”91 Similarly, William Y. Adams argued that the term “trading post” is distinctive, and the distinction must be maintained (and is insisted on by the traders themselves) between these enterprises and off-reservation retail curio stores dealing in Indian and pseudo-Indian crafts. The latter commonly designate themselves “trading posts” because of the fancied picturesque connotations of the term; but they are, of course, straight cash operations serving strictly White clientele.92

Adams further maintains that traders who refer to their stores as “trading posts” should not “attempt to attract tourists,” and that true trading posts are on-reservation and serve a clientele which is mostly Native American.93 Based on Adams’ account, traders meant to separate themselves from off-reservation and curio stores to maintain their status as the premier place to purchase authentic Native American arts and crafts. Identifying their own stores as “real” or “original” trading posts set them apart from off-reservation stores that were mostly frequented by Whites.

Arizona Highways author Marjel DeLauer claimed that people selling Indian art that aren’t traders are considered “pseudo-entrepreneurs,” and, much to his dismay, “[s]ome Indian artisans take their own prized works directly to New York or Europe,”

90 Ibid., my emphasis.
91 Ibid.
93 Ibid, 185.
which has resulted in traders becoming “as extinct as the Dodo Bird.”\textsuperscript{94} It’s surprising and thoughtless to blame Indian artists in search of other buyers for the demise of the trader and his position. Then, DeLauer’s pressing question: “But what of the men who, a hundred years ago made this all possible?” Of course, the author is referring to the traders. While DeLauer contends that traders were “men who preferred the establishment of commerce with the Indians, rather than conquest,” he fails to realize that the “establishment of commerce” the traders imposed was in itself a form of conquest, in this case, commercial conquest. Finally, another intriguing feature of these excerpts from tourist literature is the language used to describe traders, which bears a resemblance to the way Native Americans were described – as vanishing, doomed, and extinct – during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This is a topic to which I will return during the discussion of pawn jewelry.

**The Post: Design, Social Hierarchy, and the Performance of Authenticity**

I have already discussed how the architectural design of a trading post can function as a signifier of authentic Indianness, as in the case of the hogan-shaped stores like Tuba Trading Post and Tse Awe in Kayenta. I will now turn to other aspects of the store itself, and explore how the general design of trading posts helped establish and reinforce the social status of the traders and native clientele, as well as tourists.

In order to analyze this aspect of the trading post, I want to first summarize Erving Goffman’s notion of “front regions” and “back regions” that constitute commercial and touristic spaces. The front region is essentially the space in which

commercial activities take place, or where consumers and sellers interact, such as lobbies, display areas, and reception areas; back regions are where staff members “retire between performances to relax and prepare.” Goffman identifies three main roles that are described on the basis of the regions to which the role-player has access: performers appear in the front and back regions; the audience appears only in the front region; and the outsiders are excluded from both regions.

For our purposes here, we can say that, in the context of the trading post, the traders are “those who perform,” the tourists are “those performed to” and the Native artists, defined again by their absence, are “outsiders who neither perform in the show nor observe it.” MacCannell relates the interior design of a structure, in this case, front and back regions, to social class, pointing out that, “Although architectural arrangements are mobilized to support this division, it is primarily a social one, based on the type of social roles found there.” This concept applies aptly to the social hierarchy constructed within the trading post environment, with the trader assuming the more dominant and powerful social role. It is important, however, to point out arguments made by Van Den Abbeele in his post-structuralist critique of *The Tourist*. Van Den Abbeele suggests that, rather than considering tourism a product of social structure, it is instead tourism that is the “driving force behind the production of differences in a social structure.” The tourists, then, and especially the traders helped to organize and enforce the structure of social class. An excerpt from a 1974 interview with trader C.G. Wallace gives an indication of the trader’s role in the construction of social structure:

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96 Ibid., 145.
“When I came to Zuni, the gambled, they played and they didn’t do much work at all. I made up my mind that I’d have every man, woman, and child working – and by the time I left just about all of them were.”

In this interview with Mike Tharp, Wallace confirms that it was his intention to change the economic state, and therefore the social class of the population at Zuni. Whether the changes he made were positive or negative is debatable, but his influence is clear.

Willow Powers describes the general design of a trading post that would have been common before the 1960s:

The entrance door to a trading post typically opened directly into the store, into what was known as the bull pen, an area in which the customers gathered, surrounded by high, broad counters on two or three sides of the room….Shelves lined the walls behind the counter, and the floor was often raised, so the trader was a little higher than the Navajos. The design of this main part of the store was a combination of advertising and defense. The goods could be seen, but not taken.

Aside from referring to the area in which their Native clientele gathered as the “bull pen” (fig. 12), traders constructed the interior of their stores in such a way that would make manifest the order of the social classes. Although Powers refers to the raised floor upon which the trader stood as a mechanism of “advertising and good defense,” I would argue that the raised floor also functioned in a way that rendered the Native Other (and later, the tourist) as inferior to the Anglo trader.

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100 Many trading posts were renovated around this time, and often did not maintain their original design.
101 Powers, Navajo Trading, 47.
During the 1950s and 1960s, the Southwest Indian arts and crafts market experienced an increase in tourism, and this resulted in the renovation of several of the trading posts (now considered “stores” by this time, but maintained their title as “trading posts” for both nostalgic and romantic purposes). The interiors of some trading posts resembled their original forms only slightly, with their main customer areas appearing more like commercial retail spaces than the “bull pens” of yore. In the back rooms of many trading posts, traders kept new and old pawn, dead pawn, possibly part of their own private collections, as well as working silversmiths and lapidarists. Access to this part of the store was restricted, and usually granted only to fellow traders, collectors, and some tourists. Kay Tinnin, a trader that worked in Zuni at the Vanderwagon Brothers Trading Post in the early 1970s, remembered guiding tourists to the back of the store where there was a walk-in safe for tourists to see.102 Traders Tobe Turpen, Jr., and C.G. Wallace – of whom Edwin Kennedy was a frequent patron – maintained interior structures that contained a special room in which silversmiths and lapidarists would work. Deborah Slaney describes Wallace’s store, saying that, “behind the Curio Room in the northeast corner of the C.G. Wallace Trading Store was a workshop set up by the trader for the Zuni and Navajo jewelers.” Behind the glass wall of this workshop, jewelers were provided with tools and materials so that they could work on site.103 While Slaney does not mention who was permitted access to this area, one can reasonably assume that Wallace permitted tourists and especially fellow traders or special customers into the area to witness jewelry production. In much the same way, Tobe Turpen, Jr. had an area in

102 Kay Tinnin (former trader), in discussion with the author, October 17, 2006.
which his hired jewelers worked. In an interview with Brad Cole from the Cline Library at Northern Arizona University, Turpen described the working area:

Turpen: And we worked our silversmiths—we always had at least six or eight silversmiths poundin’ away right in the back of the store, plus the ones that worked outside.

Cole: Would customers be able to go back and watch the silversmith’s work?

Turpen: Yes, and they really liked that. That was a big selling point. That worked very well. And when we moved to our new location we’re in now, I designed that store so when you walked in, there was a glass wall on the left, and a big long room with about twelve or fifteen silversmiths workin’ in there. And that, again, overcame the question, “Is it handmade?” And then most every customer would go through and watch, ‘cause it’s fairly interesting. It’s very simple, really, but it’s really quite interesting to see a piece of jewelry being made.¹⁰⁴

Other trading posts like the Vanderwagon Brothers Trading Post in Zuni¹⁰⁵ and OB Enterprises in Gallup paid their silversmiths and lapidarists to work on site, at the store. During the 1970s, at OB Enterprises, “a rug weaver, a silversmith, and a sandpainter work[ed] outdoor in a crowd-drawing free exhibit when weather permit[ted].”¹⁰⁶ These artists, as some of Turpen’s, were positioned directly outside the front door of the trading post so as to function as an attraction for tourists, and at the same time, assure authentic Indian-made products sold by the trader inside. Recalling MacCannell, the “sight” of the artist him- or herself worked simultaneously as a demonstration of ethnicity as well as a

¹⁰⁵ Kay Tinnin remembers two artists that worked in the store, William Leekya and Neshi Moki (phonetic spelling).
demonstration of authenticity.\textsuperscript{107} Although this may seem to contradict my earlier claim of the Native American’s absent role, or as a non-performer among Goffman’s cast of characters in the trading post, this presence as a demonstrator is one borne of spectacle; and, as Turpen pointed out earlier, the demonstrators are there to guarantee the authenticity of the products sold by the trader. It is a primarily passive rather than active role in which the Native artists are subject to the gaze of the tourist.

As MacCannell notes, “having a back region generates the belief that there is something more than meets the eye…back regions are still the places where it is popularly believed the secrets are.”\textsuperscript{108} The fact that tourists and other guests had access to the back regions of Wallace’s and Turpen’s stores is what made those stores unique. The back region, or workshop area, was where the performance of jewelry making took place, which thereby confirmed the authentic Indianness of their products – making it a truly touristic experience including both performance and consumption of the performed result. The “back region” performance undoubtedly made the tourist feel like part of the performance as it simultaneously authenticates and demystifies the product.

Further, MacCannell says that back regions are spaces for those “who are permitted to view details of the inner operation of a commercial, domestic, industrial, or public institution,” and that “entry into this space allows adults to recapture virginal sensations of discovery.”\textsuperscript{109} If this is the case, then this unique access likely provided for the tourist the same type of discovery as discussed by Pohl, in which the discovery itself

\textsuperscript{107} Hiring artists to perform on site was likely a cue taken by the Fred Harvey Company, who set a precedent doing the same. For more information on the Fred Harvey Company’s interest in hiring artists to demonstrate their arts, see Howard and Pardue, \textit{Inventing the Southwest...}, especially page 105.

\textsuperscript{108} MacCannell, \textit{The Tourist}, 93.

\textsuperscript{109} MacCannell, \textit{The Tourist}, 93.
is a passive, but heroic experience. While the staged “re-discovery” of these authentically primitive settings are, as Snyder describes, “commercial rather than military,” they still allow the tourist to engage in a postcolonial re-conquering described by Pohl. Furthermore, the literal wall of glass that existed between the tourist and the Native artists allows for that passive discovery because it enables the gaze, from subject to object, from seer to seen, from dominant to subjugated. The structure of the interior of the trading post then, quite literally, constituted a social hierarchy in which social class was performed in the context of a commercial enterprise, and exemplified the concept of the “work display” discussed by MacCannell.

**Interior Display: Cabinet of Curiosities and “Commercial Conquest”**

As both Ruth Phillips and Jo-Ann Berelowitz have already established, ownership of Native American arts and artifacts signify a conquering of Native American culture. The display of these objects has been analyzed in the residential context as well as in the context of a museum. However, I will analyze the display of Native American objects in the commercial context of the trading posts as arranged by the traders in their stores as well as their advertisements.

Many trading posts today attempt to communicate their authentic and historic status in the construction of their buildings, such as the aforementioned Tuba Trading Post, and others prefer to advertise their most valuable products. Shush Yaz Trading Company in Gallup, New Mexico, for example, places their oversized and imposing vault

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111 Snyder, “‘When the Indian was in Vogue.’ ”
directly in front of the entrance behind the jewelry counter, so it’s the first thing a visitor sees upon entering the store. Its placement in front of the entrance demands a visitor’s attention, and its location behind the jewelry counter reminds us that it’s just out of our reach. The vault here acts as a “back region” in and of itself, suggestive of the valuable, yet unseen objects inside.

A 1920 image advertising the Babbitt Brothers Trading Post in Flagstaff, Arizona provides us with another interesting aspect of the display of Native arts and crafts by traders (fig. 13). Weavings, baskets, and other arts and crafts are crowded around each other, stacked and organized along the walls of the room as well as the floor. The Babbitt Brothers name stands in the center of the room, claiming ownership of all the objects contained therein. The room depicted bears a striking resemblance to the “curiosity cabinets” of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in which curiosities (which were often considered oddities), or items collected from foreign cultures were displayed (fig. 14). In Trading Identities, Ruth Phillips describes the moose-foot wall pockets made in the Huron-

![Figure 13](image1.png) Advertisement of interior of Babbitt Brothers Trading Post, 1920. Photo taken by Sufea Studio. NAU.PH.421.1, Colorado Plateau Digital Archives, Cline Library, Northern Arizona University.

![Figure 14](image2.png) Ole Worm, Cabinet of curiosities. Detail from frontispiece of Museum Wormanium (Worm’s Museum), Leiden, 1655.
Wendat area of the Northeast United States during the nineteenth century, and associates them with “the idea of the hunting trophy.”¹¹³ Her evidence lies in the image she provides of Cornelius Krieghoff’s 1846 painting Officer’s Trophy Room, in which moose-foot wall pockets are displayed amongst (what appear to be) other Native-made objects including a miniature canoe and war clubs, as well as taxidermied heads of animals and animal hides. Because they are in the context of a “trophy room,” the Native-made objects displayed alongside the officer’s hunting exploits serve as evidence of domination or conquest. Nearly one hundred and thirty years later, a trading company in Gallup during the 1970s displayed similar characteristics to those depicted in Krieghoff’s painting, and to those described by Phillips. The author of an article about Gallup trading posts in the 1970s wrote that,

Richardson Trading Company and Cash Pawn retains some of the flavor and feeling of the Old West. It appears in the…dramatic, animal-head-hunting trophies on the walls, and the brightly painted old wagon in the window….¹¹⁴

This proud and obvious display of animal heads among Indian arts and crafts, not to mention the image of the “old wagon,” a well-known symbol of westward expansion in the American Southwest, is visibly similar to Krieghoff’s Officer’s Trophy Room from 1846. Despite the century that separates the two, the similarities are undeniable, and present us with an aspect of our postcolonial history that is truly still a part of our present.

The Babbitt Brothers room not only evokes those concepts associated with the collections of early explorers (such as John Tradescant) that had an interest in “primitive”

¹¹³ Phillips, Trading Identities, 235.
and “curious” cultures; this “cabinet”-like display can also, as Jo-Ann Berelowitz has shown, be connected to the museum.\textsuperscript{115} In the same magazine article previously cited, the author writes about Tobe Turpen, Jr.’s store in Gallup, now owned by Perry Null.

Customers at Tobe Turpen’s often comment that the store looks like a museum….It does. Turpen’s kachinas, for example, are neatly labeled with explanations of each and verifications of authenticity.\textsuperscript{116}

In the case of Turpen’s store, the items on display are arranged in a museum-like fashion, complete with exhibit “labels.” This retail space begins to appear more like a museum, in which objects from primitive and extinct cultures become the subjects of anthropological and archaeological study.

**Pawn and Authenticity**

Pawn indisputably played a significant role in the lives of Native Americans living in the Southwest during the twentieth century. For some, it was the only resource with which they could obtain food and other groceries. Despite its long history in Native American culture in the American Southwest, pawn would play an equally significant role in the tourist and jewelry trade.

For this network of traders, pawn was yet another way to gain power and structure. Those who needed money pawned their work or even valuable or sacred heirlooms. If they never saved up enough money to buy their items back with interest, those items became what is known as “dead pawn,” and usually were sold or entered into the private collection of the trader or dealer. For their Indian clients, pawn was an often unfair and unreliable system. Peterson Zah explained the inherently flawed pawn process:

\textsuperscript{115} Berelowitz, “From the Body of the Prince to Mickey Mouse,” 70-84.

\textsuperscript{116} Hazen-Hammond, “…Gallup Now,” 8-9.
The pawn value – not the amount of the loan but the actual value of the piece – was essentially established by the trader, because he was the party in control….If [the client] did not repay his loan within the redemption period (usually six months to a year), the pawn was declared dead and the trader could keep it or sell it for as much as he wished, pocketing the profit.117

These weren’t the only problems with the system of pawn. Pawned items were at times “misplaced” or “lost.” The frequency of “lost” pawn items in trading posts was just one of the exploitative aspects the Federal Trade Commission uncovered in their 1973 report. High interest rates (as much as 60 percent) were another.118 The FTC report provided an example in which a Navajo woman was informed that her pawn was “lost” when she attempted to effect redemption. She was able, however, to walk into the pawn vault unobserved where she found the item in plain view. Upon confrontation, the trader refused to release the item and physically ejected the woman from the post.119

Of course, not all traders conducted business this way, but several managed to amass their own private collections one way or another. Former trader Joe Danoff of the Ganado Trading Post recalls that,

The only jewelry I worked with was pawn. We did take pawn, and even that I kept to a minimum, because I used to go out to these trading posts, and my God, they had fortunes in their vaults of pawn that they’ve [sic] had held for years and years.120

As shown in the passage above, this allowed the trader or dealer to amass their own private collections, or to sell the items for profit. The process in which a collector purchases “dead pawn” once again renders the Native artist silent, absent, or invisible.

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117 Phoenix Gazette, “Where Has All the Old Pawn Gone?” (June 25, 1980), C-1.
118 Ibid.
119 Ibid.
120 Joe Danoff, interview by Brad Cole, no date, Traders: Voices From the Trading Post, United Indian Trader Association Oral History Project, Cline Library, Northern Arizona University.
The phrase “dead pawn” then becomes not just a technical term, but instead something tragically appropriate. Records from the Edwin Kennedy Manuscript Collection show that Kennedy had a special interest in dead pawn. Tobe Turpen, Jr., who was a major source of dead pawn items for the Fred Harvey Company, sent Edwin Kennedy prepared invoices of “the old pawn items in which [he had] shown an interest.” Gallup Indian Trading Company provided similar services in regard to dead pawn, and both offered Kennedy a discounted percentage off every order.

Unfair practices aside, dead pawn jewelry became the most coveted and sought after type of Indian jewelry in the Southwest. Among the “most prized” pieces of dead pawn included pueblo pins, especially Zuni Knifewings and Rainbow gods. The reason for dead pawn’s desirability lies in its origins. An article in the *Phoenix Gazette* claimed that,

> “old pawn” were terms usually uttered with reverence; pawn was – and still is – highly prized as much for its historical and cultural significance as for its beauty…A piece of old pawn was once an Indian’s personal property. Unlike jewelry made for sale or trade, this item was usually designed and executed for the wearer…

A clear distinction was made between jewelry made for the tourist trade and jewelry made for personal use by the Indians themselves. Because of pawned jewelry’s association with the maker and/or wearer, it was believed to have been more authentic,

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121 Weigle and Babcock, *The Great Southwest*, 82.
125 *Phoenix Gazette*, “Where Has All the Old Pawn Gone?,” C-1.
126 This is also due to a distinction made by John Adair in *Navajo and Pueblo Silversmiths*, 165-166.
and therefore more valuable. Yet another article in Arizona Highways insists that, “For us, the value and emotional attraction for old pawn Indian jewelry is that it has been owned, appreciated, worn and used by real living Indians.”127 Owning “dead” pawn that was worn and prized by once “living” Indians gave pawn jewelry an unparalleled authenticity. Rather than settle for jewelry made for traders which, as John Adair had noted, was very unlike the jewelry the Zuni made for themselves, collectors and tourists chose instead to seek out old, or as I will refer to it, dead pawn, because it was “the Indian’s most long-lived intimate property.”128 Dead pawn became so popular that, similar to Wallace’s practice of fictitiously producing sacred Zuni fetishes, imitation dead pawn was being produced for the market.129

Like the eighteenth and nineteenth century Native American him- or herself, pawn jewelry became a romanticized symbol – or sign – of Southwest Native American culture, and this is evident in the tourist literature of the period. One author in New Mexico Magazine wrote that, “The saga of old pawn takes on all the elements of a Tony Hillerman mystery,130 complete with folklore, deception and ceremonial rituals in the midst of a vanishing era in New Mexico.”131 What’s perhaps most interesting though, is that dead pawn jewelry began to be described in, and thought of in the same terms as applied to Native Americans themselves during the eighteenth, nineteenth and even early twentieth century. An author in Arizona Highways professes that, “the lure to own

128 Ibid.
129 Hartsfield, “The Search for Old Pawn,” 70.
130 Tony Hillerman is a best-selling author known primarily for his fictional mysteries set in the American Southwest in which Native Americans play main roles.
131 Ibid., 68.
authentic old pawn or antique Indian jewelry still is there,” but that the jewelry is “quickly disappearing from the open market, becoming harder to find. Private collectors and museums hold much of it, some privately hoarded as far away as the Middle East.”

The concept of the “disappearing” or “vanishing” Indian was a ubiquitous one used in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as an attempt to justify the elimination of Native Americans in the United States. The United States government successfully convinced Euro-Americans that as long as the indigenous people of North America were considered a “vanishing” or “doomed” population, their eventual disappearance was inevitable, and was a result of their inferior status as a primitive people unable to adapt to a rapidly progressing civilization. One article, whose title “Old Pawn, the Real, Real Indian Jewelry” speaks for itself, even goes so far as to include the work of Edward Sheriff Curtis in its illustrations. The first page of the article features a portrait by Curtis (The Catcher) from 1906. It begins with a passage that reads, “In and out of pawn for his lifetime…the Indian’s most long-lived intimate property.” On the same page, the author claims that, “[w]e see old pawn jewelry as an intimate relic of a people and a culture which is slowly and inevitably disappearing into history.” One can only guess as to why the editor chose not to use Curtis’ photograph entitled, The Vanishing Race.

Based on the writing of these collectors and other tourist literature, it seems that dead pawn jewelry was being collected not just for itself; but also because the attraction

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132 Ibid.
133 The well-known photography of Edward Sheriff Curtis during the early twentieth century has been faulted for contributing to the myth of the “vanishing race,” which justified the demise of Native Americans in the United States. For information on his work, see the Library of Congress’ website: http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/award98/ienhtml/curthome.html.
was based on the culture and context in which the jewelry was produced. Moreover, dead pawn jewelry played a role as a surrogate or stand-in for the authentic Indian – it became an interchangeable sign for authentic Indianness. Because these collectors and tourists believed that such a thing existed, it was important for them to find a replacement for a “pure” culture that they believed was virtually extinct. Finally, tourist literature shows that these concepts are perfectly aligned with the myth of the “vanishing race,” a notion presented in the photographs of Edward Sheriff Curtis. Old/dead pawn was simply one more way to primitivize Zuni and, more generally, Southwest Native American culture, claiming that it only existed in its “purest” form within the context of an unattainable past. Tourists and collectors believed strongly in that purity, as one author argues, “the old pawn racks were rich and splendid sources of the jewelry created by the finest Navajo silversmiths of their day, for their own people, and uncontaminated by taste and influence of alien people and cultures.”135 Over the years, pawn and pawned items have become associated with trading posts, and are now attributes of the entire touristic experience in the American Southwest. William Y. Adams noted that, “[p]awn is still believed to be one of the cornerstones of the Navaho trade, and the pawn racks with their rows of shining silver and turquoise jewelry and whatnot are seen as a necessary and picturesque feature of every trading post.”136 An author from Travel and Leisure (1989) described the display of pawn as “that festoon of burnished conchos and squash blossoms, those smoldering, chunky blue nuggets and tiny, savagely elegant beads of needlepoint

135 Ibid., 33.
Again, we see terms such as “picturesque” and “savage,” both of which are strongly associated with eighteenth and nineteenth century descriptions of Native Americans. While the pawn system of the Southwest has changed a great deal and now is subject to governmental regulations, it seems that the products of that system, or rather, the advertising and marketing of those products by traders and dealers, have spawned a new way to categorize and stereotype the Native American other (fig. 15).

**Conclusion**

Today, trading posts hardly resemble their original forms, as many have become obsolete in the face of sprawling commercialism and some increased wealth in the Southwest. During the 1970s, some trading posts and their owners faced accusations of exploitation, and legal action forced them to abandon some of their original practices. Most trading posts are now “galleries” or “shops,” and traders are now referred to as “dealers,” who cater to the tourist trade. Some however, have retained their description as “trading post” because of the historical and romantic connotations it evokes: the lone trader as pioneer in the uncivilized Wild West, bravely living among the Natives.

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138 A combination of the Federal Trade Commission’s 1973 report and an increasing number of customer complaints led to the formation of advocacy groups that accused several traders of unfair business practices. Exploitation in pawn was the most frequent complaint, and this led to the enforcement of stricter pawn regulations. Traders claimed the regulations were too strict, which resulted in the discontinuation of pawn in several trading posts in the Southwest.
Despite the controversy over which establishment is most “authentic,” one thing is clear: the trading post of the American Southwest has become a fixture in American culture, one that is, if anything, authentically *American*. During a trip in Italy, I remember happening upon a store that referred to itself as a “Trading Post.” Obviously geared toward American tourists (as the sign was written in English rather than Italian), it turned out that it was a store full of American sports memorabilia. Clearly, the origin of the trading post has been lost in many cases, and its function now principally exists within the realm of tourism, regardless of the location. But because of some of the negative characteristics of the trading business, some “dealers” have chosen to change the name of their stores. Tobe Turpen, Jr., for instance, changed the name of his business to an “Indian Arts and Crafts,” establishment,\(^\text{139}\) although he still dealt in pawn, as does his successor Perry Null, who maintains that the pawn system is used by patrons who prefer to pawn their expensive belongings to keep them in a safe place.\(^\text{140}\) Colina Yazzie, a Navajo from the Ganado area, used to work at the Hubbell Trading Post, and now owns Yazzie’s Indian Art Store with her husband (Raymond C. Yazzie) in Gallup. In an interview with the Cline Library at Northern Arizona University, she described her reason for changing the title of her store.

Navajos have, or Indians have, hard feelings toward traders, and that was the reason why we changed our name from Trading Company to Indian Art, because we notice when we attend a lot of different shows, other artists were approaching us….At times we were asked if we really were traders. It didn’t really mean anything to us at the time when we were asked these questions, until it came to me that the “trader” name wasn’t

\(^{139}\) Tobe Turpen, Jr., interview with KMA staff, April 15, 1994, Tape 23 (B-258), archives, Kennedy Museum of Art, Athens, Ohio.

\(^{140}\) Perry Null, in conversation with the author, October 19, 2006. This claim has also been made by other traders in the past.
really a good name, because when artists would come to us and say, “Are you really a trading company?”…They dealt with pawn – the trading posts….so we decided we’re gonna change our name because we don’t have pawn, and we don’t do trading like we used to at Hubbell….141

The changes trading posts have undergone since the nineteenth century are many, as are the reasons for such changes. Today, more traders and dealers have begun to recognize the achievements of individual artists by displaying their work separately and by name (fig. 16).142 More collectors and museums are bypassing the trader or dealer altogether and directly consulting the artists to purchase their work. Pawn isn’t practiced nearly as much as it was prior to 1975, and it’s no longer the only resource for essential groceries as it once was for Native Americans in the Southwest.143 Native American arts and crafts continue to be a popular tourist attraction in the Southwest, and the market continues to evolve as more and more artists produce both contemporary and traditional art. Very few artists demonstrate their work in the context of the trading post, although they still demonstrate in more educational contexts such as schools or museums. While some artists still sell their work to traders/dealers, there are now other outlets for artists to pursue, most recently, the Internet. In spite of all of these changes, however, the trading

141 Colina Yazzie, interview by Brad Cole, January 26, 2000, transcript, Traders: Voices From the Trading Post, United Indian Trader Association Oral History Project, Cline Library, Northern Arizona University.
142 Perry Null’s website has online gallery and artist interviews (www.pntrader.com). The store has some of its jewelry arranged by artist, some artists have their own display cases.
143 After 1975, the Federal Trade Commission had implemented new and stricter regulations regarding pawn, resulting in the withdrawal of the pawn system from many trading post businesses.
post as it existed in the mid to late twentieth century persists today in its ability to attract tourists in search of the most authentic Indian arts and crafts. The Zuni Knifewing and Rainbow god designs don’t enjoy the same touristic popularity as they once did in the twentieth century; instead, they have become highly collectible and highly valuable representations of Southwest Native American jewelry seen more often in museums, private collections and high-end galleries.

The Edwin L. and Ruth E. Southwest Native American Jewelry Collection is evidence of that popularity, and of the predisposition of collectors to seek Native arts and crafts having religious or mythological content. Twentieth century traders acknowledged and understood these desires of the tourist, and created an environment and a business in which they would cater to these desires and profit off them. In doing so, and with the authority they assumed and were granted, traders helped to perpetuate archaizing stereotypes of the Native American in the Southwest. I hope that, in this analysis of Southwest Native American jewelry and production within the touristic context of the trading post, I have presented an aspect of our contemporary postcolonial culture in a way that offers a rethinking of our perspectives of Native Americans and their arts; ultimately, I would anticipate that this study contributes to a better understanding of how tourists, traders, and the concept of authenticity have affected Native American arts and crafts by perpetuating stereotypes that, despite their ability to preserve tradition, have also managed to place restrictions on Native American artists that limit creative freedom and artistic evolution.
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