

**MYTHS, MARKETS AND METAPHORS:
NAVAJO WEAVING AS COMMODITY AND COMMUNICATIVE FORM**

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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FORM

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by

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation I unearth evidence exposing the consequences of multiple forms of appropriation of a popular "collectible"...the blankets and rugs woven by thousands of Navajo women of the southwestern United States. Historically, textiles have been marginalized in the domains of art, religion and commerce. Due to a number of unquestioned assumptions grounded in logical dualisms, textile production by Navajo women has fallen between the paradigmatic cleavages in anthropology. The development of ideas related to gendered spheres of productive and non-productive labour, art and craft, and sacred as opposed to secular spheres, all of these differences reflect binary oppositions and provided the context to justify the absence of thousands of female weavers from history.

Feminist political economy provides a useful framework to assess the economic consequences of escalating appropriation historically. I assess information extracted from trading post archives and government documents untapped or underutilized by other investigators. Analysis of evidence unearthed from trader Lorenzo Hubbell's business records revealed that nearly all weaving was wholesaled by weight after 1880. Weaving fleece into textiles provided a secure means of diversification for traders faced with continual price fluctuations in the international wool markets. Massive shipments impoverished weavers, and pauperization continues today as the historic textiles are recycled in the collectors' markets, depressing the demand for textiles created by thousands of contemporary Navajo weavers. My interviews with weavers corroborate the drop in demand over the past decade in tandem with the escalation in auction sales for historic textiles and "copy" weaving imported from Mexico and abroad. The results of my analysis challenge a cluster of generalizations that have dominated the literature on the Navajo for decades.

Given the magnitude and extent of the appropriation of surplus labour for decades, one must query why Navajo women would continue to weave. Interviews with weavers suggested that they weave for reasons beyond economics. In order to reorientate weaving within a more explanatory framework, I utilize an epistemology formulated by Gregory Bateson, grounded in communications and systems theory which suggests a reformulation of Navajo aesthetics more compatible with their lifeways.

To summarize, this dissertation reveals the extent and continued impoverishment of thousands of Navajo; it uncovers the correlations between the volatile activity in the investment and import markets and their inimical effects on contemporary weavers, and suggests another way of perceiving Navajo weaving based on Bateson's epistemology.

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Other faculty, staff and students in the Department of Anthropology at York made my odyssey all the more enjoyable. Special thanks to Mane Arratia, Lynne Milgram and Rae Anderson. And to SSHRCC for four years of financial support which allowed me the privilege of returning to University to research and weave a different story about Navajo blankets and rugs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page / i
Copyright Page / ii
Certificate Page/ iii
Abstract / iv
Acknowledgements/ v
Table of Contents / vi
List of Figures and Tables / xi
List of Maps and Illustrations / xii
Preface / xiii

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION / 1

Scope of the Problem / 1
How the Personal Became Political / 2
Field Methods: Archival Research / 8
Data Analysis / 11
Reservation Field Work / 12
A Brief Review as Prelude to Reconceptualizing Navajo Weaving / 13
Theoretical Perspectives / 16
Feminist Political Economy / 17
Postmodernist readings of the production of woven collectibles by women / 21
Reconceptualizing Navajo Weaving / 23
Putting Language in Its Place / 24
The Epistemology of Gregory Bateson / 26
A New Formulation of Navajo Aesthetics / 29
Organization of Chapters / 33

CHAPTER TWO ORIGINS AND EARLY HISTORY OF NAVAJO TRADE / 34

Inter-tribal Trade Relations / 36
Spanish Traders / 37
The introduction of livestock / 39
Textiles and Pre-Reservation Trade / 39
Bosque Redondo - Subduing the Wild Tribes / 43
Provisioning the Bosque: a Contractor's Paradise / 46
General Carleton's Holy Crusade / 48
A Painful Failure / 49
Post-Bosque Redondo Trade / 51
Regulating Merchant Trade / 51
Annuity Goods: Links to Survival / 52
Cessation of Annuities: Recipe for Impoverishment / 54
Kinship, Social Organization and Residence Patterns / 57
The Reservation Traders / 62
Endnotes / 65

CHAPTER THREE TRADE, COMMERCE AND DIVERSIFICATION / 66

- "Opening" the West / 66
 - Gross-Kelly and Company / 69
 - Charles Iffeld Company / 71
 - Barter and Debt Peonage / 71
- An Arizona Dynasty: the Babbitt Brothers / 73
 - Diversification: Recipe for Survival / 75
 - Protecting Profits / 76
 - Profitable Politics / 77
 - Diversification and Debt / 78
- Domestic Wool Production / 78
 - The Wool Market / 79
 - Partido / 81
- The Wool Tariff / 82
- Reservation Trade / 84
- Terms of Trade / 86
 - Credit and Credit Saturation / 89
 - Seco or "Chips" / 91
 - Pawn / 91
 - Government Regulations and Trading / 93
- Diversification Denied / 96
- Chapter Addendum - Tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 / 99

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATING DISCOURSES ON TRADERS, WEAVERS AND BLANKETS / 108

- Demographic Background: Reservation Period / 110
- Textile Production as Registered in Government Documents / 111
- Discourse I: Calculating Increased Production as Reported in Amsden / 113
- Discourse II: Ethnohistorical Perspective and Political Economy Sources / 117
- Discourse III: A Marxist Model of Navajo Weaving / 121
 - A Critique / 124
- Discourse IV: Weaving Time and the Navajo Rug / 130
 - Traders' "Experiments" / 130
 - Museum Experiments / 132
- Discourse V: Why the Navajo Blanket Became a Rug / 133
 - Appropriating the Patterns: Escalating Success of Commercial Trade Blanket Manufacturers / 135
 - The Pendleton Company: Merchandising Success / 139
- Conclusions / 142
- Endnotes / 143

CHAPTER FIVE BLANKETS BY WEIGHT: THE "HIDDEN" NARRATIVE / 146

- Gambling on Wool / 147
- Evidence Extrapolated from Archival Sources
 - Demonstrating Increased Textile Production / 148
- Evidence Demonstrating Increase in Weavers' Workload / 154

Evidence Demonstrating Sustained Appropriation
of Weavers' Surplus Labour / 158
Youngblood's Survey 1929-1934 / 160
The Navajo Agency Report 1939-1940 / 162
Terms of Trade: Issues Related to "Standardization" / 166
The Old Conundrum "Standardization" / 168
Post-World War I Rug Production / 170
Government/Trader Relations / 173
The Perpetual Need for Pawning / 173
Letters from Navajo / 174
Conclusions / 175
Endnotes / 192

**CHAPTER SIX BLANKETS BY DESIGN: ASSESSING TRADERS' INFLUENCE
ON STANDARDIZATION OF PATTERNS / 195**

Traders and Weavers in the Published Record / 196
George Wharton James, the Earliest "Classic" / 198
The Influence of J. B. Moore 1897-1911 / 199
 James's critique of traders' influence / 201
Charles Avery Amsden: the Earliest Orthodox Source / 204
Additional Sources on Traders' Influences / 209
 Historian Frank McNitt / 209
 Collectors Kaufman and Selser / 209
 Political Economist Larry Weiss / 210
 Museologist Kate Peck Kent / 211
Traders and Weavers in Unpublished Archives / 211
 Hubbell's Influence on Navajo Designs / 211
 Dissertation study by Joann Boles / 213
 The Fred Harvey Company/Hubbell Correspondence / 214
 "The Rug Business": Selected Inter- and
 Intra-Post Correspondence 1909-1940 / 216
Rethinking Standardization / 220
Endnotes / 222

**CHAPTER SEVEN FROM FLEA MARKET TO FIFTH AVENUE:
TRACKING THE INVESTMENT MARKET IN HISTORIC
NAVAJO WEAVING / 224**

From Woven Craft to High Art / 225
 Unravelling the Entwinement of Academic
 Scholarship and Commerce / 226
Tracking the Journey from Collectible to High Camp / 228
Marketing in a Museum Context / 229
Counter-Voices and the Politics of Representation / 230
 Critique from First-Nations Perspectives / 233
Artspeak: From Barbarism to Eye-Dazzling / 234
Historic Navajo Weaving and the Local/Regional Scene / 238
 More Affordable Collectibles / 240
The Conservation of Historic Treasures / 240
The Contemporary Scene / 242

Tracking the Drop in Demand / 244
Continued Appropriation of Patterns / 246
Regional Off-Reservation Rug Auctions / 249
Rug Auctions on the Reservation / 250
Worried Weavers' Voice / 251
Conclusion / 254
Endnotes / 256

**CHAPTER EIGHT TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF
NAVAJO AESTHETICS / 260**

The Aesthetics of Navajo Weaving: Anthropologists' Perspectives / 262
 The Rug as Functional Commodity / 263
 The Symbolic World of the Sacred / 265
 The Non-symbolic World of the Secular / 267
A Counter-Interpretation: Gary Witherspoon and Semiotic Geometry / 268
Counter-Discussions from Navajo Perspectives / 270
The Rug is a Way of Life for the Dine / 272
The Aesthetics of Navajo Weaving: Museologists' Perspectives / 277
Contemporary Navajo Weaving as "Art" / 279
"Navajo Weaving Since the Sixties" / 282
 Weavers Respond / 282
Reflections on Contesting Presentations / 287
 Traders and Dealers' Voices / 288
 Response from Navajo Audience / 289
A Weaver's Story / 289
Conclusions / 291
Endnotes / 293

**CHAPTER NINE RECONCEPTUALIZING NAVAJO WEAVING: FROM
COLLECTIBLE COMMODITY TO COSMOLOGICAL
PERFORMANCE / 296**

The Differences Between Analogic and Digital Coding / 297
A Striking Lesson / 299
Movement as the Basis of Life / 301
A Timely Review of Navajo Cosmology / 303
 The Primacy of *K'e* / 304
Perceiving the Patterns / 305
 Weaving as Metaphor / 306
Collapsing the Dualisms / 307
An Empirical Quagmire / 309
Reconstituting an Aesthetic Unity / 312
 Learning the Context / 314
 Mapping Differing Contexts / 316
 Aesthetic Holism / 318
Concerning the Sacred / 319
Conclusions / 321
Endnotes / 331

Bibliography / 332

Appendices:

- I Juan Lorenzo Hubbell, Dean of Navajo Traders
and Father of the Navajo Rug / 353
- II Price Comparison Between Official Statistics on
Wool and Stock and Actual Credit Received by
Navajo Herders According to Hubbell's Records / 359
- III The Babbitt Brothers Trading Posts and Navajo Blankets / 362

- IV Weavers' Ledger Accounts / 368
- V Three "Curio" Pamphlets / 379
- VI The Fred Harvey Company Earliest Shipment / 390
- VII J. B. Moore and the Navajo Rug / 393
- VIII The Fred Harvey Company and Indian Demonstrators on Display / 395
- IX The Fred Harvey Company as Brokers of Historic Navajo Textiles / 398
- X Navajo Cosmology / 401
- XI A Vignette on Reciprocity / 407

Glossary of Terms and Description of Weaving Process / 408

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURE	1.1	Visible Commodity Relations / 18
	4.1	Goat Skin/Patterned Saddle Blanket Wholesale Cost Hubbell Trading Post Records 1890-1920 / 145
	5.1	Annual Blanket Shipments from Ganado Trading Post 1900-1901 / 187
	5.2	Frequency Distribution of Coded Rugs, Ganado Trading Post 1900-1901 [Box 333] / 188
	5.3	Annual Wool Shipments from Ganado Trading Post 1891-1914 / 189
	5.4	Number of Blankets Bartered by Weavers at Ganado 1906 / 190
	5.5	Credit Received by Weavers for Textiles [from Fryer, 1939] / 191
	9.1	Navajo Relations [Non-Empirical] / 317
TABLE	3.1	Annual Wholesale Averages, Primary Navajo Products / 99
	3.2	Cost Per Pound of Foodstuffs Extracted from Hubbell Trading Post Inventories and Wholesalers' Invoices / 102
	3.3	Cost of Consumer Goods and Stock Supplies Extracted from Hubbell Trading Post Inventories and Wholesalers' Invoices / 105
	4.1	Goods Bartered by Selected Traders, 1910-1911 [from McNitt 1962] / 128
	5.1	Profit and Loss by Category, Hubbell Trading Post Records, 1891-1909 / 178
	5.2	Coded Textiles, Ganado Trading Post 1900-1901 [Box 333] / 179
	5.3	Blanket Shipments, 1901, Ganado Day Book [Box 333] / 180
	5.4	Rug Schedule from Traders' Purchases, Navajo Reservation, 1939 [from Fryer] / 184
	5.5	Cash Valuation of Bartered Goods, Hubbell Trading Post Records, Ganado, 1906 / 185
	5.6	Navajo Pawn Records / 186
	6.1	Fred Harvey Company Shipment, 1901 / 392

LIST OF MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

- 1.1 Unknown Navajo Weaver, September 23, 1942, by Milton Snow
[Courtesy Navajo Nation Museum, Window Rock] / 6
- 2.1 Map of Navajo Reservation / 35
- 3.1 Gross-Kelly and Company / 70
- 5.1 Saddle Blanket/Pound Blanket Rug / 157
- 5.2 Summer Sheep Camp by Milton Snow (1925-1930) / 172
- 5.3 Three "Curio" Catalogues / 380
- 6.1 J. L. Hubbell's Office, Ganado, circa 1907 / 197
- 7.1 Susie Hosteen (Circa 1951) / 253
- Navajo Loom [Glossary] / 410

PREFACE

This preface provides a means to orient readers to this dissertation. I began weaving in 1971, and have combined my interests in cloth with anthropology since that time. While doing field work for my Master's thesis in 1982, I spent time on Baffin Island, Northwest Territories. The Canadian Government has subsidized a weaving program at Pangnirtung, NWT, since 1970. I became aware of both the advantages and the shortcomings of government support. However, one of the most noticeable differences between my Arctic experience and that in the southwest is the systemic poverty evident in the latter location.

Both the Navajo and the Inuit are "high profile" art producers. That is, both groups produce expressive forms that are popular and "collectible." However, Navajo weaving (and silverwork) has been sought after and sold for more than a century. Published documents provide evidence for the prodigious production of textiles by Navajo women. More than 100,000 Navajo women have woven a million blankets and rugs. Yet we lack knowledge of the conditions under which these women laboured.

For decades, the per capita income of the Navajo people has remained at 20% of the national average. Clearly, they have not benefited from their production of textiles. My research question arose from a need to explain the gap between wealth of production and dearth of knowledge about Navajo weavers. I looked to anthropology for answers and discovered that weavers are missing from history.

This work is about the production of knowledge about the Navajo, and the destructive impact that knowledge has had on the Navajo. The evidence cited is culled from literature about the Navajo and from historical archives. The archives I accessed have been available to researchers since 1977, yet no publications reveal the means, magnitude and extent of impoverishment of thousands of Navajo women. However, this dissertation examines the political economy of collecting rather than the domestic political economy of the Navajo.

Second, the interpretive framework I use is based on Bateson's epistemology. It is one of a possible set of theoretical frameworks, and is not a Navajo perspective. I chose it because I found it the most illuminating and appropriate to deal with issues related to dualisms that continue to dominate the social sciences. It is my path to understanding, not that of the weavers. However, I hope by the end of the dissertation, the reader will see the relation between my view, Bateson's epistemology, and the Navajo.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Scope of the Problem

On October 9, 1992, while interviewing weavers on the Navajo Reservation, I was privileged to hear bell hooks speak about the Quincentenary at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. During her presentation she broke into tears while quoting a passage on the legacy of Christopher Columbus, authored by Chickasaw Linda Hogan (1992):

What has been done to the land has been done to the people; we are the same thing. And all of us are injured by the culture that separates us from the natural world and our inner lives, all of us wounded by a system that grew out of such genocide, destruction to the land, and slavery....we Native Americans were invisible or we were commodities.

I reference this poignant remark because it evokes the subject of this dissertation. Native peoples were not only separated from the land. Much of what anthropologists designate as "material culture" was also appropriated in various ways. After years of research on various aspects of this topic, I am convinced that the loss of their material culture has also had devastating consequences. But it is more insidious. Many people are aware that most treaties between nation-states and indigenous nations were either broken or ignored by colonizers. In contrast, the effects of multiple appropriations of their material culture has received scant attention. Based on evidence presented in this dissertation, I argue that in terms of its catastrophic consequences, it is second to the loss of their homelands.

Today, many of the most valuable textiles created historically by aboriginal peoples are ensconced in museums or owned by wealthy private collectors and dealers. Prominent auction houses located in major cities around the world feature sales of indigenous material culture in the form of "collectibles" that not infrequently reap hundreds of thousands of dollars for connoisseurs (Sotheby's 1989, 1991). Meanwhile, the descendants of the original makers remain impoverished producers. Unlike foodstuffs grown by peasants and consumed shortly after harvest, handwoven textiles frequently outlast their makers. The perpetual

circulation and re-circulation of their ancestors' creations continues to have inimical effects on contemporary producers.

In this dissertation I unearth evidence exposing the consequences of multiple forms of appropriation of a popular "collectible"...the blankets and rugs woven by Navajo women of the southwestern United States over the past 150 years. I track the complex connections and financial success between the local and regional business empires subject to global market pressures, and link the past to the present in a manner not attempted before. The story that emerges does not concur with the extant literature on the history of Navajo weaving. However, some of the information I have uncovered is corroborated in various ways by Navajo I have interviewed.

For a portion of the historic section I analyze information extracted from trading post business records and government documents either untapped or underutilized by other investigators. To examine the economic consequences of the recent volatile investment market, I incorporate information from auction house and gallery catalogues, newspaper and magazine articles, museum publications and juxtapose these to interviews with contemporary Navajo weavers.

How the Personal Became Political

My interest in this topic spans 25 years. I began weaving in 1971, shortly after moving to Canada. Having sewn since the age of eight, weaving was a natural extension of my life-long interest in cloth. I was particularly interested in indigenous looms and weaving techniques which complemented my interest in anthropology. In 1973, along with members of a local weavers' guild, I attended the first international tour of historic Navajo textiles exhibited at a prominent regional gallery. Rather than displayed individually on gallery walls like paintings, these century-old textiles were mounted on tracks like rugs in a carpet shop in a difficult to locate sub-level gallery. I left the building in shock, wondering how could people not see that these textiles were ART!

After weaving for several years and entering craft exhibitions, several guild members encountered stubborn resistance from the professional arts community concerning their attitudes towards crafts. Prestigious art galleries neither collected nor exhibited contemporary pottery or textiles. Their official mandate designated exhibits of fine arts only, i.e., painting and sculpture. Infrequent exhibitions of textiles were comprised of rare, historic treasures.

Frustrated with this rejection, I began reviewing relevant literature to discover why textiles were marginalized. I learned that indigenous weavers typically "design from their heads," that is, they do not draw out their patterns before commencing to weave. Attempting this feat resulted in the most frustrating activity of my weaving career. I encountered both conceptual and technical challenges weaving two rugs on my indigenous upright loom that I never encountered utilizing floor looms. In contrast, painters and sculptors had the luxury of sketching their ideas in advance. Yet textiles are absent from most art history books.

Intrigued as to "why the medium makes the difference" I returned to University in 1981, vowing to research the genesis of the distinction between art and craft for an M. A. in Sociology. While doing fieldwork on the subject, I discovered the Lorenzo Hubbell Papers housed at the University of Arizona, Tucson. Given my interest in Navajo weaving, I was naturally curious as to the kind of information these documents contained, as they were the collected papers of the most prestigious trading family to the Navajo since the formation of the Reservation in 1868. I spent several weeks taking notes from the papers and eventually incorporated some of the information in my Master's thesis.

I was quite familiar with the 'standard story' concerning the history of Navajo weaving depicted by anthropologists such as Ruth Underhill (1956) and Gladys Reichard (1934, 1936, 1939), and popular writers. Authors frequently stressed the importance of the traders in "saving" Navajo weaving by developing markets in the east. The archival information appeared to flaunt this story to some degree. Given the size of the collection, I realized it would take months of effort to peruse even a portion of the voluminous records.

Another part of the extant story concerned authors' comments on how hard working Navajo women were. This was certainly borne out in the archival records I examined. The acquisition and disposition of textiles was a topic that frequently appeared in both business and personal correspondence, and intra and inter-post communications. A cursory examination of business records revealed an abundance of information related to the acquisition and sales of Navajo weaving, reflecting prodigious production.

On my last trip to the library before leaving the southwest in 1982, I remarked to archivist Clint Colby, "I think a good portion of the hidden history of Navajo weaving may be buried in the Hubbell Papers." He nodded and said, "It's all there, Kathy, but I've spent seven years processing them... you should think about doing some research, especially since you are a weaver." I tucked that comment away, returned to Canada, and wrote up my Master's thesis.

But Clint's remark haunted me. Later visits to the southwest confirmed that an increasing number of retail establishments were advertising and selling historic Navajo textiles. No longer hung as carpets, they were displayed as prized works in exclusive galleries catering to an elite market. Bookstores increasingly featured publications by dealers, collectors and museologists highlighting historic textiles. With greater frequency, the early nineteenth century "chief's blankets" were described in terms formerly reserved for fine art. I wondered what sort of an effect this activity was having on contemporary Navajo weavers. I knew out of a population of 150,000 Navajo, there were thousands of women (and a few men), weaving on the Reservation. I also became aware that in tandem with the heightened interest in the historic textiles, imported rugs incorporating Navajo patterns woven by "Indian" weavers were selling at the lower end of the retail scale at many tourist outlets adjacent to the Reservation.

While driving across the Reservation on the way to southern Arizona to fieldwork sites, I frequently stopped at supermarkets located in a few villages that dot the Reservation.

The parking lot would be loaded with pickup trucks. Sometimes three generations of a family would drive in from outlying areas, with children and young adults crammed in the bed of the pickup. Shoppers frequently used food stamps, and many elderly Navajo did not speak English. Invariably there were clusters of Navajo selling turquoise jewellery, juniper bead necklaces, and rugs at roadside stands, especially those adjacent to the Grand Canyon. Sometimes there were articles in local newspapers about the persistent poverty on the Reservation.

In 1987, anthropologist Gary Witherspoon published a monograph that accompanied an exhibition of Navajo weaving at the Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff. He estimated that more than 100,000 weavers had woven more than a million blankets and rugs over two centuries. To a weaver like myself, these are astonishing figures. Yet these women are absent from history. Although a few books exist on how to weave a Navajo rug, most publications today cater to collectors. Most literature on the subject highlights the influence of a handful of traders. But traders cannot obtain textiles without weavers! By emphasizing traders and individual historic textiles, thousands of weavers vanish [Illustration 1.1].

This dissertation is an attempt to initiate writing these women into history. Given the systemic poverty on the Reservation, and the magnitude of past and present production, clearly the Navajo were not the beneficiaries of their prodigious output. I felt that the Hubbell Papers would hold clues to a number of questions worthy of investigation--questions I puzzled about, but remained unaddressed in the literature on the subject. Because of my initial exposure to the Hubbell Papers, I became aware that there were major discrepancies in the literature concerning rates of returns to weavers. From the limited exposure I had with his business records, it seemed that published literature contained inflated figures. Yet Hubbell is eulogized as the "ideal" trader. Indeed, he is deemed the czar of Navajo trade and the father of the Navajo rug. If the weavers who traded with him appeared to receive little in exchange, was it much worse for weavers who bartered with traders who lacked the



Unknown Navajo Weaver
Illustration 1.1

reputation for fairness that Hubbell enjoyed? It seemed as if the more the Navajo wove, the poorer they became. If that was the case, why would these women continue to weave?

After finishing my Master's degree in 1985, I wove full time for two years, and taught part-time. I realized I would never survive as a weaver because it is such a labour intensive, underpaid profession. In 1989, I returned to university after curating a textile exhibition, determined to investigate the hidden history of Navajo weaving, and resurrect the *contributions made by thousands of nameless women*. While doing the archival research described in the methods section, I met two other individuals who had either researched portions of the Hubbell Papers, or worked at Hubbell's home at Ganado, now a National Historic Site. They were very familiar with the Hubbell family history and southwestern history in general. But neither of them were prepared for the evidence I was uncovering. Besides archivist Clint Colby, the only person who was not surprised by the evidence revealed in the Hubbells' business records was the individual who accompanied me to bell hooks' presentation.

While working on his doctorate in History and Political Science, Rahim Akbarzadeh had spent seven years researching the unprocessed archives of the Babbitt Brothers, housed at the Northern Arizona University Library. As the Hubbells' contemporaries, the five Babbitt Brothers built a business empire and controlled much of the commerce in northern Arizona. They also owned a dozen trading posts over that period of time. Rahim had also discovered evidence of escalating production by Navajo weavers. And he knew too, that these women were missing from history.

As a weaver, I feel it is unconscionable that a handful of entrepreneurs continue to receive credit for the prodigious production of thousands of women. One way to write these women's contributions into history is to examine whatever primary evidence is available that can shed light on this refractory problem. Within the past four years, an adjunct curator at the Heard Museum in Phoenix has researched the history of Elle of Ganado, one of the

handful of Navajo weavers whose names have come down to us through history. To acknowledge a weaver who wove in the public eye for decades, under the auspices of the Fred Harvey Company, is laudable. But it is important to remember that Elle had thousands of sisters.

Although thousands of weavers currently reside on the Reservation, it is increasingly difficult to find contemporary Navajo weaving for sale in a number of southwestern cities, such as Albuquerque, New Mexico (David Brugge, 1996). As the largest city in the state, Albuquerque is located less than two hours from the south-eastern border of the Navajo Reservation. However, tourists will encounter little difficulty purchasing imported copy weaving, or the historic Navajo textiles in Albuquerque. Indeed, the first billboard one encounters when leaving the airport is a colourful sign emblazoned with the name and phone number of one of the largest historic textile dealers in the region.

Field Methods: Archival Research

My fieldwork was comprised of two components. The first portion involved extensive research from May 5 to September 30, 1992, in archives stored at the Special Collections Library, University of Arizona, Tucson. This library houses the collected papers of the Lorenzo Hubbell family, traders to the Navajo from 1876 to 1967. Although the Hubbells owned more than thirty businesses on or adjacent to the Reservation over time, the Ganado, Arizona post was the most important single post in the history of Navajo trade. Its unbroken history spanned eighty years, and it continues to function as a trading post under the auspices of the United States Park Service. Consequently it is the oldest continuously operated business in all of northern Arizona. Because it remained in one family for decades, business and personal records remained intact. When Dorothy Hubbell turned over the post and contents to the Park Service in 1967, government personnel discovered 250 cubic feet of papers stored in one hundred crates, boxes and trunks in the warehouse, barn, and a porch behind the house. Robert Utley (1959) prepared a special report on the post for the National

Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings. He made the following comments about the papers:

We found them badly disorganized, laden with quantities of Arizona sand, and in some places suffering from the attacks of rodents. We concluded, however, that not only could most of them be salvaged, but that, properly organized and studied they would yield a treasure of information about Navajo trading. For a study of the pattern of the Navajo trade, in fact, they are probably the most valuable single collection in existence.

Weighing nearly two tons, the papers were shipped to Tucson in 1971. The Hubbell Papers were processed by archivist Clint Colby over a seven year period and completed in June 1978. Mr. Colby prepared a 143-page annotated Index. The papers are stored in 573 Hollinger boxes and contain information spanning an 80 year period, from 1883 to 1964. Group I is composed of 125 boxes and contains all incoming, outgoing, intra- and inter-post correspondence, and Indian letters. All correspondence is alphabetized to the initial of the middle name (just like the telephone book). Group II contains vendor files concerned with the exchange of goods or services between the Hubbells and individuals or companies, 114 boxes of orders, invoices, freight bills, etc. from off-post vendors. Another 77 boxes [numbers 241-318] are intrapost vendor files containing orders, invoices, receipts, etc. in alphabetical order. Group III is composed of business books and records: including daily records (174 boxes), of day books, cash books, individual accounts (ledgers, ledger sheets), journals, and daily sheets. The arrangement is alphabetical by posts with material for each location in as nearly as possible, a chronological order.

There are 29 boxes of summary records which cover a range of materials concerned with a general accounting of the business on a monthly, quarterly, and yearly basis. Inventories, financial statements, accounts payable/receivable, and profit and loss records are arranged alphabetically by post. Five other boxes are labelled "Indian records." Several smaller groups of files contain all papers related to legal and banking matters, personal materials, post office materials, sales books and advertisements, price lists and catalogues.

I reviewed information relevant to weaving in more than 225 boxes of papers. I

entered pertinent information into a Data Train Notebook computer. Because much of the information was too detailed to assess and enter on site, the library staff xeroxed one thousand pages directly from the papers.

Hubbell maintained a double-entry bookkeeping system, a sophisticated form of record-keeping for a frontier trader, unusual for the time period. Some traders never kept formal records as so little cash changed hands (Adams 1968:135; Richardson 1986:11; Roberts 1987:45). They depended upon wholesalers to notify them annually regarding their financial solvency. I was exposed to this form of record keeping as a young teenager, as I kept books for my father's small business.

Records of individual transactions form the basis of an accounting system. The double entry accounting system was devised in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Venice, Italy (Turton 1991). Account records are kept in different types of record books including: books of prime entry (cash books and day books), journals, ledgers, accounts and "other records." Oftentimes these types of records are kept in volume form, labelled and numbered according to date.

Day book entries contain detailed information often summarized in either the journal or the ledger. Cash books contain debit and credit transactions. The debit columns represent transactions of monies received, and the creditor transactions reflect sums paid. All transactions in the books of prime entry (cash books and day books), must be posted to the ledger. The journal stands between the books of prime entry and the ledger. In the journal, all transactions of the same kind are 'arranged' sequentially in date order and gathered together, often alphabetically, under appropriate headings, with an indication of which sums are to be carried to the debtor side and which to the creditor side of the ledger. The journal is ruled into several columns. The first column notes the date, the second column lists the reference forward to the ledger page.

The ledger is the central record in double-entry book-keeping where all the

transactions of an enterprise are classified by every activity in which the enterprise is engaged. The name of each account is written at the top of the page, and the transactions entered below. Balance sheets show assets and liabilities; therefore, one can deduce net worth or value. Profit and loss accounts are subsidiary to the balance sheets, detailing how the profit or loss figures have been arrived at. They bring together profits from the different activities of an enterprise and losses and other items that must be set against them.

Journals and ledgers contain the same information arranged in different ways. They are invaluable, but by themselves, can be frustrating if other records have not survived alongside them. By using sales ledgers, researchers can work out monthly and yearly sales figures to show seasonal trends, how business grew or declined. [Hubbell's shipping records also revealed this type of information.] When a researcher wishes to get behind any published figures, an examination of the journals or ledgers is a must.

Hubbell maintained a rudimentary bookkeeping system until 1895. His record keeping became more sophisticated after his former business partner Clinton Cotton, left for Gallup to open a wholesale house that year. After 1900, Hubbell had hand tooled leather bound record books printed with column headings as follows: **WOOL (white/black), GOAT SKINS, SHEEP PELTS and BLANKETS**. By 1905, more headings were added. His business records spanning the years from 1895 to 1911, are quite complete. I was able to cross check and verify a number of the figures and totals highlighted in several of the Tables and Figures contained in Chapter Five. All of the information concerning post inventories, cash valuation of Navajo products, pawn accounts and annual cumulative shipments were compiled after collecting and analyzing pertinent information. Hubbell served in the territorial legislature from 1912 to 1914, and left his younger son Roman in charge of Ganado. Record keeping deteriorated during that period.

Data analysis

The analytical process began by ordering the data accumulated during my five months

of archival research. It was necessary to organize, integrate, decipher and tabulate cumulative information. I arranged a xeroxed copy of all computer notes in chronological order. Many of the rug entries in the ledgers and journals were coded. I discovered several codes deciphered in one of the earliest ledger books. No other entries were coded except rug entries. Thus each rug entry had to be deciphered before figures could be tabulated. It was necessary to gather information on all other products the Navajo exchanged for goods to *determine the importance of weaving relative to other primary products.*

After tabulating relevant data from Hubbell's papers, I returned to extant literature to search for similar information to use as comparison or contrast to my project. Although helpful in many respects, other sources proved of somewhat limited use as the information was too general, or interpretations of annual cumulative figures too ambiguous (government documents) for my purposes. Unlike Bailey and Bailey (1986), and Weiss (1984), I chose to illustrate how wealth accrued to the regional mercantile houses in tandem with the impoverishment of the Navajo. Adams (1963) provides much detailed information for the 1950s, a period too recent for my purposes. Social security, welfare and wool subsidies were available to eligible Navajo by then.

To date, this is the only study to extract detailed financial information from traders' records directly related to Navajo trade prior to 1950. As Aberle (1966:33) notes, "a better picture of Navajo livelihood will depend on future use of traders' records, diaries and letters, and perhaps of the Navajo Agency Letter Books." To my knowledge the only other comparable records in existence that span the same time period are the Babbitt Papers housed at Special Collections, Northern Arizona University. However, these papers remain unprocessed.

Reservation Fieldwork

The second component of my fieldwork involved moving to the Reservation for nearly seven weeks (October 1-November 16, 1992), to interview Navajo weavers. This time

period was chosen as it was after the monsoon season and resumption of school. Many families with flocks move to higher elevations during the summertime, thus they are difficult to contact. Summer thunderstorms may create hazardous travelling conditions.

I interviewed over thirty weavers during that period, including follow-up visits with several families. I also excerpted information from a survey of weavers conducted by curator Clarenda Begay at Ganado during 1986. Additional information was collected from a series of interviews Park Service employees held with elderly Navajo in the early 1970s. Several other weavers were interviewed who lived in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona. In March 1994, I compiled extensive notes while attending a four-day conference in Phoenix titled "Navajo Weaving Since the Sixties." More than twenty Navajo weavers (including two men) ranging from teenagers to women in their 80s spoke about what weaving meant to them. Many weavers attended with their families, and some of the commentary was translated into English or Navajo because of the number of unilingual speakers.

During the personal interviews, I aimed to keep the questions brief and fairly general, and instead, I asked if weavers would share stories related to weaving, and their memoirs of trade relations. I brought along a hand-woven jacket as a demonstration of my ability to weave. I complied with the Government of the Navajo Nation regarding their policy of paying for interviews. Each weaver interviewed was paid a minimum of \$10 (the hourly rate), and my interpreter was paid \$15 per hour. The following section provides a very brief sketch demonstrating how the history of Navajo weaving has been constructed. This mini-review is intended as a prelude to suggesting an alternative perspective.

A Brief Review as Prelude to Reconceptualizing Navajo Weaving

A short paragraph describing the mythological origins of the loom and weaving tools almost always appears at the beginning of a treatise on the subject of Navajo weaving (cf. Reichard 1934, Wheat 1984). With few exceptions, authors launch into a description of its historical origins. Everything was borrowed: sheep from the Spanish, the upright loom from

the Pueblos, dyes from the Anglos, and so forth. Because none of the "ingredients" was indigenous, most authors disclaim any symbolism or sacred associations attached to the woven textiles (Amsden 1934, Kent 1985, Reichard 1936, Wheat 1984). Given the increased commodification of weaving during this century, it is not coincidental that only the first publication on the topic (James 1914) references the importance of weaving in the Navajo Creation Story, discusses symbolism and provides the names of more than a dozen weavers. Twenty years later, Charles Avery Amsden published Navajo Weaving: Its Technique and History (1924), considered the authoritative text on the subject. An anthropologist for the Southwest Museum, Amsden shifts the focus to tools, techniques, and trader influence. Scant attention is paid to the role of weaving in the Navajo Creation Story; it is relegated to a footnote, a charming bit of myth. Production for external markets, foreign influences and materials are perceived as submerging any sacred associations that weaving may have had for the Navajo (Kent 1985, Reichard 1936, Tanner 1968, Underhill 1956, Wheat 1988).

The paradigms of cultural particularism and acculturation dominated anthropology when much weaving-related research was published by ethnographers who produced "classics" (Reichard 1934, 1936, 1939) and Underhill (1956). As a student of Boas, Reichard embraced the concept of culture as commensurate with, or equal to, the number of discrete elements or traits. The collection of objective facts, in conjunction with the perception that native peoples selected or rejected individual traits from the dominant culture shaped the perspectives adopted by these ethnographers. Reichard (1950) perceived symbols as cognized isomorphic elements relevant to the sacred sphere of elaborate Navajo ceremonials. The aesthetics relevant to Navajo weaving lay in the area of decorative design (Reichard 1936). This perspective of weaving as functional, secular commodity dominated published literature on the subject for nearly fifty years. Vogt's (1961) acculturation model continues to influence museologists' publications (Hedlund 1983, 1989, 1990; Kent 1985, Rodee 1981, Tanner 1968, Wheat 1977, 1984).

Rather than emphasizing the commodity aspects of Navajo weaving, anthropologist Gary Witherspoon (1987) suggests that weaving has played a major role in perpetuating Navajo lifeways. He argues for an interpretive approach, suggesting that the vigour and endurance of the Navajo people is culturally inspired, not materially determined. A linguist, Witherspoon is married to a Navajo weaver. His research is marginalized by several museologists who critique his perspective as overly structuralist and anti-empiricist (Hedlund 1988, 1989, Wheat 1989). The alternative embraced by museologists currently redefines Navajo weaving as "art." However, it is not enough to discard the word craft and add weaving to the art sphere. In support of this reclassification, the description posited for ethnoaesthetics is: "how different societies decide what makes a design good or bad" (Hedlund 1992). This is not a genuine reformulation. It is utilizing an old recipe, adding another scrap to the quilt of culture patched together with bits of disparate information.

The museologists' perspective that continues to dominate the subject emphasizes the empirical domain. What is measurable becomes real. What constitutes knowledge depends upon an agreed-upon methodology. Pictured in books, or hung in exhibits, textiles are displayed isomorphically. Dimensions, types of yarn, dyes, provenance, and so forth are labelled adjacent to the piece. Cut out of its context, a Navajo rug equals the sum of its parts. The isomorphic facts objectively collected according to museological practices confers its own kind of value.

The aesthetics currently embraced in most texts on Navajo weaving are variants familiar to individuals versed in classical art history. They concern the philosophy of taste and standards of beauty, always referenced to the individual. Presumed to be disinterested and value-free, grounded in Kantian idealism, classical Western aesthetics espouses a type of universalized 'atomism.' Although at first glance, aesthetics appears to be qualitative and value-free, it is frequently translated into quantified form. For example, an historic textile deemed properly balanced according to Western formalist aesthetic notions will command a

higher price at the auction or retail outlet. One type of value is perpetually valorized and continually manifested in quantified form--the price sticker (Sotheby's 1989, 1991). Thus, the cash value of objects becomes their primary value. The most blatant example of this quantification occurred in 1989, when a nineteenth century Navajo "chief's blanket," appraised by Sotheby's at \$150,000, sold for \$522,000.

There are clues in the literature on the Navajo that aid in explicating the Navajo aesthetic. But few come from the publications by museologists (Kent 1985, Rodee 1981, Wheat 1984). The only patterns that museologists privilege are the empirical designs woven into individual rugs. Most extant history of Navajo textiles reflects the imposition of the dominant society's ideas. Emphasis is placed on the material, the empirical. The construction of their history, their display and preservation of historic textiles reveals the views, values and assumptions of the caretakers. Based on information from Navajo informants and selected publications, I argue that the Navajo rug is part of a much larger pattern.

Theoretical Perspectives

Historically, textiles have been marginalized in the domains of art, religion and commerce (Weiner and Schneider 1991). Due to a number of unquestioned assumptions grounded in Western logical dualisms, textile production by Navajo women has fallen between the paradigmatic cleavages in anthropology. The development of ideas related to gendered spheres of productive and non-productive labour, art and craft, and sacred as opposed to secular spheres, all of these differences have been binarily opposed and provided the context to justify the absence of thousands of female weavers from history. Thus the context of interpretation that has sanctioned the marginalization of weaving is supported by a number of asymmetric dualisms. The perspectives that dominate the subject of Navajo weaving are covertly structured by adherence to such categories that shaped the development of particular research regimes. As Peter Berger remarked, "ideas do not succeed in history by virtue of their truth but by virtue of their relationships to specific social processes"

(Berman 1989:35) [Figure 1.1]. The following section describes the theoretical frameworks utilized here in explicating how these categories influenced research regimes and served as a barrier to understanding the economic and symbolic importance of Navajo women's textiles.

Feminist Political Economy

Feminist political economy highlights the centrality of gender relations to the relations of production in both non-capitalist and capitalist economies. Many scholars now recognize that gender relations in many parts of the world have been transformed under the successive impacts of colonization, Westernization and international capitalism. The study of gender cannot be a sub-discipline--it cross-cuts economic, political and cognitive anthropology (Moore 1988:6). Within the last twenty-five years, feminist scholars working within the sphere of political economy have demonstrated the shortcomings of both Marxist and non-Marxist economic models.

Eurocentric ideas about proper activity for women have undermined their economic activity (Stamp 1989:14). Women's autonomy in various spheres was incomprehensible to colonial administrators, traders, missionaries, anthropologists and other Westerners who assumed that woman's place was (or ought to be) in the home. The self-perpetuating process of transforming colonized peoples into producers and consumers of commodities served the colonial powers need for both raw material and markets (Leacock and Etienne 1980:19). Production for commodity exchange and reliance on commodities became crucial mechanisms of colonization, enriching the colonizers. The co-optation of the indigenous textile market by traders and manufacturers of trade blankets during the latter part of the nineteenth century epitomizes this process for the Navajo (The Hubbell Papers; Kapoun 1992).

Prior to the 1970s, anthropological theory neglected gender as an analytic category (Caplan 1988:16). The most important debate to emerge in feminist anthropology during that decade was the "domestic/public" dualism suggested by Rosaldo (1974). This dichotomy is

VISIBLE COMMODITY RELATIONS

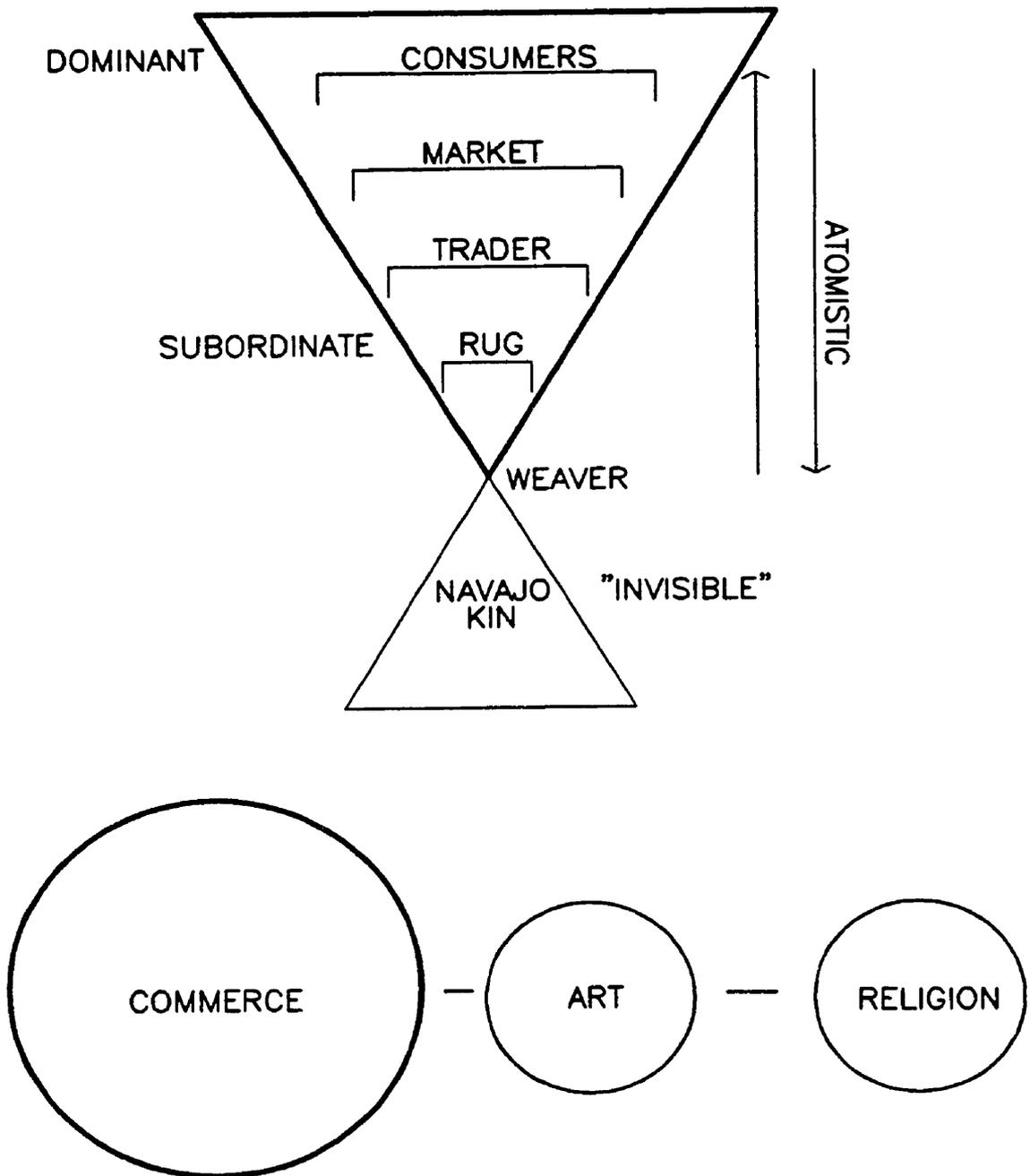


Figure 1.1

often presented as a description of social reality, rather than as a cultural statement masking relations which are highly problematic and expressed ideologically.

The public/private split was nowhere more opposed than in Victorian thought. As Rosaldo (1980:402) notes, the Victorian doctrine of separate male and female spheres was quite central to their sociology. Scientists, philosophers and social scientists "naturalized" the division of labour which in turn formed the basis of the public/private dichotomy (Sacks 1982:88, 99). Moore (1988:23) summarizes:

The prevailing 19th century ideology of the home as refuge.. the family, the home and the 'domestic' are conceptualized as a single unit which is defined in juxtaposition to the 'public' sphere of work, business and politics: i.e., the market relations of capitalism. The latter involve relations of competition, negotiation and contract which Western society views as separate from and opposed to the relations of intimacy and nurturance associated with the family and the home.

This axiomatic assumption shaped the perceptions of government agents to the Navajo who, for decades, routinely charted the escalation in textile production. Thousands of Navajo women were perceived as dark-skinned housewives weaving in their spare time for pin-money (Dockstader 1976, Maxwell 1963). This so-called leisure-time activity produced for external markets was ultimately valued at one million dollars annually by 1930.

As Moore (1988:4) notes, "theory always informs the way in which we collect, interpret and present data, and as such it can never be neutral." As illustrated above, women are absent in many analyses, especially in the domains of politics and economics (Edholm 1977:126). Since the 1970s, Marxist-feminists have made major contributions in acknowledging the importance, but inadequacies, of Marxist theory (Bennholdt-Thomsen 1988:46-49). Maria Mies (1988) remarks on how the Marxist notion of productive labour has created the greatest barrier against an understanding of women's work in both capitalist and socialist contexts. Her study (1982) of more than 150,000 lace makers of Narsapur highlights how women's work is defined by a particular set of interconnections between reproductive and productive relations. Mies provides a detailed analysis of the structure of the crocheted

lace industry, and the consequences of defining women as non-working housewives, categorizing their labour as "leisure-time" activity. Rapid expansion occurred after 1970, and 95% of the foreign exchange earnings from the export of handicrafts from the state of Andhra Pradesh came from the lace industry of Narsapur. Yet these women were missing from census records. Mies's study contains some interesting parallels with the Navajo situation. In both instances, women's household production frequently provided most of the (meagre) income or goods. Mies's research demonstrates how women's insertion into capitalist relations of production does not depend on a separation between home and workplace (Moore 1988:85).

However, the Navajo provide an important exception on several accounts. Gender relations were not significantly altered within Navajo society after merchants began actively trading on the Reservation. The most recent comprehensive studies indicate that gender relations remain quite egalitarian, especially in the more remote areas of the reservation (Lamphere 1977, Witherspoon 1975). Women's status seems not to have decreased. Pastoralism was not imposed upon them by the government. Women's ownership and control of animals was not undermined by the traders. Although textile production greatly increased, relations of production remained intact. If women moved off-reservation their status may have declined, especially if divorce occurred (Hamamsy 1957). However, women did lose control of the marketing of their textiles, as traders had territorial monopolies and bartered perishables and cloth, then shipped bales of rugs off-reservation to eastern markets. Although Navajo textiles became increasingly commodified when marketed by the traders, Navajo social relations continued to emphasize cooperation and reciprocity, especially among close kin (Lamphere 1977, Witherspoon 1975). [Additional information on this topic is contained in Chapter Two].

There is no question that various feminist perspectives have made major contributions both theoretically and empirically in illuminating the effects of patriarchy, capitalism, the

'globalization' of the economy and raising issues that were never addressed due to both Marxist and non-Marxist conceptual blinders. Women are differentially affected by colonization, and frequently their overall position is one of extreme vulnerability. For more than two decades, feminist social scientists have cogently demonstrated that it is insufficient to just "add women and stir" to extant economic models.

Postmodernist readings of the production of woven collectibles by women

The resurgence of material culture studies reflected in texts by Appadurai (1986), Miller (1987) and others, has intersected with gender in an intriguing manner. Recent interest in globalization and craft production is reflected in publications authored by Berlo (1991), Nash (1993), Stephen (1991, 1993) and Tice (1995). The marked shift in discourse from women as victims of patriarchy and external market factors, to women as subjects, as active negotiators demonstrating agency, expresses the importance of textiles as a form of cultural identity. Such texts reflect the response to the asymmetry of women's "power" highlighted in the 1970s feminist literature described above.

Clifford (1988:236) has remarked on the accelerating pace of the post-modern world, signified by increasing eclecticism and bricolage:

art collecting and culture collecting now take place within the changing field of counterdiscourses, syncretisms, and reappropriations, originated both outside and inside 'the West.'

Commenting on its intersection with textile production, Berlo (1991:452) remarks:

American and European textile designers freely take from native sources...this is part of a long artistic tradition in the West...the contemporary indigenous textile aesthetic is, in many regions, an aesthetic of appropriation and accumulation.

In her research with Zapotec weavers, Stephen (1991, 1993) provides confirmation of the magnitude of appropriation relevant to my study. For the past twenty years, entrepreneurs have appropriated popular Navajo patterns taken from ubiquitous books on the subject to Mexico and other parts of the world. In a paper titled "Weaving in the Fast Lane," Stephen (1993) documents the exponential increase in orders for Navajo-style patterns that kept thousands of Mexican weavers working overtime during the 1980s. She comments upon

the alacrity with which Mexican weavers appropriated the designs provided by entrepreneurs. In 1989, while visiting the Hubbell trading post, Stephen spotted a pamphlet informing consumers how to distinguish the genuine Navajo product from imported copies. After a discussion with several weavers at the post, she remarked that they "resented the intrusion on their market and the 'stealing' of their designs."

Documentation and confirmation of this appropriative activity without critique sanctions an activity that threatens the Navajo lifeworld. It also provides intellectual rationale for equating the symbols of consumerism with emergent types of communal identity. Stephen's commentary evokes the image of anthropologist as neutral observer/reporter of commodified cultural formation. Such a stance gives intellectual support to this kind of activity. Harries-Jones (1993:9) provokes reconsideration of this postmodern position. Noting that neo-conservatives require free markets on a global scale to permit the spread of consumerism, Harries-Jones cautions:

this gives rise to numerous epistemic problems in anthropology especially where there is a spatial divorce of cultural expression from the intimacies of a defined local space in which cultural forms were hitherto socially reproduced. ...to continue to treat culture as epistemological object within a defined space; and to insist that anthropologists remain neutral observers of this context is, in fact, to take an intellectual position about globalization. Such a position allows little room for critique of the process in which commoditized forms of culture are disembedded from active collectivity and marketed through simulations of cultural performance. ... we need to stand as witnesses, uncovering [such] sets of relations...

The appropriation of popular Navajo patterns described by Stephen (1993) is not just a pilfering of pretty designs. It is theft of a way of life. Such appropriation on a massive scale threatens the destruction of activities vital to Navajo culture. This type of appropriation is one of the more recent threats that perpetuates and accelerates processes that began more than a century ago.

Post-modernist readings of cultural reformulations through appropriations described above demonstrate a deficient understanding of aesthetics (Berlo 1991). In order to reconceptualize an alternative interpretation in relation to Navajo weaving, it is necessary to jettison the concept of aesthetics that continues to influence Western discourses on forms of

material culture. Only by reformulating outmoded concepts of aesthetics can readers surmise the threat to Navajo livelihood. Because weaving falls between the paradigmatic cleavages in the discipline (the bifurcation between political economy and symbolic spheres), it is impossible to adequately acknowledge, much less critique, the multiple appropriations through referencing most of the extant literature on the subject. However, based on interviews with Navajo weavers and other supporting evidence, the reformulation proposed here appears to be more in keeping with Navajo ways.

Reconceptualizing Navajo Weaving

Scholars working with the Navajo in various capacities (Downer 1990, Faris 1990, Griffin-Pierce 1992, Kelley and Francis 1994), have recently published on aspects of Navajo culture in which their findings differ significantly from former generations of colleagues. During his presentation at a Navajo Studies Conference, Alan Downer (1990:203), Director of Historic Preservation, noted real concern among Native Americans regarding historic, archaeological and cultural sites that are the physical manifestations of those cultures. Such concern goes beyond recognizing them as symbols of a bygone era because they are part of an ongoing system of beliefs and actions in a way that historic sites normally are not in the larger American society. In fact, these sites are frequently viewed as central to cultural self-definition. In their insightful text, Navajo Sacred Places, Kelley and Francis (1994:145) enlarge on Downer's theme and critique the demarcation of sacred places on a map. Excerpting a specific point fractures the meaning of the sacred place in the landscape as the context is expunged.

Faris (1993) has critiqued anthropologists' dismissive attitudes regarding Navajo mythology juxtaposed to the West's knowledge of the facts. Just as the Bible becomes a code by which Christian believers organize their lives, the Navajo Creation Story continues to serve as an organizing principle for many Navajo. Because weaving is produced for an external market, most scholars perceive it as a secular commodity, an isomorphic item of material culture that is tinged with myth and history (Amsden 1934, Bailey and Bailey 1986,

Hedlund 1990, Kent 1985, Reichard 1934, 1936, 1939; Rodee 1981, Tanner 1968, Underhill 1956, Wheat 1977, 1984). These assumptions are grounded in a faulty epistemology, but it is the one that currently dominates the subject.

The eurocentric nature of Euroamerican empiricist philosophy emphasizes a linear world filled with objects and individuals, in marked contrast to most non-Western peoples' perceptions of a more 'cosmocentric' world (Means 1988, Walters 1992, Wilden 1980). Non-Western societies such as the Navajo have different root metaphors. Because they do not share the Graeco-Roman/Renaissance heritage, they "see" the world differently. Not only has an epistemology inappropriate to the subject been adopted, errors are compounded by the explicit or implicit insistence on the "truthfulness" of our knowledge of the "objective" world vis a vis the interpretations or subjectiveness of the worldviews of non-Western peoples whose cultures are seen as objects of [our] study (Faris 1993). Much of the difficulty lies in language translation and faulty interpretation in attempting to grasp the lifeways of others. But the reliance on language itself as the ultimate arbiter of discovering "truth" is really at the root of the problem.

Putting Language in Its Place

As Wilden (1981:1) notes: "communication begins everywhere, it mediates all of our relationships." All language is communication, but not all communication is language. We share with other species non-linguistic forms of communication. In every Western society, especially since the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, language is identified with 'thought' or 'reason' and assumed to be more important or more significant than other modes of communication such as non-verbal communication that makes thought and language possible (Wilden 1987:137).

How we understand the world shapes how and what we think about it, and what we think determines our actions and influences how we do research. Language illustrates, but also limits our mode of thinking. Given a language system, we make choices regarding the patterns we discern. Ordering sequences in one way or another creates different realities. Yet

the rules by which we create our reality are largely hidden from conscious view. The categories we define shape how we "see" the world. As anthropologists we draw boundaries between information to be included, for example, in the fields of economics, art, or religion, and what will be excluded. Descriptions are themselves the drawing of distinctions upon what we observe. Jack Goody (1977:36) has warned of the pitfalls associated with "objective" thought:

The folk-taxonomy we develop brings order and understanding into a complex universe. But the order is illusory, the meaning superficial. Binary systems and categorizations are often value-laden and ethnocentric.

What constitutes a concept or category is not a straight-forward empirical matter. Perception of what is viewed as distinct is culturally mediated by emphasis on or underplaying of particular associations (Phillips 1990:94).

Anthropologists have produced numerous publications on Navajo religion and art. Yet Navajo artist Conrad House says:

..we have no word for art, we have no word for religion. Because there is no need...to separate those concepts away from our real life. Because real life has all that...How you live is an art...How you go about is a religion...(Jones 1994:127)

Categories frequently become conceptual straight-jackets. Imposition of categories destroys context; patterns are dismembered in the name of order. Just as feminists have demonstrated we cannot "add women and stir" to extant economic models, I argue we cannot conjoin weaving to extant symbolic models implicitly or explicitly grounded in linguistics. Instead, we need a new epistemology not grounded in dualisms constructed through language.

The Epistemology of Gregory Bateson

In order to perceive the patterns, we must be wary of categories and get rid of the dualisms. A primary example of a dualism endemic to Western epistemology is represented in the split between fact and value. I intend to utilize an epistemology developed by Gregory Bateson in which fact and value are inseparable. I am not the first to recognize the compatibility between Navajo thought and Bateson's epistemology. James McNeley (1987), vice president of Navajo Community College at Tsaile, Arizona has already published on this

topic.

Bateson sought to develop a natural history of communication, one that situated language, unique to humans, within a wider communicational network (Harries-Jones 1995, Wilden 1981). The path followed by empiricists (including museologists) has emphasized the material world of substance, and it is a path that continues to be well-travelled by social scientists. But as Bateson comments:

My colleagues...have tried to build the bridge to the wrong half of the ancient [Greek] dichotomy between form and substance. The conservative laws for energy and matter concern substance rather than form, but mental process, ideas, communication, organization, differentiation, pattern, are matters of form rather than substance. (Keeney 1983:81)

However, it is difficult to adopt this way of thinking about the world because it goes counter to the entire Western scientific tradition. A paragraph in a recent issue of "The Systems Thinker" (5#10:6), summarizes it nicely:

In science we have been taught to measure and weigh things. But relationships cannot be weighed and measured--they need to be mapped. And measuring and mapping are two very different approaches. This is the tension between substance and form. The study of substance begins with the question, "what is it made of?" while the study of form queries "what is its pattern?"

The study of form requires attention to context. The etymology of the word is derived from the Latin verb *contexere*, to braid, weave, connect or unite, and the word text from *textus*, web, tissue, texture or structure. This is a most appropriate word for a dissertation concerned with the subject of weaving. The epistemology suggested by Gregory Bateson is woven, rather than the "patchwork quilt" produced in studies which implicitly or explicitly rely on models grounded in linguistics (Leach 1976, Levi-Strauss 1963, Reichard 1950, Witherspoon 1987).

In living and social systems, it is information that organizes and directs the matter-energy flows and exchanges which allow work to be done within and outside the system. It is necessary to distinguish between information (variety, pattern), from the matter-energy markers which transport and/or store it. The distinction between energy and information is neither objective nor subjective...it is systemic (Wilden and Wilson 1976:268). One of the

benefits of general systems research has been to raise fundamental objections to reductionism in conventional science, and to make the case that what science takes to be "real" is a construction of that which observers interpret to be "reality."

Bateson's epistemology relates to broad knowledge systems and to the forms of communication within them. Grounded in cybernetics, his perspective is concerned with human understanding, not from the perspective of what we understand, but from that of how we come to know. Coming to know means actively constructing what we see and suggests that knowing resides in a recursive process of constructing 'realities' that constitutively involve and reinvolve the self. Krippendorff (1989:116) stated that cybernetic epistemology as elucidated by Bateson, locates knowledge not in the person, not in an external reality and not in a text, but in an "essentially circular social practice involving perceiving, thinking and acting beings." Thus Bateson was committed to an epistemology of pattern and form, which assumes that people operate within fields of habitual or repetitive activity, expressing customary rules of relationship. His theories of perception and cognition were built on the fundamentals of information and communication--habit and learning modified by experience. Bourdieu (1977) does not utilize terminology developed in communications theory, but his concept of symbolic capital is similar in intent. In his study of practice, Bourdieu (1977) proposes the notion of symbolic capital, or the accumulation of cultural knowledge by distinct groups for transmitting a lifeworld intergenerationally.

Bateson claimed there is no such thing as unmediated perception (Harries-Jones 1995:200). Instead of achieving direct perception, epistemology must always come between me and my organic perception of the world. [Kant had stipulated that perception was passive, whereas understanding was 'active.'] How we cut up the world through language becomes our reality.

Bateson warned anthropologists about the "theoretical box of tricks" one takes into the field. The perception of a culture is somewhat limited by that "box of tricks" (Harries-Jones 1995). When one complex culture comes into contact with another, the tendency is to

oversimplify. The themes of the other culture are actually complex patterns, yet they are simplified, or reified, and the mode of interaction tends to become quantitative (money, trade) (Berman 1989:196).

Philosopher Alfred North Whitehead's concept of "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness" is useful to reference in this respect. Informants have 'point of view.' However, the context is often expunged by the researcher who substitutes "hard data" for context. The observer-scientist calls evidence "true" and "objective" although the knowledge derived emerges from the researcher's own style of labelling the evidence. This parallels the concept of constructing categories. Harries-Jones 1995:24) remarks:

Thus a sequence of behaviour cut out for the convenience of the observer's description becomes a piece of behavior validating classes of activity, which anthropologists then label 'symbolism' 'economics' 'kinship'.... In fact these are really a by-product of the scientist-observer's interaction with society. Such false labelling results in 'kinship,' or other activities becoming identified as 'objective' channels of behavior...Worse, their functional interlinkage, a figment of the anthropologist's scientific imagination is said to constitute 'the structure' of the society.

The evidence is "true" because the methods of science have guaranteed its truth.

Thus the descriptions we develop reveal properties of the observers because knowledge always bears the mark of its producers. As empiricists, museologists are caught in a proverbial bind: the manner in which they structure their research determines the way they perceive the results. Their method becomes their epistemology. Museologists have carved out a domain of study and severed weaving from its cultural matrix. In contrast, Bateson realized that a phenomenon can only be known in context. Wholes have properties that parts do not have. Thus it is inappropriate to reduce a Navajo rug to its material components. Adopting a communicational perspective provides a more comprehensive view of values, perception, symbolism and social behavior than other perspectives which rely on structuralist or empirically based models. According to Bateson (Harries-Jones 1995:26), social sanctions or arbitrary values (ethics) do not exist externally to the communicative processes from which they arise. The values of a social network partly determine the network of perception. Aesthetic, religious, and moral views arise out of integral relations of humans

in communication with each other and are a product of the field of communicative activity which their interactions construct. Patterns of character formation are found in the modalities of nonverbal, or meta, communication (Berman 1989:201). Socially learned categories are not mutually exclusive, but like Russian dolls or Chinese boxes, tend to nest inside each other (Harries-Jones 1995:136). Thus a communicational perspective not only puts language in its place, but also demonstrates the necessity of questioning constructions of "reality." Such a perspective provides a real critique of "objectivity." There are no timeless percepts.

Bateson did not accept the notion that objects, events and actions could be directly translated into meaning. Messages could become meaningful only in relation to the whole matrix of communication. A key component concerns the interpersonal relation of the communicators. This is why context takes precedence. The epistemology or foundational beliefs of a group become the meta-context for the message.

A New Formulation of Navajo Aesthetics

By utilizing Bateson's epistemology, I intend to demonstrate how the dualisms supported and manifested in the Western separation of mind from body, sacred from profane create a barrier which distances us from an understanding of Navajo aesthetics. Differences in language and culture compounded with the inappropriateness of translating from primary unconscious processes to conscious purposiveness of language creates barriers blocking a more holistic understanding of Navajo aesthetics, and consequently, Navajo weaving. A number of anthropologists and art historians have implicitly or explicitly borrowed from linguistic studies in analyzing the expressive forms created by indigenous peoples (Layton 1981, Leach 1976, Schevill 1986, Tedlock and Tedlock 1985, Witherspoon 1987). In contrast, the approach utilized by Bateson (1972) suggests that language brings thought to the surface of consciousness, therefore it is not the sole vehicle with which to analyze art (which involves activities closely associated or bound up with the unconscious). Artistic skill is the combining of many levels of mental processes, the unconscious, conscious and external--to make a "statement" of their combination.

Bateson perceived art as humanity's search for grace. In his article "Style, Grace and Information in Primitive Art" (1972), he notes that any art object is "both itself internally patterned and itself part of a larger patterned universe." He articulates how, even with the development of language, non-discursive forms of communication have become richer. Dance, song, and other expressive forms have not withered away. Translating these forms of communication into words courts falsification, as it supports the notion of conscious intent to a message that is unconscious and involuntary. In other words, translation into discursive terms destroys the nature of the message. This is why artists frequently have difficulty articulating what their artwork is about, precisely because it is not "about" words. Art codes the world differently from language, and therefore art is not reducible to a system which is constructed through secondary processes. Unlike consciousness which selectively encodes the world and expresses it through language, art shares with dreams, religion and poetry the ability to allude to a vast reservoir of the unconscious. In the same vein, tacit knowing can never be rationally expressed, but we can certainly recognize its existence. This form of knowing begins at a very early age.

Navajo aesthetics is not concerned with an abstract concept of beauty divorced from process. Navajo weavers' feeling for *hozho* (beauty/harmony/balance) encompasses far more than Western classical aesthetics which condenses and locates "beauty" in the isomorphic object (Witherspoon 1977, 1987). This is because weavers express, maintain and perpetuate *hozho* through their weaving, and such activities relate to their cosmology.

In the Navajo Creation Story, weaving plays a pivotal role in the origin and maintenance of the Navajo people. Their Creation story defines meaningful relationships among members of the community and between the community and the entire cosmos. Such relations are still very real and very important to many Navajo (Faris 1993, Griffin-Pierce 1992). Although kinship functions as the infrastructure, cosmology provides the charter for proper behavior. Utilizing communications theory, one may reconceptualize weaving as cosmological performance. Aesthetic wholes derive from recognition of the pattern which

connects (Harries-Jones 1995:191). This is why one cannot look at one rug to determine or define aesthetics. Thus, aesthetic patterns are epistemological and recursive, rather than objectively distinguished, isomorphic and autonomous, as in museologists' models.

However, ethnographies on the Navajo fail to acknowledge weaving as cosmological performance. Because weaving has become a commodity produced for non-Navajo, it has been categorized as a secular or profane activity vis-a-vis the spiritual world imbued with religious symbolism. The bifurcation between the spheres of political economy and symbolic anthropology have obfuscated an understanding of weaving as a metaphor. Metaphor is a means of uniting the experience of the individual with the system of order or knowledge of which that individual is a part (Harries-Jones 1995:142). Metaphors are analogies in which the reflexive form of recognition is that they are "about" another wider relationship. Thus weavings are far more than isomorphic objects; they become material manifestations of relationships.

To attribute the several different forms of value to a Navajo rug, to play the symbolic value against the economic quantified value replicates dualisms. For the Navajo, weaving as cosmological performance has intrinsic value which is both aesthetic and integrative. Political economists would tend to classify this as use value, related to need, an attenuated interpretation. Adopting the terminology utilized by political economists maintains dualistic thinking and fails to adequately reflect the multi-levelled patterns of relationships perpetuated through weaving. Nor is it appropriate to reposition Navajo weaving within the sacred sphere as it is typically constructed by symbolic anthropologists (Reichard 1950). In order to perceive the patterns, we must reject the dualisms altogether. Utilizing an approach grounded in communications theory provides an alternative explanation for the continuation of Navajo weaving under adverse economic circumstances.

It is difficult to ferret out information to craft another story, a different history. But recent events make the telling paramount: to reveal and critique activities occurring in the art world that contribute to and perpetuate the impoverishment of the Navajo people. As

constructed in extant literature, both the political economy of weaving and the symbolic associations have been relegated to minor themes in the extensive literature on the Navajo. Although I present a great deal of empirical evidence that demonstrates the importance of women's textile production to the regional economy, my purpose is multi-fold: 1) to reveal the extent and continued impoverishment of thousands of Navajo for more than a century; 2) to uncover the correlations between the volatile activity in both the investment and import markets and their inimical effects on contemporary weavers and 3) to suggest another way of perceiving weaving based on an epistemology developed by Gregory Bateson. I have utilized evidence available for decades in archives and numerous publications to weave an alternative story which appears to reflect weavers' experiences and be more in keeping with the Navajo lifeworld.

History is concerned with interpretations of a particular past based on particular preserved evidence that reflects the choices of those in a position to make them as to what deserves recording and preserving and in what form it should be recorded. In this dissertation I uncover and analyze the historical realities of discrimination and impoverishment faced by numerous nameless weavers. Practices of exclusion have occurred, indeed, been sanctioned, through neglect of available evidence that reveals another story. Thus exclusions and devaluations of whole groups of people are systemic. To uncover what weavers were undergoing is to locate and ground a different and more realistic coherence, and that means that we are not merely adding information, but fundamentally reconceiving what we thought we knew. To one degree or another all views of the human past are created by those telling the story. The story I relate in this dissertation bears little resemblance to that which exists in the literature. However, it is written from a weaver's perspective, and it sadly corroborates the statement quoted by bell hooks which moved her to tears.

Organization of Chapters

Because a great deal of evidence has been collated from disparate sources, I have incorporated information in roughly chronological order to contextualize the origins and

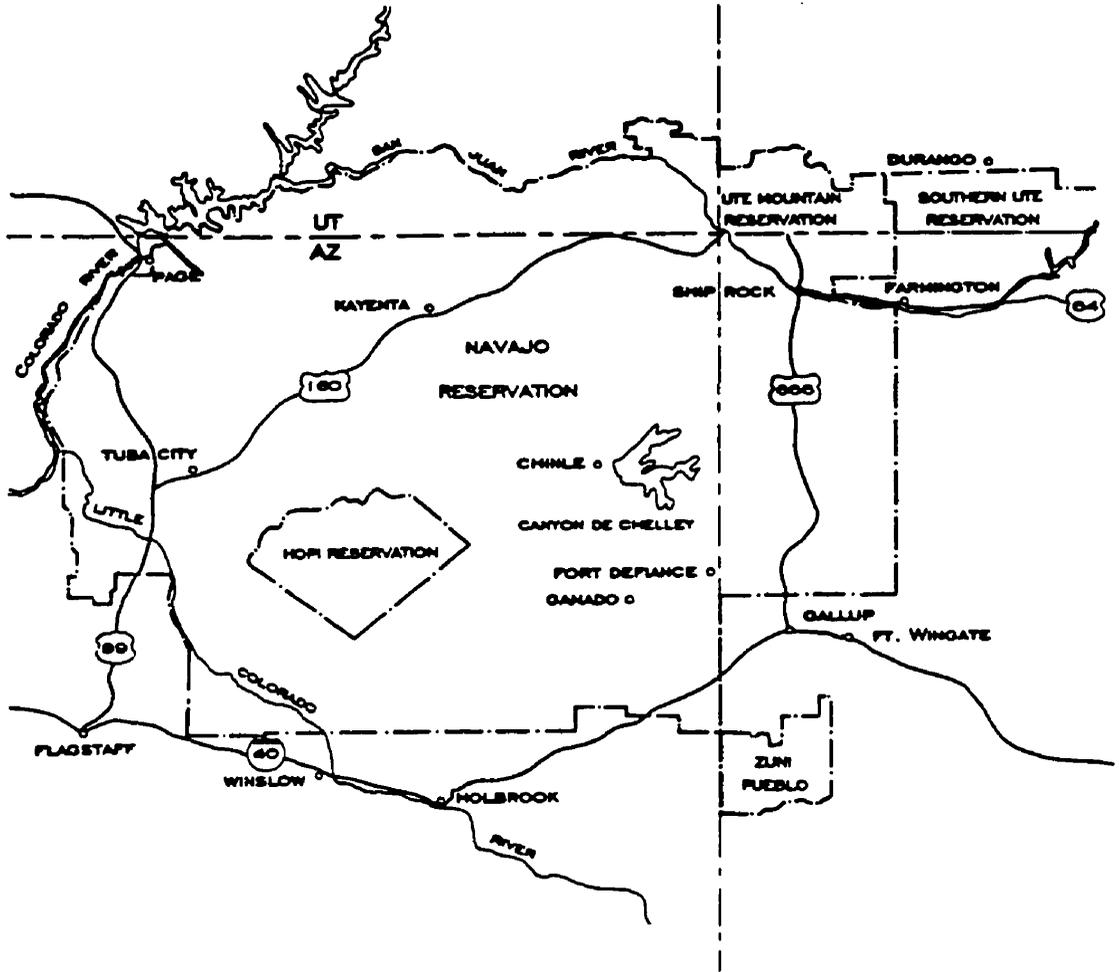
development and multi-fold nature of impoverishment. The following section describes the subject matter of each chapter.

Chapter Two surveys the origins and history of pre-Reservation inter-tribal trade, highlights the importance of the Navajo blanket as a trade item, describes the incarceration of the Navajo at Bosque Redondo, and their return to the newly formed Reservation in 1868, and incorporates information on Navajo domestic relations. Chapter Three describes the opening of the West to settlement, the growth and success of mercantile houses, domestic wool production and the wool tariff, and curtailment of diversification by Navajo through extension of credit by Reservation traders. Chapter Four presents evidence drawn from published sources which, upon analysis, demonstrates the long-term impoverishment of weavers and the loss of their former market to trade blanket manufacturers. Chapter Five presents evidence concerning the growing importance of Navajo textiles as an alternative means to market wool. Information drawn from archival sources corroborates the impoverishment of weavers locally, and unpublished government documents verify the long-term impoverishment of weavers regionally. Chapter Six assesses evidence in published and archival sources concerning "standardization," in particular, traders' reputed influences on Navajo weavers' designs. Chapter Seven tracks the factors leading to the development of the investment market in historic Navajo textiles, the role of museologists as textile experts, the importation of "copy" weaving from abroad, and the inimical effects of these activities on contemporary weavers. Chapter Eight surveys ethnographic origins and perpetuation of dominant discourses supporting Navajo weaving as "collectible," and counter-discourses from Navajo perspectives. Chapter Nine concerns a reconceptualization of Navajo weaving, from collectible to cosmological performance, utilizing Gregory Bateson's epistemology and concludes the dissertation.

CHAPTER TWO ORIGINS AND EARLY HISTORY OF NAVAJO TRADE

The Navajo (or Dine) are the largest indigenous group in North America, and more than 75% of the population of 200,000 currently occupies a twenty million acre Reservation in the southwest United States. According to their Creation story, they evolved through four underworlds before emerging in the mountains in the region now known as southern Colorado. From there they converged in Dinétah "Old Navajo Land," an area bound by the Continental Divide, the San Juan and La Plata Mountains and the Carizzo, Lukachukai and Chuska ranges [the region southeast of Farmington, New Mexico, on the accompanying map]. Ethnologists and archaeologists suggest a different genesis, in which the ancestors of the Navajo crossed the Bering "land bridge," ultimately migrating along the western edge of the great plains (USFTC 1973:63). Archaeologists date the arrival of these Athabaskan speakers around 1000 BP (Vogt 1961:288). The Dine had migrated to a region populated by other indigenous groups including Pueblos, Utes and Pimas.

The area comprising Navajoland today is situated in the south central portion of the Colorado Plateau. To the north and east lie the Middle and Southern Rocky Mountains. The west and south/south-east areas are referred to as Basin and Range country. The region is cross-cut by deep canyons, steep escarpments, buttes and several mountain ranges. Canyonlands are dissected by riparian woodlands. The Colorado and San Juan Rivers form a portion of the northern Reservation boundary in Utah. Elevations range from 1524 to 3400 metres. Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir and aspen forests dominate higher elevations and receive from 38 to 102 cm annual precipitation. Mean monthly temperatures range from 18 C to -4 C. Pinon-juniper and desert scrub dominate the mid and lower range elevations. The sage-grass ecozone contains perennial shrubs and grasses and approximately 20% of this steppe zone is considered ideal farming and grazing land. Approximately 75% of the Reservation



NAVAJO RESERVATION

Map 2.1

is classified as desert. Permanent water sources are too rare for continual transhumance (Kelley and Whiteley 1989:3 and 213). Rainfall ranges from 15-41 cm annually, and monthly temperatures vary from 0-25 C.

Intertribal Trade Relations

Hill (1948:373) notes that although it is impossible to date the origins of trade relations, ample evidence is available which substantiates the flourishing commerce among the peoples of the Southwest and adjacent areas in prehistoric times. Explorers in the region were impressed by the amount of trade they witnessed and the distances covered by indigenous traders. Nearly all trade transpired through specially organized expeditions planned in advance. As long distance travel could be hazardous, special rituals accompanied the preparations (Adams 1963:149 and Hill 1948:393). Ceremonies and ritual behaviour ensured the personal safety and material success of trading ventures. Such ritual behaviour paralleled that engaged in when hunting and on journeys for salt. Exchange as a social aspect of foreign relations made friends of potential enemies. A kinsman or trade partner was protected and provisioned. White (1983:242) describes the "Navajo ideal" of gift exchange:

..a Navajo trader, who qualified for his task largely by possessing ceremonial knowledge, had a trading partner or "friend" among the people with whom he dealt. In the early days he gave gifts of hides or baskets to this friend: later the gift was almost always blankets. The friend reciprocated by giving horses if he were a Ute, or foodstuffs, pots, or turquoise if he was a Pueblo. When such gift exchanges were mutually satisfactory, the "friendship" of families and traders might endure for generations. Gift exchanges which involved no barter at all were the Navajo ideal..

Ford (1983:715) notes that the means for exchanging goods and services varied along a dimension of social distance. Within Pueblo villages, for example, reciprocal interactions were continuous. Four general methods of exchange were practised: mutual assistance, gambling and gaming, ceremonial redistribution and trading parties. Variants of general exchange emerged in inter-village trade, which sometimes coincided with "fiestas." Through the creation of social dependency, desired goods became easier to obtain (Ford 1983:722)

summarizes:

Traditional Southwest exchange was a splendid example of multiple means for moving goods within an open communication network to insure the adequate provisioning of politically independent, egalitarian communities.

The distribution network and web of "commercial" relationships was extensive, involving entire regions such as the Pacific Plateau, Greater Southwest and Middle Missouri. Such was the extensiveness of trade that on the eve of European contact, early Indian-white trade relations should be viewed as "an elaboration of native patterns rather than a European innovation (Swagerty 1983:353).

Spanish Traders

The Spaniards were the first Europeans to appear in the southwest in the sixteenth century. When they arrived in the region that is now New Mexico, the Pueblo peoples were almost entirely surrounded by Apachean peoples. During the following era, trade expanded as the Spaniards built a series of royal highways to service their communities and missions. The invaders developed an extensive trade network between Santa Fe and rich merchants in Chihuahua, Mexico. Trade between the Navajo and Spanish was recorded as early as 1680 (Hill 1948:348). During that year the normally autonomous Pueblo villages along the Rio Grande River in New Mexico united and expelled the Spanish from the area. By 1692, the Spaniards had successfully repressed the revolt. Vicious and sustained retaliation by the victors drove many Pueblo Indians westward into Navajo country. According to archaeologists, it was during this period that the Navajo adopted many Pueblo ceremonies, farming practices and weaving (Underhill 1956, Kluckhohn and Leighton 1974). However, Kelley and Francis (1994:214) differ by stating that it is more likely that Navajo and Pueblo peoples share common roots in earlier prehistoric peoples. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Navajo were trading regularly with the Spaniards (Adams 1963:149). Caravans from Mexico sanctioned by Spanish officials sought to acquire Indian goods such as hides,

jerked meat, salt, horses and slaves. Unlike inter-tribal trade, rates were set by the Spaniards to their advantage (Smith 1983:719). Utes, Navajo, Pawnees and other tribes brought in for trade great numbers of skins, horses, guns, knives and other goods. According to several sources, although disease and intertribal warfare took its toll on numerous Indian groups, the greater southwest trade network remained relatively intact during the entire Spanish era. Thus, inter-Indian trade west of the Missouri River remained significant during historic times. Although the introduction of new goods and livestock by Europeans increased the variety of goods, it also altered the worth of trade commodities. Spanish and Mexican traders dominated a large portion of what is now western New Mexico and eastern Arizona for two centuries, playing the marauding Apaches and Navajo off against the Pueblos. They sold liquor and guns to both sides, often in exchange for stolen horses or captive slaves (McNitt 1962:227). As New Mexicans acquired more weapons, the Navajo became a major target of the suppliers of captives for the slave trade. Many captives were baptized (Brugge 1983:495). By mid-nineteenth century, thousands of Navajo were enslaved, working in Spanish haciendas and workshops. According to Robert Roessel (1983:507), the attempt by Navajo to regain captive relatives resulted in warfare. The Navajo also took captives, but they did not make them slaves; instead, they formed the basis for new clans. However, Bailey and Bailey (1986:99) state that ricos (Navajo with large numbers of stock), kept slaves as herders. During the seventeenth century, Navajo/Spanish relations were contentious, with frequent raids and reprisals, as the Navajo sought to prevent encroachment on their territory. During the 1750s, Spanish settlers received land grants and began invading Navajo country in northwest New Mexico (Thompson 1976:3). The Spanish clergy played a central role in attempting to civilize the Indians. A priest by the name of Father Neuting, described the dispositions of the Indians as resting on four foundations, "each one worse than the other, and they are: ignorance, ingratitude, inconstancy and laziness (Spicer 1962:322). Although

a number of Navajo were baptized, missionaries were not very successful in converting the Navajo to Catholicism (Brugge 1985).

The introduction of livestock

Spicer (1962:546) notes that the introduction of livestock via Spanish colonization to band people was revolutionary. Lands, fields and herds became closely identified with women (Underhill 1956:156). Navajo sheep not only represented a source of food and prestige for the people, they also provided the primary staple for their clothing, the Navajo blanket woven of wool (Lamphere 1977). According to Brugge (1983:495), until 1860, agriculture, animal husbandry, hunting, gathering and woven blankets formed the core of Navajo subsistence. A broad spectrum of subsistence activities augmented by pastoralism acted to cushion the effects of fluctuating environmental factors which could jeopardize crops. However, Amsden (1934:129-30n), states that by 1776, Spanish reports indicated that the Navajo were living almost entirely by weaving since farming was poor (in Underhill 1956:69).

Textiles and pre-Reservation Trade

Navajo-Spanish commerce was well-developed by the latter part of the seventeenth century (Hill 1948:348). Several accounts exist which document the importance of the Navajo blanket in early inter- and intra-tribal trade (Ford 1983:711-22; Hill 1948). Terrell and Terrell (1974:89) highlight its importance:

Navajo women, who were skilled basket makers became the great weavers of their people, developing an industry that not only supplied the needs of the tribe, but produced blankets and other woven articles for trade that were widely distributed at a good profit as far east as the Great Plains.

The excerpts quoted below appear in many types of publications detailing the history of Navajo weaving. Both Amsden (1934) and James (1914) comment on the popularity of Navajo textiles among indigenous groups. Amsden (1934:100) highlights the importance of

the "chief's blanket":

[this] highly standardized and well-known form..was once so widely bartered and so popular that it might be seen over the shoulders of influential Indians from the northern Great Plains to the Mexico border. Many of the finest specimens in existence today were obtained from tribes far removed from the Navajo.

Dockstader (1976:468) echoes this statement, and Wheat (1988:70), states that:

Through the American occupation and settlement of New Mexico and the Southwest, the Navajo blanket was considered to be a superior product, with a steady demand for all that could be obtained. There is, however, very little information on how many Navajo blankets were woven each year, especially for the earlier periods.

and:

If the Navajo woven products did not match the Spanish fabrics in quantity, they clearly made up for it in terms of quality. When common Spanish blankets sold for two dollars and the finest Hispanic copies of Sattilo and Navajo sarapes sold for twenty, the fine Navajo sarapes brought fifty to a hundred dollars (Wheat 1990, Introduction).

Amsden (1934:130-133) devotes part of a chapter to the early historical records of Navajo weaving, and quotes several sources as to its beauty and importance as an article of trade. The earliest most comprehensive study of the Navajo blanket, authored by James (1914), incorporates nearly a dozen quotes from eighteenth and nineteenth century sources praising the Navajo blanket (Chapter III). In 1852, Lieutenant J. H. Simpson wrote:

It seems anomalous to me that a nation living in such miserably-constructed mud lodges should, at the same time, be capable of making, probably, the best blankets in the world!

Eight years prior to that statement, Josiah Gregg, in his classic Commerce of the Prairies (1844) commented on the high valued placed upon the "sarape-Navajo", which was woven so densely as to hold water. Those of fine quality were acquired through barter, then sold by traders among the Mexicans for \$50 to \$60 each (equivalent to six months pay for a US army colonel) (Baer 1989:531, Weiss 1984:35). Each sarape required six months to one year to produce.

As the Navajo blanket gained notoriety, reports from military and government

officials commented on the increasing wealth of the Navajo people. Charles Bent, first United States governor of New Mexico territory, wrote Secretary of State James Buchanan on October 15, 1846:

...their principal wealth consists of immense herds of horses, mules, sheep and cattle. The country which they inhabit is mountainous and rugged...They manufacture blankets of rare beauty and excellence...

On July 15, 1850, Major George A. McCall wrote the Secretary of War:

[the Navajo are] numerous, well equipped...they possess large stocks...many times more so than those of all New Mexico at present...their manufactures..being made of wool of their own growing...for their own use, and for traffic also to a large amount.

On September 1, 1854, D. Merriwether, Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs in New Mexico territory estimated the Navajo population at around 8,000. He wrote the Commission of Indian Affairs:

..they live in a degree of comfort and plenty unknown to the other wild Indians of this section of the Union. They manufacture their own clothes...it is a rare thing to see a Navajo uncomfortably clothed. In the manufacturing of blankets they are believed to surpass any other Indians on this continent, and these blankets will compare favorably with any other manufactured by a civilized people....

The earliest official publication on Navajo weaving which incorporates a series of detailed drawings, was authored by medical doctor and amateur ethnologist Washington Matthews. It was published in 1884, as the Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology. Matthews (1968:1) wrote:

The art of weaving as it exists among the Navajo Indians of New Mexico and Arizona, possesses points of great interest to the student of ethnography. It is of aboriginal origin; and while European art has undoubtedly modified it, the extent and nature of the foreign influence is easily traced. It is by no means certain, still there are many reasons for supposing, that the Navajo learned their craft from the Pueblo Indians, and that, too, since the advent of the Spaniards; yet the pupils, if such they be, far excel their masters to-day in the beauty and quality of their work. It may be safely stated that with no native tribe in America, north of the Mexican boundary, has the art of weaving been carried to greater perfection than among the Navajo...

Van Valkenburg (1974:42) remarks on the importance of the Navajo blanket as an article of trade:

The Navajo blanket can well be called the mother from which all external Navajo trade of today developed. Before the inception of the American system of trading, the woollen goods manufactured by the Navajos was the most important medium for external exchange with the Pueblos, Havasupai, Apache, and Utes as well as the New Mexicans.

Remarkable as it may seem, Navajo blankets filtered by the process of primitive trade as far eastward as the tribes of the Great Plains. .. [they] were important items in the packs of trade goods carried from Abiqui to Los Angeles in the Spanish Trail days of the early 1800s.

The text that follows documents the exchange rates of various Navajo textiles. Ford (1983:713) notes that by the end of the nineteenth century, Navajo blankets were highly esteemed throughout the Southwest and "most published data on equivalences state them in terms of blankets" (Ford 1983:720, quoting Spier 1928). Several authors have published long lists of rates which demonstrate a remarkable homogeneity and near universal knowledge of the rates. This suggests that bargaining was quite restricted, although not absent (Ford 1983:720). In Table 2, "Equivalent Values of Selected Paired Goods", Ford notes that the Navajo would trade a blanket for a buckskin with the Yavapai, Hopi, Havasupai, and Western Apache. The Utes and Yavapai would trade two buckskins for a large blanket. In their trade with the Pueblos, the Navajo exchanged a large blanket for a string of turquoise. Most of the items that the Navajo traded were finished products, principally blankets. Most of the items they bartered for were raw materials, destined for home consumption and use, rather than for manufacture and retrade.

Hill (1948:380) comments that the Utes were willing to exchange five buckskins, a good mare, or a dressed buffalo robe, for a Navajo chief's blanket. This particular type of blanket was the trade article most in demand among Utes. Kaufman and Selser (1985:17) note that chief's blankets were worn as status symbols by Plains Indians, and bartered for

horses, silver or bayeta. Gifford (in Hill 1948:380) noted that the Northeastern Yavapai traded a Navajo blanket for six or seven undressed deer hides, three blankets for one buckskin; one large blanket for two buckskins; one small blanket for one small buckskin. If purchased, one small buckskin cost \$10, and a large one cost \$30.00. These rates and equivalencies are important to keep in mind when comparing the exchange values for goods bartered later with Anglo traders. Of twenty-six items listed in Table 2 (Ford 1983:720), fourteen items depict blankets as the unit of exchange by which other goods were measured. Although curtailed by the formation of several reservations and the infusion of trading posts beginning around 1870, intra-tribal trade continued to some extent among various southwestern societies. Ford (1983:721) displays a photo of Navajo trading ponies and blankets with Apaches at Ft. Apache, Arizona, circa 1890.

Sporadic trading with American settlers began early in the nineteenth century; by mid-century it became more formalized as Mormons colonized regions north and west of the Colorado River (Adams 1963:149). The earliest patterns of intercultural commerce involved direct barter between pioneer traders and natives, as European manufactured goods were exchanged for native products. Traders often preceded missionaries, administrators and settlers (Adams 1963:306). After the defeat of Mexico in 1846, the United States became the dominant influence in the region and altered Anglo-Indian relations. Rather than promoting trade in goods and captives, the US sought to open up territory to settlement and agriculture. Over the following two decades, many indigenous groups in the region were subdued and confined to Reservations.

Bosque Redondo - Subduing the "Wild Tribes"

Prior to examining the increasing importance of wool and the sheep market to the southwest economy, it is necessary to pause and review the military actions of the United States government toward the Navajo which resulted in their incarceration at Bosque Redondo

(Fort Sumner), New Mexico, from 1863-1868.

By the end of 18th century, New Mexicans regarded the Navajo as wealthy, settled people. They raised extensive crops of corn and wheat, and had enormous flocks of sheep, cattle and horses. As reported above, raiding and warfare increased and disrupted trade networks somewhat as the non-indigenous occupants of the region tried to extend their territory. By the 1820s, due to their retaliations, the Navajo were the most feared Indians of the southwest (Bailey and Bailey 1986:17-21; Thompson 1976; Underhill 1956:74).

In 1846, the American army took control of the New Mexico-Arizona region, and by the early 1860s, federal government policy included military campaigns, treaties, removal of the Indians and construction of forts to maintain peace. Unlike the Spaniards, who regarded Indians as heathens possessing a valuable soul, the Americans thought of them as part of the landscape that should retreat before civilization. By 1850, the governor of New Mexico, J. S. Calhoun divided tribes into two groups: the sedentary (Pueblo) Indians and the wild tribes comprised of Navajo, Apache and Utes. He urged the government to give Pueblos full status as citizens, including the right to vote and own property. Thompson (1976:32) comments on how the Pueblo Indian has always been the Euroamerican's model native American. In outward appearances their lifestyle, with its highly developed agriculture and apartment-like housing, seemed more "civilized." The wild tribes, on the other hand, would require more attention before they could fit into American society. Calhoun proposed that the military curb Indian raids and collect Indian groups on reservations. There, under skilled Indian agents, they could be taught the ways of husbandry.

In 1852, due to continued raids and unrest, Colonel Sumner became so frustrated he suggested that the government would be better off if it gave Arizona and New Mexico back to the Indians! (Thompson 1976:6) In 1860 a large Navajo war party (about 1000 men) attacked Fort Defiance. In retaliation, a civilian militia made up of 400 men murdered many

Navajo and took women and children captive. In 1862, property losses to Indian depredations were estimated at \$250,000, and settlers lost more than 30,000 sheep to Navajo alone (Thompson 1976:10).

Some Indian Department administrators felt that the Navajo were an "Arizona" problem, and they should be incarcerated in that region. Others, including a superintendent who had been a prominent merchant and newspaperman in Santa Fe, realized the potential profits to be made in large government contracts by enforced migration (Thompson 1976:18). Although not highlighted in Thompson (1976), it appears that General Carleton wanted the Navajo removed because the potential for gold within Navajo territory looked very promising. A publication by the Navajo Community College titled Pictorial History of the Navajo from 1860 to 1910(1980), contains a series of quotations culled from Carleton's correspondence dating from February 1863 to March 6, 1864. Much of the correspondence reveals the motives behind government policy:

By the subjugation and colonization of the Navajo Tribe, we gain for civilization their whole country, which is much larger in extent than the state of Ohio, and, besides being by far the best pastoral region between the two oceans, is said to abound in precious as well as in the useful metals. (Roessel 1980:133)

In 1863, with a scorched earth policy in effect, the government dispatched Kit Carson to kill all Navajo men who resisted arrest, round up the women and children, drive off their animals and destroy their peach orchards and corn fields. In addition, the government provided weapons to the Utes and willing residents of New Mexico, who were told they could capture the spoils and sell off captive women and children (Roessel 1980:10-11). More than 8000 Navajo and Apache were driven more than 300 miles into eastern New Mexico. General Carleton, military commander of Fort Sumner anticipated that (Thompson 1976:21):

little by little the Navajo would be brought to the reservation and treated with Christian kindness. The children would be taught to read and write. The arts of peace would be instilled in them and the truths of Christianity would be

revealed. In time, the Navajos would become a new people. They would acquire new habits, a new lifestyle, and most importantly, new beliefs. Gradually as the old Indians died off, the young Indians would grow up without their ancestors' affection for robbery and murder.

As prisoners of war, the Navajo had to acquire passes to leave the area, and they were given tin ration tickets to procure food (Vogt 1961:313). The supervisor at Bosque was given permission to issue condemned clothing and cheap blankets (1863). The sutler (or civilian trader), attached to each fort became the liaison between the merchants of the immediate area and the fort (Thompson 1976:37). Carleton resolved to make Bosque Redondo a success. He even cut rations to his own soldiers to feed the Navajo during the ubiquitous food shortages.

Provisioning the Bosque: a Contractor's Paradise

Because of the accelerated need to feed thousands of Indians, the cost of basic foods including meat skyrocketed in New Mexico which worked real hardship on the poor of that region. The price of beef doubled, and sheep went from \$2.50 to \$4 a head (sheep were not to peak at this price again until 1910 (Bailey and Bailey 1986:307). Prices for wheat and corn tripled (Thompson 1976:71). In a census taken in December 1864, there were 8,354 Navajo or 1782 families who had a total of 3,038 horses, 6962 sheep, 2757 goats and 143 mules (Thompson 1976:71-72). They refused to kill goats and sheep because they needed the milk and wool. It was reported that Navajo women were weaving every day at 630 looms to produce blankets to help combat the cold. Thus about one third of the families had looms.

Initially rations were given every five days, but the food never lasted long enough (Thompson 1976:36). The Bosque (referred to by critics as "a concentration camp") measured 40 miles square. It was too large to police effectively. The attempt to turn the Navajo into farmers was a miserable failure due to alkaline water, inclement weather, and nearly total destruction by pests of the corn crop. However, there were beneficiaries to this

tragic "experiment." Mercantile houses harvested huge financial benefits - contracts ranged in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. Contractors regarded the Reservation as an "enormous plum." During one four-month period in 1864, the government spent \$510,000 on food and supplies for Bosque Redondo--a truly fantastic sum for that period.

Because the superintendent had friends who were cattle ranchers, the incarcerated Navajo were often fed beef, which was twice the cost of mutton. Speculators bought up all available food supplies, anticipating selling to the government at a handsome profit. Large scale farmers and speculators held back some of their products until winter, when prices were highest. By purchasing subsistence for 10,000 Indians (many Apaches were also incarcerated at the Bosque), the military controlled the New Mexican market. By 1866, a number of former military personnel or friends of Carleton held large contracts to supply Bosque Redondo.

Carleton's detractors claimed he was involved with a "contractors' ring." Fraud and corruption abounded. Some agents purposely made last minute purchases of goods on the open market, without taking sealed bids in advance, thus driving up the prices to the government and reaping extra profits for merchants. In one shipment, anxiously anticipated for months, merchants (including the former governor of Kansas) had \$100,000 of taxpayers money, and the Navajo were shortchanged over \$60,000 worth of goods. At times shipping cost 50% of the goods (Thompson 1976:62), as the railroads had not yet penetrated eastern New Mexico. The Indian Department and the military blamed each other for various shortcomings.

Merchant Zadoc Staab offered to supply blankets made by the peasantry of the territory for \$2.50. Each blanket weighed between four and five pounds and measured 6.5-7 ft in length (Thompson 1976:108). Because of previous fraud on such a large scale, Carleton suggested Navajo be issued more sheep to weave their own blankets rather than having

purchased blankets distributed, as their own blankets were "superior in quality to anything made in the States" (Thompson 1976:131).

General Carleton's Holy Crusade

Carleton ran Bosque Redondo like he was engaged in a holy crusade, that of civilizing the largest (and perceived as one of the most unruly) tribe of Indians in the United States. He believed that one of the causes of the demise of the Navajo (by disease and starvation at Bosque Redondo) was that:

[the] Almighty originates [causes] when in their appointed time he wills that one race of man--as in races of lower animals--shall disappear off the face of the earth and give place to another race. (Thompson 1976:90-1)

A measles epidemic struck in the fall of 1865 and killed many Indians (Thompson 1976:98). Food, more than military might, acted like a magnet to hold the Navajo at the Bosque "they clustered around the issue house like steel filings around a loadstone." The situation was so critical that at one point, five hundred Indians escaped one summer night (Thompson 1976:89)

Carleton believed that God had traced out a great cycle of creation which went beyond the understanding of mortal man. The mammoths, mastodons and great sloths had come and gone--and so "the Red man of America is passing away!" In reference to prostitution and venereal disease at Bosque Redondo, Carleton believed that "the natural decay incident to their race must find its remedy in a power above that of mortals." The general did not believe in treaties. He felt it was beneath the dignity of the United States to sign a treaty when the other party was not a legal nation. There was no need for "theatricals simply for effect."

Both Carleton and the Bosque were the target of criticism from a number of newspapers. The Weekly New Mexican referred to the occupants as "fugitives from that pandemonium of breech clouts and red skins" (Thompson 1976:135). Criticism flew because

of the enormous expense, and reputed corruption and collusion related to the lucrative government contracts. But the citizenry were in agreement that Indians needed rule by law, regardless of whether or not they comprehended it. Law was a step toward civilization (Thompson 1976:82).

On December, 31, 1866, the Indian Bureau took over Bosque Redondo from the War Department. One of Carleton's last acts as district commander was to award Vicente Romero a big wheat contract for one million pounds at 5.85 cents per pound. Merchant Romero was a long time supporter who had acquired great wealth and influence in the previous years. Thompson claims that Carleton was motivated by humanitarian motives rather than greed. Carleton believed he had started a new era in government policies toward Indians which in coming years would prove to benefit both Indians and the entire country. President Grant was convinced that Carleton had presented a blueprint for the civilizing of the American Indian (Thompson 1976:121 and 133). Newspapers hostile to Carleton and the expensive debacle at the Bosque were against the government returning the Navajo to their country because "whites now needed the region .. [as there is] much mineral wealth" (Thompson 1976:151).

A Painful Failure

More than eight thousand Navajo suffered five years in exile, and the entire experiment cost the government in the neighborhood of ten million dollars. Speculators reaped much of that. Approximately 30% of the population died as a result of "The Long Walk", disease or starvation. At the time of their release in 1868, a report remarked how, prior to their confinement, the Navajo had subsisted on their own land, cultivated corn and wheat and raised livestock, without government assistance. They had owned thousands of horses and sheep and were acknowledged to be one of the richest tribes in the country. "Their blankets were some of the best that could be made... [they] had supported themselves

without government expense." Yet the people once referred to as "proud and wealthy" had sunk into a condition of absolute poverty and despair. They had worked diligently year after year only to see their fields ruined by flood, insects or drought. The Navajo had grown to hate the Bosque. Comanche raids, crop failures, bad water, unproductive soil, scarcity of wood..all contributed to one of the most devastating experiments ever perpetrated on an indigenous group in North America. By 1868, because the post Civil War economy was demoralized and interest rates were high, it was imperative that the government divest itself from this financial and political albatross (Akbarzadeh 1992:39).

The government created a 3.5 million acre Reservation, about one quarter of the land that the Navajo had occupied prior to their incarceration (Vogt 1961:315, Brugge 1993:11). The creation of the Reservation was intended to help the Navajo recover economically, and educate them for assimilation. They were not to dispute the railroad being built through their country. In the treaty signed June 1, 1868, the head of each Navajo family was promised seeds and farming tools the following year. The government also allotted \$30,000 for initial distribution of sheep.

The government preferred to settle the Navajo as farmers as less land was required, and people could be concentrated in villages. The Navajo continued to use traditional digging sticks, and sometimes traded government issued farm tools for stock (Bailey and Bailey 1986:46). Most fields were small, and after 1880s, farmed for subsistence only (Weiss 1984:33). Hunting and gathering decreased rapidly during the 1880s, as both wild animal and plant populations declined due to over-harvesting, inclement weather and encroachment by large herding operations (Bailey and Bailey 1986:49). Thus the Navajo lost not only an important source of protein but also their primary source of hides for leather goods as sheep pelts and goat skins were inappropriate substitutes.

Thompson (1976) titles his final chapter: "A successful failure." The Bosque failed

to make the Navajo self-sufficient (which they had been!!) and it did not solve the old problem of Indian depredations. However, it surely changed their way of life. He concludes that the Navajo:

now comprehended the white man's world much better. The Indian Fund transactions taught many Indians the value of money and its relation to such everyday items as clothing, horses, wheat, corn, liquor, women, trinkets and blankets. ...Indians had better grasp of material desires and values..Few Navajo...would be easily duped by unscrupulous whites in the future.

Post-Bosque Redondo Trade

Federal control over Indians was first established by Continental Congress in 1775. In 1784, administration of Indian affairs placed with the War Department (USFTC 1973:35). Indian trade officially regulated by Congress, and began in 1796. The government sought to control abuses of the fur traders. However, regulation was difficult, if not impossible, due to distance and communication problems on "the frontier" (Roberts 1987:15). In 1834, the Office of Indian Affairs was created and in 1876, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs became the sole authority to appoint traders, etc. (USFTC 1973:35). The Indian agent reported to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who reported to the Secretary of the Interior and the President. High turnover, poor communication, inadequate or rejected appropriations and graft exacerbated problems.

Regulating Merchant Trade

The first traders to the Navajo had been sutlers, civilians who were itinerant peddlers who supplied the army with food and clothing. When Navajo flocks began to increase after Bosque Redondo, some sutlers bought the excess Navajo wool. A few sutlers abandoned army trade for the increasingly lucrative Indian commerce. The first license was issued in 1868, at Fort Defiance, but primarily served a white clientele associated with the Fort (Utley 1961:15). Gradually the Indian agent encouraged the Navajo to sell their excess wool and by 1889, there were nine posts on the Reservation with 30 posts surrounding it, outside

government control (McNitt 1962:51, Weiss 1984:50).

Patronage and politics often determined who received a trading license. Competition for licenses, obtained from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for an annual fee, was spurred by the knowledge of the fortunes made by western entrepreneurs. Indian agents were not to have direct or indirect interest in the trade carried on by licensed traders at his agency (McNitt 1962:46). Government personnel and traders did not see eye to eye on many issues. Traders often felt that Indian agents had almost unlimited power, that is, they could make or break any trader (Schmedding 1974:317). Many traders felt they were over-regulated, whereas agents were to be wary of the potential for entrepreneurial fraud. Agents often had short terms and could barely begin to cope with numerous problems (McNitt 1962:70). Given the scarcity of government fieldworkers to address matters of concern to the Indians, the traders filled a lacuna, and reflected the government's support of "rugged individualism."

Annuity Goods: Link to Survival

From 1869 to 1879, the federal government issued \$5.00 worth of annuity goods to each Navajo, which included rations such as corn, flour and beef, cloth, tow cards (for cleaning fleece prior to spinning), kitchenware and yarn (Bailey and Bailey 1986:38,55; McNitt 1962:128-9; Weiss 1984:47). Wheat (1981:8) states that 75,000 pounds of aniline dyed Germantown yarn was issued between 1863 and 1878. In 1872, \$40,000 of \$54,000 annuity distribution was for clothing (Weiss 1984:47). Large antelope herds ranged over several areas of the Reservation, and the Navajo were able to supplement their diets and forgo butchering sheep as they were rebuilding their herds. To augment their subsistence, Indian Agent Army shipped 60,000 pounds of Navajo wool in 1875 (Brugge 1993:18). In the 1877 annual report, Agent Irvine stated that the Navajo had "sold" approximately 200,000 pounds of wool and a large quantity of Navajo blankets. These were exchanged for horses in Southern Utah, "and have no superiors, and are to be found in use all over the

Southwest." Blankets and skins were also traded with indigenous neighbours for food and other goods (Brugge 1993:18). Blankets continued to be major trade items until the 1880's (Bailey & Bailey 1986:37,44). In 1879, Agent Eastman describes Navajo women, in particular still wearing "woollen cloth, ...of their own manufacture." Amsden (1975:180) and McNitt (1962:80) report 100,000 pounds of wool woven into blankets. Corn, wheat, peaches and melons were raised in considerable quantities in suitable locations (Roessel 1980:144). In the late 1870's the Navajo economy began to show signs of self sufficiency. Many narrative statements indicate that the economy may have returned to its pre-1863 level and "due to judicious management of their flocks and herds of domestic animals, now attained to a condition virtually independent of government aid" (Bailey and Bailey 1986:50, van Valkenburgh 1974:42).

The railroad reached the fringes of Navajo country by 1881, and 800,000 pounds of wool left the Reservation. Dockstader (1976) reports the wool clip was valued at \$80,000 in 1880. The report to the commissioner in 1883, stated the size of the herds had increased, but a brutal winter destroyed many animals. The winter of 1886-87 was also severe, and reports indicate that the Navajo butchered approximately 280,000 sheep and goats as "necessary subsistence," bartered 240,000 sheep pelts and 80,000 goat skins (Peterson 1986:107), and shipped over one million pounds of wool (Bailey and Bailey 1986:61). Bailey and Bailey (1986:60) quote the Report to the Commission of Indian Affairs for 1887, which states that 75% of the blankets for inter-tribal trade were of the "coarse variety." The Apache and Utes were still good customers. As late as 1889, the Navajo bartered only \$24,000 worth of blankets to traders (Bailey and Bailey 1986:60). By 1890, the reporting agent estimated that the Navajo had produced just over two million pounds of wool the previous year, and had at least 700,000 sheep (worth \$2 each). They "sold" approximately 12,000 sheep and 1.3 million pounds of wool. The agent estimated that 700,000 pounds of wool were retained "for

home use." During that decade because of storms decimating their herds, the Navajo did not appear to be selling animals in any great numbers. That fact, in conjunction with the tremendous drop in value of annuity goods after 1878, dramatically affected Navajo well-being.

Cessation of Annuities: Recipe for Impoverishment

It is apparent from government reports of the period that after the cessation of annuities, the Navajo received far less per capita in subsistence than other southwestern tribes. This is corroborated in Bailey and Bailey (1986) and Weiss (1984). Roessel (1980:69) reports that in a typical year (he chose 1880), the Navajo received only \$0.39 per person compared to the Southern Ute Agency which received \$15.58 per Indian each, the Mescalero Apache Agency received \$26.82, and the San Carlos Apache were granted \$34.61. The pleas of Navajo agents to the government fell on deaf ears. Some agents spent a portion of their salary in a vain attempt to assuage the hunger and cold (Roessel 1980:72).

On August 14, 1883, Agent D. M. Riordon of Fort Defiance wrote the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, D. C. a 16-page letter which comprised his annual report on the Navajo people, and tendered his resignation. Portions of his letter are worth quoting at length because they reveal the frustrations, hardships, problems and attitudes of agents for that period. Riordan was considered by peers to be one of the finest agents to serve in that capacity. He writes:

..I have been without adequate assistance to perform the work of the agency, ..I was much of the time without funds. It would require the descriptive powers of a Scott or a Dickens to portray the wretched condition of affairs at this agency in language such as to present a faithful picture of it to the mind of one who never saw it. This reservation...embraces .. over 10,000 square miles of the most worthless land that ever laid outdoors. ..occasional patches of valley land are susceptible of cultivation by the rude Indian methods...a barren rocky desert. ..An Illinois ... farmer would laugh to scorn the assertion that you could raise anything in the sandy beds which form the planting grounds of this people. Seventeen thousand Indians manage to extract their living from these spots..without any government aid. If they

were not the best Indians on the continent they would not do it. The US has never fulfilled its promises made to them by treaty. It is safe to assume that it never will. As I have resigned and am about to leave here, and will probably be relieved before this report is read, I may be pardoned for...speaking plainly of the gross wrongs perpetrated by the Government on the Navajos and..the Agency. Whether that treatment is due to ignorance, malice, or neglect it is time something was done to remedy existing evils... [I] supplied much needed articles at [my] own expense.. \$800..I found..that the US does not pay anything it can avoid. .. How any man could turn a deaf ear to the sufferings I witnessed here last winter--to the cries of hungry women and children whose only support had perished, owing to the severity of the winter..But that impersonal myth, the Government, neither sees nor hears these things; and if any of its officers has humanity enough in him to heed them, he pays the expenses. .. An institution which does not fulfil its written obligations cannot be expected to sustain its officers in an action dictated by any such weak sentiment as humanity... when I came here (January 1, 1883), there was not an ounce of hay or grain..the thermometer ranged as low as 20 below zero. ...I was compelled to buy food for them at my own expense rather than see them die of starvation. There is not a house that would keep out the snow or the rain...in a word, the agent and employees who were to lift up these people to a higher plane, to carry out the civilizing policy of the Government, were expected to live in a lot of abandoned adobe huts, condemned by ..reports as unfit to live in 15 years ago...they are full of vermin...I sent my family away...those who did this work before me have begged, pleaded, implored for a place to live in..but all to no purpose. Why won't the Government give an agent here as good a shelter as it gives a mule at Fort Wingate?...I was told..to "hold on", "be patient", ... it is an agent's duty to make himself personally familiar with the entire country..to know their wants, their habits. ...the method of shearing ..is crude, barbarous, and wasteful in the extreme...fleeces will not average more than a pound apiece...they have too many sheep the number could be reduced one-half or two-thirds..introduce blooded bucks.. Out of all this could grow the care of stock, shelter for them in winter, selection, the idea of accumulation, permanent homes, desire for education, education itself, and ultimate civilization. ...they have an enormous number of useless ponies..these animals are consuming grass and water that ought to be raising beef or mutton...continued use of them [ponies] only tends to confirm their owner in habits of indolence and improvidence. As a Navajo measure a man's wealth by the number (regardless of quality) of horses he has, a radical change in their modes of thought must be brought about before much improvement can be made. The Government..compelled the opening of the school in an unfinished building...sans everything almost that was needed for success in a school..Make bricks without straw, ye workers in this field...The history of mankind shows that the advances from barbarism to civilization have been by a series of steps or jumps rather than by a gradual forward movement. The Navajos have been standing still, in a transition period, for some time. .. If this generation is given the proper impulse the next will be a wealth-producing factor in the civilization of the Southwest... the Navajos are, in my judgement, the most independent, self-reliant Indians we have; and

I believe that in native shrewdness and intellect they are superior to any other tribe in the country. They are all armed and well armed...Respectfully..D. M. Riordan.(Box 43)

Although Riordan's letter is quoted at length, it reveals the tremendous shortcomings of "government at arms' length," and its attitude of benign neglect toward the Navajo because they were subdued and confined to the Reservation. The Apache continued to resist settlement, and funds were spent on annuities related to pacification. Navajo Agents Eastman (1882) and Bowman (1884) issued similar pleas in their annual reports, noting the tremendous discrepancy between the minuscule funds allocated to the most populous tribe, and their recalcitrant neighbors (Roessel 1980:68-72). Agents other than Riordan directed criticism at the Department of Interior bureaucratic inefficiency, graft and meddling (Crane 1926).

Riordan's report demonstrates that the Navajo were under tremendous pressure to augment their subsistence. The dramatic drop in annuity goods left the Navajo in a precarious position, exacerbated by the formation of new economic relations which differed completely from their previous experience. It was during the 1880's that intratribal trade was drastically curtailed, and entrepreneurial traders "filled a void" in an effort to "civilize" and profit from the most populous wild tribe in the United States.

The Indian agents, then, the traders foresaw the commercial possibilities of sheep, wool and craftwork (Utley 1961). After Bosque Redondo the Navajo tribe became a stable and dependent market liable for commercial exploitation by entrepreneurs. This is in contrast to the wild profiteering that occurred while the military was still in the region. A thriving wholesale mercantile business emerged, specializing in trading post supply after the arrival of the railroad in the region. Although capital risks were high, because of the size of the confined population Navajo trading offered impressive, immediate profits from a "virginal consumer market" (USFTC 1973:5). However, prior to an examination of this history, it is

necessary to review Navajo domestic relations to properly contextualize how newly imposed trading relations were to impact upon the Navajo.

Kinship, Social Organization and Residence Patterns

The importance of land to the Navajo cannot be overestimated. Kelley (1986:1) notes that as farmers and pastoralists, the Navajo "grow themselves from the land." The flexibility of Navajo social organization is remarked upon in a wide variety of literature. Livestock is individually owned and jointly managed and fields are jointly used. Women tend to own sheep and goats, men favoured horses (Weiss 1984:33). Goats supply milk, cheese and meat, and have twins more frequently. Sheep supply raw materials for trade items, and produce wool for weaving. Cattle were of little economic importance for decades. Ownership and control of animals has remained relatively unchanged. However, political policies affecting access to land and size of stockholdings, have altered subsistence patterns to some degree. Home consumption of livestock continues to make an important contribution to the diet of many Navajo families, especially when cash is unavailable or in short supply (Bailey and Bailey 1986, Kelley and Whiteley 1989).

The residence group is the fundamental land-using unit, and households are its building blocks. A household is defined as a group of people who share a dwelling (Kelley and Whiteley 1989:51). Occupants of a household tend to be a nuclear family of one or two parents and juvenile children, with possibly a relative or two unable to live alone. A residence group is a collection of people who share a homesite, i.e., one or more households. Two or more residence groups make up an "outfit" or co-residential kin group (Witherspoon 1975:101). These groups tend to merge in the winter and disperse in the summer. Rights to use the land on which the residence group is located are controlled by those living in the residence group, particularly the older couple.

The largest kin grouping is the clan, a named group of people who consider

themselves the descendants of a common mythological ancestress. Kin relations in Navajo society favour female autonomy (Aberle 1962, Lamphere 1977, Witherspoon 1975). Navajo society is matrilineal, clans are exogamous, favouring matrilocal post-residence. Residence patterns have shifted to more diverse patterns in recent history. However, even in the most recent studies such as those by Witherspoon (1975), and Lamphere (1977), matrilocality continues to predominate, especially in the more remote parts of the Reservation. Kelley (1986:116) comments that even in the most acculturated areas, uxorilocality predominates among the junior households. Post marital residence choices in 1940 resembled those of 1915. As long as a woman has living kin organized into an "extended outfit", she is assured access to land, even if she never married, was divorced or widowed.

Marriage is normally a gradual process by which an inmarrying affine is separated from his natal unit and incorporated into the unit of his spouse. The initial bond is very tenuous. The new husband usually brings only a small number of his sheep. In the past marriages were arranged. The sexual division of labour is described in the Navajo Creation Story: women perform certain tasks and men do others. Men clear and help till fields, hunt game and help women with their work. Women till the soil, carry water, make fire and weave the blankets. Tools (including weaving tools) are mentioned in the Creation Story. The major role for women is reproducing and sustaining life. Men are leaders in political and religious affairs. As recently as 1970, approximately one fourth of all marriages were arranged with the couple's approval (Witherspoon 1975:112). Divorce is common. If in-law problems emerge, the couple may choose to live with the husband's relatives.

Livestock remained the centre of Navajo livelihood for more than a century. The subsistence residential unit is organized around a sheep herd, a customary land use area, a head mother and sometimes agricultural fields, all of which are called "shima" or mother. Thus the head mother is identified with the land, the herd and fields, and all residence rights

can be traced back to her. Mies (1988:73) has described this form as matristic, where femaleness is interpreted "as the social paradigm of all productivity, as the main active principle in the production of life. All women are defined as mothers, but the term had another meaning than it does today" [in non-matrilineal societies].

During the 1880s, herds increased exponentially. Most families continued to plant small fields, but pastoralism dominated Navajo livelihood. Corn, a few melons, alfalfa and where possible, peaches were grown by Navajo families. Due to limited water resources, farming was often confined to washes (Bailey and Bailey 1986:95 and 143). Frequently harvests did not meet domestic needs, much less yield a surplus. By the late 1870s, wild game had decreased to such an extent that hunting no longer made a significant contribution to Navajo subsistence (Bailey and Bailey 1986:95). The exponential increase in herds affected wild plant growth, leading to a decline in the acquisition of wild foods as dietary supplements.

Kelley and Whiteley (1989:55) quote an 1881 source concerning the division of labour:

Young girls assist their mothers in all home duties; women cook, clean "hogan," weave blankets and "tilmas," make their own clothes, (the men make their own clothes just as the Apache braves do). The men do most of the knitting of leggings and caps, but the accomplishment is also shared by the gentler sex. Boys and girls herd flocks of sheep and goats, the care of which is almost wholly under control of the old women. Shearing is done by all hands and the same rule obtains in gathering the peach crop (in Canyon de Chelly) which duty calls out every man, woman, and child able to lend a hand. Women and children dry fruit after it has been gathered. Such little farming as is possible in the arid country of the Navajos is performed by the men, that is the hard work of ploughing is their special business, but in this, as in everything else, the women assist.

In more recent times, married women's duties are much the same. Women continue to do much of the herding, milking and they butcher small livestock and process the skins. The husband usually does the heavier tasks such as housebuilding and repair, water and wood hauling and wood chopping. Many of these tasks are specifically mentioned during the

wedding ceremony. Men also build corrals and fences. Men cook while their wives are away, or women may perform more arduous tasks if their husbands are absent (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1974:94-5, Lamphere 1977). Kelley and Whiteley (1989:90) note that the seasonal schedule of herding and farming tasks probably remained the same from 1840 to 1940 (with the exception of Bosque Redondo). By 1900, inclement weather conditions had reduced the ratio of Navajo to their sheep at 1:19, less than half that considered necessary for basic subsistence. Until World War I, the subsistence value of herds far outweighed their market value. The market for feeder lambs developed during mid 1920s (Bailey and Bailey 1986:137 and 139). The Navajo were not to sell breeding stock until 1926.

Navajo notions of cooperation provide diffuse obligations where the exact nature and timing of requests and counter-requests need not be exactly equivalent. Navajo ideology of kinship cooperation can be viewed as an instance of a widespread method of interpreting and regulating the exchange of goods and services and the organization of tasks among kinsmen. Kindness, respect, hard work, generosity and helpfulness are all important values related to behaviour for both men and women. These values are inculcated into children at an early age through example, and explicitly taught to young Navajo women during the Kinaalda, or puberty ceremony for girls (Lamphere 1977:43).

The Navajo hogan or hexagonal home typically constructed of pine logs and earth has increased in size over the past two centuries. In her ethnoarchaeological study of Navajo land use, Kelley (1986:80) notes that this facilitated activities associated with weaving, especially in the wintertime. Although herd size varied a great deal, poorer Navajo were aided by wealthier outfits who had large stock holdings (Kelley 1986:34, Weiss 1984:32). Although many Navajo continue to live in hogans, small bungalow-style homes clustered in mini-subdivisions dot the reservation. Often these homes are built adjacent to a hogan as ceremonies may only be held in the hogan.

Kelley (1976:246) lists several potential income alternatives other than stock raising, and their lack of feasibility after the formation of the Reservation: 1) less than 1% of Navajo country is capable of producing a regular crop even with development of water resources 2) seasonal wage work required costly travel over long distances for nearly all Navajo; 3) railroad labour was a minor source of income until World War II, 4) wage work in border towns was difficult to acquire due to language differences and racism. Border towns experienced rapid population growth with influx of settlers, thus there was an over-abundant labour pool.

Collier's analysis of Plains Indian tribes during the 19th century places domestic relationships at the core of the political and economic processes of society. This is central to an understanding of Navajo society as it was affected by changes in the economy after the formation of the Reservation. For decades, more than 90% of the Navajo economy was dependent upon production that occurred within the "domestic sphere." As mentioned previously, waged labour was practically non-existent for most Navajo families who lived many days ride from the nearest railroad. Although the Navajo have tried to maintain a degree of diversification to offset inclement weather and other unpredictable events, per capita income has remained at 20% of the national average for more than a century.

Wolf (1982) has demonstrated how the processes of capitalist transformation have been very uneven in their geographical spread and in their effects. What capitalism encountered in the developing world was a series of specific social formations with their own institutions and sets of relations. These indigenous social formations had a determining influence on the way in which capitalism affected rural production systems. The form that intruded upon the Navajo after the formation of the Reservation, was that of merchant capitalism, with licensed traders operating posts optimally separated by great distance (to avoid competition).

The Reservation Traders

The trader occupies an ambivalent place in Navajo history. Numerous authors (Adams 1963, Reichard 1968, Utley 1961, Underhill 1956) see him as an individual who aided the Navajos' transition into the modern world. Others (Lampere 1976, Ruffing 1977, Weiss 1984, and USFTC hearings 1973) picture him as often unscrupulous and profit-oriented. Some traders truly befriended the Navajo, acting as interpreter, doctor, lawyer, banker and sometimes mortician (Underhill 1956). But many were unscrupulous and casually justified a number of inimical trading practices. Navajo killed more than 20 traders (including Lorenzo Hubbell's brother, Charles) between 1901 and 1934 (McNitt 1962:322). Underhill (1956:184) calls the trader the "Navajos' Shogun":

He had the touchstone of friendly personal contact which opened the hearts of the Navajos. While the government was striving to civilize the Navajos by issuing orders that they should cut their hair and cease their heathen dances, and while the missionary was trying to convince them of their errors, the trader simply laid before them the possibilities of the new life.....[the trading post] was to the Navajo what a world's fair might be to a modern American.

The author notes that trading was doubly profitable, because of the mark-up on staples sold to the Navajo, and the handsome profit gained selling Navajo products. The Reservation continued to increase in size and most government officials had little contact with the Indians. By 1943, there were 146 posts on or near the Reservation.

The zeal of the Indian Department to "civilize" the Indians and the role that the trader fulfilled in realizing this consummate goal is graphically reflected in the following statement by Commissioner Leupp in his treatise titled The Indian and His Problem (1925:190-91):

He lived in an ell of the store building, and used to leave the door of his living quarters ajar, so that the Indians could peep in and see what uses he made of his simple appliances of toilet and table. After he had sufficiently piqued them to emulation, he refused to sell them a set of cups and saucers unless they would buy a table to set them on. He kept bright mattresses and comforters for sale, but he would not sell one to an Indian who did not buy also a cot to hold them. Thus by degrees he lifted his customers off the

ground and got them into an approach, at least, to decent household habits. Pretty soon he set up a sewing machine; and any squaw who would buy sensible goods for her own clothing and that of her children, he would teach how to use the machine...

Several (failed) attempts were mounted by the government to get Navajo weavers "off the ground" (Weiss 1984:80). Floor looms and spinning wheels had met a frosty reception from weavers incarcerated at Bosque Redondo. Two more attempts failed in 1871 and 1875, with weavers hired to teach the Navajo women how to use the unfamiliar equipment (Bailey and Bailey 1986:51).

Utley (1959:38-9) states how the trader in particular, induced, sustained, and expanded native desire for, and later dependence on, items of white manufacturer:

probably the greatest service to the Indian stemmed from the change in material culture..[he] played the dominant part in replacing the aboriginal economy, which the reservation had destroyed, with an economy linked to the white world and adjusted to the realities of reservation life. *Perhaps it was not the best solution, but it worked.*

After Bosque Redondo, the Navajo economy gradually shifted to specialized production for the American market, accompanied by debt peonage (Aberle 1983:657). Traders retained their hold on customers by providing credit to absorb future income, from livestock, wage work, and by physical control of welfare and social security. Traders held a monopoly on consumer credit (Adams 1963). Thus, Navajo trading came to have a stability and continuity unexcelled by trading on other reservations. As recently as the 1960s, it was largely controlled by Anglo families whose ancestors initiated trading in the 1880s. The risks of extensive credit operations, together with high shipping rates (especially for the independent posts), meant goods were expensive. Youngblood's 1935 survey states that gross sales probably differed little from general stores for that period, but because the trader paid no rent, had a low salary and wage account, and paid no taxes, he realized a higher net profit than his urban competitors. Even during the Depression, far fewer trading posts went

bankrupt relative to other off Reservation businesses. Several authors (Hegemann 1963, Faunce 1928) state that a post was expected to "pay its way" within five years.¹ Sometimes traders hired Navajo to work in the post. But they were seldom paid in cash. This was the case for the Hubbells, and for the men who worked seasonally in their fields. For decades they averaged \$1 per day in "pay", but it was always discharged in goods, not in cash. The Hubbells' horse team drivers and herders were "paid" in the same manner.

With few exceptions, most authors perceive traders as providing the Navajo with an opportunity for a new and workable economy (Utley 1961, Bailey and Bailey 1986). The intertribal trading network significantly declined after the turn of the century due to the expansion of trading posts (Bailey and Bailey 1986:147). The following chapter contextualizes the nature of Reservation trade within southwestern commerce, and documents how much of the Navajo economy was appropriated by Anglo business interests operating as merchant capitalists.

ENDNOTES

1. Elizabeth Hegemann traded with her husband at Shonto. They paid the Babbitts \$5,000 for the post in 1929, sold it to Mildred Carson Heflin and her husband Reuben 1945 for \$45,000, and in 1957 the Heflins sold it for \$80,000.

CHAPTER THREE TRADE, COMMERCE AND DIVERSIFICATION

This chapter contextualizes the nature of entrepreneurial activity in the southwest after the formation of the Navajo Reservation in 1868. It surveys evidence that 1) demonstrates the growth, development and diversification of three competitive wholesale merchant houses surrounding the Reservation; 2) highlights the escalation in domestic wool production subject to international price fluctuations; 3) reveals the emergence of debt peonage among the Navajo, and 4) demonstrates the importance of women's domestic textile production as an alternative means to market wool. These are some of the key factors that affected the entrepreneurial success of merchant capitalists and traders, as competitors and suppliers.

"Opening" the West

In 1862, Henry David Thoreau penned:

"Eastward I go only by force;
but westward I go free....."

a fitting assertion of American's attitude toward the great "empty" frontier. The Homestead Act passed that year, and any person could file for 160 acres of federal land if he or she was an American citizen at least 21 years old, head of a family, or had served two weeks in the US army or Navy, and never fought against the United States (Dary 1986).

Both western territories and the railroads became heavily involved in promotion by producing posters, pamphlets, and maps targeting potential settlers. In 1876, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad published a 46 page pamphlet in Boston titled "How and where to get a living: a sketch of the "garden of the West." Presenting facts worth knowing concerning the lands of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad Co., in Southwestern Kansas." Such promotional literature lured thousands of citizens westward (Dary 1986:232-33). Between 1873 and 1878, 18,000 companies failed in the east (Dary 1986:213). Thus reports of profits in mines, lumber, farming, trading and ranching in the seemingly unlimited frontier tempted many aspiring pioneers with a yen for adventure. Western promoters had

creative imaginations.

J. H. Beadle penned the following in 1873:

the West promised land for the landless, money for the moneyless, briefs for lawyers, patients for doctors, and above all, labor [and its reward] for every poor man who [was] willing to work.

However, not everyone was satisfied, as reported in Eastern newspapers. Upon returning from Washington Territory a disgruntled pioneer wrote:

every bunch of willows is a mighty forest, every frog pond is a sylvan lake, every waterfall a second Niagara, every ridge of rock a gold mine, every town a county seat, and every man a ___ liar." (Akbarzadeh 1992:54)

Yet fascination with the west continued despite some negative reports from the frontier.

Many settlers headed to Arizona which had fewer than 2000 Anglos [Americans] in 1865 (Dary 1986:297). Texas and New Mexico filled up with ranches more quickly, but the Arizona territory contained many Hispanics and Indians, especially the Navajo, christened the "lords of the desert" by the United States cavalry. As pastoralists they ranged over much of northern Arizona and New Mexico, until, as described in Chapter Two, the United States Government drastically curtailed their movement by incarcerating them at Bosque Redondo from 1863-1868.

Cattle ranching had become one of the most profitable businesses in the West by the early 1880s, yielding in good years about 33% annual profit. This of course was facilitated by government policies in establishing Reservations which blocked or circumscribed movement of pastoralists such as the Navajo and other indigenous peoples. Huge areas were opened for "settlement." More than 750,000 acres in homesteads were recorded in the territory of New Mexico between 1880 and 1900 (Parish 1961:174). During that period 186 cattle corporations were formed, and competition for land sparked bitter range wars with sheep ranchers. The federal government helped settlers by fighting and managing the Indians, granting land taken from them, protecting settlements, and subsidizing the construction of roads and railway lines critical to transportation. Violators of grazing rights on federal land

were spared prosecution as strict enforcement of the law could result in great losses to ranchers, and the government did not want to damage profits of big taxpayers (Akbarzadeh 1992:152). Eastern speculators invested heavily in ranching, but many were disappointed. Ranching was a risky business, dependent upon good management, an often fluctuating market, sufficient rain to grow enough grass to feed the cattle, and enough land to graze them (Dary:224-25). The hey day of ranching was over by 1900 as enclosures, disease, over-grazing, soil erosion and several massive storms decimated herds.

Huge profits were also made during the mid-nineteenth century onward in merchant capitalism, sheep herds (which provided wool, hides and meat), freighting, and government contracting to supply military posts (Dary 1986) (cf. Chapter Two). In 1868, New Mexico merchants Adolph Letcher and Charles Ilfeld grossed \$40,000 during their first year of business of which \$18,000 was profit (Dary 1986:303).

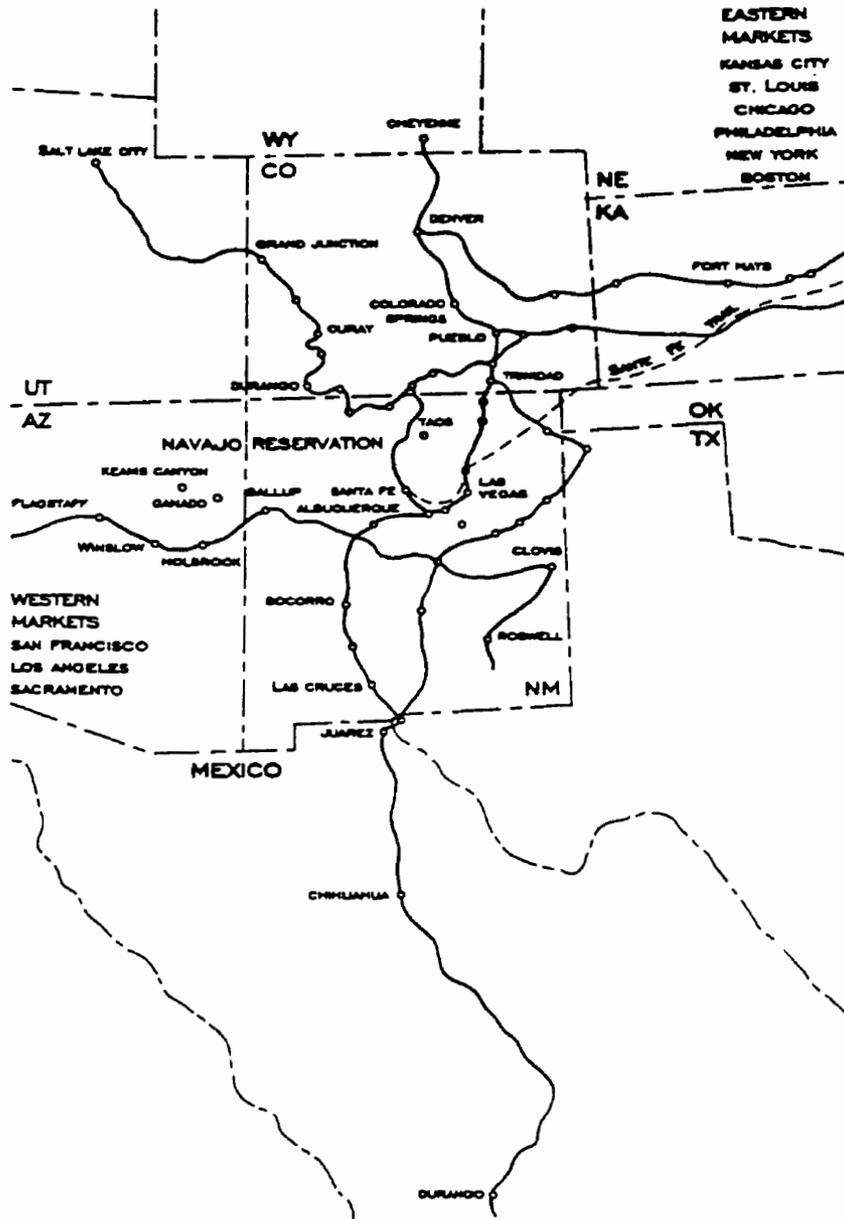
David Dary (1986:322) refers to these entrepreneurs of various stripes as "the silent army" who, as profit seekers, linked the East with the West. Through seeking personal benefit within the free enterprise system, they perpetuated the belief in America as the land of opportunity. People measured accomplishments by material standards. A common theme that recurs in the scholarly works about Western entrepreneurs concerns their motivation for profit. Their highest goals in life were freedom for self-advancement, acquisition of worldly possessions, and success through initiative (Limerick 1987). Hard work to accumulate personal wealth stimulated money-making efforts and spawned intense competition. Instead of having a single interest, most pioneer merchants pursued opportunities in many local enterprises which, if one area languished due to over-supply, inclement weather, or other factors, diversified business interests acted to buffer temporary downturns in various economic arenas. Thus the most successful entrepreneurs were flexible and diversified to protect multiple interests. The following information highlights two of the most important merchant "dynasties" in New Mexico.

Gross Kelly and Company

Dan Kelly, author of The Buffalo Head, a Century of Mercantile Pioneering in the Southwest (1972), was a direct descendent of one of the oldest mercantile families in New Mexico. He notes how the pioneer merchant-capitalist was as important to the west as the Yankee trader was to New England. The building and operation of a large mercantile company took a special blend of "imagination, stubbornness, and optimism combined with the gambler's flare for mastering a game and playing it ruthlessly, if need be" (Kelly 1972:1). Kelly and his brothers attended Harvard, his sisters were schooled at Manhattenville in New York. In 1900 Gross, Kelly and Company paid a 21 % dividend to the three owners (\$21,000 each). Their mercantile empire, centred in New Mexico, extended to seven adjacent western states, California and major cities in the east. [Map 3.1] The Company was also affiliated with several other firms handling wool, cattle and feed. The company opened their first branch house in 1881, and 12 more followed between that date and 1929. In that year they bought out Clinton Cotton of Gallup, Lorenzo Hubbell's former business partner. In 1954, they sold out to the Kimball Grocery Company of Texas. The company had earned over \$3 million in profits and paid out over \$2 million in dividends since 1901.

Gross, Kelly and Company was one of key suppliers to Reservation traders for decades. Kelly (1972:106) remarks on the excellent quality of goat skins acquired through the traders from the Navajo. "The women had the privilege of skinning the goats and sheep, and since they usually owned the family flocks they were allowed to keep the money when these commodities were sold." These skins were sold to east coast tanners. In 1912, the company handled over a million pounds of sheepskins alone. Most of these were acquired from Reservation traders.

Kelly (1972:249) mentions how one year wool, hides and pelts dropped nearly 50%... 'we took a big loss' though it could have been worse.' Kelly's book contains a



THE MERCANTILE EMPIRE OF GROSS - BLACKWELL 1881 - 1902
AND GROSS - KELLY 1902 - 1954

ADAPTED FROM KELLY (1972)

Map 3.1

photograph (p 48) of the Company's hide warehouse located in Las Vegas, New Mexico. Stiff dried hides are piled as high as a man's shoulder, and for many years, the (wholesale) price per pound of goat skins and hand-spun, hand-woven saddle blankets was very similar (Fig. 4.1).

The Charles Ifeld Company

The Charles Ifeld Company was another important New Mexico mercantile firm that wholesaled goods to Reservation traders. Dr. William Parish, dean of the business school at the University of New Mexico published a history of this firm in 1961. He charts the rise in success of the company (founded in 1865) which maintained diversified interests to protect its profits. Merchandise sales reached \$160,000 in 1889, \$188,000 in 1890, and nearly \$270,000 in 1892; wool sales amounted to nearly \$150,000 that year (Parish 1961:121). Between 1895 and 1949, the company's gross profits ranged from a low of 9.3% (in 1930) to a high of 21.8% in 1897 (1961:259). Gross profits were somewhat higher in the years prior to 1897. In 1924, Ifeld absorbed a major competitor, the Gallup Mercantile Company. What is remarkable in the histories of these companies is their continued expansion and high profit margins, even during periods of economic downturns such as the recession of 1923-24. For example, almost one half the banks in New Mexico failed between 1920 and 1925, yet the Ifeld Company continued to expand. Keeping a constant eye on diversification paid off in the long run by protecting companies' assets and profits. Parish (1961:251) remarks "from 1873 to 1924, depression and recession had been times of opportunity for Charles Ifeld and his enterprise."

Barter and Debt Peonage

Both Mexican residents and Reservation traders were the backbone of Ifeld's business. Parish (1961:216) relates how Ifeld frequently carried low cost goods of inferior quality. As early as 1884, Ifeld used exclusive brands to maintain his economic prowess regionally. If he discovered that a local competitor carried an identical brand, Ifeld dropped

it immediately, or requested an exclusive contract with the supplier. This meant that traders and other customers were unable to shop around, as they were beholden to a few suppliers such as Ilfeld who would carry them between the lamb and wool seasons. Williams (1989:31) provides an excellent example. He notes how Clinton Cotton held the regional monopoly on Pendleton blankets and Arbuckle coffee, two mainstays of Navajo trade.

Barter accounts were both a necessity and an advantage to mercantile firms. Because of a shortage of cash in the region, this method of trade was permitted and encouraged. Sometimes markups, even on food, were 100%. Parish (1961:15 and 46) claims nearly all transactions (except paying rent on buildings) were bartered for decades. Banking specialists appeared late in the southwest, after the arrival of the railroad, and decades after the first merchant capitalists. They failed to dominate the financial scene for a long period after their initial appearance.

Many small petty capitalists gradually had to commit themselves to "production" by contract to the large merchant. Thus the mercantile capitalist sold them supplies on credit, advanced them money, found markets for their products, while demanding a commitment on their production. Sometimes companies retained such a tight grip on the economy of the region that merchants literally became business dictators. Parish (1961:44) describes a firm in New Mexico which forced many individuals into perpetual debt, resulting in the forced labor of the debtors in the construction of a large store. Some merchants and traders attempted to protect their territories by acquiring businesses adjacent to their current operations.

All over the southwest merchants operated in a barter economy in which their primary source of income was agriculture, ranching and herding. Terms of credit were geared to a seasonal production cycle in which it was not unusual for settlements on accounts to occur but once a year. Thus the merchant capitalist kept close control over his customers' financial obligations: he often insisted that these obligations be confined solely to him. Wholesale

merchants carried producers and traders over long periods of economic hardship. Akbarzadeh (1992:296) quotes one of Kelly's competitors regarding this practice: he "claimed he knew certain customers better than their mother, since mothers carried them nine months, but he carried them over several years!" Thus merchants acquired complete control over the producers and traders. As money became more available, off-Reservation producers could look elsewhere, but the Navajo, through traders, were locked into this relationship.

An Arizona Dynasty: The Babbitt Brothers

The most important entrepreneurs to occupy multiple economic niches in Arizona were undoubtedly the Babbitt brothers. The five men sold their grocery business in Cincinnati and migrated to northern Arizona in 1886, to seek their initial fortune in cattle ranching. Within a 20 year period, the Babbitts completely dominated the economy of the region. With little exaggeration, one could say they were the economy of northern Arizona.

The Babbitts left Ohio with hopes and dreams that their names would be "enshrined in the archives of fame." And indeed they are. To by-pass or overlook the Babbitt dynasty would be to exclude information vital to understanding how traders managed to both compete (because the Babbitts ultimately owned a dozen trading posts on or adjacent to the Navajo Reservation), and coexist with this powerful family.

Appropriate highlights concerning the saga of the Babbitts are related below. Much of this information has been culled from a dissertation written by Rahim Akbarzadeh (1992) titled: "The House of Babbitt: a Business History of the Babbitt Brothers Trading Company, 1886-1926." Other histories of the Babbitts lack contextualization of their business operations within the political economy of the southwest (cf. Smith 1989).

Rahim explicates how the Babbitts became masters of diversification. It was through his bibliography that I encountered references either unutilized, (or under-utilized for my purposes), by other historians of the Navajo economy. In addition, I have used critical information from Wright's text on the Wool Tariff (1910), which is not listed in Rahim's

bibliography.

By 1886, only a handful of entrepreneurs were located in Arizona. Clinton Cotton and Lorenzo Hubbell had recently formed a partnership to run the trading post at Ganado in eastern Arizona (called Pueblo, Colorado at that time). The Babbitts chose Flagstaff as their base of operations. They were fortunate in bringing substantial capital with them, because many newly arrived entrepreneurs had to start from scratch. Three of the brothers married Verkamp sisters, whose father had made his fortune in Ohio in retailing and manufacturing. Father-in-law Verkamp loaned the brothers more than \$100,000 at 5% interest between 1885 and 1894 (Akbarzadeh 1992:266). Clearly they were in a unique position to maximize their entrepreneurial abilities in an economically untapped region. All entrepreneurs benefited from the absence of taxes. There were no income, sales or luxury taxes, however local taxes had to be paid (Akbarzadeh 1992:212).

After achieving success in cattle ranching, the Babbitts quickly moved into the mercantile field to avoid paying inflated frontier prices for needed goods. A large percentage of goods were sold on credit. The cost of goods was higher on credit than for cash. Although this was a cumbersome form of merchandising, the average western store had more merchandise and served more people than the average specialized eastern store. Carload buying from eastern manufacturers and importers gave the Babbitts a decided advantage over their smaller competitors. Merchants always tried to maximize profits and minimize costs through bulk purchases (Akbarzadeh 1992:208). And mercantile firms acquired new trade domains with each geographical expansion. The Babbitts quickly expanded and each brother developed his own area of expertise. By 1888, "exotic" foods were available through their grocery stores: bananas, oranges, Cape Cod cranberries, figs and dates. Fresh oysters were delivered every other day. The following year they built an opera house (Akbarzadeh 1992:210). Their retail outlets carried a broad variety of goods; by 1892, a wide selection of toys was available for Christmas shoppers.

Diversification: Recipe for Survival

Initially, ranching became the primary means for the Babbitts to acquire enough capital to become merchants, bankers, speculators, and politicians. As with Ilfeld, and Gross, Kelly Company, the interdependence of the Western frontier economy compelled these entrepreneurs to:

diversify rather than pursue a single interest. They ultimately controlled the supply, demand, credit and trade in Northern Arizona in both vertically and horizontally integrated enterprises. (Akbarzadeh 1992:523 and 526)

In 1890, the Riordan Mercantile Company of Flagstaff (operated by the former Indian agent), advertised the largest and most complete stock of goods in northern Arizona. It was a wholesale and retail dealer in groceries, clothing, furniture, drugs, grain, feed, saddles, hardware, wagons, mill supplies, wool, pelts, skins and Indian curios. The Babbitt Brothers purchased the company in 1893, and "neutralized a very strong competitor by absorbing it" (Akbarzadeh 1992:334-5).

Although ranching brought high profits in good years, adverse weather, fluctuating prices, and economic downturns affected sustained profits. The Babbitts acquired the massive Hashknife outfit--two million acres in Northern Arizona with more than 30,000 cattle in 1901 (Akbarzadeh 1992:145-6). They had entered the sheep business by 1897. This was very unusual, as cattle ranchers and sheep men usually occupied opposite sides of the frontier fence, with each blaming the other for woes ranging from environmental degradation to illegal grazing. Sheep ranchers preferred unfenced range; cattlemen preferred fenced range to reduce risk of damage to cows whose hides were marketed for the burgeoning boot and shoe trade (). Eventually they controlled or financed most of the livestock outfits in Arizona (Akbarzadeh 1992:509). The Arizona Sheep Breeders and Wool Growers Association formed a pressure group in 1886, and in later years the Babbitt and Verkamps served as directors. In 1894, they met and sought to devise ways to procure cheap labour, freight, provisions, and reduce assessed valuations. The Babbitts vigorously protested the

extension of the Navajo Reservation in 1901, as it would constrain their ranching enterprises.

By building a prosperous mercantile base, the Babbitts acquired many animals in barter, took over assets of defaulting ranchers, expanded and eventually dominated the regional livestock industry. The Babbitts sold 11,000 wethers, ewes and lambs for \$1.35-2.57/head in 1897, to liquidate mortgages they had on sheep owners (Akbarzadeh 1992:148). They controlled a local livery stable, slaughter house, ice plant (which supplied their grocery stores, meat packing plant and funeral parlour), financing firms and warehouses, and retail department stores (Akbarzadeh 1992:507). Thus they became both the clearing house and shipping point for other merchants and traders in the region.

Babbitt Brothers and other companies participated in transactions reminiscent of triangular trade. For example, they encouraged their suppliers to patronize Arizona Lumber and Timber, another Flagstaff corporation, and vice versa. Economic sanctions were taken against metropolitan suppliers who failed to comply (Akbarzadeh 1992:341). Many inquiries from all over the United States sought information about Indian artifacts. When AL &T received these letters, they forwarded them to the Babbitt Brothers, and told people that the Babbitts "carried the largest stock of Navajo and Hopi wares in the southwest and could easily furnish their exact requirements." Likewise, if the Babbitts did not have a particular kind of lumber in stock, they referred the business to AL&T. This *quid pro quo* arrangement resulted in Babbitts making their purchases from metropolitan companies conditional on that supplier's patronizing local industry (Akbarzadeh 1992:343). Although these Flagstaff-based firms operated closely for mutual business benefit, they wasted no time in complaining if price gouging was suspected.

Protecting Profits

By 1891, the Flagstaff Board of Trade was in operation and promoting tourism to northern Arizona and the Grand Canyon. Local firms advertised nationally and sought to entertain eastern capitalists (Akbarzadeh 1992:239). Leading merchants in the region devised

protective measures to retain their prominence. In 1892, the Babbitts and other local merchants organized a subscriber branch of the Merchant's Mercantile Association of Chicago. A fine was imposed on members who granted credit to individuals or companies who did not honourably adjust indebtedness to all other subscribers. This national agency checked on "dead beats" (Akbarzadeh 1992:237-8). The R. G. Dun and Company (predecessor to Dun and Bradstreet), collected financial information on businesses throughout the country to aid in the propriety of giving credit. Dun had branch offices in 150 cities and in 1896, their records estimated the Babbitts surplus at \$250,000. Two years later their assets stood at \$449,442 (Akbarzadeh 1992:268).

Profitable Politics

To further protect their investments and strengthen their economic base, the Babbitts became heavily involved in local and regional politics and events (Akbarzadeh 1992:370). During different periods, the brothers served the community in various capacities: as probate judges, treasurer of the county, superintendent of schools, assistant district attorney, and local United States court commissioner (Akbarzadeh 1992:218). Brother David served as town councilman and mayor several times. The brothers became the largest taxpayers in Northern Arizona, and formed the largest livestock loan company in the southwest in 1926. They co-owned the First National Bank of Flagstaff with the Riordans and owned the "Northern Arizona Leader", the first Flagstaff daily from 1916-20, with the largest circulation of any local or regional paper. It closed down after George Babbitt died unexpectedly. The local newspaper, the Coconino "Sun" promoted the brothers as the leading retail and wholesale merchants of the southwest, and christened them the "Napoleons of Finance." When the territory of Arizona was slated for statehood in 1912, a joke circulated that "the region was bound on the west by California, on the south by Mexico, on the east by New Mexico, and on the north by the Babbitt Brothers" (Akbarzadeh 1992:260). At the height of their empire before the post-World War I recession, they owned about 40 livestock outfits with 157,000

cattle and sheep on 3.5 million acres of land, a dozen mercantile houses and auto dealerships, more than 10 trading posts, a cotton mill, ice plant, packing house, lumber yards, and investments in California (ranching and oil), Kansas, Colorado, Montana and Texas) and numerous other ventures. The firm's net worth rose from \$3 to \$5 million between the years 1915-1917. They sold a record-setting \$1.5 million worth of beef in 1915 (Smith 1989).

Diversification and Debt

By 1921, the family was doing \$5 million worth of business a year. With a capital stock of \$25 million divided into 250,000 shares, it was the largest family-owned corporation of its kind in the entire southwest. By 1922, cattle and sheep markets were collapsing. As the national economy became more sluggish, the post-war recession and several years of drought brought hard times. Unlike Gross-Kelly and Ilfeld, the Babbitts had been accustomed to putting every dollar back into their extensive operations; they had scarce cash reserves. "Their tendency for over-expansion had outgrown their power to coherently implement policies in management, supervision and expenditures" (Akbarzadeh 1992:497). Unbeknownst to the general population, the empire went into receivership, and the banks dealt ruthlessly with the Babbitts. Had the truth been revealed in the newspapers, the entire economy of northern Arizona might have collapsed. By 1924, the Babbitts received government aid in bailing out their flagging empire (Akbarzadeh 1992:467-8). After hoof and mouth disease affected their cattle in California, they received additional aid and were reimbursed 70% of the value of their destroyed stock. In building their empire, they profited from the scarcity of capital and goods and abundance of labor and land on the frontier. Their grip on the economy of the northern Arizona region was so complete, that when one of their old houses became the offices of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks (B.P.O.E.), some locals read the acronym as: "Babbitt People Own Everything."

Domestic Wool Production

In 1910, Chester Wright published Wool Growing and the Tariff: a Study in the

Economic History of the United States (Harvard Economic Studies), for which he received the Wells Prize. This text demonstrates how price fluctuations in the international wool market affected the cash valuation of Navajo wool. To protect their interests, traders encouraged women to weave wool into blankets, as textiles were seen an alternative means to market a renewable resource subject to volatile price fluctuations. The section that follows highlights the most important information concerning domestic wool production, the wool tariff and the international wool market, and how fluctuations in that market affected all wool growers and buyers, including Reservation traders. This text has not been utilized by authors of the two recent treatises on the Navajo economy (Bailey and Bailey 1986; Weiss 1984).

The Wool Market

Prior to the Civil War, wool from the far west had little effect upon the eastern markets, but this region was the only part of the country that offered any promise for the future of the wool industry. Most sheep in the far west were in New Mexico and California. The original flocks were kept mainly for excellent mutton rather than wool which was very coarse. Before 1845, little wool was carried on the Santa Fe trail. Raising sheep primarily for wool did not begin until around 1852, after the California gold rush. The California clip alone rose from 360,000 pounds in 1855 to eight million pounds in 1864.

Wright (1910:273) claims that the transfer of the main seat of the industry to the far West was the dominating factor in the history of wool-growing from 1870-1890. It was the final step of the general westward movement: "the process of opening and settling the West had been the most important factor in the country's history during the 19th century" (Wright 1910:274). The last decade of the 19th century was a period of transition marking the close of one era and the opening of a new one. This period also marks the increasing control by traders over Navajo livelihood (Bailey and Bailey 1986, Weiss 1984).

The penetration of the railroads changed wool marketing practises. Stock raising in the West was different than in other parts of America, as it was a range industry divorced

from general farming. In 1871 (Wright 1910:252) there were nearly seven million sheep in the far west, and by 1885, numbers had reached 26 million animals. The far west was well adapted to sheep raising. Because of vast arid regions and type of vegetation, sheep raising did not meet competition from dairy farming and crops to any great extent. It was five times cheaper to keep a sheep on arid western range land than back east, as the range was "free." In California, droughts occurred during 1863-1864, 1871 and 1877, and growers sustained losses in the millions of dollars. In addition, fencing, land enclosure, competition from ranching and increased farming including orchards--all took their toll on wool growers (Wright 1910:255). Owners drove large numbers of sheep to New Mexico.

New Mexico was one of the oldest sheep regions in the country, as sheep had been brought by early Spanish settlers. But it was not until after 1860 that this region exercised any influence upon the sheep industry or the wool market. The Civil War stimulated great demand for wool. Because of the extra needs of the army, and scarcity of cotton, wool rose to \$1 a pound! (Wright 1910:206). By 1867, the annual clip from New Mexico, Oregon and California equalled over 11 million pounds (Wright 1910:187). High prices were relatively short lived as cotton again became available, and the world's supply of wool increased at an unprecedented rate. The Franco-Prussian war (1870-71) greatly augmented the demand for wool. Prices rose, with the average price of three grades of washed Ohio wool running 71 cents per pound. Eight years later wool had dropped to 56 cents per pound.

By the mid-1880s, commission houses showed a lack of enthusiasm for contracting wool at any price. Sometimes merchants such as Ilfeld had difficulty disposing of their wool except on consignment to eastern buyers. In other words, wool futures became a gamble, and it was buyer beware: buy low and hope to sell at a profit. Parish (1961:137) notes how the small wool grower of this period was in a "somewhat helpless situation." Once he sheared his animals the wool had to come to market because he had no satisfactory means of storage. In the slow market that existed in most of the years from 1884 to 1897, his opportunity for

bargaining was lessened and his logical place of delivery was to the merchant to whom he was indebted. ...his problem went beyond the local and the national level..it was international as well. To complicate matters, the lack of large textile manufacturers in the west meant growers had to ship their clips to eastern mills.

Partido

Due to this trade slump, merchant capitalists such as Ilfeld were forced to assume the additional role of sheep husbandmen. The Partido contract was an agreement for the raising of sheep and the production of wool, akin to the share-cropping system of the south. This system was seen as "a sound method of refinancing or funding debt of customers whose account balances with Ilfeld [and other merchants] were growing unduly, or were not being reduced." Ilfeld became more involved in partido contracting; his holdings peaked at 33,000 in 1897 (Parish 1961:154). The size of his partido holdings are indeed impressive: the average number of sheep per partido ranged from 799 to 1,021 between 1896 and 1912 (Parish 1961:155). Between 1898 and 1902, Ilfeld handled about one million pounds of wool annually, that increased to nearly 1.7 million pounds in 1903 (Parish 1961:147).

This demonstrates that even large off-Reservation growers became indebted to merchant capitalists and had to surrender absolute ownership of their herds in order to survive economically. This is important because it highlights the tenuous nature of entrepreneurial activities of all types in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Thus many petty capitalists began to realize that "they who produced with their hands were under the control of those who sold by their wits" (Parish 1961:45). These latter years were a sobering contrast compared to the period from 1860-1880 when "everything was coming up roses" for ranchers, wool growers and earlier entrepreneurs. The value of the animals held for Ilfeld fluctuated between \$41,000 to \$70,727 between 1896 and 1912. And the average book value per head ranged between \$1.26 each (in 1896) to \$2.25 per head in 1912.

Table 10 in Parish (1961:156) contains information related to the value of Ilfeld's

wool (both partido) and open wool between 1894 to 1904. The rate of return to Ilfeld averaged from 5.3% to 15.8% in the years from 1894 to 1904, which compares to the 12% simple interest that was charged to delinquent accounts. This it is not a bad return, taking into consideration that these partidos were still customers of the company, and Ilfeld is making a more than reasonable profit on all goods sold to clients, as evidenced by the growth of his company over the years. This situation exemplifies how extension of credit to those already indebted served to closely bind the producer/herder to respective merchants. Such diversification demonstrates how Ilfeld "never made the mistake of permitting himself to be placed at the mercy of a single dominating risk" (Parish 1961:45).

The Wool Tariff

Although Western flocks greatly increased in size relative to the rest of the country, there was little change in the price of wool in the years between 1840-59 and 1872-89. In the latter period, wool market prices tended downward, due to the huge increase in the world's production. Fleeces became heavier due to improved breeding practises. High tariffs gave added encouragement to domestic growers, who sought to maximize economic returns on both mutton and wool (Wright 1910:271). President Grover Cleveland, a Democrat, was responsible for placing wool on the free list (no duty on imported wools). He served two terms, from 1885-89, and 1893-1897. But domestic wool met competition from other fibres, especially cotton.

The tariff of 1867 lasted until July 1883, and was very important as it became the model for all but one of the succeeding tariffs until 1912 (Wright 1910:213). These tariffs meant a great increase in the protection afforded domestic wool-growers. From 1868 to 1890, American woolgrowers not only held their own, but made substantial gains in their control over the domestic market (Wright 1910:225). American wools supplied a much larger proportion of domestic consumption than before the tariff. Prior to Civil war, all forms of wool imports were 100-150% over the domestic clip. After the Civil War, imports made up

only 75-84% of domestic clip. By 1890 the per capita consumption of American manufactures of wool was more than twice what it was in 1860 (Wright 1910:228).

The McKinley tariff of 1890 restored the duties of 1867 which had triggered the increase in flocks which peaked in 1884 (Wright 1910:280). It was hoped that this tariff would restore the prosperity of the earlier years, when imported wool had also been subjected to a high tariff. But in 1894, when the Democrats came to power and put wool on the free list, prices plummeted. In 1897 the Dingley tariff became law and the tariff held until 1912. The importation of Class I wool, which most closely resembled the domestic clip, increased by 3.5 times on average, and Class II wool quadrupled. Over 141 million pounds of wool were imported annually into the US when wool was on the free list (between 1894 and 1897). As wool buyers and partido contractors, merchant capitalists such as Ifeld, and Reservation traders fought the removal of the wool tariff. According to Parish (1961:144), most sheep and wool men were Republicans. Ifeld was an active member of the New Mexico Wool Growers Association which was founded to spark the tariff issue. In 1895, he requested via proxy that a six cent duty be placed on all classes of imported wool (Parish 1961:145).

Although domestic producers held a greater share of the United States market, the price of wool bottomed out in 1885 after the long decline following 1870, and this continued with little change until 1891 (Wright 1910:275). Prices plummeted further with the onset of the silver panic in 1893. During the period of free wool (1894-1897), prices were over one third lower than during the years 1885-90 when the new lower price level occurred. The tariff was reinstated in 1897, and prices gradually rose until 1905, when the average price per pound was the same as in 1890. After 1901, the general level of prices was from 17-25% below that maintained in the period from 1870-89, and still further below that for the years 1840-1859 (Wright 1910:276).

Wright (1910:312) notes that from 1890-1907, the industry failed to progress, even though the average domestic fleece now weighed nearly seven pounds. The entire industry

lost ground, chiefly because the general level of prices in the world's market was abnormally low. There was a rapid increase in the world's wool supply, with a falling off of its consumption, which was partly due to the removal of tariff on cotton. It appears that cotton prices dropped more than wool during the 1890s, thus the use of cotton not only increased, but made inroads in manufactured products formerly the province of wool (such as certain kinds of hosiery). Although Reservation traders railed against tariff removals, the real threat to Arizona wool growers and buyers was not foreign competition but domestic competition from another fibre - cotton. The industrial depression during the 1890s coincided with the removal of the wool tariff--further exacerbating the already depressed prices for domestic wool. Wright (1910:314) states: "the action...must have discouraged many flock owners who appear to have been engaged for years in a desperate and losing struggle with fate."

The industrial depression and trade slump affected wool, cattle and sheep markets. The prices of goods that merchants purchased, indicated by the general wholesale price index, fell from 100% in 1880 to 70% in 1896. The value of wool, which they sold, declined to less than 40%. In two critical periods, 1880 to 1888, and 1893 to 1896, the price of medium and coarse wool fell three, and then 2.5 times as much as wholesale prices of all goods. In dollar amounts the tremendous drop in prices due to changes in the international tariff, is illustrated in the following figures: non-Indian Arizona growers had received \$840,000 for their wool in 1892; the value of the total clip plummeted to \$280,000 the following year (Akbarzadeh 1992:155). Reservation traders experienced a similar decline in the value of the Navajo clip. The following section explores the asymmetric relationship that developed between herders and traders on the Navajo Reservation during a period in which the local drought-prone climate, and the international economic climate altered the relative autonomy achieved by the Navajo after the formation of the Reservation.

Reservation Trade

Several major studies exist which examine the development of trading posts on the

Navajo Reservation after Bosque Redondo. The information that follows was culled from these and other sources. McNitt (1962), ethnohistorians Bailey and Bailey (1986), and anthropologist William Adams (1963) published texts that have become classics on the subject. The Federal Trade Commission investigated trader abuses during a series of hearings in 1972 (USFTC 1973). Larry Weiss (1984) analyzed the development of capitalism on the Reservation. Thus he incorporates much useful information on the subsequent expansion of the trading system.

The earliest and most comprehensive study of southwestern traders, and trading in general, was published by archaeologist Frank McNitt in 1962. The author draws upon numerous sources, including archival collections, interviews, correspondence, books, articles, pamphlets, reports, diaries, and government documents. He provides a backdrop of early trading history beginning with the Spaniards, followed by the appearance of mercantile houses, sutlers, and Anglo traders. McNitt profiles several traders' influences upon the development of Navajo weaving, which will be discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

Information in Chapter Two revealed how inter-tribal trading relations were severed when the Navajo were exiled to Bosque Redondo, and described their partial realignment during the ten year treaty period which followed. According to White and Cronin (1983:425), sheep alone stood between the Navajo and famine after the creation of the Reservation, thus herding became the primary means of subsistence for the Navajo. Limited water resources on the Reservation prevented the Navajo from engaging in extensive farming (Bailey and Bailey 1986:140; Kelley and Francis 1994). Recall that the land that comprised the Reservation was approximately 25% of their previous "territory." The Navajo became somewhat dependent upon rations distributed annually by the government. They resumed hunting again to allow their herds time to rejuvenate. The annuities ended in 1879, thus the Navajo no longer received any monies or provisions from the United States government. With the exception of animals owned by the Navajo, the territory lagged behind in

commercial sheep herding as frequent Indian raids had made it a hazardous undertaking until after 1865. Arizona was the last of the western regions to open up to commercial sheep herding. It was an ideal time for traders to become involved in marketing products produced by people recently confined to a Reservation. Arizona was prime territory for an activity that had brought large fortunes to several generations of southwest residents. The Navajo had already demonstrated their past success as herders. Because the formation of Reservation had curtailed the size of their former land base, the Navajo had lost access to both prime grazing lands and watering holes. Commercial ranchers increased the size of their herds adjacent to Reservation boundaries, thus benefitting from their loss.

Terms of Trade

Trading posts created more frequent contacts between Navajo and Anglos than any other institutions. They predated other Anglo run agencies such as schools and hospitals (Adams 1968:134). By 1890 there were at least forty posts on or adjacent to the Navajo Reservation (Bailey and Bailey 1986; Weiss 1984:151). The government controlled the number, locations and licensing of posts on the Reservation. Off-reservation posts were unregulated. Due to government regulations, off-reservation buyers were unable to purchase wool directly from the Navajo. Traders had to sell wool through eastern brokers. In January 1898, more than two million pounds of Arizona wool sold in Boston (Akbarzadeh 1992:151). Much of this was Navajo wool. There is much discrepancy in government statistics, but Aberle (1966:32) states herds may have increased from 30,000 in 1869 to nearly one million by 1890. During the annuity period, Navajo received additional stock and they withheld butchering to increase their herds. By 1900, drought and storms reduced that estimated number by half (Bailey and Bailey 1986:124). Cattle never comprised more than 10% of Navajo stockholdings. The subsistence value of Navajo herds far outweighed market value until World War I (Bailey and Bailey 1986:136).

The sheep initially procured from the Spanish were churros, hardy range animals that

needed little care. Their wool was long, straight and nearly greaseless, ideal for spinning in an arid country (Underhill 1983:38). But churros were light weights in both fleece and meat, relative to other breeds. After 1904, Indian agents introduced new breeds, including the Rambouillet. Cross-breeding increased the weight of the animals and their fleeces, but it proved inimical to weavers, as the crimped, oily wool attracted dirt (Bailey and Bailey 1986:129; Weiss 1984:80). The Navajo also herded goats, primarily for milk and meat. When mohair became a popular fibre, they replaced the little Spanish milk goat with Angoras. Thus subsistence value was sacrificed to commercial value (Bailey and Bailey 1986:132).

Roberts (1987:xviii) describes an Indian trader as an individual who "exchanges manufactured goods with the Navajo for raw materials and crafts, usually on the latter's home ground." The term carries a connotation of a whole way of life and livelihood. Flour, coffee, sugar, and baking powder were the main staples, along with canned peaches and tomatoes. Tobacco, flannel, velveteen and calico and trade blankets were bartered in large quantities (McNitt 1962:78). [See Tables 3.2 and 3.3 for cost of consumer goods and foodstuffs].

Reservation posts were generally constructed of stone, wood or adobe, with a corrugated roof. Windows were often protected by iron bars. Interiors were similar: the "bull-pen" usually had an iron stove and woodbox, and high, wide wooden counters which discouraged shoplifting from shelves that lined the walls. Doors were often double locked or equipped with stout drop bars (McNitt 1962:73, Schmedding 1954:327). Traders owned their own buildings, but they rarely owned the land. Some posts had a guest hogan on the grounds to accommodate Navajo families who travelled long distances to trade (McNitt 1962:78). Few Navajo owned trading posts on the Reservation, as business decisions ran counter to community values. An Anglo trader could refuse credit to a Navajo, but his Navajo counterpart could not (Roberts 1987:120).

Initially no cash changed hands, as it was always in short supply. Exchange via barter predominated, and due to the instability of the population, it was impossible to extend credit. According to information supplied by an elderly Navajo, Walter Dyk, his cohorts were not dependent upon traders during the early Reservation years. The transformation from a barter to a commodity credit economy began around 1885, within a few years of the cancellation of annuities. The first traders sought quick riches in the commodities market, especially in wool [See Table 3.1]. As these opportunities diminished due to reasons described above (cf. tariff removals and downward trend in wool prices), they were forced to settle for long-range profit. Adams (1963:279) quotes a trader who had been in the business forty years:

in the old days the Government minded its own business and left traders alone. As long as wool prices held, all you had to do to make a profit was to open the doors... it was not necessary to keep any books.

Traders sought to retain and protect their consumer market. To discourage mobility traders performed many ancillary functions (translator, postmaster, recruiter for railroad work and claims agent, etc.), otherwise their clients might have traded elsewhere. Posts were generally open long hours six days a week. Territorial monopoly rather than price collusion tended to minimize competition (Adams 1963:169). Posts were generally 25-70 miles apart. Due to high freight rates coupled with low volume purchasing, prices at trading posts continued to be higher than off-Reservation retail outlets. Yet the per capita income on the Reservation has remained at approximately 20% of the national average for decades. Even today many Navajo lack dependable transportation; they must rely on the post closest to their residence.

Since the beginning of the Reservation period, the Navajo economy has become integrated into the national market via wool production, weaving, lamb production and wamework. Traders have selectively promoted new subsistence activities to their benefit, to perpetuate the seasonal, uncaptialized cycle with its dependence upon post credit (Adams 1963:293). Adams posed as a trader in the 1950s during his fieldwork for his doctorate in Anthropology. According to Adams (1963:283-4), from the traders' perspective, the

American ideal is to promote material welfare without disturbing moral and spiritual values. Traders see themselves as best equipped to "bridge the gap" between the Anglo and Navajo worlds. They allege that it is "better to be a good Navajo than a poor White man. The following section describes the different forms of credit that developed via trading, which initiated the economic subordination of the Navajo.

Credit and Credit Saturation

"What is the use of having so much if nothing can be given away?" ..comment made by elderly Navajo, cited in Utley (1959:14).

Adams (1963) provides the most detailed explanation of the different forms of credit extended to the Navajo by Reservation traders. Although he worked as a Reservation trader during the 1950s (rather "late" in trading history), his descriptions tend to comply with information culled from earlier traders' memoirs and record books (Hubbell 1883-1964; Richardson 1986; Roberts 1987; Schmedding 1954). As will be seen, the development of credit and pawn practices fostered a bondage-like dependence of the producers on the traders. Lax enforcement of government regulations concerning inimical trading practices resulted in traders having de facto monopoly control over the Navajo, especially since the historical and regional indigenous markets were severed or curtailed (Weiss 1984:152).

Direct, across-the-counter exchange of consumer goods for commodities was initially the backbone of the Navajo trade. Although the commodity trade is referred to as barter in many publications, there is no haggling over prices. Traders acquired all items by quality or quantity according to fixed, pre-announced unit prices. In addition, all exchanges are based on cash valuation, and not on valuation in equivalent goods. Such a policy allows for free price adjustments, (which was much to the trader's benefit) (Adams 1963:199). Although it was legally impossible for an Indian trader to demand payment of old debts, traders had ways of "settling" accounts (Adams 1963; Faunce 1928; Hegemann 1963; Hubbell Papers; McNitt 1962; Schmedding 1954).

"worked" for the United States postal service (USFTC 1973:40). Some Reservation traders have been charged with mail tampering (USFTC 1972:14). Adams (1963:304) notes that his study is an example of how the introduction of a cash economy and credit saturation have curtailed economic freedom for the consumer. He comments on how such practices have also been noted in Canada, Puerto Rico, Africa and Oceania.

Seco or "Chips"

McNitt (1962:9) notes that during the 18th century, next to officials of the provincial government in Santa Fe, traders were the most affluent group in the northern regions of New Spain. Because cash was in such short supply in the region for generations, traders:

invented a system of imaginary currency, including four kinds of dollars ... the beauty of this system was that the traders always bought for the cheap pesos and sold for the dearer kinds, all being 'dollars' to the Indians...a trader by two or three barbers in a year often getting \$64 for a piece of cloth which cost him six.

Indians distrusted paper money, so most traders substituted "seco," tin money in various denominations stamped with the post's name on the back (McNitt 1962:84). In earlier years, traders had issued "due bills", or credit slips. If the customer lost the due bill, the trader could deny its existence (USFTC 1973:21). Traders turned to using seco as some Navajo learned how to counterfeit "due bills" (Adams 1963:152). Although Indian agents discouraged the practice, traders issued seco to Navajo who had credit balances. If Navajo had credit balances at all, it was for very short periods during wool or (after 1920) lamb seasons. By issuing seco, traders ensured their customers would return to trade with them in the future, rather than trading at a competitor's post. Acquiring seco benefited Navajo who did not wish to trade out their credit all at one time. Posts only extended credit in the form of merchandise, and only "paid" for articles produced by the Navajo with merchandise (Adams 1963:108).

Pawn

Another practice generally discouraged by the Indian office, and subject to abuse was

However, due to the seasonal nature of Navajo subsistence, for example, their dependence on the annual spring wool clip, it became necessary for traders to extend credit. The following information describes the different types of trade and credit (from Adams 1963:186): 1) Cash sales: very rare, low percentage of such sales as cash was always in short supply; 2) "book" (unsecured) credit granted against future wool clips, livestock and (in earlier years) textiles; in more recent years, also against future wages, unemployment or relief checks; 3) pawn (secured credit); and 4) direct commodity exchange (for crafts, pelts, skins, and pinon nuts).

Any monies received by check were subject to "credit saturation" described as follows. The few Navajo who held waged jobs off-Reservation, sent their paychecks to the post to pay down accounts. As the trader was usually the postmaster, and had acted as labour recruiter, he was well aware of paycheck amounts, and allowed or even encouraged family members to spend most of the anticipated income before it was received. This practice was perpetuated when welfare and social security became available to Reservation residents. In this way, very little cash circulated in the region, preventing residents from trading elsewhere (Adams 1963:186-192). Thus "credit saturation" allowed the capture and retention of the consumer market. According to Adams (1963:280-1), many traders discouraged off-Reservation farm labour as entire families could be absent from the region for months. Whereas with railroad work, only male breadwinners worked seasonally and had their paychecks sent to the posts. Thus the Navajo consumer was in a continual state of "economic indenture.... tied to the post in a treadmill of payments and future extension of credit" (USFTC 1973:16). The threat of withholding future credit acts as an effective sanction against default. The Navajo live on credit so much that the trader is, in effect, budget director and finance manager for his "community" (Adams 1963:191).

Although Bureau of Indian Affairs regulations prohibited government employees from having an interest in trading with the Indians, many traders were also postmasters; thus they

the widespread practice of accepting pawn as a secured form of temporary credit for an individual Navajo. The pawn system developed during the 1880s (Bailey and Bailey 1986:54; Hubbell Papers). According to McNitt (1962:55), pawning originated from the shortage of money and the Navajo skill in making jewellery. Because jewellery was the valuable most frequently pawned, it extended its function from adornment to savings. Pawn was usually held for a minimum of six months, at 10% interest per month (Hubbell Papers; Roberts 1987:181). Generally credit was allowed up to 25% of the value of the pawned goods. If too much credit was allowed, it made it difficult for the owner to redeem it. Pawn credit, like book credit, requires intimate knowledge of both the individual and his past record (Adams 1963:196-7).

Most sources on the subject acknowledge that it was impossible to carry on trading without handling pawns (Adams 1963; Hubbell Papers; McNitt 1962; Richardson 1986; Roberts 1987; Schmedding 1954). When wool and stock sales occurred, traders try and "clear" pawn accounts, by posting notices that all pawn must be taken out. When Navajo brought in their wool or lambs during buying season, they had to redeem their pawn before receiving credit. Sometimes the redeemed goods were immediately repawned, even after the owner had just "sold" all of his/her wool (Schmedding 1954:327).

Elizabeth Hegemann (1963:271), who with her husband, traded at Shonto after 1929, remarks:

..everything was barter trade at the outlying posts, a trader automatically took heed of what a Navvy wore or carried on himself or on his horse. A Navvy wearing a new shirt or hat that the trader had not sold him meant that [he] had ridden over to another post to trade. If he did not owe anything, all right let him go, but if he had heavy pawn in, this was a warning signal not to be ignored. He had probably sold some wool or a rug or pawned a piece of jewelry at a competitor's post where he did not owe anything.

Trader abuse of pawn was criticized for decades prior to the imposition of stricter government regulations (USFTC 1973:22). Because pawn was always valued at much less than its true worth, an unscrupulous trader could sell it at considerable gain. The market

value as agreed upon by trader and owner was to be marked on the pawn ticket. Often it was left blank, showing only the amount borrowed. If the item was lost, misplaced or stolen, the owner was out of luck, as the trader was responsible only for the amount displayed on the ticket. If the owner lost the ticket, s/he had no proof of the transaction. If the owner needed cash, outrageous interest rates were often charged for such a request (USFTC 1972:22). Curiously, several sources refer to pawned items as a form of "bank account" (Roberts 1987). A rather strange type of account, as, instead of earning interest, the owner was liable for interest charges of up to 120% per year.

Government Regulations and Trading

New and more stringent regulations on stock purchases and trading practices were mandated during 1914, and traders were threatened with revocation of their licenses if they did not comply. Box 100 of the Hubbell Papers contains a revealing five page letter dated February 8, 1915, from Harry Wetzel, trader at the Hubbells' Cornfields Post. [See Appendix I for information on Lorenzo Hubbell.] Portions of this letter are worth quoting, as methods influencing trading practices are revealed. Wetzel begins by noting he convinced the trader at the neighbouring Sunrise Post to raise and hold prices on low and high grade flour in 25 and 50 pound bags. Then he suggests that Hubbell invoice everything to him wholesale, and he will:

make you more money than has ever been made here before. ..you have to first make it worth his while to trade with you -- the chance will eventually come to soak him...as far as credit is concerned I have cut it out, but they haven't stopped trading here as you predicted...a lot of my accounts are protected with pawn--good pawn..average percent...about 66% profit, this includes cost-5% and freight...there are very few men who can handle the whole job with success [bookkeeping plus trading]..come up against the hardest kind of competition possible and have had a bunch of Indians to contend with that were educated to all the twists and turns of the trading game before I was born. ...During the time the permits allowed me to buy sheep I bought 1726 head and they cost me \$3664.20. The total cash received from Ganado to buy sheep with was \$640.00 Total amount of cash I turned in to Ganado during this time was \$529.30. So you can see that most of the sheep I bought was in trade.

Wetzel's trading practices are clearly in violation of government policy. Since 1904, licensed traders were to pay Indians cash for all products, not cash and trade. Otherwise their licences were subject to revocation. Traders were reminded of this regulation in letters from Peter Paquette (7/07/1910 Box 43) and by Superintendent Leo Crane on March 31, 1916. In the latter correspondence, Crane requested that traders help "stamp out the use of tin money" (Box 44 HP). Lorenzo Hubbell (Box 101#1) had written a letter to Cato Sells, Commissioner of Indian Affairs the previous month that revealed his trading practices:

The great trouble is that men on this res will agree to pay cash for all I.[Indian] products and then surreptitiously use means to practically force the I. to take out the amt. pd for this product sold in trade. I am going to be very frank with and tell you exactly the way I have been doing business with these I. for forty years. ..whatever price they may be quoted in the mkt, cash can be realized for them. I pay cash..wool, pelts, cattle, sheep. The following I pay cash when they ask for it..adhere strictly to it. The traders off the res. do not pay cash, have no freight to pay on same..there is not an I trader now on this reser. that came here when I did...pay cash when asked for blankets and baskets, but is seldom asked for. I carry the I. on my books for large amts as they are stockmen...they require money and provisions to carry them thru from Nov. to shearing time in May. My custom has been that instead of an itemized acct, as they buy the goods, I hand them trade checks to the amt. of goods that they desire and they use them the same as cash either at Ganado or keep them for future use. ...we all work to keep the I sober and industrious, and store I. that I come in contact with are the most prosperous and progressive (2/12/16).

Both of these letters reveal a glimpse of the true nature of trade on the Reservation. Although traders were to pay cash to any Navajo who requested it, the exigencies of trading on the Reservation precluded much cash changing hands. Cash was always in short supply and evidence abounds in inter- and intra-post correspondence, and letters from various wholesalers such as the Babbitts and Cotton. When cash was available, it was utilized to pay down wholesalers' accounts. As Hubbell admits, it was seldom given to the Navajo, instead trade checks (or seco) were utilized. It is important to keep in mind that the dollar "income" figures incorporated throughout the text must not be mistaken for cash payments.

Superintendent Daniel sent a sharply worded letter dated May 10, 1920, concerning the price of wool (Box 44). He quoted Boston prices, and informed the Hubbells that under

no circumstances were traders to allow wholesalers such as Cotton to dictate the value of wool. Daniel quoted a letter from Cotton which stated he would pay 20 cents for white wool, and 15 cents for black. Whereas three classes of wool on the Boston market were valued between 23 to 60 cents per pound. He wrote:

We are trying to help the trader as well as the Indian and under no circumstances do we propose to allow the wholesale merchant or speculator to dictate wool prices on this reservation. That means that your first obligation is to yourself and the Government by whose permission you are permitted to trade upon the reservation.

Periodically the Hubbells received letters from the government concerning collections of Indian accounts. Edgar Miller, Superintendent at Keams Canyon wrote "Friend Lorenzo:"

I am attaching two copies of the balance owed the Government on wagons, wire and stock...[I] do not ask you to make any collections, but you have devious ways and methods of assisting us in helping the Indians to realize that these balances should be paid... I am using every endeavor to give the Indians all the freighting ... that I can possible give them in order to help them pay their debts and become self-supporting. .. Surely the Government should spend every cent it can among these Indians for they badly need it. (Box 44, 11/23/23)

Miller's three page list contained eighty names of Navajo and Hopi who owed the government a total of \$2631.53, with balances between \$1.70 to \$145.00. Some of these accounts dated back to 1915.

As Adams (1963) indicates, for more than a century, traders on the Navajo Reservation have exerted a profound psychological and social influence over their customers; an influence that transcends their economic importance. Traders represent dominant Anglo society. After receiving complaints for decades concerning inimical trading practices, the Federal Trade Commission held hearings to investigate abuses. According to FTC hearings (1973:15 and 49), traders' monopoly rests upon ignorance and poverty. As recently as 1972, many Navajo were still pre-literate and unsophisticated in commercial transactions. More than 50% of Navajo adults over the age of twenty-five did not read or write English, and a third could not speak it. Examination of bookkeeping procedures at selected posts revealed numerous opportunities for abuse and concealment through lack of prescribed standards

(USFTC 1973:41). Traders' long-term sustained profit was ensured by perpetuating Navajo dependence. In more recent years, post owners actively discouraged mobility of their clientele (who could shop for less in off-Reservation border towns), by criticizing truck ownership as too expensive, too burdensome and by always demanding cash for gasoline. Adams (1963:273) relates that at the Shonto post, the trader removed mail order catalogues listing cheaper prices, and he refused to play the Navajo radio station which featured advertisements of (cheaper) goods in town.

Until the 1960s, the modern Navajo market economy was underwritten by wholesale houses such as Ilfelds, Gross, Kelly and Company, and the Babbitts who carried traders on long term credit. Interest rates on such credit are high, and these costs along with high freight rates, were passed onto Navajo consumers. Since the 1960s, wool, lambs and skins are no longer taken in trade by the wholesale houses to pay down post accounts (Adams 1962:167).

Diversification Denied

The Navajo were disadvantaged in many ways. As small growers living in remote regions, they lacked bargaining power. The fleeces from their herds were unimproved, and shearing practices were quite crude. The federal government banned outside wool and lamb buyers from coming onto the Reservation, therefore traders enjoyed a monopoly (Weiss 1984). When utilized for commercial purposes, Navajo wool was most suitable for carpets, it was too coarse for clothing. However, weavers disliked the wool from the "improved" breeds, as it was more difficult to spin.

Information provided in this chapter demonstrates how it was impossible for the Navajo to "diversify"... they were caught in an economic web spun by entrepreneurs, and as the most populous primary producers in a vast region, they suffered the brunt of American capitalism. To make matters worse, because they were so dependent on their flocks for their main staple, mutton, the Navajo were unable to sell a maximum number of animals to traders

as off-Reservation sheep growers could. The government prohibited certain classes of Navajo stock from being sold even to traders, because it was the primary food for the people. Had the Navajo seriously depleted their flocks, the government would have to provide foodstuffs. Periodically droughts, floods, blizzards or disease took their toll on Navajo herds. Reservation traders were not heavily involved in buying sheep until shortly before World War I (Box 349 and Kelley and Whiteley 1989). By the 1920s many Navajo were providing lambs for the market in addition to providing for their own subsistence.

Because of price fluctuations in the volatile wool market, it was difficult for traders to depend upon "making a killing on the wool market." Traders had to maximize profits by another means if they were to survive the competitive economic climate that dominated southwest trade after 1890. Recall that wool was placed on the free list from 1894-1897, during the Industrial Depression. This coincides with the period in which the number of trading posts was increasing on the Reservation, and traders were acquiring as much Navajo wool as possible. Thus the product that most traders hoped would provide them with greatest profits was continually at the mercy of the international markets, which fluctuated for the reasons previously stated. Several authors of texts on the Navajo (with the exception of Weiss), state that the Navajo were on the verge of economic recovery around 1900 (Johnston 1966, Utley 1961). One of the primary reasons it failed to materialize was because of the low price for wool. One way traders could maximize financial return was through an alternate way to market wool--one which meant little extra effort for them, but placed an enormous burden on Navajo women.

Extant literature informs us that "traders saved weavers"... by developing markets for their production in the east. In the history of Navajo trade, most if not all well-known traders whose names are household words to aficionados of western history, and Navajo textile lovers, acquired their fame because of their association with the Navajo blanket. Meanwhile, the names of a handful of weavers have come down to us in history (James

1914, J.B. Moore catalogue and Reichard 19334, 1936, 1939). Both archival research utilizing Lorenzo Hubbell's business records, and reassessment of relevant literature reveals that traders pressured weavers to produce to keep their profits higher. Thus it appears that a more insidious reason for their lack of economic recovery concerns the likelihood that the price of weaving was actually pegged to the price of wool. Returns to weavers never increased substantially except for an extremely brief period just after World War I when wool prices peaked along with prices for other basic goods [Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3]. Analysis of Lorenzo Hubbell's business records revealed that after 1897, his blanket profits were far higher than his wool profits [Table 5.1 and Fig. 5.6].

In his text on the wool tariff, Wright (1910:348-89) has incorporated a table that shows the prices of washed Ohio fleeces (clean raw wool), from 1855-1907. For many of the years between 1883 (Hubbell's earliest records) and 1907, the value in kind received by a Navajo weaver for her hand-spun, hand-woven saddle blanket is pound for pound, almost identical to the value of washed Ohio fleeces. Chapters Four and Five will illuminate the devastating consequences of this strategy for Navajo weavers and their families. Situating Hubbell and his business contemporaries within the economic history of the southwest which incorporates price oscillations of the international wool market, illuminates an important problem that has not been investigated to date in this manner. The following chapter incorporates a review of circulating discourses associated with traders, weavers and textiles.

**TABLE 3.1
ANNUAL WHOLESALE AVERAGES (\$), PRIMARY NAVAJO PRODUCTS**

Year	WOOL		SHEEP		BLANKETS			HIDES	
	Navajo White	National Average	National Average	Navajo	Saddle	Bed & Common	Rugs	#1 Sheep Pelts	#1 Goat Skins
1884	.085				.20-.30	.37		.04	
1885	.085	.145	2.19						
1886	.08	.163	1.95		.20-.30	.37			
1887	.08	.18	2.05		.35				
1888		.171	2.06			.40		.07	
1889		.18	2.14		.30	.35			
1890	.12	.171	2.29		.30	.35		.09	.17-.28
1891	.10-.13	.163	2.51		.30	.35		.09	.25-.28
1892	.08	.163	2.60		.30			.05-.09	.12
1893	.08-.12	.145	2.64		.30			.097	.25
1894	.07	.11	1.97		.25	.20-.24		.04	.18
1895	.095	.103	1.57		.25	.25-.30		.03	.20
1896	.055	.103	1.71	1.26	.25			.04	.21
1897	.087	.11	1.84	1.35-2.57	.25			.067	.29
1898	.07-.09	.137	2.51	2.35	.27			.08	.25
1899	.07	.145	2.80	2.25	.30			.08	.25
1900	.097	.137	2.97	2.33	.30	.30	.48	.09	.27
1901	.08	.137	2.96	2.00	.35-.40	.30-.50	.80-1.00	.06	.24
1902	.08	.137	2.62	1.75-2.15	.50	.50-.65	.65	.074	.31
1903	.12	.154	2.62	2.10	.45	.52-.65	.75	.087	.37
1904	.10-.12	.163	2.55	2.20	.35-.50	.41-.70		.08	.25

Year	WOOL		SHEEP		BLANKETS			HIDES	
	Navajo White	National Average	National Average	Navajo	Saddle	Common	Rugs	#1 Sheep Pelts	#1 Goat Skins
1905	.16	.222	2.77	2.25	.45		.70	.10-.13	.37
1906	.125	.231	3.51	2.25	.50	.65-1.10	1.09-1.53	.14-.17	.38
1907	.11	.205	3.81	2.25	.70-.80	.65-.90	.85-1.50		.25
1908		.163	3.87	2.25	.50-.65	.70	1.00	.10	.21-.26
1909	.10-.14	.222	3.42	2.25	.65-1.00	.75	.75-1.40	.12	.315
1910	.12	.217	4.06	2.25	.65-.75	> .75	.85-1.50		.25+
1911	.11	.158	3.83	2.25	.85	> .85	.85-1.25		.33
1912	.135	.173	3.42	2-2.25	.60-.75	.70-.90	.90-1.25	.12	.40
1913	.12	.167	3.87	2.25	.60-.75	.85-1.10	.85-1.50		
1914	.14-.17	.166	3.91	2.25	.60-.85	.80-1.25	.75	.08-.10	.40?
1915	.17-.19	.221	4.39	3.00	.50-.65	.65-1.00	1-1.25	.13	.27
1916	.18-.26	.261	5.10	3.00	.75-.85	.85-1.00	.85-2.00	.16-.22	.25-.49
1917	.43-.45	.416	7.06	> 5.40	.70-.85	1-1.50	1-1.75	.36?	.40
1918	.45	.577	11.76	3-4.55	.60-.80		1-1.25	.38	.58
1919	.175	.495	11.49	3-5.00	.75-.90	1.10-1.25	1.10-1.75	.38-.43	1-1.30
1920	.25-.29	.455	10.59	3-4.00L	.60-.75	1.00+	1-2.25	.25	.65
1921	.10	.173	6.34	4.62L	.75-1.25	1.50	1.50-2.00	.10	.25
1922	.20-.27	.271	4.79	2.50-6.00	> .50	1.40	1.15-1.25		
1923	.25-.35	.394	7.50	5.00		.90-1.25	1-2.00	.18-.21	.25-.41
1924	.28	.366	7.94	4-5.40L	.50-.90	.90-1.25	1-2.00	.18-.25	.28-.33
1925	.25-.29	.395	9.63	5.00L	.75-1.00	.90-1.25	1.00		.33
1926	.20-.25	.34	10.53	3.33-5.00	.65-1.00		1.40	.20-.26	.36-.40
1927	.25-.32	.303	9.79	5.25+L	.75			.20-.26	.45-.50

Year	WOOL		SHEEP		BLANKETS			HIDES	
	Navajo White	National Average	National Average	Navajo	Saddle	Common	Rugs	#1 Sheep Pelts	#1 Goat Skins
1928	.31-.37	.362	10.36	3.74-5.00					
1929	.33	.302	10.71	6.50	.80-1.50	1-1.33	1.50	.20	.25
1930		.195	9.00	2-2.50L	.70-.80				
1931	.11	.136	5.40	2-3.00	.40-.68	.50-.80	.50-1.25	.03-.05	.22-.31
1932	.08	.086	3.44	2-2.15	.50-.65				
1933	.15-.18	.206	2.91	1.75L	.30-.45	.60-.75	.75-1.00	.03	.14
1934	.11-.18	.219	3.77	1-2.00					
1935	.12-.17	.193	4.33	2.20-3.00	.85-1.00	>.79	>.79	.06	.12
1936	.22-.24	.269	6.35	4.00L	.65-.85			.15-.17	.25
1937	.28	.32	6.02	4.50-5.00L	.65-.85			.10-.20	.12-.35
1938	.10-.15	.191	6.13		.65-.75	>3.99	6.80each	.09-.12	.20-.23
1939	.16-.18	.223	5.74	3-4.50	.75-.90		>6.50	.12	.20
1940	.22?	.284	6.35	2.50-2.75	.75-.90	3x5@6-10	4x6@10-15	.10	.10

**TABLE 3.2
COST PER POUND OF FOODSTUFFS EXTRACTED FROM HUBBELL
TRADING POST INVENTORIES AND WHOLESALERS' INVOICES**

Year	Flour or Bread	Sugar	Coffee	Candy or Tobacco	Bacon or Lard	Dairy	Canned Fruit & Vegetables
1881	.06	.17	.25	.65 t	.21 b		
1883	.06	.25	.25	.50	.25 b		
1886-7	.05.5	.10 w	.30		.10 b		
1890-1	.03 w	.06 w		.45-.57 t	.12 b	.18 milk	
1894		.12					
1896			.14	.46			
1900	.04		.16			.15 m	
1901					.15 L		.20
1902					.13 b		.09 raisins
1903	.045	.08	.15 w	.40 chocolate	.20 b	.15 m	.15 tomato
1905-6	\$4/100#	.10		.20 c			
1907	.10 bread	.135	.20		.20 b		.25 pears
1908			.20	.25 peanuts	.16 b	.25 cheese	.15 tomato
1909	\$4/100#	.09	.30		.16 b		
1910	.04					.35 butter	.25 pears
1911		.07	.30				
1913	.05			.28 c w		.54 eggs	.14 t w
1914		.09				.20 b w	
1915	.04						

Year	Flour or Bread	Sugar	Coffee	Candy or Tobacco	Bacon or Lard	Dairy	Canned Fruit & Vegetables
1934	.05	.10	.25				.23
1935	.15 bx cereal	.10 w	.20 w	.15 pkg cig w	.25 crisco w	.25 milk w	.25 tom w
1936			.15 w		.30 corn beef	.25 cheez	
1937	.16 bx cereal		.15 w	.28 c w	.42 butter w	.32 eggs w	.30 dz lem
1938	.12 cracker w	.06 w	.20-.35	1.50 ctn cigs	.24 bacon w	.06 m w	.30 pears
		.15 cookies w		.08 pop w			.30 peach
1939	.08	.09	.65		.25 pork		
1941		.10	.40		.25 peanut bu		
1942					.13 corn beef	.41 butter	
1943	.23 oats w	.07 w	.40			.50 b	.14 tom w

w = wholesale

TABLE 3.3
COST OF CONSUMER GOODS AND STOCK SUPPLIES EXTRACTED FROM
HUBBELL TRADING POST INVENTORIES AND WHOLESALERS' INVOICES

Year	Wool Sacks Hay/Alfalfa	Yarn/# Tow cards	Trade Blkt Shawl/Robe	Shoes/ Boots	Fabric/yd. Calico Velveteen	Clothing Pants Shirts	Misc.
1881	.60 ws	.88	1.55 shawl	4.00 b	.08 c		
1883	.32 ws w		1.65-2.55 w		.75 v .10 c		
1886-7	.25-.50	.86	3.40-5.30 w		.07 c	1.20 p w	.75 overall w
1888-9		.78w	4.50-5.00 w		.07 c	1.13 coat	.63 vest
1890-1	.34 ws	.35 tow	4.00 w		.27 & .45 v	1.65 p	6.00 suit
1894	.32 w	.69 w	2.50 shawl w		.09 c .55 v		.60 indigo
1896		.85 & .93			.10 flannel	.48-1.00 p	1.25-2 quilts
1900	.30 ws	.95	1.20-4.50		.45 v		8.00 stove
1901	.35 ws	.91	3.25-4.25 robe		\$7/4yd bayet		
1902	.35	.86-.97 w		1.00 boys	1.25 "plush"	.75 shirts	.50 underwear
1903	1.42/81# hay			1.50 oversh.	.15 sateen	1.25 pants	.30 fry pan
1905-6	.37 ws	.78	4.50-5.25 w	\$17-30/ saddles	.10 c .43 v	4.50 vest & pants	2.50 sheep shears
1907	1.30/120# alfal		5.00-6.50	2.50 boys	.60 v w	2.50-3 pant	3.00 comforts
1908	.45 ws		7.00	2.25-5 mens		3.50-8.coat	.75-2.00gloves
1909		.50 tow	6.00 w		1.40 silk v	2.75 men s	
1910	.35 ws	.79	5.00-12.50	8.00 boots			125.00buggy
1911		.85	12.50	2.50 m w	1.00 v	1.90-2.35 p	20.00buckskn
1913		.10 pkg dy	3.00-9.00 w	3.00		15.overcoat	30.00 gun

Year	Wool Sacks Hay/Alfalfa	Yarn/# Tow cards	Trade Bikt Shawl/Robe	Shoes/ Boots	Fabric/yd. Calico Velveteen	Clothing Pants Shirts	Misc.
1914	.50 ws	.50 tow	5-10.00	7.00 boots	.75 v	1.50 s	4.00 quilt
1915		.81	3.75-6.25 w	3.50-5.00 w		.75 boys p	2-3.sweatr w
1916	.27 ws	.90-1.05 w	3.90-6.00 w	1.45-4.50	.06-.09 c	.36-1.25 s	.45/gal gas
1917	1.75 hay .60 ws w	.30 warp	4.50-8.50 w 12.50	6.25 boots 4.00 m s 6.00 boot w	.14 sateen .28-.45 v w	1.35-2.00 p 1.50 boys p	10.75 rifle 11.00 tent 2.00 hat w
1918	1.25 ws	1.40	3.50-13.00 w	5.00oxfords	1.50 plush	3.00 pants	2.00 sweater
1919	.75-1.25 ws	.73 tow	11-17.50	2.70 boys	.25 sateen	.75-1.65 shir	4.50 quilt
1920		1.50	6.60-16.50 w	7.50 boots 4.00boys w	.30 c 1.40 v	3-5.00 p w 1.50 s w	2.75 sheep shears
1921	1.50 ws		13.50 robe w	3-9.50shoes	1.00ea towel	5-6.50 coats	80.00saddle
1922	1.85 hay	1.00 w	13.50-15.00	.50 pr sox	.11 c w	1.25 shirt w	8-20.buckskn
1923	1.20 hay w	.90 tow	8.50-11.00 w	2.60 w s w	.12 c w	2.0flannel s	11.50 bed
1924	1.50 alfal	1.50 tow	14.00 shawl 13.00 robe	5.50 b w 2.50 s w	.17 sateen w	3.50 coat w 1.88 m p w	100-175.00/ wagon
1925	2.50 hay		3.25-12.00 w	20.00 boots	.62 v w		.30 fry pan
1926	1.50 alfal	1.50 tow	14-15.00	4.00 s	.62 v w		65.00saddle
1927	1.40 hay			2.45girl w	.27 c	4.men coat	>5.men hat

Year	Wool Sacks Hay/Alfalfa	Yarn/# Tow cards	Trade Bkt Shawl/Robe	Shoes/ Boots	Fabric/yd. Calico Velveteen	Clothing Pants Shirts	Misc.
1928	1.75 hay		10-11.00 w	1.85 child		3.50 pants	4.00comfort
1929	1.50 alfal		15-22.50	6.00 women		54-.70 s w	6.50 trunk
1930	1.00 alfal			2.50 w	.10-.14 glnh	2.25-3.00 p	3.71 bed bkt w
1931	1.28 alfal			2.50 oversh	.55 v w .13 s		9.leathr coat w
1932			5.00 lite s w	2. women w	.09 plaid w	.60overall w	.10 baby food
1933			14.45	2.93 men	1.50 plush	1.50 men p	3.00 hat w
1934			5-10.50 w	6.00 b w	.22 c w	.75-2.00 s w	
1935	1.25 alfal	1.50 tow	17.50	7.50 b	1.75plush w	2.00 men p	4-5.00 hats
1936	1.25 alfal		10-11.25 w		.50 v w	2.75 jackt w	
1937	.75 ws	2.33 tow	14-15.50 s	12-17.00 b	.20-.25 plaid	.96 jeans	
1938				1.75-4.00 w	1.00corduroy	6.00sweatr	
1941		1.35 tow	16-17.00				
1942					2.00plush	1.25 s	
1943	.84 ws w			1.60-2.50 w	.25 flannel	5.00dress p	1.25 shirt
				3.75 retail	.35 prints		5.00comfort

w = wholesale

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATING DISCOURSES ON TRADERS, WEAVERS AND TRADE BLANKETS

With weaving, these [favorable] circumstances are spare time and cheap wool. Traders long ago noticed that most of their rug purchases are made in the spring because most weaving is done during the long idle days of winter.. the Navajo woman weaves when she has nothing better to do, or when the family wool crop cannot be sold to better advantage in the raw.. wool in rug form brings a little more money. (Weiss 1984:105, quoting from Amsden)

..[weaving is] no business-like nine-to-five procedure, but a now-and-then method. She weaves between housekeeping and shepherding chores, and the preparations to weave are even more tedious, and arduous than is the actual work of weaving itself. (Weiss 1984:105)

..the more desperate people were, the more they brought in rugs to acquire goods. (Trader's wife quoted in Roberts 1987:128)

...Navajo women are hard workers....they work all the time...cooking, weaving, herding...all the time. (cf. Trader Coolidge 1930:37; James 1974[1914]; Reichard 1934, 1936, 1939; Underhill 1956)

...the trader is regulated, the Indian is not. Many persons have lost their eyeteeth in rug deals with the Navajo. Besides, you have no guaranty (sic), yet the trader would guarantee the rug. (admonition to "dudes" {tourists} from Government Indian Agent Leo Crane, 1925)

These quotes, or variations thereof, frequently occur in literature devoted to Navajo weaving. Most publications on the topic also focus upon technology, materials utilized, and "external" influences on the development of various regional rug styles. Extant texts continue to emphasize the traders' influences on designs, and neglect the importance of textile production to traders' profits (Amsden 1934; Blomberg 1988; Boles 1977, 1981; James 1988; Kent 1976, 1981, 1985; McNitt 1962; Rodee 1981, 1987; Underhill 1956, Wheat 1977, 1984).

In the prolific literature on Navajo textiles, a cluster of generalizations has emerged which form the foundation of the field. Based on data analyzed from government documents, and evidence extracted from archival sources, Chapters Four and Five will demonstrate "the more the Navajo wove, the poorer they became." This statement challenges the following generalizations that have dominated the literature on weaver/trader relations for decades:

1) Traders "saved" weaving by developing markets for it in the east (Amsden 1975:179; Dederer 1990:36; Kent 1985:85). 2) "Pound" blankets were a short-lived phenomenon at the end of the nineteenth century (Boyd 1979:20; Kent 1985:83; Rodee 1981:9). 3) Weavers benefitted "financially" by trading their own blankets for machine-made trade blankets (Amsden 1934; James 1914; Kapoun 1992:35; Kaufman and Selser 1985:73; Maxwell 1963:60; Weiss 1984:54; Wheat 1984:19). 4) Rug weaving always decreased when wool prices were high and increased when wool prices dropped (Amsden 1975:235; Bailey and Bailey 1986:152). 5) Traders greatest profits lay in wool (Adams 1963:175; Adams 1968:135; McNitt 1962). 6) Traders were responsible for design changes in Navajo weaving (Amsden 1934; Boles 1977; James 1988; Kent 1985; Rodee 1981, 1987).

It is evident from government records that an extraordinary amount of weaving was done, and it became increasingly important to Navajo livelihood after the formation of the Reservation. Weaving was the only product exchanged for trade goods or credit that did not depend upon the seasonal cycle. Weaving was also the only fully finished product exchanged for manufactured goods and foodstuffs. All other commodities traded by the Navajo were unprocessed (fleece, skins, pelts and pinon nuts). The Navajo did not sell stock to any great extent until after 1912, and the market for feeder lambs remained undeveloped until the mid 1920s. Cumulative reports or publications as to the importance of weaving to traders' profits in comparison to other commodities does not exist in any published literature. However, as this chapter will demonstrate, enough evidence exists that such information could be collated and analyzed from government documents and "classic" publications (Navajo Letter Books, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, annual reports, Bureau of Indian Affairs; Amsden 1934; James 1914; McNitt 1962).

There are a number of reasons why textile production was not taken into account to the extent that it should have been by other authors: 1) weaving was not considered work, it was "spare-time" activity. 2) only Reservation traders were required to submit annual

reports, yet many traders failed to keep adequate records 3) according to Kelley and Whiteley (1989:209) 40% of the population did not live within Reservation boundaries at the turn of the century. 4) acquisition of textiles by off-Reservation traders was unaccounted for in government reports, yet there were many unlicensed posts bordering the Reservation. 5) evidence easily extrapolated from several published sources demonstrates the accelerated production of weaving, but it continues to remain unanalyzed in texts devoted to Navajo political economy.

Demographic Background - Reservation Period

It is impossible to comprehend the escalating importance of textile production to Navajo livelihood without knowledge of population growth after the formation of the Reservation. One of the most useful studies on the Navajo was produced as a doctoral dissertation in Sociology by Denis Foster Johnston at American University. Titled An Analysis of Sources of Information on the Population of the Navajo, it was published by the Smithsonian as Bulletin #197 in 1966. Johnston (1966:14) comments on how enumerators have had a difficult time acquiring adequate statistics on the Navajo due to a number of factors. He offers a litany of reasons including: the transhumant nature of herding, the severely limited road network, errors associated with attributing patrilineal descent to a matrilineal society, other forms of artificial classification, errors in the recording of names, and cultural differences. He describes the inadequacies of various "official figures" on the Navajo population over the past 150 years. He provides a comparative investigation of the two key sources of information on the Navajo: that provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Bureau of the Census.

Johnston publishes several tables with figures relevant for my purposes. To begin with, population figures from various sources are amalgamated in several tables. The following information taken from Table 27, pp 136-137, provides useful estimates of the Navajo population which will aid in assessing the number of weavers in the entire population.

1875 - 11,767 (BIA)	1920 - 30,473 (BIA)
1900 - 21,826 (BIA)	1925 - 31,985 (BIA)
1905 - 28,544	1930 - 39,064 (BIA)
1910 - 22,455 (BIA)	1935 - 43,555 (BIA)
1915 - 30,871 (BIA)	1940 - 48,722 (BIA)

Johnston (1966:33) notes that prior to Bosque Redondo, the Navajo had "long enjoyed a reputation for relative wealth and prosperity." He (1966:31) comments that during the thirty years following their return to the newly formed Reservation, the Navajo demonstrated remarkable vigor in recovering from the cultural shock suffered during their incarceration. However, the anticipated economic recovery did not materialize after 1900. Information provided in Chapter II highlights how the traders appropriated the paired goods exchange relationship the Navajo had engaged in inter-tribally.

Textile Production as Registered in Government Documents

Johnston (1966:35) notes that according to the second special census of the Indians (1910), of all tribes polled with members in "gainful occupations," the Navajo ranked eighth of forty-four tribes in the proportion of males aged ten years and over, and first in that more than 50% of its female population over ten years of age were weavers. Additional information concerning the importance of textile production is contained in the "Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, written by Cato Sells, which covers the period from July 1, 1912 to June 30, 1913. In the section devoted to "Employment of Indians" (pp 27-28), no mention is made of weavers. Emphasis is on procuring native boys for various agriculture and irrigation projects. Sells devotes several pages to the importance of handicraft production to various Indian tribes. On page 40, under a short section titled "Indian Art", he notes that the blanket industry among the Navajo is probably "the most profitable of the native industries." Although the actual number of Navajo weavers is unknown, he estimates the valuation of blankets produced that year at between \$600,000 and \$700,000. He mentions the initiation of fairs and exhibits with prizes to "discourage inferior work and the making of smaller sizes." Prizes were offered on blankets exceeding 4.5 by 6.5 feet and woven of

handspun wool. He also mentions that 1200 Pima Indians made about 9,000 baskets with a cash valuation of \$14,500. This figure represents the next highest amount relative to Navajo weaving.

In Table 17, Johnston (1966:125-129) draws upon Sells who provides summaries of the number of Indians engaged in industries other than farming and stock raising, and the value of products created. Although the number of weavers is unknown, the evaluation of textiles produced by Navajo weavers comprises by far the largest amount in any category. Table 6, pages 99-104, lists incomes of Indians by Reservation. Navajo weaving ranks highest as an income source in all categories except for a handful of tribes which receive land lease royalties, or monies from timber sales. In fact "income" from textile production for approximately 10,000 Navajo weavers during 1913-14, is nearly ten times that acquired by crop sales or wages. However, the value of stock sold by the Navajo during that year is unknown. Kelley and Whiteley (1989:76) note that farming never returned to pre-Reservation levels. From 1890 to 1930, crop production stagnated or decreased.

In the section titled "Native Industries" (pages 36-38), Sells comments on how the Navajo blanket industry "continues to be the most important and remunerative... the work is done by the women usually during their spare time" for which they 'received' about \$700,000. He then introduces the plan to tag all blankets valued at \$8.00 or more to "guard against imitations...satisfy the public regarding the genuineness... and avoid the production of large quantities of low-grade blankets." The evaluation of other handicrafts produced by *all* other Indian tribes in the United States was estimated to be around \$100,000. Sells (1913:38) notes the negative conditions Indians encounter when trying to sell their work. He attributes the problems primarily to the fact that they "usually want their money as soon as they bring in their articles," yet the markets are "distant", and that if quality was improved, better markets could be found so "they might realize the true value of their work."

Although textile production brought a far greater return to the Navajo during this

period than wage labour, it was realized at great effort. Most adult women wove, and for a large percentage of the population, young girls began their apprenticeship at the loom well before puberty. Thus a far higher percentage of the population was involved in textile production relative to the small percentage of Navajo comprising the wage labour force. Kelley (1976:236) estimates that real wages comprised less than 4% of Navajo "income" until 1920.

As mentioned above, off-Reservation traders were not bound by government regulations to submit annual reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Because many Navajo traded at such posts, government reports which contain figures related only to on-Reservation trade, lack important information relevant to Navajo livelihood, especially in the realm of textile production. This point alone creates problems concerning the interpretation of annual government reports. Johnston (1966) has amply demonstrated the shortcomings of government statistics on the Navajo prior to 1930s. I am inclined to query the Commissioner's reports for the same reasons. Yet scholars analyzing the development of the Navajo economy have utilized these government reports and replicated the dollar amount of weaving leaving the Reservation annually (Bailey and Bailey 1986, Weiss 1984). They have assumed that the published figures reflect weavers "incomes," as this is the term used in the official documents.¹ The following paragraph drawn from an historical study, serves as an example of a discrepancy that should have triggered a response from scholars writing on the Navajo.

Discourse I: Calculating Increased Production as Reported in Amsden

Charles Amsden published his classic work on the history and technical aspects of Navajo weaving in 1934. He draws on information from government sources to calculate the increase in annual textile production. Amsden comments that annual sales were first assessed in 1890 at \$25,000, (~ 16,000 Navajo; Johnston 1966:136). In 1930, the Navajo population was estimated to be 40,000, and annual textile production amounted to an estimated one

million dollars. Therefore, there was a 40-fold increase in 41 years. Since the population increased by 2.5 times, and the evaluation of blankets increased forty-fold, even taking inflation into account, visible benefits should have accrued to the Navajo. In this calculation lies a key to understanding that the tremendous increase in production by Navajo women was not to their material benefit. I think that this estimation furnishes a prime example which reveals the miscalculations of other investigators concerning the economic returns to thousands of Navajo weavers. Had the population which more than doubled actually received the material benefits forty times over, there is no doubt the living standard of the Navajo would have been visibly augmented. This information quoted from Amsden was published sixty years ago. Many scholars frequently quote his work. However, it has failed to trigger questions related to the correlation between the increase in poverty and the [hidden] decreasing returns to weavers. Even with social security and welfare available (beginning in the 1930s), per capita income on the Navajo Reservation has remained at 20% of the national average for decades. The amounts reported in various government documents likely reflect the profits realized by traders and other wholesalers. Such information, summarized from licensed traders' annual reports and continually replicated in extant studies on the Navajo, is not fine-grained enough to reveal the growing importance of textile production to the regional economy, which coincided with the continued impoverishment of the Navajo. Had such information been adequate to the task, it is quite possible that researchers would have realized the gaps in extant analyses of the Navajo economy, and such shortcomings addressed prior to this study. This is why it is important to estimate the rise in the cost of living to the Navajo [Tables 3.2 and 3.3 depict the cost of basic goods and foodstuffs from 1881 to 1943]. Bailey and Bailey (1986:306-308) provide figures which demonstrate that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) doubled between 1890 and 1930. Based on evidence extracted from trading post inventories, in comparison to credit received for their commodities, reveals the cost of living increased far more for the Navajo. Baileys' use of the CPI in a text devoted to Navajo

livelihood is misleading, and it underestimates the rise in their cost of living (1986:Appendix B). The figures utilized for wool and stock are national averages taken from government records which document the market value of those commodities. The first column in Table 3.1, displays amounts received by the Navajo for their wool, or amounts Hubbell or other traders received for Navajo wool. The adjacent column utilizes information taken from Bailey and Bailey (1986:Appendix B).

Information contained in the following section provides another way to calculate the dramatic increase in textile production over a thirty year period relative to the rise in population. This evidence is also contained in government documents referenced by various writers since 1914 (Amsden 1934, James 1914, Johnston 1966, Kelley and Whiteley 1989, USRCIA reports, and Weiss 1984).

According to Amsden (1934:180), the Navajo population was estimated at 14,000 in 1880. Navajo flocks produced 900,000 pounds of wool, with 100,000 pounds woven into blankets (about 12% of the clip). The Navajo were still weaving for themselves and for intertribal trade to some extent. In 1888, with an estimated population of 16,000, Navajo weavers retained 400,000 pounds of wool or 33% of the clip for weaving.

Between 1880 and 1890, the wool clip more than doubled, and totalled more than two million pounds. The wool retained for weaving increased by seven times during that period. The population increased by 20 to 25% (from 14,000 to 17,000 people). Navajo wool sold for 12 cents per pound in 1890, and the CPI stood at 27 (according to Bailey and Bailey 1986). In 1911, the Consumer Price Index held at 28 and Navajo wool sold at 11 cents per pound. Based on available figures reported in government documents, the population rose approximately 50% over 30 years (from 14,000 to 22,000 between 1880 and 1911). The total wool clip quintupled (from 900,000 pounds in 1880 to 4,512,213 pounds in 1911). In 1911, approximately 25% of the clip, or 843,750 pounds of wool were used for weaving. Assuming there would be 50% more weavers given the increase in population, one would

anticipate a concomitant rise in textile production. Yet weavers' output increased by 843%, even though wool and cost of living index were the same for both years! According to Bailey and Bailey, the CPI fluctuated very little (from 27 to 29) over the 30-year period. These figures could have been calculated without difficulty by other investigators. To further understand the increased burden borne by thousands of weavers, the following calculations were extrapolated from additional published statistics taken from the same sources.

According to Kelley & Whiteley (1989:79), textile production brought the Navajo \$711,000 in income in 1911. Approximately 843,750 pounds of fleece (25% of the clip) were woven up by an estimated 7000 weavers. Based on the estimated value of wool that year, I calculated that weavers used \$92,812.50 worth of their own wool to make textiles. Weavers did not receive extra compensation for using their own wool. The cash valuation of their textiles when trading included the fleece used to make them. Calculating twice the amount of wool needed to produce a pound of handspun yarn, weavers produced approximately 421,875 pounds of yarn which was woven into blankets and rugs. This averages out to sixty pounds of yarn woven up by each weaver annually. With saddle blankets ranging from three to seven pounds each, and rugs averaging from four to fifteen pounds a piece, depending upon size, a weaver could produce 15 to 18 single saddle blankets, or eight to ten double saddle blankets or four to ten rugs per year, or a combination thereof. Given other household tasks including preparation of goat and sheep skins, cooking, herding, and child rearing responsibilities, one could argue the increasing burden borne by thousands of Navajo women is the North American equivalent of the Lace Makers of Narsapur (Mies 1982). Although a number of publications exist which examine the changes in Navajo livelihood since the formation of the Reservation, all of the evidence just presented has remained unanalyzed. Thus the comments that appear at the beginning of this chapter take on added meaning. The following section highlights how two authors have described the importance of weaving to Navajo livelihood.

Discourse II: Ethnohistorical and Political Economy Sources

The following section tracks the economics of Navajo weaving as reflected in two key publications. Ethnohistorians Bailey and Bailey (1986), and Larry Weiss's Marxian analysis of the development of capitalism on the Navajo Reservation (1984), provide the most comprehensive studies on the Navajo to date. Their texts, supplemented by other works, provide a backdrop to assess and survey how textiles have been treated by authors working from various perspectives.

Bailey and Bailey (1986:51) state that the Navajo were the "premier weavers in the region, and of the five major types of craft production, weaving was first in importance." Even after Bosque Redondo, textiles were the major trade items until the 1880s (Bailey and Bailey 1986:37). The authors (1986:155) note that during the 1880s, the Navajo had little reason to seek wage labour (although very little was available!). Adequate rainfall contributed to the maintenance of large herds and high crop yields and the continuation of intertribal trade in skins, blankets, baskets and pottery meant the people prospered (Bailey and Bailey 1986:96).

The Navajo acquired metal goods, and some foodstuffs from traders, and bartered their wool clip for credit. Bailey and Bailey (1986:96) note that herds increased (per-capita) 300-400% above pre-Reservation estimates. McNitt (1962:80) wrote that a trader by the name of Leonard purchased a quarter of a million pounds of Navajo wool in 1880, and that he may have cleared between \$5,000-10,000 on wool alone that year. The authors report that as late as 1887, estimates reveal that weavers produced one textile for every two women. More than 60% of them were traded with Apaches, Utes and others. Adams (1963:152) comments that the tremendous increase in quantities of raw wool provided the impetus for women to "weave wool into blankets." Fine quality Saxony yarns (a German vegetal dyed yarn) had comprised a portion of annuities, and inspired weavers to "fabricate a yarn of quality never since equalled in the history of Navajo weaving" (Weiss 1984:35).

As described previously, this rosy picture was drastically altered during the last decade of the nineteenth century, when global economic and regional environmental factors initiated a collapse of the Navajo economy. The removal of the wool tariff in 1893 allowed duty-free foreign wools to compete with domestic wools, and coincided with the silver market crash. Several massive winter storms in conjunction with excessively dry summers, decimated Navajo herds. By 1900, extended drought had decreased Navajo herds by 75%. The people had to slaughter stock for subsistence as crops failed, and some surviving stock died of thirst. However, Weiss (1984:43) citing Kelley, does not depict such a drastic drop in stock.

According to extant literature, the economic collapse of the 1890s made weavers "open to suggestions." Traders guided weavers into the production of marketable items, resulting in the shift from blankets to rugs. The Baileys (1986:152) note that "rug weaving developed as an alternative means of marketing wool" and that "rug production decreased when wool prices were high, and increased when prices were relatively low." Traders' influences were perceived as "commercializing the industry." Bailey and Bailey (1986:96 and 152) comment that "blankets...brought a much higher price per pound than wool." They also note that weavers adopted commercial yarns and dyes, which eliminated the arduous processing of raw fleece and collection of plants for natural dyes. However the authors provide no discussion of the cost of these commodities. The railroad provided both increased access to Navajo markets through traders, and the means by which indigenous products including blankets, left the southwest. These authors (1986:97) state that changes in material culture, as a result of the invasion of trading posts:

did not reflect acculturation or acceptance of Anglo-American technology, however, because the Navajos traded for manufactured goods functionally equivalent to items they already used, and rejected items that forced them to adopt new methods of production.

They also mention that the Navajo did not relinquish their economic self-sufficiency until the

Depression (1986:181). However, this is clearly not the case as the Navajo could no longer organize for the market themselves. Weiss's text (1984) also illustrates the loss of economic independence before that time.

In a section titled "The Commercialization of Crafts", the Baileys (1986:150-155) provide a precis of the increase in the evaluation of textile production after 1890. Utilizing information also accessed by Amsden, they claim that the Navajo "sold" about \$24,000 of blankets in 1890, which rose to \$50,000 in 1899. Within four years, the total "income" from weaving reported to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs rose to between \$280,000-350,000, a five to seven-fold increase. Again, these numbers are published as "official figures" representing "income" to Navajo weavers.

A similar problem concerns the total weight of textiles annually shipped off the Reservation. These figures appear to be absent in published reports after 1900. Other than information culled from the Hubbell Papers, and tables compiled by Fryer for 1939, I have been unable to locate any tables, graphs or other data that would allow researchers to calculate more realistically the relationship between accelerated production and drop in "cash valuation" of weaving for weavers. Akbarzadeh (1992) references a newspaper article that reported the Babbitts shipped 16,000 pounds of weaving during November 1902.

Bailey and Bailey (1986:152) also utilize information published in Reservation border town newspapers during the early part of the century to illustrate the amount weavers received per pound for their textiles. By 1907, weavers in the Farmington, New Mexico area were reported to receive between 75 cents and \$3.50 per pound for their weaving. Yet archival records reveal Reservation traders wholesaling hundreds of pounds of saddle blankets at 80 cents per pound, native wool blankets for 65 cents to \$1.00 per pound, and rugs from \$1.00 to \$1.44 per pound (Chapter Five). Textiles woven entirely of Germantown wool (a commercial yarn) averaged \$2.50 pound wholesale; however, Germantowns comprised only a small percentage of textile production. The prices listed in such newspaper

articles lead to exaggerated impressions of the amounts that weavers actually received.

According to Baileys' graphs, by 1910, weaving "income" was reported to have increased to \$700,000. As mentioned above, official government reports do not define how "income" is determined; therefore it is difficult to decipher what these figures really represent. According to my own research, they probably reflect the dollar amount calculated by the traders of weaving leaving the Reservation annually. Such figures would represent credit traders received from wholesalers, and not the credit received by weavers on their accounts. However, these figures must suffice, as no others are available. Between 1910 and 1921, the value of weaving peaked at \$700,000 in eight of eleven years. Income received by Navajo for wage labour (railroad, road construction), did not reach that figure until 1926, and held for two more years before dropping to less than \$400,000 in 1932. In fact, the "commercialization" of weaving (the shift from blankets woven for indigenous use to rugs woven for an external market), generated most of the economic growth between 1890 and the Depression.

Using the term "commercialization" in association with the Navajo blanket or rug, is an unfortunate misnomer. Weavers continued to weave on the upright loom, and utilize the large spindle. It is true that some weavers used dyes either purchased from, or provided by traders. However, the most time consuming components of textile production remain unchanged--that of spinning and weaving. Had weavers been given, or bartered large amounts of wool or yarn from the traders, it would have defeated the purpose of their acquiring a 'greater' return on their blankets and rugs gained through using wool from their flocks. Due to the escalation in production, it may appear that textiles are becoming commercialized on a large scale. But the process of production remained as labour intensive as before. This subject will be dealt with shortly.

Another factor that dramatically affected Navajo livelihood concerned the doubling of the Consumer Price Index after World War I. Although the cash valuation of textiles was

maintained at record levels for a short period, their "purchasing power" realized approximately half the cash valuation received by weavers prior to the War. Thus the post-war rise in inflation led to a resurgence in textile production, and an intensified search for wage-labour (Bailey and Bailey 1986:118-119). Bailey and Bailey (1986:307) report the CPI at 30 in 1914, and at 60 in 1920. Sales of feeder lambs did not become an important component of the Navajo economy until the late 1920s, therefore high rug production was imperative if the Navajo were to survive. Contrary to the Baileys' (1986:152) comment quoted previously, women continued to increase their production of textiles, regardless of the price of wool [Fig. 5.1].

Discourse III: A Marxist Model of the Navajo Economy

As Larry Weiss utilizes Lenin's text The Development of Capitalism in Russia as his model for examining the development of capitalism on the Navajo Reservation, his prognosis of the destruction of the Navajo economy is far gloomier than that provided by ethnohistorians Bailey and Bailey. Weiss (1984:34) remarks on the use of imported dyes, yarns and bayeta by Navajo weavers prior to Bosque Redondo. Quoting sources utilized by the Baileys and others, he notes the importance of textile production to southwestern trade prior to the formation of the Reservation. He summarizes how the United States government destroyed the subsistence base of the Navajo when they were incarcerated at Bosque Redondo. Following their release, traders as merchant capitalists appropriated the markets formerly provisioned by the Navajo themselves. By 1889, there were nine licensed posts, with 30 posts outside Reservation boundaries (Weiss 1984:50). The use of seco, the restrictions placed on off-Reservation sheep buyers' access to Navajo herds and wool, government regulations which restricted grades of stock the Navajo were allowed to sell, all these factors and others provided traders with a monopoly which functioned in their interests to the detriment of the Navajo.

Although Weiss provides the most comprehensive analysis of the Navajo economy

to date, he relies heavily on official government documents prior to 1900, and supplements them by quoting from many classic sources published post-1900. Several of texts he references were written by or for dealers and collectors who neglect to identify their sources (Dedera 1975, Berlant and Kahlenberg 1977).² Weiss does not provide any new analyses by extrapolation from published statistics taken from annual government reports. Nor does he extrapolate from Amsden's information quoted previously.

However, Weiss (1984:65) acknowledges that the increasing prosperity of the traders was "inextricably linked with the continued domestic production of the Navajo herder and weaver." Had large Anglo herders gained control of Navajo territory, traders would have lost their customers! It was in traders' best interests that the Reservation be enlarged and the Navajo continue as herders and weavers. Unlike the Baileys, Weiss does not paint as rosy a picture of the Navajo economy during the 1880s (1984:68). He notes that in 1887, a government agent reported that one-third of the adult population lacked stock (recall Agent Riordan's 1883 letter, Chapter Two). Weiss (1984:69) also comments that approximately 350 Navajo worked as wage labourers (\$1.00-1.10 per day), for the railroads by 1898. [Hubbell had close to that many women bartering their blankets with him in the Ganado area alone.] Based on population estimates, there may have been as many as 7000 weavers.

Weiss defines the years between 1900-1930, as the period in which merchant capital consolidated its control over Navajo production, and wage labour increases significantly. Weiss attributes far greater importance to the increase in wage labour which is a fraction of that provided by textile production (cf. Bailey and Bailey graphs, 1986:153, 159). For example, in 1930, rug production was estimated to bring one million dollars in income, whereas wage labour averaged \$200,000. The calculated value of cultivated acreage amounted to \$140,742 that year (Kelley and Whiteley 1989:211). Kelley (1976:246) quoting Adams (1963:51), states that there was little demand for Navajo seasonal railroad work until World War II.

Weiss highlights the many ways (sanctioned by the United States government), in which traders were able to gain rapid domination over the Navajo economy. As described in the previous chapter, implementing credit saturation allowed traders to control Navajo production before commodities were produced. With increasing emphasis on herding as the primary form of subsistence (at the expense of agriculture), many Navajo became increasingly dependent upon traders for most foodstuffs, except mutton. Unlike the years prior to Bosque Redondo, the Navajo were compelled to barter raw resources such as wool, for finished goods, such as clothing, processed foods and tools. With the exception of their woven textiles, nearly all products that left the Reservation remained unprocessed. Sometimes when traders purchased corn and wool from Navajo compelled to reduce their debits, traders held the commodities, rather than shipping them back east, then re-sold them back to the people at a later date (Weiss 1984:45, 80, and the Hubbell Papers).

As demonstrated previously, ample evidence already exists that can be extracted from extant literature, which challenges most of the assumptions listed at the beginning of this chapter. For example, trader Gladwell Richardson (1986) mentions that while running the post at Sunrise, he acquired an average of ten rugs per day, and in 1932, when boarding school ended and parents picked up their children, four hundred blankets were bartered in one day! Prior to World War II, he notes how rug sales drastically decreased, with fuzzy saddle blankets selling for less per pound than the fleece. Even the trader could only get about \$1.25 apiece for a "fuzzy" - about the price of a 25 pound sack of flour (Richardson 1986:180). During that time he claims that more than 60% of the local economy was based on weaving. This type of commentary appears in traders' memoirs with some frequency. However, scholars tend to rely upon the "official" government figures rather than investigating microlevel relations revealed in archival records or traders' memoirs. Because Weiss's text appears to provide the most comprehensive analysis of the Navajo political economy to date, it is necessary to further survey how he has utilized sources relevant to

textile production in his analysis.

Weiss (1984:51) overemphasizes traders' control over the production of Navajo textiles. In his glossary, he describes "domestic commodity production" as follows:

The partial or total working up of a commodity in the home or on the laborer's land to the order of a merchant or industrial capital. For example, at certain periods in history Navajo weavers and silversmiths fabricated commodities at their homes with their own means of production (tools), but specifically to the order of a trader (merchant capital).

Evidence exists in archives and other publications to substantiate the case for smithing (Adair 1944, Bedinger 1973, Volk 1988). Smiths were supplied with all the materials to fabricate jewellery. Additional comments related to smithing will be presented below. Weavers were never supplied with the tools (they made their own, except for tow cards), and they were seldom supplied with fleece, as this would defeat the purpose of utilizing their own wool to achieve a "greater" return. Chapters Five and Six will present archival evidence challenging traders' influence on weavers.

A Critique

Because Weiss does not understand how these textiles were actually created, he attributes far more influence to traders than is warranted. Had weavers actually woven to order, traders such as Hubbell would not have had portions of large shipments returned to him by the Fred Harvey Company and other retailers. Based on evidence collated from correspondence and business records in Hubbell's papers, a very small percentage of weaving was created for specific orders (cf. Table 5.3 Blanket Shipments 1901, Ganado Daybook), and Boles (1977, 1981).

Weiss (1984:53) states that the Navajo had bartered blankets for horses with the Utes, yet their cash evaluation was registered at 25 cents per pound at Lee's Ferry trading post (near the Utah border), during the 1870s. Thus, Weiss's statements on the continued "cheapening of the product" are not balanced by concomitant critique of the tremendous "devaluation" of Navajo weaving. He neglects to discuss how the treatment of these fully

finished products as renewable resources placed an intolerable burden upon Navajo weavers. Instead, textiles become just one more expropriated commodity. Weiss (1984:54) quotes without critique, Amsden's classic comment on how traders thrice benefitted while bartering blankets: on the mark-up on goods bartered to the weaver for the blanket, on the sale of the blanket to the off-Reservation buyer, and on the mark-up of materials utilized in the processes of weaving such as commercial dyes and yarn: "three transactions, three separate profits."

Between 1900 and 1930, Weiss (Chapter Four) claims that petty commodity production declined in importance as wage labour increased. For example, Weiss (1984:86) quotes from a government report which states that nine thousand Indians (from several tribes in Arizona and New Mexico) earned at least \$260,000 as wage labourers in 1911. Weiss references James's text periodically yet he neglects to incorporate the following relevant evidence in his study which demonstrates the importance of textile production to Navajo livelihood. James (1914:57) references government reports [referred to earlier in this chapter] which reveal that in 1911, 25% of the annual wool clip was woven into blankets and evaluated at \$675,000. The rest of the wool sold for approximately \$320,000. James also mentions that a single wholesaler, C. C. Manning of Gallup, sold \$40,000 worth of blankets in 1912.

The graphs depicted in Bailey and Bailey (1986:153, 159) are also developed from data extrapolated from government documents, and they provide a more realistic assessment as to the importance of textile production, than the information provided by Weiss. Yet Weiss draws upon disparate sources which continually demonstrate the escalation in textile production alongside the estimated "earnings" per hour of a typical weaver. The following paragraph provides a provocative example.

Weiss (1984:106) notes that weaving was estimated to bring an income of approximately five cents per hour. This amount is based upon the results of a well-known

experiment during the 1930s "in the economics of weaving" in which two traders from Shiprock furnished an experienced weaver with yarns to weave a 2.5 by 5 foot rug "of a simple pattern." It was appraised at a fair market value of \$12.00, yet they paid her \$40.80 to weave it (20 cents per hour). Weiss then contrasts the amount a weaver may average (2.5 to 5 cents per hour) with the \$2.00 per day paid male Navajo labourers during the same period. In the next sentence he quotes Amsden (1934): "entire Navajo rug industry during the same period, was estimated to be valued in the magnitude of a million dollars a year!" He then sympathizes with the position of independent traders who had to find outlets for the additional tens of thousands of pounds of rugs woven during the 1930s to compensate for depressed wool prices. Additional comments are made concerning the continued debasement of textile quality exacerbated by the poor market. Such events necessitated a revival to improve the quality of textile production.

The only critique offered concerning all of the above statements relates to traders selecting out and retaining the superior wool (from the churro) to sell to weavers in the future. The "improved" strains, such as Rambouillet and Merino provided a superior fleece for commercial purposes, and higher weight yields, but the wool was detrimental to the hand-spinner, who was able to achieve better results with the older straight, hair-like churro wool. Yet Weiss (1984:142) is well aware that preparation of wool is at least as time consuming as the actual weaving process, because he references an experiment in which a 3 x 5 foot rug required 388 hours to produce. He notes that carding [cleaning] the wool and spinning took 130 hours. However, this time estimate did not include shearing or dyeing the wool.

In Chapter Six, Weiss notes how women's roles continued to be undermined by the destruction of their herd-and craft-based incomes. He comments on how weavers receive far less than Navajo formally employed, and that "the woven commodity is often a cheapened version to compete with the returns of wage labor." In addition, a "substantial amount of weaving is done in large part by unemployed women."

Weiss provides a number of tables which designate the existence and importance of wage labour on the Reservation. However, only two tables incorporate information on data related to weaving. No weaving-related figures are reported in tables prior to 1926.³ Youngblood (1935) and Fryer (1939) provide ample evidence to substantiate the importance of weaving over smithing. None of this information is included in Weiss. Given that his study is a classical Marxian analysis, modeled on Lenin's work, Weiss neglects to mention the cultural importance of weaving for Navajo women, nor does he even consider the possible explanations of why women would continue to weave under such arduous conditions.⁴ Weiss (1984:144) trivializes their endeavors by remarking that once transfer payments such as welfare and social security became available, women could "weave on a whim or not at all if they desire."

One of the most distressing aspects of his analysis concerns the inordinate attention he devotes to the economic importance of silversmithing to the Navajo economy. Careful analysis of government sources utilized by Bailey and Bailey and information provided by McNitt (1962), Youngblood (1935) and Fryer (1939), reveals how weaving is shortchanged. Prior to 1940, there were fewer than 600 smiths on the entire Reservation, yet the Hubbells alone probably bartered with that many weavers by 1905, if their other posts are included. Weiss's text comprises 158 pages, excluding notes and Bibliography. He devotes 23 pages to the importance of silversmithing to the Navajo economy, and 28 pages to weaving. Such inordinate emphasis on smithing (accompanied by tables and statistics) magnifies its importance to the detriment of textile production. Table 4.1 on the following page draws on information taken from McNitt (1962:250-2), which clearly illustrates the dollar amounts of bartered goods received by weavers and silversmiths from nine traders during 1910-1911. Although Weiss frequently quotes from McNitt, he has neglected to incorporate this type of information in his analysis.

Kluckhohn and Leighton (1974) reported that smithing represented less than two percent of

TABLE 4.1
GOODS BARTERED BY SELECTED TRADERS, 1910-1911
[FROM McNITT, 1982]

TRADERS	WOOL [\$]	BLANKETS [\$]	HIDES [\$]	SILVER [\$]	LIVESTOCK [\$]
WALKER	2997	3570	784	250	540
SAMPSON	N/A	4000	N/A	550	1137
NOEL	N/A	6000	N/A	350	N/A
REITZ/DAVIES	N/A	6855	N/A	125	N/A
WALKER	N/A	10,417	N/A	397	N/A
FOUTZ/BLACK	N/A	5420	N/A	500	N/A
ALDRICH/DODGE	N/A	6510	N/A	582	N/A
BABBITT/PRESTON	N/A	2384	N/A	2814	N/A
BABBITT [RED LAKE]	N/A	3912	N/A	150	N/A
TOTAL		49,068		5718	

total Navajo "income" in 1940.

It is possible that Weiss overemphasizes the importance of smithing because of a competent analysis provided by Adair (1944) which he frequently references. We lack an equivalent analysis on the economics of weaving. A fair portion of smithing was comprised of waged labourers making jewellery in established workshops which bordered the eastern portion of the Reservation (Adair 1944, Bedinger 1973, Volk 1988, Weiss 1984:97, 111-112, 152). Thus it would be easier to calculate wages, use of materials and control of production processes from extant business and government records.

However, there is enough evidence provided in numerous sources to more than hint at the tremendous exploitation borne by Navajo weavers over the past century. Yet a conceptual framework that cannot "factor in" non-waged labour is seriously handicapped in demonstrating the magnitude and extent of production, and the subsequent pauperization of thousands of women. Indeed, weavers appear to vanish even though Weiss acknowledges:

almost all [women are] engaged in the weaving of rugs for sale or trade to traders. While this produced income, the activity is not included in this analysis since it was not a formal wage in the sense of industrial labour. (Weiss 1984:92)

The fact that he quotes without critique from classic sources (cf. excerpts from Amsden incorporated on the first page of this chapter), demonstrates how the most intensive analysis undertaken of the Navajo economy is an [unanalyzed] recapitulation of much descriptive information which has been available in some cases for nearly a century.

In his conclusions, Weiss (1984:152) notes how the total dominance by merchant capital over the domestic commodity production by the Navajo, put it merely "a step away" from a formal wage-labour relationship with direct producers. Based on information to be presented in the following chapter, I would suggest that accelerated pauperization has been masked to a far greater extent with the system extant on the Reservation, rather than direct wage labour. The gross exploitation of weavers would have become far more apparent at a much earlier date, had these women been waged at the amounts they received in barter from

the traders. Weiss (1984:154) admits it himself when he comments:

Rug weaving generally gave very low returns to the weavers, with merchant capital skimming everything off the top. The returns to the direct producer were so low that it was not worth it to potential (merchant capital) investors to set up workshops.

The "lip service" paid by Weiss and a handful of others, to the exploitation borne by countless women, cannot be grasped without analysis of primary documents, including government records which remain unutilized. This critique may appear harsh, yet Gary Witherspoon has estimated that 100,000 Navajo women have woven a million blankets and rugs over two centuries. The most detailed analysis of the Navajo economy has failed to adequately assess the extent of their contributions - both to Navajo livelihood and the southwestern economy in general.

Discourse IV: Weaving Time and the Navajo Rug

Over the years, several classic experiments similar to the one described previously, reappear in the literature which document the amount of time it takes a Navajo weaver to produce a saddle blanket or rug. Two of these experiments will be described in detail before turning to a subject concerned with explicating the necessity of transforming the Navajo blanket into a rug. This review is important given that the processes to be described were undertaken by tens of thousands of Navajo women since the advent of weaving among the Navajo, which continued after the formation of the Reservation.

Traders' Experiments

Long-time trader Gilbert Maxwell published Navajo Rugs, Past, Present and Future, in 1963. His text provides a description of the tools and materials, and highlights the development of weaving as influenced by various traders. He provides an example of an "experiment" to determine the length of time it takes to weave a saddle blanket and a rug. In 1955, a dealer paid a weaver \$1 an hour, and provided the yarn for her to weave a double saddle blanket in a twill weave (see glossary), and a 3 x 5 foot quality rug. The weaver completed the saddle blanket in 140 hours, and the rug in 238 hours. The dealer estimated

the entire process would have taken another 200 hours if the weaver had to shear, wash, card, spin and dye the yarn. The "going rate" or typical retail price for a saddle blanket of this type in 1955 was \$35, and \$65 for the rug. Using the figures Maxwell has provided, one can figure that the amount per hour at the retail level for the saddle blanket totals 14 cents per hour, and for the rug, it adds to 17 cents per hour. Had she prepared all the yarn, she would have received 10 cents per hour for the saddle blanket and 15 cents for the rug. Recall that the weaver received groceries in exchange for her textiles and that the retail price includes the traders' markup. Maxwell himself provides a table (discussed below) on average prices for rugs. In 1955, his cash valuation averaged \$20.20 per rug. Maxwell (1963:19-20) then makes a classic comment, reiterated in various forms by other sources:

Weaving a rug--can be a lot of work. From time to time we hear reports that a Navajo weaver is poorly paid, maybe an average of five cents or so an hour, for her labor. Unfortunately there is much truth to this, but it should be pointed out that rug weaving is a spare-time avocation....

Which brings up a very important point. Although weaving is an essential part of the reservation economy it is not exercised as a full-time occupation. Hence there can be no wage scale. A Navajo woman will do most of her weaving in her spare time, as some of our non-Indian ladies will knit a wool dress in their spare time.

These comments epitomize the attitude that most authors share concerning Navajo weaving. Any activity engaged in part-time, regardless of how important it is to the economy is not considered work. Maxwell also provides additional information concerning "the future" of weaving, and he incorporates tables with revealing information concerning the average price he paid for rugs (not saddle blankets) from 1948 to 1962. His prices ranged from a low of \$17.60 in 1953 to a "high" of \$39.70 in 1962. He provides two photos of his "rug room" with textiles stacked nearly to the window tops in 1951, in comparison to piles as high as a chair seat in 1961 (Maxwell 1963:62). During this period, day labourers earned on average a \$1.50 per day. Based on the "experiment" just quoted, if a woman wove eight hours per day on her textile, it would take her thirty days to handspin and weave a double saddle blanket, and forty-two days to produce the rug. I will return to this topic in the chapter about

"the weavers' narratives." A single saddle blanket in plain weave ranges from 32 to 36 inches square, and weighs from three to four pounds. Based on these calculations, a weaver would receive less than \$2.00 in trade goods for a textile that may take her more than sixty hours to produce, depending upon complexity of pattern. Thus she would supply all materials, and receive approximately three cents an hour in credit for her textile.

Museum Experiments

In 1981, the Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, published a six page article with photographs titled "The weaver and the wool: the process of Navajo weaving" written by curator Marsha Gallagher. The Museum chose to highlight the production of a Navajo rug, as part of an issue devoted to Navajo weaving. Gallagher (1981:22) comments on how weaving is a complex and time-consuming process. Many books, articles and exhibits are devoted to aspects of the subject, however, this article is the first to provide a complete documentation with photographs accompanied by text, of one rug from beginning to end. On the last page of the article, there is a colour photo of the completed rug still on the loom, which appears to measure approximately three by five feet [and it probably weighs between five and six pounds]. Here is a little chart of the "estimate of total hours expended":

Shearing and cleaning	15
Carding and spinning	368 [~ 67 hours/pound]
Dyeing	19
Weaving	<u>158</u> [~ 29 hours/pound]
TOTAL	560 hours

Because the loom and weaving tools have remained unchanged, the time estimates depicted above would be quite similar to the time spent by numberless weavers to create an equivalent textile since the Navajo began weaving centuries ago. Recall that if "shortcuts" were taken, it was in relation to using aniline dyes. A few hours would be saved using packaged dyes rather than collecting plants for dyeing. Margaret Grieve, the woman who wove the "experiment" rug, respun her wool on a Navajo drop spindle three times. She produced

approximately 3,000 yards of yarn to weave the rug. It is necessary to spin the wool three times to achieve a fine yarn, or even four times for warp yarn. Thus preparation of materials prior to weaving may comprise 70% of the total time expended to produce a completed textile. The process just described is a preamble to the following section which highlights why the Navajo blanket had to be "transformed" into a rug. This section reveals the basis of "triple profits" for the traders which translated to a "double loss" for the Navajo.

Discourse V: Why the Navajo Blanket became a Rug

"Pendleton blankets were cheaper than native blankets, and the technical skill and energy consumed by blanket-making could now be utilized more profitably by weaving for trade." (Weiss 1984:54)

"..colorful, light, warm, and reasonably affordable shawls and blankets (from \$8 to \$15 each - 1918 prices) were natural substitutes for Navajo wearing blankets, as...weavers preferred to spend their time weaving rugs to sell to Anglos." (Kaufman and Selser 1985:73)

[when the weaver] found she could sell her blanket for enough to purchase a dozen American blankets she promptly did so, for the reason before stated, viz., that most of her own blankets are too stiff to give warmth and comfort when wrapped around her. ...none familiar with Navajo blankets ever buys them for bed-covers or wraps. As soon as this fact dawned clearly upon Messrs. Hubbell and Cotton...they immediately began to negotiate with the [trade] blanket manufacturers, for the manufacture of blankets especially designed for the Navajo trade, containing designs and colors which they knew would be pleasing to their Indian customers. They themselves provided the designs--these men, be it especially noted and remembered, whose greatest income is from the sale of *genuine Navajo blankets*, and whose business would suffer materially if the notion ever became broadcast that the real Navajo could be successfully imitated. They now purchase these [trade] blankets by the *carload*, and there is not a trader on or off the whole reservation who does not carry a quantity of them in stock. (James 1914:160-61)

The passages just quoted contain a wealth of information, which provides critical commentary as to the complete insertion of the merchant into the heart of Navajo trade, and in one stroke, the co-optation of both the indigenous and Anglo markets for the Navajo blanket. If Navajo weaving were to survive (and the economic success of the traders was far more dependent upon its survival than people realize), the blanket had to be transformed into a product attractive to American consumers. And that is exactly what happened. Thus, traders are perceived as having saved Navajo weaving by developing new markets for it in

the East, as the old markets were destroyed (Amsden 1975:179; Dederer 1990:36, Kent 1985:85). Authors such as James perpetuated the myth by stating that the Navajo preferred trade blankets, because they are lighter, and because a weaver could sell a good hand-woven blanket and obtain the machine made product, and earn additional credit. The latter statement, quoted as gospel by many writers of various persuasions, is totally incorrect, as volumes of evidence extant in archival sources attest (Table 3.3 and Figure 4.1). Yet Amsden (1934:179) valorizes the business activities of Hubbell and Cotton, and their ingenious plan for sharing with the Navajo some of "the advantages of the American methods." This is in reference to the "three transactions and three profits" scenario discussed earlier in this chapter:

If one man thought of all that, his portrait, crowned with laurel, should be over every trader's doorway... obviously the traders advantage lay in selling the materials of weaving rather than encourage the Navajo to provide their own. (Amsden 1934:186)

Had Navajo weavers continued to supply both the indigenous and Anglo markets with textiles, even through middlemen, their livelihood may have remained strong. However, from the time that traders began operating on and adjacent to the Reservation, weavers faced formidable competition from trade blanket manufacturers. Commercial producers began manufacturing double-faced fabrics during the 1880s on Jacquard adapter looms. Although hundreds of woollen mills were in operation during the latter part of the 19th century, only a handful targeted the Indian trade. The five major mills and their dates of origins are as follows: Capps Woollen Mills (1864), Oregon City (1864), Buell Manufacturing Company (1860-under another name), Racine Wool Mills (1877) and the giant Pendleton (1896). Kapoun (1992) documents how these major blanket manufacturers usurped the indigenous market for wearing blankets and also appropriated a large portion of the Anglo market.

Other indigenous textile markets were affected as well. Kapoun (1992:22) replicates a photo of a potlatch held at Port Rupert, British Columbia, depicting multiple stacks of Hudson Bay blankets. He estimates their worth at \$50,000 by 1992 standards. Kapoun

(1992:24) comments on how writers at the time failed to recognize the cultural importance of blankets to Indians, but "its commercial importance was never questioned. In fact..it became acknowledged as a standard of trade" replacing its indigenous predecessors, especially Navajo blankets.

Appropriating the Patterns: Tracking the Escalating Success of Commercial Blanket Manufacturers

Financial success came early to these manufacturers. By the 1880s the Capps Indian Blanket Company earned annual revenues over \$200,000 from sales of clothing, cloth and blankets (Kapoun 1992:75). "The golden age" of the American Indian trade blanket reigned from 1880 to 1930, and parallels the precipitous decline in value of Navajo textiles. Firms had no compunction regarding the appropriation of Indian patterns to varying degrees, yet each company guarded its designs carefully. They aggressively marketed their blankets to Indian agents, trading post operators, and other retailers catering to the Indian trade. With the coming of the railroad, traders brought in blankets by the carload. According to Williams (1989:33), Clinton Cotton held the regional rights as representative for the Pendleton Company for years, and made a dollar on every blanket he wholesaled to traders. His secretary reminisced that he ordered more than 1000 at a time.

Kapoun (1992:Chapter 6) defines six general categories of design: the striped, banded, center point, framed, overall, and nine element, with its variant the six element. Four of these six basic design categories were wholesale derivations of Navajo blanket patterns. Companies sought to fit the preferences of individual tribes. As competition increased, manufacturers produced more colorful blankets in a great variety of patterns. Capps (Kapoun 1992:75) produced 22 distinct designs in more than two hundred different colour combinations. Every blanket measured five by six feet and weighed three pounds. Shawls weighed from 1.5 to 2 pounds each, and averaged between \$1.50 to \$1.67 per pound, wholesale cost to traders in 1910 (Box 66 Pendleton correspondence August 24, 1910). By

1918, Pendleton blankets had increased in price, with robes and shawls wholesaling for \$10.50 and \$11.50 apiece. Although Pendletons were never sold by the pound, their weights are listed on shipping manifests and invoices. A commercially manufactured blanket cost the Navajo more than \$4.00 per pound - three times the amount a weaver received that year for a fancy blanket, and more than six times the amount she received in cash valuation for a saddle blanket (Hubbell Papers). Each blanket was distinguished by the name of a North American Indian tribe, and associated with the romantic images of the American Indian and the American West. Names were assigned for poetic impact, rather than concern for accuracy (Kapoun 1992:78).

Because copyright was non-existent for native designs, the trade blanket manufacturers capitalized on "the Indian's instinct"...and turned it into "the white man's reasoned choice" (Kapoun 1992:111). Kapoun (1992:Preface) writes:

with European contact and the introduction of trade goods, suddenly the need for these traditional forms of protective clothing was altered. The trade blanket replaced the hide robes and hand-woven blankets previously worn by native people.... The development of a market for these blankets parallels the evolution of the Indian people's cultural existence.

A provocative sub-text runs throughout the book that Kapoun neglects to discuss. Both in text and photographs, he documents the complete appropriation, in form, proportion, style and patterns of indigenous blankets, and incorporates information related to the growth, development and financial success of these companies. There is no discussion of why the need was altered... but the owner of the Racine Mill states in a 1915 interview (Kapoun 1992:111):

The Indian's love for gaudy colors and loose garments despite all the civilization that the white man has forced upon him, retains for the Racine Woollen Mill a very valuable source of income...

At the time of the interview, his company supplied forty Indian tribes with blankets.

Factory representatives visited reservations and "worked side by side with the Indian and come (sic) into possession of his favorite designs and colorings" ..to produce "the blanket

of 1000 uses." And the multiple ways in which they could be used directly competed with the Navajo blanket as early as 1884. The description of a litany of uses for Navajo blankets produced by Clinton Cotton (Box 92) bears remarkable similarity to those depicted by the trade blanket manufacturers in their glossy high profile advertising campaigns. Sometimes the advertisements distorted information. The Racine Woollen Mill ad of ~1915 (Kapoun 1992:113) reads:

...Indians [formerly] made their own [blankets], but being handicapped by the lack of machinery and proper raw materials, they were unable to produce the kind of article they desired. ..The Indian woman with her crude machinery could not spin the yarn very fine, hence her product was coarse and heavy, more suitable for rugs than for a blanket to be worn.

Kapoun makes no effort to challenge this statement, which ignores evidence of high quality blanket production that was the norm prior to the trading post era. He fails to acknowledge who initiated the decimation of the market for the hand-woven articles. He elaborates on the massive intrusion of commercially produced blankets without hinting at the dire economic consequences for the Navajo. A number of statements in his text require critique, in particular, remarks related to the salvaging (appropriation) of these designs as tantamount to saving the entire tradition (1992:111). One could ask the hypothetical question: just how financially successful would these companies have become had copyright been available and enforced for native blanket patterns? Ample evidence appears in Hubbell's papers as to the invidious affect such sales had on the market for Navajo blankets. By 1889, Cotton was ordering trade blankets in large numbers from several different manufacturers. Brown Brothers of San Francisco, representatives of the Oregon City Woollen Mills, shipped 877 robes to Ganado which wholesaled between \$3.25 and 6.00 a piece (Boxes 12 and 143). The following year (10/07/91) the Company wrote: "we now have in stock the largest variety of Indian robes that we ever carried, and shall be pleased to receive your order." By 1890, another trade blanket manufacturer is shipping a "great variety of patterns", and wholesaling black blankets at \$4.00 each. The Beckman Company, Northern Ohio Blanket Mills of

Cleveland wrote: "we have seen a Navajo blanket and they are a grand thing, but there is no sale for them here." The following month they shipped 500 pounds of trade blankets to Ganado (Box 327). That same year finds former Navajo agent D. M. Riordan (Box 70) doing a "booming [mercantile] business" in Flagstaff. He writes Ganado saying he is obliged to take blankets from traders on the west side of the Reservation and "will be months in disposing of heavy surplus"... , but .. "we think we can handle all that you can get hold of, or care to send us if the prices are right." Between April and August, Cotton shipped more than 1,283 pounds of blankets which paid for much of the merchandise ordered from Riordan. The former Indian agent informed Cotton that he would only pay 35 cents per pound for common blankets, as "this is all we're paying other traders ... would rather accept cold cash than blankets anytime." In Box 70, the Hubbell Papers, invoices on six styles of wool trade robes list their weight at just over three pounds. In 1889, Oregon City Woollen Mills wholesaled robes from \$3.25 to \$6.00 (Box 12). Manufactured blankets wholesaled from \$1.00 to \$2.00 per pound, in contrast to weavers receiving 20 to 30 cents per pound for their handwoven blankets. Thus prior to the turn of the century, commercially manufactured trade blankets were three to ten times more expensive per pound than their handwoven counterparts.

During the 1930s Racine advertised that they dealt in blankets, Navajo rugs and other Indian goods (Kapoun 1992:113). They made no distinction between the indigenous Navajo blanket/rug and their commercial blankets, thus capitalizing on the confusion in the minds of consumers who for the most part, would not know the difference. Oregon City's ads noted how their designs were "conceived by the Indians in the early days...used exclusively by Navajo Indians..a fine tribute to their authentic designs, beautiful colors and high quality." This company entered and won awards at major national and international exhibitions as early as 1876. In 1919, the company published full page colour illustrations in the Saturday Evening Post, and operated seven retail outlets in the United States (Kapoun 1992:92).

Parish (1961:330) provides a description of the Rio Grande Woollen Mill of Albuquerque, circa 1905, operated by Johney Bearrup. Although a small operation compared to its giant competitors discussed in Kapoun, the mill had two sets of 60 inch cards for cleaning and straightening the wool fibres, 1,588 spindles, and 10 looms. This cooperatively owned mill produced blankets, dress goods and men's wear fabrics. Mechanized equipment ensured accelerated production.

The Pendleton Company: Merchandising Success

In 1895, its first year of operation, the Pendleton Company scoured four million pounds of wool, and not one ounce was Navajo wool. At the time about 300,000 Indians lived in the United States. About half that number lived in Indian Territory, and the Navajo country of Arizona and New Mexico. The company claims to have originated "the true Indian blanket." Their goal was to weave "the correct designs and color demanded by the Indians of the different tribes" (Kapoun 1992:121,122,127).

Pendleton acknowledged the origins of their product in their 1910 catalogue (Kapoun 1992:69) by stating "To him is all the credit due for the beautiful patterns and the unique color combinations of the famous Pendleton Line." The company ignores the prior importance of Navajo blankets by commenting in another ad (Kapoun 1992:132) "The Indian has never found a blanket comparable to Pendletons in quality, serviceability, or with colorings or marking so genuinely expressive of his own inherent art." and

high quality manufacturing standards and an understanding interpretation of the Indians needs has provided Pendleton with unique position of being identified in the minds of both Indian and White man as the exclusive manufacturer of Indian design blankets, robes and shawls. (Kapoun 1992:155)

This last comment erases Navajo weaving completely, and conveniently so, since by this time, the Navajo blanket had become a rug. Yes, skillful designers and weavers utilizing power looms transformed the original designs and colorings into a more refined form, and in the process of appropriation, accelerated the destruction of a viable livelihood. A trade

blanket was expensive, conferring prestige on its wearer. Adopting the clothing of Euroamericans was seen as "civilizing the savage." Kapoun (1992:16) replicates a photo of several dozen natives at the Ouray agency in 1898, draped only in commercial trade blankets. Many of the trade blanket wearing Indians portrayed in Kapoun's texts have Anglicized names, whereas tens of thousands of Navajo women who created hand-woven originals remain unnamed and unknown.

In the Pendleton catalogue published in 1915, and reissued in 1992, the author notes how the new owners who acquired the company in 1909, were graduates of the highly acclaimed Philadelphia Textile School. By the late 1920s, Pendleton was well established with an extensive product line that included all kinds of clothing for the Anglo and Indian markets. Pendleton employed 500 workers and their annual revenue was in the millions prior to the Depression. There are several letters in the Hubbell papers during this period in which the company tentatively discussed purchasing improved Navajo wool from Hubbell. The company processed about three million pounds of wool from Oregon and surrounding states. Amsden (1975:196) notes how a superintendent for the company sold carded and dyed wool from Switzerland to traders in the Shiprock area, which competed with the local indigenous wool market.

During World War I, the Navy contracted Pendleton to produce yardage. Prices increased and the company was unable to fill numerous orders from traders and the natives were literally left "out in the cold." Kapoun frequently mentions how trade blanket manufacturers enjoyed a captive market in wholesaling blankets to traders. Companies did not have to invest heavily in advertising to attract and retain this market. During the 1940s, production for the indigenous market slackened to service the war effort. After the War, Pendleton slashed production of patterns by 90% since all their competitors had gone out of business (Kapoun 1992:129). Today the Company enjoys a monopoly and supplies the entire contemporary American Indian trade blanket market.⁵

Kapoun documents a number of clever advertising ploys on the part of blanket manufacturers. All of them acknowledged that their patterns were taken directly from, or were inspired by native designs. Sometimes advertisements subtly derided the hand-woven creation. In their 1927 catalogue, Pendleton reiterated deceptive information by stating:

These Indian blankets were originated for the Indian--not by him. ..with his own crude methods of weaving the Indian could not reproduce the intricate designs and elaborate color combinations sufficiently to interpret his inherent art in a blanket of first quality.

Kapoun (1992:70-1) counters but does not critique Pendleton's claims. He notes that Navajo weavers are able to incorporate more colors on a single horizontal line while working on their vertical looms than the commercial manufacturing companies can add to a trade blanket.

The Hamley Company of Pendleton, Oregon sold saddles and horsetack and marketed Pendleton blankets to cowboys. Lorenzo Hubbell shipped thousands of pounds of saddle blankets to Hamley's and other saddle companies for decades in exchange for leather goods (Boxes 35 and 180). Even when blankets were utilized to pay for goods, they still faced the competition of major manufacturers of trade blankets. Not content with just appropriating patterns, for years the Pendleton logo featured an Indian clothed in buckskin seated in front of an upright loom.

Kapoun relates how Indians from many tribes continued to wear trade blankets or robes as a statement of "individual and tribal identity", a fascinating concept, as identical mechanized designs were reproduced by the thousands and sold to hundreds of thousands of indigenous peoples since their inception in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Although blanket manufacturers usurped indigenous patterns, particularly Navajo patterns, the reverse did not occur. Amsden (1975:62) notes the limited influence of the commercial product on Navajo weavers. They developed a double-sided twill weave, a very challenging weaving technique, possibly inspired by reverse patterning on the trade blankets. There is irony in acknowledging that in his text, Kapoun differentiates commercially produced trade blanket

differences by weight and by measurements, the two primary notations that Hubbell often used to distinguish each hand-woven blanket entry in his voluminous ledger books. Kapoun concludes by stating that the trade blanket alone makes more of a visual statement of "Indianness" than any other item.

Conclusions

Analysis of information available to researchers for decades reveals the tremendous escalation in textile production relative to population growth. Factors impinging upon a fairer return to weavers were revealed, such as the appropriation of the niche for the Navajo blanket usurped by trade blanket manufacturers, and the stagnation in the wool market which led to pressures applied by traders to weavers to turn wool into rugs. The gaps in theoretical frameworks utilized by other investigators have resulted in the neglect of a realistic assessment of the exponential growth of textile production by indigenous "housewives" in tandem with increasing pauperization. Johnston (1966:31) noted that Navajos' vigor almost brought them to ruin after 1900. The Navajo had to increase their stockholdings, which exacerbated overgrazing, thereby affecting farmland to counter diminishing returns on both textiles and unprocessed commodities traded for commercial goods. By 1915, 85% of all households censused were categorized as "destitute, moderately poor or average" (Weiss 1984:83). Kelley (1976:247) notes how low prices paid to producers generates increased production in the absence of alternative income sources. Increased production depletes resources, "inducing still greater production, which lowers prices further, the whole process constituting a deviation-amplifying feedback loop." The following chapter will utilize information from archival records which will explicate weaver/trader relations at the local and regional levels. Although this evidence has been available for decades, it remains unutilized by researchers investigating the Navajo economy.

ENDNOTES

1. My scepticism concerning the reliability of government reports to adequately assess returns to weavers is well-founded. Garrick Bailey and his wife Roberta have worked extensively with such records. In a conversation (4/1/95), with Bailey on the subject, he commented on how they are somewhat deceptive. Sometimes traders neglected to submit annual reports, or the information was incomplete. If Indian agents failed to receive annual reports from particular traders, they "rolled over" information from the previous year into the current year to "complete" the report. Nearly all publications that discuss various components of the Navajo economy reference these Annual Reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. I do not recall any caveats published which addressed any problems concerning their interpretation. On the contrary, they are continually referenced as "primary" data by numerous authors on the subject of Navajo political economy (Aberle 1966, Adams 1963, Bailey and Bailey 1986, McNitt 1962, Underhill 1983, Weiss 1984). There are too many discrepancies in information I'm utilizing from Hubbells' Papers that "conflict" with the "official" statistics. For example, the amounts the Navajo receive in credit from Hubbells for their wool, and the figures that appear in "official" records (cf. Appendix B, Bailey and Bailey 1986). Another reason for scepticism concerns the volume of textiles that Herman Schweizer purchased from unlicensed off-Reservation traders. Textiles acquired from these individuals would not be incorporated in official government statistics.

2. Weiss (1984:54) quotes from Berlant and Kahlenberg (1977) who do not reference their source, that "in the early 1890s...traders brought into the territory inexpensive machine-made blankets... Pendleton blankets were cheaper than native blankets, and the technical skill and energy consumed by blanket-making could now be utilized more profitably by weaving for trade." Such a statement is totally unfounded. Analysis of traders' business records described in the next chapter reveals just how incorrect this is. Table 3.3 lists wholesale or retail costs of trade blankets extrapolated from Hubbell's post inventories. A comparison with data illustrated in Figure 4.1, or Table 3.1 provides a more realistic assessment of comparison.

3. Weiss (1984:81) reports on the tremendous drop in textile production at the end of World War I, due to increased prices for wool and mutton. Such a decrease is clearly not evident in Hubbell's records (Chapter Five). He quotes textile expert Kate Peck Kent concerning the nadir in Navajo textile production which occurred around 1920 (Weiss 1984:84). This is certainly not borne out in the Hubbell Papers, in fact evidence to the contrary is apparent. It appears the ghost of the superb quality Chief's blanket continually haunts the narrative of the post-Bosque Redondo "cheapened product." Such unreflective criticism, coming from economists, textile experts and anthropologists, does a deep disservice to countless Navajo weavers.

Approaching the end of his analysis, Weiss (1984:122) comments on how craft production nearly stopped during the Second World War. This may be true for the Reservation as a whole, but records from the warehouse in Winslow, Arizona, operated by Hubbell's sons, reveals the continued importance of textile production. Dozens of pages of rug inventories exist, which note the weight, measurements, and wholesale price of each textile. This warehouse handled tens of thousands of Navajo textiles until 1954.

4. Weiss (1984:173) states "It is important to emphasize, however, from the perspective of the author of this study, that the fact of increasing wage payment is the crucial element. The family or clan relations of those involved in the wage relationship and the cultural aspects surrounding the wage relation are of secondary importance."

5. Within the last few years, a handful of small companies have produced commercial trade blankets as mementos of historic events.

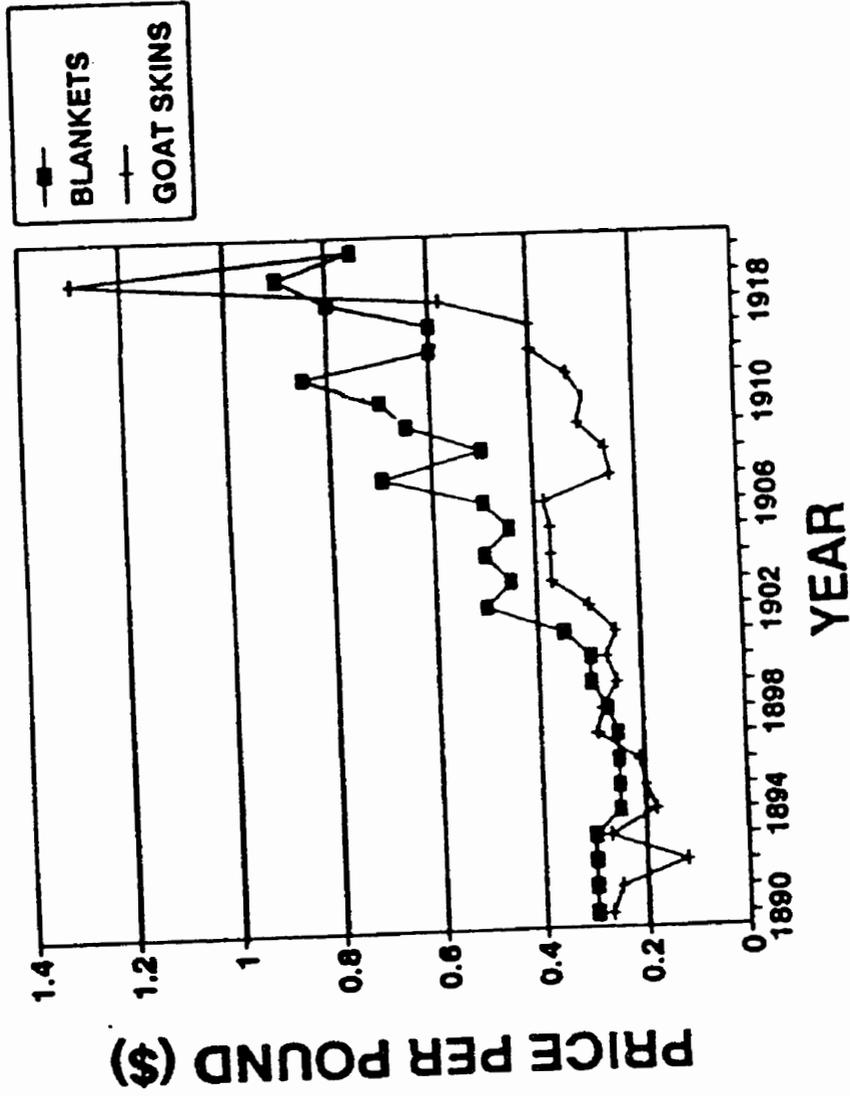


Figure 4.1 Goat Skin/Pattern Saddle Blanket
Wholesale Prices Hubbell Trading Post Records 1890-1920

CHAPTER FIVE BLANKETS BY WEIGHT: THE HIDDEN NARRATIVE

"When it comes to effectiveness of design, harmoniousness of color-schemes, strength of warp, cleanliness of wool, care in dyeing, fineness in weft, skill in weaving, closeness and neatness of weave, there are scores of Navajo women to-day who can equal any of the fine weavers of the past. (James 1917:79)

Navajo women "were always busy cooking, herding, killing, and dressing mutton, milking goats, shearing sheep, lambing, spinning, dyeing, weaving or looking after children" Youngblood. (1935:4)

"Traders are perceived as keeping weaving alive since it was so financially important to the Navajo." (Rodee 1982)

"Remember, blankets are our good business." [Juan Lorenzo Hubbell to family members in inter-post correspondence 1905-1925]

"A good Navajo blanket is better than having money in the bank" [Lorenzo Hubbell Jr., inter-post correspondence]

This chapter reviews evidence concerning the growing importance of Navajo textiles as an alternative means to market wool. Much of the information is culled from primary sources that continue to remain underutilized by ethnohistorians and authors publishing on Navajo/trader relations. As noted in Chapter Four, most researchers continue to rely on data contained in annual reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Such information is not fine-grained enough to explicate how diversification reaped multiple benefits for traders to the detriment of Navajo weavers. Although authors acknowledge the importance of textile production, the extent of impoverishment and increasing workload of thousands of weavers cannot be grasped without analysis of primary documents. Information drawn from the Hubbell Papers corroborates the impoverishment of weavers locally, and unpublished government documents verify the long-term impoverishment of weavers regionally.

For decades writers have reiterated that "traders' greatest profits lay in wool" (Adams 1963:135; McNitt 1962). In the earliest days of Navajo trade that may have been the case, but after 1895, archived business records reveal a far different story. Given the necessity of increasing diversification to maintain profit margins, Reservation traders encouraged weavers

to "weave wool into blankets" (Bailey and Bailey 1986, Weiss 1984). But, as we shall see, the primary producers were not the principal beneficiaries of their extensive production. The wealth accrued to the traders, dealers, merchant capitalists and consumers. Analysis of traders' business records and unpublished government reports in conjunction with information readily available (cf. Chapter Four), substantiates weavers' contributions to Navajo livelihood and the southwestern economy.

Gambling on Wool

Kelley and Whiteley (1989:65) remark on how high wool prices during the early 1880s, fuelled the demand for Arizona wool. However, that was short-lived because during the following decade, fluctuations in the market value of wool affected by tariffs and a recession, threatened to jeopardize traders' profits (Chapter Three). Fluctuating wool prices were a frequent topic of discussion in inter- and intra-post correspondence, and comprise the subject of a text by Professor Chester Wright (1910) of Harvard University. Textiles were not as susceptible to fluctuations in the international wool market, nor were they directly affected by weather. For example, inclement weather in the fall could jeopardize driving animals to the railheads. Severe spring weather threatened the "lamb crop."

Periodically, the wool market became "demoralized" (term used in archival correspondence). When this happened, wholesalers such as Clinton Cotton urged traders to ship blankets, pelts, and skins, otherwise goods remained on shelves of trading posts and wholesale houses bordering the Navajo Reservation. As the following story illustrates, when wool failed to move, traders paid dearly. McPherson (1992:36) relates how two traders lost their shirts on the wool market:

In 1922, raw Navajo wool, characterized as "coarse in quality and light in quantity" sold for forty cents per pound with a three to six cent margin on market prices. By the time it was transported to the buyer's bin and cleaned, some clips were reduced to 50% of their original weight. Two traders reported that between dirty wool and fluctuations in market prices, they suffered disastrous financial problems. They had purchased the wool in 1920 at thirty-five cents per pound, stored it for a year and a half because of poor market conditions, freighted it at one-and-a-half cents per pound

then sold it at nine cents per pound for an estimated loss of \$38,000. The accuracy of these figures is difficult to determine, but they do dramatize a very real problem.

Based on information available in archival and ethnohistorical sources (Bailey and Bailey 1986:Appendix B; the Hubbell Papers), these figures accurately reflect the fluctuating value of wool just after World War I. Normally wool sales occur in the summer. Yet by late October 1919, Clinton Cotton had not sold one pound of wool. Wool had sold for 45 cents per pound in 1918, dropping to 17 cents in 1919 (Table 3.1). Cotton no doubt held his wool hoping for a price increase. Wool rose, then plummeted as described above. In 1926, Cotton held 6000 bags of scoured wool waiting for a price increase.¹ Clearly, the wool market was a gamble.

McPherson (1992:36) describes how wool and textiles helped "anchor" the regional economy:

In 1922 in the [Navajo] Western Agency, 23,080 pounds of rugs sold for \$41,000; raw wool for \$22,000, comprising 78% of all the commerce for that year to include the sale of sheep, cattle, pelts, silver and miscellaneous items.

Many traders including the Hubbells did not risk putting all of their entrepreneurial eggs in one basket. Had Hubbell continued to market only wool, he would have lost his shirt (and his empire (Table 5.1). Instead, his empire expanded significantly after the turn of the century. And it was the marketing of Indian "curios" (especially the Navajo blanket) that enhanced his fame, expanded his influence, and augmented his bank balance.

Evidence Extrapolated from Archival Sources Demonstrating Increased Textile Production

When information is presumed to be unavailable or inaccessible, critical aspects of an economy may receive scant attention. This is all the more reason to analyze business records as much valuable information may be unearthed. The following section highlights evidence from the Hubbell Papers that demonstrates the economic importance of weavers' production.

Although the number of posts increased from 17 to 36 in "Navajo country," no new

trading posts appeared in eastern Navajo country until after 1896 (Kelley and Whiteley 1989:65). This means that Ganado, Hubbell's original post was strategically located to capture much of the Indian trade in that region. Hubbell opened several branch posts (Cornfields, Mud Springs and Cedar Springs) between 1896 and 1905. Ganado was sixty miles from the railroad.

The increase in blanket production occurs early in the Hubbell archives [Figure 5.1]. Before the turn of the century, 94%, or 180 of 192 business accounts were primarily for textiles (Box 337). Several tables and figures compiled from his business records are incorporated in this chapter to demonstrate both the importance of women's textile production relative to other commodities, and the escalation in production by weavers which benefited Hubbell's entrepreneurial success (Tables 5.1 and 5.3, Figures 5.1 and 5.3).

By 1896, Hubbell's former partner Clinton Cotton moved to Gallup and constructed a large warehouse and store (50,000 square feet); he became one of the leading wholesalers in the region. Photographs of his "rug rooms" illustrate hundreds of textiles stacked on floors and shelves. Cotton (1896:5) states that prior to 1892, few blankets were available and:

the demand in the neighborhood of their manufacture was sufficient to exhaust the supply. Since the low price of wool, however, the Navajos, realizing that they could get a much better price for their blankets than for the crude wool, have become extensive manufacturers of rugs and blankets...one Navajo blanket will outlast half a dozen machine-made blankets.

During the 1890s, when Hubbell shipped blanket stock, he grouped them in bundles: bed blankets, saddle blankets (single and double), fancy blankets (probably Germantowns), and Indian dye blankets (Box 332). By the turn of the century, blanket shipments began to increase in complexity. Much of the demand for handmade articles was fuelled by the burgeoning Arts and Crafts Movement. Aficionados rebelled against stuffy Victorian interiors and sought to embrace a simpler lifestyle surrounded by handmade goods both functional and beautiful.

Hubbell appears to have raised the wholesale price of bed and saddle blankets to 50

cents per pound, yet weavers were still receiving about 30 cents per pound in book credit (Box 333, Ganado Day Books). However, he continued to wholesale some bed and half-saddle blankets to Cotton in Gallup for 30 cents per pound and regular saddle blankets for 40 cents per pound. Many pages from the Ganado Day Book contain blanket entries that comprise 80% of the information per page. Old bayeta blankets were sold to collectors for \$50.00 each. Some blankets were coded, some noted only the price, or the weight. Care was taken not to accidentally duplicate entries. After totalling all categories (and noting some information was missing), I found that weavers wove up more than \$7904.56 in textiles during 1900. More than 478 blankets were produced and entered individually, plus another 7,450 pounds were noted only by weight. Two hundred sixty-five entries in this ledger use the CASH [1234] PROFIT code [567890]. Table 5.2 "Coded Textiles, Ganado Trading Post 1900-1901" lists the jobbers, the value weavers received in book credit, and the amount Hubbell charged the dealers for coded textiles. Note the markups are nearly 100%. Figure 5.2 illustrates the frequency distribution of coded rugs reported in Table 5.2, that were sold in six wholesale price categories during 1901.

Table 5.3 "Blanket Shipments, 1901, Ganado Day Book" provides detailed information on most textiles shipped in 1901 (Box 333). A great number of rugs and blankets were shipped in ten categories (this includes textiles identified only by weight). The large number of categories counters the oft-quoted assumption that textile styles decreased with the advent of "trader-controlled weaving." In comparing Hubbell's prices printed in his 1902 catalogue with coded entries, reveals, for example, that a weaver received \$12.50 in credit for weaving an "old style red ground" blanket which Hubbell in turn sold to Marshall Field Department Store in Chicago, for \$25 to \$30.00.

Between August and December 1901, Hubbell purchased \$4000 in goods from Cotton. Of this amount, \$1529 was paid down with blankets (Box 337, p4). On May 17, Hubbell bought the trading post at Keams Canyon for his nineteen year-old son Lorenzo Jr.

(Box 94). Exactly one month later Cotton wrote Hubbell:

Lorencito buying blankets cheap..only way I know of to handle them...if a good price is paid..cannot make a profit. Lorencito has a good head..will not allow Indians the best of it...

Hubbell admits to another retailer that large blankets take six months to weave (Box 94, Feb. 15), and that he sold \$27,000 worth of textiles in 1901 and half were old style patterns.² He comments on how few of the large Indian dye blankets were produced because "it [the low price] has not justified them making them" (March 24, Box 94). Hubbell wholesaled Indian dye blankets for 75 cents per pound. Weavers received 45 cents per pound in credit for this type of textile. Hubbell sold Navajo wool for eight cents a pound that year. Textile production dramatically increased after publication of Hubbell's 1902 pamphlet with photos and descriptions of Indian "curios." Shortly after he began distributing his catalogue he responded to an inquiry on October 17, 1902:

{I have} a large assortment of grey grounds, navy blue and black stripes, ..native wool, well made all wool sell in 1000 to 5000 pounds lots at 65 cents per pound also 75 to \$1.00 per pound.

His textile shipments doubled (from 14,000 to 28,000 pounds) within the year, and for several decades, approximately 80-90% of annual shipments of "curios" by weight were composed of textiles (Figure 5.1). During the first decade, textile sales and shipments continued to escalate (Figure 5.1) while prices for Navajo wool fluctuated 100% (Table 3.1).

Clinton Cotton wrote Hubbell (Box 20, 6/09) that although the wool market appeared weak, the blanket situation "has been very good, in fact twice as good as it was last year at this time." Hubbell advertised a large selection of hand woven blankets from 6 x 7 to 10.5 x 11 feet. He admits to correspondents that he's making more money on saddle blankets than on any other commodity acquired from the Navajo (Bauer 1987:88).

Hubbell wrote the Bank of Commerce in Albuquerque (Box 96):

business has never been better with us since we have been in business. We have bought twice as much wool as we did last year, we have nearly double the number of Bkts. that we did last year and have nearly doubled our sale

of merchandise...we retail between 1000.00 per day between us all, and sometimes 1500. But the latter ...only during the sheep shearing season.

Hubbell (Box 96, 6/14/09) reported that the Indians in his vicinity had never been so prosperous. Their herds had increased 25-50%, their wool sold for a good price, and weavers had increased their sales of blankets by 50% compared to previous years. Hubbell's admission counters the often quoted comment that weaving increased only when wool prices were depressed. Evidence in the Hubbell Papers from previous years also counters this frequently quoted refrain. For example, referencing Figures 5.1 and 5.3, and Table 5.1, although wool increased 50% in value between 1902 and 1903, textile production increased from 28,000 to 30,000 pounds. During the following two years, wool rose from 10-12 cents to 16 cents per pound, and rug production increased by 7%. Wool fluctuated between 11 and 12.5 cents per pound between 1906 and 1908, yet textile production by weavers trading with Hubbell escalated from 29,000 to more than 40,000 pounds (Figure 5.1). His 1907 rug profits were \$9223.60. Hubbell suffered a net loss of -\$207.75 on the wool market that year. Such discrepancies demonstrate how weavers' production provided a very comfortable cushion to offset losses in the volatile wool market.

The blanket profits totalled from information contained in his shipping and profit and loss records that year are corroborated by statements made in his business correspondence. Hubbell reaped record profits of \$27,000 for "curios" [mostly textiles] in 1909 [Table 5.1].³ Based on evidence in his papers, he would have had to sell at least 1.35 million pounds of wool (at two cents per pound net profit) to make equivalent profits!! According to my survey of his wool shipments, the Hubbells do not appear to sell more than 400,000 pounds of wool in a record year. Few traders ran freighting operations the size of Hubbells. Most traders not only lacked adequate storage and shipping facilities for enormous amounts of wool, they lacked the economic security to hold wool for an extended period of time because of debits owing to wholesalers.

By July 1910, the wool market appeared "thoroughly demoralized." With the wool market down, Hubbell shipped a massive number of rugs to Cotton on October 28: 6,500 pounds to his Gallup warehouse to pay down his accounts, and 2583 pounds to other clients (Box 348). Earlier that year, Hubbell had shipped 19 bales, or 3333 pounds of textiles to the Fred Harvey Company over an eight week period (Box 348).

The following information summarizes Hubbell's economic prowess in wholesaling wool in the form of blankets. Referencing information contained in Table 5.1 and Figures 5.1 and 5.3 in 1891, Hubbell's wool shipments were worth ten times his blanket shipments. By 1900, blanket shipments were valued at 260% more than his wool shipments. By 1909, Hubbell's profits in blankets were nearly fourteen times higher than his wool profits. In fact his blanket profits that year were greater than the total amount of wool sold. For every pound of weaving Hubbell shipped from 1891 to 1909, he netted 27 cents per pound in profits (Table 5.1). Over a twenty year period, his blanket profits averaged 12.5 times his wool profits. Between 1906 and 1909, Hubbell's sales and shipments of wool doubled. Over the same time period his curio profits increased twenty-fold over wool profits. These calculations provide irrefutable evidence that traders' greatest profits lay in wool woven into textiles.

In 1924, Lorenzo Jr., purchased a large warehouse in Winslow, which ultimately stocked 10,000 Navajo blankets and rugs (Boxes 465, 482, 483).⁴ On May 24, 1926, Lorenzo Jr., submitted a confidential report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs as to the value of goods he acquired from Navajo on the Reservation, and those living on the Hopi Reservation (Joint-Use area). Of seven categories, including sheep, the only commodity valued higher than blankets is wool. Since it is difficult to interpret the wording and decipher the numbers, I have not replicated the information here. However, rugs from both Reservations outrank all other commodities except wool.

In a letter to Superintendent Miller on June 11, 1931, Lorenzo, Jr., wrote that traders

seldom realized more than two cents per pound on the sale of Navajo wool.⁵ Information contained in Table 5 which reveals how the Hubbells' cumulative profits in blankets had been far greater than their wool profits for decades. In fact their profits in pelts and skins were nearly double their wool profits for that period.

Both the Depression followed by the stock reduction program initiated by John Collier had devastating consequences for the Navajo. Mohair dropped to seven cents per pound in 1932, and plummeted further to 2.5 cents per pound in 1933. To offset such miserable returns, Roman had women spin from 35 to 70 pounds of mohair to be woven into large sand painting blankets. In checking weavers' records for this period, it appears that women needed from eight months to a year to complete a 9 foot x 9 foot or 12 foot x 12 foot textile. Upon completion of the larger blanket, the maximum amount a weaver was able to discharge from her account was \$300 (Boxes 401 and 403). Saddle blankets were graded and wholesaled between 70 cents to \$1.25 per pound comparable to 1902 prices (Box 106).

Another trader who owned a post at Shonto relates:

Due to drop in wool prices during the Depression, weaving became very important. [more rugs were woven because] they did bring in slightly more credit at the post per pound than the raw wool...[a particular Navajo family]..their pawn, consisting of several turquoise and silver bracelets, went in and out when redeemed by his wife's rugs. She was an excellent weaver, but often she was forced to weave quickies, or "bread and coffee rugs" which of course we had to buy... (Hegemann 1963:298)

Evidence Demonstrating Increase in Weavers' Workload

The amount of labour extended by traders to market blankets was minuscule relative to the extreme effort expended by thousands of women weaving "wool into blankets." As described in Chapter Four, it often takes longer to prepare the fibres for the loom as it does to weave the textile, depending upon complexity of pattern and fineness of weave.

Data extrapolated from archival sources demonstrates that weavers' workloads tripled after 1890. Not only were women compelled to accelerate weaving, they had to barter for cloth (by the yard) and sew much of their families' clothing. The evidence revealed below

taken from Hubbells' business records parallels the increase in Reservation-wide production [adapted from Amsden] described in the previous chapter. Additional evidence is provided by a government study during the 1930s.

When working with the Hubbell archives, there appears to be a high volume of rug production as information related to textiles appears everywhere--in inter and intra-post correspondence, off-Reservation general correspondence, day books, journals and ledgers, shipping manifests, and invoices. The following section highlights the escalation of textile production reflecting increase in workload as revealed in the Lorenzo Hubbell Papers.

Textile production rose dramatically after Hubbell published his 1902 pamphlet with photos and descriptions of Indian "curios" (see Appendix 5 and Figure 5.1). Utilizing information from the weavers' ledgers in his business records, one can track how weavers were "squeezed." The shift from blankets to rugs, to offset the increased competition from trade blanket manufacturers, pressured weavers in the following manner. Prior to the turn of the century, bed blankets formed a portion of Navajo textile production (pre-1900 Cotton correspondence in Hubbell Papers). Many of these were more loosely woven and of simpler patterns. When the Navajo blanket became a rug, it meant that wool had to be spun one to two more times. It also had to be packed down more tightly while weaving, otherwise the rug would be too soft, and would not withstand hard wear.

Recall that most "experiments" referenced in Chapter Four involved weavers provisioned with yarns. Because weaving became an "alternative means to market wool" (Bailey and Bailey 1986:152), providing weavers with yarns defeated that purpose. Utilizing evidence previously referenced, it becomes apparent that preparation of materials prior to weaving often takes more time than weaving itself. By using information extrapolated from these "experiments", one may calculate the number of hours needed to produce a pound of weaving. ⁶

Saddle blankets are fairly standardized according to size, with singles averaging 32

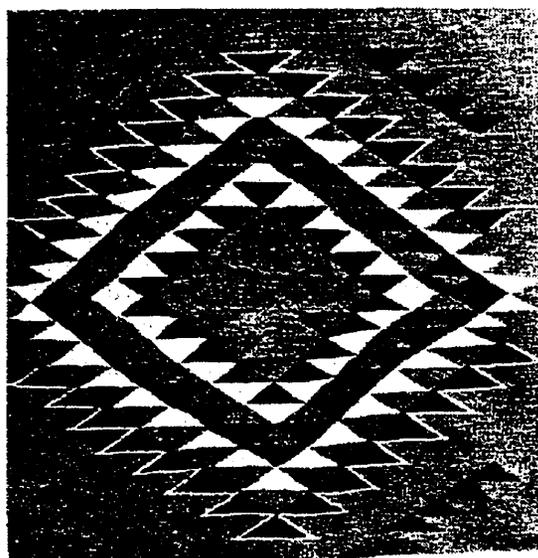
to 36 inches square and weighing three to four pounds each. Double saddle blankets measure approximately 30 x 50 or 60 inches and weigh from five to seven pounds a piece. Based on published experiments, I calculated that patterned double saddle blankets may take 140 hours just to weave (this estimate includes warping the loom), which averages 20 hours per pound of yarn. If the weaver also cleans, cards, spins and dyes all of the wool, the workload per pound of finished weaving will more than double. The time required to turn raw fleece into a textile will vary quite a bit, depending upon the number of times the yarn must be spun to achieve the desired diameter, and the complexity of the pattern. For example, simple horizontal stripes of coarsely spun wool weave up more quickly than a complex pattern created with fine hand-spun yarn. If a 3 x 5 foot rug weighs approximately six pounds, it may take from 204 hours (simple pattern, coarsely spun wool) to 560 hours (complex pattern, fine spun wool) to spin and weave. Given the escalation in production [Figure 5.1], weavers may not have been able to afford the extra time necessary to collect plants for dyes. Plants cannot be collected during winter, and frequently are at their peak for short periods during the growing season. Thus weavers resorted to using aniline dyes.

Hubbell's branch post at Cornfields has detailed, readable records for 1906 and 1907. Tracking the movement of commodities, it appears that for four months per year, weavers' production is exchanged for more than 50% of all goods acquired from the trader. For the rest of the time, weaving provides from 21% to 44%. In 1906 (Box 66), weavers received 73 cents per pound credit for large rugs. Hubbell wholesaled them for \$1.22 per pound. Navajo are receiving 12.5 cents per pound in credit for their wool at Cornfields. Weavers needed approximately 25 cents worth of wool to a produce pound of yarn. They are netting less than 50 cents per pound in credit for their large rugs which generally take months to weave [Appendix IV].

Additional evidence extracted from archives demonstrating the importance of women's textile production and subsequent increase in workload is exhibited in several Figures and



Pound Blanket/Rug Circa 1905 (4.5' x 5')



Saddle Blanket Circa 1950 (30" x 32")
Illustration 5.1

Tables in this Chapter. Figure 5.4 illustrates the number of blankets bartered by weavers monthly at Ganado during 1906. Table 5.5 reveals the breakdown by month of all goods bartered by Navajo trading at Ganado in 1906.⁷

In summarizing the escalation in production by weavers from 1892 to 1909, Hubbell shipped 415,000 pounds, or 208 tons, of textiles from Ganado over an 18 year period (Figure 5.1). This increase in textile production corroborates that described in the previous chapter that was extracted from information published in Amsden (1934). Such an escalation in production over less than a generation provides direct evidence of increased workload for many Navajo women.

Information provided in several studies developed by government personnel after the Depression demonstrate how such an increased workload was sustained. For example, E. R. Fryer collated statistics summarizing the total value of Navajo products in 1939-1940. Information in Table 8, "Rug Schedule From Traders' Purchases For Year 1939," demonstrates that weavers had to use two pounds of wool to produce one pound of yarn, or a ratio of 2:1, raw fleece to hand-spun wool. It is evident that weavers were utilizing their own wool; they were not being given wool by the traders. As described previously, the introduction of new breeds increased wool and meat output, but had inimical affects on wool utilized by hand-spinners. Much of the "improved" wool was oily and crimped. It required additional preparation to rid it of dirt and grease.

Evidence Demonstrating Sustained Appropriation of Weavers' Surplus Labour

Except for mutton, wool, and corn, the Navajo became completely dependent upon provisioning themselves through "barter" with the trader. Analysis of archival records demonstrates the overwhelming necessity of textile production to the maintenance of a livelihood damaged by direct competition engendered by appropriation of indigenous designs. As trade blanket manufacturers usurped the markets formerly served by Navajo weavers, textile production increased dramatically (Figure 5.1). Information in this section reveals how

the cash valuation of Navajo textiles failed to keep pace with the rise in the cost of living.

Evidence of a market saturated by Navajo weaving occurs early in Hubbell's records. Hubbell held between \$10,000 to \$12,000 stock in blankets (Box 94, 12/05/03). Although Hubbell's financial assets continued to grow (Table 5.1), trader Charles S. Day (Box 23, 7/22/03) wrote indicating his concern with the glut of Navajo blankets on the market which is depressing returns to weavers:

Trade is fair here but no sale for blankets. Cotton wrote me that if blankets came in for the next 30 days as they had been coming for the last 30 he could not take any more. I do not know what we will do if there is no sale for blkts, as that is about all the Indians have to sell.

A plea was made to get the Commissioner to visit and assuage the problem, but to no avail.⁸ The "glut" exemplifies the impoverishment of weavers in conjunction with the relentless usurpation of the market by trade blanket manufacturers. Coincidentally, the average retail cost of trade blankets to the Navajo increased 800% [from \$1.55 to \$12.50], between 1880 and 1911, which parallels the escalation in production of Navajo weaving relative to the 50% increase in population.

Wool moved from 13.5 cents to 18 cents a pound between 1912 and 1915. Although textile production had increased and the Navajo were selling more stock due to the War, Weiss (1984:83) reported that 85% of the Navajo population was "destitute, moderately poor or average" in 1915.

Information contained in the following section is adopted from two reports contained in the Hubbell archives (Box 527). Portions of Youngblood's study provide a more realistic assessment of the proportionately higher cost of living for the Navajo than that reflected in the CPI utilized by the Baileys (1986). Fryer's 1939 survey demonstrates the magnitude and importance of textile production to the regional economy. In conjunction with the evidence analyzed in the previous chapter, these reports substantiate my conviction "the more the Navajo wove, the poorer they became." Both reports were produced by government

personnel during the 1930s. Although they contain data compiled years after most of the information I analyzed in archival records, [all of the Tables and Figures in this chapter], they corroborate similar information contained in Hubbell business records. A handful of authors have referenced one or both reports (Bailey and Bailey 1986; Kelley 1976, Kelley and Whiteley 1989), but they do not appear to exist as independent publications. Through amalgamating both the published and archival information, it is possible to estimate the appropriation of surplus labour by merchant capital for decades. The following section surveys information related to trading prior to focusing on textile production.

Youngblood's Survey 1929-1934

The first report to be cited was compiled by B. Youngblood, an Agricultural Economist with the United States Department of Agriculture (HP Box 527 #4). Dated May 1, 1935, the study covers the years from 1929 to 1934. Youngblood surveyed more than one hundred posts on and adjacent to the Reservation. Traders were generally cooperative. Some kept adequate account books, others almost no books at all. Youngblood found the bulk of Navajo trade was with licensed on-Reservation traders. On average the trading posts he surveyed possessed considerable solvency throughout the Depression. Three of 80 posts suffered business failure during his study. Based on figures published on page 23 of his report, Youngblood says that posts in Navajo country probably weathered the Depression better than the average American business. Reservation-wide there was great variation in retail prices which bore no relation to wholesale prices. This is quite remarkable since the survey was conducted during the Depression, when one would expect lowered retail prices as an aid to assist Navajo in overcoming the collapse of the wool, mohair and lamb markets. A government directive published in 1924, had stipulated that retail prices at trading posts were to be no greater than 25 to 35% over wholesale costs.

In Tables 95 and 96, Youngblood compares operating costs of chain stores and trading posts. He found the net operating profit for posts was 276% higher than chain stores

because the margin of profit on goods was (marginally) higher, but operating expenses were considerably lower. Information provided in Table 16 from Youngblood (1935) illustrates the average undelivered wholesale cost of twelve key items of merchandise at 45 trading posts on the Navajo Reservation in 1933 and 1934. All of the items are represented in my Tables 3.2 and 3.3, compiled from information extracted from Hubbell's post inventories. Because Youngblood's figures are so similar to the figures in Hubbell's 1933 and 1934 inventories, I have utilized his information to demonstrate the average percentage of markups on goods represented in my tables. Table 58 in Youngblood illustrates "Average markups for six months period January-June 1933." Figures utilized are taken from information collated from 24 to 44 trading posts on the Reservation. With the exception of coffee and alfalfa, markups are far greater than the ceiling mandated by the government in 1924.

Consumer item	% of markup
Flour	43 %
Sugar	57 %
Coffee	37 %
Fats	69 %
Canned milk	84 %
Canned pears	58 %
Canned peaches	86 %
Canned tomatoes	81 %
Alfalfa	30 %
Trade Blankets	53 %
Women's shoes	69 %
Men's work shoes	74 %
Velveteen	94 %
Sateen	96 %
Cotton yardage	102 %
Thread	139 %
Overalls	77 %
Men's cotton shirts	83 %
Men's hats	64 %

According to Kelley and Whiteley (1989:229), Navajo families surveyed in 1936*, spent an average of \$233.56 annually on food and clothing. Sixty percent was spent for food, and 40% for clothing. Of the latter amount, 35% was for trade blankets and 20% for

yardage.

The Navajo Agency Report 1939-1940

Another government report containing relevant information was produced by government agent, E. R. Fryer. As General Superintendent with the Navajo Service, Fryer requested information from all traders on the Navajo Reservation as to the amount of wool retained for weaving. Fryer also requested information as to "cost price" of rugs acquired from weavers. Traders were not required to report this information, however, they appear to have complied with his request. Fryer noted that "the great majority of rugs..are sold to the wholesale houses in Gallup, Winslow, and elsewhere." He (1939:101) provides a description of services rendered by wholesalers:

[who] must maintain connections through which he can dispose of wool, lambs, rugs and other Indian products in volume. In the late 1930s, rugs sold in various ways...either locally, by mail order, or delivered to the wholesaler on account. Wholesalers advance no cash for the purchase of rugs. The wholesaler must find markets for rugs he accepts on account. Wholesalers average 10% markup (on goods sold to traders): 8% on staples, 10% on dry goods (including shawls & robes), and 15% on canned goods, and possibly 5% on flour.

Fryer found that markups on goods were higher because cash sales seldom occurred.⁹ Traders granted Navajo "unsecured credit" for at least six months per year.

In late 1930s, it was reported that traders paid down their accounts with wholesalers with Indian products (80%) and cash (20%). Cash payments had increased because of Indian Emergency Conservation and Soil Erosion Service programs initiated during the Depression. Additional cash was generated due to the stock reduction program mandated during the John Collier era. The Navajo were forced to sell many animals between 1934 and 1937. By 1939, the percentage of weaving applied to paydown of traders' accounts with wholesalers ranged from 8% to 55%. It would have been far higher before Depression, and before the CCC programs. [Recall that textile production was valued at one million dollars in 1930.]

According to Fryer, weaving comprised \$333,056, or 19% of the commercial revenue in 1939, with 303,325 pounds of textiles acquired from weavers. Thus, there was a sharp

decline over the decade, reflecting the drastic affects of the stock reduction program which decreased the amount of wool available to weavers. By 1939, 29% of tribal income was from sheep, and 20% from wool (selling for 17 cents per pound that year). Wage labour comprised only 3% of tribal income. The Navajo Agency noted in their detailed study that:

rug income is of greater economic significance to the Navajo than the values involved would indicate. It is practically the only income they can normally depend upon between wool and lamb marketing seasons....There are no silversmiths in the vicinity of 50% of posts.

This is quite a revealing statement, demonstrating the continued importance of textile production even though it sharply declined during the decade for the reasons stated above. Fryer's comment also corroborates the voluminous evidence in Hubbells' business records.

Fryer's report provides valuable evidence which demonstrates the sustained appropriation of weavers' labour for decades. The figures replicated in Table 8, represent the actual cash valuation of textiles woven by Navajo women in 1939. In other words, the figures reflect the actual amount of credit weavers received. There is no ambiguity whether the reported figures reflect the value of rugs wholesaled off the Reservation, or credit allotted to weavers. The figures definitely represent credit allotted to weavers. The calculations to be made in the following section are based on information from this report. They demonstrate the extent of impoverishment of Navajo weavers and corroborate much of the evidence compiled from earlier archived business records. According to Table 1, in the Navajo Agency report, waged labour amounted to \$57,873.00 in 1939. Navajo workers earned about \$2.00 per day (or 25 cents an hour). If they worked an "average" eight hour day, the dollar figure approximates 231,492 hours of labour expended by waged workers. Using the amount of wool woven into rugs during that year (303,000 pounds), and using information related to "experiments" referenced in the previous chapter, I calculated that each pound of wool required from forty to sixty hours preparation and weaving time. In 1939, the labour expended by thousands of Navajo weavers ranged from 12 to 18 million hours and earned

them \$333,056.00 in credit. However, weavers supplied all of the wool valued at \$103,713.00 (Table 8, Column Six). The value of the wool must be subtracted from the total, as the Navajo could have sold the wool to the trader instead of weaving it into rugs and saddle blankets. Thus weavers netted \$229,343.00 in credit for producing 303,325 pounds of textiles. Weavers also supplied all of their own tools, paid for dyes and tow cards used for cleaning and straightening the wool fibres.

In Fryer's table it appears that weavers earned only four times the value of the fleece in weaving a saddle blanket or rug - and that is in credit (not cash). Figure 5.5, Credit Received by Weavers for Textiles, shows the amount of credit per pound extended by the trader (\$1.06 computed mean value), and the revised amount (71 cents computed mean value), after deducting the value of the wool [17 cents per pound]. Weavers averaged one to two cents per hour for their labour, or 8 to 16 cents per "weaving day." Even utilizing dependable information for this particular year, reveals an astounding amount of "hidden" labour. In previous years with higher volume output (cf. in 1911, weavers utilized 843,750 pounds of wool and produced an estimated 500,000 pounds of finished textiles). Thus fewer weavers had to work even harder.¹⁰ But regardless of how hard they worked, it appears weavers received less than three cents per hour in credit, even when they supplied all the inputs. Although the Hubbell data I have analyzed covers an earlier time period, it corroborates much of the information provided by Fryer. This estimate of one to two cents per hour was corroborated in a recent conversation with a Navajo weaver. Both her mother and grandmother wove for decades and received approximately \$15.00 in credit for a 4 by 6 foot rug. My correspondent has been weaving for decades, and she had calculated the hourly return based on her own experience.

Fryer's report is also important because he illustrates the breakdown of information by District. The Navajo Reservation was divided into 19 Districts incorporating 137 trading posts (the total number of posts on the Reservation). Ganado, the Hubbell family's key post,

is located in District 17, and Lorenzo, Jr.'s post at Oraibi is located in District 5-6. The younger Hubbell also maintained a large warehouse/sales room located in Winslow, Arizona, a Reservation border town. Although a major portion of the Hubbells' business enterprises centred on Navajo textiles, the output from these two districts does not stand "head and shoulders" above the others. The six posts located in District 5-6 represent just over 3% of all textiles acquired from weavers on the Reservation in 1939. Ten posts are located in District 17, and handled 10% of all textiles obtained from weavers that year. Several of the Hubbells' smaller posts are incorporated in District 17. Weavers in District 5-6 received an average of 70 cents in credit per pound of weaving in comparison to women from District 17. Those weavers averaged \$1.02 per pound (revised computed mean value). The percentages for the districts incorporating Hubbell posts are not unusually high. This demonstrates that the volume of the Hubbells "rug business" was not exceptionally high in comparison to that reported for other Districts in Fryer's table. Reviewing information in pertinent Tables and Figures demonstrates the escalation in production and decreasing returns to weavers faced with a rise in the cost of living. For decades, the price of a Pendleton trade blanket averaged six times per pound the cash valuation of a saddle blanket and three times the amount a rug would bring.

During the 1940s, prices for weaving remained extremely depressed. In the fall of 1940, wholesale prices ranged from \$3-6 for rugs 2 x 3 to 4 feet; a 3 x 5 foot rug cost \$6-10; 4 x 6 foot ran \$10-15; and 5 x 6 or 7 foot rug sold for \$16-25. Double saddle blankets wholesaled for \$4.50 each, and singles were \$2.25. Rugs at these quoted prices contained "nice designs," whereas most of the saddle blankets had stripes (Box 112, 10/03/40). The rug prices just quoted are less than prices listed in Hubbell's 1902 catalogue.¹¹ That year Lorenzo responded to an enquiry:

we pride ourselves in the quality, quantity, and assortment of sizes and designs of Navajo Rugs; at no time do we wish to make the impression that we sell the Indians material at bargain prices...our interest is to keep on creating an income to these

people. (Box 112, 12/24/40)

Two days later he responded to another inquiry:

It is such a help to us and these primitive people in obtaining an income from these hand made rugs, the only small permanent income they have, the Lord knows its not much, as they come not less than 15 miles to sell them, and they utilize wool to make them which in itself is a cash commodity. (Box 112)

Weavers who traded with the Hubbells also "earned" from one to three cents per hour in credit for every pound of weaving they produced. Prices for Navajo weaving remained depressed until the early 1970s (Chapter 7). Bailey and Bailey (1986:Appendix B) report the CPI at 26 in 1902, 42 in 1940 and 116.3 in 1970. The following section reviews issues related to standardization.

Terms of Trade: Issues Related to Standardization

Prior to the turn of the century, the Navajo blanket was "transformed into a rug." It is apparent that both Cotton and Hubbell were seeking to extend the market for Navajo textiles as trade blanket manufacturers expanded their production, usurping markets formerly provisioned by Navajo weavers. As discussed previously, marketing wool in the form of textiles cushioned the volatility of the wool market. The following section highlights pertinent information extracted from archives which sheds light on weaver/trader relations.

In Hubbell's pre-1900 ledger books, bed and saddle blankets were wholesaled for 30 to 40 cents per pound. Cotton advertised "first grade" small blankets between \$4 to \$10, the larger blankets from \$20 to \$60. Saddle blankets retailed for 83 cents to \$1.25 each. However, I found little evidence that weavers received more than 25 to 30 cents per pound for their textiles, regardless of quality. Some record books may be missing, but on the inside cover of the 1886-87 ledger (Box 321#7) from Chinle, I found several pages of English words translated into Navajo including terms for 'money' up to 90 cents. Thirty percent of the words dealt directly with weaving and the first four words were as follows:

blanket ...	[Navajo word]
good ...	" "

bad ... " "
to much ... " "

How is one to interpret such information found in one of the earliest ledger books? Given the tremendous devaluation of weaving, it appears that regardless of quality, the weaver wanted "to (sic) much." And what other choice did she have but to "sell" it to the trader at the "price" he would give her? In 1887, Cotton sold 4 x 6 foot textiles for \$10 each. He noted that each was made of "their own wool are much finer woven...It takes months for a squaw to make one as each thread has to be put through the loom by hand..." (Box 92, p682). This remark indicates that weavers were receiving far less than \$10 in barter for a textile that may take several months to produce.

Although government policy mandated traders to give cash in return for goods, the realities of Reservation life precluded carrying out transactions in this manner.¹² The Navajo were always in debt, thus the promised blanket was sufficient to secure a credit advance, while a finished blanket paid down the debt.

The following quote highlights the weaver's vulnerable position when it came to bartering her textiles. It is contained in a charming 'diary' kept by Mrs. Frank Churchill, wife of a government Indian Inspector (Box 16#6, 12/28/04). After describing the delightful dinner at Ganado, and the interesting company at the table, she wrote:

there are several hogans near the store and one woman came to the store while we were there with a blanket. Mr. Hubbell was not willing to pay the price she asked. She said she could get much more at Gallup (60 miles distant). She told him he had three partners in his business, he asked who they were and she replied "cold, rain and mud." If it wasn't for them she could get her price.

By 1906, it appears that some of the materials utilized for weaving were valued more than the cash valuation of saddle blankets per pound: Hubbell charged 65 cents per pound for fuzzy roving yarn. Rough yarn, wool warp and spun wool all retailed to weavers for 50 cents per pound. Given the pressure to increase production, sometimes weavers engaged in forms of resistance. Throughout correspondence with Clinton Cotton and other wholesalers,

comments appear concerning sand in blankets and wool. In attempting to receive a greater return for their efforts, some weavers either spun the wool fewer times, more loosely, or packed it lightly (rather than firmly) during the weaving process. Any blanket or rug which was loosely woven would probably suffer from uneven edges. Such a textile would be classified as a "poor [quality] blanket." Several sources claim that traders paid for weaving by weight for just a short period prior to the turn of the century. For example, Rodee (1981:9) states that weavers "outsmarted" the traders by weaving loose, coarse rugs from poorly cleaned and carded wool, ...then pounded more dirt and sand into the finished product..to increase the weight." The information analyzed in Hubbells' records soundly refutes such an assumption. Experienced traders were always wise to such tricks, and penalized weavers and wool growers accordingly (selected inter and intra-post correspondence and Cotton Letter Books).

The Old Conundrum "Standardization"

Adams (1963:200-01) describes a typical trader's reaction when a weaver appeared at the post with her rug:

[he will]...look it over in silence for a minute or more, without touching it...or measuring it. The trader can then come out in a firm voice with the first figure that enters his head and stick resolutely to it. The trader who examines a proffered rug closely weakens the authority of his judgement since he is supposed to be able to spot...defects at a glance...trading is a white man's game...

Such a statement coming from an anthropologist who posed as a trader while doing fieldwork for his Ph.D., lends credence to the generalization that traders wielded great influence over weavers. However, given the escalation in textile production, much of the information already covered in this chapter tempers that generalization to a great degree. The following section provides additional critique concerning traders' influences.

Historian Edgar Moore (1979:8) comments on Hubbell's influence as the individual most responsible for "improving and standardizing" the quality of Navajo weaving. Yet in Hubbell's voluminous records, by the turn of the century, there are at least a dozen

categories of textiles in varying sizes within each category, a far cry from "standardization!" (Table 5.3). Had textiles actually become standardized, it is doubtful that Herman Schweizer would have rejected so many. Clinton Cotton often acquired Schweizer's "rejects" for his own rug warehouse in Gallup, in "payment" for Hubbell's merchandise accounts (Box 6). In his landmark study during the Depression, Youngblood (Box 527), remarked that the reason for traders not advertising Navajo rugs more widely was the lack of standardization of rugs as to "size, quality and design." Traders preferred "clean, straight edged rugs," and there is no question that rug borders were definitely trader-induced. The following statement is a familiar refrain in their advertisements: "there's no such thing as two Navajo rugs alike." Although it appears to be a marketing ploy, it reflects the real situation based on both Hubbell's and Schweizer's ledger books and traders' advertising pamphlets. [Appendix V]. Tens of thousands of blankets are entered into the Hubbells' business records, and Herman Schweizer's ledger books. Weights and measurements continually differ, patterns and colours are never described, although the background colour may be mentioned. It would be impossible, as there was such great variation and volume. Hubbell wrote customers that he could ship "rugs of any colour, size and design." Standardization was far more likely to occur in the low returns weavers received for their arduous labour.¹³

Although archival information relevant to this topic has been available for decades, researchers have neglected to utilize these sources which reveal the escalation in production and shipments of weaving. Because of the tremendous number of blankets shipped off Reservation, traders' influence has been greatly over-emphasized. Weavers always wove at home, often many miles from the post and they never worked from full size drawings [Appendix IV]. After 1907, when rug shipments had escalated to more than 40,000 pounds per year, close to one-half of Hubbell's stock came from his other posts. It was not unusual for bales of blankets to be shipped unopened to Gallup. If Hubbell never saw these rugs, how could he have influenced the women that wove them? During the period in which he shipped

415,000 pounds of textiles off the Reservation (Figure 5.1), Hubbell served as chairman of the Republican Central Committee, held the position of postmaster at Ganado, opened several branch posts, ran a large freighting operation and farm, and oversaw the construction of the Ganado dam and irrigation system, the single largest construction project on the Navajo Reservation until the Depression.¹⁴ His hospitality was legendary, and he frequently fed many visitors from all walks of life at his dinner table (McNitt 1962; Underhill 1956). One wonders, given the thousands of pounds of textiles shipped annually, when he had the time to commiserate with each of several hundred weavers who bartered at Ganado. Without examining archival evidence, researchers lack information critical to assessing his influence.

Post-World War I Rug Production

Because Hubbell served in the territorial legislature from 1911 to 1913, trading post records containing information related to cumulative shipments of all commodities are somewhat deficient for those years. Hubbell left his younger son Roman, barely out of his teens, and other family members in charge of Ganado. It is unnecessary to review much of the correspondence highlighting his business prowess from 1914 to 1920. However, a series of letters written by his son Lorenzo, Jr., from Oraibi, reveal some interesting developments relative to the fluctuations in the volatile wool market just after World War I. This information counters another fundamental generalization concerning Navajo weaving and traders. Weavers did not always increase production when wool prices dropped. The following correspondence is very revealing and demonstrates just how dependent traders were on Navajo weavers. In conjunction with the massive shipments of textiles from the Reservation, it also counters the notion to some extent that they "standardized" Navajo weaving. Had traders continually insisted on specific sizes, colours and patterns, many trade goods would have remained on post shelves.

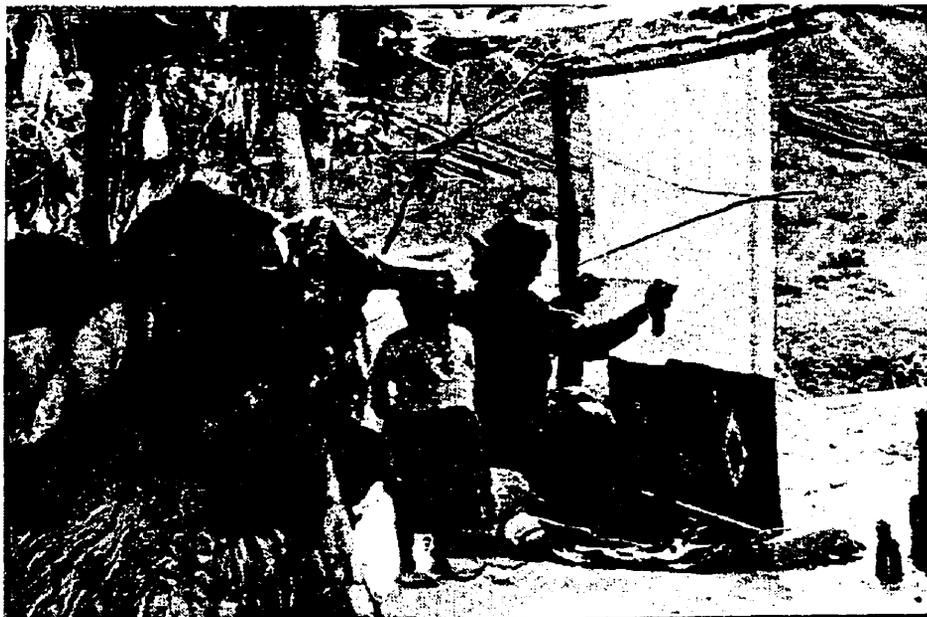
Lorenzo wrote the Commissioner in Keams that he had purchased far less wool (at 24 cents per pound) that year, as the Navajo were holding wool to weave into blankets [Box

102 8/12/20]. He commented since he had known the Navajo, blankets were their main revenue, and:

more Navajo blankets have been made by the Navajo tribe in general, than ever before, or I can safely say in the last four or five years..the Navajo fared better by making blankets, than to have sold..wool at the prices offered..at the beginning of season #1 grade wool was 50c/pound and #2 grade wool was 40c/pound, both were 20c/pound at seasons end; common hairy wool was 30c/pound and 10c/pound at seasons end.

In 1920, Hubbells were receiving approximately 25 to 29 cents per pound on Navajo wool. In 1921, the market plummeted, with wool bringing a scant ten cents per pound (McPherson 1992:36). Yet women were not weaving. Lorenzo Jr. wrote a relative from Oraibi marked personal (Box 102, 9/04/21). He is obviously feeling the post-war economic pinch. All commodities are depressed, and so is his stock of goods. He writes: "Trade is very dull..I'm not getting a third of the rugs I usually get. They are not making them...good rugs are as scarce as hens teeth." Without rugs, Hubbell cannot pay down his accounts with his creditors. Therefore, he cannot order in any goods. Without goods, weavers will not weave for trade. It is a vicious circle. He mentions he's having a Hopi get 1000 pieces of pottery. Although he claims he's low on rugs, Hubbell plans to ship 1500 pounds to his brother-in-law who is running a new store in Long Beach, California.¹⁵ On September 12 he writes again, mentioning that he cannot encourage weavers right now, since he hasn't got the goods... "we are out of cash and goods both...I still believe rugs are going to be scarce... Babbitt Brothers only have about 7000 pounds."

Therefore, high rug inventories were very important to move goods off trading post shelves. To some extent, such commentary helps deflate the "hegemony" of traders over weavers in terms of "standardization." Rather than traders "saving" weaving by developing off-Reservation markets, archival correspondence coupled with business records clearly demonstrates how weavers saved the traders!



Summer Sheep Camp (Circa 1925-30)
Photographs by Milton Snow
Illustration 5.2

Government/Trader Relations

Government bureaucrats were concerned that wholesale merchants such as Cotton not "dictate" wool prices to Reservation traders. Superintendent Daniel (Box 44 - 5/10/20) makes the following comment:

It is the desire of this office that the Indians be especially encouraged to use as much of the low grade or "cow tail" wool as possible in the making of blankets. The fact that this wool on the market will bring only 23 to 28 cents per pound and \$2.00 to \$3.00 per pound in a blanket leaves no room for argument.

Based on information contained in the Hubbell Papers, Daniel's assumption concerning blanket prices is extremely generous. In checking the amounts that wholesalers paid Hubbells during 1920, saddle blankets wholesaled for 60 to 75 cents (Clinton Cotton, Box 21). Furstow paid \$1.25 for "nice double saddles." Cotton paid \$1.00 pound for native wool rugs, and \$2.00 per pound for "excellent" ones. The Fred Harvey Company paid between \$1.45 to \$2.30 per pound that year. (The Fred Harvey Company never handled the "cheaper grade" textiles). Had weavers utilized "cow tail yarn", they were likely to receive far less than \$1.00 per pound in credit for their textiles. Weavers usually chose the best parts of the fleeces for spinning, as it yielded the most ideal yarn for weaving. Such statements from the Navajo Superintendent reveal just how little he really knew about the exigencies of weaving, whether it be technical or economic factors.

The Perpetual Need for Pawning

Pawning continued to be an important source of credit for Navajo trading with the Hubbells (Box 350). It appears that Navajo pawned on a daily basis. In descending order, pawn was exchanged for food, clothing, hay or alfalfa, and 5% for cash. Nearly all names in the pawn records are in Navajo, very few are "anglicized." Bracelets, beads (coral and or silver) and other jewellery, moccasins, saddle blankets and buckskins were pawned. Regardless of when an article was pawned during the month, Hubbell charged 10% interest. Most accounts appeared to be "paid up" by the end of the month. During May, 1905, 156

Navajo pawned \$297.30 worth of goods; an average of five a day @ \$9.58 (or \$1.90/person). During June, 203 Navajo pawned \$360 worth of goods, which were redeemed for a total of \$407.85. Twenty-one accounts remained unredeemed. From May through November, there were 857 pawn transactions for \$1613.30, an average of \$1.88 per transaction. As the year passed, the average amount of each transaction tended to increase from a low of \$1.77 (in June), to a high of \$2.34 in November. The account totalled \$2352.55, which probably reflects the total value of articles plus interest pawned throughout the year. The necessity for pawning would temporarily decrease in the spring as the annual wool clip was brought into the post.

Although total amounts for 227 weavers' accounts [\$2603.17 Box 523#6) and pawn appear similar for 1905, this is deceptive because weavers' accounts represent only those women who had a blanket owing on January 1, the day the annual "inventory" was taken. In 1906 there were 1135 pawn transactions which totalled \$2336.35. Each transaction averaged a low of \$1.11 in February and a high of \$3.31 in December, 1906 (Box 344). From January through December 1907, there were 1263 pawn transactions totalling \$3210.75 (Box 350). During 1908, 1507 transactions totalled \$3455 (Box 350). The number and amounts of pawn transactions continued to increase over the years, even though craft production had risen significantly since 1900 (Figure 5.1). Pawning continued to escalate; it totalled \$3753 for 1910 (Box 523#6). By 1912, pawn totalled \$5411.30 for the year, and in 1915, it increased to \$5774.90. Pawn continued as an important source of credit during the Depression for Navajo trading with the Hubbells. It rose from \$8429 in 1929 to a high of \$16,756 in 1932, dropping to just under \$11,000 in 1934. These pawn records are displayed in Table 5.6.

Letters from Navajo

This chapter would remain incomplete without mentioning a series of letters from Navajo to the Hubbells (Box 124). Over one hundred letters span a period from the turn of

the century to 1966. Many letters were written by children away at boarding school. They were lonesome, and they requested that the Hubbells read letters to their families. Children frequently wrote letters during their writing period at school. As they had no one to correspond with in English, they wrote the trader. A number of letters from adults requested that Hubbells extend the time period for pawned items. A number of Navajo wrote because they were genuinely concerned about their overdue accounts. Many letters began with the salutation "dearest brother," or "dearest father."

In the "Letters from Indians" file, there are very few letters from weavers. Louise Alcott wrote from Sand Spring, Arizona, and requested flour, coffee, sugar, and baking powder. She was working on a rug for the Hubbells:

This morning I will asked you to help me out again as when ever I make a Navajo Rug I always take it to your Store at the Tenabeto, I make pretty Rugs sometimes but the prise is so low. I do not get much out of what I Weved. So I do so much for you in that way I help you out all the time (Box 124, 11/27/35).

Another letter from a weaver who lived in Blue Canyon promised the Hubbells a rug if they would send food for their children (Box 124, 12/38). None of the letters in this file contain any questions or sketches related to weaving patterns, dyes, or sizes. This is surprising, given the magnitude and extent of production. However, I think it provides another example which demonstrates the autonomy of weavers who wove miles away from trading posts. They were the experts who seldom needed the "guiding hand" of the traders except in the most general sense (i.e., a piece of string equivalent to the length of a single or double saddle blanket). In the hundreds of pounds of evidence available in the Hubbell Papers, it is remarkable that only a handful of detailed blanket sketches exist. Boles (1981:53) found fewer than a dozen, and most of them were rough sketches by potential customers.

Conclusions

This chapter contains information drawn from archival sources that refutes most of

the generalizations described at the beginning of Chapter Four which have dominated the anthropological and popular literature on Navajo weaving for decades. It provides a glimpse of the tremendous increase in (hidden) labour endured by Navajo women in tandem with growing impoverishment. By aligning relevant information from published literature with archival evidence, it becomes apparent that for more than sixty years weavers received an average of two cents per hour in credit for their prolific production which was so necessary for their survival. Thus, the refrain that continually appears throughout the Hubbell family's inter-post correspondence for decades, "remember, blankets [rugs] are our good business," takes on new meaning in light of the information revealed in this chapter.

The archival evidence also dispels the myth that Navajo weavers preferred to weave for "barter" as they could acquire for example, a Pendleton blanket and additional credit by trading their handwoven textiles (Amsden 1934; James 1914; Dederer in Kapoun 1992:35; Maxwell 1963:60; Weiss 1984:54; Wheat 1984:19). Based on invoices issued by Pendleton and other trade blanket manufacturers, which include the weights of shawls and blankets for shipping purposes, the commercial textiles wholesaled on average for more than \$1.50 per pound! Unlike their handwoven counterparts, however, commercially manufactured trade blankets were never sold by weight.

Additional evidence was surveyed that tempers traders' [reputed] influence on weavers which led to "standardization." Traders' influence was mediated to some degree by the necessity to keep goods moving. Rather than reject "unsatisfactory" textiles outright, traders probably allowed a reduced amount in trade or credit (Reichard 1936:141).

Gary Witherspoon (1987:41) estimates that more than 100,000 Navajo have woven over one million blankets and rugs over two centuries. With the escalation in production that began around 1890, it is quite probable that 75% of these textiles were wholesaled off the Reservation as "pound blankets." Several of my informants recall their mothers' rugs placed on wool scales in trading posts as recently as 1967 (field notes 1992). The treatment of a

fully finished product such as Navajo weaving as a renewable resource through acquiring it by weight did more to accelerate pauperization on the Reservation than any other factor. Thus, "globalization" and "subsistence insecurity" are phenomena encountered by the Navajo people from the day the Reservation was formed.

The following chapter provides evidence that challenges another entrenched generalization, one that ascribes major changes in weaving patterns to traders.

TABLE 5.1
PROFIT AND LOSS [\$] BY CATEGORY, 1891 TO 1909
HUBBELL TRADING POST RECORDS

YEAR	WOOL	BLANKETS	PELTS	SKINS
1891			486.40	625.94
1892	1559.93	384.67	740.17	514.82
1893	-524.93	1241.90	399.05	388.28
1894	1087.61	2269.00	296.20	287.89
1895	301.17	25.17	125.48	414.03
1896	62.17	64.89	57.53	99.81
1897	537.26	401.70	196.51	333.63
1898	-547.67	2.27	268.37	-374.54
1899	-138.81	176.23	393.36	324.45
1900	147.76	1701.97	212.82	297.16
1901	182.76	7160.95	6.00	129.72
1902	219.00	5135.69	173.11	578.26
1903	-30.25	6541.02	193.54	364.61
1904	8.08	8643.45	173.88	478.90
1905	993.37	7043.27	426.58	439.59
1906	1384.86	5096.98	639.03	233.63
1907	-207.75	9223.60		767.76
1908	1208.11	20,120.86	1136.15	1036.09
1909	1945.37	27,558.42	791.46	890.90
TOTAL	8188.04	102,791.12	6715.64	7830.93

**TABLE 5.2
CODED TEXTILES, GANADO TRADING POST
1900-1901 [BOX 333]**

Page Entry #	Credit Rec'd by Weavers [\$]	Jobber	Wholesale Cost [\$]
36	11.25 [4]	W. H. Clark	24.00
104	109.00 [5]	Babbitt Brothers	194.50
131	145.40 [14]	Glasscock & Vroman	229.00
131	437.80 [25]	Albuquerque Blkt Acct	708.30
152	43.00 [4]	Abe Gold	62.00
152	121.00 [8]	Fred Harvey Co.*	207.50
190	186.50 [21]	C. P. Chandler	300.75
237	313.50 [31]	A. B. McGaffy**	651.00
244	151.10 [40]	H. G. Walz	217.50
245	363.00 [10]	H. G. Walz	771.50
295-7	633.31	Albuquerque Blkt Acct	1508.00
Total	2514.86 [265]		4874.05

*Uncoded Blankets only

**On Consignment

TABLE 5.3
BLANKET SHIPMENTS, 1901. GANADO DAY BOOK [BOX 333]

DATE & PAGE	SDLE BLKT/WT	BED/COMMON WEIGHT	INDIAN DYE/WEIGHT	INDIAN DYE PIECE	GERMAN-TOWN	OLD STYLE/PIECE	HANOLCHADI	"FANCY" PORTIERS	GENERIC	SADDLE BLKT/PIECE
JAN.14		100#@ .50/#			1 old @\$100 1 @ \$50		7@ \$168			
FEB.12	69#@.39/ cost.30/#			10@ \$88	5@ \$26.50	19@ \$487.50		2@ \$110		
p.130	96#@.35/#	9#@.40 & 66#@.30 & 34#@.37	8#@.50	1@ \$7 16 @ \$88	1 @ \$9	8@ \$142.50 1@ \$100 (cost \$46.)		1 @ \$60	1@ \$15 15@ \$52.50 1@ \$10	4@ \$14
MAR.20				31@ \$196	5@ \$34 4@ \$9	5@ \$77				
MAR.29		41#@ \$.50		2@ \$11.50 4@ \$85	2@ \$35 o.s.g.y.	8@ \$175 2@ \$30n.w. 5@ \$77		3@ \$42.50 1@ \$65 1@ \$12.50		1@ \$4 7@ \$22.50
p.152		144#@ .30								
MAR.30	119#@.40									
p.153										
APRIL 5										
p.162	76#@ .40 10#@ .30 84#@ .40			12@ \$65. 2@ \$47.50 9@ \$53.75	2@ \$40	8@ \$197.50 11@ \$240 5@ \$75.50 2@ \$33.50 1@ \$25			7 @ ??	
APR.18		52#@ .50								
p.171										
p.177										
MAY 1										2@ \$9.75

DATE & PAGE	SDLE BLKT/WT	BED/COMMON WEIGHT	INDIAN DYE/WEIGHT	INDIAN DYE PIECE	GERMAN-TOWN	OLD STYLE/PIECE	HANOLCHADI	"FANCY" PORTIERS	GENERIC	SADDLE BLKT/PIECE
MAY 2			202#@ .80		4@ \$100 o.s.	1@ \$17.50 5@ \$73.50 11@ \$197.50	1@ \$19.50 1@ \$13.50		5@ \$5	3@ \$10 o.s. 4@ \$12 "tight" 2@ \$25 o.s. 1@ \$4
P.186		44#@ \$.50 62#@ .50		6@ \$75 n.w.						
JUNE 3										
P.190										
JUN 10	21#@ .40			10@ \$71.5		6@ \$112	4@ \$135			
P.194										
JUN 25	19#@ .40			15@ \$39		12@ \$192				
P.201	4#@ .30					5@ \$61.10 12@ \$365	1@ \$25 3@ \$57 o.s.	2@ \$325 (cost\$135) 5@ \$62.50 "special"	1@ \$60 (grey)	
JULY 3		40#@ \$.45		8@ \$69.50						
P.204										
JULY 10	22#@ .30			15@ \$121.		6@ \$147			10@ \$70.75 32@ \$596.5	3@ \$12
P.208	55#@ .40	23#@ .30		3@ \$36		7@ \$121.50				
P.221	115#@ .40			10@ \$61.7		16@ \$233				
AUG 12	25#@ .30			16@ \$85.5		6@ \$88.50				
P.244	61#@ .40									
AUG 29	25#@ .40				1@ \$32	7@ \$100 1@ \$150 (indigo)	9@ \$66 "n.w."fancy" (mod.style)		2@ \$75 "greys"	
SEPT 18	16#@ .40	49#@ .50				2@ \$50	4@ \$90	2@ \$35 dress & shawl	1@ \$30	6@ \$20
P.236-7		50#@ .50 5@ \$100			35#s,12@ \$87.50 2@ \$100 2@ \$17.50	10@ \$220 5@ \$62.50				

DATE & PAGE	SDLE BLKT/MT	BED/COMMON WEIGHT	INDIAN DYE/WEIGHT	INDIAN DYE PIECE	GERMAN-TOWN	OLD STYLE/PIECE	HANOLCHADI	"FANCY" PORTIERS	GENERIC	SADDLE BLKT/PIECE
SEPT 18 p 238				26@ \$232.				10@ \$89.55 "blue" 2@ \$425	7@ \$122 14@ \$310	
SEPT 28 p 244				16@ \$135. 4@ \$60.50 1@ \$17.50	2@ \$60 1@ \$6.50	12@ \$250.50	5@ \$110	3@ \$47.50 1@ \$17.50 dress 1@ \$150		6@ \$58 o. s.
OCT 5 p 248 p255				1@ \$15(lg.) 3@ \$9 12@ \$78 3@ \$48.50		1@ \$50 14@ \$141			25@ \$283 7 @ \$269	
NOV 2					1@ \$25	5@ \$125		3@ \$24 Moqui drs. 2@ \$35 shawls 12@ \$8 (pillow tops)	2@ \$42 greys 4@ \$110	
NOV 18 p285						4@ \$115				
NOV 20 p 266						4@ \$100				
NOV 25				6@ \$59 2@ \$33		18@ \$291 5@ \$107.50 2@ \$37.50	1@ \$10	1@ \$25 "blue"	3@ \$75	
DEC 21 p 278				9@ \$71.1 \$12 o.s.i.d. 5@ \$35.50 43@ \$807	1@ \$10 21@ \$296	2@ \$50 9@ \$180 21@ \$481	1@ \$25 2@ \$47.50 2@ \$35 15@ \$317.50	1@ \$50 7@ \$122.50 (dresses/ shawls)		2@ \$20 o.s.

DATE & PAGE	SDLE BLKT/WT	BED/COMMON WEIGHT	INDIAN DYE/WEIGHT	INDIAN DYE PIECE	GERMAN-TOWN	OLD STYLE/PIECE	HANOLCHADI	"FANCY" PORTIERS	GENERIC	SADDLE BLKT/PIECE
DEC 21 P 280 p 281 283 & 284 p 295 p 296								2@ \$40 'Moqui" 2@ \$40 2@ \$325 1@ \$78 3@ \$22.50 1@ \$75 3@ \$17 squaw dress	4@ \$75 red 1@ \$11.50 7@ \$254.25 12@ \$254.5 3@ \$3 1@ \$20 "grey"	80@ \$240 25@ \$12.50 19@ \$81 17@ \$42.50
TOTAL	817#@ 315.90 or.39/#	713.5 for \$302.83 + 5@ \$100	210# \$165.60 or.79/#	215 for \$2815.50 [\$13.09 ea]	74 for \$1266.00 [\$17.10 ea]	347 for \$6929.30 [19.97 ea]	56 for \$1119.50 [\$20 ea]	74 for \$2304.05	144* for \$2744.00*	185 for \$603.25

n.w. = Navajo wool

o.s. = old style

o.s.g.y. = old style, Germantown yarn

o.s.i.d. = old style, Indian dye

TABLE 5.4
RUG SCHEDULE FROM TRADERS' PURCHASES, FRYER 1939

RUGS(\$)	WEIGHT (LBS)	AVERAGE (PER LB)	WOOL USED		LABOR REVENUE FROM WEAVING	DISTRICT	NUMBER OF POSTS	% RUGS/ DISTRICT
			LBS	PRICE					TOTAL
10,802	13,939	.775	27,878	.17	4,739	1	4	3.26
3,057	4,170	.733	8,340	.166	1,390	2	3	.91
9,774	10,564	.925	21,128	.159	3,359	3	5	2.94
8,000	8,421	.95	16,842	.18	3,031	4	2	2.4
10,485	10,265	1.02	20,530	.164	3,358	5-6	6	3.15
30,573	33,459	.914	66,918	.167	11,155	7	7	9.18
6,996	6,380	1.087	12,760	.151	1,927	8	6	2.08
15,729	12,096	1.30	24,192	.158	3,825	9	5	4.73
33,237	27,748	1.20	55,496	.166	9,212	10	7	9.98
11,573	9,395	1.23	18,790	.158	2,973	11	3	3.48
45,121	31,027	1.45	62,054	.158	9,805	12	16	13.5
8,696	8,259	1.05	16,518	.173	2,868	13	4	2.62
12,172	10,974	1.11	21,948	.161	3,540	14	5	3.65
17,166	18,840	.91	37,680	.178	6,707	15	9	5.16
22,799	24,547	.93	49,094	.183	8,960	16	13	6.84
34,522	24,742	1.39	49,484	.185	9,174	17	10	10.37
29,064	25,471	1.14	50,942	.18	9,170	18	20	8.74
23,350	23,028	1.01	46,056	.185	8,520	19	12	7.01
333,056	303,325	1.09	606,650	.17	103,713		137	100

TABLE 5.5
CASH VALUATION OF BARTERED GOODS
GANADO 1906 [BOX 322]

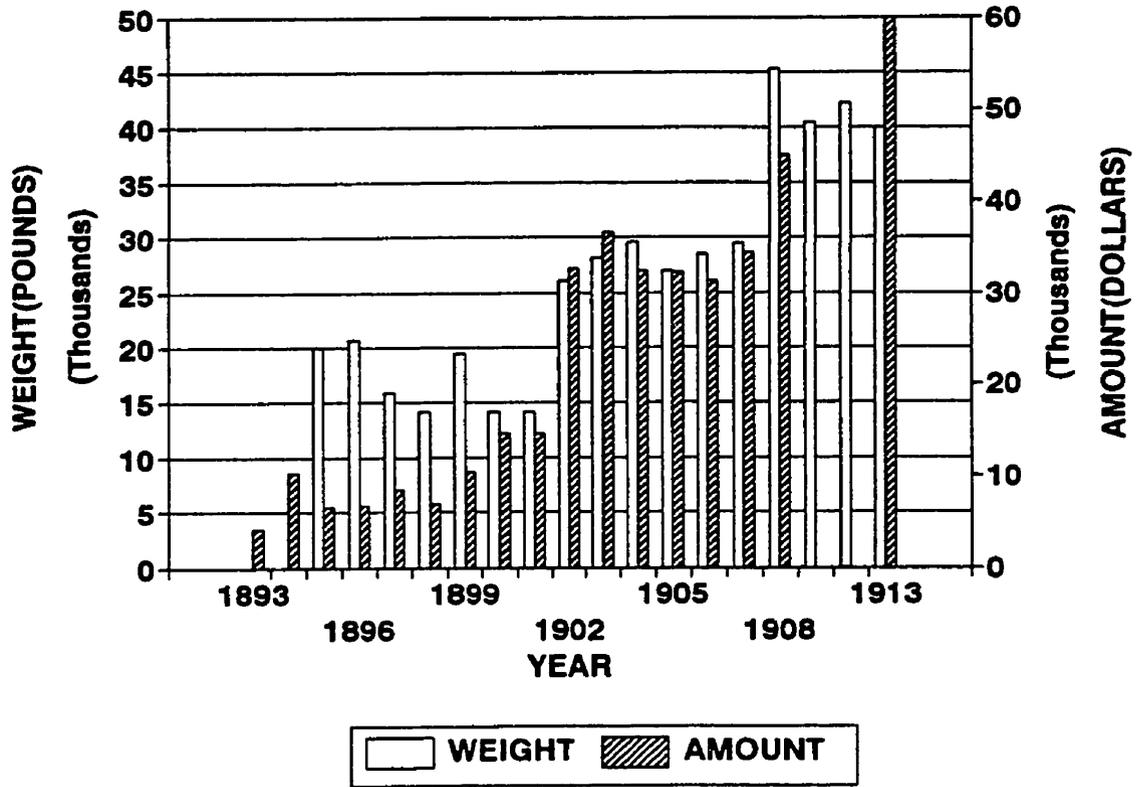
Month	Wool	Skins	Pelts	Blankets	Mdse	Pawn
Jan	17.45	37.65	17.00	317.75	265.15	107.60
Feb	87.95	40.30	13.05	276.45	92.10	85.30
Mar	137.60	50.70	27.50	415.35	160.30	163.80
Apr	410.60	49.00	10.95	320.50	153.80	157.15
May	2498.65	47.50	15.62	163.00	104.25	211.30
Jun	866.36	47.15	12.80	330.10	346.10	151.85
Jul	158.45	55.55	24.10	405.25	192.00	166.85
Aug	365.65	57.95	24.14	388.60	198.55	164.30
Sep	275.30	51.70	17.45	88.10	229.45	139.40
Oct	195.90	35.35	10.15	64.25	1004.00	251.95
Nov	64.40	39.95	14.15	104.00	2084.60	317.90
Dec	3.90	54.45	8.15	184.50	864.10	153.65
Total	4992.21	567.25	195.06	3057.85	5694.45	2071.05

*Entries Are Dollars

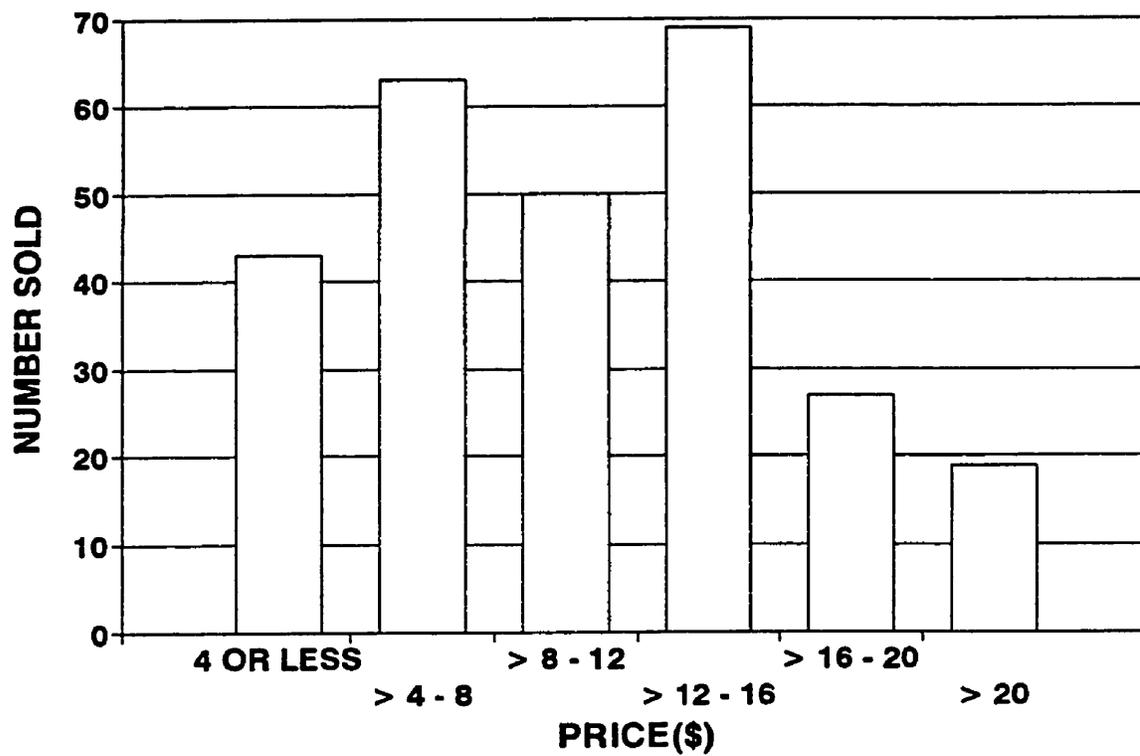
TABLE 5.6
NAVAJO PAWN RECORDS
GANADO TRADING POST

Year	Annual Totals [\$]	Number of Transactions
1905	2352.55	Incomplete
1906	2336.35	1135
1907	3210.75	1263
1908	3455.00	1507
1910	3753.00	Unknown
1912	5411.30	▪
1915	5774.90	▪
1916	4450.21	▪
1921	5618.87	▪
1929	8429.00	▪
1932	16,756.00	▪
1934	11,000.00	▪

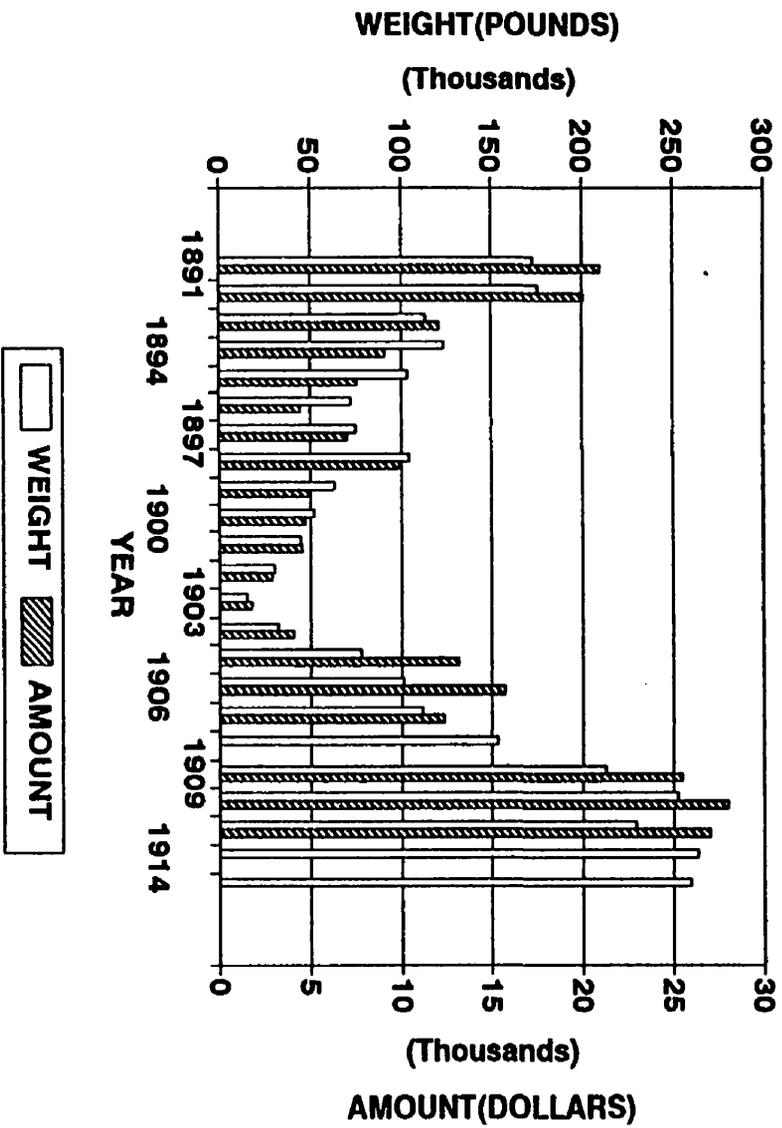
Compiled from Boxes 350,
496, and 523(6)



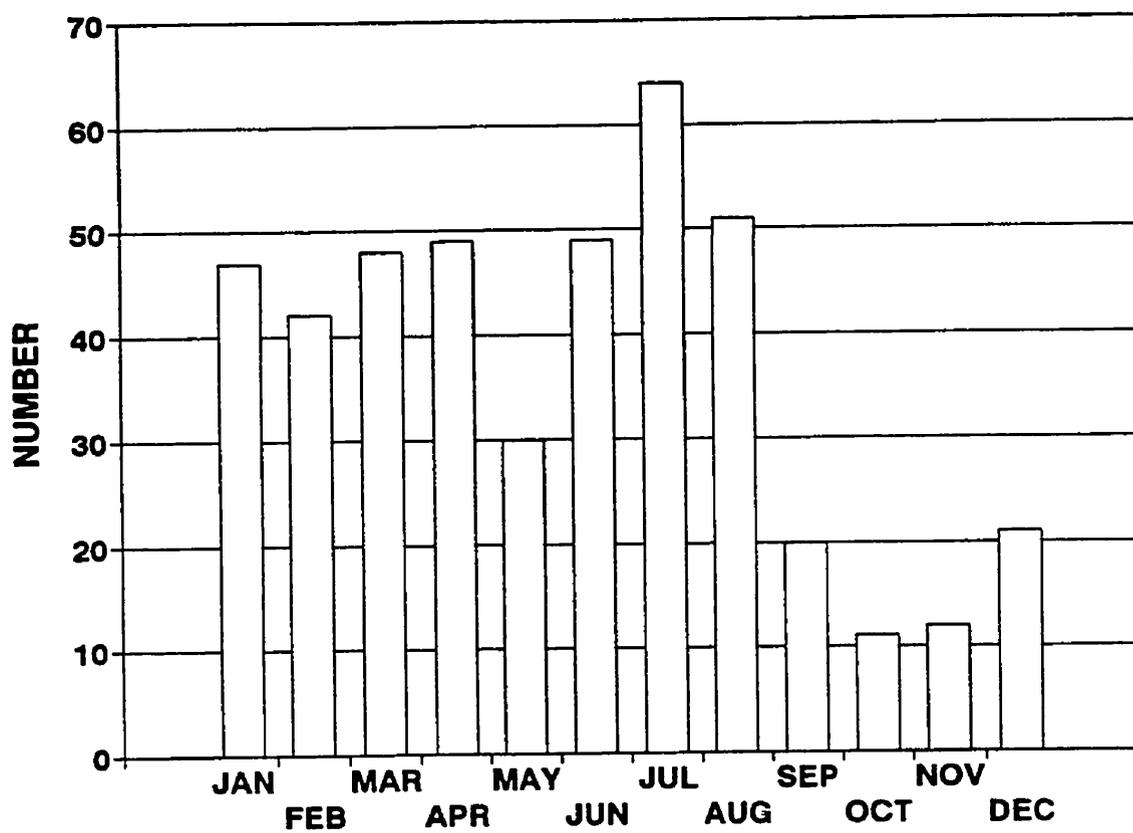
Annual Blanket Shipments
 from Ganado Trading Post 1893-1913
 Figure 5.1



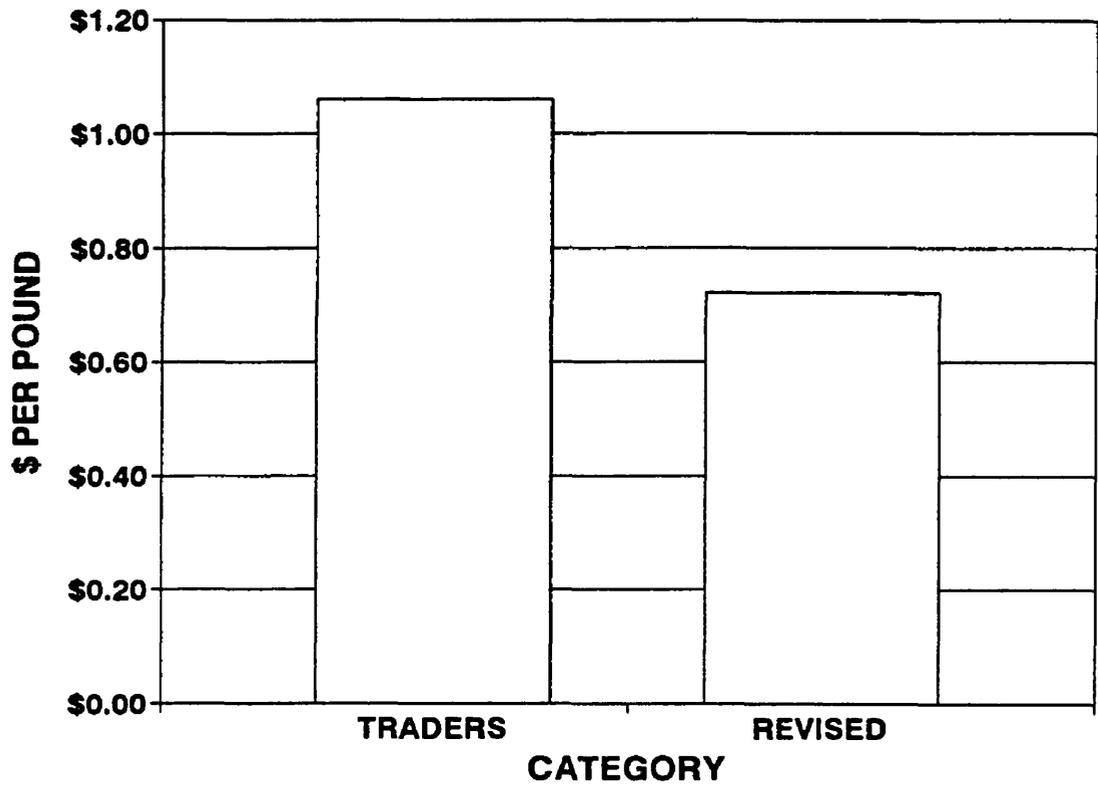
Frquency Distribution of Coded Rugs
Ganado Trading Post 1900-1901 (Box 333)
Figure 5.2



Annual Wool Shipments
from Ganado Trading Post 1891-1914
Figure 5.3



Number of Blankets Bartered by Weavers
at Ganado 1906
Figure 5.4



Credit Received by Weavers for Textiles
(from Fryer 1939)
Figure 5.5

ENDNOTES

1. As wool was usually bagged in 250 pound lots, Cotton probably held an estimated 1.5 million pounds that year. Recall Ilfeld (Chapter II) typically purchased that amount of wool annually prior to 1900 (Parish 1961).

2. My breakdown (Table 5.3) reveals \$16,000 worth of textiles shipped, but it is incomplete. Hubbell made several large sales to the Hyde Exploration Company that year, but they are not noted in this Day Book. Perhaps Hyde sent their own teams down to pick up their large orders, as they were also purchasing from other Reservation suppliers. Certainly "old style patterns" comprise by far the largest category of the number listed.

3. Hubbell wrote E. A. Burbank that 1909 was a record year in blanket sales (Box 95#13). He told retailer J. B. Field of Atlantic City, New Jersey, that he anticipated sales between \$50,000-60,000 on blankets alone (June 1, Box 96). Box 349 reveals the following blanket shipments from other Hubbell posts: 13,698 pounds from Keams, 4,042 pounds from Oraibi, and nearly 2000 pounds from Cedar Springs. He shipped a total of 10,263 pounds to the Fred Harvey Company that year. Box 348, ledger book reveals that Hubbell shipped at least 40,460 pounds of Indian "curios", mostly textiles, and that his profit for the year totalled \$27,558.42 (Box 347) in curio sales. His wool profit that year was \$1945.37. In spring, 1909, saddle blanket prices were as follows: common saddle blankets at 70 and 75 cents per pound, best saddles at 85 cents per pound. White ground, patterned: \$0.75-1.25 per pound; grey ground \$0.75-\$1.50 per pound; red ground, patterned \$1-2.00 per pound. Wool sold for between ten and 14 cents per pound that year; much of this would be improved wool, therefore weavers need to use 20 to 28 cents worth of wool to produce a pound of saddle blanket.

4. The Hubbells sought others ways to cope with the post-World War I recession. Box 103(8) contains a letter from Roman to his brother dated July 29, 1924. J. J. Gould wants the Hubbells to supply Indian labour:

...we can get so much a head for them and have half their wages delivered to us...remember Cotton and Hubbard made their money start by furnishing Indian labor. If we can get \$25,000 of Indian money in December it would help.

5. Lorenzo Jr. submitted a report which was included in Youngblood's statistics. His operation at Oraibi had nearly four times the volume of business of the average Reservation trading post, and he reported his gross profits ranging from 30-55% between 1929 and 1934, the Depression years. He acquired 2725 textiles averaging \$3.60 a piece in 1934. Referencing Fryer's report, the six posts in District 5-6 (which includes Oraibi), represented just over 3% of the total Reservation-wide rug output in 1939.

6. The calculations to be made are very similar to information provided in a study mounted by the Office of Navajo Women and Families in 1987. Over 400 weavers were asked a series of questions including length of time it takes to weave a double saddle blanket, and a 3 x 5 foot rug. As described

previously, the only significant reduction in production time occurs when processed spun wool is used. Otherwise, the tools and techniques have remained the same.

7. Box 340 contains information related to sales and profits on blankets in 1906. With \$6597.22 of blankets in stock, Hubbell sold \$31,249.19 and had "purchased" \$26,152.21. Thus his profit appears to be \$5,096.98, although I am unable to corroborate that amount. He made \$1384.86 profit on wool sales of \$15,702.42. At the time inventory was taken, he had advanced \$1264.32 to weavers (Box 523#6). Hubbell shipped more than 7500 pounds of textiles to the Fred Harvey Company that year. Cotton wrote Hubbell (Box 19) noting that he's having trouble purchasing trade blankets and robes from mills as they have so much other work to do, they refuse to make them! On May 19, 1906, Cotton shipped Hubbell 57 robes, "all we had" and mentioned "can't seem to sell wool."

8. Hubbell's "Weavers' Inventory List" on January 1, 1904 (Box 523#6) contains 6.5 pages with 237 women's names. The credit advanced on textiles owed to Hubbell totalled \$2625.53.

9. In his assessment of operation of posts and the costs involved, Fryer noted how some traders kept incomplete records, or no records were kept of traders' withdrawals of cash and goods from their posts. In some cases, significant withdrawals were made for personal use (i.e., of an automobile) even when the activity was unrelated to post business. Fryer (1935:90-1) suggested segregation of record keeping as is practised by urban businessmen.

10. If one calculates an average of 40 hours preparation and weaving time per pound of yarn produced, weavers expended more than 20 million hours from shearing to finished product in 1911. This averages out to six hours per weaver per day, if 9000 women were weaving [population estimated at 22,000 that year]. This may not be an unrealistic estimate, as children and other female household members were frequently involved in carding and cleaning wool. There are photographs located in the "Navajo File" at the University of Arizona Special Collections Library which illustrate little girls of pre-school age carding wool. The Fred Harvey Company featured six-year old "Tuli" weaving her own patterns while demonstrating at the Indian House in Albuquerque (James 1914:Fig. 142). Navajo families were very reluctant to send their daughters away to school, as weaving was so important to household livelihood.

11. In his 1902 catalogue, Hubbell advertised 3 x 5 foot weavings from \$10 to 17.50. In 1931, this size sold for between \$7 to 11.00. In 1936, Macy's Department Store requested such weavings from \$5 to 8.00 for a promotion. Prices remained the same during the 1940s, yet flour, coffee, and canned vegetables had doubled and trade blankets and tow cards had quadrupled in price between 1902 and 1940 (Table 3.3). Bailey and Bailey (1986:307-308), report the CPI at 26 in 1902 and 42 in 1940.

12. Box 44 (8/01/16) contains a letter from Superintendent Leo Crane concerning the 1904 government edict requiring licensed traders to pay cash for whatever the Indians produced.

13. This concept of "standardization" becomes troublesome given the magnitude of evidence unearthed in archival sources that challenges it. What if one were to apply this concept to paintings hanging in art galleries? It appears to be a rather ludicrous idea, yet if one were to calculate, size,

framing, brands of paints, types of canvas and subject matter (abstraction, realism), it is quite plausible that one could make a greater case for "standardization" in the latter example. After all, many artists train professionally in groups for years, network with their peers, and attend each others' openings. Do gallery owners create an environment for "standardization" when they reject the purchase of a painting? Had traders continually rejected weavings, their goods would have stayed on the posts' shelves. One could argue that applying the concept only to "craft" produced by native women vis a vis "art" [frequently] produced by men, smacks of sexism and racism.

14. The Senior Hubbell lobbied hard in Washington, D. C., to be reimbursed for this project which began around 1902 and took many years to complete. The dam and reservoirs diverted water from the Pueblo Colorado Creek. In 1912, the House of Representatives passed a bill to reimburse him for \$25,000, ultimately advocating \$75,000 to be spent on the project. Hubbell held the majority rights to the water which irrigated his farm. According to Arthur Hubbard, an elderly Navajo interviewed during 1971, the Navajo had no right to the water, as Hubbell held two-thirds rights, and the Presbyterian Mission the other one third. During 1931, the Navajo were told that the government could not lend any money to construct earthen dams and reservoirs in the southern sector of the Reservation (Kelley and Whiteley 1989:92).

15. [from Box 102: Sept-Dec 1921, folder] Forrest Parker opened a shop in Long Beach called "Arizona Navajo Indian Rug Company. On 5/4/21, Lorenzo Jr. wrote his father: "I sent down the finest collection of rugs I ever saw (to California).. I don't think anyone has ever had such a collection. We had hundreds and hundreds of rugs of the very finest kind. I have been putting them away for nearly a year. The store measures 25 by 140 feet with a basement." Parker wrote Lorenzo Jr., on 9/7/21, and said he checked with J. W. Robinson (the most exclusive department store in Southern California). The Manager said the Company had sold more than \$50,000 worth of Chinese rugs during a big promotion in August He thought if merchandised properly, and if the Hubbells could keep up the supply, the same thing could be done with Navajo weaving. The post-war recession deepened, and the store closed. However, the Hubbells mounted another California venture, and several years later, opened a store in Hollywood.

CHAPTER SIX
BLANKETS BY DESIGN: ASSESSING TRADERS'
INFLUENCE ON STANDARDIZATION OF PATTERNS

...to the real good Navajos, the genuine artists, every trader knows he dares offer no chart. They are not to be perverted from the religious ideas of their ancestors, who taught them that the creative and artistic gift was of the gods, to be prized and used, and that only by so doing could it be retained. Hence every design is new, every new blanket must have its original design which the active brain of its weaver creates out of suggestions gained from a life-time of careful observation of Nature. The stars, clouds, lightning, falling rain, electric phenomena, springs, rivers... trees, flowers, --everything is grist to the mill of the Navajo artist's creative mind. (James 1917:78)

...the implements and the weaving process look simple, but the setting-up and stringing of the loom and technique required to make a fine, smooth, firm rug are, in fact, intricate, demanding a skill only learned in childhood and with years of practice by a person of superior craft intelligence. (Coolidge 1930:94)

This chapter focuses on the traders' reputed influences on design and materials. The only trader to have had direct influence on Navajo weavers was J. B. Moore at Crystal (1897 to 1911). His influence will be discussed shortly. Traders did introduce manufactured yarns and commercially manufactured aniline dyes, and controlled the marketing of weavers' products, but not the production of their patterns nearly to the extent that is reported in most literature on the subject with the exception of Witherspoon 1987. The following quote typifies statements repeatedly referenced by authors:

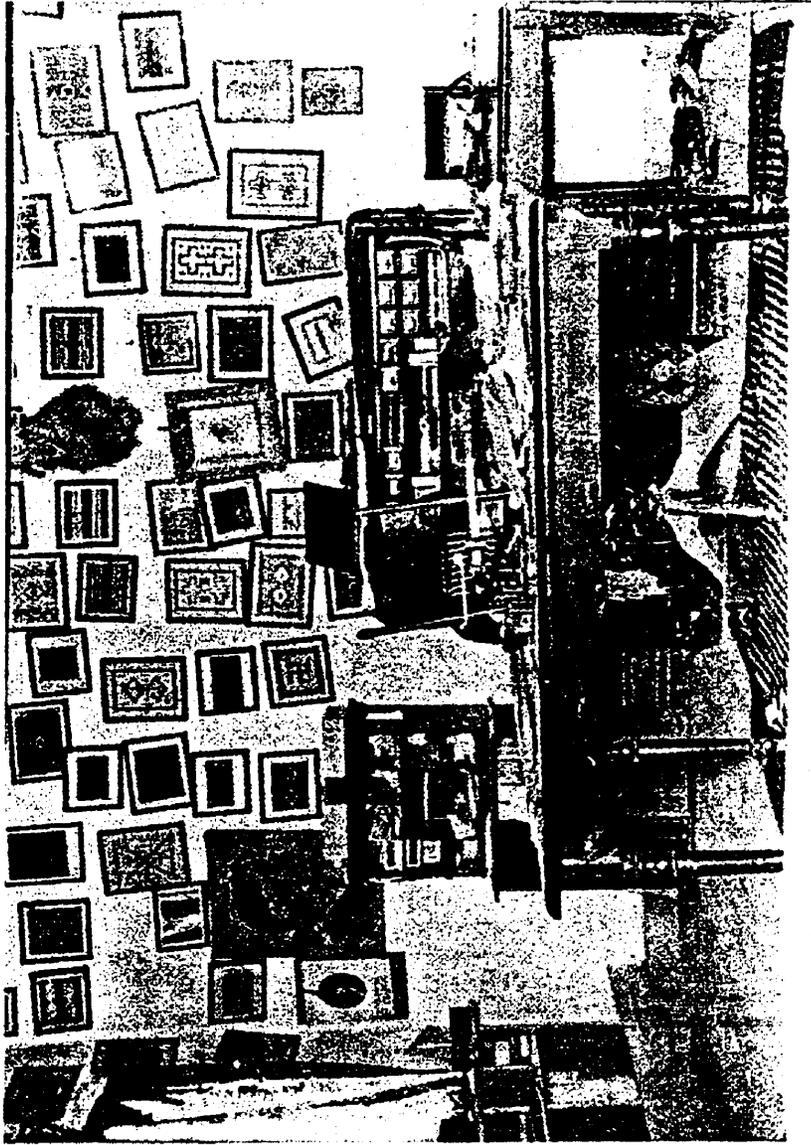
Traders became the catalyst that caused Navajo weaving to change radically... quite possibly saving it from extinction... In order to raise the quality of the rugs and sell them as genuinely handmade, traders paid weavers higher prices for textiles that were of a superior technical quality, woven from the wool of the Navajo sheep... [The] Modern [rug] Period dominated by what were originally trader-influenced rug designs for the Anglo American market. (Houlihan 1987:57)

Several traders have left memoirs in which they describe the unrelenting winter solitude of the posts. Days and weeks could pass, without another soul appearing during long, harsh winters. Some posts were described as located from 'fifty to two hundred miles from nowhere' (Richardson 1986:78). Such statements bear repeating when authors continually insist upon traders' influence on Navajo weavers, especially since textile production was consistently highest during the wintertime (Richardson 1986:42-3) (Fig. 5.4).

Traders and Weavers in the Published Record

All sources on trader influence document the importance of a handful of traders relative to the number of posts on the Reservation. For example, James (1976) explicates the history of a dozen traders including Hubbell and J. B. Moore. Weiss (1984:73) notes that there were 79 posts on the Reservation in 1900, which escalated to 154 by 1930. Hubbell owned at least fifteen different posts for various periods during this era (Bauer 1987: Appendix 6). This chapter will demonstrate how, based on evidence from his personal papers that Hubbell's influence on weaving patterns at Ganado (his key post) can be called into question. In fact, excepting J. B. Moore, traders' correspondence and advertising brochures (Appendix V), provide the most convincing evidence for their limited influence on patterns. In reviewing the published literature on the subject, paradoxes emerge concerning the extent of traders' influences on Navajo weavers. A survey of information by Individuals who authored "classics" on the subject, reveals contradictory statements in their texts. Much of the evidence to be reviewed in this chapter will also demonstrate the necessity to distinguish between "standards" and "standardization."

Synthetic, or aniline dyes manufactured from coal-tar derivatives were introduced around Ft. Defiance (Arizona territory), about 1884. Shades were violent, unfixed and produced rather wretched results. However, the dyes were improved and they saved women time. Traders purchased selected colours, weeding out the more obnoxious shades (Coolidge 1924:97; Moore 1987; McNitt 1962). Women began to weave with commercial yarns too, however, the yarns cost as much or more per pound as the woven textiles! (Coolidge 1924:97 and Hubbell Papers, Tables 3.1 and 3.3). James and Amsden, and others perceived (cf. Utley 1959) traders' influence on weaving as having positive economic effects, but negative artistic affects. This is because in the rush to "weave wool into blankets", many traders began to barter string and aniline dyes, which "cheapened the product." It was traders such as Hubbell and J. B. Moore that put a stop to this. A great deal of evidence was surveyed in



J. L. Hubbell's Office, Ganado, circa 1907
Illustration 6.1

the last chapter that demonstrates the positive economic effects of weavers' production for traders.

Because water was usually in short supply on the Reservation, weavers could not always wash the fleece prior to spinning. Dirty wool streaks when taking up the dye, and the woven result was not always pleasing. Cotton string is not an appropriate substitute for handspun wool warp. The latter provides a much stronger, longer wearing foundation for a floor rug. As weavers were under so much pressure, some did this, and they were subsequently penalized when they brought the textile into the post. Cotton string is an acceptable substitute in a pillow cover woven of commercial Germantown yarn, as it is quite light weight. But no rug, regardless of how well the weft yarn is spun, can withstand the wear and tear of many feet, if the warp is made of cotton string. Only the genuine product will do.

George Wharton James, the Earliest "Classic"

The first "classic" publication on the Navajo blanket was written by George Wharton James (1914). James (1914[1920:203]) designates Cotton and Hubbell as "the fathers of the rug business among the white race." He claims that to ignore the importance of Hubbell's influence on Navajo weaving would be equivalent to describing the history of the phonograph and leaving out Edison's name! James's description of Hubbell is worth quoting at length, as it encapsulates the attitudes toward Hubbell that continually reappear in numerous texts:

Mr. Hubbell..saw the art deteriorate, and set himself to work to stem the tide of ignorance and carelessness which bid fair speedily to wreck what his far-seeing vision knew might be a means of great wealth to an industrious and struggling people. He spoke the Navajo language fluently, lived in the very heart of the reservation and was in daily contact with some of the most progressive men and women of the tribe. He took them into his office and talked with them, one by one. As rapidly as was possible, he eliminated the use of cotton warp, ..certain dyes...discouraged the use of Germantown yarns...urged thorough cleaning and scouring, carding, spinning and dyeing of their own wool. During all this time he was urging the weavers to higher endeavor, and giving special privileges and favors to those who showed not only skill and originality of design, but general acquiescence in his endeavors to improve the art. The final result...now he has gathered around him by far the finest set of weavers on the whole reservation...he has learned from practical experience what

designs of pure Navajo origin please the most exacting patrons..these [are] copied in oil or water-colors and they line the walls of his office by the score.. When a certain type of blanket is needed, he can point to the design, or..loan the painting to the weaver.. ..he can supply wool..thus he gains the best kind of work... That his name is synonymous with honorable and upright dealing goes without saying, for no man can stand as he does with the Navahoes...

Quotes such as these perpetuate several legends entrenched in the literature on Navajo weavers and traders. Information presented in previous chapters refutes portions of this oft-quoted statement.

At the time James published his text, only J. B. Moore and Lorenzo Hubbell had become intimately involved with "improving" the Navajo blanket. [Recall there were more than one hundred posts on the Reservation in the early decades of the century.] Along with the improvement came the genesis of new styles. Consequently, James has not categorized weaving according to regional styles, as these were in the process of "development".¹

The Influence of J. B. Moore 1897-1911

"If the Navajos make it, I can supply it. Not the cheapest, may be but the very best they can make it" [Catalogue inscription]

J. B. Moore operated the post at Crystal (Washington Pass) from 1897 to 1911. He issued two catalogues highlighting Navajo textiles, the first in 1903, and the second in 1911. Designs in the earlier catalogue were based on "traditional" weaving patterns common in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In his forward to the 1903 publication, Moore, like Hubbell returned "to the old time weaves, colors and patterns...to perpetuate the noblest of all Indian Arts." He discouraged the use of Germantown yarns, as it was not a "Navajo product," and he never carried textiles woven with cotton warp. He also described the differences between handwoven rugs and their machine-made counterparts. Moore graded his rugs, as did Clinton Cotton in his 1896 publication. Portions of his text reveal his tenacity in pursuing the marketing of Navajo weaving. Moore (1911:3) remarks:

..In the beginning I had stubborn and conservative workers in these Navajo women, and a discredited product to contend with on one hand; and on the other, a prejudice and lack of knowledge that has proved harder to break down and overcome than I

had anticipated..Resistance, stubborn, hurtful, and senseless opposition on the part of the weavers, has given place to cheerful co-operation, good natured rivalry and friendly strife for excellence in their work...greatly increased prosperity and better conditions of life..come to the people. But I am no philanthropist and must disclaim any philanthropic motives for my part in it. I saw,..in their dormant skill and patience a business opportunity, provided they could be aroused, encouraged and led on to do their best..if they prospered, that I would come in for a share with them at least.

In the years between the publication of his two catalogues, Moore issued individual coloured plates with descriptions to introduce new patterns to potential clients. His second catalogue exhibits a marked departure from its predecessor, and shows influences of Oriental designs. Moore also incorporates black and white photographs of several of the weavers, and he credits one in particular, *Bi-leen al-pai bi zha ahd*, with designing four of the patterns incorporated in the catalogue. Because unfamiliar, Oriental-like motifs appear in these rugs, Rodee (1981) states that Moore probably showed his most talented designers new patterns and they used "their skill and good taste" in weaving them up. Rodee feels that these new patterns appear to be a collaborative effort between weaver and trader. Yet in his catalogue, Moore himself provides the name of individual weavers underneath each colour reproduction, designating her as designer. Of all the traders who supposedly "fathered" new patterns, Moore probably had the most influence, as he collaborated closely with fewer than twenty weavers whose textiles are highlighted in his catalogues. Moore credits *Bi-leen al-pai bi zha ahd* as designer of the most "Oriental" of all patterns, yet he claims "she will never weave after another" (Moore [1911] 1987:23). The foregoing is an excellent example of the paradoxes associated with the genesis of Navajo weaving patterns after the formation of the Reservation. Although we lack empirical evidence tracing the Oriental influence, Rodee (1981:21) claims proofs of the influence are those of "logic and visual similarity." She states that Amsden was the first to discuss this influence, yet he does not link Moore to this development, but does note that some traders "preferred" Oriental rugs.² Several articles have been published on the subject, and the Maxwell Museum in Albuquerque mounted a

display of Navajo textiles titled "East Meets West" which exhibited the Oriental influence.

James's critique of trader's influence

James condemned the deleterious affects that cotton warp, garish dyes and sloppy weaving had on the Navajo blanket. He blames the traders and notes how they had to reverse such degeneration, as no one would purchase woven monstrosities. But in describing the degradation, and noting the turn around, James is inadvertently providing evidence for the tremendous pressures placed upon Navajo weavers in the ensuing years as the product improved. James attributes the improvement in textiles to the efforts of Hubbell, Cotton, J. B. Moore, and the Fred Harvey Company. He comments positively upon Moore's providing commercially scoured wool which ensured "odorless, perfect cleanliness, uniformity of quality.." (1914:53). He notes how even Moore had problems getting weavers to exactly copy designs, and he comments:

..the constant surprise of the careful observer is the great variety of color and design. Every collection is sure to contain specimens utterly unlike those gathered by other collectors of many years' experience, and the variety is the ever-increasing wonder of the student (1914:38).

Although Moore was the exception in having special designs made to order, the natural impulse of the weavers was to never copy, and never repeat herself in her designs (1914:120). [This topic will be developed more fully in the final chapter.] James (1914:54) notes that all traders claim that "the Navajo is a shrewd business man, and the women are as keen, intelligent, and self-reliant as the men." He sees this as one of the key reasons for the improvement in the blanket. James (1914:55) sees the trader as needing education too, and that with an increasingly educated public, poor quality will not be tolerated. Thus "the quality of blankets will continue to improve, even though the output increases and becomes four times what it now is." James (1914:55-56) then lists the steps by which improvement occurred, including the elimination of cotton warps, and [supposedly] higher reimbursement to weavers. He notes how Germantown yarn is seldom used; the weavers themselves have

stopped using it as they realized that "if they would preserve their profitable industry, they must themselves make a yarn that is equal to Germantown." Information provided in the previous chapter revealed who profited from weavers' diligence. James (1914:58-9) mentions how successful the annual fairs became, with large exhibits of "the best" weavings. The first San Juan Agency fair held at Shiprock in 1909, displayed 230 native wool blankets, and 25 Germantowns. Four years later, more than 700 blankets were exhibited. These events placed great pressure on weavers, who laboured to continually improve their textiles. It is quite likely that weavers in regions where textile production was more competitive, were placed under the greatest pressure. The previous chapter revealed the schemes played by firms such as the Fred Harvey Company, who continually culled the highest quality textiles from thousands shipped annually.

James (1914:72-102) incorporates a chapter on Navajo blanket designs. He notes that generally, Indians are conservative, and so a design may become "permanent" even when "its meaning is not recognized." He quotes Father Berard who states that there are no "stories" in their weavings; rather, the blanket demonstrates:

untiring patience and diligence, the exquisite taste and deftness, of semi-barbaric people, and the high art and quality of their work, wrought with simple tools and materials.

According to James, the modern blanket is now designed in accordance with the known wishes of the trader. It is a purely commercial proposition. Yet note his statement quoted at the beginning of this chapter. However, he states it is important to understand the mental attitudes and lives of the Navajo to comprehend the origins of their designs. He notes that others have attributed the source of Navajo designs to the Pueblos, the Mexicans, even "nature." James (1914:112-3) quotes Matthews concerning the development of the double or two-ply weave. The ethnologist noted that American Indians are "generally believed to be neither imitative nor inventive"; thus the development of this unusual, difficult weave is all the more puzzling. This was a rare weave, first encountered around 1890. Amsden claims

weavers developed it in imitation of the trade blankets. The weaver uses double the number of warps and heddles; thus two completely different patterns can be woven at the same time. The development of this particular type of weaving exercised a number of commentators. Various explanations were offered of how the double weave was accomplished, and many of them were incorrect. In the chapter devoted to "Designs on modern Navajo blankets," James (120-129) provides the names of several well-known weavers, including the previously mentioned *Bi-leen al-pi bi zha ahd*, of "artistic temperament" or "creative instinct" who wove only her own patterns for J. B. Moore. James (1914:153) remarks about this woman's "natural aptitude", and that she admitted she would never duplicate a pattern because:

the voices of Those Above will no longer inspire her to make new designs. ...she must trust the gods to supply her artistic needs and ever be in the receptive condition to take in what they send.

Yet she is the "designer" of the most "Oriental" looking pattern (Moore 1987:23).

James also describes several of the weavers who demonstrated for the Fred Harvey Company, including Elle of Ganado, her daughter, and another young girl by the name of Tuli [Appendix VIII]. James is one of the few authors to highlight a handful of Navajo weavers. He provides a charming description of a weaver inspired by the trains speeding across the landscape near her hogan. She wove railroad cars filled with people, cattle and goods, and birds filled the sky. He (1914:146) praises weavers' designing ability:

the Navajo have proven themselves possessed of inventive genius in this department of art. There are no "stock" designs as far as they are concerned. Repetition of design comes from the desire of the white race for duplication... never from the unperverted, natural instincts of the weaver. Multiply the designs reproduced herein by ten thousand and still new and striking designs will continually be found.

He (1914:147) notes the difficulty in classifying Navajo blankets in ways similar to the classifications and descriptions attributed to machine-made textiles. "The colors are dissimilar, the weave is different, the designs are individualistic... every blanket must be examined for itself.." However, he provides photographs with descriptions of blankets typical of particular categories, such as "saddle blankets," "standard" "native wools, undyed"

"extras" (the class of blanket of which the Harvey Company makes a specialty, as they never sold the cheaper grades) "native wool, fancy" , and "Germantowns." James also notes that it is the great exception for a weaver to create a design in sand prior to weaving--weavers "design from their heads." His commentary also undermines the reputed influence of traders on weavers' patterns. Overall, James's comments underscore the autonomy of Navajo weavers concerning patterns, yet his statement concerning the modern blanket being designed "in accordance with the known wishes of the trader," is perplexing.

Charles Avery Amsden: The Earliest "Orthodox" Source on Designs

The second "classic" text written on the subject of Navajo weaving was published in 1934 and authored by Charles Avery Amsden. His work is considered to provide the "foundation" of Navajo textile studies, and it is usually referenced more than James. Although written as a guide to the subject, James's book was published for commercial purposes as well. Hubbell and several other traders had to pay \$150 each for the privilege of being included in the book as "reliable dealers". Hubbell "paid" for his advertisement with Navajo blankets, as James had requested. On February 4, 1916, Hubbell shipped a 56 pound bale of blankets to Pasadena (Box 353, p 3).

Amsden (1934:31) notes that the size and pattern of blankets are influenced by the preferences and prejudices of the buying public and by the fine artistic sense of the Indian trader who acts as middleman. Amsden's (1934:67) description of native peoples paints a rather unflattering portrait:

Inordinate love of color is popularly considered an outstanding trait of primitive people the world over. . .primitive peoples revel in the possession of colored objects because they are color-starved.

Both Amsden and James described the bayeta period as the high point or "Golden Age" of Navajo weaving. Such emphasis harkens to the romanticized past, and belies scrutiny of economic conditions associated with weaving. Amsden (1934:170) also develops the scenario of the dependent relationship of the weaver to the trader, and romanticizes the

weaver "after the conquest":

It set an alien master..beside every loom in the land, to tell a sensitive, talented, and artistic weaver how to make a blanket that would have a proper barbaric appeal to an intruding white man; to impose the dictates of a selfish instinct of gain upon an artist immensely superior to her instructor except in her simplicity and helplessness...the conquest of the Navajo commercialized that article for all time to come.. brought from her for a pittance by an unresponsive trader whose sole interest was in making a profitable sale. The conquest..made the blanket a rug, made a journeyman weaver of the Navajo artist in wool. Is it any wonder that the blanket of pre-Bosque times is an utterly different thing from the rug of today?

It appears the ghost of the high quality "pre-Bosque" Chief's blankets haunted weavers nearly a century ago. Amsden (1934:186) notes how the demand for Navajo textiles increased during the transition period which followed the Navajos' return from Bosque Redondo. This demand was "fostered by many shrewd and zealous minds... [but] the Navajo was lucky ...the white man coveted his weavings, not his land." Commenting on the amazingly high figures reached in recent years in rug sales, Amsden (1934:189) notes that they were not "attained without striving and struggle. Commercial demand was an intoxicating stimulus..[creating an]..esthetic debauch." Amsden chronicles the important influence wielded by the Fred Harvey Company, in keeping the Navajo product "genuine" and of "high quality." Amsden follows this comment with a discussion of regional styles. He notes that Navajo weaving has always been in part an alien craft - borrowing the Pueblo loom and tools, Spanish sheep, English baize, and commercial yarns. Hubbell was the "leading innovator" of the early days of the Navajo rug business. He comments on the influences of traders such as Moore and the Hyde Exploring Expedition.³ He notes how Hubbell showed the paintings to weavers of patterns specially ordered by customers.

Amsden (1934:193) notes how large rugs, which were financed through special arrangements, as they could take six months to produce, were a Hubbell specialty. He (1934:196) mentions that Pendleton Woollen Mills sold the Shiprock Trading Company a long-stapled commercially carded wool which was dyed with expensive Swiss dyes. Although he has mixed emotions about this, as it is a "coals to Newcastle" situation, such interventions

help to "set, maintain, and compensate a high technical standard where without them the trend has been fairly constantly downward to the detriment of all concerned" (Amsden 1934:197). Although the standards were "set and maintained," there was little evidence of requisite compensation to weavers in the Hubbell Papers.

Amsden (1934:205) demarcates four dominant styles of pattern types, each preeminent at a given period of time; they are not discontinuous or unrelated as the Navajo were continually "borrowing and adapting." They are as follows: the striped, to 1800; the terraced, to 1863; the diamond 1863-1900; and the bordered - from blanket to rug, 1890-to present. He constructs a rosy scenario:

The white man is demanding blankets--big ones, little ones. The trader pays handsomely for everything brought in. Smart weavers are buying the new yarn, ready-spun, ready-dyed, and of such brilliant colorings! ... new dyes...Everything is made easy for the weaver. It is her millennium. The white man's ways are best, after all.

Yet Amsden (1934:217) makes some curiously relevant remarks concerning the incubation of Navajo weaving patterns:

All [the styles] are linked by an increasing complexity upon the basic foundation of the horizontal line in repetitious rhythm. They are allied too by the common factor of pure design expressed in rectilinear geometric form. We feel strongly that these styles do truly and worthily express the Navajo artist in wool, just as they expressed her artistic Southwestern forebears in their basketry, their simple finger weaving, and their ceramic decoration. How the transition came..will never be exactly known... [patterns encountered] on old baskets, or clay vessels may have given a gifted weaver her formula... The supposition is not preposterous when we consider that all the outstanding modern forms of esthetic expression are credited to a handful of men of genius who wrought virtually the whole fabric. The individual genius fills a large segment of the entire human horizon, and especially is this true in the arts.

Amsden's statement is worthy of replication, because it reflects not only attitudes towards "art", typical for the period, but it contains the seeds necessary for the topic under discussion in my final chapter.

In the last chapter of his book, Amsden highlights "the revival" in Navajo weaving, from 1920 to 1934, the year his book was published. Amsden discusses the influence of Mary Cabot Wheelwright, and her collaboration with trader Cozy McSparron at Chinle,

concerning the resurgence in vegetal dyes. In addition, both Diamond Dyes and DuPont Chemical began to market dyes that mimicked softer colours. He also mentions the interests developed by the National Association on Indian Affairs in improving Navajo weaving by returning to the old patterns and colours. In their report issued in 1932, the Association noted that although more than one million dollars worth of rugs were sold from the Reservation, because the quality was "poor", the price per rug received by the weaver, considering the work involved, was "ridiculously low." The problem would be rectified by distributing large photographs of old, desirable patterns. Rather than having exact copies made, the photos would stimulate and revive the older patterns.

Amsden (1934:232-3) favoured the revivalist movement. He felt that although the average trader may balk, because his "approach is commercial from first to last", the aficionados of Indian arts welcomed it. Rather than offer continued support of the bordered rug with garish aniline colors which suited the sun-porch or den, Amsden (1934:233) felt the Navajo rug:

must be made worthy of the living room and the bedroom; it must harmonize with the French wallpaper, the Colonial furniture... A certain degree of boldness may be allowed at times...but whatever the situation, it must chime in with the prevailing harmony.

A return to the older patterns and colours will make the textile "more Navajo" as:

nature created the colors in the Navajo country and the patterns in which they were displayed bore the authentic tribal stamp. There is the true Navajo expression, not in the later rug which got its colors from a factory and its pattern from a catalogue. ... far from dictating his weaving, we would protect it from that dictation which has brought it, in both technic and artistry, already so low.

Thus Amsden (1934:234) sanctions the "revivalist" movement. He sees it providing the impetus for an "artistic renaissance":

for a return to the days when weaving was (presumably) done with pride and joy and a complete, self-effacing devotion to the task of producing textiles both useful and beautiful..the miracle may come to pass: we know so little of the Indian and his ultimate artistic potentialities. But we know a great deal of the trader, the tourist, the influence of Government school, the automobile, the movie; and knowing these, how hard it is to believe that the thoroughly industrialized craft of Navajo weaving

will throw off its shackles and emerge untrammelled as a joyous art.

Amsden remarks on the importance of the market which will ultimately determine the perpetuation of weaving among the Navajo. As the blanket became a rug {1895-1905}, the taste and market expectations of the Anglo trader became the dominant influence on Navajo weaving:

Some traders had a taste for Oriental rugs, some for Classic Period nineteenth-century blankets, and some for Pueblo/Rio Grande-style striped blankets, and they all made their preferences known to the weavers. Of course the weavers usually had ideas and market expectations of their own... Today's regional rug styles can be traced directly back to the personal design preferences of a few influential traders. Juan Lorenzo Hubbell, who ran the trading post at Ganado, Arizona, wanted his weavers to return to the bold patterns of the Classic Period and he encouraged them to do so by hanging oil paintings of the old blankets on the walls...

The above statement has become a familiar refrain. Amsden's text is worth quoting from at length, because nearly all authors addressing the subject consider him the earliest "orthodox" source. He developed the foundation for most of the generalizations that dominate the literature today. And he firmly believed that Navajo women wove for "primarily economic reasons." A key distinction between the two "classic" texts concerns differences in the number of photographs incorporated by Amsden (1934) as compared to James (1914).

Although Amsden has incorporated many more photographs of weavers, none of them are identified. In fact Amsden does not include the names of any weavers, in distinct contrast to James, who names at least a dozen. However, Amsden identifies dozens of individuals: traders, military men, collectors, Indian curio dealers, Indian agents and "revivalists." In a heavily illustrated text devoted to the subject of Navajo weaving, it is remarkable that not one weaver is identified by name. Thus the emphasis continues to shift from the weaver and her textile to the trader [or revivalist] as "producer".⁴ The section that follows quotes from various authors writing about trading, and Navajo weaving. Amsden's influence becomes evident in reiterating their statements.

Additional Sources on Traders' Influence

Historian Frank McNitt

In his classic text on Indian traders, archaeologist McNitt (1962:200-213) devotes an entire chapter to Ganado. He comments extensively on Hubbell's positive influence on the development of the Navajo blanket. He notes Hubbell's insistence on quality, and his preference for generous-sized blankets. He mentions how Burbank painted fifty or sixty "rug studies" from patterns that Hubbell preferred [Illustration 6.1]. McNitt details the information on blankets contained in Hubbell's 1902 sales catalogue. McNitt also highlights the importance of J. B. Moore, of Crystal trading post, and his influence on the development of a regional style of weaving. He notes that Moore had about sixteen weavers "working for him." Sometimes Moore provided commercially scoured wool to avoid greyish whites. McNitt (1962:254) notes:

with only slight variations in design, Moore's weavers departed from the usual practice and turned out the same rug patterns again and again...in 1910-11 he said he paid his weavers \$13,000 for their blankets and only \$1000...to his silversmiths.

The dollar amount quoted above is deceiving. As Moore was running a trading post, he also bartered rugs from other weavers. This becomes evident in another quote where he mentions only 25% of the rugs produced in his region were made from the specially scoured, dyed and spun wool. The dollar figure quoted above was contained in a report sent to the Indian Office in 1910-11. No doubt many people have thought that 16 women averaged over \$800 per year each (or \$70 per month), weaving for Moore. This is highly unlikely for the simple reason that Moore would have priced himself out of the market [Appendix VII].

Collectors Kaufman and Selser

A more recent text by Kaufman and Selser (1985), on Navajo weaving highlights Hubbell's influences concerning his insistence on high quality weaving, over-sized textiles, reliance on old patterns depicted in the oil-paintings, abandonment of cotton warps and with the exception of red, minimum use of aniline dyes. Hubbell is attributed with "fathering"

the first regional style, identifiable by the incorporation of Classic Period design elements (crosses, terraced diamonds and stripes) into a bordered rug pattern (1985:67-68). A description of the Hubbell/Harvey connection ensues with the authors reiterating the old refrain concerning the Harvey Company purchasing all of Hubbell's textiles of "good" or "better" quality. They note that the Company's standards were as high as Hubbell's. Kaufman and Selser (1985) mention the emergence of various styles, based on traders' influences. For example, the Storm pattern, reputed to have emerged from the western portion of the reservation, is attributed to J. B. Moore, as an example is depicted in his 1911 catalogue. According to Kent (Rodee 1981:93), Babbitt Brothers used this pattern on their stationary before 1900. Moore may have purchased goods from these wholesalers and seen the pattern on their stationary. It could be the case that Babbitt Brothers acquired the pattern from a weaver who bartered her rug.

Political Economist Larry Weiss

Weiss draws extensively upon both government documents and "classic" sources on the topics of trading and weaving. He quotes statements by James (1914), Amsden (1934) and McNitt (1962) regarding the traders' influences on Navajo weaving patterns. For example, Weiss (1984:79) quotes James at length concerning the hours traders spent with "their weavers" pointing out flaws in their work, and encouraging them to produce textiles attractive to the Harvey Company, and other buyers. Although Hubbell was reputed to be the "dean" of Navajo textiles, and probably the most influential figure with the exception of J. B. Moore, there is overwhelming evidence in his papers that soundly refutes the extent of his control, thus calling into question the influence of other, lesser figures. Table 5.3 illustrates the various types and amounts of textiles wholesaled off the Reservation by Hubbell in 1901, when sizes and designs were supposedly "standardized." Weiss (1984:79) also quotes James as to the "larger pay" that traders such as Hubbell offered to "their weavers" to improve their production. Unfortunately there is scant evidence in the Hubbell

Papers to support this story. However, in the next paragraph, he comments upon how "the more intelligent" traders created rivalry among weavers by exhibiting and offering prizes for the best blankets at annual fairs. This did happen, with annual fairs initiated around 1910 which featured prizes for the best blankets in the region (Wade 1985:177-179).

Museologist Kate Peck Kent

In her discussion of traders' influences, textile expert Kate Peck Kent designates 1895 until 1950, as a period of "directed change" in textile design. Because most rugs woven during that period were marketed through reservation trading posts, weavers were so strongly influenced by local traders that distinct styles emerged in several areas of the Reservation. Kent (1985:86) notes Hubbell's instigation of the "revival" pieces based on nineteenth century Navajo patterns, his insistence on high technical standards, and his penchant for over-sized textiles. Because traders "saved" weaving by encouraging weavers to create rugs instead of blankets, they invariably imposed their own aesthetic, and that of Anglo-American buyers on the weavers. Kent (1985:107-115) devotes an entire chapter to the topic of "the search for a Navajo aesthetic," stipulating that a distinctly Navajo aesthetic vanished with the onset of the Rug period. This topic will be dealt with in my final chapter.

Traders and Weavers in Unpublished Archives

Hubbell's "Influence" on Navajo Designs

Prior to the turn of the century, Hubbell's business partner (until 1895), Clinton Cotton purchased hundreds of pounds of commercial yarn, trade blankets and robes from A. Grunsfeld of Albuquerque, successor to the Spiegelberg Brothers. On March 3, 1887, Grunsfeld shipped \$104.78 worth of yarn in scarlet (87 pounds) yellow (15 pounds) and dark green (25 pounds), at 82.5 cents per pound. He later remarks "I have never seen two blankets woven exactly alike" (Box 92, November 2). This refrain occurs so frequently it becomes a marketing by-line. By 1888, Cotton is purchasing Perfection Dyes in dark green, yellow, orange and scarlet, in addition to the commercially dyed yarns.

By the turn of the century Hubbell was primarily interested in reviving the "old style" nineteenth century classic patterns. He certainly facilitated their production by encouraging women to weave them (Table 5.3). Discussion of these old patterns recurs in some of his correspondence for the period, and they are highlighted in his 1902 curio catalogue. Several artists including E. A. Burbank painted a number of the old classic patterns and Hubbell hung them in his office for weavers to see (see photo circa 1907).⁵

In the ledger books for this period, I see that Hubbell periodically lent a woman a blanket "to weave by" or in rare cases, a little painting. For example, "Tom's Niece", p 170, Box 344(2) "has blanket to weave by" written in tiny print adjacent to the ledger entry. With several hundred weavers trading at Ganado, Hubbell always noted in the journal when a weaver had "borrowed" a painting or a blanket "to weave by." The latter phrase was found nine times in file #2, which contains close to 1000 entries. Most of these entries have the word "Settled", or "paid" scrawled across the original notation. The detailed information contained in the "Weavers' Journals" and incorporated in the Appendix V challenges Hubbell's reputed influence on Ganado area weavers which has received so much attention (Boles 1977, 1981, James 1976, McNitt 1962, Rodee 1981, 1987). The acknowledged "innovator" capitalized on a business opportunity by encouraging women to weave patterns originated by their ancestresses. All of these patterns were created long before traders became involved in "influencing" weavers. Boles (1981:88) found that all of the "rug studies" Hubbell had made up were of "old style" patterns taken from 19th century chief's blankets, biils, mantas and serapes, created prior to the formation of the Reservation. Even the rug studies containing borders surrounded "floating motifs" borrowed from "old style" patterns. Contrary to being "foreign" or "new, " these patterns were all part of weavers' repertoires.

In the only catalogue he ever published, Lorenzo Hubbell, Sr., (1902) notes how the popularity of Navajo weaving has escalated in recent years. He says that because demand exceeded supply, quality degenerated (cotton warp, aniline dyes), and unscrupulous dealers

have foisted shoddy goods on an unsuspecting public. To counter such activity, Hubbell claims he has taken the "greatest pains" to perpetuate old patterns, that he has "patiently unravelled" some of the old blankets to show contemporary weavers how they were made.⁶ Thus he guaranteed a beautiful reproduction of a genuine old pattern. Because Hubbell never updated his catalogue, information related to types of blankets and various colour combinations seldom appears in his correspondence until after 1905. Given the tremendous escalation in production after 1900 (Fig. 5.1), and the increasing value of historic weaving, I doubt that Hubbell had either the time or the inclination to unravel many old blankets. The text incorporated in Hubbell's 1902 brochure was written by a Chicago artist and advertiser, H. G. Maratta.⁷ James's (1914) text, brochures published by the Babbitts during the 1920s, and Lorenzo Hubbell, Jr., in 1933, provide ample evidence of the limited amount of influence traders actually had on weaving patterns. [Appendix V].

Dissertation study by Joanne Boles

Joanne Boles (1977) wrote an entire dissertation on Hubbell's influence on Navajo weaving patterns. She combed all of the Hubbell correspondence over a thirty year period (1890-1920). Boles (1977:87) researched major collections in American museums and the only exact copies of rugs found were those that Park service commissioned to replace the originals on the floor at Ganado! [Due to increased foot traffic, the Park Service did not want to subject the original rugs to additional abuse.] Boles (1977:114) discovered that requests for patterns were made in very general terms. She found nine sketches accompanying letters, and of specific colour requests, there were a total of 243 requests over a thirty year period, which averages out to eight per year (Figure 4:105).⁸

During the 18 year period in which he shipped 415,000 pounds of weaving (Fig. 5.1), there were 155 requests for specific colours or colour combinations. If potential buyers (including the Harvey Company) commented at all, it was to acquire the best textiles at the lowest prices (Boles 1977:122). Hubbell himself made few comments concerning colour and

design until 1909, seven years after he issued his little sales catalogue, and more than thirty years into his trading career. Hubbell never wrote about the weavers themselves (Bauer 1987). Boles (1981:60) notes how some customers complained because rugs were inadequately wrapped for shipping, and arrived in poor condition sometimes infested with moths. The most consistent comments in the correspondence dealing with Navajo textiles concerns the acquisition of textiles with "the best weave, the best yarn, the best pattern, the best color, and the largest size for the lowest price" (Boles 1981:60). My own research with the correspondence contained in the Hubbell Papers confirms this.⁹

Additional evidence regarding weavers' autonomy is noted in Lowell Anderson's thesis (1951), concerning factors influencing design. Anderson interviewed 31 weavers and they all maintained they had a complete mental image of their rug before they wove it and they wove whatever size they felt like. The author noted that nearly all weavers showed remarkable "design sense" in that they limited pattern in their rugs to one to three themes, and made variations on these throughout. The only moderator of design was the weaver, and she never duplicated a pattern.

Witherspoon (1987) also argues that traders' influence on designs is overrated. In his text explicating the origins of specific motifs, Witherspoon notes that traders may have pressured weavers to improve quality, but that they influenced weavers only in the most general way in regard to patterns. Witherspoon's contributions to the "design debate" will be more fully covered in Chapter Eight.

The Fred Harvey Company/Hubbell Correspondence

In assessing the Hubbell/Fred Harvey Company correspondence, a number of letters deal with requests for particular colours or changes in designs. Taking into consideration the thousands of pounds of textiles shipped annually by Hubbell [Fig. 5.1], these requests from Company employees such as Huckel and Schweizer are very general. Other researchers state that these men had a great deal of influence on changes in Navajo weaving over a long period

of time (Blomberg 1988, Boles 1977, McNitt 1962, Rodee 1981).

Periodically, the Harvey Company requested a different background colour. On March 16, 1908, Huckel wrote Hubbell from Los Angeles:

the public getting tired of grey...we have got to get up something new all the time to keep the public interested so they will buy. This is good business for you as well as for us (3/16/08).

Far more of the Harvey Company correspondence deals with complaints about Hubbell's high prices, rather than requests for specific colours or patterns [Appendix VI]. However, Schweizer did complain if rugs made with cotton warp had been shipped. In a letter dated September 12, 1907, Schweizer warns of the shortcomings of the cotton warp blanket:

When we started in the curio business several years ago, we made it a point to keep the general public informed in regard to cotton warp blankets, and succeeded to a great extent in killing the sale of this class of goods....it now appears they are again making them...

In the first place an ordinary Navajo blanket can be made in several days less time, by using a cotton string for warp, as the wool warp, properly made and strung, is one of the most difficult parts of making a good blanket.

When cotton..is used, the blanket is not at all durable..[it] can be made in much less time, and much cheaper, and we consider them practically worthless....I believe it is necessary that we must again keep this information before the public at all times, not only to protect our own interests, but in an endeavor to again stop as much as possible, the production of cotton warp blankets, and I will be glad if you will keep this letter before you for a little while, so as to keep the matter in mind.

Thus Schweizer enslaved the Navajo weaver to her spindle to protect the Company's interests. Schweizer's insistence on hand-spun, hand-woven all wool textiles acted to differentiate the "authentic" product from the commercially produced trade blanket woven on a cotton warp--but at great cost to thousands of Navajo spinners and weavers.

The following comments demonstrate just how "unstandardized" Indian "curios" were! On May 28, 1909 (Box 96), Hubbell wrote his son Lorenzo, Jr., and enclosed a letter from the Fred Harvey Company:

You will note that he [Schweizer] wants them [rugs] practically all different and if you could get a lot of them made we can sell them...it will make no difference if you

can get 100 or 200 of them as we can sell them. Be sure and attend to this.

Periodically, Schweizer requested articles such as Kachinas to be made a certain size. For example, he requested Kachinas measuring from five to eight inches, and to cost between 25 and 50 cents each:

it would seem to me that the Indians could make more money if they would make the things that people want. Any American merchant or manufacturer manufactures the things that he has demand for...(November 8, 1930, Box 38).

Further evidence that the Hubbells refrained from disseminating "their" blanket patterns occurs in the interpost correspondence. The senior Hubbell served in the Arizona Senate during 1912. On April 2, (Box 97) Lorenzo Jr., trading at Keams Canyon, wrote Roman at Ganado and rejected the possibility of duplicating the oil painted blanket patterns to distribute to weavers:

the cards we distribute to the Indians will be an advantage to other traders as the Indian will always want to show these cards..and traders...will...bid on all blankets being made. At present we are the only people..that have these patterns in oil..I am not going to give my patterns to any squaws that are not regular customers or live near another trader's store...

Years before, Hubbell had written to the Harvey Company, noting that he:

never have had any cuts (photos) of my blankets made for the reason that I have a large collection of old Blankets from which I have new Blankets made after the old patterns (9/21/01 Box 94).

He noted that both his Germantowns and "old style" blankets are "tight woven" (Box 94).

"The Rug Business"; Selected Inter- and Intra-Post Correspondence 1909-1940

The "rug business" picked up during 1909, as evidenced in Hubbell's ledger books and correspondence. Liz Bauer (1987) has excerpted portions of Hubbell's correspondence during the year. On February 11, he wrote a retailer: "...sell \$6,000 this month compared to \$1300 [this time] last year." ...prices "\$1.00 per pound to \$2 depends upon the quality of weave and beauty of design" (Box 95). Two weeks later he noted..."a good year in selling rugs"...and on February 26 he wrote to Lorencito: "Our Bkt business is the very best and

must keep up its standards .." February's sales peaked at \$7000. On May 9 he wrote his brother Charlie at Cedar Springs:

There was a demand for a cheap saddle blanket. Not desiring to spoil my indians by having them make that kind of goods...: prices: saddle, common, 70-75 cents, saddle, best kind, 85-\$1.10; white w/red [rugs], .75-[1909].

That same week, Hubbell responded to a request from Tillman Brothers, LaCrosse, Wisconsin (Box 96), and quoted the prices listed above. He also noted that he carried a wide variety of blankets from three to fifty pounds.

It is difficult to give prices on Blankets as each blanket is different from the other both in quality and design. Now in regard to the high priced blankets, that are quoted from 1.25 to 2.00. At first sight these would look as the highest prices but they are really the cheapest and in which there is the most money.

He also wrote Lorencito on May 3 (Box 96):

we need all the good blankets we can get, particularly bkts 6 feet wide and from 7 1/2 to 8-1/2 and nine feet long ... I have orders this morning for about 1500.00 of Bkts. one order for 1000.00 of good Bkts and the others for Bts at 75 cts. But I cannot fill that order for we buy very few Bkts that are poor ones here and yours cost at least that if not more. ... the people in Gallup are getting that trade now. They buy there poor Bkts. much cheaper, for they are out of good ones all the time, so they do not get many.

On October 25, 1912, Charles Dawes, supervisor of farming wrote traders:

Navajo blanket industry needs proper and efficient promotion of a higher degree of art and mechanical skill...too great a sameness of price for various classes of work...[generates] mediocrity (Box 44).

After serving in the Arizona legislature for nearly two years, the senior Hubbell returned to trading. Hubbell wrote several potential customers that he now had:

as fine an assortment of blankets as we have ever had and are in a position to make these blankets much cheaper to you than ever before...I am now buying blankets in greater quantities and at a much cheaper price and can therefore make you prices on blankets much less than ever before..I have an assortment that I feel safe in saying is sufficient that I can furnish you with blankets of any color or quality or weave that you wish...(Box 99 - 1/14)

Another letter "to the trade" from Cotton (Box 21 - 4/25/21) provides a classic example of how blankets were treated as merchandise and the pressures placed on weavers. He

comments:

We note considerable improvement in both weave and design of Navajo Blankets, which no doubt is caused by the traders encouraging the Indian to make them better....By encouraging the Indians to make blankets of good weave and design, you are not only helping the Indians out, but yourself as well..

Within the month Forrest wrote Lorenzo, that people were after "size and pattern." He suggested that if Lorenzo could get loosely woven rugs with fair pattern and little white "at cheap prices we will be in the swim" (Box 102). On October 7, 1921, Lorenzo, Jr., wrote Forrest:

I was counting on the wool, and rugs, and particularly on rugs, and I have enough of these at present that with our sales this fall, we should be able to reduce our indebtedness ten thousand dollars by the first of the year....sold wool at 9c/pound so as not to have to borrow more [money]. (Box 102)

By March 25, 1922, Cotton paid \$1.15 and \$1.25 a pound for blankets (Box 21). Lorenzo, Jr., wrote Ed Morris, the trader at Black Mountain, to acquire as many nice small rugs as possible from the weavers: "tell them not to make them so thick, add that they must be clean, and straight" (Box 102).

Babbitts wrote Lorencito on April 19, about a new type of yarn at \$1.00 per pound which was selling well to the traders at Crystal.. "we thought it would be wise to do this [sell at cost] until the Indians had gotten use to using it." The following month, Hubbell noted that he needed "cash for skins, wool and sheep; if we can sell the rugs we can forget the rest of the business" (June 10, Box 104).

Lorenzo, Jr. wrote his father who was running his curio outlet in Hollywood, California: "Turn all the blankets you can Dad, its the one thing that keeps our business going and its just where you shine, I fail to give it the attention it needs" (Box 104 - 6/18/26). As mentioned in the previous chapter, the returns to weavers were very poor during the 1930s and early 1940s. Lorenzo, Jr., tried to increase the sales of weaving, knowing how important it was to Navajo well-being. On November 13, 1931, he wrote a

potential customer that "the variety of patterns, sizes and quality was unlimited..." On April 6, 1938, in answer to a query concerning a commissioned rug, he responded:

the Indians idea of color and design is so very different from the white man, and it is very difficult to get anything near like what you want... but if you draw a design and state size and colors [I] will have someone weave it.

On September 6, 1940, Lorencito wrote:

I consider the Navajo Rug the most important in bringing up the Navajo people's income, providing the Navajo is made to understand that cleanliness, size, finish and design determine its value ...our objective is that at all times, that clean wool be used, that the edging is straight and strong, well designed... (September 12, Box 112 - 9/12/40)

On March 28, 1944, textiles were advertised as follows:

The Navajo rug weaver develops her design as she weaves; she is an artist in her own right; emphasizing all wool, Navajo made, outwear any rug, no two rugs are alike. (Box 115)

The following February, in response to another query, an employee wrote:

Mr. Hubbell encourages the weavers to use red in the rugs since the average purchaser seems to prefer it, however, the choice of color, design and quality of weave is entirely up to the weaver. (Box 116 - 2/13/45)

Before Christmas that year, Roman wrote the traders at their Tennebito Post to pay weavers \$4.50 each if they will weave single saddle blankets with designs, and \$9.00 each for doubles (December 5, 1945, Box 116). "Give every squaw a string with the right measurements so she will be sure to get the right size." From the letters written by the "most influential traders" in the business, we can discern just how influential they were in "fathering" Navajo weaving patterns.

Periodically, government officials promoted the Hubbells' expertise in curios.

Superintendent Miller sent them a copy of his response to a query:

Mr. Hubbell can furnish you anything you might want from their handicraft. He is absolutely reliable and carries a large stock. His assortment is the finest and largest in this country. Of course, the Navajo blanket is the best thing these Indians on this reservation make. It is an article of utility as well as of interest. Mr. Hubbell can furnish these in any design, size or color made (Box 44 - 4/30/29).

At one point a number of Reservation traders were polled about ways to improve the

quality of Navajo weaving. The government eventually sponsored the "First Navajo Rug Project Conference" in Santa Fe, New Mexico, which was attended by several dozen weavers, who studied old rugs and heard lectures on wool types, cleaning, carding and dyeing of wool. This conference was held at the height of the Depression, when weavers received less per pound for their textiles than their mothers and grandmothers had prior to the turn of the century.¹⁰

Coolidge (1930:103) acknowledged that traders "improved" the product by taking in trade only "well-woven, firm and tasteful rugs. As the women had no other market and no other direct way of making money, they were slowly induced to return to older and better methods." According to Coolidge and other publications, by 1900, the rug of commerce had become "approximately standardized" as to grades, colours and weaves [yet see Table 5.3). It appeared that the colours used were determined by what the weaver has discovered the traders would pay a good price for in trade. Chapter Five revealed just how high a "price" weavers paid for the "privilege" of weaving for the most influential traders. Traders own advertisements [Appendix V] and comments made in correspondence, belie the notion of "standardization." The necessity of moving goods off trading post shelves, particularly outside of wool season, acted to off-set the imposition of rigid norms.

Rethinking Standardization

The statement by the Coolidges, individuals knowledgeable about weaving, in conjunction with the evidence discerned in Hubbell's Papers, provides provocative testimony to the pressures borne by thousands of Navajo women in accelerating production while maintaining quality to meet the traders' demands. Several factors weighed heavily in maintaining this pressure: 1) The ever-present commercially produced Pendleton blanket that provided an error-free product (unlike a weaving which could contain mistakes). 2) The pressure exerted by the existent trade blankets which usurped the market for the hand-woven textile; 3) The ever-present commercially spun yarn--fine, smooth, with no colour gradations.

Weavers were compelled to duplicate the machine-spun counterpart by laboriously handspinning the yarn several times to achieve desired fineness. Even today, contemporary weavers remark on how traders will criticize their rugs by saying.. "you're not there yet."..."you can do better." 4) Competition from handwoven imports. By 1910, Navajo weavers were facing stiff competition from Mexico, as the Fred Harvey Company began importing "Mexican greys." On June 29, 1910 (Box 37), Herman Schweizer wrote Hubbell that such blankets "come in close competition with your fine greys and are much cheaper and very good quality." Schweizer comments that he will consider handling them himself "unless we can make some progress getting something else that everyone else has not got."

This Chapter has revealed, based on traders' own statements and records, the (limited) extent of their influence on Navajo patterns. One could argue that standards were imposed concerning technique (i.e., clean wool, straight edges). The inducement to place borders around the perimeter of weaving took nearly a generation to effect. There is no question that traders were responsible for this change, as the niche for the Navajo blanket was usurped by numerous trade blanket manufacturers. For the most part, weavers held their own in matters of colour, design and size, although Hubbell encouraged the production of over-sized textiles.

As argued in Chapter Four, given the eight-fold increase in textile production with less than a 50% increase in population between 1880 and 1910 (Kelley and Whiteley 1989:213), it was impossible for traders (with the exception of J. B. Moore) to "standardize" the Navajo rug. This lack of standardization has created a number of problems for contemporary weavers. Unlike foodstuffs grown by peasants and consumed shortly after harvest, thousands of Navajo textiles have outlived their makers. Chapter Seven will explore another pressure encountered by Navajo weavers over the past century. An invidious pressure that they could not discern, but one that has become apparent through analysis of extant records, and continues to escalate today--the collectors' market for historic Navajo weaving.

ENDNOTES

1. The text that follows provides a precis typical of descriptions which describes the development of the post-Reservation Navajo rug. The magazine Designers West incorporates a column "Antique Digest." Museum of Northern Arizona Curator Laura Graves Allen wrote an article for their April (1983:133-138) issue titled "Navajo Rugs: a Marketing Success." She describes the long term popularity of Navajo textiles. She notes how geometric elements incorporated over time into the earliest textiles were part of the Navajo "design repertoire" as they appear in early baskets. The "Transitional Period" led to a "wild period of experimentation." Allen describes trader J. B. Moore as developing a "production line" . . . some women were better spinners. She notes that the "Storm" pattern is the only pattern to incorporate "symbolism." She describes Hubbell as "flooding the market" as he had more than 300 weavers "employed" at Ganado. The quality of weaving from Ganado was "unsurpassed." Weavers are described as accepting and mixing the "oddly matched ingredients" such as Oriental design influences, into their weaving. Thus Navajo weaving is a "continually evolving textile tradition steeped in heritage."

2. Publications devoted to Oriental rugs have featured articles on how weavers ultimately incorporated these "foreign" influences. In the December 1990 issue of The Oriental Rug Review (14-17), curator Marion Rodee notes the dramatic changes that occurred in the textiles woven by weavers "working" for trader J. B. Moore between the publication of his first (1903) and second (1911) catalogues. The appearance of patterns incorporating multiple borders, airplane-like motifs and simple 'guls' contrast with previous patterns, and represent a "complete break" with previous "styles." Although there is no direct evidence of influence, Rodee notes how Oriental carpets were popular, and paper rug hooking and other domestic craft patterns were made available to housewives through companies such as E. S. Frost. In another publication, Rodee (1981:56) illustrates four of Frost's Turkish hooked rug stencils. Both types of textiles exhibit multiple borders, but the patterns are quite dissimilar. With the exception of a "latch hook" motif and two rug patterns which incorporate "airplane-like" motifs, I think the comparison is overdrawn.

3. According to Brody (1976 fn 17,np), Hubbell had copies of Ruskin's texts in his library at Ganado. Brody claims that traders Hubbell and Moore "applied the canons of good taste of the arts and crafts movement to Navajo weaving." Yet most patterns are variations and permutations of 19th century Navajo patterns.

4. A parallel situation occurs in Rodee (1981). In replicating 18 patterns from Moore's 1911 catalogue, Rodee (1981:36-53) neglects to include the names of the weavers/designers identified by Moore. Rodee (1990:17) credits traders with "working hard to achieve a high degree of perfection in weaving." She also notes:

Ganado..had developed its own style under the management of Lorenzo Hubbell... today weavers buy the latest books on their art.. So common are the Oriental styles that Navajo weavers believe they are completely traditional since their mothers and grandmothers wove in this way. They are surprised and often incredulous of the great change which took place in Navajo weaving as a result of the taste of the dominant American society for Caucasian rugs.

5. Boles (1977:17) also notes how a Miss Bonsell, an associate of anthropologist Stewart Culin, was paid \$30.00 by Hubbell to paint two of the rug studies in 1902. In one day this woman earned more money in cash than a Navajo weaver would receive in credit for weaving three 9 by 9 foot "blue" blankets or a pair of portieres--requiring up to six months labour (Box 344).
6. This statement is probably the source of Weiss's comment previously mentioned, and James (1914:203). A number of other authors (cf. Hogg 1930) also quote it.
7. On May 19, 1902, Hubbell shipped Maratta a pair of portieres to pay for his brochure (Box 54).
8. Incoming, inter- and intra-post correspondence comprise the first 125 of 573 Hollinger Boxes of the Hubbell Papers. Thus 22%, or approximately 1000 pounds of letters contain a minuscule number of requests relative to the magnitude of correspondence.
9. Yet an overemphasis on traders' influences persists. Coe (1986:np) comments on his visit with master weaver Mae Jim, while she was weaving an enormous rug. He describes it as "a superbly controlled Ganado design..continuing the Don Lorenzo Hubbell tradition. ... Hubbell worked out the general concept of a locally woven rug that would compete with Oriental carpets." Yet there is not a shred of evidence in the Hubbells' voluminous correspondence that he deliberately attempted to develop similar designs to capture that market. The only correspondence I recall related to competition from "Persian" carpets concerns a letter from Karl Schlatter (Box 73) who remarked that his son was unable to sell Navajo rugs in Europe because people preferred the less expensive Turkish rugs.
10. For example, in his 1902 catalogue, Hubbell advertised 3 x 5 foot weavings from \$10 to 17.50. In 1931, this size sold between \$7 to 11.00. In 1936 Macy's Department Store requested such weavings from \$5-8.00 for a promotion. Prices remained the same during the early 1940s, yet flour, coffee and canned tomatoes had doubled and trade blankets and tow cards had quadrupled in price between 1902 and 1940 (Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3).

CHAPTER SEVEN
FROM THE FLEA MARKET TO FIFTH AVENUE
TRACKING THE INVESTMENT MARKET IN HISTORIC NAVAJO WEAVING

"We owe to the voyagers, colonials, and ethnologists the arrival of these objects in the West. But we owe primarily to the convictions of the pioneer modern artists their promotion from the rank of curiosities and artifacts to that of major art, indeed to the status of art at all. (Rubin, quoted in Foster 1985:47)

The relations of power whereby one portion of humanity can select, value and collect the pure products of others need to be criticized and transformed. This is no small task. (Clifford 1988:213)

It would be folly for any museum curator or other scholar active in the southwest field to presume to work independently of the Indian arts market. Academic scholarship and commerce have been entwined since before the turn of the century. From purchasing personal garments made of new or recycled ethnic cloth to commissioning pieces for museums' permanent collections, we are all implicated. (Hedlund 1994:42)

This chapter surveys the repercussions associated with the transformation of historic Navajo weaving from craft to art and its subsequent escalation in value. It reviews the role of textile scholars and museologists as facilitators of this transformation. It highlights how this metamorphosis has provided a lucrative environment for collectors, investors and artists: the latter have a wealth of inspiration for their own work. When artists lend their blankets to international travelling exhibitions, the market demand for historic textiles rises along with the price. The Navajo, however, are thrice deprived: their magnificent cultural heritage is financially far beyond the reach of their own museum. Navajo weavers see ancestresses' creations in books, or must travel to museums far from the reservation to view historic works. Articles and advertisements appearing in arts and antiques magazines lure collectors and dealers to invest in historic textiles.

Today many Navajo weavers struggle to continue weaving--but lack buyers in the face of intermittent recessions, competition from copies imported from Mexico and overseas, the difficulty of travelling to cities to market their work, and the persistence of dealers, traders and collectors retailing historic textiles. The final portion of the chapter surveys the inimical effects of these activities on sales of contemporary Navajo weaving. Statements from weavers

themselves are incorporated to reveal the effects of these activities on Navajo livelihood.

From Woven Craft to High Art

Based on information provided in previous chapters, although a weaver may have spent hundreds of hours spinning, dyeing and weaving a textile, its functional aspect far outweighed any consideration of its overriding aesthetic (Amsden 1934, James 1914, Kent 1985, Underhill 1956). Navajo "dexterity" was acknowledged in the literature, but until recently it was never accorded the status of art because it was represented in a (functional) textile, and not on a non-functional canvas.¹

Nineteenth century Navajo blankets were instrumental in the development of colour field painting, an important genre which emerged during the 1960s. Indeed, many aboriginal textiles prefigure major developments in contemporary art, in some cases by centuries. Some specialists note that the "colour aesthetics" of Navajo weavers was superior to that of painters inspired by their work.² Witherspoon (1977:174) lists nearly two dozen famous artists who own Navajo weaving, including Tony Berlant, Jasper Johns, Frank Stella, Tony Smith, Andy Warhol and Kenneth Noland. A portion of the first major exhibition featuring 81 historic Navajo textiles to tour internationally (from 1972 to 1974) was culled from their collections. While on exhibit in London, art critic Ralph Pomeroy (1974:30) wrote:

I am going to forget, in order to really see them, that a group of Navajo blankets are not only that. In order to consider them as I feel they ought to be considered as ART with a capital 'A' -- I am going to look at them as paintings-created with dye instead of canvas--by several nameless masters of abstract art.

Feminist art critics and historians responded to this aesthetic revisionism." Parker and Pollock (1982:68) remarked:

Several manoeuvres are necessary in order to see these works as art. The geometric becomes abstract, woven blankets become paintings and women weavers become nameless masters...in art history the status of an art work is inextricably tied to the status of the maker.

Lucy Lippard (1984) wryly critiqued this new-found notoriety:

They were eulogized as neutral, un-gendered sources for big bold geometric

abstractions by male artists like Frank Stella and Kenneth Noland. Had they been presented as exhibitions of women's art, they would not have been seen at all in a fine arts context. When feminists pointed out that their much admired 'strong works' were crafts...one would expect the women's art to be taken more seriously, yet such borrowings from 'below' must still be validated from 'above.'

Sculptor Tony Berlant and textile curator Mary Hunt Kahlenberg of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, co-authored the publication which toured with the abovementioned exhibition. In the catalogue (1972:26-28), the curators wrote:

In visual power and force of statement Navajo blankets represent a high point in the history of American Indian art...within the traditional Navajo culture the majority of weavers were able to produce works of art on a level that can only be matched by a handful of professional artists in our own culture... Navajo weavers ...dealt with many of the same concerns as contemporary American artists.

Berlant began collecting historic Navajo blankets during the 1960s and early 1970s. He owned more than 300 textiles, and required a warehouse to store them (Baer 1989:539). The inaugural exhibition spawned several others, for in 1973, New York gallery owner Andre Emmerich mounted "Navajo Blankets from the Private Collections of Contemporary Artists." In the catalogue essay, Berlant (1973:np) noted:

...these [19th century] blankets are entirely secular objects and without ceremonial significance, neither are they symbolic in any direct sense...each blanket carries the dynamic expression of a self-image, this priority of individual creation... carries through the sense of a specific artist and it is as they gain power in contemplation that this sense of the individual is revealed.

With the genesis of colour field painting, the cant of modernism and the aesthetics of formalism altered the perception and treatment of historic Navajo weaving within the academy. Suddenly, the aesthetic concerns of nameless weavers and internationally known painters were discussed in the same breath by dealers, modernist critics and museologists.

Unravelling the Entwinement of Academic Scholarship and Commerce

During 1974, the University of Arizona Museum of Art mounted a solo exhibition of several dozen blankets owned by Tony Berlant. Director Steadman acknowledged the Museum's indebtedness to Los Angeles collector and real estate developer Edwin Janss for suggesting an exhibition of a portion of Berlant's collection. In the Introduction, he

remarked:

..the art museum brings together "thirty [19th century] masterpieces in which craftsmanship and color are the keynotes of the composition...the blankets show..the spirit in which great painters have treated their craft... [this is]..the most splendid collection of Navajo blankets in the world.

Archaeologist Dr. Joe Ben Wheat, formerly of the University of Colorado Museum, wrote the catalogue essay for the exhibition. Acknowledged as the doyen of Navajo textile studies, Wheat (1976, 1977, 1981, 1984, 1988), exhaustively studied the history, techniques and materials of Navajo weaving for decades (Hedlund 1989). He researched early nineteenth century archives concerning the types and values of imported materials such as bayeta, ultimately incorporated in southwestern textiles. He analyzed, catalogued and appraised hundreds of historic textiles in private and public collections. He developed a cluster of "diagnostic techniques," including dye analyses, which aid in dating nineteenth century textiles. Navajo weaving is classified according to design (banded, striped, zoned), function, yarn type, and weaving technique. Chief's blanket styles are generally divided into three subgroups (Blomberg 1988). Wheat has reassessed much of Amsden's research. Curators, textile scholars, gallery owners, collectors and dealers frequently reference his studies. Wheat's (1974) assessment of pre-Reservation pieces reflects his admiration for them. The following comments are excerpted from his catalogue essay which accompanied Berlant's solo exhibition:

...for purity of color and clarity of design and composition, Navajo blankets of the Classic period have never been excelled.. and ...the achievements of the past which produced the magnificent textiles of the 19th century are not likely ever to be repeated.

In 1994, Wheat's contributions to Southwest textiles studies were lauded by dealer/curator Mary Hunt Kahlenberg. During her conference presentation, Kahlenberg noted how Wheat's research on the techniques, history and materials aided in establishing the provenance, pedigree and importance of individual blankets. When a blanket's age could be determined, it was "guaranteed." This in turn attracted new collectors because of its potential

increase in value.³ Today 19th century weaving is acknowledged as "art," since the aesthetics of Navajo weavers is seen to parallel that of painters. As the historic weaving has become art, privileging the conceptual, the information concerning manual technique is no longer as important (cf. fn 1). In a New Age twist, Kahlenberg suggests that Navajo weaving provides a link for Americans searching for spirituality. Acquiring a blanket, is like a "fetish in the pocket": we can bring spirituality into our lives by owning "a piece of history."

Tracking the Journey From Collectible to High Camp

In 1968, Tony Berlant acquired a Second Phase Chief's blanket for \$50.00. By 1974 (post-international exhibition), Arizona Highways noted that Chief's Blankets currently sold at auction for \$15,000-20,000. Five years later, Berlant began selling off a portion of his large collection. During the 1980s, the market for historic Navajo blankets became increasingly volatile, with Chief's blankets remaining the "most recognizable" of all native American works of art (Baer 1989). In 1984, a Navajo satillo serape was auctioned by Sotheby's for \$115,000, a record-setting amount for a native American artifact (Johnson 1984:17).⁴ In 1989, Sotheby's auctioned a rare First Phase Chief's Blanket owned by Edwin Janss for \$522,000!⁵ What is the connection between this spectacular increase in price and several New York gallery exhibits mounted within the previous decade highlighting the "inspired" works of prominent contemporary male artists juxtaposed to Navajo weaving? One exhibition prompted the art critic for the New York Times to query "How 'primitive' is the folk art of the Navajo?" Collecting, exhibiting and auctioning historic textiles and other artifacts created by indigenous peoples prior to being "spoiled" by "modernization" has become big business (cf. Price 1989).⁶

Auctions sponsored by Christie's and Sotheby's in major cities around the world represent the most elite sales of native artifacts. Such activity can be tracked in the Albuquerque, New Mexico publication Artlist. Available since 1985, author Laurence Smith provides year to year comparisons of prices realized at all auctions of native art. He also

writes the column "Auction Track" for The Indian Trader. In the February 1990:31 issue, Smith highlights the "Records set at Sotheby's".⁷

In November 1991, Sotheby's auctioned a pair of portieres woven of Germantown yarns and attributed to the Ganado area (circa 1910). Appraised at \$35,000 to \$45,000, they are similar to portieres advertised by Hubbell in his 1902 catalogue for \$200 to \$300.00. Recall that weavers received from \$27 to (rarely) \$75.00 in credit for weaving one pair of portieres. Twenty other classic and transitional blankets illustrated in colour and conservatively appraised at \$250,000 were also auctioned. At the back of the catalogue with five to eight black and white illustrations per page, more textiles are depicted along with other items such as kachinas, pottery and baskets. Rugs are described as "Navajo pictorial" or "Navajo regional" rugs, and appraisals range from \$1000 to \$9000 each. All were originally "pound blankets" woven by Navajo women after 1900.

Marketing in a Museum Context

The myth of 'fine quality old textiles,' juxtaposed to inferior 'modern' weaving frequently pervades the collection practices and research methods of many museums. "Masterpiece" and "treasure" are terms applied almost exclusively to 'traditional' historic textiles categorized as 'museum-quality.' During the nineteenth century, many textiles were deemed primitive because they were constructed by a technology inferior to that used in Europe (Chapter Two). By the time efforts of colonial educators and missionaries were felt, Anglo Americans began to experience nostalgia for the "untouched primitive lifestyles" and expressed a horror of indigenous creations debauched by western influences (cf. Chapters Four, Five and Six). For example, in describing the changes in weaving after the formation of the Reservation, Kahlenberg and Berlant (1972:25) wrote:

after traders appropriated the market, weavers began to produce the "trading post controlled rug."...[weavers] often following explicit instruction and designs suggested by the trader. ...the creative, personal edge was dulled as the connection between blanket and individual self-image was lost...

Today, descendants of weavers once criticized for their primitive technology, find their creations now discriminated against for being "non-traditional" (Rodee 1981).

Although the recent mania for historic textiles is not a new phenomenon (Appendix IX), the current craze is far better advertised. The curator at the Maxwell Museum, University of New Mexico authored Old Navajo Rugs: Their Development From 1900 to 1940 (Rodee 1981). Funded with National Endowment for the Arts support, the book has enjoyed ten reprintings. Recently enlarged and republished in hardcover, the text is geared to inform collectors and dealers about properly identifying early twentieth century Navajo textiles. Rodee uses wool type and quality as the most accurate markers for dating a particular textile. Dating via the pattern alone is not an accurate indicator, as particular designs are periodically "revived." The following paragraph appears in the Preface to the book:

Old Navajo rugs exert an appeal that is frequently lacking in contemporary weaving. In contrast with many modern rugs that are sold as wall hangings, beautiful but remote from their original function, old Navajo rugs remain engaging, well woven, strong. This book is designed to fill a lacuna in their history--the period from 1890 to World War II. I hope..to assist both private and public collectors who are turning to this period as 19th century weaving becomes increasingly expensive....

Much of the information relayed this chapter explores the implications of similar statements on the markets for both historic and contemporary Navajo weavings.

Counter-voices and the Politics of Representation

As reflected in comments previously quoted, the terminology currently utilized by art historians, dealers, collectors and museum curators has altered remarkably over the last twenty years. For example, some of the "wild," or "coarse" pound blankets and rugs of the past now receive accolades as "eye dazzlers" whose makers are perceived as part of mainstream American art (Arnold 1988:41). The recent interrogation of museum practices and issues of representation emerging from the academy and from First Nations peoples have not yet addressed these striking changes in relation to the altered discourse surrounding

Navajo textiles (cf. Museum Anthropology 1991, 1993, 1994). However, some of their commentary speaks to issues relevant to situating this problem in current museum discourse.

Post-modernist trends in recent scholarship have tended to question the isolation of "art" or "science" from cultural narratives that inform a society's values (Penney 1988). Museums, responsible for arranging the "facts" of art and science into public narratives, have found that their representations are inherently political; they either reinforce a consensus of values or challenge it. If the latter occurs, they risk censorship or loss of funding. Many museums are reluctant to alienate wealthy patrons whose financial support is crucial to their survival, but whose politics seldom embrace the post-colonial anti-hegemonic Other (Krech 1994:6).

Michael Ames (1991:7) notes how the word museum is used in its generic sense to include museums of art (art galleries) and museums of history, science and technology. The term includes both types by "papering over" some profound differences in curatorial perspectives and practices. It is more than a division between terms "art" and "artifact".. these are code words which stand for a range of ideological, social and political differences. Ideas about aesthetics, the process of art making, and the role of the artist (as it has evolved in Western societies over the past several centuries) form the basis of art gallery policies and their definitions of "art." Classical art history defines art as a "heroically personal, subjective, and non-utilitarian expression of creativity." In contrast, history museums are founded on Western ideology of science which views the world "objectively" as a field of potential specimens used as representations of a natural world. Cultural materials are divided and treated separately.. as artful creations of individuality by named individuals if the works are Western in origin, or as anonymous 'collective representations' made by unnamed tribal craftspeople if works are non-Western in origin (Price 1989, Ch 4). In reviewing the comments quoted above, the "artspeak" currently operating in the field of historic Navajo weaving clearly straddles the two domains. A coterie of experts, many associated with

museums, has contributed to the construction of the post-Reservation narrative which culminated in the frequently referenced generalizations quoted at the beginning of Chapter Four. This narrative is presumed to describe the context within which the historic weaving was produced. However, as revealed in previous chapters, the economic conditions under which these textiles were produced have not been adequately investigated. Such information is unnecessary to the current "artspeak" climate which dominates current discourse on Navajo textiles. As Clifford (1988:200) notes, cultural context is not perceived as essential to an aesthetic appreciation:

an ignorance of cultural context seems almost a precondition for artistic appreciation. In this object system a tribal piece is detached from one milieu in order to circulate freely in another, a world of art--of museums, markets, and connoisseurship....the "masterpiece" is universally recognizable.

The "Primitivism" exhibition mounted by the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MOMA) in 1984, juxtaposed tribal and modern art, and sparked critiques by post-modernist art historians and critics (Clifford 1986, 1988; Foster 1985). Clifford's (1988:196-97) commentary provides a critique which encapsulates the hegemony enjoyed by culture brokers in defining and extending the parameters of the art world:

..the "discovery" of tribal objects by modernist artists occurred at the moment of high colonialism...the story involves reclassification...not redemption or discovery. The fact that rather abruptly, in the space of a few decades, a large class of non-Western artifacts came to be redefined as art is a taxonomic shift that requires critical historical discussion, not celebration... [that] this expansion of the category "art" occurred just as the planet's tribal peoples came massively under European political, economic, and evangelical dominion cannot be irrelevant. ...the scope and underlying logic of the "discovery" of tribal art reproduces hegemonic Western assumptions rooted in the colonial and neocolonial epoch.

Although apropos, Clifford's critique has yet to trigger a reflexive reconsideration by Southwest scholars concerning the radical transformation in the discourse surrounding historic Navajo textiles. However, such a wholesale appropriation and absorption of indigenous forms has spawned a generalized critique from First Nations quarters.

Critique from First Nations Perspectives

According to Cree artist Alfred Young-Man (Ames 1994:11), First Nations peoples resent having their cultures, (which they view holistically), "separated and interpreted according to alien categories of domination." It is also a matter of status and prestige. Artifacts are ranked lower than art, and crafts below artifacts. Categorizing an object as art or craft becomes a political act because such categorization shapes its subsequent history (Ames 1991). Many members of First Nations perceive the "universalism" enunciated by mainstream institutions as a form of imperialism which denies or devalues the importance of collective difference. Metis filmmaker Loretta Todd (1990) offers this critique:

the missionary zeal with which colonialism sought to make us all Christians persisted in artistic realms. Our cultural orders, our cultural expressions were not of value until they were washed in the holy waters of western thought..until the critics, academics, the artists recognized or discovered the worth of our work.

The above critiques provide a penetrating countervoice to hegemonic Western views as reflected in the reconstitution of the Navajo aesthetic in historic blankets. Ames (1994) remarks that First Nations peoples are discomfited by academic institutions and professions such as anthropology, museology, and art history, that frequently manifest the values of rationality, linear logic, depersonalized methodologies and persistently "order, dissect and classify everything in sight." Such critiques from members of the First Nations become increasingly relevant in scrutinizing the evidence related to the recent volatility of the market for historic Navajo textiles. The compliance of southwest museologists in facilitating this market in face of the decreasing demand for contemporary textiles calls for critique.

The escalating interest and shift in type of publication on the topic of historic Navajo weaving is the subject of a paper authored by anthropologist Suzanne Baizerman. Published in 1989, in a volume devoted to honouring the legacy of textile scholar Kate Peck Kent, Baizerman comments on the changing discourses. Tracking publications since the 1880s, nearly 70% of all books, dissertations, and theses produced on the topic of Navajo weaving

were published since 1960. Baizerman documents the increase in the number of books and catalogues on the topic, and notes the shift in authorship from anthropologists in academe in the earlier periods (cf. Reichard 1934, 1936, 1939), to art historians and museologists in the last 20 years. For example, Table 2 (Baizerman 1989:16) reveals the number of citations on Navajo textiles written by academics. Ten academic publications were produced between 1960 and 1979, whereas only one was written between 1980 and 1988. In contrast, a concomitant rise occurred in the number of museum/gallery catalogues. For the first period, 11 catalogues were published, and this jumped to 17 produced during the 1980s. From one catalogue to every two years, we see an increase of two catalogues per year. In fact, of the total number of catalogues produced on the subject since 1884, nearly half were written between 1980 and 1988. Baizerman (1989:16) also notes:

some museum curators and anthropologists became dealers, and some dealers received training in anthropology.... it is evident that the museum is the centre of publishing on Navajo textiles (in 1989), and the trend is getting stronger.

Baizerman (1989:17) remarks on the tremendous increase in value of historic Navajo weaving, noting that dealers and collectors serve on museum boards:

Publications are important to establish authority and expertise and to provide the publicity necessary to help sustain the value of the product. ...the rise in the number of publications on Navajo textiles correlates with the rise in their monetary value.

She also notes how general interest in craft peaked in the 1960s and 1970s, and then declined in recent years. However, this is not reflected in publications on Navajo weaving. The following section provides a provocative example of how the shift in categories (from craft to art) has altered the discourse on a style of historic Navajo weaving.

Artspeak: From Barbarism to Eye Dazzling

When the Navajo wove the bright Germantown yarns into busy serrate patterns, the "eyedazzler" was created, so named because of the pulsating optical effects it created. It was these creations, and their aniline-dyed counterparts woven between 1880 to 1900, that early critics such as Amsden and James referred to as "barbaric" and "an aesthetic debauch."

Techniques once referred to as "lazy lines" and "bungling" in historic texts are now described as creating "extremely subtle and beautiful effects" (Pomeroy 1974:35). The redemption of the "eyedazzler" was initiated in an exhibition mounted at the University of Iowa Museum of Art in 1976. In the forward to the catalogue, Director Jan Keene Muhlert lamented the "disappearance" of indigenous peoples:

..it may be altogether fitting at this time to contemplate the remnants of a native American culture which has been displaced, in some cases destroyed, or perhaps so totally distorted by now as to be beyond recognition of its indigenous forms...We owe the [delayed] appreciation of these "works of art" to the artist, due to his "universalizing aesthetic."

When this statement was made, the "remnant" population was comprised of over 150,000 Navajo, with possibly 20,000 weavers. Exhibition curator J. J. Brody admits he was blind to these eyedazzlers, even though he worked with them daily as Director of the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, University of New Mexico, until the late 1960s. Brody attributes the "fresh vision" of three artists to altering his perception.

In a more recent publication, Kaufman and Selser (1985:65) describe their reception:

many eyedazzlers were outstanding examples of artistic expression, completely different in visual appeal from the blankets that preceded them and the rugs that followed. Today, eyedazzlers have become the pets of twentieth-century color-field painters, art critics, and collectors of Navajo weaving. They have been favorably compared to Op art, a style that reached its peak of popularity with "The Responsive Eye," the 1965 exhibit at The Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

Newspapers such as the New York Times have also covered the recent mania for historic Navajo weaving. Columnist Rita Reif (1983:H-35) published an article titled "Navajo Weavings Are Choice Collectors' Items" in the "Antiques View" column:

Over the past 15 years, ever since artists and other collectors began seriously acquiring "eye dazzlers," these stunning weavings have been studied, written about, exhibited and acquired with mounting enthusiasm. ... the visually arresting blankets are regarded as the precursors of the Op Art paintings of the 1960s.... explosive in their colours, and dynamic in their designs..[they] project extraordinary passion... [and] possess raw intensity.

Their raw intensity or deep turbulence is contrasted to the quiet control conveyed by the pre-Reservation weavings. The author suggests that the dramatic contrast may be due to the

emotional despair experienced by a once proud and free people who became captives at Bosque Redondo.

Reif mentions two concurrent events: an exhibition in Scottsdale, Arizona and an auction of "eye-dazzlers" scheduled at Sotheby's, New York City, predicted to set sales records. She concludes:

Navajo blankets have skyrocketed in price in recent years...Germantown weavings have risen from 10 to 40 percent in less than two years. Over the last decade the Indian blankets have escalated 10 times or more in value. And collectors see no end in sight to rising prices, as the finer examples become scarce and new collectors compete for the few available.

Judith Arnold (1988) authored "An Investment in Beauty" for "Southwest Profile." She interviewed Lee Cohen, director of fine arts galleries in Scottsdale and Santa Fe. Viewing historic Navajo weaving through the lens of art history, he comments on how historic Navajo textiles have been collected by modernist American painters because:

Navajo women had an intuitive grasp of using color and form to create a third dimension and dynamic ..without using perspective or representational imagery. This is precisely what the abstract painters were experimenting with, creating a third dimension with color and form. So these Navajo weavings..are an important part of the mainstream of American art, not just a regionally interesting craft...

He notes how the aesthetic importance of the older pieces and the prices they are bringing at auction--\$50,000 to \$100,000 and more..[they] have helped establish the "intrinsic worth" of post-1900 Navajo weaving. Cohen anticipates continual price increases (Arnold 1988:41).

In 1989, the New York gallery Hirschl and Adler Folk mounted "Eye Dazzlers: Navajo Weavings and Contemporary Counterparts." This exhibition "explores the tradition of contemporary artists drawing inspiration from the abstract qualities of Indian art." In the catalogue essay Frank Miele notes:

American Indian art has been a very integral and vital part of mainstream American art and both, in fact have exerted a profound influence upon the contemporary American art of this century.

The exhibition featured paintings by Donald Judd, Frank Stella and Kenneth Noland. The terms affinity and inspiration are used in describing correlations between these artists' work

and Navajo weaving. In describing Noland's "Every Third" painted in 1963, Miele noted "it is truly startling to find that so many of the descriptions of Noland's work are so apropos in describing an eyedazzler as well."⁸

Santa Fe dealer/collector Joshua Baer frequently publishes on the topic of Navajo weaving. The October 1991 issue of Antiques magazine carries a ten page article on "Garments of Brightness: the art and history of the Navajo eye dazzler." Baer provides a precis of Navajo weaving history, noting that the Navajo language contains no words for "art" or "sacred." He surveys the importance of Navajo textiles in pre-Reservation trade, how they were exchanged for gold, buffalo hides or horses. After the advent of trading posts, weavers were "at the mercy of traders' aesthetic preferences" since the extension of credit bound them to a particular post. He perpetuates the conviction that weavers sold the "eyedazzler" textiles for enough credit to purchase yarn for three or four more blankets. Only the best weavers could afford large quantities of these expensive machine-spun yarns. As the time consuming processes of shearing, spinning and dyeing were dispensed with, they could concentrate on colours and designs. Weavers achieved "a level of design innovation and technical expertise that had not existed in Navajo weaving since the early classic period (1820-1840)." Baer continues by noting that weavers received more credit for their textiles if they produced blankets that looked like machine-made weavings. Although the bold, complex designs of these eyedazzlers appeared distinct from earlier patterns, they tend to be exaggerated versions of elements influenced by Pueblo and Spanish weaving, that had been incorporated in earlier Navajo textiles.

Baer's text exemplifies how dealers, collectors and curators weave nostalgic scenarios to fan an already volatile market for historic weavings. As described in Chapter Five, the "eyedazzlers" brought weavers \$3 to \$10 in credit at the trading post when first exchanged for goods. Today they are routinely auctioned or retailed from \$3,000 to \$50,000.⁹

Historic Navajo Weaving and the Local/Regional Scene

During the last fifteen years there has been a noticeable increase in the appearance of historic alongside contemporary weaving at Reservation trading posts and southwestern retail outlets. Many of these historic textiles advertised by dealers and collectors are within the same price range as counterparts woven by contemporary weavers (Reno 1988). Museums of ethnology located in the southwest now sell historic pieces adjacent to contemporary Navajo weaving in their gift shops. Because nineteenth century Navajo textiles have become prohibitively expensive, curators, dealers and collectors have shifted their attention to textiles woven after 1900 (Arnold 1988; Rodee 1981). The director of the gift shop at a New Mexico Museum described these rugs as: "Affordable. Available. Beautiful." Such textiles are now realized as:

perfect examples of the ideal collectible--intrinsic beauty, a history of rising prices, limited and decreasing supply yet still plentiful enough to allow for comparison shopping and a relatively active resale market (Arnold 1988:38).

One rug, possibly from the Ganado area, was estimated to have increased in value more than fifty-fold, from \$25 in 1925, to \$1,300 in 1988. The director predicted its worth would more than double by 1995. However, when one compares the technical quality in identically priced historic and contemporary weavings offered in retail establishments, the latter are generally superior. For example, in comparing two textiles priced at \$1000, the contemporary rug is likely to contain more finely spun and evenly dyed yarn, and more detailed pattern. Although it is impossible to generalize on this topic, my observations are based on comparisons made over the past ten years.

In conjunction with escalating auction and gallery activity, a dramatic increase has occurred in the last ten years in advertisements featuring historic Navajo textiles in magazines devoted to native art. During the 1970s and early 1980s, advertisements highlighted rugs by contemporary weavers. A full page colour ad in a recent issue of American Indian Art (1995) features the new gallery of historic Indian art, in a retail establishment that formerly

features the new gallery of historic Indian art, in a retail establishment that formerly advertised itself as "the largest dealer in contemporary Navajo weaving in the world." Years ago, when one visited this gallery, a small portion of their stock was comprised of historic weaving; today they have hundreds of old pound blankets for sale.¹⁰

American Indian Art Magazine, published in Scottsdale, Arizona, caters to individuals interested in the history, aesthetics, and market value of Indian art. It features articles by scholars and dealers, and advertisements by dealers and galleries, with an emphasis on historic material. A two-page advertisement with text by Santa Fe dealer Joshua Baer, (Autumn 1992) notes the dramatic increase in prices realized of antique Indian art... pottery, baskets and blankets are "all worth multiples of what they were selling for in 1982." Published quarterly, the magazine generally devotes several pages of every issue to recent sales activity of Indian-made goods held in different parts of the country by Sotheby's, Christie's and regional auction houses. Historic Navajo textiles comprise a prominent portion of the auctions. Anthropologists, ethnologists, museologists, dealers, collectors and artists make up the Editorial Advisory Board of this publication. Articles on contemporary makers seldom appear in this magazine, although galleries feature their creations in colourful advertisements. Within the last five years, only two articles devoted to contemporary weaving have appeared. No articles featuring a specific "weaver/artist" have been published to date.

The Indian Trader is a popular monthly which appeals to dealers, collectors and retailers of Indian goods. The newspaper is published in Gallup, New Mexico by Martin Link, former director of the Navajo Tribal Museum. In February 1980, the editor reprinted an article first published ten years previously. It noted that given the recent bearish trend in the stock market, Indian and Western art was increasing in value, as speculators were entering the market. Groups wishing to diversify their investments were purchasing historic Indian art. Such investment activity was noted in The Wall Street Journal and Business Week. Increasing demand along with a diminishing supply led to price escalations. Curators

and dealers have noted the shift in the type of collector. The recent volatility in the market has attracted "educated, sophisticated and demanding buyers" who formerly invested in fine art and/or expensive oriental rugs (Arnold 1988).

More Affordable Collectibles

Popular publications in paperback also highlight the attraction that "collectibles" hold for investors. In 1988, Dawn Reno published the first edition of American Indian Collectibles: Official Identification and Price Guide. The text covers a broad spectrum of arts and crafts ranging in price from under \$100 to more than \$100,000. In her Introduction, Reno notes during the 1980s, dealers began putting together investment portfolios that specialize in the acquisition of Amerind artifacts. Travelling throughout the Southwest while researching material for her book, she encountered people taking money out of the stock market to invest in Indian arts. Reno (1988:3) comments: "Indian art is part of the American heritage, and, should you own a piece of work in this category, you have an investment that will continue to grow." She acknowledges that the Navajo continue to weave by hand and that "their work sells for very high prices" (1988: 112 and 117). The final portion of her 400 page book contains a short section titled "The Modern Artist/Artisan." Reno (1988:366-368) comments on how some of the work produced by contemporary makers "is highly collectible." If a consumer is fortunate to purchase directly from the maker, she suggests:

..make sure you get their signature on the piece you are purchasing because it will make it easier to identify later and will add to its value. ...jewelry, pottery and other crafts have been identified for many years and have, therefore, increased tremendously in value... since antique Indian items are among the hottest collectibles in the antiques world right now, some of them might be out of your price range...which gives you another reason to patronize the younger and upcoming artists--their work is still easy on the pocketbook!

The Conservation of Historic Treasures

Textile conservators have hosted seminars on the history, care, and investing in historic Navajo textiles. A 1980 conference held in Santa Fe, New Mexico, attracted 150 devotees, for a \$300 fee. Museum personnel, textile conservators, anthropologists, and

curators chaired sessions devoted to fibre identification, regional styles, dyes, restoration and imitations. Long-time trader Bill Young related many stories. He informed his audience that during the 1920s, rugs were bought by weight, and listeners were astonished to hear that prices ranged from \$1.25 to \$1.65 per pound. The conference was organized by Noel Bennett, a California native who had learned to weave while her husband served with the United States Public Health Service on the Reservation for more than a decade. Bennett opened her textile restoration centre to "give back to the Navajo." She has published several books on various aspects of Navajo weaving (1971, 1974, 1979, 1987). Bennett has given numerous workshops, lecture demonstrations, and taught Navajo weaving at the Gallup Branch of the University of New Mexico (June 1980:34). She is quoted in another article in the same issue of The Indian Trader as stating that:

Weaving is boring...but the stories are the source of power. They fill your mind with a 'life away' to put in the long hours. You focus on the legends--Spider Woman, the Spirit Trail, weaving taboos...

Several presenters disagreed on the restoration of old weaving needing repair. Museum curator Marian Rodee finds stabilizing a textile may be necessary, but thinks it ought not be touched just "to make it more attractive." Artist Tony Berlant disagreed. He argued that restoration may be "an act of generosity to the spirit of the piece.. restoration may improve market value....you must do justice to the piece." A textile conservator remarked that when damaged areas are repaired they are no longer the focal point, thus "other relationships can speak with their original intensity." Textile conservationists generally earn between \$40 to \$80 per hour. Many contemporary Navajo weavers critique the repair of Navajo weaving, since "the thoughts and ideas of the original weaver are in the piece." When queried whether repairing old textiles may bring "bad luck," an Anglo conservationist remarked: "...by reweaving the damage, I feel I'm healing the piece, making it complete again" (Hastings 1994:12).

Conundrums associated with conservation and restoration of old textiles have been

discussed in several publications (but not from a Navajo perspective, which will be discussed in the next chapter). American Indian Art (Spring 1995:33) features an article titled "Guarantees" in its "Legal Briefs" column by Ron McCoy. The author provides a [hypothetical] caveat to collectors paying hundreds of thousands of dollars for a First Phase Chief's blanket purchased from a Santa Fe gallery. He comments that "auction prices are related to those of the marketplace." However, if you discover that 10% of the piece you paid \$225,000 for is what "you thought it was" but the remaining 90% is the work of a contemporary restorer, you are "peevled [as] one could argue that "an implied warranty existed"... in connection with this transaction. He queries: "After all, who would pay such a sum for a modern weaving?" The dealer's location "in the Beverly Hills of the Southwest" implies that the textile was an "old piece" even though no one said it was. Other articles in this magazine and in newspapers have also discussed crossing the line between old and new when extensive conservation is involved.

Curators associated with museums generally focus on individual textiles, and incorporate information related to political economy in exhibitions and publications as an adjunct (if noted at all). In a recent conversation with a conservator, I mentioned how the Navajo Nation Museum held a very small collection of historic textiles when viewed in comparison to collections in various museums in the southwest. The conservator remarked: "well, if the Navajo don't realize what they have, they don't deserve to keep it!" Centuries of domination are expunged, with collectors and museums viewed as "saviours."¹¹ In a separate conversation, another textile curator remarked that she was not surprised that nearly all Navajo weaving was acquired from weavers by weight as recently as the late 1960s.

The Contemporary Scene

Autobiographical evidence of the exploitation borne by weavers is poignantly expressed in the following translation from Navajo weaver Nancy Woodman (1954 [1980]:np):

I learned to weave when I was 13 years old, and weaving became my trade. When I learned it, I gained my independence. I got so I could support myself by my work and I kept it up. I made fairly good rugs, and still do...I've made a great many rugs. I just take them to the trading post, where I have always just taken them out in trade.

I get food for my rugs...it is now 49 years since I learned to weave...and back there in the days of my innocence I merely took them to the trader accepting whatever he offered for them...

There is not a trader here amongst us who pays cash. I ask for even so little as a nickel in cash, but they won't give it to me. ..As I now give thought to this matter, I wonder why this is true..why is it? Could there be some law which makes it that way? Maybe there's a regulation..it's for this reason that even when I take a little rug to the trader I feel sort of unhappy at letting it go. I put a great deal of effort into my rugs, and it is this fact which causes me to be a bit unhappy at letting them go to the traders hereabout.

Woodman's statement provides public corroboration of the mountain of evidence contained in Hubbell's business records concerning the minuscule returns to weavers. Republished in 1980, her statement has failed to trigger a response by authors who continue to perpetuate "comfortable stories." Yet several writers have noted the minuscule return to weavers even a generation ago. For example, Dederer (1990:101) comments on how many reservation weavers "earned" about fifteen cents an hour during the 1960s. Underhill ([1967] 1983:264) reported the average annual family income at \$200 in 1961.

In 1987, Gloria Duus, Director of the Office of Navajo Women and Families, Window Rock, distributed a questionnaire which surveyed the feasibility of organizing weaving cooperatives on the Reservation. Four hundred lengthy questionnaires were distributed to weavers in ten areas. Only 4% of the weavers surveyed had received more than \$2,500 in cash or goods for their weaving the previous year. More than 70% of the weavers who responded "earned" \$600 or less. Sixty percent of the women used wool from their flocks, and more than 90% made their own tools (or family members made them). Nearly 200 women had been weaving for more than fifteen years (thus they were experienced weavers), and 65% of them were over thirty-six years of age. Nearly 75% of the women still took their rugs to the trading post. Published the same year, a coffee-table book titled

Harmony By Hand: Art of the Southwest Indians, provides a striking contrast to Duus's unpublished study. Sarah Nestor (1987:58) commented on how contemporary Navajo weavers had difficulty meeting the demands of collectors and the prices of their textiles continue to rise in consequence.

Within the last ten years, I've noted a great deal of overlap (as high as 80%) in the prices for the historic and contemporary weavings at southwestern retail outlets and trading posts. In 1992, I interviewed thirty weavers on the Reservation, some of them quite well-known. Several weavers were very candid, noting that collectors and dealers were paying them approximately 40% less than they had received five years previously for the same quality textile. In March 1994, the Heard Museum in Phoenix sponsored a conference titled "Navajo Weaving Since the Sixties." For the first time an audience heard weavers reveal how they felt about their work. Several presentations were translated, because some weavers were unable to speak English (or felt their English was inadequate for them to speak to a large audience). Several women were quite outspoken about how the market for their weaving has evaporated. An elderly weaver wondered if the reason was due to fewer weavers spinning their own yarn. Such information was not translated as the Navajo translators "did not want to offend the conference organizers." [A bilingual Navajo friend of mine told me about the comments]. One of the trader/dealers invited to participate on a panel, admitted that "the market for contemporary Navajo weaving is no longer strong."

Tracking the Drop in Demand

However, the market was very strong during the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1981, Lea Lundburg authored "Threads of tradition" which appeared in Arizona Living. She interviewed the Garlands, retailers located in Sedona, Arizona, who claim to have the largest selection of Navajo rugs in the world. The cost of rugs was increasing at approximately 20% annually, "prices have doubled in the last five years." This price increase follows upon the publication of a special issue of the popular Arizona Highways magazine. Published during

the gasoline shortages of the early 1970s, the issue (1974) featured contemporary Navajo weaving. Other issues that year featured Indian pottery, baskets and jewellery. When the fuel shortages eased, tourists flocked to the southwest, precipitating another "Indian craze." The jewellery craze peaked in the late 1970s, and the rug craze continued for several more years. For the first time in history, demand outstripped supply, and some weavers (for a short time) received a much fairer return for their textiles. Although prices increased, Garlands admitted that a weaver may need to spend six to eight months creating a rug which would retail for \$3000 or \$4000. This does not take into consideration the time spent cleaning, carding, dyeing and spinning the wool in preparation for weaving. One woman is described as weaving a nine by fifteen foot "Two Grey Hills" rug which will retail for \$6000 to \$8000. It required more than a year's labour to complete the rug. According to Lundburg, the Garlands try to keep their mark-ups reasonable to provide a fairer return to the weaver. This article and other publications (Arnold 1988), corroborate the escalation in rug prices during the late 1970s which continued into the early 1980s.

During the 1980s, articles on the healthy markets for both historic and contemporary Navajo weaving appeared with some frequency. A long article appeared in The Indian Trader in November (1980:3-12). The market for rugs appeared stronger than that for jewellery and pottery. It was expected not to "peak for quite some time...it should stay 'very healthy' for a long time." Prices appeared to have doubled from 1975 to 1980, or in some cases, within two years. One long-time Reservation trader remarked on the increase in foreign tourists who "appreciate the craft involved in weaving a rug."...[as] the world is losing our traditional art forms.. Several dealers interviewed noted that fewer younger women appeared to be taking up weaving, and that inflation has also led to increases in rug prices. One dealer remarked that he could sell three to four times as many rugs...if he could find them. Those halcyon days were short-lived.

Prices for contemporary textiles stalled around 1984, and began to decrease. Arnold

(1988:41) queried Joshua Baer about the market for contemporary Navajo weaving. He admitted that contemporary textiles "fluctuated in value." According to Baer, the market peaked in 1982-3, and dropped 25-30% after 1984. In the same article, Arnold (1981:41) quotes another dealer, active since 1972, who said he had never seen the historic rugs drop in value while he had been in the business. He remarked that rugs woven between 1900 and 1940 were still available "at good prices..between \$500 to \$1,200." The individuals interviewed commented that the general consensus was that it did not matter whether a buyer invests in a new or old rug, the important thing is quality. A dealer who was collaborating on a book with archaeologist Joe Ben Wheat, stated that he personally preferred the old rugs. Another dealer claimed that the current market for classics is a "fine art market"... the nineteenth century classics are now available only through auctions or private dealers. Most traders and dealers admitted that it may take from twenty to thirty years for a contemporary rug to appreciate in value. Arnold (1988:41) concludes her article by commenting upon her own historic woven treasure, acquired at a garage sale during the 1960s. When she approached the owner to inquire about purchasing it, she recognized a well-known Southwestern ethnologist. The ethnologist stalked off after refusing to pay \$75.00, muttering she'd "gotten much better for \$30.00."

The drop in demand for contemporary weaving in the late 1980s, is borne out in other articles published in The Indian Trader, and in stories related to me by Navajo weavers interviewed during my 1992 fieldwork. Prior to reviewing this information, I will summarize the affects of another "threat" to contemporary Navajo weavers which has contributed to the decline in demand.

Continued Appropriation of Patterns

Information in Chapter Five concerning correspondence during 1910, between Lorenzo Hubbell and Herman Schweizer reveals that the latter was importing "well-woven greys" from Mexico that were much cheaper than Navajo weaving. Today copy or

"imitation" Navajo weaving is imported from Guatemala, Hong Kong, India, Japan, northern Thailand and in particular, Mexico. David Brugge (1971) surveyed six stores on the Interstate Highway in New Mexico, and five stores in Gallup, a town just east of the Navajo Reservation. Most stores carried the "copy" weaving. Some of the copies were mixed in with the genuine rugs. Brugge found that the imitations sold at prices well below the authentic textiles, which gives Navajo weavers "unfair competition and undermines the public's confidence in the craft." The Mexican rugs are also woven of handspun wool yarn, with designs that are very similar (Dockstader 1976:475). Most copies are single and double saddle blanket sizes, up to four by six feet. Some Mexicans are even weaving variants of the "Yei" patterns, taken from the Navajo ceremonial sand paintings. There are differences between the techniques utilized in making the side cords, and top and bottom selvages that a knowledgeable individual can spot. Just looking through a pile of rugs without carefully checking, one can be easily 'fooled.' Noel Bennett (1973) provides information on how to determine if a rug is a genuine Navajo textile or a fake.

More recently, far more sophisticated copies, including the earlier "Chief's Blanket" styles have been imported from Zapotec, Mexico. These carefully dyed and woven rugs are created by thousands of Zapotec weavers active in "cottage industries." Weaving traditions in this region of Mexico date from precolumbian times. Entrepreneurs have appropriated Navajo patterns to this region, import and retail the finished products into the United States, and earned profits from 200 to 1000% (Stephen 1993). By law, all woven imports must have a label attached when checked at customs, noting country of origin and materials. However, tags sometimes conveniently "fall off" between the customs office and the shops. Retail outlets in the southwest frequently display large signs advertising "Navajo rugs," or "Indian rugs." Once inside the shop, only a portion of their stock is the genuine Navajo product. These rugs provide a real threat to the Navajo textile market, as they are priced well below their Navajo counterparts.

Anthropologist Lynn Stephen (1991, 1993) has tracked the development of external markets for Zapotec weaving. In an article published in four years ago, Stephen (1991:384) describes the four levels of production engaged in by Zapotec weavers. The third level comprises:

mass produced pieces, up to five by seven feet, that feature several popular designs; Navajo designs currently dominate. These pieces are bought by smaller-scale Mexican and US distributors who run their own businesses. This is the largest sector of the market in Teotilan. The 1980s were marked by a surge of orders for Navajo designs.

Stephen remarks that because of demand, there is a shortage of weaving labour...Zapotec weavers often have more work than they can handle. She comments that the Mexican weavers do not understand American taste, but they want to produce what sells. Thousands of weavers effectively produce a technically high quality product by incorporating elements of foreign design, color and content into their work. As avid weavers, the Zapotec are able to sustain ritual and kinship obligations within their communities. Stephen (1993:51) visited the Hubbell Trading Post at Ganado in 1989, and spotted a pamphlet titled "How to Distinguish a Mexican from a Genuine Navajo Rug." She commented that the Navajo weavers present were familiar with Zapotec textiles, and "resented the intrusion on their market and the 'stealing' of their designs."

Several recently published texts highlight the effects of globalization on indigenous Central American weavers (Ehlers 1990, Nash 1993, Schevill et.al. 1991 and Stephen 1991). Within the last several years, Zapotec weavers encountered competition from Dhuri rugs woven in India and imported into North America by retail chains such as Pier One. This recent development graphically demonstrates how appropriated patterns can be reappropriated by entrepreneurs attempting to fill new market niches and increase their profits (Stephen 1993:48). However, post-modernist readings of the events described above and the inimical affects on Navajo livelihood preclude critique. This subject will be dealt with in my final chapter. Clifford (1988:236) reminds us:

art collecting and culture collecting now take place within a changing field of counterdiscourses, syncretisms, and reappropriations, originating both outside and inside 'the West.'

Berlo (1991:452) comments:

American and European textile designers freely take from native sources...this is part of a long artistic tradition in the West...the contemporary indigenous textile aesthetic is, in many regions, an aesthetic of appropriation and accumulation.

As noted above, entrepreneurs have recently appropriated Navajo designs and their Zapotec counterparts, and had rugs of all sizes expertly woven in India. A consumer may purchase a nine by twelve foot rug for less than \$1000, whereas its Navajo counterpart likely would retail for \$6,000-\$8000. These rugs were observed in 1994, at a large trading post in Cameron, Arizona, within the Western boundary of the Navajo Reservation. The post is near the junction of the highway that leads to the Grand Canyon which attracts millions of visitors per year. This post began sponsoring semi-annual auctions of historic Indian art in 1985. The most recent auction netted \$500,000.¹²

Regional Off Reservation Rug Auctions

Journalist Susan Doerfler (1986) published an article on contemporary Navajo weaving in the Phoenix Arizona Republic. She noted how some weavers incorporated pastel colours into their rugs, to accommodate market trends. One trader remarked that during the 1970s, at the height of the Indian craze, rugs were seen as a means for entrepreneurs to "make a fast buck." This man has sponsored auctions since 1983, at the Moqui Lodge near the Grand Canyon. No weavers are present. Instead, dealers and traders bring textiles which average between \$40 to \$1500, about half the suggested retail price. One of the auctioneers remarked that unless weavers are well-known, their rugs do not command high prices. Very few weavers are "well-known" relative to the thousands that reside on the Reservation. In the final presentation at the Heard Museum conference in 1994, Gloria Emerson remarked on the importance of such events when weavers "speak for themselves." However, she expressed concern about the thousands of weavers on the Reservation who had no voice.

During my fieldwork on the Navajo Reservation in 1992, several interviews with weavers corroborated the decline in prices. One woman, whose rugs are depicted in a popular publication, was deeply concerned about the devaluation of her work by an active collector/dealer who generally paid her more than \$1100 per rug. Within the previous five years, he not only purchased her rugs less frequently, he refused to pay her more than \$700 for a textile of equivalent quality. This weaver was raising three of her grandchildren, as her daughter and son-in-law had to move to Phoenix to find jobs. This dealer has become increasingly active in the investment market for historic Navajo weaving. He has his counterparts in other areas of the southwest, and currently weavers are having a difficult time finding dealers who will purchase their weavings at equitable prices.

Rug Auctions on the Reservation

Periodically, rug auctions are held on the Navajo Reservation at various "chapter houses." The best known auction, formerly held quarterly, is the Crownpoint rug auction now held monthly in a school gymnasium in northwestern New Mexico. The auction is currently the only non-profit Navajo-run market for textiles held on a regular basis. It was begun during the 1960s by the trader at Crownpoint who was discouraged at the \$6 to \$8.00 that local weavers averaged for their rugs at that time (Conner 1991:46). For a time the Bureau of Indian Affairs superintendent and the trader supervised the auction.

During the 1970s, as market conditions improved, the auction grew in popularity and it continues to be popular today. As many as 300 to 600 rugs may be brought to each auction. Most of the weavers are over 50 years old (Conner 1991:51). Weavers suggest the minimum acceptable bid, and receive 90% of the proceeds. Depending upon weather and time of year, several hundred people crowd into the gym to watch or participate in the bidding. I attended one Crownpoint auction held in October, 1992. Approximately 200 people attended, and 154 individuals acquired bidding numbers. One hundred ninety one rugs ranging in price from \$40 to \$4000 were entered. Six 'large' rugs ranging from four by six

to six by eight feet were priced from \$1100 to \$4000. No one bid on the two most expensive rugs, and the four rugs that did sell went for \$400 above the lowest acceptable bid. More than two dozen rugs were sold at the minimum bid. Only a small percentage of rugs elicited "volatile" bidding. At the end of the evening, the unsold textiles were retrieved by their owners.¹³

The previous year I had attended another auction at Ganado, Arizona, that was organized to coincide with the Sixth Annual Navajo Studies Conference. Participants were bussed to the Ganado Chapter House. The only other attendees were teachers and local hospital employees. Many weavers attended the auction and more than one hundred rugs were "registered." Many of the smaller rugs did not receive minimum bids. Four very beautiful large rugs entered at minimum \$2,000 were purchased by the local trader, who now operates Ganado for the United States Park Service. Had these rugs been offered through a gallery in a tourist "hot spot", the retail prices would have averaged more than \$6,000.

Evidence from varying sources reveals the drop in demand from dealers and the public at large for contemporary Navajo weaving. Interviews with weavers, traders and off-Reservation dealers corroborate the down-turn in the market for contemporary weaving. One southern Colorado dealer who was part of a panel at the Heard Museum conference in 1994, admitted that "the market is no longer there...." In the recent past he frequently declined to purchase fine textiles brought to him by excellent weavers, as their previous productions remain in his stockroom. During an interview in 1993, another dealer remarked to me that there was no question the investment market in historic textiles was harming the market for contemporary weaving. However, several individuals active in the Navajo government had no knowledge of the investment market in historic Navajo weaving.

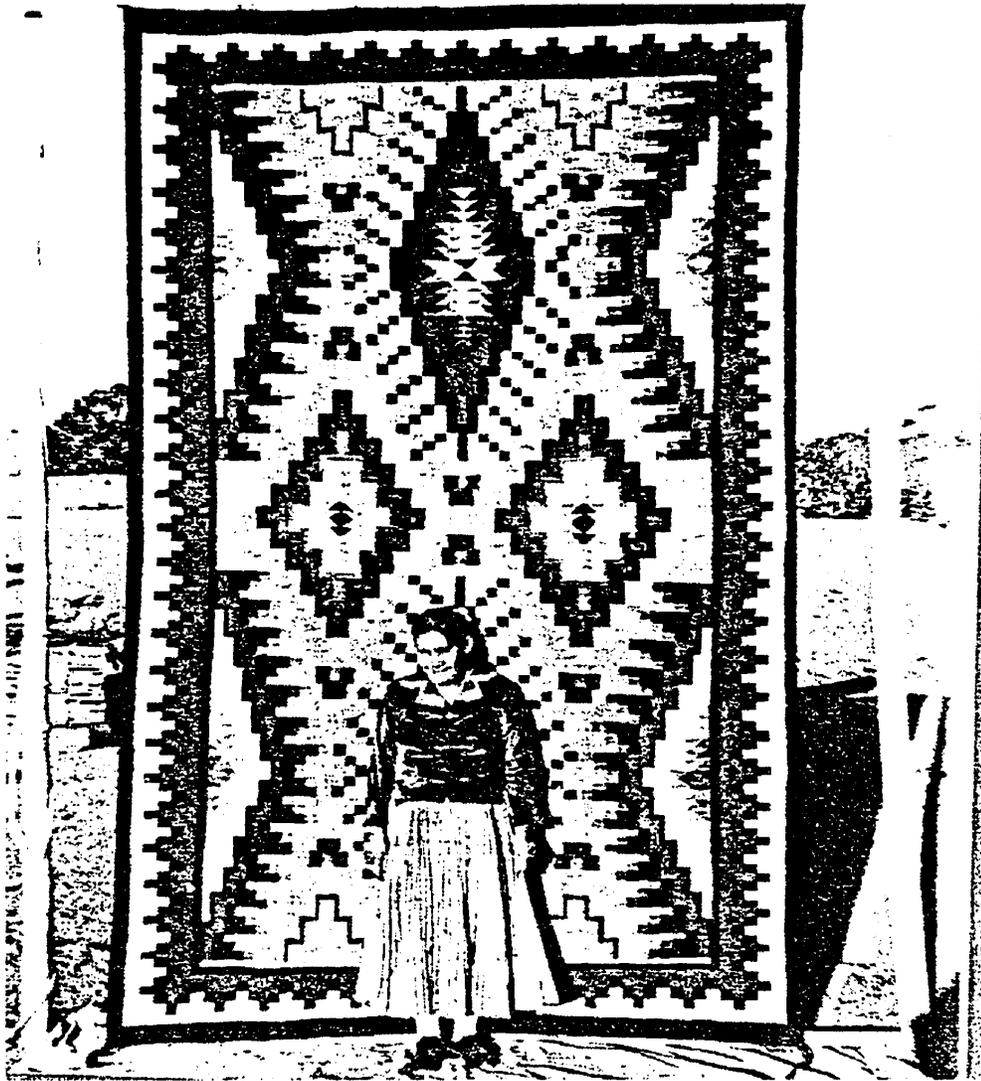
Worried Weavers' Voices

An interview with a Navajo woman temporarily residing in Phoenix provides a sobering example of the "economic squeeze" endured by weavers. This woman comes from

a family of relatively well-known weavers and jewellers. In 1991, she accompanied her sister to one of the largest off-Reservation dealers of Navajo rugs. Her sister had woven a small (two by three feet) fine rug of her own handspun yarn with an intricate pattern. The Gallery owner inquired as to how much she thought her rug was worth. The woman replied "\$600." He answered: "You've got to be kidding--I'll give you \$25.00." Shocked, they turned to leave, and he said, "Well, I'll give you \$50.00."

Unfortunately, such stories are not rare. I documented several other cases where weavers were offered the equivalent of "a nickel an hour" for their textiles. Weavers also admitted that traders and dealers a) compared their rugs to other weavers, and b) commented on the continual need for "improvement" to perfect their weaving. The latter comment is corroborated in statements made by weavers interviewed as part of an oral history project in the Ganado area in the 1970s and 1980s. I have heard it from weavers myself. It appears to be a standard refrain used by traders and dealers, to pressure women to accept less cash or goods in exchange for their textiles. Although weavers resent it when traders make derogatory comments about their work, in comparison to textiles woven by other Navajo, there is little they can do about it.¹⁴

Periodically weavers' stories surface as to the minuscule return they receive for their textiles. During my field interviews in 1992, I was told on several occasions, either through interpreters or directly by younger weavers, how they remember their mother's weavings put on the wool scale (as recently as 1968). In one incident, a woman currently acknowledged as a "master weaver", who raised her eleven children by her weaving needed cash as her husband required medical attention. She had spent nearly a year spinning wool from her own sheep, then dyeing and weaving a room-sized rug. Several traders refused to pay her cash, insisting upon trade. In 1968, the trader at Black Hat paid her \$250.00 for the rug. Today a similar rug of superb quality woven of handspun wool would sell for more than \$20,000 in a gallery. Weaver Susie Hosteen is pictured standing in front of her large rug woven in



Weaver Susie Hosteen (Circa 1951)
Illustration 7.1

1950 [Illustration 7.1]. She received a wagon from the trader in exchange for the rug. A number of weavers I have interviewed over the years have commented on how they have told Anglos about "pound blankets and rugs" woven by themselves, or their relatives, but people do not believe them!!

Conclusion

The fluctuating collectors' market associated with historic Navajo weaving has affected contemporary weavers for nearly a century. Such activity would not be cause for concern had Navajo weaving ceased. However, it is estimated that more than 30,000 weavers reside on the Reservation today (Hedlund 1992:23). Emphasis on historic weaving focuses upon individual textiles, their provenance and pedigree, while ignoring the systemic economic problems, both past and present, which are severe. Hundreds of pounds of documents exist that provide evidence of the conditions endured by Navajo weavers in order to provision their households (Hubbell Papers, Babbitt Brothers Papers, Fred Harvey Company ledgers). This evidence is ignored, while museologists continue to "order, dissect and classify" by determining the kinds of dyes, yarns, number of warps and wefts, and types of fleece incorporated in historic textiles. This information accompanied by art world rhetoric occupies center stage and neglects the political-economic domain. The stories of the makers of these historic blankets that now bring so much money have literally been "swept under the rug." Instead, the quixotic relationship between traders and weavers continues to be valorized in extant literature (James 1988, Kaufman and Selser 1985, Kent 1985, McNitt 1962, Rodee 1981, 1987, Underhill 1967). The information in this chapter demonstrates how both the investment market and the "copy" weaving have precipitated the downturn in sales of contemporary weaving. Museums and galleries highlight treasures saved from a destructive history, relics from a vanishing world (cf. Muhlert 1976).¹⁵ That it has not vanished is painfully evident in a poignantly illustrated article in a recent issue in *US News & World Report* (November 28, 1994:61-64). No doubt there is a correlation between the persistent

poverty on the Reservation and the consistently inadequate returns to most Navajo weavers.

During the seminar on historic Navajo weaving held in Santa Fe for 150 collectors, dealers and textile experts, Rain Parrish, curator at the Wheelwright Museum, and at the time the only Navajo in attendance, reminded her audience, that:

we must, when we look at Navajo weaving, think back to the Blessing Way, back to the daughter placed in the cradle beside the mother's loom. We are thinking (here) too much of weaving in terms of money as the end product for the Navajo woman. Rather I would like to see the Anglo supporting the cultural identity of the Navajo and our ritual life cycle. You must be careful not to be pompous in terms of what you think you know of the Navajo lifestyle. You must not impose upon the Navajo what you feel is best for our culture (Indian Trader June 1980:33).

Her eloquent statement provides the theme of the following chapter which explores a topic that has been relegated to a footnote in the vast literature on the Navajo: the value of weaving for Navajo weavers.

ENDNOTES

1. The differentiation and treatment of indigenous expressive forms by museums reflects the extension of the mind/body dualism (so prevalent in Western thought), into the realm of art. The institutional separation of art from craft occurred during the Renaissance when the creation of painting and sculpture became intellectual activities, differentiated from utilitarian crafts which emphasized technical excellence. Only objects released from formal considerations of function could be truly expressive. Thus, the production of crafts (including weaving), was considered equivalent to manual labour, primarily attractive because a wage was involved (Kant 1951). The elevation of aesthetics as a branch of philosophy during the eighteenth century further undermined attitudes towards "crafts." The Western concept of beauty (central to classical aesthetics), was expressed only in the fine arts of painting and sculpture, providing the justification for the exclusion of indigenous creations globally (M'Closkey 1985).

2. Concerning another travelling exhibition of historic Navajo textiles in 1985, the director of a Canadian gallery remarked to me "all sorts of things about modernism fell into place when I hung this show."

3. Founded in 1744, Sotheby's is the oldest and largest auction firm in the world. The company maintains centres in Europe, Asia, and North America, and recently held auctions in China and Russia. The company surpassed one billion dollars in annual sales a decade ago.

4. Intrigued as to the 35-fold increase in value in fifteen years (between 1974 and 1989), I contacted Sotheby's and inquired as to their explanation for this dramatic increase. The Curator of Indian Art informed me that the blanket was originally appraised by Harmer Johnson, their acknowledged expert in Indian art as worth between \$110,000-150,000. The auction house requested Dr. Wheat to write a one page description of the blanket. He describes its unusual pedigree, having been owned by Herman Schweizer of the Fred Harvey Company, who later sold it to John Collier, director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs during the 1930s. Evidently only three other blankets of this type remain in private hands. One is owned by artist Tony Berlant, another is owned by silk screen artist Jack Silverman. The blanket was auctioned for a record-breaking \$522,000 and Sotheby's made more than \$50,000 on the sale.

Silverman owns art galleries in Santa Fe, New Mexico and Aspen, Colorado. During the 1970s he began to market large serigraphs of historic blankets that he owns in limited editions of one hundred, netting several hundred thousand dollars on each edition. Based on recent auctions of comparable pieces, the original textiles are now worth several hundred thousand dollars each. He titles the serigraphs " 'Navajo Chief's Blanket' by Jack Silverman." One wonders if the exact translation of an article from a 'craft' [textile] medium into an 'art' medium negates the notion of plagiarism. Distinctly uneasy about this appropriation, a well-known Canadian art dealer refused to act as his Canadian representative when Silverman contacted him during the 1970s. In 1993, I queried the dealer concerning the remarkable similarities between colour field painting and Navajo blankets, he snorted, saying: "Where do you think those guys got their ideas?!"

5. During the 1980-81 auction season, a number of nineteenth century Navajo textiles reached record prices. A man's serape was auctioned by Sotheby's for \$54,000, and a third phase chief's blanket sold for \$11,500. Six years later, another chief's blanket sold for \$33,000, a Germantown measuring 2.5 by nearly 6 feet was auctioned for \$27,000. In 1989, a classic man's weaving blanket sold through Sotheby's for \$93,000, and an "eye dazzler" went for \$35,200. This "buying frenzy" affected textiles auctioned from Andy Warhol's collection; some weaves sold for more than \$10,000.

Sotheby's auctioned the Lorimer collection on November 26, 1991. George Horace Lorimer was editor-in-chief of the "Saturday Evening Post." According to the catalogue text, Lorimer and his family toured pueblos and Indian reservations collecting Indian "art," favouring textiles. Twenty pieces were acquired directly from the Fred Harvey Company. In the preface to the pre-sales catalogue, the Lorimers are praised for "their rare collecting acumen... insightful awareness..and their avant garde appreciation for a largely unknown "art" form." Conservative appraisal of forty textiles from their collection totalled three quarters of a million dollars. One of the First Phase Chief's Blankets (\$125,000-175,000), had been given to Lorimer by a grateful "Navajo Chief." Sotheby's gratefully acknowledged Dr. Joe Ben Wheat for his "generous and insightful comments" along with his chemist associate who provided dye analyses.

6. Numerous individuals have benefited from Wheat's scrupulous documentation, including dealers and collectors anxious to establish either the provenance or pedigree of their holdings. In the proceedings associated with a conference on southwestern textiles, curator, anthropologist and Wheat's former student, Ann Hedlund (1989:134) notes:

An intriguing by-product of Wheat's scholarly work has been the interest shown in the research results by private collectors, gallery owners and others who buy and sell historic textiles. The complex mechanisms of proving authenticity through dating, sourcing and otherwise identifying have attracted a wide and supportive audience.

7. The one- day sale in November 1989, realized \$2,364,560 for four hundred individual Indian articles, one-half million dollars more than their appraised value.

8. During the 1980s, Noland designed a series of commissioned tapestries for a select number of Navajo weavers. This "collaboration" is celebrated as contributing to "the evolution of Navajo weaving" (Hedlund 1986). A major exhibition incorporating several Noland-designed pieces has toured the United States since 1992. The curator described the genesis of this collaboration in The Weaver's Journal (1986). She noted how Noland's geometric paintings are perfectly suited to the Navajo non-symbolic notions of design. Commenting that he owned a collection of fine Navajo blankets, Noland remarked how "such traditional textiles led him to discover that the history of abstraction went back further in the decorative arts than it did in the fine arts" (1986:33). The article concludes by noting:

this New York-Navajo connection has forged bonds that transcend the distinctions between fine arts and fine craft, between East and West, between primitive and sophisticated (1986:34).

9. In 1995, Joshua Baer ran a full page ad in American Indian Art Magazine. Baer was interested in buying fine examples of 19th century Navajo wearing blankets, noting he has clients who will pay premiums: Classic Bayeta Poncho, circa 1820-1850: \$250,000-350,000. Classic First Phase circa 1800-1850..same; 2nd Phase circa 1830-1855: \$100-150,000. There were a total of 21 "categories." The final entry read: Pictorial Blankets & Early Pictorial Rugs, circa 1890-1930: \$5,000-25,000. He remarked: "We will pay these prices for fine examples of each type of Navajo blanket. "Fine," in this case means that the blanket is a satisfying, compelling work of art with unique qualities which distinguish it from more typical examples of its type."

The child's blanket is another type of Navajo textile that has achieved recent notoriety. Long ignored by textile aficionados, a "new breed of collector" has turned its attention to the child's blanket. In 1986, Joshua Baer mounted a "retrospective" of forty child's blankets which are slightly larger than single saddle blankets. In the exhibition catalogue, Baer entices speculators, noting that the man's serape that realized \$115,000 in 1984, has "come to look more and more like the bargain of the decade." Several months later, an article appeared in Southwest Profile (Fall 1988). Titled "An investment in beauty" the author revealed that a collector purchased a child's blanket for \$30,000.

10. While on a Reservation field trip in fall 1993, I was stunned to find a large pile of "coarsely woven" pound blankets stacked in the stock room at Ganado with price tags ranging from \$1000-\$15,000. They had been placed on consignment by owners anxious to cash in on the craze for historic weaving. The trading post, now a National Historic Site, continues to purchase rugs from Reservation weavers which are displayed in the "rug room." I queried the young Navajo man working at the time as to why Ganado was handling historic textiles. He replied that some people much preferred the old pieces; the post complied by taking old rugs on consignment as they earned a percentage on every sale, whether new or old..

11. Within the past two decades, numerous texts and articles have explicated the "salvage" mentality associated with the collection practices of museums and other institutions within the past century. Virginia Dominguez reviews some of the recent literature on the subject in American Ethnologist 13(3):546-555.

12. I attended an auction of historic Indian art held at this post in October 1992. Approximately 350 people came by bus and automobile, crowding into a large "circus tent" erected for the occasion. Many bidders were draped in sterling silver and turquoise squash blossom necklaces or heavy concho belts. Trading post employees, auctioneers and their children were dressed in period costumes (cowboys and girls, "ladies of the evening," outlaws and sheriffs).

13. A Navajo weaver active at the Crownpoint auction related a story that describes a disturbing trend. A cluster of experienced bidders (possibly dealers) preview the textiles and each decides in advance what s/he will bid on to avoid competitive bidding on those particular rugs from their cohorts.

14. The following story was related to me by an Arizona acquaintance who had stopped by a trading post on the Reservation during the summer of 1991. A young Navajo woman came into the post carrying her infant and a saddle blanket she had just completed. The trader offered her \$10, commenting that he disliked the "yellow" in it. She had handspun the background yarn, and it had taken her more than two weeks to weave the single size saddle blanket, given her new responsibilities. Dejected, she turned to leave, and the "acquaintance" inquired as to what she would accept for the rug. The two pound blanket was purchased for \$20.00, and the "distasteful yellow" turned out to be a lovely gold.

15. The National Museum of the American Indian is planning to tour a collection of historic Navajo textiles in 1995. The first exhibition curated by Berlant and Kahlenburg that toured for several years was exhibited for an extended period on the Navajo Reservation. According to an anthropologist who frequently works in the southwest, the NMAI was reluctant to display the planned exhibition on the Reservation because the physical plant is simply not sophisticated enough to handle such a valuable collection. Under heavy security, a portion of it was on display at the Navajo Community College, Tsaile, Arizona, over one weekend in Fall 1995.

CHAPTER EIGHT TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF NAVAJO AESTHETICS

Art and beauty are integral to life, [whereas] in the West, art is seen as part of "high culture." No word exists in the hundreds of Native American languages that comes close to our definition of art. What does this mean? Indians did not set out to create art for its own sake...Art, beauty and spirituality are so firmly intertwined in the routine of living that no words are needed to separate them. (Anna Lee Walters 1989:17)

...In Western aesthetics, emphasis is on the finished product. In Navajo society, one experiences beauty in creating and expressing, not in preserving and possessing. The construction of Navajo culture is learned through interaction...through songs, stories and prayers... (Wesley Thomas 1994)

My mother always wove, and raised her children through her weaving. ...it makes you a person, it makes you who you are.. this is art, this is life. (Ruth Roessel 1994)

Chapters Two through Six highlighted the perception and treatment of Navajo textiles as craft commodities with emphasis on their importance both to Navajo livelihood and the regional economy. Their value as commodities was examined utilizing information drawn from numerous sources, including historic accounts of the growth of commerce in the southwest over the past century, and from trader's business records, specifically the Juan Lorenzo Hubbell Papers. Chapter Seven detailed the recent transformation of historic Navajo weaving from craft to "art." Factors contributing to the emergence of a volatile investment market in historic textiles were examined to reveal the inimical effects on the sales of contemporary Navajo weaving. Thus prevailing discourses emphasize Navajo textiles as commodities. Anglo-Americans' concepts concerning the functions of textiles shaped their perceptions of what a blanket or rug "means." The popularity of the Navajo rug as a "collectible" has obscured the importance of weaving to the Navajo people.

In this chapter I try to work my way toward an understanding of Navajo aesthetics convinced that the popularity of the Navajo rug as collectible has also diminished our understanding of Navajo aesthetics, including the process of weaving. When many non-Navajo read or write about Navajo weaving, they fit it into their own cognitive frameworks. With few exceptions, they fail to see it as part of a circuit of relationships in which Navajo

are themselves embedded. Textile experts and museologists subject individual textiles to detailed, even microscopic analyses (Kent 1985, Spencer 1989, Wheat 1989, 1990). An elaborate typology has been developed as an aid to classification. These methodologies are reported to facilitate the discovery of "the elusive Navajo aesthetic" (Hedlund 1989, Kent 1985). In a recent publication documenting the struggles of First Nations women, Anna Lee Walters (1993:12) explicates why scholars have failed, in one way or another, to understand native lifeworlds:

Modern American society for the most part has passed through a western education system that breaks down lifestyles and the cycles of the cultures and lifestyles exposed to it into the smallest units for study and examination, habitually separating politics from social life, medicine from education... in much the same way academic disciplines or areas of specialization are now separated or viewed in our everyday life, and this fragmentation will prevent anyone from perceiving tribal lifestyles on this continent as they were a century or a millennium ago. In more traditional tribal lifestyles these cultural aspects have been fully integrated with each other.

As the latter portion of this chapter reveals, Navajo weavers' feeling for *hozho* (beauty/harmony/balance) encompasses far more than the Western concept of classical aesthetics which condenses and locates "beauty" in an isomorphic object (Witherspoon 1977, 1987). The classical perspective privileges the object in the external world isomorphic to the form or image which current aesthetic taste represents as "beautiful." In contrast, I propose that Navajo aesthetics places emphasis on patterns of relations. Rather than privileging typology, Navajo aesthetics appears to be topological as the patterns of interconnections that emerge through weaving are of primary significance. Based on their own statements, weavers express, maintain and perpetuate *hozho* through their weaving, and such activities relate to their cosmology.

In the Navajo Creation Story, weaving plays a pivotal role in the origin and maintenance of the Navajo people. Their Creation story defines meaningful social relationships among members of the community and between the community and the entire cosmos. Such relations are still very real and very important to many Navajo (Faris 1993,

Griffin-Pierce 1992). Navajo cosmology provides the charter for proper social behaviour (Appendix X). Few publications on the subject of Navajo weaving acknowledge the links between social relations and cosmology, for the reasons given in Walters' statement. Historically, anthropologists categorized weaving as a secular, functional activity vis-a-vis the sacred sphere of Navajo ceremonials.¹ Such bifurcation reflects the dualisms discussed in Chapter One.

In reviewing the voluminous literature on the Navajo, terms such as "religion," "sacred," "ceremony," and "ritual" are used repeatedly by ethnographers such as Reichard in reference to practices engaged in by medicine men. However, the use of such terms connotes a division between sacred and secular spheres alien to many Navajo (Kelley and Francis 1994:9). Weavers do not categorize weaving as secular, but they do express reluctance in discussing matters relating to the sacred. Thus, the theme of this chapter will focus on the differences in perceptions as to what constitutes the "Navajo aesthetic." Statements made by Navajo weavers differ markedly from commentary by textile scholars in the published literature on the subject of Navajo weaving.

The Aesthetics of Navajo Weaving: Anthropologists' Perspectives

The aesthetics currently embraced in most texts on Navajo weaving are variants familiar to individuals versed in classical art history. They concern the philosophy of taste and standards of beauty, always referenced to the individual. Presumed to be disinterested and value-free, grounded in Kantian idealism, classical aesthetics espouses a type of universalized 'atomism.' Although at first glance, aesthetics appears to be qualitative and value-free, it is frequently translated into quantified form (Chapter Seven). The following section surveys how the history of weaving and its role in Navajo culture have been constructed by most ethnographers. It is a necessary review as it explicates the basis for their categorizing weaving as a secular activity, vis-a-vis the sacred world of Navajo ceremonials.

The Rug as Functional Commodity

Texts on the subject of Navajo weaving frequently begin with the following paragraph describing the mythological origins of the loom and weaving tools excerpted from the Navajo Creation Story:

Spider Woman instructed the Navajo women how to weave on a loom which Spider Man told them how to make. The crosspoles were made of sky and earth cords, the warp sticks of sun rays, the healds of rock crystal and sheet lightning. The batten was a sun halo, white shell made the comb. There were four spindles: one a stick of zigzag lightning with a whorl of cannel coal; one a stick of flash lightning with a whorl of turquoise; a third had a stick of sheet lightning with a whorl of abalone; a rain streamer formed the stick of the fourth, and its whorl was white shell. (Reichard 1934)

With few exceptions, authors launch into a description of the historical origins of Navajo weaving. Everything was borrowed: sheep from the Spanish, the upright loom from the Pueblos, dyes from the Anglos, and so forth. Because none of the "ingredients" was indigenous, most authors disclaim any symbolism or sacred associations attached to the woven textiles (Amsden 1934, Kent 1985, Reichard 1936, Wheat 1984). Given the increased commoditization of weaving during this century, it is not coincidental that only the first major publication on the topic (James 1914) references the importance of weaving in the Navajo Creation Story, discusses symbolism and provides the names of more than a dozen weavers. Twenty years later, Charles Avery Amsden published Navajo Weaving: Its Technique and History, considered the "Bible" on the subject. An anthropologist for the Southwest Museum, Amsden shifts the focus to tools, techniques, and trader influence. Scant attention is paid to the role of weaving in the Navajo Creation Story; it is relegated to a footnote, a charming bit of myth. Production for external markets, foreign influences and materials are perceived as submerging any sacred associations that weaving may have had for the Navajo (Kent 1985, Reichard 1936, Tanner 1968, Underhill 1956, Wheat 1988). Most ethnographers sanctioned the categorization of functional objects created by indigenous peoples as "non-sacred" craft commodities produced for an external market. Such a designation is generally acknowledged

as reflecting the "real" situation, as native peoples sought ways to increase their income. Because the epistemology that justifies such statements still informs researchers in the field, it is impossible to critique it without adopting a very different perspective.

The paradigms of cultural particularism and acculturation dominated anthropology when much weaving-related research was published by ethnographers (Reichard 1934, 1936, 1939; Underhill 1956). As a student of Boas, Gladys Reichard's rich and varied body of work was greatly influenced by her mentor. Her research on the Navajo spanned the gamut of sociocultural life, material culture and daily activities, social and economic organization, religion and ritual, art and literature, language and symbolism. Like Boas, she embraced the concept of culture as commensurate with, or equal to, the total number of discrete elements or traits. The collection of objective facts, in conjunction with the perception that Indians selected or rejected individual traits from the dominant culture shaped the ethnographers' perspectives.

Like her contemporary Ruth Bunzel, Reichard was one of the few anthropologists to undertake longterm studies of a craft. She continued her research on social organization and ritual life of the Navajo as a weaver/apprentice through the 1930s. Reichard was a master of poetic description, and a keen observer who produced three books during the thirties specifically on Navajo weaving. In these texts she weaves the story of her (frustrating) apprenticeship into the daily activities, religious ceremonials, excursions and festivities that make up the annual cycle of Navajo life. The rich detail in her texts appears to provide the reader with a holistic, insightful view into another lifeworld. She comments upon the unceasing cooperation and reciprocity among the Navajo. When she spoke of weavers' feelings about their work, Reichard couched it in terms of classical aesthetics associated with decorative design. That is, a certain percentage of weavers in the tribe were "real artists...who would experiment with colors for hours" (Reichard 1936:27). Although Reichard (1934) excerpts a portion of the Navajo Creation Story referenced above, she

seldom refers back to Navajo cosmology in her account of the trials and tribulations of learning to spin and weave. One of the striking aspects of her texts on the subject concerns the ease with which weaving is incorporated into their daily domestic life, unlike the sacred time when the hogan is purified and male chanters create the elaborate sand paintings in preparation for a ceremony. Such a perceived demarcation appears to fulfil Mircea Eliade's contrast between mythical time and religion (the sacred past), with the profane, historical present (Kelley and Francis 1994:189-90). Nearly all of Reichard's fieldwork took place in the summer, when the Navajo never share stories. However, in her texts she refers to activities or taboos related to weaving and incorporates them as bits of folklore.

Noting that weavers and other handworkers never receive enough financial compensation, Reichard (1936:186) comments on the inappropriateness of emphasizing the commercial component. She remarks that satisfaction gained creating a beautiful object should be considered equally important. Yet in other portions of her texts, Reichard remarks on how weaving provides the only income for some Navajo families.² Her friendship with Roman Hubbell was instrumental in helping her to become an apprentice weaver. He introduced her to a Navajo family with whom she lived for several summers while learning to weave. Commenting on the decline in the quality of weaving at the end of the nineteenth century, Reichard (1950:foreword) perceived traders as businessmen and catalysts for arts and crafts production. While admitting she could never make her living as a weaver, she sanctioned traders' insistence upon greater technical perfection in weaving (1934:32-33 and 1936:141).

The Symbolic World of the Sacred

In her magnum opus, Navajo Religion, Reichard (1950) provides a synthesis of Navajo religion by developing an account "which takes up the function of each element in a highly elaborated whole.. an extensive dictionary of symbols" ...[which] provides the function and position of implements, names, Holy People, and ritual paraphernalia. She notes

how diverse elements are frequently combined in a unit (1950:147). As Navajo religion is a philosophy of life and preservation "the scheme may be compared to a language." She incorporates remarkable detail about Navajo chants.

In a short text devoted to Navajo prayer, Reichard (1944) provides a moment by moment description of a Navajo ceremony. Noting prolific and rhythmic repetition, she comments on how prayer demonstrates reverence for order and form (1944:14). Prayers also celebrate the beauty of the landscape. Navajo categories are inclusive rather than exclusive, there is an essential unity in all things. She notes how the most unexpected things are associated, such as lightening, snakes, arrows, winds and clouds. All of these diverse things occupy the same class, as they are associated in function. Such classifications differ sharply from contemporary Euroamerican thinking, as classes are based on uniqueness and distinctiveness (1944:4). Navajo religion is perceived as a huge compilation of elements from which each innovator may choose depending upon the notion he wishes to emphasize. Prayer is an unending system of symbolic associations which can in no way be considered free. They are too orderly and depend upon decree. Prayer may exist without words. For example, strewing pollen is a form of prayer. Reichard (1944:8,12) comments:

Prayers are organized in complicated patterns. The chanter must learn it by hearing the whole. If there is repetition it is of the whole, no words are to be spoken out of its setting. It is learned in its entirety or not at all. Although prayer is only a small element of the complex to which it belongs,... he [the chanter] constantly reiterates in myth, ritual, teaching and practice that its oneness be preserved.

She perceived symbols as cognized isomorphic elements relevant to the sacred sphere of elaborate Navajo ceremonials. Reichard (1936:178) defines a symbol as:

a design unit or even an entire composition which has a definite emotional content or meaning, immediately and spontaneously recognized by a group of people...

Juxtaposed to this definition, is a page of symbols including crosses, hourglasses, arrows, and so forth.

The Non-symbolic World of the Secular

Reichard notes that silverwork and weaving were borrowed fairly recently from Mexican and Pueblo sources, adopted for primarily economic reasons. Thus weaving and silversmithing never became thoroughly integrated into the spiritual life of the tribe:

[there is a] lack of imagination with regard to designs used on things the Navajo sell...They have a well-worked-out symbolism with functions generally understood in their religious life...[sacred] symbols represent to the people who believe in them, supernatural power. That power may be mistreated; if it is used too much, it "wears out". Who, understanding this attitude, would expect its owners to give it away? For that is what selling a blanket or a piece of silver with "sacred patterns" means. (1936:181-2)

She notes that horses were acquired from the Spaniards recently, too, but a Navajo never gave up his horses; they were traded with his own people. Rugs and smithing were different.³ They were always traded with outsiders: "they never became packed with the emotional content typical of their most important activity, religion." Although the Navajo lack a word for religion, Reichard categorizes activities associated with rituals as "religious." Both colour and motif have meaning, or emotional content in the religious act of sand painting. She explains:

the Navajo have kept the symbolic designs of their religion apart, in a separate compartment of their minds, from their ordinary blanket and silverwork patterns. The form occasionally overlaps; the emotions are kept distinct. (Reichard 1936:183)

With few exceptions, such statements sanction the eventual development of a practical approach to explaining the persistence of Navajo weaving. By the time Reichard (1934) wrote her ethnography titled Spider Woman, a Story of Navajo Weavers and Chanters, Navajo textiles had been marketed by weight for more than fifty years.⁴ As indicated above, Reichard claims that trader and market influences have relegated weaving to the secular domain. Her research is considered definitive in its depth and breadth, and anthropologists currently working in the field continue to quote her. David Aberle, noted authority on the Navajo, supports Reichard's thesis concerning the secular nature and lack of symbolism in weaving, while maintaining that "the activity of weaving and the names for the weaving tools

take you right to the heart of Navajo religion" (1991, interview).

Thus Reichard was convinced that weaving was a profane activity unlike the sacred sand paintings created by the medicine men. Navajo medicine men perpetuate religion and culture in the spiritual realm while Navajo women provide material sustenance by weaving commodities. Both are functional activities in their respective spheres. Therefore, a balance appears to be created. But Reichard bifurcates Navajo social relations and practices through dualistic labelling. Because of this proposed split, her ethnography provides support for the treatment of Navajo textiles as commoditized collectibles by most anthropologists and museologists (Dutton 1975, Ellis 1974, Hedlund 1983, 1986, 1994; Kent 1976, 1981, 1985; Kluckhohn and Leighton 1974; Lamphere 1977; Tanner 1968; Underhill 1956; Wheat 1976, 1977, 1981, 1984, 1988).⁵

A Counter-Interpretation: Gary Witherspoon and Semiotic Geometry

Gary Witherspoon, anthropologist and linguist married to a Navajo weaver provides an alternative interpretation of the continuation of Navajo weaving. Rather than emphasizing its commodity aspects, Witherspoon (1987) suggests that weaving has played a major role in perpetuating Navajo lifeways. He argues for an interpretive approach, commenting that the vigour and endurance of the Navajo people is culturally inspired, not materially determined. Witherspoon notes that weaving continues regardless of financial compensation; economics is not the primary motivation. He has published on Navajo language, philosophy and world view (1977, 1983), and produced major works on Navajo kinship (1975), symbolism and ritual knowledge (1974, 1983). Witherspoon (1981:31) comments that the dominant theme in Navajo aesthetics is creative synthesis and that the Navajo essence of beauty *or hozho* is simultaneously moral, physiological, philosophical and emotional. Order is based upon the pairing of contrasting but complementary elements. *Hozho* refers to a state of affairs where everything is in its proper place and functioning harmoniously with everything else.⁶ *Hozho* encompasses balance, harmony, health, peace, and blessing (Faris

1986:138). For the Navajo, positive health involves far more than a physiological dimension, it entails proper relationships to everything in one's environment. The goal of Navajo life is to live to maturity in the condition described as *hozho* and to die of old age. Kluckhohn commented on the difficulty in translating Navajo words into English since the latter lacks terms that simultaneously have moral and aesthetic meanings (Witherspoon 1983:572).

In contrast to previous interpretations, Witherspoon (1987) claims that Navajo women have woven (and continue to weave) archetypal symbols of Navajo cosmology. The hourglass motif he identifies as "Changing Woman" forms the outline of Figures 1.1 and 9.1. These symbols are found in petroglyphs, adult hair styles and ritual paraphernalia. Forms and patterns have changed over time, but the underlying motifs remain distinctly Navajo. Witherspoon (1987:99) notes that every culture has two sets of symbols by which it codifies and communicates its concepts and meanings. The first is language, and the second is found in material forms and actions which are imbued with symbolic meanings. He maintains that Navajo weaving has not lost its identity or its creative autonomy even though it underwent a period of Pueblo absorption and Spanish influence prior to the appearance of Anglo traders and markets. He queries why the Navajo were neither diminished nor destroyed by more numerous, more powerful and technologically superior societies. Instead, they have endured and flourished due to:

[their] ability to synthesize aesthetics with pragmatics, internal culture expression with external market influence, individual creativity with universal cultural theme, is at the very heart of their vigor, vitality and adaptability as a human society. Their transformations were culturally inspired and facilitated, not materially determined. (Witherspoon 1987:4)

Thus Witherspoon links techniques, symbols and process together with cosmology. He claims the primary metaphysical assumption upon which the Navajo worldview is built is the opposition between static and active phases of phenomena. This dualism pervades all Navajo art. Energy, activity and motion constantly recur in Navajo sandpaintings, ritual music and weaving. The binary opposition or dualism, between the passive male principle

and the active female principle is expressed through the maintenance of *hozho* through rigid adherence to formulaic ritual and the more fluid productive/reproductive activities. Both ritual activity and weavers' artistic compositions express, accentuate and celebrate the inherent beauty and magnificence of the universe (Witherspoon 1987:103). Although Witherspoon acknowledges the circuit of relations, he constructs it through adherence to dualisms generated through a dependence on a model grounded in structural linguistics.⁷

Witherspoon's interpretive analysis reveals far more about the relations of Navajo society and culture implicated in textile design and production, than all the tabulating, classifying and dating of Navajo artifacts favoured by typologists. Although he has made major contributions to explicating Navajo kinship, social organization and language, he is soundly criticized for arguing for the existence of symbolism in Navajo weaving. In a publication devoted to the legacy of museologist Kate Peck Kent, Wheat (1989:30) notes that Kent was unable to find a single aesthetic that bound all Navajo weaving together, whereas:

Gary Witherspoon, by contrast, sees every design as having derived from Navajo religion--every terraced or stepped element represents a Navajo religious figure, but the examples he chooses are so far-fetched as to have little credibility.

In the same publication, Hedlund (1989:26) quotes from Witherspoon's perception of the Navajo aesthetic style, which he describes as:

one of dynamic symmetry based on the idea of similar and complementary but inexact, imperfect and unequal pairing or balancing...woven designs demonstrate a unity of diversity, a synthesis of differences, a harmony of divergence and a confluence of contrast (Witherspoon 1977:198, 200).

Hedlund (1989:26) critiques his description by stating that his "poetic interpretation of form makes little contribution to our understanding of ethnoaesthetics." Thus Hedlund and Wheat perceive Witherspoon's research as overly structuralist and anti-empiricist.

Counter-Discussions from Navajo Perspectives

Only a handful of publications exist which explicitly link weaving to Navajo cosmology and kinship in a non-dualistic manner. That is, there is no bifurcation between

the secular domestic sphere and sacred religious sphere as exemplified in Reichard's ethnographies.⁸ Two texts are authored by Navajo weaver and educator, Ruth Roessel (1981), and her husband Robert (1983). Published by the Navajo Curriculum Center, they demonstrate how the Creation story provides a charter for behaviour, with weaving as an important component. In the forward to her text, Roessel (1981) writes:

Navajo women are basic to the understanding of Navajo life and culture. We women are the heart and center of our society. If there is no teaching of Navajo life to our children there will be no future for the Navajo people. We, the Navajo women, must know the role and traditions of Navajo culture so that we can carry and pass it on. Countless generations ago, when things were out of hand, Changing Woman came and taught the Navajo the right ways. We now need to bring her teachings to our children.

Changing Woman, the genitrix of the Navajo people, is an exemplary model as she represents all that is good and right. She is a living example, and she helped her people obtain assistance from other Holy People. Roessel speaks of Changing Woman and crops, how they have similar cycles. Women are very important in perpetuating the growth of corn and other plants. Roessel feels that the extensive literature by non-Navajo has not emphasized this enough. Care must be taken to plant, care for, harvest and properly prepare corn and other crops given by Holy People to the Navajo to eat, use and respect. Some Navajo say as long as they have corn and *Kinaalda* (the female puberty ritual), they have nothing to worry about.⁹

In her text Roessel incorporates an entire chapter on Holy People's instructions on child rearing. Women show their daughters how to cook, spin and weave. These activities and other family responsibilities are learned by doing, observing and helping. The word "teach" is a very recent addition to the Navajo vocabulary.

Robert Roessel (1983) begins his text titled Navajo Arts and Crafts by describing how Spider Woman taught Changing Woman to weave. He states that by weaving, the Navajo would not suffer from the cold because they would have clothing. The Holy People would respond and recognize Navajo women who wove and properly respected their tools. Navajo

women reflect another Navajo value through weaving; that of industriousness on the part of the mother by working hard and taking care of one's family. All this refers back to original lessons Changing Woman was taught when she learned how to weave from Spider Woman. Weaving perpetuates kin relations as directed by the Holy People. Loom weaving exemplifies the Navajo philosophy of *hozho*, in which everything is in its proper place and harmonizing with everything else. Roessel concludes by stating that weaving will never die out because it is a vital and dynamic part of Navajo life and culture. However, most non-Navajo authorities predict the ultimate demise of weaving (cf. Amsden 1934, Kent 1985, Tanner 1968, Weiss 1984). Because it is such a labour intensive activity with little financial return, as more Navajo women attend school, it is assumed they will abandon the practice.

The Rug is a Way of Life for the Dine

The following section excerpts comments from weavers I interviewed over a seven week period in the fall of 1992. Weavers' commentary reverberates with statements about relationships. References are made linking cosmology, kinship solidarity, harmony, and process. Weavers' statements support the Roessels' perspective, but contrast sharply with most published literature on the subject of Navajo textiles.¹⁰ Indeed, most ethnography that incorporates information on Navajo weaving lacks commentary relevant to interpreting informants' statements.

Several weavers remarked that weaving is a very emotional skill, that is difficult to talk about. Sometimes weavers make direct reference to the landscape. One may see a "rug" of many shades when she looks out of her hogan because of the beautiful colours. One weaver said:

life grow out of the land, woman grows out of the earth.. the Beautyway...women change the world..rear sheep, shear... all the movements and tensions into a rug...

Another weaver remarked that art provides a chance to experience

hozho ...beauty, harmony, "there's a song, story and prayer behind each rug..." Another weaver repeated the phrase, and added "...and they are all from the spider."

Grace Joe, a weaver in her eighties, told me the following story through a translator which her mother had told her:

long ago a woman named Mary got frustrated with her weaving--just couldn't weave, so she cut up her weaving and threw it toward the east. A few days later she heard singing..she travelled toward the sounds and found her rug singing. She brought it back and started weaving towards all directions. The song came from her weaving, and the loom frame and tools were making the music...

Several other weavers and other Navajo also knew this story, with variations. One woman said that the weaver's tools began to cry when she threw them away. When she picked them up again, they began to sing. Another weaver told me that the weaver's frustration was "a lesson in itself." In a follow-up interview with a weaver who spoke no English, I told this story and her sister-in-law translated. Suddenly the woman became very excited and she began to speak very quickly in Navajo ... "there's a song for everything...[she picked up her spindle] ..for spinning...for weaving.. and they're all from the spider..." She admitted she prays all the time too. She is Christian, but she also goes to the medicine man when necessary. Both women emphasized how important it is for Navajo to keep animals and to weave.... "we don't know what is going to happen in the future...we must raise animals, grow food, and provide for our families... "

One interview took place at the Heard Museum with a woman who was an intern. She comes from a family still living on the Reservation who has been weaving for generations. She spoke about "feeding your weaving tools" with white cornmeal (which is also given to the bride in the Navajo wedding ceremony--yellow cornmeal is given to the groom). Pregnant with her first child, she remarked that it is important to leave a rug unfinished just before one's child is born, so one doesn't "close up the opening." Weaving is part of the "normal cycle" of life: "if you don't have a loom set up, you'll lose money, there won't be enough to eat." She will not tell stories or songs because "it diminishes one's abilities."

A young Navajo woman interviewed while working at a trading post told me that her

grandmother warned her it is bad luck to tell stories -- especially to whites! As a young mother and accomplished weaver in her twenties, her mother (who recently died) told her:

with these hands, you can make money...your hands will bring you wealth...the more complicated designs a weaver does, the brighter she is...weavers who don't do complicated designs are "dull."

Most weavers will not copy as "strong vibrations" come off a picture... "the woman who wove it didn't want her to do it.." Many weavers will not teach non-Navajo to weave. Several weavers remarked that they dream their patterns. Others said as young girls they were told "this is what our creator gave to you to support your family..."

The richest interview lasted six hours and involved a mother, her daughter and her daughter's husband. A weaver in her sixties, Susie raised her eleven children on her weaving (Illustration 8.1). She was told not to tell the weaving stories that her grandfather related during the wintertime in the evening: "if you tell others, it diminishes the value of your work...they take it away from you." Susie told her daughter (who translated) that she cannot talk about this to non-Navajo. "All of it begins at creation with Spider Woman. The rug is sacred--enfolding ...there is wealth in it.. our hearts are in it."

Susie had a sacred ceremony done for her; thus it was easier for her to weave. A wise weaver is chosen to press weaving tools on the young girl during her *Kinaalda*: "this will be her life..bless her/pray for her." Susie no longer goes to medicine men now as she is Christian..but "the weaving part is in her heart." She said "traders don't care about sacred songs." Her daughter continued:

when you weave you don't go by the hour, by time... you weave your rug in your mind... even to feel the touch of the rug is sacred..there's a song to go over the weaving after it's finished, but one cannot talk about it. ... the thoughts and ideas of the original weaver are in the rug..it must not be touched (i.e., repaired), nor should one copy another's pattern.

Another weaver adamantly opposed repairing old Navajo textiles: "it's best to leave the rug alone...it's like an old man or an old woman--you can't renew them... one must weave an entire (new) piece."

Several weavers mentioned that they prayed and asked for help when first starting a rug. When you want an intricate design, it is difficult to think it through. Few weavers I spoke with draw out their designs. Several weavers mentioned it is not good to think bad thoughts, or speak negatively near a loom, especially with a rug up. A few others said they feel like they are "selling their minds.." when they sell their rugs. I was also told that "any pattern in a Navajo rug is "Navajo."

One man married to a weaver told me that when he sees the hourglass pattern, all sorts of things "pop into his head." Another Navajo man said that his mother told him that her weaving made the sheep and goats happy because she is using their wool. And a third man said, "My mom's rugs put food on the table."

Few weavers are comfortable weaving *Yeis*, sandpainting *Yeis* and sandpainting blankets. Most of the weavers who make them are from the Four Corners/Shiprock area. A number of these women have had "sings", special ceremonies that ensure protection. Almost all other weavers I interviewed said that one's eyesight would suffer, if one were to weave those kinds of blankets. Regardless of their age, many of the weavers interviewed through the Park Service interpreter during the 1980s made similar statements.

Another woman in her thirties with six children learned to weave from her grandmother when she was six years old. She gave it up while attending school. After her grandmother died in 1984, she began weaving again. Once she was given a rug to copy and had a very difficult time of it. Strong "vibrations" came off the picture.."the weaver of it didn't want me to do it". She finished the rug and gave it to the client. He paid her so little, she was very upset. She never copies at all now. Every three or four months her grandmother comes to her in her dreams and shows her rug designs. Some have blue ribbons. This how Sarah came up with the design for her "Beyond Native Tradition". This seven by ten foot rug incorporates more than twenty Navajo patterns superimposed on a Burntwater pattern given to her by her grandmother in a dream. She will not teach non-

Navajo women to weave. However she has shown three of her daughters. Sarah's grandmother told her "this is what our Creator gave to you to support your family. I have taught you and you can do what you like but..do not teach others."

The former Director of the Office of Navajo Women and Families has woven for decades. During an interview she told me that if things "aren't right" in a weaver's life, her weaving gets "mixed up". The weaver knows where problems are. "When things are going smoothly, when family relations are right, the weaving is always beautiful." Vangie said that when women weave a "storm pattern," family members know that things are out of kilter, so they talk about it and try and sort things out. "Lately so many things are changing..families splitting up..family network isn't there like it used to be. This is hard on everyone." She made statements similar to other weavers:

when one is at her weaving, you don't think about time, it just doesn't matter. .. because the weaving is beautiful, it will bring the weaver beautiful things... women develop patterns in their minds.

In a Park Service interview, well-known weaver Mae Jim related the story of how Changing Woman had difficulty in learning how to spin:

the spindle goes toward you..your mind and prayers are connected to it. Medicine men have ceremonial doings for it in the happy way. .. if you want to be a weaver, learn the whole process..only way it will work.

Another weaver who is also a medicine woman was interviewed through an interpreter in the same series. Evelyn remarked that she always prays and asks for help when she first starts a rug...as it takes lots of time to think through how to weave intricate designs. She loves the art of weaving. It is the first thing in her heart..she does not search for other ways to support herself. "You have to take good care of your tools. You keep them for your grandchildren to use." She won't weave *Yeis*, sandpainting rugs or repair old rugs. During my interview with her in 1992, she admitted to weaving reproductions, but she does not like to do them because:

the weaver's thoughts are in that old rug. If you copy or repair rugs woven by someone who is dead, the medicine men say that you can lose your eyesight or get

sick. Leave old rugs the way they are, and notify people who are repairing them that they should not do it.

Roger Curley, a male Navajo weaver in his thirties, provided his version of why the Navajo weave:

they said that weaving was for the woman so she could stay home and spin and weave. The men had the job of taking care of the sheep. Both men and women shear the sheep. The lady would be at home weaving while the man was out hunting, hoeing in the field. She would be spinning and weaving and then there will be a blanket. From that there will be food again. That's how I know it and that's what I heard.

Both Roger and his wife enjoy weaving, but he has not made weaving tools:

because you have to be a grandfather before you make those. Just the grandfathers made them. The babies could have a birth defect.. [only grandfathers make cradleboards too].

Roger also remarked why one should not weave *Yei* rugs:

don't bother with it you could lose your eyesight and lose your hearing. It could do anything it wants to you..you would have to have all kinds of sings. if you really want to do it. I guess the next *Yeibechei* dance you should go look through the mask and then see how your *Yeibechei* rugs..if you put corn pollen out for it (if one is in your home) nothing will happen.

Both Roger and his wife weave in the spirit line.. since "you weave in your mind" if you fail to do this. They also do not weave after midnight:

Spider Woman did weave like that. From her everyone started weaving... but you are not suppose to finish a rug at night, or weave after midnight..could lose your eyesight...

The Aesthetics of Navajo Weaving: Museologists' Perspectives

The perspective on Navajo aesthetics adopted by museologists is derived from Reichard's interpretation previously explicated. In her research spanning three decades, Kate Peck Kent (1985:111) maintained that:

rugs woven in this century will not tell us anything about Navajo personality or values because Anglo traders and markets have influenced Navajo weavers so much that any meanings or aesthetic styles which may have existed in early weavings were extinguished....The search for a distinctive Navajo aesthetic ends with the onset of the Rug period. When weavers ceased to manufacture blankets for their own use and turned to the production of rugs for sale to whites, they accepted Anglo American standards of taste.

Kent (1985:105) acknowledged that most Navajo "value weaving as a distinct cultural attribute." She gained an understanding of the technological processes associated with weaving by replicating portions of specific archaeological or historic textiles (Spencer 1989). Kent's work was based on empirical descriptions of textiles in various public and private collections, in conjunction with analyses of archival and published documents on the subject. These were her primary sources as she did no ethnographic fieldwork. After examining hundreds of textiles Kent found that "Navajo weavers struck a balance between eclecticism and originality." Thus Kent's research was synthetic as it involved the reconstruction of a historical chronology developed through empirical research on the products of material culture (Hedlund 1989:23).

Kent (1985: 109, 111) perceived the "Navajo aesthetic" as "a set of formal stylistic principles, associated with characteristics of style and standards of taste." Kent did not deny that Navajo designs may be based on a set of unconscious culturally defined principles. Like Reichard, she noted that weavers have proven particularly adept at incorporating diverse materials, techniques and designs influenced by Pueblo, Spanish and Anglo sources. Paradoxically, the changing nature of Navajo textile design appears to be one of the major characteristics that ties together three hundred years of Navajo weaving. The Navajo are described as opportunists, because they adopted a wide array of cultural traits from indigenous and Euroamerican sources. Because weaving was "borrowed" from the Pueblos and the materials (principally wool) from the Spaniards, there were no cultural constraints concerning the adoption of foreign designs. In contrast, Pueblo textiles remained conservative as they were woven for ceremonial purposes.

In an anthology devoted to tourist arts, Kent (1976:101) remarked:

Navajo weaving has no deep historical roots in cultural tradition. Essentially, it has always been a commercial link with other Indians, Spanish, and Anglo-Americans. As such, it has thrived on innovation, change, and outside contacts.

Both economic necessity and internal creativity are seen as the driving factors behind

the continued production by Navajo weavers. Symbolism in either colour or design is denied, although a weaver may ascribe a personal meaning to her particular design. Weavers' aesthetic judgements rest upon technical skills as much as visual designs. The process of textile production utilizing specific tools and techniques is of greater significance than a particular set of aesthetic standards. Technique in particular becomes the common denominator that links the diversity of Navajo textile production for several centuries (Kent 1981, 1985).

Kent's (1985:114) perspective is summarized in the following statement:

Harmony in color and balance in design structure are consistently named by Navajo critics themselves as the most important aesthetic imperatives of textile design. In addition, the Navajo judge the aesthetic value of a rug on the basis of the weavers' technical skill. Evaluating an art object in terms of the technical skill with which it was made, rather than as a personal expression is a widespread practice in nonwestern societies. This is because technical skills are variable and can be objectively assessed and compared.

Kent notes how harmony and balance are related to the aesthetics of colour and design in individual textiles. However, she fails to perceive how these factors are vital aspects of Navajo culture in general.

Contemporary Navajo Weaving as "Art"

It is evident from information just reviewed that empirical description has dominated Southwest textile studies for nearly a century. Most research has focused on creating a taxonomy by categorizing and cataloguing Navajo weaving according to type. Detailed measurements, yarn types, dyes, designs, styles, provenance and pedigree comprise much of the information available concerning Navajo weaving (cf Amsden 1975, Berlant and Kahlenberg 1977, Blomberg 1988, James 1976, Kent 1985, Rodee 1981, 1987, Wheat 1976, 1977, 1989). In more recent exhibitions a shift has occurred from descriptions of the "loom centred" rug to the weaver herself. Her biography comes to the fore; weaving is no longer discussed as craft but as an art form. Indeed an exhibition of contemporary Navajo weaving currently touring to several major galleries in the United States has some of the textiles

mounted on walls behind glass so they will be seen from a contemporary Western perspective of fine art. A transition that parallels the shift of historic weaving from craft to art is under way for a portion of contemporary Navajo weaving. This recent shift in perception emphasizes the weaver as individual artist, who may in fact be providing for her family through selling her work, but she wishes to be seen as an artist and not as a craftsperson (Hedlund 1992). Given the attitudes and perceptions concerning the creation of fine art, and the status that artists hold in North America, this appears to be a fruitful way to ensure an increased financial return to a select number of weavers.

The current discussion related to the transformation of contemporary Navajo weaving from craft to art also denies symbolism in the weaving; rather the weaver as artist selects and rejects designs much as any other artist. Influenced by numerous sources, weavers seek to produce compositions that are harmonious in colour and design. The search for a Navajo aesthetic, or sense of style exhibited in visual traits, is sought in the rug. In the catalogue essay accompanying the exhibition, the aesthetics of modernism informs the curator's perspective:

the rugs and tapestries are personal statements in themselves, if we can only learn to view them as such, instead of as a collectively and anonymously produced native craft items...the exhibition draws from the past while looking to the future..Navajo rugs are works of art, valuable to the weavers and other viewers for their visual impact... recognizing and acknowledging the Navajo artists as any mainstream artists might be, becomes important in order to get beyond biases toward Navajo weaving as craft, as trader-driven, as economically imperative, rather than as art and as individual visual statements of self. (Hedlund 1994:32).

According to curator/anthropologist Ann Hedlund (1988:86), a greater understanding of Navajo aesthetics "from the native point of view" can be gained by examining "the internal, culturally empowered processes of designing, executing and evaluating handwoven products." In the late 1980s, Hedlund initiated a pilot project as an extension of much of her own research which she describes as "an empirically based characterization of modern textile production focused on sociocultural and technological factors." She developed a series of

Weavers were asked to compare and contrast specific image triads. Weavers admitted that sources for designs generally come from their minds, or thoughts. Whiteford (1989:32) noted that Hedlund's pilot study is a carefully designed attempt to gather empirical data that may help to define the nature of Navajo aesthetics. Wheat (1989:30) concurred, noting that the design and perspective adopted in this type of research should provide "a reasoned and secure answer to the problem."

The abovementioned exhibition includes a set of flash cards with different Navajo designs. The written material accompanying the display defines ethnoaesthetics as "how different societies decide what makes a design good or bad." Each textile is perceived as an aesthetic product of an individual self-conscious artist, the weaver as cultural trend setter. This current perspective tethers contemporary Navajo weaving to gallery aesthetics. The construction of the history, display and preservation of textiles reveals the views, values and assumptions of the caretakers. Vogt's (1961) acculturation model continues to influence museologists' publications (Hedlund 1983, 1989, 1990; Kent 1985, Rodee 1981, Tanner 1968, Wheat 1977, 1984).

There are clues in the literature on the Navajo that aid in explicating the Navajo aesthetic. But few emerge from the publications by museologists (Kent 1985, Rodee 1981, Wheat 1984). The only patterns that museologists privilege are the empirical designs woven into individual rugs. Most extant history of Navajo textiles reflects the imposition of Euroamerican ideas. With the exception of Witherspoon, the perspective adopted by most ethnographers and museologists continues to emphasize those aspects of weaving associated with its marketability. The following section draws upon information relayed by Navajo weavers who spoke (sometimes through translators) to an audience attending "Navajo Weaving Since the Sixties" conference hosted by the Heard Museum in Phoenix in March 1994.¹¹ Their statements provide a marked contrast to the non-Navajo perspectives previously described. The comments made by Navajo participants at the conference support

those made by weavers I interviewed in 1992. They emphasize the importance of weaving in linking themselves and their relations through the activities associated with weaving. The quantified values that emerge from non-Navajo commentary are missing from their statements.

"Navajo Weaving Since the Sixties"

This four-day conference hosted by the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona in March 1994, was attended by more than forty Navajo weavers and their families. It was held in conjunction with an exhibition of contemporary Navajo weaving currently touring the United States. For the first time an audience heard nearly two dozen weavers speak about how they felt about their life's work. Most of these women had textiles in the exhibition. Two Navajo women translated presentations by monolingual speakers into the other language.

Conference organizer Ann Hedlund had prepared a series of questions for the Navajo weaver/presenters. Each weaver was asked to define the parts of their weaving that they consider "traditional." "Is it the techniques, colours, finished products or designs?" This was deemed important as weavers appear to be "actively re-defining their weaving. Today it is "simultaneously sacred and sold.... does the term 'authentic' apply?" Navajo weaver/respondents had diverse reactions to this request. The text that follows incorporates their answers along with additional commentary.

Weavers' Respond

One young weaver said tradition is the process of weaving... "tradition comes from within." Gloria Begay said:

there is a story behind every weaving tool, it's very emotional. The finished product itself is traditional part of artistic piece, and there's a traditional story behind it. She mentioned cosmology. Her grandmother passed it down, and she remarked that one can't pick out one part and say only it is traditional.

In response to the question from the organizer as to who or what had the greatest influence on their design choices, weavers emphasized friends and families as their biggest

influence on their design choices, weavers emphasized friends and families as their biggest influences. Much emphasis was placed on providing for families.

Long-time weaver Annie Kahn said:

weavers weave sunlight, the rain..weave all this together with their hands. ..one feels good...express and restore yourself through weaving.. walk in beauty when one finishes weaving a rug...feeds our soul..

Another weaver remarked that "if one weaves a *Yei*, one should use commercial yarns so power is subdued". In other words, avoid using handspun wool.

Weaver Irene Clark spoke eloquently:

..weaving goes with prayers, songs. Thank mother earth for plants, for sky, the air, good feeling to dye..it's all in the weaving..in your hands, tools, in your mind. Design and colouring, how you think of yourself is how you weave..good thoughts, prayers, songs. When you start to weave, design comes in your mind, in your hands. Can't leave work unfinished...it will watch you...the weaving will teach you...If you let your loom stand too long it will have pain...just like you when you stand too long!!...

Barbara Jean Ornelas, a weaver in her thirties, said "when you first set up your loom it is like giving birth to your child..watch it grow, find a good home for it." Barbara is Christian. She does not know the stories or legends, but feels she is "born to be a weaver." It is her life, it has centred her. The family lived from rug to rug as she put her husband through Pharmacy school (along with loans)..on her weaving. If she sees a rug she wove years ago, it "talks for itself" and reminds her of what her life was like at the time. Barbara has to weave everyday, otherwise "there's no harmony in my home." Her two children tell her "get to weaving so you won't be grouchy."

One weaver said every time she finishes a rug "it is like gaining knowledge of life itself...never finish learning." Another weaver said weaving to her was equivalent "to a complex college education."

Sadie Curtis commented that the "weaving circle is made up of makers and buyers. Grace Henderson Nez, a weaver in her eighties, remarked on how you "get graded [by traders] on your weaving". She wonders if rugs aren't selling as well as they used to

Weaver Elsie Wilson was born in 1924. Her presentation was translated by her daughter. Elsie said:

Navajo respect whites. Whites have the means to buy, therefore weavers strive to do their best. If I were white, I'd take this as a compliment.

Elsie looks upon us as relatives and told organizers "It must be hard to represent a culture that's not your own and do it well."

Nanaba Midge Aragon has made recordings of Navajo songs. She began weaving again as an adult after years away from her loom. She said that "it's like going home...weaving is beauty....I learned my way back to my culture.." Another weaver remarked on how her mother told her "do both your weaving and your cooking with feeling." A young mother, she commented that "school is hard, because talk (in English) is from in the head. The feeling isn't there ...it's all intellectual..."

Weavers began weaving for a variety of reasons.. one because her grandmother was going blind. She imitated her at weaving .."it was a way for us to communicate." Another weaver learned at an early age. She was ordered by her mother.. "have to weave, cannot let loom be empty. ..weave to honor the elderlies.."

A young male weaver, Wesley Thomas, gave a long and very eloquent presentation. He commented on how tradition and traditionalism are defined differently in "Navajo cultural space." His maternal grandmother saw he was fit after ten years, to take over her weaving tools. He learned the weaving songs from his grandfather. After many years of weaving, he is just beginning to understand the importance of Navajo weaving:

Spiderman and Woman constructed the loom to the other world [as] metaphorical teaching tools. Through weaving..learned a form of Navajo spirituality. Negative language is never used around the loom, or when someone is weaving. Nurturing tools--power of earth and sky embodied in the loom... there's ambiguity, esoteric knowledge...secretiveness. Navajo techniques of learning: song, stories and prayers. In Western aesthetics, emphasis is on finished product. Being a member of a family where weaving is important, you represent your family when you attend gatherings..experience beauty in creating and expressing, not in preserving and possessing. The construction of Navajo culture is learned through interaction. The songs and prayers are metaphorical teaching tools.. learned one form of Navajo

spirituality. Power and strength of Spider Woman in the loom. Weaving while in college connects me to home..soothing, the beating of the batten is like a heartbeat of earth, that's my mother.. ..rugs are an embodied part of me in the culture..

Another weaver said something similar: "... when I'm sitting at the loom, it's my mother...she's talking to me." And still another hears the heart of her mother through the batten because "the sound makes connection to the culture.. weaving given to us to use..very much a part of our lives." Another weaver said that it was "good that girls learning to weave..keeping up with tradition by supporting family..that's how they did it long ago."

Several songs were sung in celebration of weaving. One described a young weaver: "how beautifully you card wool, how beautifully you spin." Another song was about the Navajo husband running out of goods, and so his wife weaves a rug for trade.

Ruth Roessel, Navajo weaver and educator quoted previously, spoke eloquently and at length. She said:

the spindle represents the turning of the values..with the soft goods, with the jewels....you have five fingers...all the values go through your fingers to your family. Family members important...they help each other. My mother always wove, and raised her children through her weaving. ..it makes you a person, it makes you who you are... this is art, this is life. The warps are like a curtain of black clouds.. a hope for rain... weaving is to call the rain.. all tools have spiritual names, even the loom.

Ruth told the story related to me by Grace Joe and elaborated:

the tools cried out "you must always love and care for us...have beautiful buckskin bag to keep us..without us, nothing, no life, no song in your heart." Can't weave while it's raining because of the lightening.. Mother Earth has design..it's all out there, clouds, rainbow, sunrays..the art, the four seasons, our mother changes colors.. beautiful coloured dress...in the spring it is green, in the fall it changes. Her skirts are beautiful.. seasons change..how teaching takes place in our culture...that's what's in the weaving.. (cf. colour palette of nature)..

Navajo beadmaker Wendy Weston Ben remarked on how she takes designs from weaving and interprets them:

art and my world are all one..there is no separation. There's no word for art, we call ourselves weavers. Then you move into world and have terms put on you. Anglos categorize you..Navajo must redefine who they are and "create tradition." I never had to define who I was at home. Here people ask me to "define" who I am. Concerning the question "what is traditional?"...Institutions get hung up on these

words which are nice, neat categories..we are contemporary people, the art we do expresses who we are in this contemporary world.

Wendy spoke of the frustration of going to National Endowment for the Arts meetings. There are reviews of Hispanic arts, Western arts and North American crafts. She finds this upsetting:

these people are artists, [they are] not given the recognition..society is too hung up on degrees. The art world has a lot to offer weavers..lots of money.. [but] "famous" is not a becoming characteristic for Navajo women. There are many networks to be built. In the last ten years, doors slowly opening in institutions. [She asks] why do we want to get in? Why do we have to validate ourselves this way? My husband Joe is a painter...it can be a damaging word. Navajo use the Western term, but the context is very different. The word can be applied to him..but it is a mere reflection of your Western values and concerns...

Wendy's powerful and articulate presentation in English was translated by her husband into Navajo. After his talk a bi-lingual Navajo told me that he spoke directly to the issues raised by Wendy and critiqued the organizers at length for not addressing economic issues, as the market for makers' work is so poor.

Weaver Pearl Sunrise has been working on a book which will reveal her philosophy of weaving. She remarked that:

writing is difficult..an intimate part of you...[I] do not want to reveal knowledge related to weaving, or put it on paper. It is like giving part of oneself away..causes conflicts, bothers us. It is important to start at the beginning, by spinning the wool, [one] becomes a person. Weaving musn't be put behind glass --it cuts off the energy--we touch the weaving..by touch we transfer blessings. Weavings bestow blessings. When you weave, you are creating yourself....

Pearl has spoken about her life as a Navajo weaver in other public presentations.¹² She commented that if the weaver is not in tune, "she cannot create anything." A weaver works with her material in a certain way, while spinning the yarn, then warping and setting up her loom, she always moves in the direction that follows the movement of the sun. Pearl's parents told her many stories demonstrating how "everything is integrated," but younger Navajo do not want to impose on the elderlies to write down stories.

Reflections on Contesting Presentations

The information presented above provides the most detailed and eloquent collection of thoughts of Navajo weavers about their work and their lives. However, the duality exhibited in the conference was striking. The statements made and the questions asked by most non-Navajo participants appeared to have little relevance to what the Navajo weavers were saying. Yet many of these individuals have been involved in one way or another with Navajo weavers or their textiles for decades. Navajo weavers' statements emphasized the importance of relationships perpetuated through weaving, rather than weaving as commodity reflecting gallery aesthetics. The latter interpretation currently dominates the written literature on the subject (Baizerman 1989).

Presentations given by textile scholars and traders attending the conference also reflected attitudes concerning aesthetics associated with commodification. Three museologists gave slide presentations on the "history" of Navajo weaving. In one session the three speakers showed four or five identical slides of "classic" historic textiles. A museum curator remarked on how the whole history of the Navajo is defined by adaptation and innovation. In reference to Navajo thinking about designs, Joe Ben Wheat remarked:

the Navajo have no fixed tradition..They have a highly moveable.. cumulative style. Each later style has incorporated elements of previous styles. The major element in Navajo weaving is its eclecticism. This is demonstrated by incorporation and integration..[of outside influences]

When designs became more complex, Wheat referred to it as "fussiness." Wheat had been asked to summarize and comment on the discussions. Instead, he reiterated the "history" of Navajo weaving [everything was borrowed] and remarked on how we are now beginning to recognize weavers' creative concerns and abilities whether we collect traditional or modern textiles.

Traders and Dealers' Voices

Several traders and off-Reservation dealers gave presentations about the types of rugs that would sell... "we want good, clean rugs".. One dealer referred to rugs as units and products. Another trader who does high volume business because his purchasing is subsidized by the Park Service, thinks the quality of weaving is at an all time high.. "I don't think they can become any better or more progressive..."

In private conversations, weavers comment on how traders try to "talk weavers down" and pay them less money. Traders and dealers criticize a rug if it has "too much of one colour"... or, they comment, "buyers don't like that"... or "you're not there yet." .. or "there's a mistake in your rug...don't get mad if I tell you." Ruth Roessel addressed this issue in public. She commented on how weavers sometimes cry when traders criticize their rugs because they try so hard. They resolve "to do better next time." It is evident in this type of commentary that weavers continue to be pressured to produce ever better textiles, with more pattern, finer spinning and dyeing, and higher warp/weft counts. As noted in previous chapters, weavers were pressured by traders in the past to improve quality, as the niche disappeared due to sales of trade blankets. That niche vanished more than a century ago. Today the pressure continues, and increased competition is exacerbated through the sales of copy weaving imported from abroad.

While listening to the presentations, I had the impression that I was attending two conferences. One was comprised of all the non-Navajo "experts" in various fields, the curators, collectors, dealers and traders. The other group was comprised of the weavers ages 18 to 85 years, who spoke so beautifully of the importance of weaving to them. Their testimonies were very moving, but seemed to make little impression on the first group. In fact, the traders and dealers arrived late, gave their presentations and left. Only one trader heard some of the weavers' presentations. He is married to a Navajo woman and he speaks the language.

Only one non-Navajo presentation dealt with cosmology in relation to weaving. Maureen Schwartz was a former student of Gary Witherspoon. She remarked on how the *bi'il* dress, the loom, the hogan, and the Navajo basket are microcosms of cosmology. "As Changing Woman restored order and life to the world.. thus the weaver restores order. "

Response from Navajo Audience

Gloria Emerson, Director of the Center for Cultural Exchange at a New Mexico arts institution, had prepared a one hour presentation. As the conference ran overtime, she spoke for ten minutes. Gloria cogently addressed the chasm that separates the textile experts and traders from the weavers:

...every weaver who spoke is an educator. Many are in a transitional state, like myself. The whole time is an historic moment, as prominent weavers are heard and we celebrate who we are. ... through all the poetry there are some problems..white scholars need to listen and understand us. There is a real clash between whites and tribal wisdom. Organizers need to ask how they can address this and **pay attention to this.**

...we heard words of wisdom...some weavers can get their work into museums. What about weavers back home whose rugs aren't as beautiful...what about them? The purpose of the conference wasn't clear... the questions "what is tradition" and "what is contemporary"--this is not an exciting debate. Let the weavers come up with the questions. [She is referring to the tiresome and repetitive refrain on the history of Navajo weaving...where Navajo acquired their patterns, etc.]

A Weaver's story

The most detailed and profound statement concerning weaving as cosmological performance was relayed to me by a woman whose mother was one of the few Navajo weavers of the past who we know by name. This woman, now in her forties, wrote the following story for a professor while taking courses at an Arizona University. Because her mother worked at a school run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs where children were forbidden to speak their native language, she never learned to speak Navajo. Prior to giving me a copy of her paper, she told me that the medicine men know the weaving stories, but they "won't share that information with people...it's sacred." She did mention that a male relative told her great-grandmother that the warp is like the rainbow, sunlight hit the strings

(warp) and it changed into all different colours. This is what happens when rain nourishes soil, plants bloom, and so the weaver makes her warp bloom.

The following is the story of Navajo weaving as told by a Navajo woman, who although not conversant in her native tongue, articulates feelings that a rug evokes for her people:

to this day..a rug placed on the counter for sale at an Indian curio shop is evidence of only a small part of the history of Navajo weaving. Its value and significance as genuine handmade Navajo rug are diminished by the fact that there are machine made rugs, more easily accessible to buyers and fewer numbers of people desiring to master Navajo weaving. The Navajo rug, or any type of Navajo weaving, stands between the family of the weaver and starvation. It is money and financial credit to the family. Rugs are not considered by the weaver as personal property that must be kept. It is a thing for giving in exchange for nothing or in exchange for something of value. This is as it should be in Navajo ways, because it is a gift from the Holy People.

She relates a portion of the Creation Story, in which the Holy Twins come upon a small opening in the earth. They peer in and see Spider Woman, weaving a beautiful rug. Surrounding her were hung other rugs that were already finished. They descended on a ladder made of pretty yarn. She relates what the loom was made of and continues:

Thus Spider Woman opened to the Twins knowledge of the world of weaving. Years ago, young weavers just learning were taught the sacredness of weaving. .. as a life giving occupation. From the weaver's hands there are strung out, it is said, cords to the hearts and the essences of wealth, protection and happiness.. Through the act of weaving she has control of the world kingdom. Thus at an early age, the weaver is taught the religious and ethical significance as well as the economics of the art of weaving. ... weaving as work was not just a way of feeding one's family; it meant religion, wealth, and culture... other writers have explained Navajo weaving in a different manner...

...the religious and mythical concepts of designs were handed down by Spider Woman.. at one point during their visit with the "master of weavers" they say that designs and colors in the rugs hanging in her house changed automatically, like watching the colorful glitter of a town at night. Spider Woman instructed that design will come to the Navajo if she truly attempts weaving and that there need not be any plan on the design before she weaves. i.e., the designs evolved from themselves and all that the weaver needed to do was weave them into a rug... thus, during the rug period, to the Navajo, the wide variation of designs came about as no surprise [this is a quote from her grandfather in 1975]. From the Navajo weavers' hands..effortlessly flow the endless designs taught by Spider Woman. Although other literature tells us that Navajo were taught weaving by the Pueblos, the Navajo believe that weaving was taught to them by Holy People who walked Mother Earth at the

dawn of mankind.. the unwritten folklore and myths perpetuate this belief. Navajo expanded weaving ..for traders.. [They] saw they were going to be annihilated by the US government unless they accepted the American way.. weaving became their vehicle and provided money for this new way.. to them, weaving was their own. The Navajo brought it with them to this world, they took it with them to Bosque Redondo, they have it with them today. The elements of weaving may have changed in time as the Navajo went through life and encountered other people with different cultures, but the form is not different, it is still Navajo. As long as there are Navajo who cling to their religion, culture and language.. So long as a Navajo can eloquently express thoughts in Navajo, so also will eloquent expressions flow from Navajo weaving.

This woman's eloquent paper provides us with deep insight into the value of weaving to her people. In her testimony she interleaves cosmology and history, revealing the centrality of weaving as a means of cultural survival. A few other weavers have also written of its importance. Mrs. Dorothy Begay, grandmother from the Rough Rock area of the Reservation, reminisces about her childhood:

...we were taught to weave all day and even at night, carding and spinning the wool for the next rug. Once the rug was completed and sold, you would be ready to begin another one. Young girls and women did this into the late hours of the night. Even then, we were able to get up before the sun rose, when it was still dark, and herd sheep. We were always told that herding sheep and weaving rugs were the ways we would survive in this world. (McCarty 1983:12)

Conclusions

The usual museologists' perspective that continues to influence the subject of Navajo weaving emphasizes the empirical domain. What is measurable becomes real. What constitutes knowledge depends upon an agreed-upon methodology. Cut out of its context, a Navajo rug equals the sum of its parts. The individual facts objectively collected according to museological practices confers its own kind of value. The typology of Navajo weaving developed by textile scholars and adhered to by many anthropologists has shaped perceptions and written commentary on the subject. In stark contrast to commentary orchestrated by most textile scholars and art historians, weavers' statements reveal a set of relations and values unacknowledged in most literature on Navajo weaving. In order to situate weaving in a more appropriate cultural framework, more in keeping with weavers' statements, it is necessary

to move from analyses grounded in dualisms which advocate typologies, to topology. In order to perceive the patterns, one must discard the dualisms. It is necessary to shift the emphasis from the textile as a marketable commodity with quantifiable value to the mapping of textiles as material manifestations of relationships, perpetuated through the production and exchange of weaving. The final chapter will shift the emphasis from typology to topology--the form that generates circulation of value which is both aesthetic and integrative. Information gleaned from Navajo cosmology provides the context for the latter text.

ENDNOTES

1. In 1909, Alfred Kroeber published an article on Pomo basketry which was reprinted in Matthews and Jonaitis (1982). Typical of publications on "craft" the author describes the materials, techniques, and manufacturing processes related to Pomo basketmaking. In one paragraph Kroeber summarizes how anthropologists have viewed the "meaning" of functional objects. He continually juxtaposes the religious (non-functional) to the conventional, artistry to pragmatism, and states:

there is no evidence that any decorative figure originated directly from a creative symbolic impulse. Symbolism can only interpret what is already given.

In other words, when an article is commoditized or produced for utilitarian purposes, it has no sacred associations. He concludes that there is a complete absence of religious or symbolic significance from decorative designs that appear in Pomo basketry. This is essentially the explanation that is offered concerning the lack of "symbolism in" Navajo weaving. One of Kroeber's contemporaries, anthropologist Ruth Bunzel, worked extensively with Pueblo potters. Bunzel claimed that "the great source of decorative ideas is, of course, tradition...the artistic impulse is only expressed in articles which depart from tradition..." (Bunzel 1982:185).

2. Reichard also commented that because of the varied nature of women's domestic activities combined with frequent interruptions, it would be a mistake to attempt calculating the time spent weaving a rug.

3. Tanner (1968:195) remarks on how the essentially decorative nature of Indian art contributes heavily to its formal style. She echoes Reichard when she declares that Southwest Indian secular arts are "not symbolic." Sometimes the same design element or motif may be found in sacred and secular context...in the former it is symbolic, in the latter it is not, for here it is design and no more." The Indian used decoration on objects he used...although it did not improve utility value, it satisfied an ancient feeling.

4. Reichard (1936:161) mentions sandpainting blankets, noting that "Money ..dangling at the end of a string pulled ever shorter, has the same effect on the Navajo as upon ourselves. It supersedes all other values, be they social, moral or spiritual." This is an unfortunate assumption as her friend Roman Hubbell pressured women into weaving them because the market for mohair vanished during the Depression (Chapter Five). Reichard also notes how chanters are paid but she justifies it differently. Commenting that ceremonies are "expensive," Reichard neglects to note that ceremonies to protect women weaving sandpainting blankets cost as much as they would receive in credit for weaving them!

5. Wheat is actually an archaeologist, however he is considered to be the "dean" of Navajo textile studies.

6. Witherspoon (1974) examines approaches to determining "world view." He notes that Reichard (1950) made an exhaustive and useful account of Navajo religious beliefs, but the study is like a dictionary and hardly provides a unified picture of the world as seen by the Navajo. Witherspoon also critiqued Kluckhohn's "eight keystones" of Navajo view of world. He notes that these keystone statements are unsatisfactory as there is little connection between or coherence among them. Witherspoon ascribes to a symbolic approach influenced by Durkheim. Following Geertz, he perceives meanings as stored in symbols [cross, etc.] dramatized in rituals, and related in myths.

He claims that the translations of Reichard and Kluckhohn provide a general notion of *hozho*, but are inadequate because they deal with only one of the two morphological components of the word.

7. Witherspoon's analysis is not atypical. Anthropologists acknowledge the existence of both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication. However, the non-verbal dimensions of culture are frequently organized in patterned sets so as to incorporate "coded information" in a manner analogous to the sounds, words and sentences in language. Thus many anthropologists look to linguists for a model according to which they can analyze non-verbal modes of communication (Leach 1976:93). Compositions are perceived as containing a "visual grammar" which may be "read." Art forms are treated as if they had features comparable to the rules of syntax in language. Modes of communication such as dance and dress are seen as interchangeable units, subject to analyses suited to and developed for linguistic models (Turner 1967, 1975; Leach 1976; Levi-Strauss 1963). Thus the "language model" of symbolism informs the publications of anthropologist and linguist Gary Witherspoon.

8. Anglo weaver and textile restoration specialist Noel Bennett (referenced in Chapter Seven), provides information related to Navajo mythology and weaving in her text Halo of the Sun. Barry Toelken (1976) has also written eloquently on Navajo crafts and mythology. Neither Bennett nor Toelken are anthropologists.

9. Roessel's associate, native-American author Anna Lee Walters (1992:40) enlarges on the interconnections endemic to native peoples and their lifeways. She notes how corn pollen is considered sacred, and is used in prayers and ceremonies. Pollen is needed for all vegetation:

One plant communicates with another by pollination... thinking and praying are collective mindfulness. [In] native American communities, survival means to seek life... seeking life is a community matter... a knowledgeable human being was one who was sensitive to his/her surroundings. Thus one could have 'mystical learning experiences.' In order that knowledge did not get separated from experience, wisdom from divinity, the elders stressed listening and waiting, not asking why. .. you don't ask questions when you grow up..you watch, listen and wait.

10. Toelken (1976) contrasts how Euroamerican notions of order are "linear" in contrast to "sacred reciprocity" evident in interactions of many indigenous peoples. He lived with a Navajo family for several years, noting that to be healthy by Navajo standards, one must participate properly in all

the cycles of nature. For weavers, it is their interaction with nature that is the important part of making a rug. "Something which for us is a secular craft or a technique is for the Navajo a part of the extension of the reciprocity embodied in religion (1976:20).

11. The event was the first time a group of Navajo weavers appeared before an audience and spoke about their work. Additional information is derived from a series of interviews curator Clarendia Begay held with elderly weavers sponsored by the National Park Service in 1985-86.

12. Pearl was the only weaver present at a conference on the topic hosted by Kate Peck Kent at the University of Denver in 1984. In her text published the following year, (Kent 1985:113-114) quotes a portion of Pearl's presentation: "The custom of spinning at every odd moment exemplifies the Navajo ideal of keeping busy, while carding, spinning and weaving itself express the value placed on patience and determination. It is important to work steadily at one's own rate and to keep at a task until finished. The Navajo believe that beauty lies within the individual, and in visualizing a pattern and then projecting it onto her loom, the weaver is expressing this beauty. Her designs will be judged good if they meet the Navajo ideals of harmony and balance.

CHAPTER NINE
RECONCEPTUALIZING NAVAJO WEAVING
FROM COLLECTIBLE COMMODITY TO COSMOLOGICAL PERFORMANCE

To press non-economic values into the framework of the economic calculus....is a procedure by which the higher is reduced to the level of the lower and the priceless is given a price. All it can do is lead to....deception, for to undertake to measure the immeasurable is absurd...the logical absurdity is not the greatest fault of the undertaking: what is worse and destructive of civilization is the pretence that everything has a price, or in other words, money is the highest of all values. (Schumacher 1974:37-38)

As information in previous chapters reveals, through the activities of traders, ethnographers, and museologists, the Navajo rug became isolated from its context. A new value system was created which was numerical, abstract--a logical system that lacked context, or created a radically different context. The rug became a commodity treated like a renewable resource and more recently, an art form tethered to gallery aesthetics. The commodity system has imposed a value which is easily decontextualized. When an object is situated in such a physical field, other values are obliterated. When emphasis is placed on isomorphic objects divorced from their contexts, it is impossible to interpret relations between cultural phenomena. The patterns of relations that brought Navajo rugs into existence are fractured through adherence to this type of thinking. Yet it is clear from their statements that perpetuating relationships form the primary focus of weavers' concerns (Chapter 8). These relationships are frequently linked to Navajo cosmology. Major discrepancies emerge when weavers' comments are compared with statements made by non-Navajo textile experts concerning the history, influences and role of Navajo weaving. If textiles are just commodities, why do Navajo express reluctance in discussing sacred concerns in relation to weaving? Only a handful of texts link weaving to Navajo cosmology.

In the Introduction I referenced Tony Wilden who remarked on how all language is communication, but very little communication is language (Wilden 1981:1). Communication is the means by which relationships are made manifest. We cannot not communicate. The

categories constructed through language utilized by anthropologists and applied to Navajo material culture have created dualisms that have fractured our ability to perceive patterns. In this chapter I suggest, drawing on testimony from Navajo informants and selected publications, that there are other patterns to be perceived, but they have been masked by conceptual blinkers imposed by the emphasis on empirical description that dominates southwestern textile studies. Words simply cannot describe the entire pattern of relations. Patterns are not about words; patterns are about relationships. There are gaps in our knowledge because the machinery of description (signification) is always digital and discontinuous. Because a word stands for a condensed version of a pattern, no word can ever describe the entire pattern. Thus it should become apparent that linguistic approaches to meaning miss the scale of the world in which meaning operates. Yet this is the perspective embraced by non-Navajo in their dealings with Navajo weavers (Chapter 8).

In order to perceive the patterns, it is necessary to broaden our perception concerning different forms of communication. The following paragraphs describe the differences between forms of coding information that play a significant role in the creation of radically different contexts. Distinguishing between different forms of coding information provides the basis for understanding how the emphasis on the written word is deficient for an appropriate understanding of Navajo weaving. It will become apparent that differences in understanding are separated not so much by the intentions of the speaker and listener as on the contexts of communication.

The Differences Between Analogic and Digital Coding

Western societies privilege discursive digitalized forms of coding information (writing and text). Because of the dominance of literacy in Euroamerican societies, we forget that not all meaning can be communicated solely by language and texts. Thus Roland Barthes' dictum: "there is no meaning which is not named" represents a drastic form of reductionism similar to Descartes' "I think therefore I am." Communications theorist Tony Wilden

(1972:106) describes the differences between digital and analogic coding as follows:

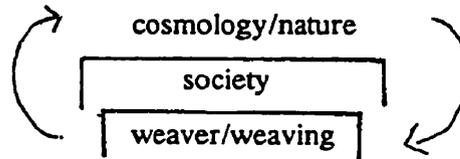
the former has a highly complex and powerful logical syntax, but lacks adequate semantics in the field of relationship, while analogic (continuous) forms of communication possess the semantics but have no adequate syntax for the unambiguous definition of the nature of relationships.

Analogue and digital modes of coding information are not mutually translatable; rather, they nourish and complement one another. Analogue coding evokes an interrelation of levels in a whole, while digital coding packs streams of information, separating "this" from "that." Trying to reduce everything to empirical conscious terms destroys the analogic mode of 'thinking' which is holistic (Harries-Jones 1995). A semantics tethered only to linguistics is far too reductionist as it refers only to abstract logic. It presumes a digitalization of feeling, which is impossible (Harries-Jones 1995; Langer 1974).

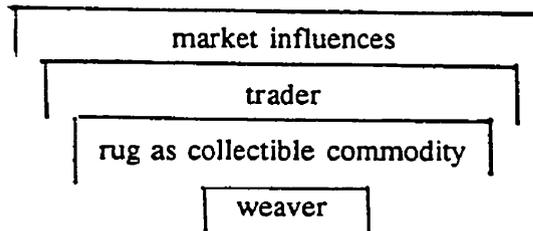
Wilden's statement explicates why communicative forms must be examined in a communicative way, and not reduced to analyses suitable only for linguistics. Although most relationships are analogic, most symbolic analyses fracture analogic relationships as they rely upon models grounded in linguistics. When verbal taxonomies are created to categorize "things", an important part of the aesthetic dimension is destroyed, or placed in an isolated category (cf. the "aesthetic" in art). If symbolism is to be understood, the relational (analogical) information must be correctly coded. Authors writing about such matters need to distinguish these differences, otherwise the multi-levelled complexities of communication are misunderstood. The information just surveyed provides the basis for a critique of Reichard's explication of Navajo religion. She broke everything into linguistic bits under the umbrella of "the sacred" and severed weaving from its appropriate context.

Acknowledging the distinctions described above is fundamental to understanding that how an object is coded frames what is known about it. Emphasis on the empirical aspects of the Navajo rug described in texts severs it from its origins and surrounding relations. In contrast, by acknowledging how information that is digitally coded is nested within analogic

coding, one can perceive that a Navajo rug is part of a much larger pattern. The following diagrams adapted from Wilden (1981), are two-dimensional topological illustrations depicting different contexts. Based on weavers' comments referenced in the previous chapter, a Navajo rug evokes a set of relations because it signals:



In ascending order, each level is dependent upon the one above it. The upper levels provide constraints. That is, weavers and their textiles cannot exist without Navajo society, and Navajo society in turn, does not exist without cosmology/nature. These recursive relationships are also illustrated in Figure 9.1. A recursive interpretation is non-dualistic and non-linear. In contrast, publications by many anthropologists, museologists, and dealers evoke the hierarchy displayed in Figure 1.1 and replicated below:



In the second diagram Anglos' unconscious epistemological frames are projected onto the relational. Patterns are doubly fractured when rugs become isolated from their context and the focus shifted to the rug as a commodity and isomorphic art work. When objects become fetishized, the relationships that brought them into being vanish. The rug as a weaving emerged from a context. The larger pattern of relations is the context for the rug. Through adherence to the dualism of sacred/profane it is impossible to perceive the complexities, the patterns.

A Striking Lesson

The following story serves as a graphic example of how differences in interpretation

are influenced by divergent contexts.

While doing archival research in 1992, I met a graduate student from the Reservation who was also a weaver. I had obtained slides of a dozen historic Navajo textiles that form part of an extensive collection of a major museum located in the southwestern United States. The textiles I chose for study were very similar to those woven in the Ganado area at the turn of the century. It is quite likely that several of them had been bartered to the Hubbells. I was interested in calculating production time of individual textiles to demonstrate the appropriation of surplus labour by traders described in Chapter Five. Detailed information was available on each textile. The dimensions, number of warps and wefts, types of fleece, yarns and dyes had been determined. All information was collated on documentation sheets designed for this study. Indeed, the detailed analyses represented the state of the art in textile analysis. Because I also had slides of individual pieces, the weaver/student would be able to assess the technical complexity of the designs observed in the rugs. All of this information would help in calculating the number of hours necessary to weave the textile depicted in each slide.

In anticipation of our appointment, I gathered xeroxed copies of notes containing all of the information the museum had collected on each Navajo textile. We met over dinner and I explained my plan, hoping that she would be willing to help. Although I am a weaver, I felt it would be more appropriate for a Navajo to take on this task. She spent a lot of time scrutinizing the slides, but when she saw the multiple pages filled with data, including the accession numbers and other information "quantifying" the weavings, she was furious. She swept up the stack of papers, threatening to scatter them. Raising her voice she demanded "What does THIS have to do with Navajo weaving?!" I was quite taken aback, but her strong reaction drove home the realization of how insulting it must be to have objects of great cultural importance reduced to a series of numbers. This experience convinced me that situating Navajo weaving within a typical museum context is destructive. It jams a process-

orientated activity dependent on a relational topology, one that perpetuates culture, into the straight-jacket of modernism.

When I had collected the data sheets and copies of slides from museum personnel the previous week, I remarked to the curator that, as good as the documentation was, there was one piece of information missing--the weight. After spending months with the Hubbell Papers, I knew that each of the textiles, regardless of their current value, had been acquired from the weaver by weight. However, my Navajo dinner companion obviously felt strongly about a deeper issue. What she felt was missing could not be put into words. What she knew had been eradicated by fiat was the proper context.

In order to more appropriately integrate Navajo weaving into the Navajo lifeworld from a communicational perspective, it is necessary to review relevant information related to Navajo kinship, language and cosmology. A portion of Chapter Two contains information on Navajo kinship and social organization. It will not be repeated below. Instead pertinent information concerning the importance of cosmology and how it informs kinship relations will be incorporated in this chapter. It may appear unorthodox to introduce this type of information at this time. However, Navajo cosmology remains a topic irrelevant to entrepreneurs interested in selling commodities (Chapters 2-6). Nor is it a topic of central concern to museologists currently researching Navajo weaving (Chapters 7-8). However, it is of primary importance in developing a reconceptualization of Navajo weaving as it provides the appropriate context. By utilizing this information, it becomes possible to reconfigure weaving as cosmological performance [Figure 9.1]. Such a reconceptualization provides the context to understand weavers' statements referenced in the previous chapter.

Movement as the Basis of Life

A large volume of published information exists on Navajo language, religion, cosmology, kinship and social organization. Much of the summary that follows is based on information extracted from numerous sources.¹ The Navajo tend to speak of the world in

terms of process, event and flux rather than parts and wholes or clearly distinguishable static entities. Continuous change is emphasized rather than atomistic structure. All aspects of reality in Navajo knowledge systems are process-like rather than thing-like. Thus Navajo culture differs from Euroamerican cultures with regard to the emphasis on movement and motion. Witherspoon (1977:48-49), estimates there are several hundred thousand permutations of the word "to go" in the Navajo language. If all the verbs relating "to move" as well as "to go" were included, the number of possible conjugations would be astronomical: "movement is the basis of life...life is exemplified by movement" (Witherspoon 1977:53). The universe is a place of motion and process; no state of being is permanently fixed. Beauty, balance and orderliness are conditions that must be continuously recreated.

McAllester (1980:199-237) suggests that myth and ritual reiterate pervasive aspects of Navajo philosophy and worldview as pairing, alternation, reciprocation, progression and sequence, "...plentiful evidence of a universe ordered down to minute detail."... From a communicational perspective, McAllester's statement is just as easily applied to a Navajo rug. Weavings also express qualities of balance, rhythm, and harmony, key aspects of *hozho*. However, adherence to dualisms and concepts grounded in classical aesthetics makes it difficult to perceive these similarities (cf. Kent 1985, Reichard 1934, 1936, 1939, Wheat 1989).

An example of the importance of active process is revealed in Worth and Adair's 1972 text, Through Navajo Eyes. The authors describe a film on Navajo weaving made by Navajo Susie Benally, in which three quarters of the footage is devoted to movement and preparations prior to weaving. Segments depict Susie's mother as the weaver, gathering plants for dyes, roots for yucca soap, and shearing sheep. The creative process begins long before the physical act of weaving, with inspiration drawn from the environment. Weavers frequently emphasize the concentration that occurs when thinking their patterns (Hedlund 1994). Thought is a vital aspect of any creative act. The quality of one's thoughts determines

the quality of one's life. The *tsii yeel*, or thong made from white yarn, is used to tie up one's hair. It ties an individual's thoughts together and makes them strong (Roessel 1981:80).

A Timely Review of Navajo Cosmology

According to Faris (1986:136), the Navajo have an extraordinarily rich, extensive and incredibly complex belief system which evolved in association with older Athapascan and more recent Pueblo sources. The origin stories collectively embody one of the most exhaustive examples of North American poetry ever recorded (Zolbrod 1984). No single text is capable of rendering the rich narrative of *Dine Bahane*, the Navajo Creation Story. The order and character of the world and the place of people including their relationships with one another and with all living creatures is defined in the Creation story. The Navajo trace the beginning of their world from a point beneath the present earth surface, prior to the dawn of time. Stories passed down from generation to generation form the foundation of Navajo life and thought. Navajos believe strongly in the power of thought, which cannot exist without speech. Navajo oral tradition is still living as it is intimately tied to Navajo ritual processes. Ritual and myth are so interdependent that they cannot exist apart. A major portion of Navajo mythology concerns descriptions of origins, incidents and ceremonial procedures which become archetypes for subsequent performances. Thus the Navajo language is indivisible from cosmology.

The order inherent in the cosmos was meant to serve as a pattern for proper behaviour in both general and specific ways (Griffin-Pierce 1992:87). Such harmony epitomizes the pattern of *hozho* manifest everywhere in the universe. It governs male-female relationships, and cosmic relationships such as earth and sky, night and day, mortals and supernaturals, summer and winter (Zolbrod 1984:11). Major mythical figures set examples for the personal growth and maturation of Navajo females and males. Changing Woman, the mother of all Navajo reminds Father Sun that:

as different as we are, you and I, we are of one spirit. As dissimilar as we are, you

and I we are of equal worth...there must always be a solidarity between the two of us...there can be no harmony in the universe as long as there is no harmony between us. (Zolbrod 1984:275)

The ideal pattern for the relationship between husband and wife is summed up in the word *k'e*. The pattern for *k'e*, which translates as right and respectful relations with others and nature, is not an abstract ideal, but provides a model for concrete human behaviours encompassing kindness, helpfulness, peace, cooperation, and generosity (McCarty 1983:3; Zolbrod 1984:170).

The Primacy of *k'e*

The *k'e* that exists between mother and child provides the foundational concept and form for all relationships in Navajo social life. Motherhood in Navajo culture is identified and defined in terms of life, particularly its source, reproduction and sustenance. Mother and child are bound together by the most intense, diffuse and enduring solidarity to be found in Navajo culture. The relationship of Changing Woman to her children provides the major conceptual framework for the Navajo cultural definition of motherhood. She gave birth to twins, and later to the first four Navajo clans. In Navajo culture, life is created in, and sustained by mothers. Changing Woman continues to sustain her children today, for she is symbolized by the earth. Changing Woman is in control of vegetation everywhere for the benefit of the Earth People (her children). Earth Mother provides the bond by which all living beings are kindred (Witherspoon 1975:16). As mother earth provides sustenance for her children, human mothers nurture their children. Changing Woman's power over reproduction and birth extends to all that exists on earth. Navajo define kinship in terms of action or behaviour, not in terms of substance. Kinship is discussed in terms of the acts of giving birth and sharing sustenance. Mothers sustain life by providing their children with loving care, assistance, protection and sustenance.²

John Ladd (1957) states that the Navajo assume that there is a potential abundance of goods and that through cooperation the amount of goods will be increased for everyone.

In other words, Navajo would deny the basic assumption upon which much of classical economic theory depends, namely the scarcity of goods. It is assumed that a neighbor's success will contribute to one's own welfare. The following quote excerpted from Navajo author Steve Darden's eloquent comments published in Hooker (1991), reflect the reciprocative relationship of *k'e* and Navajo cosmology. Darden writes:

..gardens are for feeding the family and for giving to others who are hungry. We help everyone because we all come from our earth...plants are one offspring of the Earth Mother and Sky Father. Utilized to perpetuate life, they are symbolic of the essence of life....Father Sky embraces Mother Earth, much as a husband his wife. Water flows throughout the world and embraces the earth, propagating life...wood is rooted in Mother Earth, the womb. She nourishes our wood and cares for it. Our wood and our trees project into Father Sky, and therein they, too, are nourished and strengthened. Wood provides shelter and warmth....Animals are an ancient gift from the Holy People. When born, the animals are as infants. We, the Navajo care for them through the process of herding. When they grow, they provide for us...

Darden links plants, animals, and the Dine to Navajo cosmology. The latter portion of this chapter will demonstrate that weavers do the same. With the exception of Gary Witherspoon and the Roessels, most studies in which kinship is discussed in relation to cosmology, fail to explicitly connect or incorporate weaving in relation to cosmology. This is the result of the overwhelming perception and treatment of Navajo weaving by anthropologists and others as a commodity. The underlying assumption covertly maintained is: "whatever is sacred is never sold."

Perceiving the Patterns

Reichard's analysis of weaving as secular commodity has influenced generations of anthropologists and museologists, and perpetuated the split between pattern and commodity. Yet we can glean from statements made in publications by anthropologists and textile experts, bits of information concerning the derivations of particular motifs. Many ethnographers and textile experts note the perpetuation of specific motifs derived from Navajo baskets used in ceremonies which have always been designated as sacred (Dockstader 1978, Kent 1985, Reichard 1934, Wheat 1984). However, there are multiple forms of patterns to be perceived.

In order to do so, it is necessary to shift the emphasis from the empirical to the relational [Fig. 9.1].

In utilizing a perspective informed by communications, one searches for formal sequences recurring in various activities. Instead of separating weaving from the perceived sacred sphere, it is necessary to look for similarities in patterned activities. For example, both weavers and medicine men gather plants to be used in their respective activities. Similar images and outlining of images occur in textiles and in sandpaintings. Weavers strive for harmony in colour and balance in design. Faris (1986:139) summarizes it nicely:

Navajo art in general--including poetry, prayers, songs, textiles, and silverwork, as well as sand paintings and other visual forms--are masterpieces of balance spatially, compositionally, and in terms of color use, sound play, contrast, rhythm, repetition, symmetry and sexual and directional symbolism. ...Although balance requires control, aesthetic products need not be static--indeed visual art can be very dynamic, making it all the more compelling.

Reichard (1944, 1950) comments on how crucial it is for Navajo chanters to learn prayers as a whole. So also does a Navajo weaver perceive the whole pattern in her mind before weaving her rug. As weavers' commentary reveals, both prayers and weavings celebrate the beauty of the landscape and reverence for order and form (Chapter 8). Prolific and rhythmic repetition occur in chanting and weaving.

Weaving As Metaphor

For the Navajo, values unfold as the patterns evolve (Roessel 1981). The bifurcation between sacred and profane has obfuscated an understanding of weaving as a metaphor. Metaphor is a means of uniting the experience of individuals with the system of order or knowledge of which that individual is a part (Harries-Jones 1995:142). Metaphors are analogies of juxtaposition in which a reflexive form of recognition about a meaning of an "event" cannot be interpreted unless juxtaposed with meanings "about" another set of wider relationships or events. This is why the rug is a metaphor of Navajo cultural relations: it evokes recognition of important cultural patterns of balance, repetition, rhythm and

reciprocity. In creating it, the weaver perpetuates order and harmony of the system. Thus weavings are far more than isomorphic objects; they become material forms of manifestations of relationships. The activities, the rugs, the culture, and Navajo perceptions of nature: all are patterns in motion. But the motion is not linear, it is cyclical and recursive [Fig. 9.1].

Collapsing the Dualisms

The rigid distinction that exists in the West between the daily round of work and play, and religion, is nonexistent for many Navajo (Kelley and Francis 1994). Recall the quote in Chapter I by Navajo artist Conrad House in which he states how his people do not separate art, religion and life. For the Navajo, order and continual regeneration inherent in the cosmos serve as a constant reminder of how to live one's life in balance, in a state of *hozho*. As described previously, Navajo interactions with the environment are characterized by a strong sense of connectedness to and respect for all living things. Kelley and Francis (1994:46) remark how through symbols, stories and activities, Navajo confirm that they exist within, and function as part of a very large complex world that includes other Navajo, the earth and the different landforms upon it, the heavens, the atmosphere, and the immortals who animate them. Thus, Navajo see themselves as part of a much larger living system.

In order to maintain harmonious relations with the universe, it is necessary to recognize and perpetuate humanity's place in the web of life. Because there are no cosmological connections to textile making in the modernist West, most ethnographers (with the exception of Gary Witherspoon), have failed to perceive the extent to which weaving perpetuates *hozho*. Weavers' activities unite the two fields of ritual and work, as weaving is accompanied by songs, stories and prayers. The importance of weaving in perpetuating Navajo culture becomes patently clear as revealed by numerous statements from weavers referenced in the previous chapter. Weavers' mapping of the domain of textile production includes a cosmological realm [Figure 9.1].

Beauty, balance and order, *hozho*, are continually created by both chanters and

weavers. This is in keeping with the Navajo Creation Story previously described. Changing Woman restored order in the world, and weavers do the same. Weavers become Changing Woman when they weave. They are trying to tell us this (Chapter 8), but because of our differing epistemologies, we hear their statements as poetic myth at best.

Several Navajo respondents quoted previously remarked that "weaving is a prayer for rain." Depletion and regeneration are two halves of the hydrological cycle. As water, moisture and clouds are essences of the immortals (Kelley and Francis 1994:209), weaving plays a vital and integral role in perpetuating reciprocal relations between the Navajo people and their desert environment. But the environment is alive, as the outer forms of the Holy People are features that make up the landscape, animals, plants, the atmosphere, and even celestial bodies (Kelley and Francis 1994). The weaver begins at the bottom, close to the earth, and weaves up towards the sky. She uses living materials from the Earth Mother, and Father Sky releases rain. Thus the loom is associated with emergence, growth and ascendance [cf. Wilden 1981].

No wonder many Navajo refuse to weave on upright looms made from materials other than wood. Early authors critiqued Navajo weavers' refusal to adopt mechanical floor looms (Chapter Two). Their resistance was seen as stubborn refusal to modernize as they chose to weave on the primitive upright loom which had not changed for centuries. Plausible explanations could be anticipated given that the portable upright loom is more conducive to the semi-transhumant nature of pastoralism. However, critics never suggested cosmological associations as affecting weavers' decisions as a possible reason for their rejection of floor looms. Even today some weavers disavow weaving on looms made of materials other than wood. It is quite possible that many weavers oppose the repair of old rugs because it interferes with the natural processes of growth and decay. These links become paramount when recontextualizing weaving within a framework more compatible to Navajo lifeways. Because harmony with nature is the ideal state for Navajo, it is perpetuated through

acknowledgement and fulfilment of reciprocal responsibilities. These responsibilities are fulfilled by chanters and weavers who together through their respective practices perpetuate *hozho*. Grace McNeley (1987:163-64) writes:

The Navajo term *ketl'ool*--derived from *ke*, meaning "feet", and *tl'ool* meaning "root system" --expresses the concept of having a foundation for one's life in the earth, much as a plant is rooted in the earth...Let us visualize the central root as extending all the way back to Asdzaan Nadleehi, "Changing Woman"--who is Earth Mother herself. Developing from this main root is the complex web of kinship relations extending back even to ancestors and including clan relations, the extended family and the immediate family. Tied to this system are material goods, familiar surroundings and livestock. This webbing of earth, of ancestors, of clan and familiar surroundings all constitute a Navajo home, enabling those within it to flourish, to thrive.

McNeley's statement reveals why many Navajo look upon all the land as sacred. They see themselves as caretakers who, through the daily activities of stockraising and farming turn the land into food which becomes their flesh. Ceremonial performances bond Navajo by engulfing them with the diversity of the land's natural products. The social relations between mortals and immortals, between the Navajo and the Holy People are continually invoked through songs, stories and prayers. Weaving is an integral part of this cycle as materials from the living environment are used to create the loom, weaving tools and the textiles. The importance of relationships was confirmed in a conversation I had in 1992, with Harry Walters, Director of the Ned Hatathli Gallery at Navajo Community College, Tsaile. Harry said:

what the women weave is part of the environment--it's in their hearts. If you take something from the environment, you must give something back. Navajo weaving is all about relationships... we are like children in our relation to Mother Earth...that's why shoes are important, and must be made right...the foot touches the ground, the Earth our Mother.

The weaver has a relationships with the sheep...she must respect them, and she uses the wool in her weaving...and she must respect it too, because all are related...

An Empirical Quagmire

As I mentioned in Chapter One, Gregory Bateson warned about the "theoretical box of tricks" one takes into the field. Any observer's perception of a culture is somewhat

limited by that "box of tricks" (Harries-Jones 1995). When individuals from one culture start looking at the patterns of another culture, they will often see what their culture has trained them to see. When one complex culture comes into contact with another, the tendency is to oversimplify. The themes of the other culture are actually complex patterns, yet they are simplified, or reified, and the mode of interaction tends to become quantitative (money, trade) (Berman 1989:196). This statement is an apt description of what has happened to Navajo weavers and their textiles in extant literature. As the first seven chapters of this dissertation attest, the most important aspects of Navajo textiles were seen to revolve around their function as a commodity. I suggest that this is the case for the detailed descriptions Reichard provided on the role of weaving in Navajo society. In reflecting upon the copious information she provides on all aspects of weaving, Reichard frames it much as it was framed in Euroamerican societies. That is, it was women's activity associated with the domestic sphere engaged in for practical purposes.

The social relations and practices of Navajo weavers and chanters were labelled by anthropologists dualistically. Although the binary opposition between sacred and profane appeared to "balance" activities of men and women in the religious and domestic spheres as reflected in ethnographic works (Reichard 1934, 1936, 1939, Underhill 1956), it has had unfortunate consequences. The creation of textiles by Navajo women has suffered neglect by symbolic anthropologists as active ethnographers currently working with the Navajo people. Weaving is seldom referenced by symbolic anthropologists writing about Navajo religion. With the exception of Gary Witherspoon and one of his colleagues, I am unable to identify one individual writing about Navajo weaving who is not closely associated with the perspective embraced by museologists.

The perspective adopted by museologists also provides an inappropriate context of explanation that undergirds most texts on the subject of Navajo weaving. This is because the views, values and assumptions of the dominant society are reflected in the construction of its

history. Museologists working with Navajo textiles are not concerned with ontology, either their own, or that of the Navajo. We might describe the museologists' model of what constitutes a Navajo rug as "Cartesian." That is, one gains information about the rug by breaking it into its simplest measurable components, and constructing a story about provenance based on the results of scientific analyses. Individual weavings are categorized and classified as to type, style, and age (Hedlund 1990, Rodee 1981, Wheat 1984). The privileging of this empirical and quantifiable knowledge fills up the field. (The typology and other markers have developed because of a particular way of viewing objects.) Although mathematically precise in terms of measurements, textiles have been excised from their proper context. Thus, practitioners of standard museological methods have fallen heir to Whitehead's "fallacy of misplaced concreteness" referenced in the Introduction. As empiricists, museologists are caught in a proverbial bind: the manner in which they structure their research determines the way they perceive the results. Their methodology becomes their epistemology.

All information related to Navajo textile production, with the exception of portions of Witherspoon (1987), is discursive. This digital information is verbal, rational, abstract, and incomplete. It is a way of thinking that posits the traders' influence as obliterating the wisdom of Navajo weavers. Navajo weaving is about relationships. These textiles are a primary form of metacommunication which imparts information that cannot be transmitted discursively. Navajo society has its distinctive wisdom, it recognizes that the "unit of survival" is itself and its environment. The recursiveness, redundancy and patterning that occur in Navajo weaving over the past century perpetuated Navajo relationships in the face of disruptions from government personnel, traders and educators intruding on their world. Current explanations (based on a plethora of empirical studies) related to the persistence of Navajo weaving appear to be the most logical, but they are limited, and ultimately distort the perspective of the weavers, and of Navajo society in general.

Complex patterns of relations were occluded through the epistemological lens of the colonizers, and later, the ethnographers. The bifurcation of sacred and profane thrust Navajo weaving into an alien field. It became completely disassociated from what ethnographers have designated as Navajo religion. In a recent issue of "Cultural Survival Quarterly," Alfonso Ortiz (1996:27-28) remarks:

Native American religions embody a lot of practical knowledge, teachings which serve to put believers in rapport with their environments in a very deep and abiding way. This practical dimension of Native American religions has never been seriously studied, as the romantic tradition surrounding them in American scholarship has always drawn attention to their mystical and spiritual dimensions, and away from the practical tasks that they also perform.

Ortiz's remark is most relevant to addressing the shortcomings of the perceived bifurcation between the male activities of sandpainting created for curing ceremonies, and female weaving tasks. Both activities are necessary complements to properly perpetuate Navajo lifeways. Both sets of activities are recursive processes, sacred forms of reciprocation, that stress continuative renewal and reanimation. Both sets of activities contribute to survival. Thus cyclical interdependence is continually expressed by both chanters and weavers.

Ortiz also remarks on how the term "traditions of spirituality" is more appropriate than the term "religion" for the Navajo. Such traditions are embodied in nature, rather than occupying a transcendental realm. Ortiz (1996:29) continues:

Native religious traditions also present a view of nature as a great mystery, and held all life to be sacred. They also extended kinship to all of nature, to all creation. To native peoples who still live their traditions, their sacred mountains and the whole earth are living breathing entities...In regarding the earth as alive, they also think of her as mother. Earth and humans began a common consciousness together long ago, and they have a mutual responsibility to care for one another.

Ortiz's commentary evokes both Bateson's and Navajo epistemology.

Reconstituting an Aesthetic Unity

In the Introduction, I referred to the epistemology developed by Gregory Bateson as "woven," as he sought to develop a natural history of communication. I feel this is an appropriate term to use in describing his epistemology as he situates language, unique to

humans, within a wider "ecological" network of communicative forms (Harries-Jones 1995, Wilden 1981).³ By Bateson's shifting the emphasis from substance to form, a broader pattern of relations come to the fore that sets the context for verbal communication. These patterns of relations are expressed non-verbally. In fact, these analogic or non-verbal forms of communication create the environment that make thought and language possible (Wilden 1987:137). Bourdieu's (1977) notion of symbolic capital suggests a similar concept of communicative "field."

Bateson's epistemology provides an appropriate path to reorientate our perceptions of Navajo weaving as cosmological performance. Because he does not privilege language as the primary model for all communication, Bateson's epistemology does not sanction binary oppositions which are implicitly or explicitly influenced by models developed in linguistics (Levi-Strauss 1963, Leach 1976, Reichard 1950). Such models have shaped the dualism endemic to most symbolic anthropologists' concepts of sacred and profane. Because adherence to dualistic thinking by ethnographers has had negative consequences for the Navajo people, the following section provides a brief explanation of the differences between Bateson's thought and that generally supported by symbolic anthropologists concerning matters related to the sacred. Such information is necessary to continue reformatting our understanding of Navajo weaving.

Anthropologists and archaeologists are in general agreement that the Navajo borrowed both sand painting and loom weaving from the Pueblo peoples after migrating into the region. Many Navajo may protest, stating that their ancestors brought both sand painting and weaving with them to this world. Sand paintings, created by medicine men for ceremonial purposes, are considered sacred (Appendix X). As described previously, textiles are designated as non-sacred by ethnographers and museologists, because they are produced for an external market. However, based on their own statements, the Navajo do not refer to their weaving as non-sacred or secular.

Bateson's concept of the sacred is very different from that typically embraced by symbolic anthropologists. His concept of the sacred relates to perception of immanent pattern. In his article "Style, Grace and Information in Primitive Art" (1972), Bateson exhorts us to perceive the "message" (the art object) as itself both internally patterned and part of a larger patterned universe--the culture or some part of it. From this we may conclude that the meaning of Navajo weaving is not about content or context per se, it lies in the relationship between context and content. Without context, no communication occurs. All the emphasis on the visible elements of specific textiles has produced no overall wisdom related to the subject. The rigid focusing upon any single set of relata destroys the more profound significance of the cultural aspect of the work.

Learning the Context

Bateson's commitment to an epistemology of pattern and form assumes that people operate within fields of habitual or repetitive activity, expressing customary rules of relationship. His theories of perception and cognition were built on the fundamentals of information and communication--habit and learning modified by experience. Bateson disagreed with Western philosophers who differentiate between epistemology (origins, methods and limits of knowledge), and ontology (the study of being and order in the world, i.e., the nature of existence). He rejects the notion that epistemology and ontology can be separated:

His (commonly unconscious) beliefs about what sort of world it is will determine how he sees it and acts within it, and his ways of perceiving and acting will determine his beliefs about its nature. The living man is thus bound within a net of epistemological and ontological premises which - regardless of ultimate truth or falsity - become partially self-validating for him. (Bateson 1972:314)

Bateson does not perceive "belief" as "mystery" opposed to "truth" as "fact." Regardless of the society under scrutiny, belief becomes the meta-context for the message. The unconscious epistemological frames covertly influenced by dualisms and held by anthropologists and others provide a false context for analyzing Navajo weaving. Traders and

collectors perceive the rug as a craft commodity, and more recently as an art form containing an aesthetic component. This is why such a remarkable discrepancy exists in statements made by traders, dealers and most anthropologists in comparison to the weavers (Chapter 8).

In his work with the Balinese, Bateson found that stability required change and flexibility. The cultural emphasis in Bali is on balance, just as it is among the Navajo (Faris 1993, Witherspoon 1977).⁴ As indicated above, learning is primarily an inter-personal process. To learn about any cultural context is a much more abstract type of learning than instrumental learning which behaviourists employ, but it is the more abstract ideas of cultural context that tend to sink in, become less conscious and 'habituated' the most. As they become sunk to habit, they become more difficult to disrupt, and because these contexts indicate the nature of appropriate relationships, they become more difficult to change, because new information has been organized around habituated contexts. Shared understanding arises only when communicators have a common understanding of their premises at several levels of significance. Bateson thought that learning seemed to be **patterened in different levels**. Harries-Jones (1995:202-3) describes how Bateson used moire as an example to illustrate multiple patterning. A moire pattern is a repetitive design. If another repetitive pattern is put against the tissue-like semi-opaque fabric, a third pattern is created. Harries-Jones (1995:202-3) describes Bateson's interpretation as follows:

patterns of redundancy of information (the external context) become overlaid with patterns formed in contexts of learning, and the whole yields a three-dimensional pattern. It is the interleaving of the two patterns of redundancy which yields a sense of creativity and beauty.⁵

This is a far more appropriate means to interpret weavers' statements. The aesthetics of Navajo weaving incorporates the aesthetics of systemic holism rather than the isomorphic aesthetic isolated in the individual textile favoured by museologists.

When behaviourism was in its heyday, nearly all social science models of behaviour were based on notions borrowed from physical systems: stimulus-response behaviour was the

most usual. Descriptions of learning were built around correspondence to stimulus-response, and failed to consider patterns of learning in and for themselves. This perspective provides the basis for acculturation models reflecting others' understanding of changes in Navajo weaving patterns. Traders, tourists and the market provided the stimulus, and weavers responded.

Mapping Differing Contexts

Bateson (1972:180) proposed that language bears to the objects which it denotes a relationship comparable to that which a map bears to a territory. There is a "field of relations" we construct between ourselves and the "territory," or the "objective world." What we map is that relationship in which we participate, and not a direct representation of the things "out there." The values of any social network partly determine the network of perception. In other words, there is no such thing as unmediated perception or objectivity, because epistemology always shapes one's perception of the world. Thus, if we think about the differing values a rug has for a young Navajo learning to weave, and a trader, the rug for the Navajo is a "message" about a relation. But the "message" is very different for the two parties when they meet.

Traders' relations to weavers involved a body of habituated assumptions or premises implicit in how they viewed weaving. The context for the trader lay in the sphere of economics [Figure 1.1]. Weavers know very little of the commercial context. Thus the weavers' context overlaps very little with the traders [Figure 9.1]. However, when one reads the literature on the subject, there appears to be a great deal of overlap, as traders are seen to wield great influence on weavers' patterns. Information provided in Chapters Five and Six challenged the extent of their influence, given the magnitude of production. In any event, it is more appropriate to see weavers making multiple mappings of the context. The context has altered somewhat and varies for each weaver. For example, labels on flour sacks and canned goods may provide inspiration for a weaver, in addition to patterns she already knows. The

RELATIONAL [NON-EMPIRICAL]

317

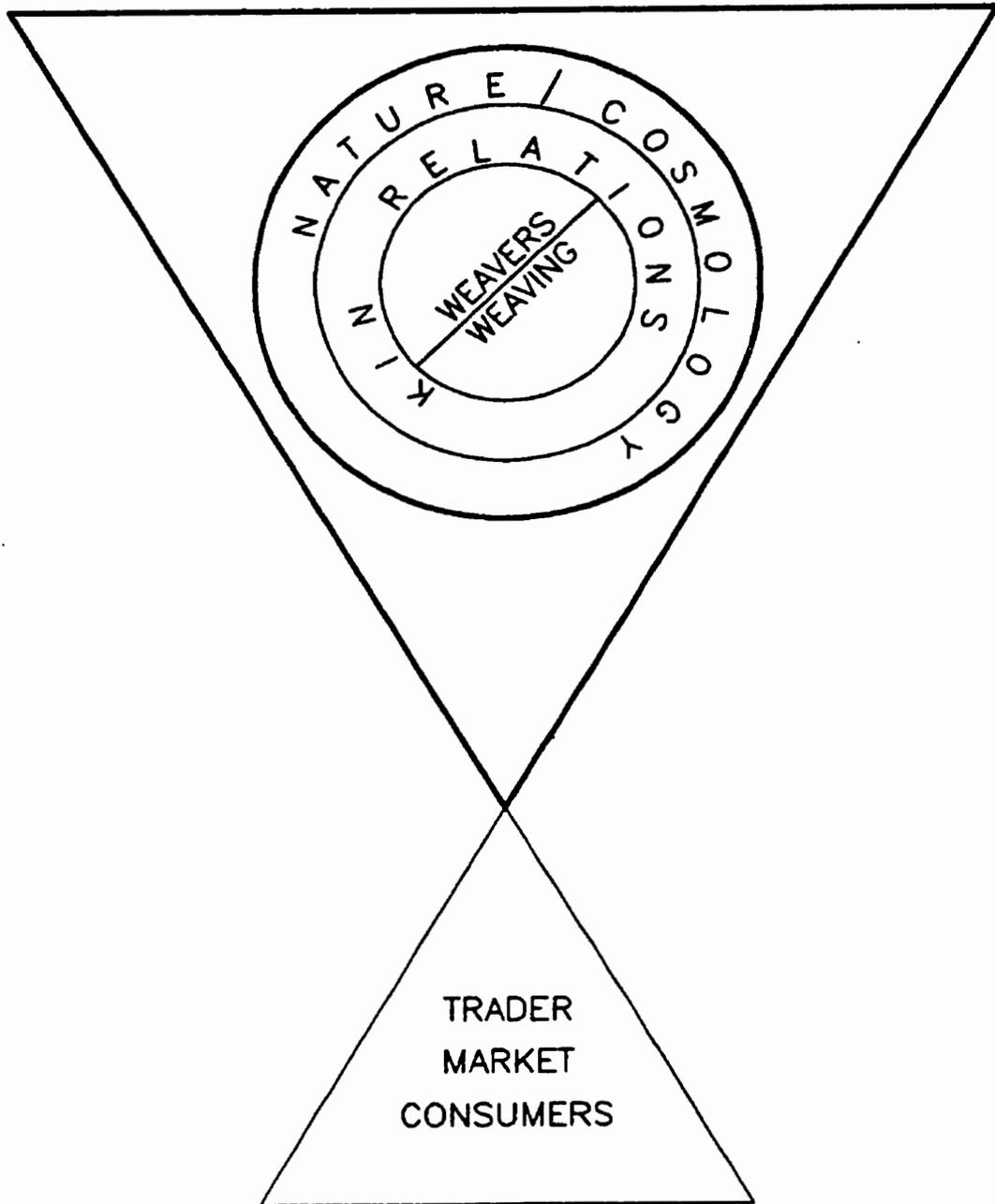


Figure 9.1

maps or forms and patterns of relating created by non-Navajo in their descriptions of weaving are not complex enough for the territory. Weavers' mappings are not acknowledged by non-Navajo because they are not recognized for what they represent to the Navajo people. This is probably one of the reasons why weavers enjoy looking at photographs of Navajo rugs, but bilingual weavers seldom read texts on the subject. The words have very little meaning for them, because weaving is not about words. It is about relationships [Appendix XI].

Aesthetic Holism

Bateson's concept of the sacred is closely tied to aesthetics. Aesthetic unity, incorporating a sense of the sacred, lies at the interface between the named (the maps) and the unnamed (territory). Aesthetics is the unifying glimpse that makes us aware of the unity not able to be described in prose or prosaic consciousness. For Bateson (1988:2), the sacred is the "integrated fabric of mental processes that envelops all our lives." The sacred implies tacit recognition that there are gaps; that the maps that we create will never provide a complete description of the territory. The essence of communication lies in the relationship between perceptual redundancy (which creates pattern{s}); metaphor, which cognitively links levels, and the sacred which lies at the interface of map and territory. Thus the sacred implies tacit recognition of an immanent aesthetic unity derived through current practices which embody patterns of relations.

Because of the emphasis on patterns of relations, Bateson's notion of aesthetics differs greatly from that stipulated by the German tradition of idealism represented by Kant and Hegel. Bateson distinguishes between idealism (which is how textile scholars previously quoted perceive aesthetics) and holism. An aesthetics appropriate to understanding Navajo spinning and weaving is embedded in the activities associated with them. Aesthetic wholes derive from "the pattern which connects" (Bateson 1988).

The woven rug is the result of a long involved process which entails interaction between the sheep and the human herder, the shearer, the spinner of the yarn and the weaver

(Roessel 1983, Toelken 1976, Witherspoon 1987). In addition, a number of plants are gathered during specific growing seasons. Hence there is interaction between the weaver, the animals, plants and the annual cycle of seasons that is repeated over the lifetime of the weaver herself. Thus repetition and redundancy of patterns occurs.

The Navajo perceive redundancies in nature and weavers transform through different coding these redundancies to culture and therefore express nature/culture relationships. Thus is the aesthetics of holism expressed in Navajo society by weavers. A weaver is involved in ordered activity embedded in a context. The ordered activity is patterned (much of it grounded in habit). Patterns of relationships are maintained over time. These patterns of relations continue long after the rug is sold. In fact weavers' patterns of relations are perpetuated because the rug is sold, as the weaver's story demonstrates. Thus aesthetic patterns cannot be objectively distinguished, isomorphic with individual textiles, and autonomous, as in museologists' models.

Concerning the Sacred

Navajo have expressed reluctance to speak openly on matters concerning sacred affairs (Kelley and Francis 1994). Information can be easily exploited and misused. Stories must be told only at certain times in appropriate settings. Stories are like verbal maps, and knowledge of them can only be gained with the consent of the teller. Authors Kelley and Francis (1994) and Zolbrod (1984) have encountered resistance to writing down narratives. Kelley and Francis (1994:145) remark:

certain subjects...are surrounded with more or less secrecy. To the singer this knowledge is his life or "breath;" part of his inner self or soul, which he carefully guards in the firm conviction that the moment he imparts it to others, his usefulness in life is spent. Pleading and tempting offers are useless, the usual reply being that "when old age is upon me and death is approaching I will tell." (from Haile 1968:31)

During my interviews with Navajo weavers while visiting the Reservation in 1992, and in statements made during presentations from weavers at the Museum conference described previously, I learned that it was inappropriate to share stories related to weaving. If stories

are shared at all, they must be told in the winter.⁶

Indiscriminant spread of sacred knowledge lessens its "power." Making what is intimate public is in violation of proper conduct. One is not to make matters relating to the sacred explicit. Secrecy is the first line of defense. Several weavers have remarked to me on the inappropriateness of scholars identifying specific motifs as isomorphic symbols. Curator/anthropologist Ann Hedlund has remarked on weavers denying any knowledge of specific symbols in textiles. Weavers may know more than they are willing to reveal. By not sharing stories with outsiders, it is possible that weavers may be choosing to maintain their integrity over their existence (Bateson 1988:72). Perhaps if the world knew how sacred weaving was to the Navajo, it could be "saved." But in revealing stories to save it, one compromises relationships that are not to be described.

Although Bateson's concept of the sacred does not incorporate an animate spiritualism, his epistemology furnishes an appropriate framework to recontextualize Navajo weaving. It not only "puts language in its place," thereby providing a means to collapse dualisms, it provides the reflexivity necessary to caution us concerning assumptions related to understanding other peoples' lifeways. His epistemology provides a means to comprehend and acknowledge the importance of social learning. Even within a particular society, the epistemology that undergirds peoples' shared experiences cannot easily be translated into words. How much more difficult it is to attempt to translate and interpret the lifeways of others into another language. The ways in which different societies chunk their worlds may be close to incommensurable.

The dualism perceived to be operative which severed sacred and profane, was neither generated nor sanctioned by the Navajo. The conclusions to follow summarize how multiple inappropriate interpretations of Navajo weaving have had unfortunate consequences for the Navajo people.

Conclusions

At first glance, the topic of this dissertation appears to centre on a single component of material culture, the textiles or "collectibles" created by Navajo weavers after the formation of the Reservation in 1868. On closer inspection it concerns survival. Analysis of evidence contained in traders' archives revealed "the more they wove, the poorer they became." However, the theme of cultural survival cannot be adequately appreciated using extant frameworks. As information in this dissertation reveals, the contexts of interpretation developed and employed in the past by most ethnographers and museologists to describe weavers' production privileges a particular history. These interpretations have blocked a deeper understanding of the value of weaving to the Navajo people. The recent escalation in the investment market for old textiles coupled with emphasis on their economic value, ensures that the prodigious production of thousands of weavers in the past threatens to bury contemporary producers.

When I began this research, I anticipated working only with the Hubbell archives, to uncover hidden history related to Navajo weaving. But every box containing Hubbell records became a Pandora's box. Within a short period of time, I realized the history that lay buried in this trading family's business records provided direct evidence of the origins and persistence of impoverishment among the Navajo people. Downer (1990) provides information on the systemic poverty that prevails on the Reservation. Per capita income persists at one quarter the national average. Unemployment and underemployment are the norm. More than half the housing is substandard, and less than fifty percent of the homes have basic utilities (US News and World Report 11/28/94:61-64).

Utilizing a perspective developed recently by feminist political economists provides a framework to address the marginalization of Navajo weavers' production. As Edholm et al (1977:126) remarked, "women are absent in many analyses especially in the domains of politics and economics, [but] women do not naturally disappear, their disappearance is

socially created and constantly reaffirmed." Until very recently, women's domestic work was seen as "natural"; it was perceived as a constant throughout history--an unchanging set of necessities which did not require analysis. An adequate assessment of the economic contribution of Navajo weavers not only remained unanalyzed, it was airbrushed from history. The following quote taken from the Hubbell archives epitomizes this neglect. [Recall that the BIA estimated Reservation-wide production at one million dollars the year prior to this citation].

On Friday, December 16, 1932, at the height of the depression, Roman Hubbell arrived in Kansas City with fifteen carloads of sheep. A journalist for the Kansas City Times described him as "Indian trader, farmer, freighter and mail contractor." Voicing his concern over the failing economy, Roman remarked:

I have known the gusto of good times, but our present dilemma has resulted from the failure of congress to place minimum prices on the sale of wheat, wool, cotton, silver, copper and livestock. Those six staples form the backbone of the Southwest; our forebears traced their patterns of development on those basic commodities. Traders have driven producers to accept prices below the cost of production and depressed prices on those commodities have thrown our section out of gear. Others have toppled with us, of course, but these primary frameworks should be stabilized so that the farmer, miner and cattleman will be received with less frost by his banker. (Box 545)

Roman fails to mention weaving or weavers, although the major portion of his family's wealth accrued from textiles woven by thousands of Navajo women (Table 5.1). As my analysis reveals, the book credit received by Navajo weavers was well below the cost of production and predated the Depression by decades.

Ignored by the very individuals who benefited financially from their production, the following quote by Coombe corroborates how such prolific output could be marginalized by social scientists. Critiquing cultural anthropology's formerly ensconced position within modernism, Coombe (1991:191) remarks:

Hermeneutics and cultural interpretation can maintain ...splendid isolation only insofar as they separate the symbolic from the political and construct cultural tradition as a monological realm of unified meanings and values. To do so is to evade the

historically specific processes by which certain meanings become privileged, while others are delegitimated--the practices through which unity is forged from difference by the marginalization and silencing of oppositional voices and alternative understandings.

Coombe's critique describes the bifurcation evident in much of the literature on the Navajo. To political economists, weaving was non-productive, hence opaque to a sustained analysis (cf. Weiss 1984). To cultural anthropologists, phenomena relating to political economy lay outside their purview (cf. Reichard 1934, 1936, 1939, Underhill 1956). Prodigious production by thousands of women remained unanalyzed because the topic fell between the paradigmatic cleavages in the discipline. These cleavages, described in the Introduction, were formed by a cluster of asymmetric dualisms that undergird Euroamerican epistemology.

The first asymmetric dualism split the public world of waged labour from the "non-productive" private sphere, and sanctioned the "disappearance" of thousands of women toiling in the domestic domain. In Chapters Three through Six, I examined the effects of newly imposed economic relations on the Navajo after the formation of the Reservation, with particular emphasis on weavers. Some of the literature assumes that the pernicious effects of merchant capital on weavers not only destroyed "tradition," but substituted a bland product that was a shabby counterpart to its pre-Reservation cousin (Rodee 1981, Weiss 1984). It is clear from information unearthed on the relations of exchange in the Hubbell archives, that women's production was of primary importance: not only for their families' well being, but for traders' profit margins. After the turn of the century, the production of Navajo weaving escalated dramatically. Although the population grew fifty percent, textile production increased more than eight hundred percent. This escalation was demonstrated by analysis of information that has been available in the published literature for more than sixty years. This dramatic increase was corroborated through analysis of documents contained in the Lorenzo Hubbell papers over the same time period. The scant documentation published in annual government reports indicate the value of textiles leaving the Reservation, but information is

ambiguous and fragmented, thus difficult to interpret. Because critical information was lacking, it was impossible to properly assess the magnitude and extent of production. The paucity of information confirming such enormous production depicted in Chapter Five reflects the colonial attitude that sanctioned the marginalization of women's labour.

In a number of studies related to the Navajo economy, authors blithely comment on how weaving was an alternative way to market wool (cf. Bailey and Bailey 1986). My analysis scrutinized the effects of treating a fully finished product as a renewable resource for decades as Navajo women spent millions of hours per year weaving wool from their flocks into rugs. Factors impinging upon a fairer return to weavers were revealed, such as the appropriation of the niche for the Navajo blanket usurped by trade blanket manufacturers, and the stagnation in wool market which led to pressures applied by traders to weavers to turn wool into rugs. The gaps in theoretical frameworks utilized by other investigators have resulted in the neglect of a realistic assessment of the exponential growth of textile production by indigenous housewives in tandem with increasing pauperization. My analysis provides support for Kelley (1976:247), who notes how low prices paid to producers generates increased production in the absence of alternative income sources. Increased production depletes resources, inducing greater production, which lowers prices further, the whole process constitutes a deviation amplifying feedback loop. Evidence of this phenomenon is demonstrated by analysis of information in archival sources which reveals that although the cost of living quadrupled for the Navajo between 1895 and 1928, the cash valuation of women's textile production stagnated at 1902 levels. As textiles were woven at home during weavers' "spare time," there was no wage scale. As the cost of production appeared minimal and impossible to quantify, it became invisible.

To summarize, the analysis of portions of the Hubbells' business records in conjunction with pertinent evidence accessed from other sources, demonstrates how subsistence insecurity began shortly after the Reservation was formed, particularly when

Navajo wools acquired by traders became susceptible to fluctuations in international wool markets. My analysis of archival evidence challenges several assumptions that have dominated the literature on the Navajo for nearly a century:

- 1) traders "saved" weaving by developing eastern markets
- 2) traders were primarily responsible for design changes in Navajo weaving
- 3) "pound" blankets were a short-lived phenomenon at the end of the nineteenth century
- 4) weavers benefitted financially by trading their own blankets/rugs for machine-made trade blankets
- 5) rug weaving always decreased when wool prices were high and increased when wool prices dropped
- 6) traders greatest profits lay in wool

All of these assumptions are false, based on prolific evidence analyzed from Lorenzo Hubbell's business records. Hubbell was not an anomaly. Analysis of similar information from other sources (cf. Fred Harvey Company ledgers and correspondence), reveals production of great magnitude, increasing competition and additional pressures applied to weavers to improve their textiles in the face of decreasing returns.

Today, most information on weaving highlights historic textiles in books, exhibitions, advertisements, and catalogues. Yet the weavers are excluded. Historic Navajo textiles are scrutinized microscopically to reveal types of wool; sophisticated dye analyses reveal origins of dyes. Emphasis on this kind of material evidence augments interest within the museologists' and collectors' spheres. The privileging of this empirical knowledge constitutes most of the field. This perspective has developed because of a particular way of viewing objects. Museums frequently support the imposition of categories and dismember context in the name of order. In Chapters Seven and Eight I explore why Navajo textile history has been fabricated in this particular manner, and reveal the consequences for the Navajo people. In doing this kind of research, one experiences how the construction of "history" occurs

through continued emphasis and recycling of particular forms of information.

The shift in emphasis from the mechanics of weaving in the past (cf. Amsden 1934 Reichard 1934, 1936, 1939), to the ideational realm reflected in the recent application of theories grounded in classical Western aesthetics (cf Berlant and Kahlenberg 1977), replicates the bifurcation discussed in the Introduction. The historic textiles are currently redeemed in a particular manner, thereby benefiting specific groups. As my analysis reveals, the women who wove the historic pieces averaged two cents an hour in credit for decades. Today textile conservators hired to repair these old rugs earn upwards of \$40 an hour.

Gary Witherspoon is the only anthropologist who has directly linked Navajo weaving to cosmology. Although his research on Navajo kinship is referenced by museologists, his assessment of Navajo weaving is soundly critiqued as overly structuralist and anti-empiricist (Hedlund 1989, Wheat 1989). The bifurcation between the approach embraced by Witherspoon, that weaving is culturally inspired, not materially determined, and the museologists emphasis on the empirical, mirrors the idealist/materialist split in anthropology. Witherspoon emphasizes values, whereas the empiricists focus on the facts.

Once the magnitude and extent of production is revealed, one must query why women would continue to weave? The answer remains inexplicable within the currently operative frameworks. Witherspoon (1977, 1987) offers great insight, but grounds his analysis in dualisms influenced by linguistic models. It is necessary to find another way to explain the continuation of this activity under conditions of extreme poverty. How was one to account for the symbolic dimension? Post-modernist readings by feminists of pattern appropriation were perceived as bricolage, and modeled on the notion of the decorative art in previous interpretations (Berlo 1991). Thus portions of the old framework remain in place. Feminist political economists and art historians view weaving as a commodity (Baizerman 1989, Stephen 1991, 1993). The appropriation described in Chapter Seven, is perceived as an appropriation of atomistic] design (Clifford 1986, 1988).

As noted in the Introduction, the Navajo language lacks words for religion, economy, and art. Yet these terms are consistently used in the extant literature to incorporate, or disassociate, ubiquitous textile production by Navajo weavers. The categorization of all Navajo weaving as "non sacred" can be attributed to three generations of anthropologists whose work was central to the ethnographic effort in the southwest. They were influenced by an unconscious epistemological frame that assumed an opposition between the sacred world of religion and the profane world of commodities. This attitude was projected onto the communicative forms created by Navajo women. The sacred/profane dichotomization shaped the perspective adopted by ethnographer Gladys Reichard.

Yet native voices protest the separation of art from life, as they perceive all life as sacred (Kelley and Francis 1994, Means 1988, Ortiz 1996, Walters 1989). The approach I have adopted is a reflexive one. It acknowledges that our categories of analysis and styles of writing our work are deeply influenced by our own history, and our relation to the "anthropological other." Bateson (1958) acknowledged the enormous problems that abstraction, reification and fetishization of terms created for anthropologists. The information revealed in this dissertation demonstrates how adherence to research regimes informed by a particular epistemology has had devastating consequences for the Navajo.

Utilizing Bateson's epistemology, one is able to shift from seeing the rug as an atomistic object, to revisioning the rug as a metaphor for Navajo culture. Bateson (1991:279) cautioned that we must be careful about how we break things down into particulars. The rule for any sort of systems theory is to draw around the lines of communication as far as you can, for there are no isolated systems. As described in Chapter Nine, for Bateson the sacred and the aesthetic are very closely related. Utilizing his epistemology reveals that multiple forms of appropriation threaten the destruction of relationships and activities vital to Navajo culture. Without Bateson, it is difficult to adequately critique this aesthetics of appropriation.

Based on my interviews with Navajo weavers and their public presentations, I suggest

that Bateson's epistemology provides a more holistic approach to understanding textile production that is more in keeping with Navajo philosophies and world views. Navajo weavers' feeling for *hozho* (beauty/harmony/balance) encompasses far more than the Western aesthetics, which condenses and locates "beauty" in the atomistic object. Instead, Navajo textiles appear to be material forms of manifestations of relationships, and *hozho*, for Navajo weavers can be created, reaffirmed and perpetuated through the process of weaving. Utilizing his epistemology provides a more profound understanding of the value of weaving for the Navajo people. The repetition and redundancy of recurring patterns suggest a commonality of form in which Navajo textiles map expressions of fundamental formal relationships. This perspective has the potential to demonstrate that Navajo textiles are a primary form of meta-communication which impart information that cannot be transmitted discursively.

Although they do not reference Bateson, recent publications by Downer (1990), Kelley and Francis (1994) and Griffin-Pierce (1992) provide additional support for the perspective I adopt in reconceptualizing and recontextualizing weaving as cosmological performance. Weaving has been excised from its cultural context. With few exceptions, researchers have overlooked evidence concerning the importance of women's textile production in perpetuating Navajo culture. As ample evidence attests, weaving is generally situated within the arena of "collectibles." This positioning is aided and abetted by museologists (Kent 1985; Rodee 1981, 1987, 1990; Wheat 1977, 1984, 1987, 1989), and provides support for the volatile investment market.

In reconceptualizing weaving, differences in perceptions of values are revealed. In the modernist West, values are defined as "conceptions of the desirable" and are frequently quantified. Whereas, for the Navajo, the value of weaving is integrative. Bateson's epistemology provides us with concepts by which the dualism of sacred and profane can be collapsed. By adhering to dualisms, it is impossible to reconceptualize weaving as

cosmological performance. Yet how is it possible to account for weavers' statements? I interpret their statements in light of Bateson's epistemology.

As demonstrated in Chapter Nine, belief becomes the meta-context for the message. There are vast differences between the beliefs of Navajo weavers, and museologists. The information I have unveiled and analyzed in this dissertation addresses significant issues that remain absent from current discussions on the subject of Navajo weaving. Bateson's epistemology provides a means to understand why Navajo women would continue to weave under persistent, difficult conditions. His epistemology provides a path to heal the division that splits pattern from commodity.

Art historian Janet Berlo published the following statement in an article written two years after her comments referenced in the Introduction and quoted in Chapter Seven sanctioning the "aesthetics of appropriation." In light of Bateson's epistemology, it seems surrealistic to read the two comments together, especially as they were written by the same individual. The juxtaposition of these two statements reflects how deeply divided the discipline is on some fundamental issues. Berlo (1993:37-38) writes:

To the Navajo, weaving is a sacred activity, as well as a paradigm for womanhood. In weaving a woman creates beauty and projects it into the world. In Navajo cosmology, the universe itself was woven on an enormous loom by the mythic female ancestor, Spider Woman, out of the sacred materials of the cosmos. ..In many respects, Changing Woman provides model for Navajo aesthetic of transformation. She is, in essence, mother earth, clothing herself anew in vegetation each year. She follows an endless seasonal cycle of transformation: In spring she is young and beautiful, in summer, mature and beautiful: in fall she begins to fade ... When Changing Woman was discovered as an infant on a sacred mountain by First Man and First Woman, she was arrayed in the same cosmic materials with which Spider Woman wove the universe.

Then Berlo cites Witherspoon:

Navajo women follow Changing Woman's patterns of transformation as they creatively synthesize the raw materials of diverse worlds..plants, animals/humans, into handsome textiles. Navajo female artistic identity comes from the transformative process of weaving, not the finished product.

Berlo essentially *describes* weaving as cosmological performance, but she does not

perceive it as such. The post-modernist argument that sanctions the "aesthetics of appropriation" requires critique. To be aware that weavers value weaving in this manner, and are yet in a position which requires them to remain silent about appropriation is deeply disturbing. Such a perspective is the symbolic parallel to traders' economic appropriation. Such cultural theft is sanctioned as both perspectives spring from an epistemology with Cartesian underpinnings that splits pattern from commodity.

In reconfiguring Navajo weaving as cosmological performance, one becomes aware that a way of life is being sold to the highest bidder. Such activities are midwifed by the sacred/profane split and currently brokered by museologists and anthropologists who write for the investment market. Anthropologists who work with First Nations peoples and publish their findings have limited control over how their research is used. It may be misrepresented, misinterpreted, or quoted out of context. To support the dealers and collectors' market for historic textiles by deliberately writing for that market at the expense of contemporary Navajo weavers threatens the maintenance of relationships vital to Navajo culture. Because the relationships are jeopardized, the culture is jeopardized. This is why anthropologists who are privileged to work with the Navajo need to acknowledge the inimical affects of this activity and do what they can to undermine it. To divide pattern from commodity threatens Navajo lifeways. Keeney (1983:123) quotes Bateson on the root of the problem.

In perceiving pattern and quality [we] encounter the aesthetic. Our attention to quantity rather than pattern leads us to ignore aesthetic necessities: in child rearing and family, in architecture and diet, in philosophy and religion...even in art--poetry. IN EVERY ONE OF THESE FIELDS OF HUMAN ACTIVITY.. THERE ARE PROBLEMS OF PATTERN ABOUT WHICH VERY LITTLE FORMAL THOUGHT HAS BEEN DONE. The result is a splitting of discourse between the pragmatic and the aesthetic, the structural and the functional, the eternal and the secular... the truth which is important is not a truth of preference, it is a truth of complexity.. of a total eco-interactive on-going web..in which we dance, which is the dance of Shiva... which includes all cybernetic complementaries... good/evil, health/pathology, aesthetics/pragmatics, family/individual.

Can this understanding which the Navajo so well demonstrate heal our own split aesthetics?

ENDNOTES

1. The principle authorities whose works are referenced include Faris 1986, 1990; Frisbie 1967, 1987; Griffin-Pierce 1992; Kluckhohn and Leighton 1974; McAllester 1980, Reichard 1934, 1936, 1939, 1950; Spencer 1947, 1957; Witherspoon 1974, 1975, 1977, 1983, 1987; Wyman 1970; Zolbrod 1984). More detailed portions of this summary are placed in Appendix X.
2. According to Witherspoon (1975:23), kinship solidarity is framed and focused in the concepts of sharing and giving, whereas nonkin, or affinal solidarity is framed in systems of exchange and reciprocity. There is an effort by Navajo to think of, and relate to everyone in terms of kinship. Navajo are more likely to use terms of relationship rather than personal names. Everyone is addressed as kin: it is offensive to speak anyone's personal name in his or her presence. Kinship is so important that the worst thing that can be said of someone is: "he acts as if he didn't have any relatives" Witherspoon 1975:64).
3. Bateson's epistemology encompasses information from anthropology, psychology, philosophy, information theory, biology and cybernetics. His methodology merges fact with value, eroding the barrier between science and art (Berman 1984:190). This methodology is holistic rather than Cartesian, and as much intuitive as it is analytic. Berman (1984:190) describes Bateson's epistemology as 'a path with a heart', without any corresponding loss of rational clarity.
4. Dr. James McNeley (1987), Vice President of Navajo Community College has written on the compatibility between Bateson's epistemology and Navajo thought. McNeley (1987) delineates the following similarities between the two epistemologies: both recognize humanity's organic embeddedness in a complex system (Appendix X); both hold that thought or mind is immanent in nature. The flow of information throughout the world is critical to the maintenance of balance or homeostasis; such balanced unity may have the aesthetic quality of beauty. In the interactions between human and non-human thought, distortions in human thinking may lead to disruptions in the larger world; if harmony is to be reestablished, human thinking must be corrected.
5. Redundancy is a vital clue to patterning; it involves convention, habit, repetition and practice. Rather than a universe of symbols (cf. Victor Turner), redundancy implies an ordering process. The structure of society expresses order in practice, not as a matrix of symbols which then reads a culture as "text".
6. This is probably one of the primary reasons why Gladys Reichard was convinced that weaving was part of the non-sacred sphere. She probably never heard any stories related to weaving because she did all of her fieldwork during the summer when stories are never told.

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**APPENDIX I Juan Lorenzo Hubbell, Dean of Navajo Traders and
Father of the Navajo Rug**

Descendants of families who found fortune in the Old West ring familiar to many people today: 1) Former Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt currently heads the Department of Interior for the Clinton administration; his grandfather was one of the five Babbitt Brothers of Flagstaff; 2) Republican Senator Barry Goldwater, descendent of the Arizona merchants of Goldwater Department Stores fame; 3) The Zeckendorfs, multi-millionaire real estate developers, are descendants of nineteenth century Arizona merchants; 4) the Fred Harvey Company associated with the Santa Fe Railroad dining cars and hotels, ultimately became the sixth largest food retailer in the United States during the 1960s. The list is extensive... but the most famous trader who did business with many of these entrepreneurs was Lorenzo Hubbell, whose trading activities, especially related to the marketing of textiles, comprise a significant portion of this dissertation. His trading post and home at Ganado, Arizona, are now a National Historic Site managed by Southwest Parks and Monuments Association. All of his papers including correspondence and business records (1883-1964), are housed at the Special Collections Library, University of Arizona, Tucson.

Born in Pajarito, New Mexico, in 1853, Hubbell was the son of a Connecticut Yankee father who had been a soldier and sutler, and a Spanish mother, whose family had been given one of the original land grants from the King of Spain (Underhill 1956:183). Senora Julianita Guitierrez Hubbell's grandfather was one of the first governors of New Mexico under Mexican rule (Brugge 1993:21). Hubbell's uncle Charles was a member of Kit Carson's campaign and commanded an escort for Navajo driven to Fort Sumner. Santiago Hubbell owned a bridge on the Rio Puerco river (south of Albuquerque) in which he charged a toll for each Navajo and their animals who crossed when Bosque Redondo was disbanded (Peterson 1985:124). Bailey and Bailey (1986:38) report the counts as: 7,136 Navajo, 564 horses, and 4,190 sheep. (It is estimated the Navajo had one-half million animals in 1863).

Hubbell's brother Frank was a very successful stockman, owning ranches of several hundred thousand acres in New Mexico.

Hubbell has been profiled in numerous popular and anthropological publications. Below, I provide a precis of his history that is most relevant to this dissertation topic. I draw upon information available from a number of sources, especially an insightful (but unpublished) study produced by Historian Charles S. Peterson titled "Hubbell Farmlands Historical Study 1985." This report was prepared for the Southwest Parks and Monuments Association to assess the importance of Hubbell's farm, which outlasted him by 35 years. One section of the study sheds light on Hubbell's early life, and I think it is particularly apropos in understanding his style of trading, his flair for politics, and the particular advantages that accrued to him through life because of his charisma and business acumen. Peterson (1986:185) lists a number of popular references he utilized in profiling Hubbell and he admits: "All of these sources more or less mythologize Hubbell and no doubt I have fallen victim of the same influences." It is difficult not to be impressed. Most sources provide a litany of accolades to "Lorenzo the Magnificent" (Coolidge 1924), the "King of northern Arizona" (Laut 1915:126), "the last and greatest of the Patriarchs and Princes of the Frontier" (Lummis 1925:182). Observers of Navajo history agree that Hubbell had few peers among traders.."he was the first and greatest...his position was almost baronial..(Utley 1959:84).

If one were to focus on just the correspondence and memoirs of people who knew him, and ignore his business records, the profile that has emerged would remain intact. But his business records are central to understanding how he supported, managed and increased the size of his "empire." They provide a subterranean text that reveals the often precarious and always competitive world of entrepreneurial activity that dominated the region.

Hubbell arrived in Navajo country during the early 1870's. He worked in a post office, clerked for a period, and became a Spanish interpreter. His fluency in English and

Spanish, and eventually Navajo, served him well. Hubbell's upbringing, infused with Hispanic values, stamped the development of the "oasis of civilization" he built over time at Ganado: "there was a quality of paternalistic fondness for the people with whom he dealt that was as real as the image of a picturesque influential figure that he enjoyed" (Peterson 1985:127). He began trading in the Ganado area around 1878 (Utley 1959:48). By 1900, an extended family group was associated with his trading/freighting/farming domain, which included several nephews, two brothers, a son-in-law, and eventually, both his sons, and grandchildren. His two daughters were very much involved with domestic matters, managing the household staff, as Hubbell entertained visiting artists, politicians, writers, and scientists. His hospitality was legendary and as McNitt (1962:208, 216-20) remarks: "He lived and entertained on an opulent scale."

In addition to the household staff, Hubbell had a large freighting operation, running as many as ten teams comprised of 50-65 mules and horses, driven primarily by Mexicans. The entire complex also included a blacksmith shop, bakery, and a one room school. Books and paintings provided the family with a library and art gallery. Utley (1959:57) describes the trader's home as a sharp contrast to "the desert wastes...comfortably furnished...picturesquely decorated with Navajo crafts..."

It is possible that none of the tremendous amount of trading the Hubbell family transacted with the Navajo for eighty years, was entered into government records such as the annual USRCIA reports. Hubbell's post was surrounded by the Reservation, but he had "homesteaded" his 160 acres prior to the enlargement of the Reservation in 1880, and owned it outright. Legally he was not "on the Reservation," thus he was not required by law to be licensed. Only licensed traders were required to submit annual reports. I have failed to locate any such reports in the Hubbell Papers to date. However, Roman was issued a license in 1912, when his father left Ganado to serve as first Republican Senator of Arizona. There are several copies of licenses for posts other than Ganado (Box 529). According to trader Tony

Tony Richardson (1986:6), Hubbell's seco looked so much like real American coins the government made Lorenzo stop issuing them (I have not been able to corroborate this in the government correspondence contained in the papers).

Hubbell served as sheriff of Apache County from 1882-86. He became postmaster at Ganado in 1895. He was elected to the Council of the Arizona Territorial Legislature in 1893, and served as chairman of the Republican Central Committee. Politics in the West generated intense debate and merchant participation could be strongly partisan. With clerks and family members available, and silent partnerships widely practised, entrepreneurs such as Hubbell and the Babbitts could manage business and engage in politics simultaneously. Hubbell was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in November 1906, and in 1912, he became Senator in the first state legislature. He was instrumental in Arizona's achieving statehood that year (Box 545 #1 HP). He was away from Ganado for most of 1912-14. In 1914, he ran as the Republican candidate in the national Senate race, and lost. It appears he never recuperated financially from the defeat (Peterson 1986:153).

McNitt (1962:57) also mentions that after 1890, with rare exceptions, the government declared it to be legally impossible for an Indian trader to demand payment of old debts. He quotes Bob Evans of the Fred Harvey Company who said:

Indian traders found a Navajo was a better risk than a white man--once they had judged the Indian's ability to pay..it is doubtful if a Navajo ever took advantage of the government's new ruling

This quote is corroborated many hundreds of times in Hubbell's ledger books. Evidence for Navajos' concern regarding products owed to Hubbell to settle accounts persistently reoccurs in Indian correspondence to the Hubbells, from 1902 to 1964 (Box 124).

The business lives of the Babbitts and the Hubbells were intertwined for half a century. The earliest correspondence (Box 6) dates from 1902, and concerns the purchase of land to be paid for with Navajo blankets. Business transactions continued until 1954. There are multiple file folders filled with invoices, shipping manifests, huge orders for

merchandise (including railroad cars containing 40,000 pounds of flour or sugar). There is voluminous correspondence and business transactions between Hubbell and Clinton Cotton, his former business partner who opened a wholesale business in Gallup, New Mexico in 1896. In the history of Gross, Kelly and Company, author Daniel Kelly (1972:216) mentions that it was not unusual for the Hubbells to owe them \$30,000 on an open account to be paid when their wool came in. His final comment speaks volumes about "the businessman's creed": "Perhaps it was fortunate that he [Hubbell] died between the wool and the lamb seasons when he didn't owe us any money.."

Although he may stand head and shoulders above other traders in the history of the southwest, Hubbell's business creed embraces that of his contemporaries:

The first duty of an Indian trader, in my belief, is to look after the material welfare of his neighbors; to advise them to produce that which their natural inclinations and talent best adapts them; to treat them honestly and insist upon getting the same treatment from them...to find a market for their products and vigilantly watch that they keep improving in the production of same, and advise them which commands the best price. This does not mean that the trader should forget that he is to see that he makes a fair profit for himself, for whatever would injure him would naturally injure those with whom he comes in contact.

The following quote may provide a more apt description of Hubbell's nature, one that reflects much of the information contained in his archived papers:

That he was motivated by an ambition for even greater profits also seems evident from the rapid and successful expansion of his trade network. Robert E. Karigan, one of his associates pictured him as brilliant, shrewd, and ambitious to control the Navajo trade. Cozy McSparron added that the ambition stemmed from a desire to have enough money to give things away, to make people happy, and, above all, to take care of the Indians who depended upon him. (Utley 1961:32)

In his memoirs (Hogg 1930) Lorenzo Hubbell states that for many years his Ganado post had sold more than a quarter of a million dollars in wool and hides alone. This figure may also reflect the value of stock sold. But the Navajo were not raising stock for the market to any great extent until the 1920s. He says:

An Indian buck drives up with his wagon in front of the post. He may have several

hundred pounds of wool, a bale of goat skins, several rugs that his squaws have made, and a number of articles of Indian silver jewelry. All such goods have a very definite market value, and the trader who is honest will allow the Indian equal value in other staple commodities or manufactured products, according to the market quotations of the day. (Hogg 1930:28)

According to his story, the trader places a stack of silver on the counter, and the Indian "trades out" and acquires goods equal in value to the silver. No mention is made of Navajo blankets, other than the statement that the buck trades for his [mute] squaws. It will become evident in the Chapter that follows that this little story conflicts with Hubbell's own business records. As Brugge (1993:5) remarks:

He wanted the facts to be those he chose to reveal. Like all of us, he tended to omit his sins and mistakes. If his memory was not perfect, the magazine article that J. E. Hogg was to write was even less so.

The following quote is excerpted from the fascinating memoirs of trader Joseph Schmedding (1954) who provides a revealing portrait of his mentor Richard Wetherill (who with his brothers discovered Mesa Verde). Wetherill was one of Hubbell's contemporaries:

...a keen bargainer, a typical "Yankee horse trader" but always and painstakingly fair. He knew every trick of the trade, besides several others of his own invention. No using trying to hoodwink him..he knew the answers before the questions were put. Of course he possessed intimate knowledge of values, but over and above that he was a master psychologist. That, perhaps more than the actual trading knowledge and experience, was the reason for his success....Mr. or Mrs. Navajo might get the better of the green trader in one or two deals, but after that they would probably find that the master had taken the neophyte in hand and imparted to him special knowledge to offset their wiles and cunning. Every....transaction was a battle of wits...

Wetherill traded in a remote area of northwestern New Mexico near Chaco Canyon at the turn of the century. He was killed by a Navajo in 1910, and his widow was forced to sell off a portion of their historic textile collection to Herman Schweizer of the Fred Harvey Company.

APPENDIX II

Price Comparison Between Official Statistics on Wool and Stock and Actual Credit Received by Navajo Herders According to Hubbell's Records

This Appendix compares information culled from the US Census Bureau records on the market value of wool and stock from 1869 to 1970, and Hubbells' records. Although data are not available from the Hubbell Papers for every year, it appears that in 36 of 45 years between 1884 and 1929, figures taken directly from Hubbell's business records indicate that the Census figures are 1.5 to 2.5 times higher than the amounts the Navajo received from Hubbell. These Census figures may reflect the value of wool quoted in the eastern markets (such as Boston), in which shipping, storage and mark-ups have been added. Recall [Chapter Two] that Navajo wool did not bring as much per pound on the wool market as "improved" wools. The oscillations affecting wool and stock prices are corroborated in Bailey and Bailey (1986:Table 29) [Annual averages of the market value of wool and stock]. No information is included prior to 1869 (the year following the Navajos' release from Bosque Redondo). But between 1870 and 1889, wool had a low of 14.5 cents per pound (in 1884) and a high of 31.7 per pound (during 1872, just after the Franco-Prussian War). Between the years of 1901 and 1908, the figures are as follows: the low was 13.7 cents per pound (1901 and 1902), and a high of 23.1 cents per pound was reported for 1906. Within this latter period, Hubbell was paying the Navajo between 6 to 16 cents per pound for their wool. For a specific example, the Baileys report the annual national average of wool at 11.1 cent/pound in 1894. Hubbell paid the Navajo between 5.5 and 6 cents/pound (Hubbell papers Box 331#1 and Box 337). In comparing what Hubbell was paying for Navajo wool and what Ilfeld received for his partido wool from eastern brokers, I see Ilfeld netting from 50 to 100% more than the Navajo are receiving from Hubbell between 1896 and 1904.

Many letters exist in the Hubbell Papers that reflect the Hubbells' concern with the wool market. Hubbell's former business partner Clinton Cotton wrote Lorenzo Sr. an important letter on June 5, 1913, warning him not to pay too much, as wool prices were

dropping because foreign wool was scheduled to be placed on the duty-free list (i.e., the tariff was about to be removed):

this thing of buying this stuff [wool] at exaggerated prices from these bloody Indians at a loss which I did last year, is all foolishness. This is a bad year Lorenzo and you know what this wool is worth under free trade... you can draw me for part of it [wool], but do not for God's sake draw me heavier, as money is a very scarce commodity with us.. I realize the chance it gives you to have these boys bring their wool to you, and if these boys owe you a lot, why it might be a good thing to get them to pay up their accounts, but I advise you to go slow....(Box 20).

In an exchange of letters filed in the intra-post correspondence, the Hubbells reveal their tactics for acquiring Navajo wool. As Lorenzo Sr., was away serving in the state legislature in 1913, his younger son Roman was "running the show." On March 21, (Box 97#1) just prior to the wool season, Lorenzo wrote his son:

..at the beginning of the trade it is always necessary to have the I(ndians) go out with the report that you pay a good price..

But Roman, barely out of his teens, already knew that, because on February 19 (Box 97#19), he wrote John Owens, the trader at Cedar Springs, on the fine points of acquiring Navajo wool, especially if there was another trader "nearby":

..start by paying Indians around Indian Wells .28 per pound for wool...then pay .22, then .20 per pound, then .12-.20 per pound..talk wool...Pay only tin money. Sell sugar for \$10 a sack..let them kick all they want...skin them every chance you get.

By March 12, he wrote another trader:

"will pay .15 now and lower later - not more than .13.5 all around."

In April, Charles Hubbell ran into trouble buying wool:

what will I do without cash? I will have to pay tin money and Crane [the Indian agent] will get after me because I have strict orders from him to pay strictly cash.

As mentioned previously, it was against government regulations for traders to pay tin money for wool and stock.

In 1924, Leo Crane, the current Superintendent of the Colorado River Indian Agency,

requested information from Hubbells as he was writing a book on Indians. He asked for the highest price Hubbells had paid for Navajo wool during the war (.45 cents per pound), and in subsequent years. Prices were as follows: 1919 (.55), 1920 (.40), 1921 (.10), 1922 (.30), 1923 and 1924 (.37 per pound) (December 16, 1924, Box 44). [Note the discrepancies between these amounts compared to figures entered in Bailey and Bailey, Appendix B.] In 1924, a sugar embargo drove up the price of canned fruits and vegetables from 5 to 40%. Such wild fluctuations jeopardized Navajo well being and placed additional pressure on women to provide for their families. The Navajo continued to raise flocks primarily for subsistence and wool until the 1920's, at which time they began supplying feeder lambs for eastern markets. They were not to sell breeding stock as late as 1926 (Bailey and Bailey 1986:168). The exception occurred during World War I, when the Navajo, with the government's blessing, sold many animals because of demand.

Information presented in previous chapters demonstrates how merchandising was highly competitive regionally. But locally, traders such as Hubbell sought to own posts at strategic locations within a particular region to maintain a monopoly on trade. Most of Hubbell's posts, and those operated by his sons, were located in the southcentral and southeastern section of the Arizona portion of the Navajo Reservation. The Hubbells also owned wholesale houses in towns such as Winslow, Arizona and Gallup which bordered the Reservation. They were able to by-pass purchasing many goods from the larger mercantilists. However, larger houses such as the Babbitts (headquartered in Flagstaff), and Clinton Cotton of Gallup, New Mexico, had exclusive rights to favoured brands such as Ariosa (Arbuckle) coffee and Pendleton blankets, and were large enough to handle carload prices on staples. Thus even more influential traders such as Hubbell for many years were unable to purchase preferred brands directly from manufacturers.

Bartered goods were acquired cheaply from the indigenous populations and brought greater profits when they were redeemed in the East. Hubbell maintained a large clientele outside of Arizona who purchased thousands of pounds of Navajo textiles and other Indian curios from him directly. But because he held accounts with various mercantile houses that often ran into the thousands of dollars, Hubbell had to ship wagonloads of pelts, skins, wool and/or blankets to periodically pay down his accounts. There is ample evidence in both the Hubbell and Babbitt Papers that Hubbell (and other traders) could not always hold onto blankets, or any other renewable resource, in anticipation of a better price.

Bitter winters, summer floods or sandstorms, lack of water, transportation and communication networks hindered Reservation business. As previous text and tables illustrate, prices for many southwest commodities fluctuated unpredictably. One of the primary reasons, as we have seen, was related to fluctuations in tariff policies which depressed the wool market resulting in hardships on the Reservation where sheep and wool

were the primary source of barter. Extension of credit led to development of pawn system.

Akbarzadeh (1992:267) notes how the Babbitts' entry into the lucrative trading post business was a landmark in their history. They acquired their first post at Red Lake during the 1890s, because its indebted owner had been killed in a gun fight over a woman. The Babbitts wasted no time in marketing Navajo textiles. They shipped 16,000 pounds of blankets during November of 1900 (Akbarzadeh 1992:298). They began marketing Indian curios nationwide. The following information from the Babbitt Papers is important as it reveals unpublished standards imposed on their managers to acquire quality textiles.

Babbitts agreed to take Tuba City trader Algert's blankets, supposedly worth up to \$1.25 per pound in 1902. They offered 45 cents per pound for his saddle blankets provided they were "extra good", thin, soft, light and vividly grey and black, grey and red, or black and white" (Akbarzadeh 1992:300). Bailey and Bailey (1986:308) report raw fleece selling at 13.7 cents per pound that year, Ilfeld is receiving 12 cents per pound, and Hubbell is paying 8 cents per pound. A single saddle blanket measures 36" x 36", and weighs about 3.5 pounds. Based on these calculations, a weaver would receive less than \$2.00 in trade for a textile that may take her more than sixty hours to produce, depending upon complexity of pattern. Blankets with Masonic emblems were woven for \$10 in credit. At this low appraisal, weavers received (taking into account the fact that they must use nearly twice as much wool to produce one pound of yarn), the same amount for their saddle blankets as they did for their goat skins! [Fig.4.1].

The Babbitts would only take goat skins, sheep pelts and "best blankets" less a handling fee. ... "no coarse, dull, faded blankets were to be obtained at any price. They were overstocked and could not afford to tie up more money on such blankets." These instructions were issued to trader/managers during summer, 1902 (Akbarzadeh 1992:301). Akbarzadeh (personal communication 1993) informed me that Babbitts actually issued directives to manager/partners regarding ways to acquire blankets as cheaply as possible.

Responding to numerous nationwide inquiries to their Curio Department, the Babbitts or their staff wrote detailed letters describing their inventory, prices and freight charges. "since no two rugs were the same," they often shipped them blindly..by drawing rugs with hectograph ink, placing the master copy on a gelatin surface, and making prints for customers, the Babbitts avoided costly photos or cut samples. Freight charges were high. Shipping cost \$4.87/100 pounds from Flagstaff to Albany, New York. In their promotions, Babbitts advertised Navajo rugs, bed and saddle blankets in "100 variety and not two alike" (Akbarzadeh 1992:302). It is quite possible this advertising tactic could have been used (indirectly) as a ploy because of competition from trade blanket manufacturers who did NOT create "one of a kind" textiles, but power-loom production blankets. Marketing a varied stock of Indian artifacts nationwide was tedious and costly before the age of mass marketing, but was nowhere near the amount of work involved in their production.

Merchant capitalists tried to obtain Indian goods at the cheapest prices. Babbitts refused to pay wholesalers \$18 for hard weave black and white striped blankets, instead they offered \$9.00 each (Akbarzadeh 1992:303). Traders in partnership with Babbitts were told to barter for blankets at 25 to 35 cents per pound which would leave some profit for them. Fancy blankets were to be tagged for identification, baled and covered with common saddle blankets to protect them from dust and dirt. Algert had paid \$1 per pound for two 12 pound blankets, which were large and fine grey blankets from three Indians at their Flagstaff store (in 1902).

Trader Preston, their partner at Red Lake was told to pay no more than .40-.50 per pound for fancy blankets. According to Rahim, Hubbell and other traders considered Preston's blankets "common." Preston was instructed to buy "exquisite 4' x 6' and 5' x 7' grey, soft black with white background, and lightweight blankets which could sell readily." [!!] Babbitts felt the blanket business had to "be refined into a finer commercial proposition" or they would lose out in the eastern markets (Akbarzadeh 1992:304).

Reservation traders were required to send reports of their transactions to the Office of Indian Affairs. In 1910, Red Lake exchanged \$3911.75 in goods for native blankets, \$150 for silverwork and \$434 for baskets and squaw belts (Akbarzadeh 1992:315). All of these 'payments' were in merchandise--thus Babbitts (as all traders) reaped double profits. This ratio of blankets to other curios agrees with similar information contained in the Hubbell Papers. These quotes from the Babbitt Papers are important as they reveal unpublished standards imposed on traders to acquire quality textiles. Yet, as we shall see, many statements in the published literature harp on the deterioration in quality of weaving after 1890, for which the weaver is often blamed. But in promotional brochures and advertisements, the trader/weaver relationship is romanticized.

Mercantile firms vigorously competed with the Indian traders and maintained high prices. In 1917, the Babbitts took over George Connally's post at Kearns Canyon and had Ross Favela manage it. This created direct competition with Lorenzo Hubbell, Jr. while trying to supply him and get his goods cheaply! In a letter dated January 25, 1917(HP Box 6), notifying Hubbell of their recent acquisition, their Holbrook manager spells out the businessman's creed in so many words, i.e., even though you now have a competitor close by, you both need to make a profit, therefore, no cost-cutting should occur to garner a corner of the "Navajo market."

Several years later, the Babbitts found out that the younger Hubbell was underselling them on sugar they had sold him (by the carload). They fired off an angry letter stating that "price cutting was a menace in any industry" since all goods sold, had cost a sum "to produce, handle, transport, and store until it was sold." Thus Hubbell had deprived them and others of legitimate profits (Akbarzadeh 1992:310-11). This quote epitomizes the "businessman's creed, and exposes the blind spot concerning the arduous production of textiles. As they were produced at home during a weaver's "spare time", there was no wage scale. Since the "cost" of production appeared minimal and impossible to quantify, it became

invisible.

Traders had no choice but to deal with firms such as Babbitt Brothers Trading Company because of their economic clout, liberal credit terms, and regional monopoly held on key items. Like other mercantile firms, Babbitts tried to save money by purchasing goods in carload lots - and that included blankets! If strapped for cash, traders were forced to increase their debt at these wholesale houses, and had to relinquish large amounts of rugs and saddle blankets. In 1918, the Babbitts paid Lorenzo, Jr., now at Oraibi, \$1 per pound for blankets. Bailey and Bailey (1986) report wool selling at \$.57.7 a pound. In February, 1919, Hubbell offered the Babbitts' Holbrook warehouse his 7000 pounds of Navajo textiles at 75 cents per pound (for saddle blankets) and \$1.10 per pound (for rugs) in exchange for merchandise! For a short period that year, wool prices had peaked at 45 cents per pound. Since it takes almost twice as much wool to produce a pound of spun yarn, weavers were actually relinquishing nearly 70 cents worth of fleece to produce a blanket that would net them 75 cents per pound in credit. Thus Navajo weavers "paid" for the "privilege" of weaving for powerful traders and mercantile houses. Periodically the Hubbells may have taken a loss on individual textiles, but on average they and their contemporaries in the blanket trade averaged from 30-100% (and above) profit on markups. If this was not the case we simply would not see the high profit margins in curio sales, relative to other renewable resources (Chapter Five and Table 5.1).

"Trading on the Indian Reservation was very lucrative for mercantile firms" (Akbarzadeh 1992). The Babbitts owned retail curio stores in northern Arizona and California. Their curio department manager, J. P. McGough, travelled across the Reservation to collect "prized artifacts." The company advertised "the finest assortment of Indian blankets and curios in Arizona, and popularized the Indian "storm pattern" via their extensive mail-order business (Akbarzadeh 1992:308). Rahim (1992:309) notes "the profit from handling Indian crafts made up for the harsh living conditions and difficulties of

maintaining the posts." This reads somewhat differently than traders' own memoirs, but certainly corroborates with voluminous information in the Hubbell Papers!

Over the last century the Babbitts have owned more than a dozen trading posts on or adjacent to the Navajo Reservation. They purchased Oraibi from the Hubbells in 1955, but by 1965, they had sold all but five posts on the Reservation. Most posts were incorporated in early 1920s, prior to that time they were operated as partnerships. The Babbitts' presence is still very much in evidence, and their political and economic clout is still pervasive when one visits northern Arizona today.

APPENDIX IV Weavers' Accounts

The following section details information taken from Box 344 #1 and #2 of the Hubbell Papers. These files contain weavers' accounts from 1900 to 1902 and 1902 to 1911. Many weavers are listed, but much of the information is hard to read and some of it difficult to interpret. According to his notations, Hubbell is advancing "cash" to many weavers in anticipation of blankets. But he is also issuing many tokens, or *seco*, and "tickets" and the denominations are not easy to decipher. I query whether Hubbell actually issued "cash" to weavers. Although he may have called it that in his ledger books, trading posts were notoriously short of cash. Hubbell himself admits to allowing credit only when baskets and blankets were brought in for trade (Bauer 1987:90). Also, the Indian agent wrote him in 1901 stating it was acceptable for Cotton to take Hubbell's tokens, and for Hubbell to take Cotton's tokens in payment for goods (Box 43).

Although a number of entries are illegible, many notations in this ledger book are quite straight-forward. In the following section, I have copied some of the information entered in Hubbell's weavers' account books to provide evidence to illustrate how he dealt with women "bartering" textiles. Most texts on the subject acknowledge Hubbell as the leading innovator in the early days of the rug business (cf. Amsden 1975; Bauer 1987:44; Blomberg 1988, James 1974; McNitt 1962). The information incorporated in this section provides a critique of that conviction.

Hubbell was known for featuring large blankets. He considered a 3 x 5 foot rug a "small" rug. Although many authors state that Hubbell "standardized" the trade, women wove rugs in many different sizes. If Hubbell wished a weaver to make a particular size, he probably provided a piece of string to give her an idea of the length and/or width of the piece. In perusing hundreds of pages of rug inventory sheets covering several decades, the Hubbells noted the width, length and weight of each blanket or rug. Standardization is a misnomer, as it really appears that "no two textiles are exactly alike in dimensions or in

patterns." In the text that follows, I have noted the approximate size (small, medium, or large), adjacent to a particular description. It is impossible to be more specific regarding sizes, except to note that single saddle blankets generally measure 90 x 90 cm. (a square yard). Double saddle blankets measure the same width, and twice the length (see Glossary).

Nearly three hundred weavers' names are entered in the 1900-1902 Ganado ledger book. Hubbell wrote down every item he gave the weaver and debited it to her account. The debit was not discharged until she returned with a blanket. Sometimes he provided the fleece (unspun wool) and/or yarn, and dyes. It is important to distinguish between fleece (unspun wool), rough yarn or roving, and yarn, the commercial product which is always pre-spun by machine. Whether Hubbell supplies the fleece or not, the weaver must still spin it prior to weaving. Spinning is a time-consuming activity and adds considerably to the production time of a textile [Chapter Four]. In a finely woven textile it may take twice as long to prepare the fibres as it does to weave the piece, especially if the pattern is not too complex (see "chart", Chapter Four). In addition, warp yarns (the threads a weaver first puts on the loom to weave upon) take longer to prepare as they must be spun more tightly and several more times than yarn for the weft. Warp threads are subjected to constant tension, necessary to keep the pattern even, and friction from packing of the weft.

Hubbell may have issued wool to weavers for several reasons. At the turn of the century, wool production had plummeted [Figure 5.3]. As noted in Chapter II Navajo flocks were decimated by a series of storms and droughts in the decade prior to 1900. It is estimated they lost 75% of their stock by that date. Some Navajo had no stock at all (Bailey and Bailey 1986:100-105). In any event, issuing fleece to weavers appears to decline over time.

I copied 48 of 308 pages from the 1900-1902 ledger book (Box 344). Each page contains the names of two women, and a number of weavers' accounts were transferred to pages towards the back of the ledger when the first page was filled. For example, on page

44, the account of *Atzi-di-Biteshi' No.2* is listed. She was "paid" \$6.00 in two increments to "make wool blanket". On July 11, 1902, she was provided with 5.25 pounds of warp (\$1.75), a total of 37 pounds of wool to spin (entered at 16 cents per pound), doled out over several months. As fleece was averaging eight cents per pound, this wool could be "improved wool." Total cost in supplies provided by Hubbell equalled \$7.97, and included three packages of dye. The final transaction is dated the following February. This weaver appeared at Ganado on three different occasions (and notations made on her account), while weaving this blanket. The textile she eventually produced probably weighed more than 20 pounds. She received approximately 30 cents per pound to spin and weave this blanket, which Hubbell advertised in his catalogue as selling for 75 cents to \$2.50 per pound. Therefore, this type of blanket retailed from \$18.75 to \$62.50. If weavers did not use all of the wool or warp provided by Hubbell, they had to return the unused amount. If they had spun all the wool, he granted them credit (which varied between 20 to 30 cents per pound). When Hubbell issued prepared warp to weavers, he entered it at 60 cents per pound at the turn of the century. This woman's account shows another entry for March 13, 1905. She was issued more warp, 20 pounds of wool and four packages of dye. But the word "died" is written over the final entry for her account. Several other weavers died during this period, and on at least two occasions, family members had to complete the blankets.

"Weaver" is the name of another women who wove continuously and traded at Ganado. Her account (from 1900 to 1907) is listed on pages 87, 155, 188, and 273. She wove several different kinds of textiles, including portieres, bayeta and common blankets. On October 24, 1902, Hubbell advanced her \$28.50 toward a pair of portieres. [Portieres are two identically woven rectangular textiles that served as room dividers between a parlour and dining room in Victorian homes.] On March 11, 1903, "Weaver" was advanced another \$12.00, issued nine yards of bayeta (valued at \$1.75/yard and 10 skeins of "r.y." (rough yarn or roving) for 70 cents to weave a bayeta blanket. [Bayeta was commercially produced

wool yardage, which weavers unravelled, then respun to make yarn - a very time consuming process.] Red bayeta blankets in particular, were important in 19th century trade and Hubbell was keen to see them revived (cf. Amsden 1975, James 1914). On May 11, she was issued another \$9.50 in credit and given six yards of bayeta. On January 2, 1904, another 2.5 yards of bayeta were issued and the following note is inscribed in Hubbell's hand: "Do not give her any more to weave. Let her make our portieres that she owes." The word "settled" is also written diagonally across this transaction, indicating she eventually finished the portieres.

On February 1, 1904, "Weaver" was given \$6.00 "cash" and issued \$7.50 in "tickets." On July 6, she was advanced another \$40.00 to make two portieres. The following February (1905) she was issued eight pounds of wool to make five small blankets for a total of \$5.00 in credit. On April 21 the following is noted: "to make a bayeta blanket to be paid \$8.00." Six yards of bayeta were issued between April 21 and September. On February 14, 1906, she was issued 60 skeins of yarn. Her account continues on page 273, noting that a pair of portieres was owing. On March 4, 1907, she was issued more bayeta and given \$3.00 "paid in advance" and \$6.00 worth of "tickets". Hubbell notes: "To receive \$8.00. If well done, \$2.00 more." On May 7, and August 17 she received more bayeta. The last transaction entered for "Weaver" is dated November 30. She was issued more bayeta, advanced \$8.00 in credit and given a "gift" worth \$2.00. On one of the earlier transactions, the word "Wanton" was gracefully inscribed and underlined over one of her account entries.

Numerous entries note the amount a weaver was "to be paid" based on the type of blanket she produced. It appears that a weaver was "paid" \$5.00 to weave two small grey blankets. Yet a number of these entries reveal that women were given more than 20 pounds of wool to spin prior to weaving. Box 344#5 contains a list of sixteen spinners who provided yarn for Hubbell. Two entries note the amount of wool charged out, the weight of the yarn returned, and the credit the spinner received. It appears that spinners received between 9 to 14 cents per pound of spun yarn, and 35 to 40% by weight was lost during the process.

[Commercially scoured wool reduces the weight of raw fleece by 40-60%].

Box 344#2 page 108 lists the account of *Hastin Bitzi At??* No. 5. On September 11, 1903, she was advanced \$6.00 in credit and given a total of \$9.10 worth of yarns (13.75 pounds) in navy blue, black, white and scarlet. She wove a *hanolchadi* (Chief's blanket) which Hubbell probably retailed for \$35.00. [Given the weight of the yarn, it may have measured at least 5.5 x 6 feet]. The commercial yarn that Hubbell issued to weavers was priced at 65 cents per pound. Yet a weaver received at most 30 cents per pound for her handspun warp. In 1905, this weaver wove a wool blanket for which she furnished the wool. She received \$10.00 credit for her efforts.

Weavers appear to be averaging \$6.00 in credit for weaving grey blankets and *hanolchadis* when Hubbell supplies the wool. Hubbell retails greys for .75 to \$2.50 per pound, and he sells *hanolchadis* for \$17.50 to \$35.00, depending upon the size (1902 catalogue). There are a number of entries in which weavers received 75 cents each for weaving small saddle blankets, and \$1.50 for two pillow covers. I found more than ten requests for pillow covers. "Capitan's Daughter (page 158) received \$2.50 for making a wool blanket but she had to spin 25 pounds of wool prior to weaving the textile. All of these accounts have "Settled" scrawled across them, so it appears that weavers are not being paid extra chits or credit--the entries are complete. Several weavers earned \$30.00 in credit making blankets that measured nine feet square when they spun and wove their own wool. A blanket this size would be considered a "large" blanket. Page 217 contains a notation: "to make blanket 6.5 feet square, she to furnish wool...\$10.00." This size would probably be classified as a "medium" blanket.

Chi Bita Wife is listed on page 166. On May 25, 190? she was allowed \$2.50 in credit and issued 20 pounds of wool (at 16 cents per pound or \$3.20) to weave "one small grey blanket." [Note that the value of the {improved} wool issued to her was worth more than her labour]. The following February she was issued 13 pounds of wool and advanced

\$5.00 to weave five small blankets. Both of these entries were marked "settled." However, an entry dating from Feb 16 was transferred to page 237. She was issued \$16.00 worth of credit in increments between February 16 and May 25, 1905. There are four more notations including one "due on next... \$6.50". The words "Dead Beat" are scrawled across the entire entry, and that is the last notation on her account. This phrase was written across at least six women's accounts in this ledger. [Recall that I have 48 of 300 pages copied from this journal.]

On July 22, 1903, *Dichadi Biquii Bitzi* (page 170) was advanced \$21 to make a large blanket, but she died so her sister was charged with finishing it, and Hubbell gave her \$15.00 in credit. Another weaver was issued 8.5 pounds of yarn to weave a small *hanolchadi*. She received \$2.50 on September 11, and the following March she was given another \$2.50. "Dead Beat" was scrawled across her account as she never returned with the blanket. *Tzepi Bicha Bitzi* (page 185) also wove portieres for Hubbell. Between December 18 and February 3, she received a total of \$27.20 in advances and chits to weave the pair of portieres. In March she received a cash advance and was issued more chits to make another pair of portieres for which she received a total of \$29.00. Hubbell advertises portieres in his 1902 catalogue as follows: "...sold only in pairs. Made only by the best weavers, of whom there are but few living with skill to make two blankets nearly alike. In bright and old style colors and patterns, size about 5 x 12 feet. Price varies according to fineness of weave... \$200 to \$300 per pair." Several weavers received up to \$75 in credit for weaving a pair, but the few women who wove them generally averaged between \$25.00 and \$50.00 in credit.

Weavers appear to receive approximately \$5.00 for weaving a 4 x 6 foot textile if Hubbell supplies the wool. A textile this size was in the "small" range. In some cases he issued more than 15 pounds of wool for such a blanket/rug and the weaver had to spin all the warp and weft. On average, several months elapsed between such entries. In addition to the two "rug weaving experiments" previously described, Roessel (1983:20) provides

another example in which it took a weaver 388 hours to spin and weave a 3 x 5 foot vegetal dyed rug. Given the time needed to produce a textile, it is not too difficult to account for the infrequent visits of weavers to Ganado.

One of the textiles Hubbell advertised in his 1902 catalogue is described as a "native wool Navajo blanket, grey ground... there are numerous entries in his ledgers dating from 1900-1907 in which weavers are issued more than 20 pounds of wool to weave such blankets for \$2.50 in credit. Hubbell retailed these textiles for .75 to \$2.50 per pound depending upon fineness of weave. When women wove large blankets and furnish the wool themselves they received \$10.00 in credit.

Page 208 lists the account of *Paji Bilshaad* who appears to weave only grey blankets for Hubbell. Within a seven-month period she was given a \$4.00 advance on each of three blankets. He supplied her with 25 to 38 pounds of wool to spin for each blanket, some dyes and some warp. Each entry is marked "Settled."

Hastin Bitzi Atini Baad received \$8.00 on January 9 by promising to make a blanket six feet square. The following July she received \$10 for making one grey blanket 6.5 feet square (page 220). On page 229, the 1905 account of "Tonto's wife" has the following noted: March 11, she was issued five pounds of wool for warp to make wool blanket. She was issued dyes and a total of 20 pounds of wool between March 29 and July 20, and she received \$4.00 for her efforts. The following February 24 she received four pounds of wool to make the warp for another wool blanket. She was issued a total of 26 pounds of wool, some dye and received another \$4.00 in credit.

Occasionally Hubbell gave a blanket to a weaver to "copy." *Tagalichi Bitzoi #2's* account is listed on page 270. This weaver produced several blankets for Hubbell, and under the last entry he noted that "blanket not returned yet." The final notation states: "brought blanket 3-9-10. Did not give her another." "Burt's Wife" is listed on page 273. She was given yarn and advanced a total of \$10 to make a squaw dress.

The latter part of this ledger book (Box 344#2) contains 40 pages similar to pawn notations, but the word "borrowed" appears at the top of the page. Some entries indicate Hubbell gave fleece to spinners to be made into wool. Other entries appear to be more like pawn, i.e., bracelets, beads, baskets and one saddle blanket (at .55) are listed as "borrowed" from Hubbell.

Box 523#6 contains lists of Weavers' accounts from 1902 to 1905. Each list, dated January 1, is six to seven pages long. Although the number of weavers is unknown for 1902, \$2769.89 was listed adjacent to the notation: "blankets being made and merchandise advanced." Use of this phrase indicates that Hubbell is indeed "paying" for anticipated blanket production via extension of credit. The "accounts owing" totalled \$3203.62, with 263 names listed for 1903. There are 237 names for 1904, with \$1555.55 listed in the "cash advanced" column and \$1069.98 in the merchandise column (total \$2625.53). In 1905, 227 weavers' accounts add to \$1038.42 and \$1564.75, (\$2603.17) respectively. For the latter years Hubbell separated the cash advance from the merchandise and entered the dollar value in two adjacent columns. However, he lumps the weaving materials he issued to weavers with the chits for merchandise, because, in effect, it was all his "merchandise." "Cash" [cf. credit] advances range from \$1.00 to \$21.00, but most entries cluster between \$2-6.00. For 1904, there are 24 entries for more than \$10.00--about 10% of all weavers were currently weaving a textile worth more than \$10 in credit. If a weaver was not working on a blanket when inventory was taken (January 1 of each year), or if she did not owe Hubbell on her account, she was not included in the weavers' accounts inventory list for that particular year. Box 523#6 also contains a list of non-weaver Indian accounts for January 1, 1905. Eighty-three names are listed which total \$1924.18 outstanding. Both Tom Ganado and his wife Elle are listed, as is Maria Antonia. These three Navajo were all demonstrating for the Fred Harvey Company (probably in Albuquerque at the "Indian House"). The money that they earned was sent to Hubbell rather than being paid directly to them, as they had family on the

Reservation and maintained accounts with Hubbell. Sometime during 1909, "Capitan's Wife" was allowed \$5.00 in credit to weave a blanket "to be paid \$5.00 more if one-of-a-kind blanket" (p 290). I mention these Navajo, as they represent a handful of individuals with recognizable names, of the thousands who dealt with the Hubbells for many decades.

Most of the entries from Box 344#2 and #3 mention the type of textile woven, but the size remains unnoted. Several entries from Box 344#5 indicate not only the materials issued to the weaver, but note the size produced. However, it is unclear whether these records are for years 1907 or 1910. "Many Sheep's Girl" is listed on page 22. She wove a blue blanket measuring nine by nine feet. She must have used her own wool because no wool was entered on her account. She received sixteen packages of dye, and \$9.55 worth of goods including calico, flour, baking powder, syrup, coffee, crackers and axle grease. The total amount came to \$12.45 which included the dyes. Just underneath that amount is listed "Chips" \$12.55. Therefore she may have received an additional \$12.55 in *seco*, especially since she probably used her own wool. A check of Hubbell's Curio catalogue issued in 1902 reveals that he charged a minimum of \$40 for an 8 x 9 foot rug.

Pages 18 and 23 of this ledger contain the account of "Stout Girl", who wove an 8 x 9 foot blue blanket for Hubbell [listed at \$40 in his catalogue]. He issued her ten pounds of spun wool valued at \$3.00, ten pounds of unspun wool for \$1.00, 4 skeins of yarn and 13 packages of dye. She was given \$6.00 worth of "chips" and another \$2.00 was added to the total. The next blanket she wove for Hubbell was a *hanolchadi* or chief's blanket pattern. Hubbell gave her \$8.55 in "chips." She also purchased a sash at \$1.25, and 20 cents worth of sugar went to her mother. Hubbell retailed these revival-style blankets for \$17.50 to \$35.00. Stout Girl also wove a large 12 x 12 foot grey blanket for Hubbell. He issued her 60 pounds of wool (which she had to spin), 48 skeins of yarn and 12 pounds of spun wool, and 11 packages of dye to create the rug. She received \$14.05 worth of "chips", \$9.20 of food, and .50 worth of calico. Total credit and food received equalled \$23.75. "Settled" is

written diagonally across this entry, and so I assume it is complete. Hubbell advertised textiles this size for \$150.00 (1902 Indian Curio catalogue).

Page 17 lists the account of "Lame Girl" who is to weave a blue blanket for Hubbell. Her husband is also charging on her account ("Goods to buck"). Although the size is not noted, Lame Girl received \$19.10 in "chips" and goods. She also wove a grey blanket for Hubbell (page 20). She probably used her own wool, as none was issued to her. Lame Girl received goods valued at \$4.50, beads valued at \$8.00, and 18 packages of dye. "Lame Girl" also wove for Hubbell in 1902-1903 (Box 344#2 p 105). In December 1902, she received some roving yarn and was advanced \$11.00 in credit to weave one grey blanket. She supplied the warp. On March 16, 1903 she was advanced \$6.00 and given 35 pounds of yarn and 12 packages of dye to weave another blanket. Another weaver entered on this page whose name is illegible wove two "common" blankets for Hubbell. Both are marked "paid." Hubbell supplied her with dyes and warp but no wool. Food and goods valued at \$4.00 are listed on her account.

Page 19 (Box 344#5) contains an interesting notation for "My Girl", written in Hubbell's hand. She was obviously a weaver as the words "grey blanket" are written sideways beside the following entry. She was given \$6.25 worth of merchandise, \$2.25 "cash", \$2.50 worth of chips, beads valued at \$28.00 and credit for \$4.00 for a bracelet that she returned. Written across the entry are the words "Transferred to my acct". [Hubbell is known to have fathered a number of children by Navajo women]. The account of "Stout Girl's Sister" is listed just below "My Girl." She wove both blue and grey blankets for Hubbell. She received \$8.20 in food, calico and chits and was issued 22 pounds of wool, ten packages of dye, and four skeins of yarn to weave a grey blanket. "Paid" is written sideways across the entry. She also wove two blue blankets for Hubbell.

Page 21 lists the account of "Mushkelly's wife No. 2". She was issued \$12.00 in "chips", and received a head band and flour (\$2.00) to weave a blue blanket. Another entry

for "Mushkelly woman" (page 24) lists \$3.50 in "chips" \$4.45 in food and 80 cents for "goods". She was issued \$1.20 in dyes and wool, so for both entries this woman (or two women) used their own wool as Hubbell issued very little. Although several years elapsed between the earliest weavers' journal entries (1900-01) and the entries listed in Box 523#5, which cover 1907 or 1910, it appears credit allotted to weavers in return for blankets increased very little whereas the cost of living according to post inventory records, continually escalated.

The data analyzed in this "weavers' ledger" reveals women bartering blankets and rugs from three to ten times/year. These figures also correspond to statements made by elderly Navajo during interviews at Ganado in 1971. Several remarked on how in earlier times, women had to work much harder. The quotations excerpted at the beginning of Chapters Four and Five describe the situation as perceived by observers. Investigation of archival records reveals the real beneficiaries of the tremendous escalation in textile production by thousands of nameless women.

APPENDIX V Three "Curio" Pamphlets

The following pages depict copies of Don Lorenzo Hubbell's 1902 Curio Pamphlet, a Babbitt Brothers brochure published during the 1920s, and Lorenzo Hubbell Jr.'s pamphlet "The Story of the Navajo Rug" printed in 1933. None of these brochures has appeared in any publications to date. The traders' text reveals the "autonomy" of the weaver far more than most published sources on the topic (cf. Amsden 1934, James 1976, Kent 1985, Rodee 1981, 1987, etc.). The texts may be a sales ploy. However, given the magnitude of production described in Chapter Five, they corroborate the evidence unearthed from Hubbells' business records.

1902
 J. L. Hubbell
 Catalogue and Price List

Navajo Blankets
 & Indian Curios



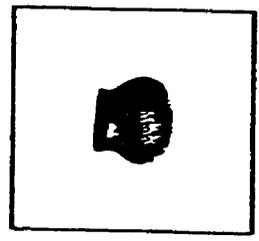
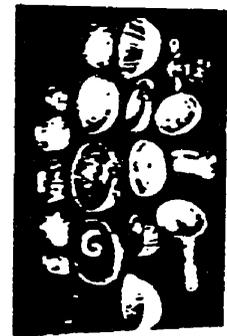
J. L. HUBBELL
 INDIAN TRADER

Canon, Apache County, Arizona
 Branch Store: Keam's Canon, Arizona

Navajo pottery, the only pottery that compares with the old in color, finish and design. Not one man living that knows the secret of making this pottery is from \$1.00 to \$10.00



There are collections of granite and blackstone and other, embracing several distinct classes of ware. Which I will illustrate at from \$2.00 to \$10.00 each.



PRINTED BY HUBBELL'S BOOKS, CANON

Guaranteed Navajo Products

The following list covers goods of the finest weaves and patterns. To ensure any purchaser of this fact, there is a tag attached to each blanket sold, which is my personal guaranty of its quality. The name of the weaver of the blanket is also supplied.

The great beauty and antiquity of these Navajo blankets has given them a world-wide reputation. No fabrics produced by native peoples in any portion of the world surpass the genuine Navajo blankets in richness, beauty and durability. The finest Persian and Indian rugs, although perhaps more dainty and exquisite, possess no greater strength of design and no greater durability or suitability to the purposes for which the fabric was intended. This reputation of the Navajo weaves extends back as far as the first white occupation of the Southwest. The early trappers and trappers, nearly a century ago, learned the worth of these fabrics. The weavers, however, were situated in a distant and little-known part of the world. Hence it was but recently that the Navajo products came into prominence in the Eastern states. At once there sprang up such a demand for them that unscrupulous dealers took advantage of the ignorance of those desiring to purchase such goods. Cheap and gaudy blankets, loosely put together—made here, there and everywhere—have been sold at fabulous prices. Unless one has given study to the matter, it is easy to be deceived. I point to my long residence and my extended references in this country as guaranty of my sincerity and honesty. I have been at the greatest pains to perpetuate the old patterns, colors and weaves, now so rapidly passing out of existence even in the memory of the best weavers. I have even at times unraveled some of the old genuine Navajo blankets to show these modern weavers how the pattern was made. I can guarantee the reproduction of these antique patterns. The next thing to possessing a genuine old blanket is owning one made exactly on the pattern of such blankets. The old blankets are passing away, in the nature of things. I can supply genuine reproductions of the old weaves. What I tell you regarding these goods will be the truth, and you will in all cases find the prices based properly upon the value of the goods themselves, with no misrepresentations, no shams and no counterfeits.

Navajo Textile Fabrics

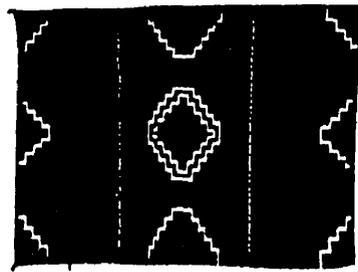
Rugs, Blankets, Portieres, Sashes, Kilts, etc.

Native wool Navajo Blankets, grey grounds, blue and black striped grounds with red and white center and corner designs, grey and black striped ground, also bright colors, any size.
Price per pound..... 80 75 to \$2 50

Extra large native wool Navajo Blankets, for dining room and parlor use, tight weaves.
Sizes from 8 x 9 to 12 x 12..... \$40 00 to \$160 00

Fine grade old style weaves and patterns. Red ground with small designs in blue, black and white.

2½ x 3½	.....	\$ 9.00 to \$12.50
3½ x 4½	.....	12.50 to 15.00
4 x 6	.....	25.00 to 35.00
5 x 7½	.....	35.00 to 40.00
6 x 8	.....	50.00 to 75.00



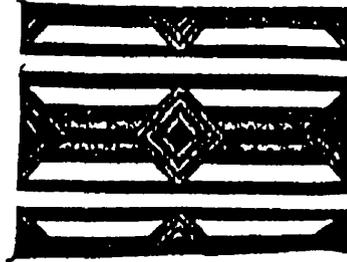
Old style, blue and black stripes

4 x 6	.....	\$17.00 to \$25.00
6 x 8½	.....	25.00 to 35.00
6 x 7½	.....	35.00 to 40.00
8 x 8	.....	50.00 to 75.00
9 x 12	.....	150.00

Prices vary according to fineness of weave.

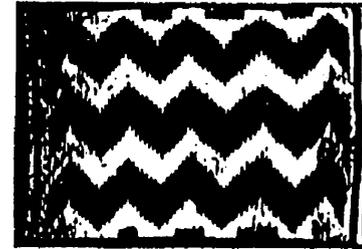
Hanotchadi or chief's blanket. Very oldest pattern known. Black and white stripes, corner and center design, blue, white and red.

4 x 6, \$17.00 to \$25.00 5½ x 6, \$25.00 to \$35.00



Grey and black stripe ground, design in white, navy blue and red.

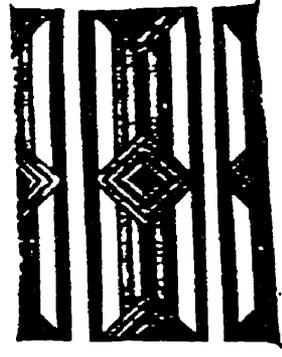
4 x 5, \$17.50 to \$25.00 6 x 8, \$60.00 to \$75.00
5½ x 6, 25.00 to 35.00 9 x 12, 100.00 to 125.00



Common coarse native wool Navajo blanket

Per pound..... 80 50 to \$1 75

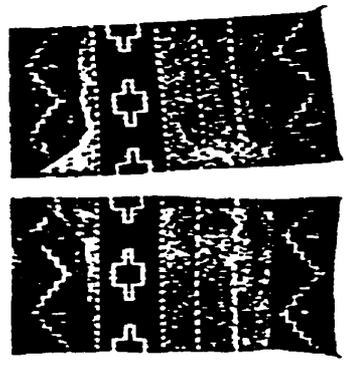
Hand-hall or chief's blanket. Very elegant, not
 very known. Black and white stripes, corner
 and center design, blue, white and red.
 6 x 6, \$17.50 to \$25.00 8 1/2 x 6, \$25.00 to \$30.00



Grey and black stripe ground, design in white,
 navy blue and red.
 4 x 5, \$17.50 to \$25.00 6 x 8, \$30.00 to \$35.00
 5 1/2 x 6, \$25.00 to \$35.00 8 x 12, \$40.00 to \$25.00



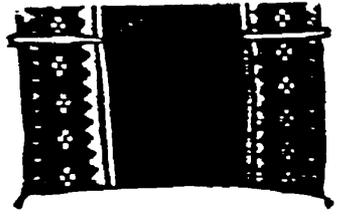
Common coarse native wool Navajo blankets
 Per pound \$0.50 to \$0.75



Porter's wool only in pairs. Made only by the best
 weavers, of whom there are but few living with
 skill to make two blankets nearly alike. In
 bright and old style colors and patterns, size
 about 6 x 12. Price varies according to fineness
 of weave.
 Per pair \$200.00 to \$300.00

Genuine old Navajo native wool square dresses,
 fine compact weave, elaborate patterns and very
 rare.
 Price \$25.00 to \$50.00

Old style square shawl blankets, twilled weaves,
 soft, fine and very durable.
 Made one size only, about 4 1/2 x 4 1/2.
 Two blankets loosely stitched together. Black design on
 wide end border.
 Price \$17.50 to \$25.00



Squaw dress style blanket
 4 x 5 1/2

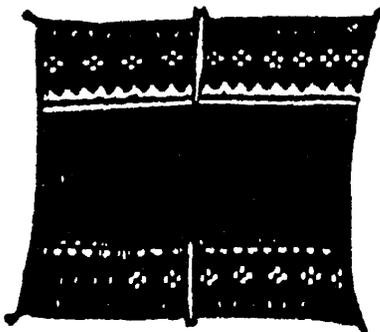
Squaw dress style blanket,
 above, only made in one pair

Squaw dress style blanket
 5 1/2 x 6

Native wool saddle blanket
 weave, 23 x 4 1/2

Small loom showing corner
 blanket partly finished. 1

Having purchased the
 from Thomas V. Kream, of
 County, Arizona, the
 Indians will be handled thro



Hyman stream style blanket
6 x 12' \$17.00 to \$20.00

Hyman stream style blanket, same size and style as above, only made in one piece \$17.00 to \$20.00

Hyman stream style blanket
12' x 20' \$26.00 to \$30.00

Narrow wood and leather blankets, used for signs, light weight 2 1/2 x 4 1/2 \$1.00 to \$1.50

Small horse slinging construction of horse with blanket partly finished back \$1.75

Having purchased the Yumpan Trading Post from Thomas V. Kross, of Navajo County, Arizona, the products of the Navajo Indians will be handled through his Navajo store.

Navajo Products

Textile Fabrics

Navajo woven dresses, dark blue wool and diagonal woven leather.

2 1/2 x 4 1/2 \$10.00

Ceremonial Garments

White cotton blanket with formal borders in black, maroon and green.

11' x 11' \$20.00 to \$24.00



White ceremonial dance belt, borders in black and green.

8 x 21' \$2.00 to \$3.00



White ceremonial moccasins, borders in black and green.

8 1/2 x 11' \$2.00 to \$3.00

Plain white ceremonial blanket.

11' x 11' \$8.00 to \$10.00

Women's girdles, woven of fine spun market wool

with designs embroidered with thread in black, white and green, from 3 1/4 to 6 inches wide and from 8 to 10 feet long \$1.00 to \$1.50



Anti-leg dance mask, white cotton, decorative fringe, 8 to 10 wide \$1.00

Hyman shawl
11' x 6' \$7.00 to \$10.00

Blankets

Navajo shawl ceremonial blanket, decorative elements (partial design)

11' x 11' \$1.00	11' x 11' \$1.00
11' x 11' \$1.00	11' x 11' \$1.00
11' x 11' \$1.00	11' x 11' \$1.00
11' x 11' \$1.00	11' x 11' \$1.00



Small blanket of dyed yarn

11' x 11' \$1.00	11' x 11' \$1.00
11' x 11' \$1.00	11' x 11' \$1.00
11' x 11' \$1.00	11' x 11' \$1.00
11' x 11' \$1.00	11' x 11' \$1.00

Navajo message blanket, small to be used in ceremony

..... \$1.00 to \$1.50

Navajo water water leather
..... \$2.00 to \$3.00



Navajo rubber, cut, per gram Q1 (N) to Q2 (N)
 Navajo rubber, sheet, per gram Q1 (N) to Q1 (N)
 Navajo rubber, sheet, small, per lb. Q1 (N) to Q6 (N)
 Tortholm, sheet, according to order of name per lb. Q1 (N) to Q3 (N)
 Mastic tape, cut, per gram Q1 (N) to Q1 (N)
 Waxed paper with lacerations, paper according to quality and quantity of lacerations Q1 (N) to Q1 (N)

Precious Stones

Various mounted jewelry specimens, small in diameter Q1 (N) to Q2 (N)



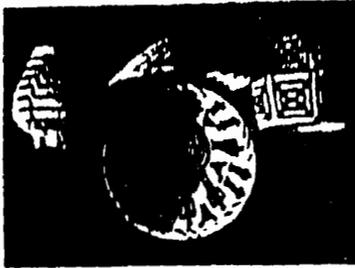
Various mounted jewelry specimens in plastic bags, eyes mounted on thin metal plates. Q1 (N) to Q2 (N)

Various mounted jewelry specimens, small in diameter Q1 (N) to Q2 (N)
 Various mounted jewelry specimens, small in diameter Q1 (N) to Q2 (N)
 Various mounted jewelry specimens, small in diameter Q1 (N) to Q2 (N)



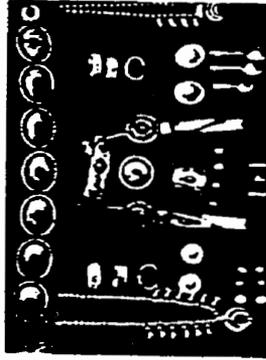
Various mounted jewelry specimens, small in diameter Q1 (N) to Q2 (N)

Miscellaneous



Various mounted jewelry specimens, small in diameter Q1 (N) to Q2 (N)

Navajo Silverware and Jewelry



- Silver finger rings without turquoise \$0.25 to \$1.50
- Silver buttons \$0.15 to \$1.00
- Silver pendants, each \$1.00
- Silver spoons with matrix turquoise settings, price according to size and color of stones. Each \$3.50 to \$5.00
- Silver spoons, arrow and Indian head design on handle, per doz \$6.00 to \$15.00

Moqui Pottery



Jars, vases, basins, varieties of almost every character, from \$0.25 to \$6.00



Navajo ruckling pins, also used as drums in ceremonial dances \$0.50 to \$1.00

Carved and painted wooden figurines or Moqui gods, representing mythological characters \$0.25 to \$5.00



Carved wooden head drums, used in dances \$0.75 to \$2.00

Precious Stones

- Navajo rubies, cut, per carat \$1.00 to \$3.00
- Navajo rubies, uncut, per carat \$0.25 to \$1.00
- Navajo rubies, uncut, small, per lb. \$1.00 to \$3.00
- Peridot, uncut, according to size of stone per lb. \$1.00 to \$5.00
- Matrix turquoise, cut, per carat \$0.25 to \$1.00
- Wamquam beads with turquoise, price according to quality and quantity of turquoise. \$1.25 to \$10.00

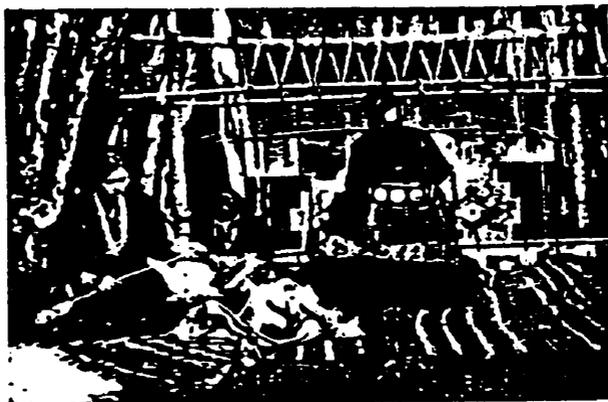
All these productions of the Navajo silver smiths are from coin silver, melted, hammered or molded with their own primitive appliances. Some are finished with plain surface, others are etched or abraded, stamped or embossed in designs of endless variety.

- Silver bells (belt plates round and oval) \$30.00 to \$40.00
- Silver mounted bridles \$30.00 to \$100.00
- Thinly spherical beads, various sizes, per string \$10.00 to \$25.00
- Silver Charities for ladies' belt buckles, per dozen \$1.50 to \$1.75
- Silver bracelets with matrix turquoise, according to color and size of stone \$2.50 to \$10.00
- Silver bracelets without settings, per ounce \$1.25 to \$1.75
- Silver finger rings, matrix turquoise settings, according to color and size of stones. \$1.25 to \$5.00

NAVAJO RUGS

and Other

INDIAN HANDICRAFT OF THE SOUTHWEST



Direct from the Indians at Our Own Trading Posts
On the Navajo and Hopi Indian Reservations

Tuba City-Cedar Ridge-Red Lake-Kayenta-Jeddito

BABBITT BROTHERS TRADING CO.
FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

ESTABLISHED 1889

date of publication: 1930.

APPENDIX VI Fred Harvey Company Earliest Shipment

The earliest Fred Harvey Company records date from 1901 in the Hubbell Papers. Yet several sources maintain the trader and the company maintained a business relationship long before the turn of the century. Kaufman and Selser (1985) reiterate the old refrain concerning the Harvey Company purchasing all of Hubbell's textiles of good or better quality. They note that the Company's standards were as high as Hubbell's. They designate Hubbell as the "leading rug dealer in North America," and claim that in 1902, the Company purchased more than \$20,000 worth of textiles from Hubbell; within ten years the amount had tripled. This is a typical statement that one frequently sees in discussion related to the sales of Navajo textiles. Not only is it incorrect, based on detailed assessment of Hubbell's and Harvey's ledgers, but it was incorrectly quoted by James (1988:101). He quotes the authors: "In the year 1902 alone, Hubbell, negotiating through Harvey's representative buyer, Herman Schweizer, sold \$60,000 worth of rugs." Not only are errors compounded because students of the subject have neglected to work with primary data, but the information quoted above should have alerted scholars researching the Navajo economy as to the economic importance of Navajo textiles.

Citing several of the earlier classic sources, Weiss (1984:50-1) states that Hubbell regularly resold about \$25,000 worth of rugs each year to the Fred Harvey Company during the 1880s. Based on Hubbell's own records, this is impossible. I am unable to locate textiles being wholesaled by Hubbell for more than 35 cents per pound prior to 1900. Thus he would need to ship nearly 75,000 pounds of textiles to the Fred Harvey Company alone! Even during the heyday of textile shipments, it appears that Hubbell never shipped more than 50,000 pounds of weaving in a single year. Weiss (1984:74) also quotes McNitt on the high volume of textile purchased by Harvey. McNitt claims the Company purchased between \$20,000 and \$25,000 worth of textiles from Hubbell annually "for many years." In analyzing Hubbell's shipping records in conjunction with the Company's blanket ledgers, if

the amount just mentioned is correct, it must reflect the Harvey Company's retail price. Table 5.7 documents the earliest shipment from Lorenzo Hubbell to the Fred Harvey Company (March 1901). A variety of blankets were shipped, reflecting some of the styles categorized in Table 5.3. Three of the blankets were actually located in Book II of the Fred Harvey Company ledger books housed at the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Six of the old style blankets were entered in the Hubbell's CASH PROFIT code, which allows the reader to decipher the amount of credit the weaver received in trade goods. According to information contained in Hubbell's 1902 Curio publication (Appendix Five), the "old style" blankets ranged in size from four by five feet to five by 6.5 feet. The sizes were estimated according to the retail cost listed in Hubbell's catalogue.

**FRED HARVEY COMPANY EARLIEST SHIPMENT
[BOX 333, 1901]**

Type of Textile	Credit Received by Weaver [\$]	Price to Harvey Co.
Old Style	11.00 [cctt]	17.50
▪	▪	20.00
▪	16.50 [crpt]	25.00
▪	15.00 [cptt]	30.00 [7#]/\$50 *
▪	16.50 [crpt]	25.00
▪	15.50 [cppt]	25.00
Portiers	35.50 [sppt]	65.00
Total	121.00	207.50
Old Style		25.00
▪		25.00
O.S. Zuni		
r,bl&blue		12.50 [4-7/8#] **
Indian Dye Blanket		25.00
▪		25.00
▪		15.00
▪		20.00
O.S. Native Wool		10.00/30.00 ***
▪		20.00
5 Bed Blkts choice		
50 # @ .41/#		20.50
7 Saddle Blkts @		
2.50-5.00/ea.		25.50

• Fred Harvey Company Ledger Books '4/27/01

** #3349 FHCo.

*** #3341 FHCo., p 20, Ledger Book #2

Code: CASH [1234] PROFIT [567890]

Fred Harvey Company Shipment (1901)
Table 6.1

APPENDIX VII J. B. Moore and the Navajo Rug

In his informative catalogue, Moore refers to an earlier period when all blankets were "coarse, heavy and unclean"...woven on cotton warps...with abominable colors." Traders purchased by weight, but with the return to good weaving "it has become impossible to make weight a basis of value." However, he admits that 75% of his stock is comprised of cheaper blankets, and he advertises the lower grade rugs to retail by the pound. He discusses the difficulties in pricing as "no two textiles are alike", and remarks why his blankets appear higher priced than his competitors--they are superior. Thus Moore and Hubbell shared many factors in common in how they marketed Navajo weaving, although it is doubtful that Moore wholesaled nearly as many rugs as Hubbell, because he did not own a string of trading posts, and he bartered with far fewer weavers.

Most of the rugs in his 1911 catalogue are advertised between 90 cents to \$1.00 per square foot. However, Moore takes pains to translate these prices into pounds, as "there are still those who insist on pound quotations." Referring to the Navajo as "Bedouins of the great Southwestern Desert, Moore reiterates his business philosophy in the closing pages of his second catalogue:

Our first thought of course is to get them to weave for us and for us only, all the fine rugs they possibly can, and then find a buyer for these. But it is also our mission here to buy any and everything the Navajo has to sell; his wool and pelts, his farm produce when he has any, the surplus of his flocks, herds of cattle and horses--any and everything that he has which he wants to turn into cash; and then it is up to us to find a market for it in turn. And, it is also our purpose to sell him in turn, all his supplies, groceries, dry goods, clothing, wagons, harness and saddles, everything in fact that he has need for and the money to buy with; or as much of it as we possibly can. Nor, is there room for failure in any of these many things for the man who would make a success of Indian trading. He must be onto his job all the time, and see to it that he is not overmatched by as clever a people as ever worked their way up from savagery.

Moore's text is worth quoting at length because his statement reflects the "monopoly mentality" of traders and reveals one of the cornerstones of civilization, that of hard work as a chief criteria for improving oneself. His final sentence reflects an attitude that persists

in historic documents, especially those penned by traders!

In 1911, Moore suddenly left the Reservation under unsettling conditions having to do with a scandal. He held the position of postmaster at Crystal and may have shipped rugs without compensating the government. The trader who succeeded him found a lot of scoured wool and about 2000 blanket catalogues (McNitt 1962:255). As Moore's plates were large and replicated in colour, he was obviously very serious about this endeavour. Of all the traders who supposedly "fathered" new patterns, Moore probably had the most influence, as he continually collaborated with fewer than twenty weavers whose textiles are highlighted in his catalogues. Yet he credits individual weavers with creating particular patterns, and provides no direct evidence concerning "Oriental influences." Moore's wife Marion wrote Hubbell on August 13, 1908, saying she thought the quality of their rugs was surpassed only by his (Boles 1977:129).

APPENDIX VIII The Fred Harvey Company and Indian Demonstrators on Display

A fair proportion of the Hubbell/Harvey correspondence concerns the Navajo and Hopi demonstrators Hubbell supplied to the Harvey Company. Tourists travelling by railroad were treated to a visual ethnographic feast as baskets, pottery, rugs and jewellery adorned the walls, floors and tables of the impressive "Indian Rooms" located in many of the hotels. To augment the attraction the Company arranged for Hubbell to send reliable demonstrators who would weave and practice silversmithing at railroad stations and larger hotels at the Grand Canyon, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, etc. Their unique position enabled them to acquire valuable ethnological material, including many items sacred to Hopi religious ceremonies. Byron Harvey (1963:35-6) notes:

Serving as a source of supply for the East, in the early years the company had a virtually insured profit in their sales of Indian craft. Freight rates, moreover were by contract extremely advantageous; empty boxcars or their equivalent could easily be loaded with collection material. The company's agents, present the year round, frequently were able to purchase items never offered to summer visitors. Winter brings hard times to the Indian or Spanish American farmer and consequently whole wagon loads of irreplaceable Santos and Indian arts were brought in for sale.

In this way the Harvey Houses were stocked with artifacts and the Company's valuable collection continually increased in size. Herman Schweizer continually culled the best and most unusual items that crossed his path. Major museums in the United States, including the Chicago Natural History Museum, Columbia, and the Carnegie Museum owe the nucleus of their ethnographic collections from the southwest to Schweizer and the Harvey family. The Berlin Museum also benefited and the kachina collection at the Heye Foundation was originally compiled by Schweizer (Harvey 1963:37).

In a letter dated July 6, 1903, Hubbell asked the Company not to pay the demonstrators all their money because they owed him on accounts. Weaver Elle of Ganado and her husband Tom worked at the Indian House for years. The Company wanted the demonstration rooms to look as "authentic" [cf. exotic] as possible. Schweizer wrote Hubbell

November 17, 1904 (Box 36) requesting the Navajo use handmade forges and bellows while demonstrating silversmithing, and to bring their own homemade cooking pots "as he would not want them to use a stove there.." The United States Indian Service sanctioned the Harvey Company's policy of hiring demonstrators because they "are paid good wages" (Box 43, R. Perry to Lorenzo Hubbell). However, it appears that the Harvey Company and Hubbell were "each other's bill collectors when it came to Indian accounts (1993 personal correspondence, Martha Blue).

Much of the correspondence over the years concerned the Indian families supplied by Hubbell to the various Harvey Houses. The Company placed implicit trust in Hubbell's judgment regarding appropriate individuals. Few traders were as proficient in the Navajo language as Hubbell. Often families were away from the reservation for months at a time. The Harvey Company was reluctant to release any demonstrators until their replacements arrived. If one of the women was about to deliver her baby, or if one of the men proved extremely troublesome, only then would an individual be sent home without an immediate replacement. Evidence of resistance on the part of demonstrators recurs over the years in the correspondence. Within a one week period in April 1905, Huckel wrote Hubbell twice with complaints about Taos the silversmith:

...we cannot control Taos. He is making silver for other Indians and they are selling it, he is going over town and selling it and also selling it to our guests on the quiet, no matter how closely we watch him. I find he has been doing this ever since he has been at Albuquerque. It is a bad precedent for our other Indians and is spoiling them...Taos has been spoiled by his experience at St. Louis....he is spoiling *Megil-li-to* also..(Box 36).

In 1905, Hopi potter Nampeyo demonstrated at the Grand Canyon along with four men, two women and five children. According to the correspondence, the Indians at Hopi House were "creating a good market for their goods." In a letter dated September 30, 1905, Huckel wrote to Hubbell stating that Nampeyo's party was "pretty independent and pretty much spoiled when they were at the Canyon last spring"

They did not want to do anything unless they were paid for it...on the other hand, Nampeyo and her daughter are excellent pottery makers...the Indian children are the greatest attraction at the Canyon.

Today Nampeyo is acknowledged as the 'matriarch' of Pueblo potters and her pieces sell for thousands of dollars each. Sometimes Hubbell had to make arrangements to ship entire families on short notice, and on a number of occasions he would receive a telegram cancelling the request. On April 4, 1907, Schweizer requested more Indians "as soon as possible" because one thousand Shriners were expected at the Grand Canyon by the end of April. In a letter dated May 19, 1910, from the Grand Canyon, Huckel noted his displeasure with Navajo silversmith Charley, who attempted to sell jewellery directly to tourists. Another Navajo smith had been retained as a demonstrator for over a year. Huckel notes: "These Indians seem to think they can come and go as they please and the only way to handle them is to be firm with them" (Box 36).

APPENDIX IX The Fred Harvey Company as Brokers of
Historic Navajo Textiles

Information provided in Chapter Three described how Navajo textiles had to "compete" with Jacquard-woven counterparts, as manufacturers of commercial trade blankets usurped the market. From the turn of the century, Navajo weavers also had to "compete" with textiles woven by their ancestors. Evidence of an active market for historic weavings appears in texts (Amsden 1934; James 1914), magazine articles and advertisements (Spiegelberg 1904; Young 1914). For decades, Lorenzo Hubbell corresponded with and provisioned collectors, traders, museum curators and dealers, such as the Fred Harvey Company. The investment market for historic Navajo textiles has been active for a century, and individuals such as Herman Schweizer played a pivotal role in maintaining it.¹ In perusing Schweizer's ledgers, the purchase of historic textiles made up a large portion of his entire annual inventory, particularly during the first twenty years of this century. Sometimes these historic pieces remained unsold for decades due to huge markups and fluctuating demand. Thus has the collectors' market in historic Navajo weaving plagued the contemporary market for a century.

Schweizer was relentless in his desire to own the best, and over a forty year period he acquired more than 6000 choice objects of Indian and Spanish origin, for the Harvey Company collection alone (Dutton 1983:95).² Amsden (1934:192) sanctioned the Harvey Company's farsightedness in purchasing old blankets, by noting:

it is no exaggeration to say that Fred Harvey has saved from destruction thousands of worthy old specimens of Navajo weaving. The vision and initiative of Mr. J. F. Huckel, Vice President of the company, and Mr. H. Schweizer, veteran manager of the Indian Department, have brought to the Fred Harvey Company the honor of being a staunch and enlightened protagonist of Navajo weaving, old as well as new.

Although Schweizer lacked unlimited funds with which to purchase textiles, he tied up thousands of dollars per year in old collections. For example, Blomberg (1988:20) notes how Schweizer paid retired merchant Abe Spiegelberg \$7,000 for his collection in 1901.³

This equals the entire amount of credit extended to 272 Ganado area weavers in 1900 (Weavers' journals Boxes 344(1) & 523). Schweizer did not purchase \$7000 worth of textiles (482 blankets and rugs) from Hubbell until 1906 (Blanket Book #3, Museum of International Folk Art).

"Abe" Spiegelberg was one of the early New Mexico merchants, described as individuals who had "opportunity and foresight" to amass fine collections for "pleasure and/or profits" (Blomberg 1988:20). Spiegelberg opened a curio shop in Santa Fe and:

..assembled one of the finest collections of Navajo and other Indian and native blankets and rugs in the Southwest, which was sold to the Fred Harvey company He became recognized as the premier expert authority on such fabrics..

In his article published in "Out West," Spiegelberg (1904:447-449), advised collectors to purchase blankets from "reputable dealers." He contrasts the beauty and quality of the historic blankets woven with pride for Navajo use, in comparison to the more coarsely woven, counterparts currently produced for the burgeoning external market.⁴

Today textile collectors phone the Heard Museum in Phoenix as their library houses a major portion of Herman Schweizer's Ledger Books. As Schweizer purchased and sold thousands of Navajo textiles for the Fred Harvey Company for nearly 50 years, many old textiles retain the Harvey Company tag with stock number and wholesale price in code. Verification of the date and cost provides additional pedigree for the textile, immediately increasing its value.

ENDNOTES

1. For example, in *Blanket Book #2*, p. 136-7 (1902), Schweizer purchased sixteen historic textiles from Hubbell for \$177.50. He retailed them for \$1148.50, an increase of 650%.
2. Schweizer bought a portion of the Richard Weatherill collection from his widow who was left with five children to support. Weatherill was killed in 1910, by a Navajo while trading at Chaco in northwestern New Mexico. On August 22, 1910, Schweizer purchased 32 textiles including several bayeta squaw dresses (*Blanket Book #4*, p. 55, Museum of International Folk Art). He paid Mrs. Weatherill \$692.75, and marked up the historic pieces to \$3562, a 500% increase.
3. The Spiegelberg collection was not the only collection purchased by Schweizer that year. Blomberg (1988) highlights how newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst acquired most of his nineteenth century collection of Navajo textiles from Schweizer. Working with Schweizer's blanket journals, Blomberg replicates the huge markups (from 100 to 1000%), between the amounts Schweizer paid for a textile (usually purchased from Hubbell or other traders, collectors, or peddlers) and his retail price. Blomberg (1988:13) documents how Schweizer not only had a difficult time collecting money from Hearst, the newspaper magnate insisted upon receiving a large discount.
4. On August 16, 1903, Schweizer purchased more of the Spiegelberg collection which included eight Acoma and Moqui textiles. This portion of the collection wholesaled at \$615, and retailed at \$2775 (*Book #4*, #6053-6065, Heard Museum). On January 20, 1903, the Company purchased twenty-five textiles from the Seligman collection, which wholesaled for \$2257.50, and retailed at \$8775. Seligman had been a major competitor of the Spiegelbergs, and Schweizer had purchased a major portion of this collection in 1902.

APPENDIX X Navajo Cosmology

The first Dine were created by the acts of the Holy People, among them First Man and First Woman, *diyin dine'e* (Long Life and Happiness). These two prototypical beings ascended through a series of differently coloured lower worlds, finally emerging into the present world. Each of the successive lower worlds was more ordered than the one(s) before it. Each subsequent upward migration toward emergence onto earth's surface led to greater stability, order and knowledge. First Man and First Woman discovered a female infant later named Changing Woman (or White Shell Woman), on top of a Blanca Peak, a sacred mountain. Changing Woman became the genitrix of the Navajo (Dine, or Earth Surface People). Her name refers to her ability to age as time passes, and upon reaching old age, she rejuvenates and becomes young again. During six months of summer the Earth is at work with the reproduction and growth of plants. In winter months she rests and becomes old. There is a continuing cycle of senescence and rejuvenation. Corn, horses, sheep, and other life forms owe their origin to Changing Woman. She is considered to be in control of all reproduction and she holds the answer to a long life.

Changing Woman was impregnated by the Sun and gave birth to twins, who later killed monsters who roamed the earth making life unsafe for humans. Four sacred mountains delineate the sacred homeland of the Navajo. Indeed, the number four recurs frequently in Navajo cosmology. The Gods and ancestors of the Navajo emerged into this world through four underworlds. There are four sacred colours (black, white, blue, and yellow), four sacred stones (turquoise, white shell, abalone and jet), four clouds of the first world, and four seasons: spring (birth), summer (growth), fall (death), and winter (decay). Mountains have anthropomorphic inner forms (Wyman 1970:24-26). The animals and plants "used to be people." Nearly every element of the universe may be personalized. Although several hundred versions of the origin story exist, an integral core of commonalities permeates all versions. Witherspoon (1977:33) reminds us that:

Ritual knowledge is fixed and complete; it cannot be expanded. All there is to know about this world is already known because the world was organized according to this knowledge. Earth surface people can expand their awareness or command of knowledge, but they cannot expand knowledge itself.

Trudy Griffin-Pierce (1992:29) beautifully summarizes Navajo philosophy:

In traditional Navajo thinking, spirituality, health, harmony, and beauty are inseparable. All the good things in life--health, prosperity, happiness, and peace--are a result of living life from a spiritual perspective that acknowledges all parts of the universe as alive and interdependent.

The Navajo perceive the universe as an all-inclusive whole in which everything has its own place and unique and beneficial relationship to all other living things. Humans, animals, plants, and mountains are harmonic components of the whole. An orderly balance based on the principle of reciprocity governs the actions and thoughts of all living things, from the smallest creature to the most complex, including human beings and the enduring land on which they live. It is the responsibility of humans to honor and maintain this balance.

The Navajo Ceremonial system is the principle means to restore and maintain balance.

The Navajo Ceremonial System

The Navajo Ceremonial system is comprised of two major parts, the general Origin Story which includes the story of the Emergence and the origin legends of particular ceremonials. The system is transmitted orally from the Navajo medicine man or "singer" to an apprentice. It sanctions and explains a large body of mythology, and is primarily designed to produce or restore the conditions implied by *hozho*. Thus *hozho* carries a connotation of harmony and balance as achieved by beauty. It is inconceivable that beauty can exist without harmony, and vice versa (Faris 1986:138). Each ceremonial has special relations with certain groups of Holy People. Ceremonies vary greatly in elaboration and may last from two to nine nights.

The ultimate purpose of the ceremonials is to restore *hozho* if order and balance are disrupted because of violations of the order set down in the Navajo Creation Story. Navajo perceive order as based upon the pairing of contrasting but complementary elements. Imbalance manifests itself in various ways, especially through illness. The universe contains evil as well as good. Evil and danger come from disturbance of the normal order, harmony

and balance. Disorder must be corrected through restructuring harmonious order. The singer learns appropriate songs, medicines and ritual action necessary for curing a patient and restoring *hozho*. The source of the ritual is a myth that relates how the ancestors of the Navajo acquired the ritual procedures from the supernaturals (Spencer 1957). The singers create sandpaintings specific to eliciting a cure for a particular illness. It is inappropriate to separate medicine from religion within the Navajo world, as the concepts of health and order are inseparable in Navajo thought. Health stretches far beyond the individual. It concerns all Navajo and is based on a reciprocal relationship with the world of nature mediated through ritual (p 270).

The Holy People are thought to be irresistibly attracted to ceremonies by prayers, offerings and seeing their portraits beautifully painted in sand. The Holy People, (or Yeis) judge correctness and completeness of the performance and restore *hozho*. The meaning and cultural significance of sandpaintings are incorporated into the processes of their creation. Thus the ceremonies re-create and restructure the universe, putting everything back in its proper place. Because humans are composed of the same elements as the mountains, plants and stars, these beings are made in human form to make them come alive and remind participants they are related to them. Prayer offerings establish a kin relationship with the Holy People characterized by reciprocity (Griffin-Pierce 1992). It is an exchange, an invitation to the Holy People, and in return they restore the health of the patient, or "one sung over." Such familial closeness is an essential part of re-establishing conditions of health and harmony. Individuals who help to create the sandpaintings and participate in the ceremonies feel spiritual fulfillment because they contribute to restoring balance and harmony in the cosmos. Thus the principle of reciprocity governs human relations with many elements in the universe. Such relationships are still very real and maintain their importance among Navajo who continue to live the "Navajo way."

Blessingway

Although numerous prayers and chants are performed for curative purposes, the Blessingway is considered the core of all Navajo ceremonies. It is at the core of all Navajo culture, the "spinal column" of songs (Winter 1993:98). Blessingway is prophylactic, and the stories provide the prototypes and sanctions for many of the acts and component rites of other ceremonies. Blessingway has historical precedence over other chants since it originated just after Emergence, It describes the birth of Changing Woman and her Twins, the creation of corn, wild game and domestic animals, the creation of the Navajo people, the origin of the loom and weaving tools, and the sacred Mountain Soil Bundle. This key ceremony consecrates the hogan, is central to *Kinaalda*, the girl's puberty ceremony, and blesses a marriage, a mother and her newborn. It is intended to secure harmony and success in all phases of life.

The Holy People through Changing Woman, are tied genealogically through clan organization to the Earth Surface People (Dine) (Reichard 1950:58-9). They experience human emotions, such as worry, jealousy, anger, sadness and joy. Thus they have emotional and physical links to humans. With the conclusion of cosmic creation, the Holy People became invisible, and the responsibility for maintaining *hozho* was passed onto the Dine. However, the Holy People can be "seen" indirectly as they reveal themselves through sights and sounds in the natural world.

The Hogan

Blessingway consecrates the Navajo family dwelling or hogan which is seen as a model of the Navajo cosmos. The hogan, with the smokehole as its breathing hole, is a living entity as prayers emerge and rise to the heavens. Farella (1984) has called the hogan a "master encoding" or diagram of the Navajo cosmos. The first hogan was conceived, planned and constructed by the Holy People (*diyin dine'e*) who decreed that humans should follow the plan with its posts at the four cardinal directions and east-facing doorway. Sacred

jewels are associated with each direction. Reichard (1950:208-213) calls such jewels "condensed symbols" intimately related to sacred colors, directions, places and entities. The design and orientation of the hogan evolves from the Creation story and it provides the model for the design of the Navajo basket and the *biil* (woman's woven dress) (Schwarz 1993:367). As a divine model given by the Holy People, the hogan evokes a much larger cosmic order.

Kinaalda

Kinaalda, or a Navajo girl's puberty ceremony, was created by First Man and First Woman so women would be able to have children and the human race could multiply (Frisbie 1967). Changing Woman had the first *Kinaalda*, which is considered the richest gift provided by the Holy People. It is the rock upon which Navajo life and culture are built (Roessel 1981:38). For many Navajo, the knowledge and stories given in *Kinaalda* by the Holy People form the foundation and basis for current Navajo family life. The knowledge and stories provide a charter on how to live in general. The stories concern subsistence, responsibility, marriage, behaviour toward family and kin, respect for Holy People, importance of hospitality and self-sufficiency tempered with support for family members. Poverty is to be avoided, however, over-accumulation of goods is frowned upon. Respect is due all things as all things are alive and interrelated (Roessel 1981:39-40).

A dramatic four night ceremony, *Kinaalda* is a celebration that ushers a girl into society, invokes positive blessings on her, insures her health, prosperity and well being, and protects her from potential misfortune. Sand paintings, masks, prayer sticks, rattles and drums are not used during a *Kinaalda*, because it is prophylactic, rather than curative (Frisbie 1967:8-9). According to Maureen Schwarz (1994), nearly 50% of Navajo girls still have *Kinaalda* (Heard Museum notes). The young girl receives instructions and knowledge to assume her adult role. It is thought to have a lasting effect on her life. She is considered to be soft and capable of being reshaped by moulding by an 'ideal' woman, one who has physical strength, perfect health, beauty, energy and ambition. The girl is moulded on pile

of blankets and other articles contributed by participants, who believe that in so doing these goods will soon be replaced by new ones. Beautiful fabrics, blankets and deerskins are "soft goods" which collectively symbolize life (Schwarz 1993:358). Sometimes a weaving batten is pressed upon her during the moulding process. Reichard (1950:584) has noted that pressing is a common procedure that promotes "identification by absorption." Because Changing Woman was moulded during the first *Kinaalda*, repetition of this process will make the young woman resemble Changing Woman.

Navajo Gender Relations as Directed by Navajo Cosmology

The symmetry desired in Navajo gender relations is informed by *Dine Bahane*. The Holy People devised the wedding ceremony. The teachings of the Navajo with regard to marriage and family life are still important. A man is taught to take care of his wife just as First Man took care of his wife. He should decorate her with turquoise and shell just as Mother Earth is decorated with flowers in the spring (Benedek 1992:87). The sexual division of labour is described; women perform certain tasks and men do others. Men clear and help till fields, hunt game and help women with their work. Women till the soil, carry water, make fire and weave the blankets. Tools (including weaving tools) are mentioned. The major role for women is reproducing and sustaining life. Men are leaders in political and religious affairs.

Without the appropriate performance, certain everyday tasks cannot be accomplished. Sex is a very important motif throughout the creation story. In Navajo thought, the nature of sexual harmony and the way of achieving and maintaining it are central. The pairing of complements (male/female) is essential to the order of the universe. Most aspects of the natural world are divided into male and female beings. Only through pairing can any entity be complete (Griffin-Pierce 1992:14).

APPENDIX XI A Vignette on Reciprocity

These comments bring to mind information relayed to me by David Brugge in 1994. Retired from the National Park Service, Brugge has worked with the Navajo for decades, and published prolifically on various aspects of Navajo culture. His comments corroborate information related previously as to how Navajo construe proper social relations. Brugge's comments to me were in reference to Navajo weavers' trade relations with Lorenzo Hubbell.

Brugge writes:

Trade to the Navajo involves an "exchange of gifts." This is deeply rooted in Navajo thought and tied up with the belief that there should be balanced reciprocity in social relations. Lorenzo Hubbell and Navajo women were keeping two very different kinds of "accounts." Hubbell kept his in writing in his ledger books in terms of dollars and cents. Women kept theirs in their heads in terms of "social capital." ..this helps explain the reluctance of many Navajo to bargain or even haggle a bit over prices. This is probably still true today for more traditionalist people as it was a generation ago, for this would destroy the harmonious relationship that a fair exchange is intended to promote....

Brugge states he is making inferences here, but "they fit with what I know of Navajo ways."

He related the following story to illustrate his point.

Brugge participated in an Indian arts and crafts store in Albuquerque in the early 1950s. It was said that a good trade took place when both parties felt they had gotten what they wanted:

I didn't even know about "social capital" at the time, but thinking back I think some of our Navajo suppliers [jeweller/craftsmen] understood the concept very well..they would seldom return to a customer [i.e. a merchant] who didn't meet their expectations. One memory of 40 years ago is my frequent frustration when asking an Indian craftsperson "what do you want for this [object]? And being told "It's up to you"...

David had no idea as to what many of the rings or other pieces of jewellery might be worth.

He continues:

The Navajo thought they were helping to create a harmonious relationship by offering to sell for whatever I was willing to give, and I was far too inexperienced to appreciate their proffered friendship, not realizing that was an important part of the transaction.

Glossary of Terms and Description of Weaving Process

Aniline dyes: coal tar derivatives, or synthetic colorants developed in Europe around 1850, and made available to Navajo weavers by traders after 1875.

Batten: a piece of smoothed hard wood about three feet long by three inches wide and one-half inch thick which is used to separate the warp threads prior to inserting the weft.

Bayeta: or *baize* was a red trade wool fabric which was unravelled by Navajo weavers, respun and incorporated in Chief's Blankets. Bayeta was also available in other colours, but red was preferred.

Chief Blanket: nineteenth century banded wearing blankets worn and traded by Navajo prior to Bosque Redondo. They were finally woven of handspun wool and sometimes incorporated bayeta. They have been classified into four different styles or phases, with increasingly complex patterns. Lorenzo Hubbell encouraged women to weave "revival-style" Chief's blankets around 1900.

Churro: The small, hardy breed of sheep introduced by the Spanish in the sixteenth century and adopted by the Navajo.

Germantown Yarns: 3 and 4-ply yarns produced from synthetic dyes and commercially spun, these yarns were originally manufactured in Pennsylvania.

Heddles: When the loom is warped, the weaver attaches every other warp thread to a continuous string heddle looped around a long thin rod or dowel. This allows alternate warp strands to come forward simultaneously when the heddle rod is pulled.

Indigo: A vegetal dye extracted from a species of the pea family. Produces a deep rich blue.

Saddle Blanket: single saddle blanket measures 30 to 36 square inches [75 to 90 square centimetres]. A double saddle blanket is twice the width and folded when placed under a saddle. These blankets may be used as small rugs.

Twill Weaves: called *iimàas* by Navajo weavers, are produced when weft yarns pass over two or more warps. Usually each successive row moves one thread to the right, or left, producing a diagonal pattern. Frequently used for saddle blankets.

Vegetal Dyes: non-synthetic colourants extracted from plants.

Weaver's Pathway: a thin line extending to edge of textile. Typically created for bordered rugs, as it allows the weaver's energy to escape, freeing her to begin another rug.

Warp: fine spun wool yarn stretched tightly on the loom bars to form the foundation for the textile. When the loom is upright, the warp is vertical. It is covered by the weft. [See Illustration].

Weft: these one-ply yarns are usually coloured, and not spun as fine as the warp yarn. They are woven over and under the warp yarns and make up the patterns seen in the textiles.

The Weaving Fork or Comb: made of wood and containing from five to ten tines, the

weavers uses the fork to pack down the weft yarns.

Ye'ii weavings: Ye'ii are Holy People who are sometimes depicted in sandpaintings created by medicine men during Navajo ceremonies. Some weavers, especially from the Four Corners area specialize in weaving sandpainting blankets.

Description of the Production Process for Weaving a Navajo Rug:

Fleece: The wool from two or three sheep are needed to make a 3 x 5 foot rug. the best wool for weaving comes from the mid-body area of the animal: the shoulders, back and flanks. If the fleece is not too dirty, it can be shaken vigorously. Wool to be dyed should be washed. And washing can be done before or after carding and spinning. Fetching water to wash fleece in the past was time consuming as water sources such as wells and streams were not always convenient to one's home. Pounded yucca root (*Yucca baccata* or *Yucca glauca*) or commercial detergent are used to wash the fleece. Several rinses are required, then the wool is spread out to dry. It may take 10 to 15 hours to shear and wash the fleece prior to carding and spinning it.

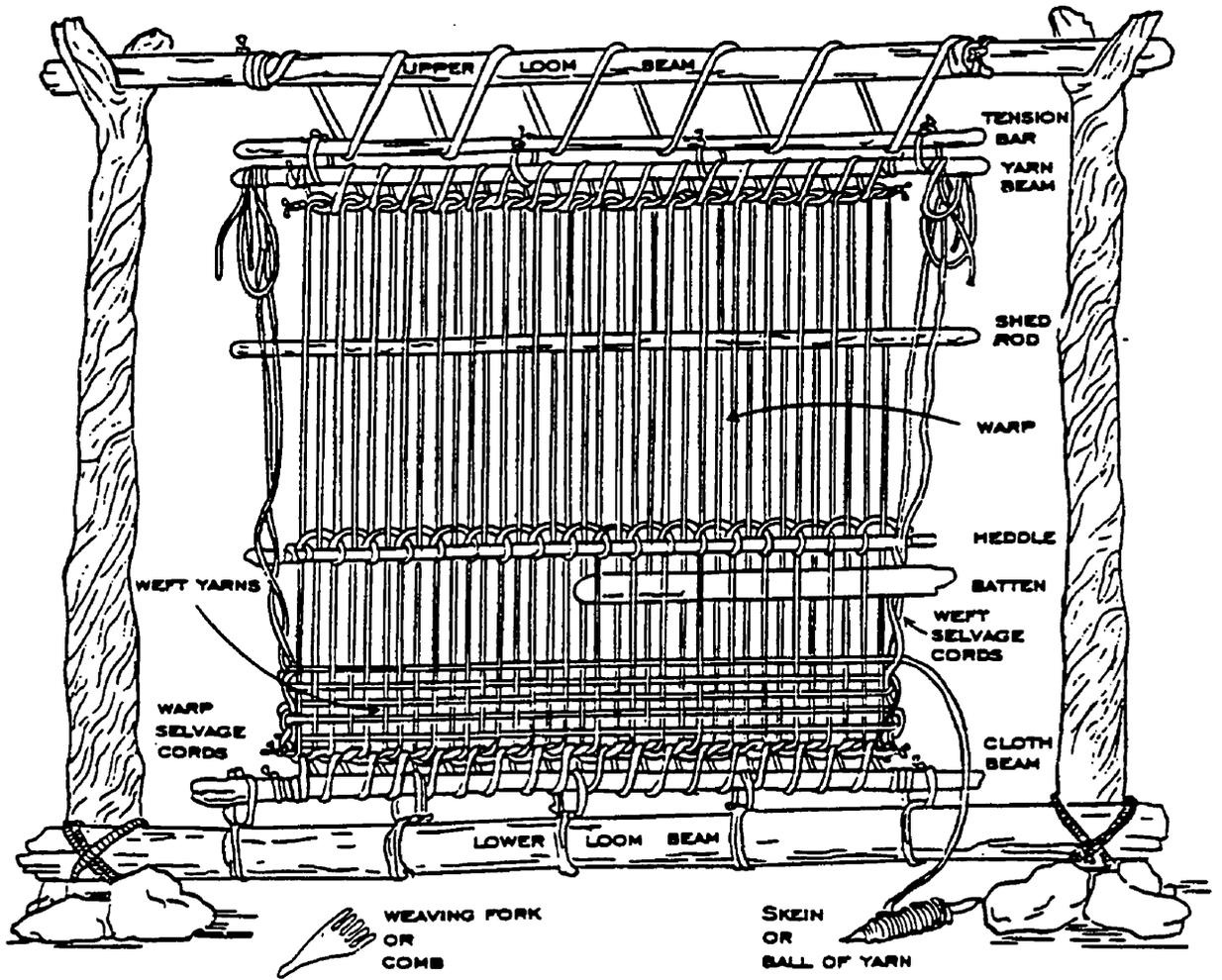
Carding: When the fleece is dried, the fibres must be straightened with tow cards to remove tangles. Carding involves combing a handful of fleece between two metal boards with fine metal teeth. A single batt or "rolag" can be produced by an experienced carder in approximately one minute. However, hundreds of rolags are necessary to produce enough fleece to spin into yarn for an average rug. If the fleece has not been washed, it takes somewhat longer to produce the rolags, as the wool is greasier and contains bits of dirt and debris.

Spinning: Navajo spinners create their yarn on the largest spindle in existence. Sitting on the floor, or on a chair, the spinner twirls the spindle against her thigh with one hand while twisting and pulling the rolag with the other. As the rolag becomes twisted into yarn of the desired thickness, the spinner pushes the spun yarn against the disk of the spindle. A new rolag is attached to the most recently spun yarn by twisting a few of the wool fibres. It is necessary to spin the wool in this manner at least twice, and preferably, three times to achieve the desired fineness for a smooth rug. To produce enough fine yarn for a 3 x 5 foot rug, at least 3,000 yards of yarn are needed. The preparation time prior to weaving may comprise upwards of 70%.

Dyeing: many Navajo blankets and rugs are woven with commercially dyed yarn, in which the dyes are purchased in small packages, and stirred into hot water prior to adding the skeins of hand-spun yarn. However, if a weaver wishes to use vegetal dyed yarns, she must collect the plants which will provide the desired colours for her rug. Plants must be collected during the appropriate season, usually summer or fall. Most plants can be used fresh or dried for future use. Sometimes Navajo medicine men are consulted concerning the location of suitable plants, as they utilize them for ceremonial purposes.

Loom Preparation: the Navajo loom is often made from pinon trees, and logs 15-20 cm are used for the uprights and crosspieces. The loom may be anchored to the ground or wooden "legs" added to serve as additional supports. Some weavers may use metal pipes, old metal bed frames with the springs removed, or a combination of wood and metal to provide the necessary rigidity to keep the weaving even.

Winding the Warp: the loom becomes a temporary warping frame which holds the cross



ADAPTED FROM KENT (1975)

NAVAJO LOOM

bars. The weaver winds tightly spun warp in a figure-eight motion around the bars held in place by ropes or nails to keep the warp perfectly even. If a large rug is planned, it usually takes two people to warp the loom, each sitting at either end of the loom frame which is laid on the floor. The completed warp is laced to broom handles or dowels (this keeps the threads evenly spaced), then stretched tightly and anchored to additional dowels or heavy metal bars. It hangs vertically between the top and bottom bars.

Weaving: all Navajo weaving, with the exception of the twilled saddle blankets and warp-faced belts, involves covering the warp completely with the weft yarns of various colours. Designs are made by introducing a different coloured wefts and weaving back and forth to build up the patterns. Adjoining colours are hooked around each other to avoid gaps in the weaving. This is the technique typically known as tapestry. It is a time consuming type of weave, as each row must be tightly packed to prevent the warp from showing. Since the weaver has wound the warp in a continuous, figure eight motion, two sheds are created which facilitate construction of the patterns. A long flat stick called a batten (about 40-55 cm. long and 2.5 cm wide) is inserted and turned on edge to hold warp open temporarily while the weaver places the wefts in position.

Finishing: Because a Navajo textile has four selvages, tension increases as the rug nears completion. The weaver uses a needle or umbrella rib to force the final centimetres of yarns through the warp.

Clarification of Terms:

The key differences between a blanket and a rug are related to size (wearing blankets varied from 5.5 to 6.5 feet in width), whereas rugs could vary between double saddle blanket size (2.5-3 x 5 feet) and room sized carpets. Textiles used as rugs were woven thicker and heavier to account for foot traffic, and many have borders. Sometimes terms such as "small blankets" and large blankets are used in the archived correspondence. It is difficult to define how size is determined. Using the wearing blanket as an "average", because it was the textile typically woven by Navajo women prior to the formation of the Reservation. Thus, any textile less than 3 x 5 feet would be considered "small." 3 x 5 feet to 4 x 6 feet would be "average" and textiles measuring greater than 5 x 7 feet could be considered "large." Hubbell was known for his preference for large rugs.

Good Blanket/Common Blanket. a common blanket can be construed as a description of the typical saddle blanket, containing edge to edge stripes, a few colours, little if any pattern, and relatively "coarse" weave (fewer than 10 wefts per inch). A good blanket could be a well woven patterned saddle blanket, or a rug with a highly patterned weave, woven on a wool warp, with a pleasing colour combination, technically well-executed, with at least 20 wefts per inch of weaving.

Modern Blanket/Historic Blanket - designation refers to patterns in blankets and rugs. Historic blanket are those patterned after blankets woven prior to Bosque Redondo. They incorporate patterns found in Chief's blankets, wearing blankets woven between 1800-1863, which incorporate terraced diamonds and triangles, primarily influenced by Navajo basketry patterns. Navajo weavers were also influenced by patterns produced by Hispanic weavers which incorporated serrated diamonds, etc. In his 1902 curio catalogue [Appendix Five], trader Lorenzo Hubbell depicts blankets and rugs woven with historic nineteenth century motifs. These he termed "Revival style" textiles. The "modern" styles emerged during the transitional period (after 1885), and many are bordered, or include various combinations and

permutations of patterns similar to, or quite different than those found in nineteenth century Navajo textiles. With the exception of Hubbell, traders perceived as instrumental in influencing Navajo weavers in their region, the rugs subsequently woven would be referred to as "modern". In his 1974 text, H.L. James highlights at least nine "regional styles" and several other styles, such as monogrammed, and pictorials. Today many weavers have books and catalogues on the subject of Navajo weaving, and they may weave a pattern attributed to a particular region that is quite distant from their home. Non-Navajo generally refer to styles that are attributed to particular areas and posts, but Navajo weavers have their own names for styles and weaves that do not coincide at all with information terms designated in the published literature. Many patterns are also handed down in families (Kathy Tabaha, 1996).