Hidden Heritage: Pueblo Indians, National Parks, and the Myth of the "Vanishing Anasazi"

by

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ABSTRACT

Tourists who have visited the Southwest are familiar with the story of the "Anasazi." Most know them as a mysterious people who built cliff dwellings in the labyrinth of desert canyons in the Four Corners, like those at Mesa Verde, Tsegi Canyon, or Canyon de Chelly, or as the architects of impressive abandoned villages, like those at Chaco Canyon or Wupatki. However, far too few realize these people were the ancestors of today’s Pueblo Indians. This paper explores the roots of this misunderstanding by deconstructing the stories told by the dominant culture concerning the Pueblo heritage national parks and monuments and describes the problems the myth has created.

Particular emphasis is placed on the popular notion that the "Anasazi" inexplicably "disappeared." This study explains the origins of the disappearance myth; the reasons why people continue to believe the residents of these ancient villages "vanished;" and the results the denial of their heritage has had for Pueblo Indians. Neither contemporary archaeologists nor the National Park Service promotes this erroneous idea
today. Yet, both played a role in the myth’s origin as both disseminated and countered the myth over the years. Similarly, this study investigates the role the tourist industry and the popular media have played in perpetuating this misunderstanding and enabling other groups to appropriate the Ancestral Puebloan past for their own ends. Finally, this study explores the Pueblo Indians’ interaction with the dominant culture for control of the story of their ancestors.

These interpretations suggest that the American perception of Indians in the national parks has closely followed the stereotype of the “vanishing American.” Although this concept has created problems for all Native peoples, for Pueblo Indians it has helped to fuel the false assumption that ultimately denied their heritage. Recently, it has created difficulties for the National Park Service as well. The fact that the nation’s best-known national parks and monuments commemorating the American Indian heritage represent in the public mind a “lost civilization” has strengthened negative stereotypes and discouraged cross-cultural understanding.
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Interpretation by the National Park Service

Plans are being developed for a suitable administrative center. . . The type of
construction follows closely that of the older houses of the present Hopi Pueblo
Indians, the presumable descendants of the cliff dwellers who in prehistoric times
inhabited this region and left the interesting cultural remains which form the chief
attractions and interest of Mesa Verde Park.¹

~ Jesse Nusbaum, Mesa Verde Superintendent (1921) ~

On Monday evening, 19 July 1926, the crown princess of Sweden sat on the rock
ledge across from Spruce Tree House and watched as the ancient village became the
stage for a dramatic production. The play began above the mesa and moved into the
alcove as darkness descended. Lit by the glow of red and green railroad flares, actors
performed under the direction of the superintendent’s wife, Aileen Nusbaum. Although
the audience sat over fifty meters away, they could hear perfectly, due to the peculiar
acoustics of the canyon. Most of the actors did not speak English. They were Navajo
workers hired to build roads and trails for the National Park. They spoke their lines in
Diné, their native language, to create a more “authentic” atmosphere. To clarify the plot,
the National Park Service (NPS) offered a synopsis before each scene. Entitled Fire, the
play ostensibly duplicated “the old ceremonies of the cliff dwellers, with a love theme
woven in.”² As the nation’s most famous archaeological park, the images of the past
cultivated by the NPS reinvigorated America’s romantic attitude toward ruins.

Nusbaum did not offer frequent performances of her play. The national park
produced it primarily for visiting dignitaries and only rarely for the public, since the
superintendent bore all the production expenses. For a historian, however, it provides
considerable insight into the interpretation of the Ancestral Puebloan past by the NPS. Since
the chanting and the dance steps were entirely Navajo, not Pueblo Indian, it complicated the
understanding of the Ancestral Puebloan culture and increased visitor’s confusion as to the identity of the cliff dwellers. Although Navajo culture bears some similarities with Pueblo culture, overall the two are quite different. The average visitor was unlikely to understand the Navajo were there to work, not because they shared the ancient culture. The NPS failed to expound the differences between the Navajo and the Ancestral Puebloans, or to explain the connection between the Ancestral Puebloans and modern Pueblo Indians. Instead, they chose to emphasize the “mystery” of the ruins, routinely writing the Ancestral Puebloans had left “for parts unknown.” If the NPS had taken the time to explain that the builders of these ancient villages were the ancestors of modern day Pueblo tribes, they might have alleviated the public’s confusion. However, the Park Service was still in its infancy and the field of interpretation was young. As a result, their interpretation created a lasting dilemma for the NPS in the Southwest: the confusion between Navajo and Pueblo culture.

Mesa Verde Superintendent Jesse Nusbaum was in the forefront of the development of NPS interpretive procedures. As a trained archaeologist, however, he was cautious to avoid categorical assertions. This caution led Nusbaum to write reports stating the Hopis and other modern Pueblo tribes were “the presumable descendants of the cliff dwellers.” Working closely with archaeologists, the NPS took the same attitude when commenting on the identity of the ancient villagers. They drew analogies between the Ancestral Puebloans and the modern Pueblo tribes, even asserted their relationship on occasion, but romanticized a “vanished race” as well. As the philosophy of interpretation developed, park managers stressed to their ranger staff the need to tell compelling stories to draw in the audience. For an audience conditioned to romantic thought, nothing could be more compelling than the tale of a “long-forgotten” people.
The Creation of the National Park Service

Once the Antiquities Act became law and Mesa Verde was a national park, some people believed the needs of preservation had been met. In reality, preservation was just beginning. The need for an administration to bring the intent of the law into practice quickly became clear. Over the next quarter century, national monuments proliferated, encompassing many of the sites Hewett had listed in his 1903 report. After establishing the NPS, President Woodrow Wilson elevated Casa Grande to national monument status in 1918 and proclaimed Yucca House a national monument the next year. President Warren Harding established both Hovenweep and Aztec Ruins National Monuments in 1923 and Calvin Coolidge made Wupatki a national monument in 1924. In 1931, after the Navajo Tribal Council consented, Congress authorized President Herbert Hoover to proclaim Canyon de Chelly a national monument. By the early 1930s, the initial list of Pueblo heritage parks and monuments was complete. However, as their numbers grew, so did administrative challenges. Congress was financially conservative when it came to funding the monuments. A decade after it passed the Antiquities Act, Congress belatedly realized the extent of the system it had created and authorized the creation of the NPS.

Proclamations for national monuments had no automatic funding provisions, and without funding, the monuments could not deter vandals. Pot-hunting continued because most national monuments were in remote locations, and the GLO and Forest Service lacked the infrastructure to protect or administer them. A few national monuments employed custodians before 1916. John Wetherill held this position at Navajo National Monument and Frank Pinkley at Casa Grande. Most national monuments, however, lacked even this simple protective measure. Even the custodians lacked financial resources – Wetherill received one
dollar a year for his service. In essence, the federal government staffed the national monuments with volunteers, when they were staffed at all.\textsuperscript{7}  

While national parks generally received better funding than national monuments, they were plagued with other problems. While the Army ran some parks, like Yellowstone and Yosemite, the superintendents in other parks, like Mesa Verde, were political appointees with little knowledge or desire to manage the resources under their protection. For this reason, Mesa Verde slid into a crisis during its first decade when a series of superintendents proved too inept to meet the challenges of administering an archaeological park.

In its initial year, Mesa Verde received no appropriation and the Department of Interior arranged for the Southern Ute Agent to supervise it. All he could find time to do, however, was to place placards to warn the public of the penalty for destroying the ruins, to write reports, and to made suggestions.\textsuperscript{8} Part of the problem in finding a permanent superintendent was the continuing saga of the CCDA. McClurg lobbied for the appointment of her husband, Gilbert McClurg. Peabody opposed her, noting the irony of McClurg trying to control the park when she had fought earlier against it. Peabody supported several other candidates, finally settling on Major Hans Randolph, a well-known member of the Colorado militia.\textsuperscript{9} She won the struggle with the support of the \textit{Denver Times} and Edgar Hewett.\textsuperscript{10}

In 1907, when Randolph took over as the first official superintendent, he was more concerned about politics in Mancos, which he made park headquarters, than the welfare of Mesa Verde. He involved himself in local politics and with the banking rivalries of the small town, creating local enemies all too willing to fight.\textsuperscript{11} He reputedly kept a revolver in his desk drawer and once left town to avoid a local mob.\textsuperscript{12} He also drank to excess and had an unhappy home life.\textsuperscript{13} Locals accused him of graft and of padding the payrolls. In the park,
visitors openly dug for artifacts. One of his rangers testified that Randolph gave him grazing privileges in the park in exchange for half his salary. In the end, Randolph attempted to resign, but before he could, the Secretary of the Interior fired him.

The next two superintendents of the park proved equally inept. Samuel Shoemaker was the manager of a brickyard and Thomas Rickner was a butcher. Both became superintendents via political connections. Rickner proved to be another embarrassment, although he secured local support by helping to procure grazing permits in the park. Under his administration, local citizens visited the park without registering, disobeyed the rules, climbed over the walls, pocketed pottery shards, and wrote their names everywhere. Coal mining began in the park and there was talk of harvesting the timber. He completed a road to the major archaeological sites, but the route was only a single lane, with grades running 20-30%. The switchbacks were so sharp cars had to back up to go around. Nepotism ran rampant under Rickner. His daughter, Oddie Jeep, handled the concessions at Spruce Tree Camp. As a result, one visitor accused Rickner of moving the campground a mile from water and providing inadequate toilets, little firewood and no trash cans because his daughter had the concession. His son-in-law, Fred Jeep, became the ranger responsible for day-to-day affairs, but provided no guides to the ruins. Instead, Jeep’s eight-year-old son and other children provided this service for a fee. Nusbaum charged that Rickner purposely neglected to post signs to the ruins so visitors would have to hire these young guides. Nusbaum further observed that the children’s interpretation was “out of this world.”

Another interpretive activity during Rickner’s tenure was equally “out of this world.” McClurg returned to Mesa Verde in 1917 to produce and direct a movie filmed inside Spruce Tree House. A romance, entitled “The Marriage of the Dawn and the Moon,”
she ostensibly based it on a Hopi legend. The costuming was elaborate and the setting in the
classic dwelling was dramatic [Figure 10]. One of the directors summed up the quality of
acting by the cast of locals from Mancos. He remarked that if they had only practiced more,
the film could have been a success. The national preoccupation with the World War and the
shift in attitudes that accompanied it combined to make the film a washout at the theater.22

Nationwide the challenges facing other national parks were as daunting as those at
Mesa Verde. In 1905, California commercial interests won a reduction in the size of
Yosemite National Park.23 As World War I began, there were cries to open all the national
parks to grazing, mining, and timber cutting. Yet, the flooding of the Hetch Hetchy valley in
Yosemite National Park raised the largest outcry. When San Franciscans sought alternative
water sources after the disastrous earthquake and fires of 1906, they looked to the remote,
picturesque valley of the Hetch Hetchy. John Muir and the Sierra Club fought a nationwide
battle in Congress to preserve the valley, but lost in the closing months of 1913. Early the
next year, Muir died, leaving his friends to believe that his remorse killed him.24

No one was more concerned about the status of the national parks than Stephen
Mather, a self-made California millionaire. A member of the Sierra Club, he attended the
Congressional hearings on Hetch Hetchy, and opposed the poor management of Yosemite
and Sequoia National Parks.25 His boundless energy made him the perfect man to assist
Secretary of the Interior Franklin Lane with the management of the national parks. In 1915,
Lane proposed his appointment, but Mather remained uncertain until Lane introduced him
to a young lawyer named Horace Albright. Albright was fresh out of the Berkley law
school, recently engaged, and about to begin a career in California, but Mather’s enthusiasm
captivated him. Albright engaged Mather’s intellect and proved to be a sounding board for
his vision.26 The two became a team and set forth to bring order to the national parks.

The first item of business was to create an administrative structure for the national parks like the agency Gifford Pinchot had promoted to manage the national forests ten years earlier. Their lobbying effort for a National Park Service faced obstacles, not the least of which was the traditional resistance of Congress to the creation of any new bureaucracy. However, Mather was an idealist, and he believed he could sell others on his vision. In this effort, he benefited from what Charles Lummis accomplished with his “See America First” campaign. Realizing he first needed to raise a constituency to support the national parks, he engaged Robert Sterling Yard, paying him from his own pocket. Yard, who had been the Sunday editor for the New York Herald, immediately began to craft The National Parks Portfolio. With impressive photographs of all the national parks – including those that were outside the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior – the book was openly jingoistic. Mather’s preface declared “This nation is richer in natural scenery of the first order than any other nation.”27 The beautiful photography helped the nation visualize the grandeur of the national parks and many of the national monuments.

In The National Parks Portfolio, Yard referred to the builders of the Mesa Verde cliff dwellings as “prehistoric,” but he did not intend this to mean “unsophisticated.”28 In his introduction to the cliff dwellings, he insisted that their sense of beauty was keen, their art, though primitive, was true; rarely realistic, generally symbolic. Their decoration of cotton fabrics and ceramic work may be called beautiful, even when judged by the highly developed taste of today. . . . They were not content with rude buildings and had long outgrown the caves that satisfied less civilized Indians farther north and south of them.”29

Yard’s description of Mesa Verde never mentioned the Pueblo Indians, even when it described Fewkes’ ideas on Sun Temple. Instead, he alluded to the Ute Indians as
descendents of the cliff dwellers, suggesting these nearby Indians shunned the spirit-ridden ruins and refused to believe the spirits – whom they called “Little People” – were “their own ancestors.” He tells how they objected to the construction of a phone line in 1915 because the “Little People wouldn’t like it.” The Utes, who objected to a phone line, were correct. They were unrelated to Pueblo Indians – the spirits were not their ancestors. With no other explanation for readers, it is likely that the identity of the cliff dwellers remained a mystery to potential visitors.

After producing *The National Parks Portfolio*, Yard prepared a smaller volume with a similar theme, entitled *Glimpses of Our National Parks*. Yard now boasted of the Puebloan heritage, proclaiming their achievements were a close second to the cultures of Mexico and Peru, and that “city planning” began at Mesa Verde. He stated that a “few of [the] modern descendents still live,” relating them with Pueblo Indians, but keeping the specifics unclear. In a confusing passage, Yard described how Ancestral Puebloans believed they “were dependent upon the Gods to make the rain fall and the corn grow,” and they “worshipped the sun as the father of all, and the earth as the mother who brought them all their material blessings.” Then he observed, “They possessed no written language, and could only record their thoughts by a few symbols which they painted on their earthenware jars or scratched on the sides of the cliffs.” He left unanswered the obvious question: if they had no way to record their thoughts, how did he learn of them?

While Yard began to publicize the national parks and monuments, Mather initiated other programs to generate popular support. His triumph was the Mather Mountain Party. Conceived of as a backpack through Sequoia National Park with a corps of journalists and influential citizens, the Mather Mountain Party became a romantic adventure to the summit

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of the highest peak in the Continental U.S. The party included Emerson Hough, the popular novelist; Peter MacFarlane, from the *Saturday Evening Post*; Gilbert Grosvenor, director of the National Geographic Society; Congressman Frederick Gillett, the ranking Republican on the House Appropriations Committee; Ernest McCormick, vice-president of the Southern Pacific Railroad; and other prominent industrialists. As a group, they traveled through the high Sierras with a pack train for support, dining on delicacies, eating on tables covered with fine linen, but sitting on logs and wooden crates, sleeping in the open air, and, most of all, enjoying the spectacular scenery. The message was clear: America’s national parks were a treasure and they had to provide for them. When the members of the party separated, they knew what they had to do to win Congressional approval for a National Park Service.

National park superintendent conferences convened in 1911 and 1912 had called for a park service and in 1912, Congress first considered such a bill. Introduced by California Congressman John Raker, that bill and a similar one he introduced the following year, died in committee. Raker tried again as Congress convened at the end of 1915. J. Horace MacFarland, first president of the American Civic Association, also introduced a bill written by Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr., which included lofty language describing the purpose of national parks. Hearings on both bills were held in April 1916 and prospects looked good.34

Finally, Mather’s vision that had led to the Mountain Party began to pay its rewards. Grosvenor devoted the entire April 1916 edition of *The National Geographic* to the wonders of the nation. Titled “The Land of the Best – Tribute to the Scenic Grandeur and Unsurpassed Resources of Our Own Country,” the article contained 33 color plates, ten of which pictured the Pueblo Indians and their culture. The article was openly nationalistic, boasting, “Man goes to Asia and to Africa to study forgotten civilizations, when the
Redskins upon our own Western plains and in our own cliff dwellings reveal stories of the past as strange as any we know.” And further, “one can find more literature . . . about the troglodytes of northern Africa and Asia Minor than about the cliff-dwellers of Arizona and New Mexico, though the latter were much more ingenious and more amazing in their achievements.”55 It flattered the contemporary pueblos, but it perpetuated the myth of a “vanished” race. There were pictures of the Pueblos, but they were absent from the text. Grosvenor discussed Mesa Verde in the text, but there were no photographs of cliff dwellings or Southwestern antiquities. The issue implied that there was no connection between the “prehistoric” people of Mesa Verde and the modern pueblos who graced the color plates. Instead, the article stated that “The Mesa Verde National Park hides in its barren canyons the well-preserved ruins of a civilization which passed out of existence so many centuries ago that not even tradition recalls its people.”56 Indirectly, Mather’s effort to create the NPS furnished national exposure to the myth of a “vanished” people.

Grosvenor’s article had a profound effect on Congress. He made sure every Congressman received a copy. That summer, a second Mather Mountain Party took to the Sierras as Albright worked with a House-Senate Conference Committee to iron out differences in the bills and reach an acceptable compromise for all parties. It was not easy, since Congressional members were anticipating the upcoming election. Albright had to corral members and to wait out long recesses. Despite the complications, the Senate passed the compromise bill on 15 August and the House, on 22 August. Albright rushed the bill to the White House that same day, and it became law with Woodrow Wilson’s signature.57

**Interpretation by the Early National Park Service**

Even before the National Park Service, the federal government had entered the
field of historical interpretation. In a pamphlet published by the Railroad Administration early in the Wilson administration, promoters repeated the romantic portrayal of ancient ruins, encouraging tourists to create their own explanations for the “mysteries.”

There is always a fascination about the unexplainable — and the attraction becomes greater if we are enabled to come in contact with the mysterious object and endeavor to conjure up an explanation. In Mesa Verde National Park opportunities for such speculation are offered lavishly.\textsuperscript{38}

The brochure commented briefly on the identity of the architects. It cryptically noted, “these people are supposed to have been the ancestors of the Pueblo Indians,” then referred to the builders as a “long-vanished people.”\textsuperscript{39} The myth that the Ancestral Puebloans “vanished” was perpetuated by just this type of vague reference.

The Department of the Interior did the most to disseminate information on the national parks. Their 1915 circular on Mesa Verde is surprisingly accurate. On the first page, it identified the builders of the ancient ruins at Mesa Verde and the nearby region as “ancestors of the Pueblo Indians.”\textsuperscript{40} Elsewhere it referred to them as the “ancient Pueblos” and quoted from Fewkes’ report on Spruce Tree House, including his telling of the Hopi tradition of the sipapu.\textsuperscript{41} In 1920, when this circular went through substantial revisions, it borrowed from Yard’s text in the \textit{National Parks Portfolio}, becoming much less exact as to the identity of the builders. While it still asserted the ruins were left by “the ancestors of the Pueblo Indians,” on the same page it referred to “the architecture of that vanished race.”\textsuperscript{42} Double messages like these became increasingly common over the century. The writer stressed the point that not all Indians were nomadic and defined Pueblo culture, while stressing Puebloan links to the antiquities of the region.

In the southwestern part of the United States there are Indians who live in houses made of stone or sun-dried bricks. The antiquity of this mode of life in the region can not be questioned; it dates back to Pre-Columbian times. These houses are not
isolated from each other, but crowded together so that their walls adjoin and are often several stories high... Such a community house is called a pueblo, and the Indians that dwell in these habitations are called Pueblo Indians... Many of these pueblos still survive in the States of New Mexico and Arizona..."43

The brochure stressed that Mesa Verde was “a land of beauty and mystery.” It promoted visitation by suggesting that the “remains of a past, almost-forgotten culture may be examined and studied by anyone who wishes to visit Mesa Verde National Park.”44

The newly created NPS soon began its own program of interpretation. In 1917, Mather appointed Yard the chief of the Educational Division, and he continued to prepare new editions of the National Parks Portfolio and Glimpses of Our National Parks. The Portfolio went through six editions between 1916 and 1931. In all of them, the section on Mesa Verde remained largely the same with no mention of the Pueblosan descendents. Even the story of the “Little People” was faithfully preserved. Later editions, however, included a photograph of a Navajo laborer, further confusing the identity of the cliff dwellers. With the 1917 edition, the Portfolio incorporated the national monuments, and Yard continued to refer to the ancient people as “prehistoric.”55 However, in describing Wupatki National Monument, Yard did identify the site as being “constructed by the snake family of the Hopi in their migration from the Grand Canyon.”

Glimpses of Our National Parks was revised more substantially between 1916 and 1941. By 1934, the NPS dropped the reference to the cultures of Mexico and Peru but retained the boast concerning “city planning," along with the vague allusion to modern Pueblo Indians. In 1917, the Educational Division began publishing a new guide, entitled General Information Regarding the National Monuments. The guide identified the “remarkable relics” at Chaco Canyon as being built by an “unknown people.”56

Describing the Tonto cliff dwellings, the booklet stated that they are “one of the most
accessible ruins of the vanished race of cliff dwellers." The excerpt on Montezuma Castle spoke of "the passing of the race" while the archaeological sites at Navajo National Monument were referred to as "prehistoric pueblo or cliff dwellings," but gave no definition for pueblo. Elsewhere this guide referred to Ancestral Puebloan sites as simply "prehistoric," with no attempt to identify the architects.

In 1926, this guide became *Glimpses of Our National Monuments*, modeled after *Glimpses of Our National Parks*. Like the Portfolio, it usually referred to the builders as "prehistoric." In their description of Aztec National Monument, the authors commented on Morris' excavation of the west ruin, noting that he studied the site "in an effort to throw light upon its antiquity and place its builders in the aboriginal history of our country." However, it did not explain who the aboriginal builders were. The depiction of Montezuma Castle was more creative.

... picture a day many centuries ago when some patriarch led his clan up or down this stream, now called Beaver Creek, and rounding a great bend saw this cliff with its deep recesses as if prepared by nature for housing his people in safety. Thus it was that the clan may have halted here, built in the cliff and cultivated the land formed by the bend in the stream and lived for many years. But these ruins were abandoned many years ago, for the Apache Indians who occupied the valley on the advent of the white man, have no tradition concerning its origin.

In later editions, the authors were slightly more explicit, although they retained the term "prehistoric." They identified the ruins at Chaco Canyon as "the very zenith of pueblo civilization in prehistoric times." Had this interpretation been encouraged, it could have altered the public perception of the ruins. Congress, however, was reluctant to fund the Educational Division of the NPS and in 1919, Yard moved to the private sector, to become executive secretary of the National Parks Association with Mather's blessing.

During the first years of the twentieth century, the introduction of a system of
museums in the national parks and monuments led to another avenue of interpretation. Pinkley gathered a cross-section of Ancestral Puebloan artifacts and placed them on display in the Casa Grande ruin in 1905 – the earliest museum exhibit in any unit of the national park system. For years, he lobbied for a regular museum building, but with little effect. Hewett had recommended a museum in Mesa Verde National Park in his report of 1908, suggesting that a portion of Cliff Palace be set aside for this purpose. Initially, the relics Fewkes uncovered were targeted for the Smithsonian, infuriating McClurg and other prominent Coloradoans. Partly in response to this, Ranger Jeep began collecting artifacts during working hours to show visitors. However, Jeep and his father-in-law, Superintendent Rickner, insisted they were his personal property.

Congress entertained a bill to establish a museum in Mesa Verde in 1915, but nothing came of the effort. Finally, in 1917, Mather announced that the new log cabin, built as a ranger station, would become a museum. Rickner had built the cabin beside the Kelly Cabin at Spruce Tree Camp, an area that contained a series of shacks located randomly in the woods and looking decidedly out of place in a national park. Rickner installed five exhibit cases and twelve photographs of Mesa Verde ruins in the cabin that was large enough for Fewkes to gather the visitors there to hear his lectures.

_Early Interpretation at Mesa Verde National Park_

Mesa Verde National Park occupied the most prominent role of any of the parks commemorating the Ancestral Puebloan past. The way the interpretive story was presented there would necessarily affect the way the story was presented elsewhere. However, by 1920, there were serious concerns about the management and physical plant at Mesa Verde National Park. First, the roads in the park, the buildings, and the signs were in disarray.
Second, storing invaluable artifacts in a log cabin, obviously susceptible to fire, was not the best method of preservation. Third, there was concern over Jeep’s unauthorized and unscientific excavations. When Albright visited the park in 1917, he became convinced Jeep was also selling relics as opportunity arose. Albright found Rickner’s administration to be crude and unacceptable and encouraged Mather to investigate. After the NPS received additional complaints from influential visitors, Mather made a surprise visit to Mesa Verde in 1920. When he saw the debacle that Rickner had made of the park, he determined to replace him with someone of the proper caliber, someone who shared his vision on what a national park should be. Mather had had it with political appointees. He wanted an administrator and an archaeologist for Mesa Verde. His assistant, Arno B. Cammerer, suggested Nusbaum and although Colorado’s senior senator, Lawrence Phipps, tried to prevent the appointment, Nusbaum got the job in 1921.

Nusbaum immediately set to work to improve Mesa Verde. His first task was to construct a suitable administrative headquarters at Spruce Tree Camp. Given the slovenly appearance of this site, he strove to create order with a unified architectural design. He chose a location south of the museum that overlooked Spruce Tree House and constructed a residence for the superintendent, moving into the park permanently. He built in the Modified Pueblo style that he helped make fashionable in Santa Fe. This style had the advantage of blending with the environment, needed little more than the available resources to construct, and took little energy to heat or cool. It also mirrored the cultural history of the park. As Nusbaum reported, this “type of construction follows closely that of the older houses of the present Hopi Pueblo Indians, the presumable descendants of the cliff dwellers.”

As plans developed, Nusbaum built a series of offices and residences on the mesa.
top, creating an attractive administrative center that forms the heart of the national park today. At the same time, he worked to improve the entrance road. He straightened, widened, shortened, and smoothed the road until it became one of the attractions of the park itself. Known as the Knife Edge Road, it had expansive views of the Montezuma Valley. He also built new loop roads along the contour of Chapin Mesa to provide scenic views and access to the archaeological sites, while permitting the NPS to monitor who was at the sites. Simultaneously, he increased trail construction, including a trail to sites on Wetherill Mesa. He built a new campground close to headquarters with spectacular views, adequate water, and other amenities. He repaired the telephone line and moved the light plant to an industrial plot. Finally, he relocated the Spruce Tree Hotel, with its assorted tents, cottages, and service buildings. He shifted it away from the rim overlooking Spruce Tree House to a location where it could be enlarged and improved. Still operated by Oddie Jeep, the hotel did brisk business at the new location.

Dissatisfied with the local, white labor supply for these projects, Nusbaum turned to the nearby Indian reservations. He had noted earlier in a letter to Hewett that the “Indians may be a little mean to handle at times but in managing, they are not a tenth the trouble of the ‘Mancos Bums.’” He requested help from his friend, Pete Shifferer, a Ute Indian trader at Towaoc, to find diligent, dependable Navajos. Shifferer found Sam Ahkeah, Johnny Hay and Jim Corn, and sent them, on foot, to Mesa Verde. Akheah was the first Navaho employed at Mesa Verde. The services he rendered led to his designation as my interpreter and, Indian foreman, and to employment of Navahos for all unskilled help during the open season and to several permanent employments like Sam's. [He] spread the word among the Navahos of the Shiprock Agency that I needed more Navaho. From then on, Navaho hiked to Mesa Verde from all of the reservation for jobs – and at maximum, on road improvement projects, we employed up to 148 Navahos in all types of labor for which qualified. Akheah later went on to become chairmain of the Navajo Tribal Council in 1946.
According to Nusbaum’s 1926 Annual Report, the use of Navajo labor was economical. “The cost to the government [being] far below that of the lowest bid submitted on these projects and rejected.” Thus began a relationship between Mesa Verde and the Navajo Nation that continues to this day. The Navajos respected Nusbaum. They invited his family to their evenings of dancing and singing; they taught the Nusbaums to play Navajo games, and told them Navajo stories. The fact that he helped them build traditional hogans for their housing helped the relationship. They respected him so much they turned their money over to him for safekeeping. In return, he tried to purchase items they needed wholesale.

Under Nusbaum’s direction, Mesa Verde moved to the forefront of interpretive innovations in the national parks in the 1920s. He conceived an educational program with three components. The first was a professional corps of rangers to guide tourists through the cliff dwellings and explain their history. He personally selected and trained these young men, insisting they came from a “properly qualified college [or] university . . . majoring in anthropology.” Visitors appreciated the tours and the surveillance protected the ancient walls from the abuse “done by the heavy mountain boots of thousands of visitors.” He did not allow visitors to enter the cliff dwellings without a ranger or climb on the fragile walls. By 1934, they were conducting more than 21,000 people per year through the sites.

What Nusbaum instructed his rangers to tell the public about the identity of the cliff dwellers has not survived. However, Arthur W. Monroe was a ranger under Nusbaum and after leaving the NPS, he prepared a lecture on “The Land of the Vanished Footsteps.” He took this lecture to junior and senior high schools around the country and with colored lantern slides provided a “glimpse into the lives of the ancient Cliff Dwellers – how they lived – where they lived – when they lived – and where they went.” Albright, who knew
and respected Nusbaum’s work, wrote that on the tours the rangers “explain to [visitors] the life and customs and industries of the builders of these great structures who thrived for centuries, then disappeared from the face of the earth.”

Nusbaum’s writings express his own convictions on the identity of the Ancestral Pueblos, and these were probably the thoughts he imparted. Since Hewett trained him, it is hardly surprising that Nusbaum also vacillated on the answer to this important question. As a member of the third generation of Southwestern archaeologists, Nusbaum was concerned with tying archaeology to the scientific method. In an address delivered in 1936, he noted that the field used “man’s material remains, such as art, architecture, and artifacts, on the basis of which the prehistory of mankind is projected and established.” He neglected to mention the oral traditions that Fewkes had employed. This explains how he could identify the Hopi as the “presumable descendants of the cliff dwellers.”

Nusbaum allowed the mesa top sites, like Far View House and Sun Temple, to be entered without a ranger and interpreted them with signage. One of these sites, Pipe Shrine House, had a novel interpretive display. At the southeast corner of the structure, Fewkes uncovered a burial that the NPS left in situ with a hinged door placed over it. Visitors were encouraged to open the door and see for themselves how the Ancestral Pueblos buried their dead. It appears the NPS removed this morbid exhibit sometime during the 1920s.

The second facet of interpretation that Nusbaum instituted was the expansion of the Mesa Verde museum into a larger, fireproof building. Nusbaum accomplished this construction with the financial help of Stella Leviston, who provided $5,000, and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who donated the rest when Congress failed to appropriate the funds. Rockefeller also provided funds to “buy the finest type exhibit cases [they could] get with
brass bands and plate glass. Aileen, who married Nusbaum just before he took the Mesa Verde assignment and shared his trials in developing the park, took charge of the old museum in the meantime. She helped install the collections into the new building and developed a reference library. Once the fireproof museum became a reality, earlier visitors who had taken artifacts from the park began sending them back to the new museum.

During the Depression, the NPS constructed a series of five dioramas for the museum to depict the evolution of Pueblo culture and bring the ancient culture to life. The Civilian Conservation Corps provided the meticulous labor that incorporated humorous details into scenes that continue to delight audiences today. Beginning with a Folsom hunting scene to provide cultural background, the displays chronologically depicted the Basketmaker, Modified Basketmaker, Developmental Pueblo, and Classic Pueblo periods. However, the final stage linking the cliff dwellers to modern Pueblo Indians was missing. Although critics could argue that no modern Pueblo Indian sites had been identified in Mesa Verde, the same was true of Folsom sites. The result was an incomplete story that fit the public perception of a “vanished race.” Though the descriptive plaque for the fifth diorama read they “left Mesa Verde by A.D. 1300, moving south and joining other Pueblo people in Arizona and New Mexico,” most visitors probably did not read it.

Another popular exhibit was the display of a Basketmaker woman whom Isaiah Ford Flora had uncovered in 1937. Flora, popularly known as “Zeke,” was a watch repairman and a self-identified pothunter, who dug in the Falls Creek Rock Shelter north of Durango. He found nineteen burials in the alcove, but the body on display in Mesa Verde was one of the best preserved. Dubbing her “Esther,” after a cartoon character of a Neanderthal cave woman, Flora claimed the desiccated remains as his own property.
“Esther” first went East to be studied, then these delicate human remains went to the University of Colorado for display until 1939, when they were acquired by Mesa Verde.\textsuperscript{98} The museum prepared a special glass case for “Esther” and, once on display, she attracted considerable attention. Some visitors were fascinated by the display; others were uncomfortable; and others made crude jokes, perhaps to hide their discomfort.\textsuperscript{99}

The final component was the popular evening campfire program. Building on the informal talks Fewkes had established, Nusbaum created one of the most popular interpretive activities. When he became superintendent, Nusbaum constructed a crude campfire circle and immediately started explaining the archeology of the park to visitors. His talks always emphasized the objectives of the Antiquities Act and the penalties for its violation.\textsuperscript{100} Later, he constructed a larger circle with a replica of a fire bowl similar to that uncovered by Fewkes in New Fire Temple.\textsuperscript{101} Reminiscent of the field school in the Rito, the campfire circle attracted almost all the campers to hear presentations by Nusbaum and the ranger staff.\textsuperscript{102} His talks centered on the cultural differences between the Basketmaker and Developmental Pueblo cultures. Other rangers lectured on the cliff house culture, geology, or other topics. Until 1923, Fewkes continued to speak at the campfire and, after he left, visiting scientists and educators were invited to speak.\textsuperscript{103} By 1924, the number of visitors who attended these talks had grown to over 200 nightly.\textsuperscript{104}

When Nusbaum began to hire Navajo workers, he added a new dimension to these campfires. Six of their best singers and dancers were selected to join the program and sing parts of their traditional Yeibeichai songs after the formal talk.\textsuperscript{105} Many visitors probably assumed these songs were part of the cliff dweller culture, confusing Navajo and Pueblo customs. The popularity of these Navajo performances led Aileen Nusbaum to pursue her
dream of producing a play in a cliff dwelling. Twice in 1924, she produced *The Eagle Woman* in the ruins of Spruce Tree House. Based loosely on Navajo and Zuni mythology, she worked hard to persuade the leading Navajos, including their “medicine man,” to back her plan. She had to costume and train eighteen young Navajos for their roles.106

The large crowds who came to these performances encouraged Aileen Nusbaum to produce another play for the summer of 1925. This was *Fire*, ostensibly a recreation of the Hopi fire ceremony, which Fewkes believed took place at Fire Temple. Aileen based her story on both Hopi and Navajo accounts of the ceremony.107 In his annual report, Nusbaum wrote that Aileen pieced this play together from “tradition, folklore, present-day sacred ceremonies, and archaeological facts” to give “intimate insight into the life and ways of the ancient cliff dwellers.”108 Aileen staged this play, which required 40 Navajo actors, three times that year. In July, she presented it to a Congressional Budget Committee studying the national parks, and again for the visiting public. In October, she produced it for the annual conference of national park superintendents for their “enlightenment” and “to demonstrate the educational possibilities of such productions.”109 She presented the play twice more in 1926, once in June for the Rockefeller party, and once in July for Crown Prince Gustaf Adolph and Crown Princess Louise of Sweden. The play continued to be performed several times a summer after that.110

Despite Nusbaum’s efforts to credit the Hopi as well as the Navajo for the inspiration of the story, the press focused exclusively on the Navajo contribution. The *Rocky Mountain News* reported the Navajo as “one branch of the descendents of the original cliff dwellers.” The press also proclaimed that *Fire* embodied “the same dances and ceremonies practiced when the cliff dwellings were thriving colonies.”111 These claims of authenticity
countered the "scientific" ethic Nusbaum was trying to establish and distorted the public perception of Ancestral Puebloans.

What the average visitor to Mesa Verde during the 1920s understood about the Ancestral Puebloans and their descendents is nearly impossible to know. However, when Ruth Erickson, Edith Fetz, and Ruth Hunsicker set out from Ouray, Colorado, to walk to Mesa Verde in 1922, they set in motion a story that would record their responses to the park's interpretation. The next fall, when their Literary Club at Western State College requested an account of their experience, each of them wrote a paper. Sixty-six years later, Ruth Erickson Miller privately published these papers, offering a rare glimpse into the perceptions of tourists during the Nusbaum years.\textsuperscript{112}

The three women rode more than they walked, begging rides from passing motorists. Arriving in Mesa Verde on a supply truck, they met Fewkes, who was excavating Pipe Shrine House. In her interpretation, Hunsicker wrote that Fewkes explained the artifacts he had found and also "the disappearance of these 'Little People,' as the Indians call the Cliff Dwellers."\textsuperscript{113} Her account suggests that Fewkes may have been the source of Yard's story of the "Little People." That Fewkes would have used the word "disappearance" is a little surprising. He may have been romanticizing the story for the young ladies, or he may have said "disappearance" because the young ladies had used the word. Perhaps he did not say it at all, but they repeated it in their questions or simply inferred it. A common problem in interpretation is that every audience brings its own perceptions and fits what is heard into these perceptions. Since popular culture claimed the Ancestral Puebloans disappeared, Hunsicker may have assumed its accuracy, and whatever Fewkes said, she placed in the context of this assumption. This is what \textit{she} heard him say. If Fewkes were
not careful, his explanations were probably lost on these young women.

The women shared their experience at Cliff Palace with several children. They played hide-and-seek in the ruin, pretended they were cliff dwellers, and confused the story of the sipapu. When Hunsicker described the kivas, she explained that they were entered “by ladder from the top or from a hole in the floor.” How she imagined the people coming up through solid bedrock is now unfathomable. She spoke of a “ceremonial fire” and “a hole in the floor through which they talked with the evil spirits in order to pacify them when they were angry.”114 How she knew it was a ceremonial fire and that the spirits were evil is unclear. The perceptions she brought to the site – in this case, romantic notions about Indians – probably exerted more influence than anything the rangers said. Something of Fewkes’ romanticism filtered through to them at Sun Temple, for here they “saw a fossil palm leaf which these ancient people thought to be a divinely carved image of the sun.”115 What the NPS thought they were teaching about science and the Ancestral Puebloan past, and what the sightseeing public understood, were two separate things. What archaeologists understood was not what the public understood.

Mesa Verde was the premier Puebloan heritage park. In the 1920s and 1930s, it received more funding than all the other national monuments devoted to the Puebloan past. As such, it set the tone for the interpretation of this past. The fact that its superintendent was a trained archaeologist helped. However, in retrospect, Nusbaum seems to have been too worried about being scientifically correct when referring to the Pueblo tribes and too lax when using Navajo traditions. The public does not appear to have left the park in those years with a clear conception of archaeological knowledge. Instead, they left with muddled ideas of Navajo and Puebloan cultures and the romantic
notion that the cliff dwellers had disappeared.

*Early Interpretation in the National Monuments*

The interpretive story visitors heard at the national monuments was similar to that at Mesa Verde, but the monuments never received comparable budgets. Mather and Albright regarded the national parks as the showcases of the service and treated national monuments as less worthy entities. This classification revealed itself through budgets, promotions, and general attitudes. The director of a national park was called a superintendent, the director of a national monument was a mere custodian. Mather and Albright conceived a plan for scenic areas, worthy of national park status and threatened with development, to be proclaimed national monuments initially. Once preserved, the NPS would lobby Congress to change the designation to a national park. While this worked for the goals of preservation, it diminished the status of national monuments. As a result, interpretation by the NPS in Pueblo heritage national monuments lagged behind interpretation at Mesa Verde. However, one custodian challenged this system. Frank Pinkley was the most important NPS custodian to develop interpretative strategies at the national monuments during these formative years.

Born in Missouri, Pinkley moved to Arizona in 1900 with his new bride, Edna Townsley, after his doctor diagnosed him with tuberculosis. In 1901, the government offered Pinkley a job as watchman of the Casa Grande Preserve. Pinkley accepted and spent most of the rest of his 39 years in close association with the monument. The Pinkleys pitched a tent in a mesquite grove beside the famous ruin and Pinkley went to work learning everything he could about the structure. He personally guided visitors through the dwelling, organized artifacts for display, and assisted Fewkes. He lobbied hard for a regular museum, and when Congress failed to appropriate the funds, he resigned to take a seat in the state.
legislature in 1915. After his replacement was caught selling relics, the GLO offered Pinkley his former position, and he returned. When Wilson made Casa Grande a national monument and transferred it to the NPS, Mather and Albright welcomed Pinkley into the service.\textsuperscript{118}

Albright may have wondered about this welcome in later years, for Pinkley turned out to be a gadfly, constantly bombarding Washington with advice and requesting money for projects he deemed vital but Albright saw as trivial. Not only did he request funds for a museum, he sought to establish a research library to benefit all Southwestern monuments. In his annual report for 1919, Pinkley requested funds for additional literature to distribute at the site.\textsuperscript{119} In 1912, he reiterated the request and recommended that the roof be painted, the well repaired, and a mechanical pump installed.\textsuperscript{120} Like Nusbaum at Mesa Verde, Pinkley understood archaeology as well as Mather’s vision for the NPS. He was the most animated custodian of any of the national monuments; he believed the monuments could be used to educate Americans about the Puebloan heritage, and he was fiercely loyal to the service.\textsuperscript{121}

Pinkley personally guided visitors through the ruins, but like the tours at Mesa Verde, it is difficult to learn now what he said. In his annual reports, he referred to the builders of Casa Grande as “a long vanished race.”\textsuperscript{122} He and his wife published a small book on Casa Grande in 1931, but in this slim account, he discussed the identity of the architects minimally. He explained that Hohokam was a Pima word meaning “the people who have gone,” and he briefly mentioned traditions linking them with the Hopi.\textsuperscript{123} A clue to his thought appeared in an article his wife wrote, published posthumously, which referred to the builders of Casa Grande as “an extinct race.”\textsuperscript{124}

In 1919, Albright met Pinkley at the Grand Canyon for a tour of the Southwestern monuments. Impressed with both his knowledge of all the monuments and his frugal living
arrangements, Albright offered him the superintendency of the soon-to-be-created Grand Canyon National Park. Pinkley politely demurred, preferring to stay and oversee the development of his national monument.\textsuperscript{125} Surprised, Albright rewarded Pinkley four years later with an appointment as superintendent of the fourteen Southwestern monuments during a major restructuring of the NPS administration. Pinkley accepted – he had informally held this position anyway – and he held the post until his sudden death in 1940.\textsuperscript{126}

In his new role, Pinkley offered counsel and tried to instill professionalism in his quasi-volunteer staff. He encouraged them to do what they could to protect their national monuments, although he was aware of their serious lack of funds. In 1924, when E. Z. Vogt, custodian at El Morro National Monument, told Pinkley that the inspector from the U.S. Geological Survey had recommended the monument be turned over to a local historical society, Pinkley exploded in protest. Vogt had been faithfully fighting vandals and name-scratchers, and in 1921, he had planned a grand celebration of the seventy-second anniversary of the arrival of the Simpson party to El Morro.\textsuperscript{127} Pinkley offered him moral support in the face of the affront and turned up the heat on Mather and Albright to win greater recognition for national monuments.\textsuperscript{128}

Pinkley viewed the Antiquities Act, and the national monuments it created, differently than Mather and Albright. He read it more literally and believed that national monuments were \textit{supposed to be antiquities}, not scenic areas. His classification would have designated scenic areas as national parks and prehistoric or historic sites as national monuments; in his mind, Mesa Verde should have been a national monument. In 1927, when Albright and Mather tried again to carve a national park on the Pajarito Plateau out of the Santa Fe National Forest, a plan Hewett still favored, Albright sent Pinkley there to
determine the feasibility of the proposal. The assumption was that as a loyal member of the NPS, he would support a national park. Instead, his report restated his general position on national parks and monuments. Though he approved of the transfer of Bandelier National Monument from the administration of the Forest Service to the control of the NPS, he strongly opposed the creation of a national park from an archaeological resource.129

One of the custodians who worked under Pinkley was Gus Griffin, the trader who took over Wetherill’s store at Chaco Canyon. On Pinkley’s recommendation, he became the custodian of Chaco in 1922 and held the position into the Depression. Years later, Ramona published her story of their years at Chaco. Under the title Chaco Canyon Ruins: Ancient Spirits were Our Neighbors, she revealed her distinctly romantic image of the Ancestral Puebloans. At Pueblo Pintado, she imagined “the dark-skinned warrior” and the “peaceful” women and children.130 In describing the moonlight at Pueblo Bonito, she claimed there was “witchery in Chaco moons,” for they led to many a romance and to melancholy. As to what happened to the builders of these deserted towns, she wrote that “this departed race” left no trace as to “where they went. No record has been left other than the efforts of indefatigable toil.”131 Once again, the lack of written records stopped park managers from making an explicit connection between Ancestral Puebloans and modern Pueblo Indians. Yet, she also vacillated. Elsewhere, she wrote that Chaco Canyon was “the home of an ancient people and their descendents today – the Pueblo and Navajo tribes of Indians.”132

Pinkley worked with Wetherill at Navajo National Monument as well. Wetherill mixed his custodianship with his outfitting business. The guides he relied on were Navajos or Paiutes, and if William Douglass’ story in 1908 was typical, these Indian guides probably spoke little English. Thus, their interpretation would have been minimal.133 Both Wetherill
and his wife, Louisa, were trusted friends of the Navajo and they probably told visitors the Navajo traditions they knew. These included a legend connecting the people of Mesa Verde to Keet Seel and the people of Canyon de Chelly to Betatakin. The legend, as Louisa later retold it, asserted that they moved from Tsegi Canyon to Black Mesa where they founded the Hopi town of Oraibi. However, few tourists took the time in the 1920s and 1930s to visit the sites they supervised at this distant national monument to hear these legends.

Earl Morris had remained the custodian for Aztec Ruins once it became a national monument. He worked for $12 a year and a lease payment on his home of a dollar a year. His home, completed in 1920, also contained a small exhibit hall for the public. One of the exhibits was the gruesome burial he had uncovered, known as the “great warrior of the Aztecs,” giving the monument an attraction like “Esther” at Mesa Verde. Under Pinkley’s direction, Morris worked to publicize the site and guided visitors when they arrived. However, when visitation was slack, he excavated other sites around the region and left the visitors on their own. What Morris told visitors on his tours of the site is again hard to know. As a member of the third generation of archaeologists, he routinely referred to the site as a “prehistoric pueblo” and probably told visitors the same. In 1928, with the increase in visitation, the NPS saw the need for a permanent custodian, and Morris turned the reserve over to others. When Morris deeded his home to the monument in 1933, it became the core of the present visitor center/museum with the “warrior” on display through the 1980s.

The national monuments administered by agencies other than the NPS offered little interpretation during these years. In 1916, Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument was remote and difficult to access, hampering interpretation. All the forest supervisor did that year was to post warnings of the penalties imposed by the Antiquities Act. As the press
learned of the site, the public became aware of “mysteries” in the Diablo Range. In 1913, a Sunset magazine article by Agnes Laut introduced readers to the cliff dwellings of Walnut Canyon, the Rito do Los Frijoles, and Canyon de Chelly as well as those of the Gila Forest Reserve. She claimed a race of dwarfs had inhabited the Gila dwellings and no one knew who they were. Her evidence was singular, consisting of a small skeleton and the little doorways. Though she admitted, “Modern Pueblo Indians claim to be descendents of these prehistoric races,” she argued they could not be since the ancient race was dwarfs.\textsuperscript{141} Her story was persuasive enough to convince a forest service employee to describe the site as the abode of dwarfs on an official map in 1915.\textsuperscript{142} The remoteness of the site even kept Pinkley from visiting after it was transferred to his jurisdiction in 1934. The site did not receive a custodian until 1942, the same year it was stabilized. The new custodian, “Doc” Campbell, was a wilderness guide who maintained the trail and took parties he outfitted there.\textsuperscript{143}

The dearth of scientific literature available at the national monuments in the 1920s and 1930s hindered any attempt by custodians to counter romantic attitudes and the sensationalist ideas of a “lost civilization.” In many cases, the NPS left interpretation to the custodians, who usually had few resources of their own. After World War II, however, the NPS increased their efforts to incorporate the monuments and provide a uniform system of interpretive standards.

Archaeological Projects in the National Parks and Monuments

Mather and Albright appreciated Nusbaum’s development of Mesa Verde National Park and in 1927, appointed him Consulting Archaeologist for the Secretary of the Interior, a position he held simultaneously with his superintendency at Mesa Verde.\textsuperscript{144} His primary responsibility was the enforcement of the provisions of the Antiquities Act, a responsibility
he took seriously. In the early 1930s, he left Mesa Verde to direct the Laboratory of
Anthropology in Santa Fe, an institution Rockefeller had built and Nusbaum had designed.
He returned to Mesa Verde in the late 1930s to resume the superintendency, but in 1939
became senior archaeologist for the Park Service and moved back to Santa Fe.143 During the
War, the NPS tapped Nusbaum to administer the park yet again as the country was drafting
staff and cutting operating funds, a duty made easier as visitation dropped. When the war
was over, Nusbaum returned to Santa Fe and devoted himself to his mounting duties as
senior archaeologist.146 In the post-war economic boom, the Southwest faced rapid, large-
scale development and many undocumented archaeological sites became threatened.

In 1950, Nusbaum learned the El Paso Natural Gas Company planned to lay a
pipeline from Mesa Verde across the Navajo Reservation. He feared this would destroy
hundreds of archaeological sites.147 Undaunted, he met with company executives and
convinced them to pay to salvage the sites by promising to waive all penalties they would
otherwise incur. They agreed, if Nusbaum would recruit the archaeologists and supervise the
project. The company provided the equipment as teams scoured the route. Nusbaum's new
wife, Rosemary, whom he married in 1947, worked to support the effort. She turned their
home into a dormitory, allowing teams to make weekend reports to Nusbaum. She cooked,
washed, typed and indexed the salvaged material for study.148 In the end, the teams rescued
1,315 sites. Most importantly, Congress used his strategy for salvage archaeology on a
national scale when interstate highways created similar threats. His reclamation design
became the model to save America's archaeological past. For his efforts to preserve the
nation's heritage on public lands, the Interior Department awarded him their highest award,
the Distinguished Service Medal, in December 1954.149
The need for salvage archaeology increased in the mid-1950s when plans for the Glen Canyon Project moved forward. As the dam went up, it blocked the flow of the Colorado River through one of the most scenic canyons in the world, and threatened hundreds of little known and poorly understood Fremont sites. Because the Historic Sites Act of 1935 gave the NPS responsibility for the preservation of antiquities throughout the nation, it was drawn into the project under its Archaeological Salvage Program. The NPS negotiated contracts with Colton's Museum of Northern Arizona and the University of Utah to carry out the survey. Between 1956 and 1963, over 200 archaeologists scampered through Glen Canyon and its tributary canyons looking for remote sites to document before the reservoir's waters inundated them, burying them in sand and silt.150

When the gates of the Glen Canyon dam closed on 21 January 1963, the NPS gained a new resource for interpreting Southwestern archaeology, the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. However, it could not effectively interpret the sites that remained. Visitors now cruised around almost 3000 kilometers of shoreline, prowling through sites that were high enough in the canyons to have escaped the flood.151 Without NPS contact, they relied on tourist literature and popular culture to interpret these ruins.

As the economy revived at the end of the War, millions of Americans took to the highways to see the nation's parks and monuments. However, these parks were suffering from years of wartime budgets and outdated transportation systems. The solution came about in 1956 with Mission 66 – an initiative to upgrade the parks in time for the fiftieth anniversary of the NPS in 1966. Mission 66 was largely a plan to expand the carrying capacity of the national parks through the construction of new visitor centers, overnight accommodations, and better roads.152 However, at Mesa Verde the plan included the
development of a whole new district. Despite the park’s size, visitation was constrained to the area around Spruce Tree Camp. An area that was less than 10% of the park, Chapin Mesa was the destination for 99% of the visitors.\textsuperscript{153} It contained the most famous cliff dwellings, but Wetherill Mesa held one of the largest. Yet, the only way to get there was by foot or horseback. One of the goals of Mission 66 was the opening of Wetherill Mesa.

To accomplish this, the NPS first had to conduct an archaeological survey of the mesa and excavate sites that would be suitable for visitation. In the 1950s, the archaeological field school of the University of Colorado, under the direction of Robert Lister (who had trained under Hewett at the Chaco Canyon field school), had excavated several small sites around Far View, but that was to pale in light of the Wetherill Mesa Project.\textsuperscript{154} The cost alone was far and beyond the amount spent on any previous archaeological excavation at Mesa Verde. The NPS hoped to include studies in related fields to create a complete picture of Ancestral Puebloan life on the mesa. However, to accomplish all they wished, they needed $1 million. The NPS could put up three quarters of this amount, essentially covering the survey, excavation and stabilization of sites, but they needed outside help for the collaborating fields, such as human osteology, soil studies, and research on the Nordenskiöld collection located in Finland.\textsuperscript{155}

Doug Osbourne was the archaeologist placed in charge of the Wetherill Mesa Project. He supervised a crew of seven other archaeologists and four field crews. Lister served on the advisory committee and Lancaster was in charge of stabilization.\textsuperscript{156} In 1958, the project began with Alden Hayes, another student of Hewett’s from the Chaco Canyon field school, directing a thorough survey of the mesa. In thirteen months, this survey located over 800 archaeological sites ranging from cliff dwellings to petroglyph panels.\textsuperscript{157}
From this list, the NPS selected three cliff dwellings and eight mesa top sites to excavate. Osbourne chose George Cattenach to lead the Long House excavation, assisted by Arthur Rohn and Robert Nichols. This major excavation took five seasons to complete and produced a massive report. Arthur Rohn led the excavation of Mug House and Jervis D. Swannack supervised the dig at Big Juniper House on the mesa. It was hoped that the sites chosen for excavation on the mesa could demonstrate for the visitor the first six centuries of human occupation at Mesa Verde, following the example set by the Mesa Top Loop on Chapin Mesa. In 1963, the fieldwork ended with two more years of lab work pending. By 1965 when the project closed, it had not only increased archaeological knowledge, it had prepared the way for enhanced interpretation at Mesa Verde.

The challenge for the NPS as the Wetherill Mesa Project wound down was creating a plan for opening the mesa to tourists. The survey had located so many sites that a two-lane road with parking space would be difficult to construct. In the meantime, conditions on Chapin Mesa were deteriorating. In July 1965, visitation for one month exceeded 100,000 for the first time. Tours through Cliff Palace had grown to include more than 200 people on occasion. Three quarters of the tours were rated “barely manageable” or “unmanageable” due to size. The problem, as noted in the Interpretive Prospectus for 1966, was “The majority of visitors are impelled to visit Mesa Verde National Park for one reason; to see a cliff dwelling” and the NPS was trying very hard to keep this a ranger-guided experience to allow accurate interpretation.

The NPS constructed a new lodge on Navajo Hill, and a new campground in Morefield Canyon in an attempt to keep the congestion away from the cliff dwellings. Both were operating by the end of Mission 66, but congestion continued unabated.
because Wetherill Mesa could not be opened until all services were in place. The park held meetings and revised plans in an attempt to make the new mesa operations conform to everyone’s expectations. In 1968, a visitor center was proposed for Wetherill Mesa. Of note is the prevailing cultural attitude that still accepted the desecration of burials as a normal feature of interpretation. The report noted that the exhibits should convey the impression of a typical cliff dwelling scene at the time of occupation. .. Viewers should look at eye level into the plaza and room .. visitors should be able to look below their feet into either recessed areas or into a double floor at a number of burials ..

Settling on a scaled down plan with visitors being carried around the sites on a narrow one-lane road by mini-bus, Wetherill Mesa opened for visitation in 1973. It offered ranger-guided tours of Long House. However, the new section did not draw the visitors expected. Instead, most visitors felt they had to see Cliff Palace, believing it was the largest cliff dwelling. Visitors assumed that “largest” meant “best.” However, before Long House could be opened, congestion had become such a problem at Cliff Palace that the ranger-guided walk winding through the site became a self-guided tour on a trail passing in front of the site, with rangers stationed to protect the site and answer questions.

The impact that sheer numbers of visitors were having on the interpretive experience was felt most severely at Mesa Verde. Since visitors spent less time with a ranger, they had to learn more about the Ancestral Puebloan heritage through self-guided reading. The reality was that many tourists did not read the trail guides, choosing instead to see this “mysterious” culture through the eyes of their own cultural biases. When visitors did read, it often took the control of the interpretive story away from the NPS and placed it in the hands of the media. While the Park Service could control what books were sold in the park, they could not control what books were brought into the park.
Allowing visitors to guide themselves meant that popular notions took precedence over archaeological science. It reinforced the romantic notion that the cliff dwellers had "mysteriously vanished" and reaffirmed the notion that the "Anasazi" were "spiritual," a perception that escalated once the New Age movement began. Yet, the kivas stumped most visitors. Many visitors coming from outside the Southwest were unaware of native cultural practices and tried to put the kivas into their own cultural framework. As a result, many interpreted the kivas as cisterns; some interpreted them as latrines.\textsuperscript{164}

A few years after the Wetherill Mesa project came to a close, another major Southwestern archaeological project began. This time the scene was Chaco Canyon, but the goal was not development oriented; the project was undertaken to learn more about Chacoan history. The Chaco Project was the brainchild of John M. Corbett, chief archaeologist for the NPS in the late 1960s, who believed the agency should take a higher profile as a research institution. He looked to UNM, which had a long history of research at Chaco Canyon, as a partner. In 1971, the Chaco Project officially began with the establishment of the Chaco Center on the UNM campus and NPS archaeologists receiving joint faculty appointments. Initially under the direction of Robert Lister, and later under James Judge, the project sought to answer questions relating to Chaco Canyon's place in the Ancestral Puebloan world, the nature of Chacoan society, the reasons for their departure, and which pueblos became their final destinations.\textsuperscript{165}

Like the Wetherill Mesa Project, the Chaco Project began with a survey led by Hayes. This time, the four survey teams located 2,220 sites, 1,751 on lands owned by the NPS.\textsuperscript{166} The Chaco Project excavated portions of 27 sites, including Pueblo Alto. They also excavated several developmental pueblos and a great kiva of the Modified
Basketmaker Period. The NPS encouraged several new archaeological techniques, such as archaeomagnetic dating and remote sensing. The latter technique led to the discovery of Chacoan roads, or rather their re-discovery. Historians found evidence that Richard and Marietta Wetherill knew about the roads. They also found considerable evidence of a water diversion system. On high points around the canyon, they found a series of C-shaped shrines, which they theorized were part of a signal system. The resulting data and changes in interpretation have been incorporated into Chapter 2 of this study.

Because visitation at Chaco Canyon is much less than Mesa Verde, and the Chaco Project did not enjoy a high profile partner like the National Geographic, the Chaco Project did not impact the public perception of Ancestral Puebloan history as much as events at Mesa Verde. The Public Broadcasting Service produced a notable film and newspapers in the region generally noted each new “discovery,” but by and large, Americans remained unaware of the sophisticated technologies of the Ancestral Puebloans uncovered by the Chaco Project. This is unfortunate, for as Phillip Tuwaletstiwa noted, the Ancestral Puebloans were scientists of the first order. If more people were cognizant of their achievements, it could help change prejudicial attitudes toward all Indians. The failure to disseminate this information was not the fault of the NPS, for at the same time they were devising strategies to impart this message to visitors. However, for this to be effective, the information had to be correct at the start, and not all rangers were aware of the research the NPS supported.

The Development of the Art of Interpretation

Once created, the National Park Service inaugurated a program of interpretation during the 1920s and 1930s. While the Puebloan heritage parks and monuments were in
the forefront of interpretation, they were not alone. Two years after Mesa Verde opened the first NPS museum in 1918, Milton P. Skinner established Yellowstone’s first museum in the former bachelor officer’s quarters at Fort Yellowstone. Albright, who had become superintendent of Yellowstone, appointed Skinner as the first naturalist for the park in 1920. That same year, support for such endeavors expanded when Ansel Hall organized the Yosemite Museum Association (YMA) to promote museums and other educational programs in the park. Hall had a long history of National Park service, having studied forestry at Berkley and worked at Yosemite National Park as a ranger. Rising quickly in the new educational division of the NPS, Hall became chief naturalist in 1923.

These three national parks were the first to develop guided walks. In 1919, when Mather visited Fallen Leaf Lake near Lake Tahoe, a site popular with California academics, he encountered a guided nature program combined with evening lectures carried out by Dr. Loye Miller from the University of California at Los Angeles and Dr. Harold Bryant of the state Fish and Game Commission. Impressed, he invited them to Yosemite to begin a similar program for the national park the following year. Once there, Bryant created the Yosemite Free Nature Guide Service, offering daily nature hikes, campfire talks, and illustrated lectures. Meanwhile at Yellowstone, Skinner, who had lectured on the geysers as early as 1896 while working for the park’s concessionaire, now conducted nature walks and gave lectures for the NPS. Nusbaum’s guided ranger walks were part of this overall development. In 1929, these became ranger-guided caravans, stopping at a string of sites to give the visitor a full history of the mesa.

The NPS went to some length to distance their educational activities from the education of the schoolroom. Although the NPS used the term “education” for its ranger-
guided experiences through the 1920s, the term “interpretation,” first used by John Muir in 1871, was commonly applied by the 1930s. However, when trying to express that difference, early park administrators often fell into the romantic assumptions of earlier generations, as the 1929 plan for the Educational Division demonstrates.

Our function lies rather in the inspirational enthusiasm which we can develop among our visitors... whether these be the wonder of animate things... the story of creation... or the history of forgotten races as recorded by their picturesque dwellings.

At the 1925 National Park Conference held in Mesa Verde, Mather announced the elevation of the NPS Educational Division to equal rank with that of Landscape Architecture and Engineering.

Another of Skinner’s duties in Yellowstone was to prepare bulletins, called “Yellowstone Letters,” providing tips for the ranger staff when they had the chance to interpret Yellowstone’s unique landscape. Carl Russell, Hall’s successor at the YMA, collaborated with the NPS to publish Yosemite Nature Notes, a bulletin similar to “Yellowstone Letters” and in October 1930, Mesa Verde began publishing a bulletin, called Mesa Verde Notes.

Contributors to Mesa Verde Notes included Nusbaum; Paul Franke, the park naturalist; C. Marshall Finnan, the superintendent after Nusbaum; and Don Watson, a ranger and later the park archaeologist. Topics on Ancestral Pueblos included diet, stature, sandals, ceramics, and diseases. The bulletin also contained articles on geology, botany, the Navajo Yeibeichai, and an occasional poem. These articles give some indication of the resources rangers had at their disposal when preparing their tours. Some articles, like Finnan’s description of the Fire ceremony, related the Ancestral Pueblos to contemporary tribes. He wrote, “The Hopi Indians of Arizona, [were] perhaps the most direct descendants
of the Mesa Verde cliff dwellers. Other writers were more vague. Ranger Robert Burgh wrote, "the builders of the cliff dwellings lived in the canyons of the Mesa Verde for several centuries, vanished at some uncertain date, and reappeared again far to the south." Other articles in *Mesa Verde Notes* were more creative. Watson tried to solve a "thousand year old murder mystery" and pondered if an owl could be the return of the spirit of a long dead cliff dweller. Jean McWhirt gave details on the studies performed on "Esther." Lilian White Spencer wrote a romantic hymn for an imagined Pueblo ceremony.

Sun, hear thy priest
As thou dost wake from night
Where dark first flees the day-god's might
Hail, O East,
Gray dawn-door to thy house of light! . . .

Thy place of rest
Is fair, where Evening lies
To whom thou goest through the skies
Hail, O west,
On whose red heart our Sun-chief dies!

Not to be outdone, Edna Davis Roming waxed romantic in a poem to the mesa.

Ghostlike again in the indigo shadows of twilight
Haunted by the spectral whisper of the wind
Through the cliff-houses wandering
Like the returning spirit of swift red runners
In ceremonial dances to the four winds
And chants to Manitou
On the green mesa.

One thing is clear. Romanticism was alive and well during the Depression at Mesa Verde.

One article gives insight into the visitor's understanding of the Ancestral Puebloan past for historians. Watson repeated common questions visitors asked. Some were funny, demonstrating that people asked questions without first thinking. "What did the cliff dwellers use for water? . . . Was the water high enough in the canyons so the cliff dwellers
could get in and out in boats?" and the perennial, "How many cliff dwellings are there in the Mesa Verde that have not as yet been found?" Others show an honest attempt to understand another culture. "Do Indians fall in love like we do? ... Did the cliff dwellers take their corn downtown to market? ... Do Indians believe in heaven?" Some visitors were obviously looking for a lost civilization, asking questions like, "What about the lost continents of Mu and Atlantis?" ... Couldn't the Indians be the descendent[s] of the lost tribes of Israel?"182

Devoted to making the Mesa Verde story accessible to the average tourist, Watson wrote a book describing Ancestral Puebloan life by depicting the likely activities at Cliff Palace over the course of a year. In print from the late 1940s through the 1980s, it offered mixed messages about the identity of the cliff dwellers. In the opening, Watson described the park's history as "a fascinating story of a vanished people."183 At the end, he explained the 24-year drought, the Puebloan migration to the Rio Grande, and how they "merged with the others [and] gradually lost their identity as Mesa Verde people." But, here he was clear.

The people of these present-day pueblos are the descendants of scores of thousands of Pueblo Indians who once lived in the Southwest. In their veins, greatly thinned by the centuries, flows the blood of the ancient people of the Mesa Verde.184

After the War, a key component of Mission 66 was to expand the possibilities for interpretation in the national parks. When Mission 66 began, there were only three visitor centers in all the national parks. In 1960, there were 56, and by 1975, there were 281.185 Even before Mission 66 officially began, park administrators were trying to find someone who could teach others how to interpret park features. In 1954, the service received a grant for Freeman Tilden, a ranger at Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, to study the topic. His research took him to national parks across America to observe rangers interpreting diverse settings. The result was the well-known handbook, *Interpreting Our
*Heritage*, which became a classic in the field.

In this book, Tilden encapsulated the concept of interpretation. The essence of his thought was the need for interpreters to involve the audience on an emotional level, to draw them in with a compelling story.¹⁸⁶ His six rules explained his thought in depth:

I. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
II. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information.
III. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical, or architectural.
IV. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
V. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.
VI. Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach.¹⁸⁷

The NPS distributed his book and his principles throughout the park system and they remain influential today in the practice of thematic interpretation.

However, what a person finds compelling remains a culturally conditioned response.

For many rangers at the Puebloan heritage parks and monuments, what was compelling was the "romance" of the past—lost civilizations, the decline of great nations, the "long-forgotten people." Tilden recognized this when he wrote, "The prehistoric ruins must somehow convey the notion to the visitor that the ancients who lived there might come back this very night and renew possession, and that there will be a renewal of grinding corn, the cries of children, and the making of love and feasting."¹⁸⁸ To an Anglo, this could be compelling. To a Pueblo Indian, it could be a distortion of their worldview. For them, the spirits of their ancestors remain, even if they cannot be seen.

Tilden’s ideas on interpretation inspired many good interpretive programs at the Pueblo heritage parks and monuments. However, they also inspired programs based on false
premises. Even if rangers knew the Ancestral Puebloans had migrated to other lands in the Southwest, they might use words like “disappearing” or “vanishing” to create a compelling story. Conversely, the word might have seemed justified in the context if it were part of a broader idea, like the Ancestral Puebloans disappeared from Mesa Verde, but not the Southwest. However, some visitors, upon hearing “disappeared,” were compelled to imagine a disappearance as complete as the Marie Celeste.¹⁸⁹

Effective interpretation must be accurate and balanced. Tilden noted this when he advised interpreters to research their story.¹⁹⁰ However, the drive to be compelling can detract from the facts. Tilden made this mistake when he perpetuated the myth of a “vanished race” in the Puebloan heritage parks and monuments. In his 1968 introduction to The National Parks, he claimed, “the Chaco people began to leave for parts unknown.”¹⁹¹ By not being accurate, rangers helped perpetuate the myth of a “vanished race.”

In the same way, Aileen Nusbaum’s performance of Fire at Spruce Tree House was compelling, but inaccurate. The press noted its mesmerizing effect, calling it “indescribable.” The same reporter understood from the presentation that the Navajo were descendants of the cliff dwellers.¹⁹² As a scientist, Nusbaum might have been appalled to read the message the reporter took from the play. If he could only bring himself to call Pueblo Indians the “presumably descendants,” the reporter’s unqualified assertion about the Navajo must have surprised him. Those who sought to engross the audience in their story by using popular misconceptions risked making the same mistake.

The NPS did not originate the idea of the “vanishing Anasazi,” but they did help to perpetuate it. This was not done deliberately. The NPS sought to make the experience meaningful for the visitor, but in the process, they denied the heritage of a vibrant culture.
Notes:


9 Lucy Peabody to Edgar Lee Hewett, 26 April 1907, Hewett Collection: AC 105, Box 1, File 5 – “Correspondence 1907,” Fray Angelico Chavez History Library, Palace of the Governors, Santa Fe, NM [Hereafter FACH].

10 Smith, Mesa Verde National Park: Shadows of the Centuries (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002), 72 and correspondence between Lucy Peabody and Edgar Lee Hewett in Hewett Collection: AC 105, Box 1, File 5 – “Correspondence 1907,” FACH.


12 Jesse Nusbaum, Comments for the Regional Director, Region Three, by Archeologist Nusbaum, 26 July 1946, in Torres-Reyes, An Administrative History, 28 and Jesse Nusbaum to Hewett, 21 October 1910, Balcony House Files, Mesa Verde Research Center, Mesa Verde National Park, CO [Hereafter MVRC].

13 Jesse Nusbaum to Hewett, 31 October 1910, Balcony House Files, MVRC.

14 Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 78.

15 Torres-Reyes, An Administrative History, 26-27.

16 Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 99.


18 Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 99-100.

19 Nusbaum, Tierra Dulce, 74.

20 Albright to the Director, 2 December 1920, in Torres-Reyes, An Administrative History, 120.


31 Albright and Schenck, *The Missing Years*, 60.


37 For an account of the Congressional debate and the passage of the National Park Organic Act, see Albright and Schenck, *The Missing Years*, 142-147.


40 *The Mesa Verde National Park* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1915), 1, Mesa Verde Printed Materials Collection MO82, Box 2, Folder 2, Center for Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College, Durango, CO [Hereafter CSW-FLC].


45 Yard, *The National Parks Portfolio*, 264, 266, and 268 and 269.


349
47 Ibid., 64.
48 Ibid., 24 and 33.
49 Ibid., 31, 52-53, 66.
51 Ibid., 3.
52 Ibid., 35.
53 Ibid., 10.
55 Ibid., 2.
57 Torres-Reyes, An Administrative History, 87-88.
58 Nusbaum, Tierra Dulce, 72-75.
59 Torres-Reyes, An Administrative History, 91.
60 Ibid., 93-94 and Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 95.
61 Torres-Reyes, An Administrative History, 94.
62 Horace Albright to the Director, 2 December 1920, in Torres-Reyes, 118-119.
63 Nusbaum, Tierra Dulce, 72.
64 Mather to Bartlett, 22 December 1920, in Ricardo Torres-Reyes, An Administrative History, 121.
65 Cammerer to Nusbaum, 26 May 1921, in Ibid., 122 and Nusbaum, Tierra Dulce, 72.
66 Larry Weise, superintendent, Mesa Verde National Park, phone interview with author, 10 December 1996.
73 Jesse Nusbaum to Edgar Lee Hewett, 21 October 1910, Balcony House Files. MVRC.
74 Jesse Nusbaum, “Jesse's story of how Indian Labor came to the Mesa Verde,” Jesse Nusbaum Files, MVRC.
75 Ibid.

76 Ibid.


78 Deric Nusbaum, *Deric in Mesa Verde* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1926), 84-86.


80 Nusbaum, *Tierra Dulce*, 83.


83 Ibid.; Nusbaum, *Tierra Dulce*, 75 and Jesse L. Nusbaum, “National Park Service in the Field of Southwestern Archeology,” (c. 1936), 4, MVRC.


90 While the 1924 Mesa Verde circular specifically discussed this burial, the 1930 circular does not say anything about it. *Circular of General Information Regarding Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1924), 48.

91 Nusbaum, *Tierra Dulce*, 83.


96 Zeke Flora, “Prehistoric Cultures of the Durango, Colorado District Observations of February 1, 1939,” 1, Zeke Flora Collection: MO94, Box 2, Folder 6, CSW-FLC.


98 Ibid., 44-46.

99 These attitudes are vividly remembered by the author on his first visit to Mesa Verde National Park in
July 1969.

100 Nusbaum, *Tierra Dulce*, 75.


111 “Mesa Verde Indians Revive Old Dances.”


116 For a discussion of the problems faced by national monuments during these years, see Rothman, *America’s National Monuments*, 74-116.


121 Rothman, *America’s National Monuments*, 120.


Ibid., 115.

Ibid., 132.

Ibid., 153-154.

Ibid., 11.

Ibid., 24.

Ibid., 6.


Gillmor and Wetherill, *Traders to the Navajos*, 126-127.


Ibid., 54.

Ibid., 37.

Lister and Lister, *Earl Morris*, 42 and Brown, Tour, “Aztec Ruins,”


Agnes C. Laut, “Why Go Abroad?” *Sunset* 30 (February 13, 1913), 156-164. Italics Added.


Ibid., 38-40.

Nusbaum, *Tierra Dulce*, 84.


Ibid.

Rosemary Nusbaum, “Biographical Notes on Jesse L. Nusbaum,” Nusbaum Folder, FACH.

For information on the Glen Canyon Project, see Jesse D. Jennings, *Glen Canyon: An Archaeological*
Summary (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1998), ix-11.

151 For an example of the vandalism this led to, see David Roberts, In Search of the Old Ones (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 70-72.

152 Runte, National Parks, 173.

153 Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 158.

154 Smith Mesas, Cliffs, and Canyons, 18.


156 Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 167.


160 Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 169.

161 “Interpretive Prospectus, Mesa Verde National Park,” Recommended by Chester A. Thomas, 4 December 1964, Revised by Jean M. Pinkley, 8 April 1966, 38, MVRC, and Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 170.


163 Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 170.

164 This information comes to the author from working six seasons as an interpretive ranger at Mesa Verde National Park between 1993 and 2002. The idea that kivas were cisterns is confirmed by a note in “Chaco Canyon Interpretive Log: Visitor Comments on the ‘Vanishing Anasazi,”’ 30 June 2000. The idea that kivas were latrines was overhead by ranger Shawn Duffy who shared this story with the author in an interview with the author, 7 April 2004, Bloomfield, NM.


167 Ibid., 145.


170 Mackintosh, Interpretation in the National Park Service, 1, 21 and 83.
171 General Plan for Administration for the Educational Division, 4 June 1929, History of Interpretation Files, National Park Service History Collection, Harpers Ferry, WV in Mackintosh, Interpretation in the National Park Service, 83.

172 Ibid., 13.


174 Mackintosh, Interpretation in the National Park Service, 10.


178 Jean McWhirt, “Esther” Mesa Verde Notes 9: 1 (December 1939), 5, MVRC.

179 Lilian White Spencer, “Hymn of the Pueblos,” Mesa Verde Notes 3: 1 (June 1932), 6, MVRC.

180 Manitou is an Algonquin term for the Great Spirit. It is not related to any of the Pueblan languages.

181 Edna Davis Roming, “Mesa Verde,” Mesa Verde Notes 6: 2 (September 1935), 9, MVRC.

182 Don Watson, “Ask Me Another,” Mesa Verde Notes 6: 2 (September 1935), 5-9, MVRC.


184 Ibid., 136-137.

185 Mackintosh, Interpretation in the National Park Service, 49.


187 Ibid., 9.

188 Ibid., 69.

189 I owe the ideas discussed here to a conversation with Leslie Landau, an interpretive ranger at Mesa Verde National Park from 1979 to 1980. We spoke on 21 August, 2001 in the Balcony House parking lot at the end of a tour I gave that she joined.

190 Tilden, Interpreting Our Heritage, 5.


192 “Mesa Verde Indians Revive Old Dances.”
Chapter 8 – “Monuments of a Vanished Race”: Interpretation by the Tourist Industry

Naturally, the wonder and mystery of these monuments of a vanished race appeal particularly to the educated traveler, thousands of whom visit these ruins every year.¹

~ Brochure for Manitou Cliff Dwellings (1920s)

As the twentieth century began, Harold Ashenhurst, a young Texan entrepreneur, came to Colorado in search of a new way to make money. With the help of William Crosby, the proprietor of a curio-shop, he decided to build a model cliff dwelling near the urban populations of Colorado’s Front Range and charge admission for people to see it. In 1904, Ashenhurst and Crosby joined with J. Bishoff, a local hotel operator, and other businessmen in Manitou Springs and incorporated the Manitou Springs Cliff Dwellings Ruins Company with a capital investment of $100,000. Their plan was to dismantle up to 25 cliff dwellings and pueblo ruins in and around McElmo canyon, transport the stones to Dead Man’s Canyon above Manitou Springs and reassemble the stones in an artificial alcove to resemble the famous cliff dwellings. In an attempt to appear “scientific,” Ashenhurst promised to engage a “well-known archaeologist” who would make blue prints of the real cliff dwellings and an artist “so that even the coloring [would] be true.”²

In 1906, the company hired ten cowboys at $2.50 a day to tear apart pueblo ruins north of Cortez and haul the sandstone blocks by wagon to Dolores, where they were loaded into 40 boxcars and hauled across the Rockies to Colorado Springs. There they were taken up to the popular tourist resort of Manitou Springs and on to Dead Man’s Canyon, renamed Phantom Canyon. Here the company blasted out a cave 150 meters long and 50 meters deep in the canyon wall that vaguely resembled the cliffs at Mesa Verde. As the company was interested in the potential of the site to draw tourists, not archaeologists, they built a fanciful
cliff dwelling resembling Balcony House in the northern portion of the cave, Cliff Palace in the middle, and Spruce Tree House in the south [Figure 11]. The illusion was perfect; where walls had fallen in the original structures, they placed fallen walls in a similar pattern. They went to great pains to build a "ruin," leaving piles of rock as if they had fallen there.

The Manitou Cliff Dwellings opened in 1907. Early on, their brochures called the artificial cliff dwelling "an exact and scientific reproduction." Later, they wrote that their "preserve demonstrates the architectural perfections achieved by the Indians of the Southwest." By the end of the century, they were calling these "actual ruins," and the local paper proclaimed, "Cliff Dwellings Here are Seven Centuries Old." Their brochures during the 1920s and 1930s described the attraction as "The Mystery of America" and asked, "Whither did they vanish?" At the end of the brochure, the writer inserted, "Some eminent authorities hold that the Pueblo Indians are lineal descendents of the Cliff Dwellers." A later version claimed, "the wonder and mystery of these monuments of a vanished race appeal particularly to the educated and traveled visitor."

The tourist industry in the Southwest flourished in the twentieth century as sightseers replaced pioneers along the Santa Fe Trail. However, the romantic attitudes toward ruins remained prominent among the new explorers out to "See America First," as the advertisement said. Hoping to draw the crowds to their businesses, promoters used the image of a "vanished race" to create interest. They built on the romance that Americans now associated with ruins and suggested to potential travelers and those who loved adventure that there was a "mystery" to be explored in the Southwest. They exhibited skeletons and continued to sell artifacts whenever they could. The buyers and the tourists operated in a tangled web of nostalgia for a "lost civilization." Capitalist interests perpetuated the myth of
a "vanished race," keeping it alive even as the scientific world was discarding the concept. What the intellectuals said no longer mattered; these entrepreneurs were the real mediators of Southwestern archaeology, telling a story designed to increase profits.

_Pot-hunting and ARPA_

Although the Antiquities Act made the sale of Southwestern relics illegal, unscrupulous individuals were willing to enter the market as long as enforcement was lax. The high prices relics commanded on the black market acted as a strong incentive for these people to dig into Ancestral Puebloan sites. What drove the demand was the romantic conception of a "vanished race." Collectors wanted a tangible link to the "mystery."

During the nineteenth century, entrepreneurs cashed in on the infatuation the nation held for the Ancestral Puebloan past. Initially, their efforts centered on the selling of curios. Gold’s Old Curiosity Shop was one of many profitable establishments. Although the Antiquities Act of 1906 failed to stop this trade, it did place these would-be capitalists on the opposite side of the law. Pot-hunting continued because the public domain was too vast to be patrolled. When archaeologists uncovered the artistic pottery of the Mimbres and the Mogollon in the 1920s, they indirectly contributed to another wave of pot-hunting, as collectors offered huge sums for the finely executed ceramics. When Fewkes purchased E. D. Osborne’s collection in 1914 for the Smithsonian, he established the high prices Mimbres art would fetch. By the 1960s, Mimbres pots attracted as much as $6,000 and Mogollon pots brought $20,000 among international collectors of art. To increase profits, pothunters employed bulldozers and back hoes, ignoring the damage they inflicted on the sites, few of which remained intact after 1960.

The NPS charged Nusbaum, as senior archaeologist, with enforcing the Antiquities
Act. Although it proved difficult to prosecute offenders, he occasionally achieved success. One of his triumphs was the case of John Brandt, curator of archaeology at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. In 1950, when Brandt lived in Shiprock, he “discovered” Promontory Ruin, a site that had been documented by Oliver LaFarge. In 1953, Brandt used ropes to lower himself and two students into the huge alcove located high above a dry wash. The three trespassers spent the night in a kiva, removing the deflector wall to use the ventilator for their fireplace, and amassing a collection of artifacts that Brandt donated to the college museum. Alerted by a friend, Nusbaum investigated the case and discovered the vandalized ruin. With the help of the FBI, Nusbaum brought Brandt to court where he pleaded guilty. The fine was $100.\textsuperscript{11}

Such victories against pothunters were rare. More common was a July 1979, conviction for Kirk Patrick and Bobby Fivecoat, who with Fivecoat’s three children used shovels and screens to sift for projectile points and bone fragments at a site in Utah’s Fishlake National Forest. They pleaded guilty, but claimed they were unaware the site was on federal land. This was a common defense since many archaeological sites remained on private land. Because they pleaded guilty to violating the regulations of the Department of Agriculture, not the Antiquities Act, their fine was only $200 each with $100 suspended.\textsuperscript{12}

By 1979, it was clear the miniscule fines the Antiquities Act created were not deterring pothunters.\textsuperscript{13} Because of the difficulty in securing convictions, fewer than twenty sentences were handed down under the Antiquities Act between 1906 and 1979.\textsuperscript{14} In 1974, in the case of United States v. Diaz, the Ninth Circuit Court found the Act unconstitutional because the terms “object of Antiquity,” “ruins,” and “monuments” in the law were too vague. Dismayed by the loss of so many valuable sites, archaeologists worked to persuade
Congress to pass a stronger act. In 1978, the Society for American Archaeology committed funds to lobby for stronger protection of all sites. The result was the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA), written by Senator Pete Dominici of New Mexico. It made the collection and sale of archaeological artifacts a felony, punishable by fines up to $20,000 for a first offense, $100,000 for a second.

Recreational pot-hunting and commercial looting persisted in the Southwest in spite of ARPA. Typical of the early efforts to enforce the law was Brent Ward’s attempt to prosecute recreational pothunters in 1986. As the U.S. Attorney for Utah, he proclaimed a “war against looters” and ordered federal agents to raid homes in Blanding. They confiscated 325 baskets, pots, and other items. They took all the artifacts of Casey Shumway, one of the area’s most successful amateurs. A recreational pothunter by his own admission, he seldom sold the artifacts he found. However, the government’s case did not hold up in court. The defendants produced evidence they had excavated their artifacts on private land, demonstrated that some artifacts confiscated were reproductions they had made, and cast doubt on the credibility of the government’s informant, who was a convicted felon. The items were returned, the government was embarrassed, and the small town was so outraged at the Gestapo tactics that the mayor threatened secession.

While recreational pot-hunting probably declined with ARPA, commercial looting remained unaffected, and public lands managers believe it may have increased. In 1987, a Congressional subcommittee estimated that 50% to 90% of known archaeological sites had been looted. Unfortunately, convictions under the new act remained low – only 44 convictions had been secured eight years after passage of the law. This meant only one pothunter in about 15,000 cases was convicted. The courts were so slow to enforce ARPA
that the first felony conviction by a jury came eight years after ARPA became law.¹⁹

The persistence of pot-hunting and the substantial sums collectors paid for these artifacts demonstrate the power of romantic attitudes toward Ancestral Puebloans. Larry Davis, superintendent at Anasazi State Park near Boulder, Utah, noted, "There are a lot of people with money out there who want that kind of thing sitting on their mantles as conversation pieces." Shumway was such a man, displaying the relics he found on shelves and in cabinets in his home. What inspired him was the romance of digging through sites of a people who, as the newspaper reported, "mysteriously disappeared." As pot-hunting is largely clandestine, historians find it difficult to identify the attitudes collectors hold toward the Indians who made the artifacts they covet. Constance B. Harriman, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks during the 1980s, believed it was the "aura of mystery, almost of magic" that created the desire to find "a bit of pottery, a drawing on a lonely canyon wall, [or] a carved ornament." Notions of a "vanished race" reinforced this romanticism, allowing recreational pothunters to see their actions as a legitimate fascination with the past of a people who had no descendents to protest.²²

One amateur pothunter who recorded his thoughts on this "hobby" was Isaiah Ford Flora, the "discoverer" of the remains of "Esther" in 1937. While he recognized that he was a "pot-hunter," an "amateur," and a "hobbyist," he took a certain pride in these designations and wanted the professional community to take note of his finds and his theories.²³ When they did not, he dubbed them "despotic" and overly trained "eggheads."²⁴ After finding "Esther" on Forest Service land, he developed the theory that she represented a new kind of prehistoric man. He called this new hominid "Durango Man," and claimed it belonged to the "Neanderthal type." He deduced that the remains were more than 3,000 years old, based on
his rudimentary understanding of tree-ring dating.25

Flora alerted Earl Morris to his finds in the rock shelter crevice, relaying how he had washed her with a garden hose and felt the skin soften.26 Alarmed, Morris went to Durango to look into the preservation of the delicate artifacts. Learning that they had been acquired without a permit, Morris was unsure how to proceed, but when Flora threatened to sell the collection for $500, he acted. They agreed that Flora would “loan” the collection, including “Esther,” to Morris for “study” in exchange for $500. They tacitly agreed this was really a sale, but the wording was necessary because Morris did not want to involve himself, or the Carnegie Institution with which he was associated, in buying illegally procured artifacts.27

The collection went East, where it was displayed in Washington, D.C., and made newspaper headlines. “Esther’s” body was X-rayed, examined, and sent to the Henderson Museum at the University of Colorado for exhibit. Finally, it went to Mesa Verde for display.28

In 1938, Morris returned to Durango and hired Flora to help him excavate the rock shelters on Falls Creek. Morris spent the next three summers around the Falls Creek region, excavating sites that Flora had located. Assessing the architecture and pottery, Morris identified them as Modified Basketmaker remains. Douglass, using the tree-ring dates from samples they sent him, suggested the sites were early Developmental Pueblo. However, Flora read the tree ring date to be 350 years earlier and insisted that was proof of the existence of “Durango Man.” As Flora’s wild theories intensified, Morris distanced himself from him. Morris saw the potential damage to his own credibility when Flora published his ideas in the local paper, and he removed Flora from the Carnegie payroll. In 1940, when Flora denied Morris’ request to return all tree-ring specimens, their friendship ended.29

While Flora never puzzled inordinately about how the people whose remains he dug
up related to modern Indians, he wrote many articles about them for the local paper. Along with articles by Helen Sloan Daniels, a local librarian and Flora’s accomplice on several expeditions, he subsequently published these articles as *Sherds and Points*. In several of these articles, Flora took a romantic narrative approach, pretending he was “Esther,” a clan chieftain, or simply a “Voice of the Past.” As “Esther,” he began one article with, “When I passed to the Happy Hunting Ground one cool morning long before the Christ-child lay in the manger...” He referred to her “Rip Van Winkle Sleep,” observing she was “forgotten” and “primitive,” and described her supposed Neanderthal motion as “a crouching, stiff-legged walk.” Elsewhere he asked, “Who were we?” and answered vaguely, “We are in no sense a wandering people,” but he did not connect them with any modern tribe. He spoke of an X-culture, defining it as “an unknown people that merged with the recognized Basket Maker III to form the beginning of the Pueblo culture known as Pueblo I.” This is as close as he came to linking the Ancestral Puebloan heritage with Pueblo Indians.

In 1943, Flora stunned Morris by demanding the return of the mummified remains and associated artifacts he had “loaned” him. When Flora persisted, Morris asked the authorities to investigate the circumstances of their “discovery.” Nusbaum was brought in, leading Flora to complain that if he had applied for a permit, he would not have received it because Nusbaum routinely denied permits to anyone who did not contribute to his museum. The charge was ludicrous. The NPS could not have given him a permit to dig on the Forest Service lands along Falls Creek. In 1945, J. B. Huston, the Acting Secretary of Agriculture, signed the confiscation papers, and “Esther” became the property of the government. Rewriting events, Flora mailed a statement to the newspaper alleging that he had decided to “donate” “Esther” to the Mesa Verde museum. Flora continued to have
run-ins with Nusbaum, beginning with the wording of a plaque on "Esther’s" display case in the Mesa Verde museum attributing "Esther’s" discovery to Morris. He complained about the lack of a diorama in the Mesa Verde museum portraying the Neanderthal stage of cultural development in the Four Corners. He also published an article in the newspaper on his supposed Neanderthal find. Its outlandish accusations against the archaeological community prompted Nusbaum to complain to the paper for publishing such smears.

While Flora's case was extreme, it suggests the pothunter's general lack of respect for the Puebloan heritage and the archaeological community. Flora's inaccurate dating, his conviction that the people were "primitive," and his conflict with professional archaeologists demonstrate his independent trajectory. While not all pothunters necessarily shared his views, they probably shared his independent stance that defied the archaeological community for its refusal to grant them legitimacy. The fact that pothunters benefited from ideas that linked the Ancestral Puebloans to a "vanished race," hints at the way they perceived the Ancestral Puebloan past.

Concessions and Tourism at Mesa Verde to 1945

While full understanding of the pothunter remains shrouded in psychological analysis and educated guesses, the attitudes of tourists are easier to access. In many ways, these are similar to the recreational pothunter, exhibiting the same fascination with a "lost civilization." This is suggested in advertisements the tourist industry wrote to attract the widest possible audience. These ads did not just play to preconceived notions; they instructed travelers how to interpret the past as well. In the milieu of romanticism, buyer and seller operated from the same understanding of adventure. As a result, early brochures, like that published by the Railroad Administration advertising Mesa Verde, could suggest that
there was a "mystery" and readers instinctively knew that they were being invited to participate in the search for a solution. The tourist industry chose to interpret the Ancestral Puebloan past with the goal of exploiting romantic inclinations in order to maximize profits.

Since the days of the Wetherills, guiding visitors to the ruins of Mesa Verde had been a profitable activity for homesteaders in the Four Corners. As early as 1894, Richard Wetherill had advertised his family’s services as guides. In 1897, he took an innovative approach by advertising their business in conjunction with the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. This ad stressed the many scenic wonders of Colorado to entice tourists to stay at the Alamo Ranch, see "its wondrous museum," and procure a guide to Mesa Verde.36 When Richard moved to Chaco Canyon to continue his excavations for the HEE, the Wetherill family lost business to another Mancos guide, Charles B. Kelly.

Kelly was a Mancos liveryman who broke into the trade by adding the amenity of a rustic cabin overlooking Spruce Tree House. This cabin became the kernel for Spruce Tree Camp, the starting point for the final leg of the three-day journey to see the cliff dwellings. Kelly used wagons and horses to take tourists to Spruce Tree Camp three days a week, charging $15 for one or $12.50 per person for a group. He recommended tough clothing and hiking shoes to climb into the cliff dwellings, a difficult task for women who sought to remain "respectable."37 He guided tourists willing to endure the hardships to Cliff Palace, Spruce Tree House, and Balcony House, but no record remains of what he told them about these sites or of the Ancestral Puebloan past.

After Mesa Verde became a national park, Superintendent Randolph made Kelly the first permanent park ranger for Mesa Verde. When Kelly asked Randolph if he could establish a tent camp for visitors at Spruce Tree House, his request was denied by the
Interior Department because he was a federal employee. Disenchanted, four years later, he
resigned to return to his livery business. Following Kelly’s resignation, Wesley Martin
became a temporary ranger and his wife received the first concession in Mesa Verde. Emma
Martin provided meals for $.75 and lodging in a tent for $.50. Visitors received Emma’s
services favorably until Superintendent Shoemaker fired her husband for drunkenness and
insubordination. 38 Nothing is known about her interpretive story or that of her successor, Mr.
A. J. Ames. With a precedent set for concessions in the park, in 1913, Kelly finally received
a concession for transporting visitors from the railroad depot in Mancos to Spruce Tree
Camp. A year later, after Rickner had completed the road to allow cars, Kelly formed the
“Kelly-French Stage,” with a Mr. French offering the journey by automobile. In 1920, they
sold the concession to C. R. Beers, who formed the Mesa Verde Transportation Company. 39

When Rickner was superintendent, his daughter, Oddie Jeep, held the lodging
concession, charging $3.00 per night for accommodations in tents. Mesa Verde was
modernizing, however, and by 1917, she had expanded her operations to include a lounge
and dining room. 40 An NPS inspection in 1918 revealed that she offered first class service,
providing drinking water to hikers returning from the cliff dwellings and even serving fresh
fruit and cream. 41 However, while the quality of her service was reported, the content of her
interpretation of the park’s archaeological resources was not. As noted earlier, her son and
his friends created their own guide service, but their stories were “out of this world.”

Early in the Depression, Jeep sold her concession facilities to the newly created
Mesa Verde Park Company (MVPC), a subsidiary of the Denver and Rio Grande railroad
(D&RG). The new company also purchased the Mesa Verde Transportation Company and
made plans to modernize facilities in the national park. However, the 1930s were not a
propitious time for expansion and by 1937, the MVPC had declared bankruptcy.

During this brief interval, the D&RG entered the field of interpretation. Their 12-page booklet, *The Story of Mesa Verde National Park*, carried the same ambivalent story the NPS was disseminating during these years. It began by identifying Mesa Verde as “an island of mystery and enchantment” and declared “Everywhere mystery calls! Whence came this people? What happened to them? . . . Mystery – all is mystery!” This set the stage for their appeal, which urged visitors to come for an “unforgettable adventure . . . a romance . . . with all the thrill of discovery.” The booklet referred to the cliff dwellers as a “vanished people” or as “Little People,” a term defined as a Navajo and Pueblo name referring to the helplessness of the cliff dwellers “against fierce foes and disastrous natural conditions, to which they probably succumbed.” It called their villages, “Pueblos of the Perished,” and reversed Navajo and Pueblo mythology by stating that the Navajos had no fear of the “haunted cliffs” and that to “the Pueblos it was accursed.” Then the article surprised the reader by stating, “it is accepted as truth that the Pueblo Indians are descendents of the Cliff Dwellers.” A footnote stated this must be true because “Pueblo Indians who have never seen the Cliff Dwellings describe accurately where buried jars are to be found” and “These have been found, just as described, under the undisturbed dust of the centuries.” The romance and the mystery were there. The booklet implied Pueblo Indians avoided these sites and that unspecified “authorities” believed the cliff dwellers to be Pueblos, maintaining the same ambivalent attitude toward Modern Pueblo Indians that the NPS disseminated.

The D&RG benefited from the publicity others gave the cliff dwellings as well. Robert Graham prepared a travelogue and advertised it though a Denver speaker’s bureau. His lecture emphasized the “mystery” of the cliff dwellers: “Who were they? When did they
live? What became of them? And what evidences have they left to show us they ever
existed?" Touching on freemasonry, Egyptian hieroglyphics, and ancient symbolism in
Palestine, his answers to these questions probably were not mainstream. However, his
pamphlet encouraged his audience to see the cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde and the Pajarito
Plateau for themselves and gave information on the rates and schedule of the D&RG.44

In 1937, the interpretive story at Mesa Verde received a boost when Ansel Hall
acquired the failed MVPC. After becoming chief naturalist, Hall became director of the
Educational Division of the NPS in 1923, then chief forester in 1930. Those who knew Hall
described him as “an enthusiastic visionary with exceptional management skills,” like
Mather and Albright. Hall loved the outdoors and when the NPS bureaucracy decided to
relocate him to Washington, he and his wife, June, could not see themselves raising a
family in the urban East.45 At that critical juncture, Nusbaum invited him to take over the
defunct MVPC, and knowing little about the Ancestral Puebloan past, he accepted.46

When the Halls saw the poor state of the concessions at Spruce Tree Camp they
were concerned, but they rose to the challenge and turned the concessions at Mesa Verde
into a model national park establishment. The Mesa Verde historian, Duane Smith, noted,
“Never before had the Mesa Verde concessions been in such good hands.” The Halls’ new
corporation, the Mesa Verde Company (MVC), worked to improve the facilities and add
amenities. They opened a small store with a gas station in Spruce Tree Camp, which
Nusbaum encouraged his staff to patronize.47 Over the next two decades, they remodeled the
lodge four times, adding a gift shop and lunch counter, remodeling the kitchen, and
enclosing the porch. They remodeled the rental cabins and expanded the complex by adding
a bathhouse, 40 canvas cottages, and 42 rooms with baths. They acquired a larger bus for
expanded sightseeing tours of the park, and even provided childcare. Their six children helped by waiting tables and cleaning rooms. Hall’s daughter, Merrie, fondly remembered many exquisite evenings on the porch of the lodge with the visitors.

Hall was described as a romantic idealist and a practical businessman, as well as a former NPS Ranger who remained loyal to the service. As a result, all his advertisements promoted the national park’s interpretive program as well as his business. To this end, he produced various interpretive aids for the average tourist. The first, published in 1938, was *Mesa Verde: A Brief Guide*. Available for a dime, it offered basic information on the concessionaire facilities, described the ruins, and explained how to see the park. The booklet gave details on the NPS tours of the cliff dwellings, with schedules of the automobile caravans, and encouraged attendance at the campfire program. Hall repeated the popular myth by writing that the park was established “to preserve and exhibit the cities left by a vanished race.” Because he distributed this brochure to motels and service stations within a 250-kilometer radius of the park, preparing travelers for their visit, its impact was immense.

Later, Hall designed a photographic portfolio with stunning photos of the mesa and cliff dwellings. He capitalized on the idea of a “mystery” by asking provocative questions.

What happened to the people when they deserted their cliff cities during the great drought? What is the significance of the peculiar structure of Sun Temple? What mystic ceremonies took place in the underground chambers we call kivas — and were they, perhaps, the direct ancestral pattern for the Hopi, Zuni, and other Pueblo dances and chants of today?

Like a circus sideshow, the booklet also had its morbid side, including photos of “Esther,” and the skull of a woman who was apparently murdered. The text queried

How can we learn about “Esther” and her contemporaries of very early Mesa Verde days? What catastrophe overtook the young lady whose skull is in the Museum — the one with the arrowhead still in place? What became of the heads of the 14 headless mummies found in 1932?
On the final page, beneath a photograph of Old Oraibi, Hall answered the first of his great questions. After stating that contemporary tribes surrounded Mesa Verde, he stated

By tracing pottery fragments, unique features of architecture, etc., anthropologists have accumulated strong evidence indicating that the people now occupying the pueblos in the upper Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico are the blood descendants of the Mesa Verde cliff dwellers who were forced to migrate southward during the great drought of 1276-1298. It is thought that the nomadic Navajos are probably descended from the wilder tribes that frequently raided the peaceable inhabitants of Mesa Verde and caused them to fortify their cliff cities. Hall assumed the same indecisive position that the NPS had assumed. The “mystery,” stated first, predisposed most readers to conclude that the scientific understanding of the Puebloan migration was only one possibility. Pueblo Indians were not given a voice in the matter; only the hesitant stance of modern scientists was acknowledged.

This booklet remained substantially the same through the 1950s, although a romantic painting by Paul Coze [Figure 12] augmented later editions. Coze’s painting hangs beside the information desk in the Mesa Verde Archaeological Museum today. Portraying Cliff Palace on a sunny autumn afternoon, it depicts the activities that could have been seen in any of the modern Pueblos at the time of the Spanish Entrada: pottery making, the grinding of corn, and women returning from the springs with jars of water on their heads. The woman in the foreground wears her hair in the traditional style of a Hopi maiden. Everyone is scantily dressed, except the shapely maiden facing the viewer in the foreground, carefully concealed with the only full-length dress in the painting.

The MVC produced a variety of tourist products for visitors to send home. One was a long, humorous tourist “letter” describing the sites with “cute” drawings to illustrate the text. To create an air of excitement, it referred to “cliff dwellers” and “prehistoric Indians,” making no mention of Pueblo Indians, and emphasized the ladders and
the “foot-wide ledges high above the canyon” to be negotiated with rangers. It also advertised other components of the interpretive program – the campfire programs and the museum – and ended by mentioning the services the Mesa Verde Company provided – restaurants, cabins, horseback rides, and a gift shop.56 The MVC also published postcards, many of them illustrated with Coze’s paintings. Since postcard space was limited, what they chose to say represented the most important facts about the site. These short captions faithfully presented the NPS interpretation of the park. A typical passage read “The golden age of the Pueblo culture dates from 1000 to 1300 A.D.”57 Another of a kiva at Cliff Palace read, “Circular subterranean chambers used for religious ceremonies by men of the prehistoric period. Kivas are still used by present day Pueblo tribes.”58 Such descriptions identified them indirectly as Pueblo heritage sites.

Other postcards played up the romance. A postcard of Sun Temple read, “On a rocky promontory overlooking Cliff Palace and many other large ruins stand the remains of the mysterious Sun Temple.”59 Pueblo religion was portrayed as an object of mystery, one that could be commodified for profit. Coze painted a romantic scene of a kiva ceremony lit by the glow of a fire – one that he could only have imagined. It read, “Priests chanting around a kiva altar. Between the fire pit and the priest using the pipe for ‘blessing by smoke’ is the sipapu, symbolic entrance to the underworld.”60 Since the days of Jackson, part of the romance had been climbing the cliffs to reach the ruins. This adventure was captured by postcards showing the tall ladder at Balcony House.61

Other publishers printed postcards for shops in nearby towns to sell. Without the sensitivity of Hall, these cards were less accurate, playing on the themes of romance and mystery. One read: “Tucked away in the far Southwest corner of Colorado, these ruins
are perhaps the strangest of the state's many wonders. Hewn from the sheer canyon cliffs stand the remains of the dwellings of a long-forgotten race. Another announced that the "cliff dwellings were mysteriously abandoned by the Anasazi Indians."

Concessions and Tourism at the Pueblo Heritage National Monuments to 1945

Outside Mesa Verde, concessionaire services at the Pueblo heritage national monuments were slight. Those located near large cities, like Walnut Canyon, Wupatki and Casa Grande National Monuments, relied on the tourist infrastructure of the towns to provide services for the visitors. At national monuments distant from urban centers, like Chaco Canyon, the early custodians often provided a measure of service. Gus and Ramona Griffin personified this service in the case of Chaco Canyon. They rented rooms in what became known as the Pueblo Bonito Lodge, the same building that had once served as Richard's Wetherill's home and store. Their rendering of the Ancestral Puebloan story, as noted earlier, focused on a "vanished race" and the romance of the spirits. This included the spirit of Wetherill, who was buried behind the Trading Post.

Although Bandelier National Monument was near Santa Fe, it warranted a small lodge until the 1930s because there was no road into the canyon and many visitors were too weary to walk in and out in a day. Judge Albert J. Abbott and his wife, Ida, built a home in Frijoles canyon in 1907, before the land was set aside as a national monument. Known as "the House of the Ten Alders," they intended it to be their retirement home. They built across the stream from Tyuonyi and planted an orchard and garden. They also guided visitors to the ruins and provided a commissary for Hewett's field school. Since the Abbots never filed a homestead on the tract, when President Wilson proclaimed the national monument, their establishment became the park concession.
In 1925, Evelyn and George Frey took over the “Lodge of the Ten Elders.” Without a road, they hauled all their supplies, including a piano, by mule along the “Frey Trail.” George Frey, formerly an engineer, replaced the mule run with a makeshift tram using a cable, a basket, and a small engine. During the Depression, the CCC built a new visitor center and lodge. CCC workers constructed these with striking stone masonry away from Tuuonyi to preserve the archaeology, and then tore down the old lodge. After the Freys divorced, Evelyn remained in the canyon to manage the new Frijoles Canyon Lodge until 1978, when her advanced age slowed her down. By that time, better roads had brought other accommodations within reach and the lodge was no longer needed.67 Evelyn Frey remembered guiding people through the ruins and how inadequate she felt, knowing little of the history and culture of Pueblo Indians. Searching for guidance, she wrote New Mexico’s Senator Bronson Cutting, who sent her reports of the BAE. Using these reports to interpret the site for the public, she probably identified it as Puebloan.68

The Abbots did not have to promote their lodge, since Hewett kept them busy. Evelyn Frey generally relied on the NPS to promote the site, but she did advertise a little. She gave away special stationary that contained a thin promotional text in the left margin, quoting Hewett, “Of all the beautiful and romantic spots in the Southwest, none surpasses the Frijoles Canyon.”69 She also published a pamphlet describing the lodge.70

Private companies printed postcards to be sold at stores throughout the Four Corners. Cards Unlimited in Albuquerque published postcards of many nearby monuments. On some of them, the people of Bandelier National Monument were identified as “Pueblo Indians” and those of Pecos as “Pecos Valley Indians,” the later designation as indistinct as the former is exact.71 Photographs of Pueblo Indians often
graced other postcards. Sometimes the inscription alluded to their heritage, but there was still some hesitation in giving them full recognition. A postcard of a Laguna Pueblo couple identified them as "Alleged descendents of the prehistoric Anasazi . . ."72

The Fred Harvey Company and the Indian Detours

The largest concessionaire for the Southwestern monuments was the Fred Harvey Company. Its business partner, the Atchinson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway (ATSF) established a transcontinental route from Chicago to San Diego in 1887. Nine years earlier, Fred Harvey, a British immigrant, proposed to the ATSF that they work together to establish a chain of exceptional restaurants to replace the poor-quality eating establishments typical along the nation's railways at that time. Harvey offered to provide the equipment and the management, if the ATSF would provide the small depot restaurant in Topeka for a trial and transport whatever he needed, free of charge, on its trains. His lunch counter was an immediate success. Passengers, crewmen, local businessmen and even families came in to dine from his delicious menu and enjoy the spotless atmosphere. The agreement worked so well the ATSF encouraged Harvey to open other eateries along the route and by the late 1880s, wayfarers could find a Harvey House about every 150 kilometers along the tracks.73 When the railroad built fine hotels along their route, they placed them in Harvey's care.74 One of these new hotels was the Montezuma in Las Vegas, New Mexico. Located near a hot mineral springs, Harvey's plan was to turn it into a resort. The ATSF publicized the hot springs and soon Harvey had a large clientele stopping at Las Vegas.75 The two companies had found a way to increase profits by opening the Southwest to tourism. When Harvey died in 1901, his operation included several newsstands in ATSF depots, 26 fine restaurants, 20 dining cars on the railway, and 16 grand hotels.76 At that time his son, Ford, took over the
business, which became a family corporation known as the Fred Harvey Company (FHC).

In 1887, Fred Harvey placed Herman Schweizer, a German immigrant, in charge of the Harvey House in Coolidge, New Mexico. Coolidge was only 32 kilometers east of Gallup, which had already become the center for an extensive Indian trade. Schweizer began buying crafts from local Navajos to resell to tourists in his store. As his interest in Indian arts grew, he furnished Indian silversmiths with silver and turquoise and requested they make lightweight jewelry to be sold as souvenirs for tourists traveling on the transcontinental trains. Schweizer’s successful business venture caught the attention of Fred Harvey’s daughter, Minnie Harvey Huckel and her husband, John F. Huckel. Impressed, they established the Fred Harvey Company Indian Department, under John Huckel’s management. As his assistant, Schweizer became known as the “Harvey Anthropologist.”

The Huckels proposed that the FHC add a museum of Indian art to the Harvey system. They chose to locate this museum, known as the Indian Building, beside the Alvarado Hotel in Albuquerque. Besides the displays, the building housed exhibit rooms where Indians made their crafts while the public watched, and a store where visitors could buy their wares. The Huckels called on their friend, Mary Colter, a rising architect and interior decorator, to design the interior of the Indian Building. This was her first assignment for the FHC in what was to become a creative partnership.

The ATSF and the FHC increased their commitment to the expanding tourist trade in 1901 when the ATSF extended its tracks to the South rim of the Grand Canyon and in 1904 when the FHC opened El Tovar Hotel, one of the most luxurious establishments operated by the company, on the South Rim. Two months later, the FHC opened the Hopi House next door, patterned after a building at Old Oraibi. Like the Indian Building, here
tourists could watch Indian artisans and purchase curios in the same building.\textsuperscript{80} Although Colter designed Hopi House as a venue for Pueblo history and art, the building contained a priceless collection of Navajo blankets, carved masks from Northwest coast tribes, Pomo baskets from California, and rare buffalo hide shields from the Plains – collections never imaginable in a traditional Hopi village. The sales counter looked out of place except to the devout capitalist incapable of understanding the discord. Professor Mark Neumann held that “The distinctive differences between cultures ... was [sic] subsumed by the larger commercial machinery geared toward merchandising non-Anglo cultural artifacts.”\textsuperscript{81}

At the outset of World War I, the Harvey Company was offering automobile trips to scenic points along the canyon rim. Conducting these tours, FHC drivers began to describe the tourists as “dudes.”\textsuperscript{82} One of the points was an “Aztec ruin,” probably the Tusayan Ruins near Lipan Point.\textsuperscript{83} In 1919, when Congress turned Grand Canyon National Monument into a national park, the FHC became the official concessionaire.\textsuperscript{84} Earlier, in 1915, the ATSF began offering a side trip on yet another spur. From Lamy, New Mexico, a line finally led to the company’s namesake, Santa Fe, 28 kilometers north. The ATSF produced an 18-page brochure on the city, and in 1916, the FHC began offering excursions to minerals springs, lakes, and pueblo ruins within an hour’s drive of Santa Fe.\textsuperscript{85}

In 1915, the ATSF and the FHC participated in both the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco and the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego, which celebrated the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914. The larger San Francisco fair was designated a World’s Fair, and won federal backing. The extravagance of the exhibits matched the funding. Along the midway, they constructed a working model of the canal with a moving walkway. The Union Pacific Railroad reproduced Yellowstone’s Old
Faithful Inn against a backdrop of artificial mountains and geysers. The Great Northern Railroad constructed a model of Glacier National Park. The ATSF, not to be outdone, built a three-dimensional model of the Grand Canyon complete with a fabricated pueblo where Hopi artisans worked at their crafts. Behind a Spanish-style promenade, visitors glimpsed cacti, adobe walls, and cliff dwellings – as if the latter were a natural feature throughout the Southwest. The builders also constructed a Navajo village designed to resemble a cliff dwelling. Laura Ingalls Wilder described the exhibit in a letter to her husband thus:

We went into the Navajo Indian village, regular cliff dwellings. It is built to be a rocky cliff and one climbs up by steps cut in the solid rock all along the way. After you get up the cliff, there are holes dug into the rock, smaller, or larger, where the Indians live, making baskets and pottery and weaving rugs. They all smell like wild beast dens and I did not like to be there.

Now the tourist industry had confused Navajo culture with Pueblo culture. The exhibit derived its amusement from racial stereotypes and taught lessons of cultural evolution.

Having lost the World’s Fair designation to San Francisco, the San Diego exposition focused on promoting the Southwestern/Mesoamerican region. As Hewett was directing active expeditions in both regions at the time, the Fair’s organizers offered him the position of Director of Exhibits, and despite his other commitments, he accepted. The development of mankind emerged as the theme, with an emphasis on the civilizations of the American Southwest and Mesoamerica. Hewett wanted to tell the story of mankind’s progress on the continent, moving from early hunters through the canal’s construction. His contributions centered on the Museum of Man, where he placed models of the Mayan monuments at Quirigua alongside artifacts from the cliff dwellings. Ales Hrdlicka, of the United States National Museum, helped make the exhibits yet another demonstration of the superiority of the Caucasian race, and Lummis assisted with the publicity.
The ATSF also asked Hewett and the SAA to design and construct their exhibit at
the fair. Entitled “The Painted Desert,” after a scenic landscape the railroad traveled
through, the object was to publicize the scenery and interest visitors in touring the
Southwest. As the ATSF unselfishly explained in their brochure:

Realizing that many people have neither the time nor the means to visit the Indian
tribes which inhabit the country adjacent to the railway from the Colorado-New
Mexico line to the Pacific, and knowing the deep interest that all take in the “First
Americans,” it was decided to reproduce at the Panama-California Exposition in
their Painted Desert Exhibit, typical Indian settlements of the sedentary and nomadic
tribes of the Great Southwest.94

Under Hewett’s influence, the ATSF hired Nusbaum to supervise the construction.95 The
exhibit included an artificial mesa, made of wire and colored cement, to display the
“crumbling ruins of a cliff dwelling.”96 On one side of the artificial cliffs, Nusbaum built a
large adobe pueblo, modeled on the villages at Taos and Zuni. Designed with assistance
from Colter, Huckle, and Schweizer, the pueblo included hornos and a kiva.97 On the other
side of the artificial mesa was an exhibit on the nomadic tribes of the Southwest, including
the Navajo. This exhibit included hogans, ramadas, and wickiups.98

Pueblo Indians from San Ildefonso provided much of the work force.99 The
companies purchased construction materials, household articles, and even cedar fences from
Southwestern Indians and built without nails, screws, or any modern hardware to establish
an air of authenticity.100 The ATSF staffed the exhibit with Indians. On the pueblo side of the
mesa, these included families from San Ildefonso Pueblo and the Hopi mesas – including
the soon-to-be-famous potters, Maria and Julian Martinez. Replicating their success at the
Indian Building and Hopi House, the ATSF hired the Indians to be on display for the public.
Visitors watched them make pottery, weave rugs, bake bread, and dance in the plaza.101 Off
to one side stood a “trading post” where fairgoers could purchase their handcrafts.102 The
message designed for the public was that the Indian past, while romantic, was disappearing. Visitors could purchase a piece of the past at the exhibits, but they would have to hurry if they were to see these crafts in the pristine beauty of a native habitat.103

More than three and a half million people visited the Panama-California Exposition. Since the Painted Desert was located on the “Isthmus,” or midway of the fair, most of the visitors viewed the ATSF exhibit. Newsreals featured “the Painted Desert,” and reporters photographed silent film actress Mary Pickford at the pueblo talking to Indian children.104 The San Diego Union declared the exhibit to be “the most impressive display of Indian Life.”105 Hewett praised Nusbaum for “creating the atmosphere of an ancient pueblo,” dubbing the exhibit “a representation of the fast disappearing culture of the American Indians.”106 The placement of cliff dwelling ruins in this context is problematic. They were obviously another artifact to be visited. Since they resembled the pueblo village, visitors might have thought them to be Ancestral Puebloan. However, their location near the Navajo and Apache exhibit might have suggested a link with these groups instead; or visitors could just as easily have seen them as “abandoned” ruins, a part of the landscape, fulfilling their notion of a “lost civilization.”

During the late 1910s, the focus of America was the First World War, which took the nation’s attention away from the Southwest. As the “Roaring Twenties” progressed, tourism picked up with the coming of better roads. In New Mexico, Ema Fergusson began Koshare Tours in partnership with Ethel Hickey in 1921.107 Hickey was once on the faculty at the University of New Mexico and Fergusson, a member of a prominent Albuquerque family, was a teacher and journalist. In the war, Fergusson became a field director for the Red Cross and traveled widely in the region, gaining the background for her post-war
articles in *The Albuquerque Herald*. When Fergusson and Hickey founded Koshare tours, they planned to transport tourists by “high powered car with an expert driver,” providing “luncheon and afternoon tea,” and meeting with “artists, cowboys and Indians.” They offered small, intimate tours to Chaco Canyon, Puye, the Rito de los Frijoles, and many of the pueblos. Their promotional materials stressed the romance of the “primitive” as well as the ruins and religious ceremonies. One pamphlet proclaimed that “Here you will find legends as yet unprinted, folk dances of primitive beauty, religious ceremonies of weird dramatic force[,] prehistoric ruins, Indian pueblos, [and] old missions.”

Koshare Tours became a modest success due to Fergusson’s intimate understanding of the state and her personal relationships with many Pueblo Indian families, as well as prominent Hispanic families in Santa Fe. Her enthusiasm made it work and after the business was up and running, Hickey turned the business over to her. Her brochure romanticized the modern pueblos, even as it announced her intimate relationship with them.

Koshare Tours have a special welcome to and a thorough knowledge of all living pueblos, such as Acoma on its mighty rock, Taos unchanged since the sixteenth century, Isleta, San Felipe, Jemez. They will take you to Zuni and to Hopi land. They will show you all of these places in the color and activity of their great dances and festivals; but even more fascinating to the lover of human types, they will also show you these places when the people are going about their primitive – almost Biblical – tasks and pleasures.

Her brochures linked the modern Pueblos and the Ancestral Pueblos explicitly, calling Chaco Canyon “the ancient home of the modern Zuni Indians.” However, the same brochure romanticized the Ancestral Pueblan past. It described Ceremonial Cave at Bandelier National Monument as “the sacred meeting place of some prehistoric clan or fraternity.” It identified Gran Quivira as a deserted village rich in “tradition and speculation,” where the Spanish believed “there was buried treasure, and from that day to this someone has been

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digging.” The brochure also compared the archaeology of New Mexico favorably with that of Rome, declaring, “Puyé has its trails hollowed deep in the rock, trails as old perhaps as the famous wheel ruts of Pompeii.”\(^\text{13}\) The description of Bandelier in another brochure combined the romantic and the primitive. It read

El Rito de los Frijoles is set in a narrow canyon of the Jemez Mountains. The ruins of homes a thousand years old with soot-blackened walls, primitive decoration, and broken bits of prehistoric handicrafts record a life not unlike that lived in the pueblos of today.\(^\text{14}\)

While linking the sites to modern pueblos, this description left the nature of the link unclear.

In 1925, Alfred Knopf, a New York publisher, encouraged Fergusson to write a book about her experiences.\(^\text{15}\) In 1931, she published *Dancing Gods: Indian Ceremonials of New Mexico and Arizona*. In this work, she drew the link between the Ancestral Pueblos and modern Pueblo Indians clearly, writing:

Archaeologists learn a great deal about prehistoric life from the Pueblos, all of whom have traditions connecting them with the inhabitants of the ruins which are found all over the southwest. The Santa Clara people, for instance, claim descent from the inhabitants of Puyé, and all the Keres of the Rio Grande valley consider the Rito de los Frijoles as their ancestral home.\(^\text{16}\)

In 1940, she published *Our Southwest*, a collection of her picturesque descriptions and seasoned reflections on the people and environment of the Four Corners. In this book she vacillated, attributing Southwestern archaeological sites to both a “vanished people” and simultaneously linking them to modern Pueblo Indians. She began the chapter on the prehistoric past with the traditional romantic lament that the “relics of prehistoric life are . . . reminders of how transitory every people’s culture is.”\(^\text{17}\) She discussed Father Kino’s discovery of Casa Grande, mentioning a tradition that linked it to the Hopis.\(^\text{18}\) Then, suggesting native traditions could not be trusted, she asked the typical questions:

Where did its builders come from, where did they go, and when, and why?
Answers to such questions are still being sought. Only in the twentieth century by slow digging, sifting, collating, comparing, and compiling, anthropologists are beginning to weave the scattered remains of many peoples into a pattern more or less complete.19

The ensuing pages championed the scientific advances that led to the accurate dating of the sites. Contradicting herself, she argued “nobody knows where the Chaco Canyon people went.” Later she asserted,

It is clear that some of them got themselves across, or around, the Jemez range and into the Rio Grande Valley. Their best known sites are on the Pajarito Plateau. . . . The people of the Pajarito Plateau are the immediate ancestors of Pueblos who live along the Rio Grande today.120

In her writing, she romanticized Southwestern ruins by retaining their mysterious air. She maintained a strong respect for the ability of science to solve the “mystery,” while denying her Pueblo Indian friends the legitimacy of their own historical knowledge.

Fergusson respected Fred Harvey, calling him a “genius” and the “civilizer” of the West. However, in her depiction of his paternalistic attitudes toward his waitresses, she dubbed him an “autocrat” and a “beneficent despot.” She spoke highly of the company’s taste for Indian and Spanish art and for their treatment of native artists.121 In this context, she wrote from a unique perspective. In 1926, the FHC bought out Koshare Tours and employed Fergusson to train a new cadre of tour guides called Fred Harvey couriers.122 The hospitality and graciousness she instilled in them made the Indian Detours memorable.

The concept for the “Indian Detours” began with Major R. Hunter Clarkson who, like Harvey, was born in England. After serving with the British army in World War I, he immigrated to the States, and the FHC management hired him to oversee the transportation of tours at the Grand Canyon. Clarkson conceived a plan for longer tours into the Indian country of the Four Corners and took his idea to his friend and boss, Ford Harvey, who was

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equally enthusiastic. Since these would be “detours” from the main railway to see the Indian Pueblos and Pueblo Indian ruins, they decided to call them “Indian Detours.” They ran the operation from Santa Fe via a new subsidiary, the Santa Fe Transportation Company.

Clarkson began developing these “Indian Detours” by hiring the best staff he could find. Roger Birdseye, a freelance writer who had written about other scenic points of interest, became the head of the advertising department. Clarkson hired Fergusson as the “Director of Couriers.” In response to this last appointment, the Albuquerque Tribune congratulated the FHC for obtaining the services of such a capable person to train the corps of interpreters around whom the entire tour idea revolved.

The excitement this new venture brought to New Mexico was tangible. The Albuquerque Morning Journal proclaimed “Fifty Thousand Tourists will Traverse State” and Albuquerque would be as well known as Southern California. Birdseye worked fast to produce an attractive brochure emphasizing the ease and the luxury of the tours. He stressed the romance of the Southwest, writing “It is the purpose of the Indian Detour to take you through the very heart of all this, to make you feel the lure of the Southwest.” Within four months, 35,000 copies had been distributed and another 100,000 copies ordered.

Fergusson handpicked the couriers, establishing standards worthy of the FHC. To be a courier, women had to be 25 or older, college educated, knowledgeable about the Southwest (Spanish proficiency preferred), graceful, amicable, and interested in learning more. The couriers tended to be teachers or journalists. Some came from east of the Mississippi, but many had grown up in well-known New Mexican families. Two had been guides with the Koshare Tours. They trained for three weeks and had to pass a written exam covering the history, archaeology, geology, ethnology, art, and literature of the
region. While Fergusson oversaw the basic training, she worked with SAR to arrange for the couriers to hear lectures by Hewett, Kidder, Morley, Hodge and Lummis. These renowned archaeologists served on the Courier Corps Advisory Board, allowing the FHC to advertise that the SAR trained their couriers. Given the various ways these archaeologists identified the Ancestral Puebloans, the emphasis the couriers would have developed in their interpretation, probably reflected an explanation relying on romance and science and ultimately ambivalent in linking the modern pueblos to their ancestors.

However, Fred Harvey had a name people trusted. If his employees said the “Anasazi” vanished, then visitors could assume the Ancestral Puebloans had vanished. If the couriers were ambivalent, then it could be assumed that nobody knew. The reliability of the Fred Harvey name was summed up in an editorial in the *Albuquerque Morning Journal*.

Fred Harvey had in fact the true spirit of the . . . antiquarian. He insisted on authenticity. He discouraged the fairy stories that too often passed current to astonish the gullible tourists. If Fred Harvey showed an old Spanish bell there was no doubt of its age. If one of his agents related an historical incident or an Indian legend, its veracity could be relied on.

Once the courier service was running smoothly, Fergusson resigned from the Indian Detours, ostensibly to pursue her writing and training continued through regular bulletins to supplement what the couriers had learned.

The Yellow Coach Company of Chicago and the White Company of Cleveland supplied the autobuses. Built to FHC specifications, they had swivelting leather seats and large windows to give tourists the best views. The public dubbed these buses Harveycars. Initially, drivers had to pass rigorous driving and health exams. A few drivers came from the Grand Canyon, where they had driven tours along the rim, but most came from within 60 kilometers of Santa Fe. One driver, Tom Dozier, was a native of Santa Clara Pueblo.
The couriers’ uniform included a long wool skirt, velveteen blouse, concha belt, and leather boots. The drivers wore English-style riding boots and britches, a cowboy shirt and 10-gallon hat. The Company paid couriers $150 a month, plus $10 more if they spoke Spanish. However, they could not accept tips. They paid drivers $125 a month, and they could accept tips. The drivers could not drink, even on their own time, and could not date the couriers. However, after one of the drivers had a heart-to-heart talk with Clarkson, pointing out the difficulty of meeting other women at the overnight stops, he relaxed the rules. The result was that many of the drivers married couriers, and they became an elite social group in Santa Fe. The drivers were capable mechanics and carried enough supplies for minor repairs – spark plugs, fan belt, distributor, although the most frequent repairs were flat tires. They quickly became a team with the couriers; when they had to do repairs, they sent the courier off with the dudes to study wildflowers while they worked.

The basic three-day detour began at the Casteñeda Hotel in Las Vegas, New Mexico. After breakfast, they drove to the ruins at Pecos, where the couriers explained that the village was abandoned in 1838, but did not emphasize that the population continued at Jemez. After driving over Glorieta Pass into Santa Fe, they spent the night in another Harvey Hotel, the renowned La Fonda, and attended a lecture by the SAR faculty. The second day, the drivers and couriers took the dudes to the pueblos of Tesuque, Santa Clara, and San Juan. They also visited the large cliff ruin at Puyé where they stayed an hour, allowing the dudes to climb the ladders in order to explore the cliff, described as “honeycombed with rooms and granaries built by a long vanished tribe.” However, the couriers informed the dudes that the people of Santa Clara were “believed to be descendants of the Pajarito Plateau people who were forced from their village by drought 100 to 1,000
On the final day, the tour visited Santo Domingo and Isleta pueblos and toured the Indian Building, and then the dudes boarded the train to continue their trip to California. The same tour was available in the reverse for tourists traveling east.

The tours began on 15 May 1926. A journalist from the *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, Ottilia M. Halbach, accompanied the first tour and published her account in the paper. At Puye, Halbach noted how effectively the ambivalence of the archaeologists had been communicated to the tourists. She wrote that “Several Santa Clara Indians ... claim it was their forebears who occupied these cliff dwellings.” Her unwillingness to credit the Indians with any real knowledge was clear. She also noted the curious attraction Anglos had created between themselves and cliff dwellings. “Several times a few members of the party vowed they had seen enough of how the Puye Indians lived four or five hundred years before Christ, this writer among them, but always their curiosity overcame their timidity and on they went, climbing ladders, using the moccasin footpaths worn into the soft rock by the early Indians to the top of the mesa.” This first tour was a marked success; news stories on it appeared in Los Angeles and New York.

Another journalist who described the Indian Detour that year was Francis McMullen of the *New York Times Magazine*. He described Pecos as a “plateau crowned with ruins” and noted, “archaeologists have been digging many years” there. Yet, he found the courier more interesting than the romance of the past. He described her as “a pretty young college girl in high boots and a 10-gallon hat, with enough Indian jewelry to open a curio shop.”

The Indian Detours were off and running in an ambience of romance and ambivalence.

With the success of the 1926 season behind them, the company added more detour routes to the schedule the following year. A repeat business had already begun, in part
because of the popularity of the couriers. Some of the new tours, called “Land Cruises,” were substantially longer. The Sierra Verde Cruise took eight days and traveled to Chaco Canyon, Aztec Ruins, and Mesa Verde, as well as the modern pueblos of Isleta, Laguna, and Taos. At Chaco Canyon, the dudes stayed at the Pueblo Bonito Lodge. Tourists received a guided tour of Pueblo Bonito, visited Chetro Ketl, and hiked to Peñasco Blanco, before heading north to climb the walls of the ruins at Aztec. At Mesa Verde, the couriers explained that Pueblo Indians settled the area about 1 C.E., then the dudes stood “in awe at the accomplishments of a people who vanished mysteriously in 1200 A.D.” They stayed at the Spruce Tree Lodge and attended the campfire talk. Other new tours set off for sites as close to Santa Fe as the San Cristobal ruins or as far away as Carlsbad Caverns. The latter tour visited the pueblo ruins at Gran Quivira and Quarai. Couriers probably identified both sites as historic pueblos and they also “filled the dudes in on the crop failures, the droughts, and the Apache raids that brought an end to this communal area.”

Letters from satisfied customers praised the tours. They touch on the subject of vanished civilizations only in passing, but reveal glimpses of how dudes understood the relationship between the ruins and Pueblo Indians. Margaret Dun of New York City, praised the couriers because they “added much to [her] knowledge of Indian customs and history.” Jennie Weaver of Somerset, Pennsylvania, perceived a possible disconnect in pueblo history, however. She wrote to say, “The combination of ancient civilization, colorful Indian Pueblos, and Mexican villages in their setting of most beautiful scenery makes it an unforgettable trip.”

Promotional materials for the Indian detours poured from the presses. The FHC placed ads in the National Geographic, relying on the romance of travel as well as the past
to stir interest. A 1929 ad read, "Beyond the train horizons of New Mexico are hidden primitive Indian pueblos, Spanish missions, prehistoric cliff dwellings and buried cities – all set in the matchless scenery and climate of the Southern Rockies." Clearly, the FHC hoped to profit from the romantic appeal of a "lost civilization." Another advertisement asked, "Is this really the New World?" and stated

New Mexico and Arizona shelter countless ruins left by ancient races. About them live descendents of the Spanish Conquistadors and 50,000 Indians of today. Here Americans have a treasure of romance, archaeology, and history.

The ATSF also produced promotional materials. One was a pamphlet entitled *Indian Country of the Southwest*. Illustrated with colorful photographs, the text is quite revealing. In its description of Mesa Verde National Park, it referred to the ancient inhabitants as "a unique, completely distinct race of Indians." Then it went on to state, "The tribe completely vanished more than six centuries ago – no one knows why – yet their dwellings are so complete that experts can reconstruct their entire way of life from the ruins." A better statement of the idea of a "vanished civilization" cannot be found. In its depiction of Aztec National Monument, it both discredited the Aztec theory and suggested a tenuous link to the modern pueblos. "Although many of the cliff ruins are believed to be of Aztec origin, it is a debatable point, because several Indian tribes of the Southwest claim the early cliff dwellers as their ancestors." It then capitulates to the Aztec legend by claiming that Montezuma's Castle was named for "the ancient chief of the Aztec tribe" without any explanation.

In 1931, Byron S. Harvey, who became president of the FHC in 1928, sold the Indian Detours to Clarkson. He believed the recent decline in business, attributable to the worsening depression, did not warrant further participation of the FHC in the venture. Clarkson kept the personnel, including the distinctive couriers and drivers. He changed the
name of the company to Clarkson, Inc., the name of the Harvey cars to Courier cars, and the insignia from a thunderbird to two Eagle Dancers, but retained the service, the routes, the advertising and the training – at least for a few years.

The FHC began plans in 1931 for the Watchtower, another Indian building to be constructed on the south rim of the Grand Canyon. Colter designed this structure to replicate the design of Ancestral Puebloan towers within the Four Corners region, specifically the towers of Hovenweep and the unique round tower of Cliff Palace.154 By the early 1930s, the Hopi artist Fred Kabotie was working for the FHC, and Colter persuaded him to paint the wall murals on the second floor. Opened to the public in 1933, it provided wonderful views of the canyon and the same “authentic” environment for the sale of Indian crafts as Hopi House and the Indian Building. To assist the couriers, Colter produced a manual for guides taking visitors to the Watchtower. In it, she plainly stated, “the Pueblo Indians are the acknowledged descendants of the so-called Cliff-dwellers.”155 She also instructed the couriers in the basic theory of Pueblo cultural evolution, concluding with a discussion of her thoughts as to why the Ancestral Puebloans built cliff dwellings. In her notes, she compared this last point to the history of Acoma Pueblo, asserting, “Thus in historic times has been reenacted the probable history of the prehistoric cliff-dwellers.”156

As economic conditions worsened, Clarkson cut back on the amenities. In 1932, he eliminated restaurant meals from the list of prepaid expenses. By 1933, picnic lunches were dropped as well and the tours centered on a radius closer to Santa Fe. That year’s brochure was leaner with only brief descriptions of the tours.157 Salaries were cut and the equipment grew old. He lowered prices in an attempt to lure customers. Part of the company’s trouble was Clarkson’s excessive budget for entertainment and his poor financial skills. His brother,
Jim Clarkson, a former driver, tried to help, but Jim’s interests centered more on his auto shop. Clarkson returned to the army in World War II and remained in Europe until 1956, giving the business to his brother when he returned. Although the tours revived briefly in 1947, the Indian Detours eventually fell by the wayside. In 1968, Jim Clarkson sold what was left to Gray Line. They kept the equipment and the name, but none of the service.

The Indian Detours had been a remarkable achievement in interpretation. Possibly as many as half a million visitors enjoyed the tours and learned of Puebloan history and culture from the couriers. Thousands more learned through a brief synopsis in the advertisements the FHC and ATSF produced. Both built on the romance of a “lost civilization.” Although it appears the couriers understood the link between archaeology and the modern pueblos, their job was to make the tours exciting. It is probable the couriers glossed over the link to increase the romance. If visitors came with preconceived notions, the couriers did not sway them otherwise. Probably few visitors left the Southwest understanding that Indians living in the pueblos they visited were descendents of the people who inhabited the ruins they had photographed. Like Halbach, they could view Santa Clara’s statement that their ancestors lived at Puye as a “claim,” not a fact. They could maintain the illusion of a great “mystery” in the Southwest by casting doubt on the Puebloan knowledge of their own history.

Interpretation at the Manitou Cliff Dwellings

At least one tourist establishment actually attacked the idea that the Pueblo Indians were the descendents of this “vanished race.” This was the Manitou Springs Cliff Dwellings Ruins Company that had moved the ruins of a pueblo village to the Front Range. Their actions bolstered their claims to authenticity since scholars censured them from the beginning and the company was anxious to dodge the criticism of the scientific community.
When Ashenhurst announced his scheme for an artificial cliff dwelling near Manitou Springs to the Colorado Cliff Dwellings Association (CCDA) in 1906, he hoped to win their prestigious endorsement. Virginia McClurg, smarting over her defeat to Peabody, decided the CCDA should support his endeavor. If she could not manage the real thing at Mesa Verde, maybe she could manage a reproduction of it. She asserted it “must be handled carefully, but if it is scientifically conducted, I can see no objection. Mr Ashenhurst simply wants the Association to become his supervisors.” However, the concept appalled most CCDA members who believed his design was to create a tourist trap with their backing.

Peabody wrote repeatedly to Hewett for his support.160 Hewett objected to the plan as “a serious loss to science,” but he could do nothing about it. Because the ruins they removed were on private land, they had not violated the law.161 When Ashenhurst suggested to Dr. A. Noyes, a well-known member of the Colorado Archaeological Society, that Hewett approved of the plan, Hewett wrote to Noyes. He stated the plan lacked “scientific value;” it was “destructive;” and that he had “nothing but disapproval for it.” 162 However, Hewett later changed his mind and was present at the opening in 1907, giving the site his explicit approval.163 His picture remains on display in the gift shop at the site today.164 In the contest for control of Southwestern archaeology, he may simply have followed the old adage, “if you can’t beat them, join them.”

The press was not as gullible as the company was hoping tourists would be. The Rocky Mountain News called it “an anachronism of the age” and quoted society women in Denver who said that hauling a cliff dwelling in pieces across the state for profit undermined the romance of the attraction.165 In the years since, the NPS has fought with the company repeatedly. Trying to force them to retract their claims of authenticity, Nusbaum considered
charging them with mail fraud, but was warned that prosecution would be difficult. The ultimate irony came in 1946, when Manitou Springs openly boasted that the ruins at Mesa Verde could not compare with the ruins at Manitou Springs.

The CCDA, weakened by their disagreement in the last days of winning legislation for Mesa Verde National Park, was now permanently disabled over the Ashenhurst controversy. Half the membership resigned in a commotion begun by the Durango chapter that worried about a rival cliff dwelling drawing tourists away. It included the entire Pueblo contingent, upset by McClurg changing the location of the annual meeting to Colorado Springs. The damage was irreparable. Membership in the CCDA declined until only McClurg and her loyal supporters remained. Within a decade, the CCDA ceased to exist as a meaningful force for archaeological preservation.

Because the Manitou Cliff Dwellings were not original, their creator had reason to deny the link between the Ancestral Puebloans and their modern descendents. In a 25-cent pamphlet the company produced in 1907, the writers argued vociferously against such a connection and in favor of a “mystery.” They quoted extensively from Cecil A. Dean, whom they identified only as an “eminent archeologist” from Denver, who for “forty years [had] made extensive explorations in the Cliff Dwellers’ country.” However, few archaeologists today have heard of Dean and Kidder’s classic textbook does not mention him.

The brochure began by insisting “the causes which lead to their extermination [would] never be known.” It introduced Dean, who continued with anecdotes from his explorations suggesting a “mystery.” He inferred this “race” achieved great things, but “disappeared” for no apparent reason. Although “menaced by foes,” he asserted that enemies could not have annihilated them, as their refuge was their “almost inaccessible cliff
house.” It could not have been famine that led to their disappearance, since he found “great quantities of their now carbonized corn harvest.” There could not have been a voluntary migration either, “for now, no tribe or nation possesses their marked characteristics of art and architecture.” In stating this, he contradicted Puebloan oral tradition and the work of Cushing, the Mindeleffs, Fewkes, and Hewett; he also denied the obvious similarities in art and architecture reputable men since the nineteenth century had noted.

Advancing a new theory all together, Dean contended that what had led to their extermination was “the heat and noxious gases” from a volcanic eruption. He claimed they were “wiped out by fire,” that “destruction came with lava overflow,” and that “lava from fissures wiped out Cliff Men.” Referring to a site on Montezuma Mesa, he asserted that

Not a particle of wood can be found in these ruins; the great lava waves swept along the western base of the plateau, and its fiery breath must have been the cause of the destruction of those who once lived on its rock crowned summit.

He claimed the eruption, akin to one in California, occurred in the Pliocene era, making Pueblo civilization the oldest on earth and granting America a unique honor.

Archaeologists inform us that the oldest civilization of the Nile Valley, and that still older period of the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates does not reach back to exceed eight thousand years; yet in a land which was once called the New World, but is the Old, we know that a nation once lived... who wholly perished when earth’s eruptive forces spread death and desolation over the extensive region where we now find mute yet eloquent evidence of their long continued occupation.

Another key section of the brochure, entitled “Pueblo Indians are not Descended from Cliff Dwellers,” attempted to disprove any connection between the two people. While modern science would place the date of any lava flow in New Mexico no later than 2,000 years ago, and the cliff dwellings as thirteenth century, Dean misconstrued his interviews with Pueblo Indians to assert that since they had no knowledge of this catastrophe, they could not be related to the cliff dwellers. Again, he claimed that the “dissimilarity of the
[Pueblo] Indians in productive industry and mode of life from the Cliffmen is a further confirmation." He asserted falsely that the "Indians had no knowledge of the loom," that they made "no tools of stone, but utilized those found among the ruins," and that they never made petroglyphs. Clearly, his understanding of Puebloan culture was weak. Yet, his audience probably knew even less and accepted his pronouncements without question.

A later, undated version of this pamphlet, authored by J.A. Jeancon, quoted from Jackson, Fewkes, Mendeleff, and Hewett, as if to make up for the earlier pamphlet quoting Dean. Jeancon now wrote that the idea "they are a vanished race is by no means true" and stated, "undoubtedly all of the Pueblos of today . . . have an infusion of Cliff Dwellers' blood." Since other company pamphlets were asking, "Whither did they vanish?" about the same time, this doublespeak was probably more than a little confusing for the average tourist. A later, smaller pamphlet resurrected Dean's assertions, by referring to a "lost race" that was "exterminated before the glacial period, as their remains have been buried under volcanic deposits." It appealed to state pride, promoting the cliff dwellings as "Colorado's Most Wonderful and Interesting Attraction." Apparently, some locals had criticized their display, for this pamphlet advised readers to disregard those carriage drivers who opposed their attraction. As the company's interpretation changed, so did their physical plant. They added a museum, styled after "the Pueblos' homes in New Mexico and Arizona" and brought in Pueblo Indian and Navajo dancers to entertain the visitors.

Eventually the company's promotional advertising focused more on the touring public's need to believe they were seeing something authentic. The company began to stress the canyon's scenery, the extensive collection in their museum, and, to the consternation of the NPS, the fact that tourists could climb on the walls of their ruins and explore the interior.
of the cliff dwellings. They displayed Indian entertainers prominently in their brochures with romantic images and inaccurate legends. Pedro Cajete, of Santa Clara Pueblo, was the first such entertainer. To promote Manitou Springs, Crosby hired Cajete to masquerade as "Chief Manitou." On a promotional trip to the East, Cajete "danced, chanted songs, and brandished his tomahawk in the center of a curious crowd that soon became ripe for a rousing talk on the clear, pure air of Colorado." At Manitou Springs, Cajete became a "real" Indian for Easterners to see. He performed, posed for photographs, and gave visitors what they expected. After World War I, he was joined by Joseph Tafoya, also of Santa Clara, who brought his family to dance and sell their handicrafts. Here was perhaps the company's clearest opportunity to champion the Pueblo Indian heritage. Instead, they continued to disseminate information alluding to a "vanished race."

Another Indian who worked there was Juan Cruz. A picture in the brochure of the 1920s identified him as "Juan Cruz, Chief of the Pueblo Indians," as if there were such a position. He stood on a rocky pinnacle gazing out upon Manitou Springs in the pose of the "Noble Savage." The presence of "real" Indians made the artificial ruins appear more authentic. The company needed this authenticity to counter criticism. Later pamphlets took a defensive tone, decreeing, "Only those untutored of mind or dull of comprehension can fail to yield to the wonder and mystery of these monuments of a vanished race."

The search for authenticity drove the promoters of the ruins to ultimately deny they were artificial and to proclaim them to be "actual ruins." Literature at the site today carefully disguises the artificiality of the "ruins." A flier handed visitors at the gate refers to "the people who lived in these dwellings long before Columbus arrived in the New world" as if these dwellings were ever actually occupied. Postcards in the gift shop perpetuate this
illusion. Several refer to the site as occupied between 1100 to 1300 A.D. They also confuse the identity of the cliff dwellers, while adhering to the romance of a “primitive religion,” by asserting that they are “considered sacred ground by the Ute Indians today.”

The trail guide for the site today states clearly “These early people have disappeared without a trace.” However, repeating the long history of vacillation, the penultimate page states, “It is thought that the Pueblo Indians are the descendents of the cliff dwellers,” suggesting a reasonable doubt about this statement. The museum continues this confused tale with a sign stating, “Most archaeologists agree that the Pueblo Indians are descendents of the Cliff Dwellings Indians” when, in fact, all archaeologists agree with this statement. In visitor guides to Colorado, advertisements for the Manitou Cliff Dwellings refer to “the Cliff Dwelling Indians” or the “Ancient Anasazi Indian culture,” not the Pueblo Indians or their descendents. This only masks the Puebloan achievement from the touring public.

**Concessions and Tourism at Pueblo Heritage Parks and Monuments since 1945**

During the latter half of the twentieth century, outsiders continued to exploit the Puebloan heritage for profit. Concessionaires and travel agencies joined with other businesses to promote the public misperception of a mysterious “lost” civilization in the Southwest. Their advertising suggests that they were not so much creating an image, as repeating an accepted construct the public had grown to expect. Advertisements promoted the idea that Southwestern ruins were proof of the previous existence of a superior, but vanished, pre-Columbian race. Replicating this image proved profitable. In 1963, Sinclair Oil advertised travel to Mesa Verde in the *National Geographic* with a photograph of Cliff Palace adjacent to drawings of Navajo dancers and weavers. The headline declared “Mesa Verde: Where You Discover the People Time Forgot.” The text suggested, “If you’ve ever
dreamed of being a great explorer and discovering a ‘lost civilization,’ drive to Mesa Verde
National Park in Colorado and start looking. America’s first great civilization vanished here
200 years before Columbus.”

In the 1950s, the Mesa Verde Company began publishing a brochure that, with
minor variations, continued to appear until 1976. The brochure emphasized the region’s
“restful atmosphere,” “spectacular scenery,” and “intriguing prehistoric ruins.” Further,
the company broadened the concept of “intrigue” by describing “the thrill of exploring
enormous ruins left by a prehistoric people that vanished almost a thousand years ago.”
Hall continued to promote the ranger-led activities, while suggesting his concession’s
programs. Although the layout of the brochure changed over the years, the key words
“exploring” and “vanished” remained. In 1972, after the concessions moved from Spruce
Tree Camp to Navajo Hill, the brochure suggested visitors could marvel at “artifacts left
by a people that vanished 700 years ago.” The intent seems clear. The company relied
on a “mystery” to draw potential tourists to the archaeological sites of the Four Corners.

When Hall passed away in 1962, his family took over the company. His daughter,
Merrie, became the merchandise manager, and in 1968, her husband, Bill Winkler,
became president. Winkler continued the photographic portfolio, producing his own
version in 1977, which identified the ancient inhabitants as Pueblo Indians. When he
asked, “Where did they go?” he answered, “It is likely that they moved southeast, south,
and southwest to settle among and be absorbed by other pueblo-type peoples.” Yet in
1975, their brochure still invited visitors to marvel at artifacts of a people who vanished.
By the mid-1970s, the company was also offering tourists a bus tour of Chapin Mesa for
a nominal fee. This service was particularly attractive to people who did not like
mountain roads. Their guides joined the training for the seasonal ranger staff and their interpretation followed similar guidelines.

In 1976, the Mesa Verde Company was sold to ARAMARK, a Philadelphia-based firm operating in several national parks. The Winklers stayed on for a while to manage the Mesa Verde operations, and they continued to affect the interpretation offered to the public. Winkler continued to train the ARAMARK guides and occasionally they joined the NPS staff for training. However, the guides, working for tips, cultivated a dramatic flair. Some downplayed ethnographic accuracy with crude jokes and assumptions about primitive life. These became standard fare to induce tourists to make a hefty gratuity on which many of the guides depended. In the 1990s, it was not uncommon to hear guides distort Puebloan culture with jokes about mothers-in-law, romance, or the like.

Even the current ARAMARK brochure continues the Hall legacy of building on the “mystery” of the park. Emphasizing “exploration and intrigue” and “spectacular dwellings,” it states that the “Mesa Verde inhabitants left everything they couldn’t carry . . . and moved on” without identifying where they moved. In conformity with modern NPS practice, the brochure refers to the “Ancestral Puebloan people” rather than the “Anasazi,” but the sense of mystery is still dominant.

Although the Indian Detours had left the Southwest by the 1970s, other tour companies stepped in to provide guide services. One of these was Mesa Verde Tours, operated out of Durango by Art and Lucy Olson, who continue service today. Their current brochure invites tourists to “go back in time almost 1500 years to discover a lost civilization – the Anasazi.” However, during the 1990s, their tour guides emphasized the connection between Mesa Verde and the modern Pueblo tribes. Romance also persists in a pamphlet
produced by Jeep Tours of Santa Fe, which urges its readers to imagine “being whisked away to a remote mesa top lined with cave dwellings” to explore the “Anasazi” ruins and “ancient Indian rock art,” without attributing either to the Pueblo Indians.204

In Arizona, Crawley’s Monument Valley Tours plays up the romance of the past by declaring, “It will beckon you to discover it’s [sic] hidden secrets of this culture once alive but since vanished.” Another brochure misleads the public by making the diverse “Anasazi” culture a single tribe. It promises that the company will “tell the story of the Ancient Ones – The Anasazi tribe who lived here 1,000 years ago and mysteriously disappeared.” Using Navajo guides, Crawley’s tours offer to take visitors to “remote places of unbelievably, haunting beauty.”205 Elsewhere, the company promised that the land would “beckon you to discover it’s hidden secrets of this culture once alive but since vanished.”206 Another tour company using Navajo guides at Monument Valley is Simpson’s Guided Tour Company. In June 2003, when the Navajo guide was asked, “what happened to the “Anasazi,” he replied “Nobody knows where they went or why they left.”207 Apparently, Navajo guides are trained to give the same ambiguous responses as other guides.

As communities in the Four Corners vie for tourist dollars at the beginning of a new century, local Chambers of Commerce work to promote their cities through visitor guides, making them appear more colorful and romantic than rival Southwestern destinations. These visitor guides invariably play on the romance of the ruins and perpetuate the myth of a “vanished” people. In 2002, the town of Durango announced in its circular that “Mesa Verde offers a unique chance to walk in the actual footsteps of the vanished Anasazi civilization” and local tours would “help you unlock the mysteries.”208 Like the promoters of the Manitou Cliff Dwellings, the Cortez Chamber of Commerce discovered that Indian
dancers performing for the public would bring in tourists. The New Mexico Department of Tourism is more willing to link these archaeological sites to the Pueblo Indians, perhaps because tourism in New Mexico had been drawing on the romance of the Pueblo tribes as well as their ruins since the days of the Indian Detour. However, the visitor guide for Grants, New Mexico, plays up the "mystery" suggesting there are no clues.

One of the world's ancient cultures have become one of the world's greatest mysteries. They built monumental cities in Chaco Canyon more than a thousand years ago. . . . Not long after building Pueblo Bonito, the Ancient Ones disappeared without a trace or an explanation.

Postcards continue to mislead the public as well. A postcard of Bandelier National Monument features a quote by Zane Grey, the Western novelist, portraying the romance of lost cities. "It was a stupendous tomb. It had been a city. It was just as it had been left by its builders." Others refer to the "Anasazi" without relating the term to modern Pueblo Indians, even with such obvious ancestral Hopi villages as Homol'ovi.

Many other companies engaging in business in the Southwest capitalize on the "Anasazi" legend. Along Interstate 40 near Houck, Arizona, a succession of billboards announce "Indian Ruins This Exit." As it turns out, "Indian Ruins" refers to the name of a tourist shop with an unexcavated ruin, closed to the public, nearby. A small motel chain uses the name "Anasazi Inn." A winery near Albuquerque with Ancestral Puebloan ruins on its land chose to call itself the "Anasazi Fields Winery." The owner chose the name to romanticize the fact the "Anasazi" had farmed these fields as well. He did not consider that Pueblo Indians were farming the same lands when the Spanish arrived. Today, the winery uses petroglyph symbols to label the different wines.

An alternative to this romantic style of advertising is suggested by a brochure published by Ojo Caliente Mineral Springs, located below the ruins of Posi-Ouinge. It
demonstrates that the heritage can be credited to Pueblo Indians, without losing the romance. This brochure states that the hot springs “were considered a sacred spot by the ancestors of present day Pueblo Indians who inhabited mesas and valleys surrounding these waters.” Crow Canyon Archaeological Center, a private archaeological field school for tourists near Cortez, Colorado, is explicit in advertising that the sites they excavate are Ancestral Puebloan. The Center’s brochures repeatedly make this point, though they still rely on the concept of a mystery to attract customers. The archaeologists working for the Center are sensitive to Puebloan concerns. They established a Native American Advisory Group in 1995 for consultation. Similarly, the private museum at Salmon Ruins identifies its site as being built “by the Pueblo Indians.”

The drive for profit has interfered with the interpretation of archaeology in the Southwest. Entrepreneurs were convinced that the idea of a “mysterious, vanished race” would attract more visitors than a site attributed to “inferior” Indians. Promoters hoped to make money, not to educate the public, and they had no incentive to honor the Puebloan heritage. Demonstrating little concern for the feelings of Pueblo Indians, entrepreneurs converted the Puebloan heritage into a commodity and seized the opportunity to draw gullible travelers to their businesses. Tourists sought the romantic thrill of exploring ruins, and insensitive business owners provided that thrill with the novelty of experiencing a “lost civilization.” There is a “nearly unanimous consensus among American Indians that the benefits from Indian tourism go to nearby non-Indian communities while Indian communities are turned into ‘human zoos.’” Tourism at Indian archaeological sites also benefits nearby non-Indian communities, while turning the Indian heritage into a curiosity. The tourist industry perpetuated the myth of the “vanishing Anasazi” for private gain.
Notes:

1 The Mystery of America," Cliff Dwellings File, Colorado Springs Public Library, Colorado Springs, CO [Hereafter CSPL].


4 Manitou Cliff Dwellings Museum, Cliff Dwellings File, CSPL.

5 “Cliff Dwellings Here are Seven Centuries Old,” Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph, 21 May 1967 and Manitou Cliff Dwellings Preserve and Museums, (n.p.: Manitou Cliff Dwellings Preserve and Museums, n.d.) [brochure handed out at the entrance today].

6 The Educational Trip.

7 Mystery of America. Italics added.

8 Peter Russell, Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument: An Administrative History (Santa Fe: National Park Service Southwest Cultural Resources Center, 1992), 19-20.


15 Cheek, “Protection of Archaeological Resources,” 33-34.


19 McAllister, “Looting and Vandalism of Archaeological Resources, 94.

20 Gurwell, "‘Looter War’ Bogs for U.S."


23 Zeke Flora, “Prehistoric Cultures of the Durango, Colorado District Observations of February 1, 1939,” 1 and 6, in the Zeke Flora Collection (Collection MO94, Box 2, Folder 6) at the Center of Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College, Durango, CO [Hereafter CSW-FLC], and Zeke Flora, “The Amateur Speaks,” in the Zeke Flora Collection (Collection MO94, Box 2, Folder 12), CSW-FLC.


26 Lister, Prehistory in Peril, 28.

27 Ibid., 29-32.

28 Ibid.44-46.

29 Ibid.67-68.


33 Lister, Prehistory in Peril, 74-75.

34 Ibid.47.

35 Ibid.76 and 91.


38 Ibid.63-64.


Joseph Emerson Smith, *The Story of Mesa Verde National Park* (n.p.: Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, n.d.), 2. Although the booklet is not dated, internal evidence places it after 1929 and before World War II.


Graham, *The Ancient Cliff Dwellers of the Southwest*.


Winkler interview.


Ansel Hall, *Mesa Verde* (Denver: Smith-Brooks, 1951), 15, Mesa Verde Printed Materials Collection: MO82, Box 2, Folder 15, Series 2, CSW-FLC.


"Tourletter No. 12" (Colorado Springs, CO: El Paso Products Company, 1950), Mesa Verde Printed Materials Collection: MO82, Series 1, Box 4, Folder 7, CSW-FLC.


67 *Ibid."


69 A copy of this stationary can be found along with a letter from Erna Fergusson, in the Erna Fergusson Papers: MSS 45 BC, Box 15A, Center for Southwest Research, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, [Hereafter CSWR-UNM].

70 *The Frijoles Canyon Lodge*, Bandelier National Monument Archives Collection, Bandelier National Monument, NM.


83 Thomas, The Southwestern Indian Detours, 32-34.


87 Howard and Pardue, Inventing the Southwest, 75.

88 Rydell, All the World’s a Fair, 227-228.

89 Howard and Pardue, Inventing the Southwest, 72.


91 Rydell, All the World’s a Fair, 228.


93 Rydell, All the World’s a Fair, 220.


95 Herman Schweizer to Jesse Nusbaum, 19 July 1921, Collection: RC 39 (1B), Correspondence – Fred Harvey Indian Department, 1920-1929, HM, 2.

96 Adkins, “Jesse L. Nusbaum and the Painted Desert,” 89.

97 Howard and Pardue, Inventing the Southwest, 75 and Schweizer to Nusbaum.


99 Kropp, “‘There is a Little Sermon in that,’” 40.

100 Howard and Pardue, Inventing the Southwest, 76 and Grace Norcross Allen, “Patching the Prehistoric Cliff Dwellings,” Sunset (April 1917), 64.

101 Allen, “Patching the Prehistoric Cliff Dwellings,” 64.

102 Kropp, “‘There is a Little Sermon in that,’” 39.

103 Ibid.

104 Howard and Pardue, Inventing the Southwest, 76-77.

105 “Santa Fe Railroad’s Indian Pueblo Marvel.”


107 Marta Weigle, “‘Insisted on Authenticity’: Harveycars Indian Detours, 1925-1931,” in The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company, 49.
108 The Koshare Tours (Albuquerque: The Koshare Tours and the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, 1923), 5, Albuquerque and New Mexico Pamphlet Collection, 1880-1961: MSS 112 BC, Box 1, Folder 4a, CSWR-UNM.


110 Marta Weigle, ""Insisted on Authenticity,"" 50.

111 The Koshare Tours, 5.

112 Ibid., 42-43.

113 Ibid., 47-49.

114 Koshare Tours from Santa Fe (Santa Fe: Spanish-Indian Trading Company, n.d.), Erna Fergusson Papers: MSS 45 BC, Box 15A, CSWR-UNM.

115 The University of New Mexico, "Erna Ferguson Biography," The Online Archive of New Mexico, URL: http://elibrary.umn.edu/oam/NmU/nmul#mss45bc. (Accessed 31 March 2004).


117 Erna Fergusson, Our Southwest (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1940), 112. Italics in original.

118 Ibid., 113.

119 Ibid., 114.

120 Ibid., 129.

121 Ibid., 189-201.

122 Howard and Pardue, Inventing the Southwest, 124 and Thomas, The Southwestern Indian Detours, 75-76.

123 Ibid., 41-45.


126 Thomas, The Southwestern Indian Detours, 65.

127 Ibid., 117.

128 Ibid., 77-79.

129 "Three week's Cramming to Keep Clever Couriers Busy," Santa Fe New Mexican, 16 April 1926, 2.

130 Thomas, The Southwestern Indian Detours, 79.

131 Indian Detour (n.p.: The Fred Harvey Company, 1926), Fred Harvey Collection: RC 39 (9A): 8, HM and "Is This Really a New World?" Fred Harvey Collection: RC 39 (9A): 35, HM.

“Dude Wrangler” Miss Fergusson No Longer With the Indian Detour,” *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 22 September 1927, 4 and Thomas, *The Southwestern Indian Detours*, 54-55 and 85.


An itinerary for the basic Indian Detour can be found in *Ibid.*, 68-69.


Thomas, *The Southwestern Indian Detours*, 132.


Thomas, *The Southwestern Indian Detours*, 163.

Rollins-Griffin, *Chaco Canyon Ruins*, 63.


Margaret Dun to the Fred Harvey Company in *Ibid.*, 170.


“Indian Detour Advertisement,” *The National Geographic* 45: 1 (January 1929), 144.

“Is This Really the New World?” Fred Harvey Collection Indian Detour Advertisements: RC 39 (9A): 35, HM.


Lucy E. Peabody, Letter to Dr. Edgar Lee Hewett, 17 February and 26 April 1907, Hewett Collection: AC 105-Box 1-File 5: “Correspondence 1907,” Fray Angélico Chavéz History Library, Palace of the Governors, Santa Fe, [Hereafter FACHL].

Edgar L. Hewett to Dr. A. Noyes, 15 February 1907, and Edgar L. Hewett to Mrs. Lucy E. Peabody, 7 March 1907, Hewett Collection: AC 105-Box 1-File 5: “Correspondence 1907,” FACHL.

Lucy E. Peabody to Edgar L. Hewett, 17 February 1907 and Edgar L. Hewett to Dr. A. Noyes, 15 February 1907, Hewett Collection: AC 105-Box 1-File 5: “Correspondence 1907,” FACHL.


Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 126.

Ibid., 150.

Ibid., 73. Forty members resigned out of a membership of 87 dues-paying members that Peabody counted. However, McClurg claimed the organization had 200 members. These statistics come from Don D. Fowler, A Laboratory for Anthropology: Science and Romanticism in the American Southwest, 1846-1930 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000), 307.

“Society Women of Colorado are Rent in Twin.”

Smith, Mesa Verde National Park, 72-73.

Cecil A. Dean, Historical Facts of the Ancient Cliff Dwellers and a Glimpse of the Ruins and Canon at Manitou (Colorado Springs, CO: The Manitou Cliff Dwellers’ Ruins Co., 1907), 2. All attempts to learn more about Cecil Dean than what was printed in this pamphlet ended in failure.


Dean. Historical Facts of the Ancient Cliff Dwellers, 1.

Ibid., 7 and 10.

Ibid., 8-10.

Ibid., 9.

Ibid., 12.

Ibid., 11.

The Manitou Cliff Dwellers’ Ruins (n.p., n.d.). Copy available in the Carnegie- Special Collections, CSPL.

Ibid.

Mystery of America.

W.S. Crosby to Hank Givens in Robert N. Cronk, Jr., Chief Manitou (Monument, CO: Arasian Productions, 2002), 47.

Cronk, Chief Manitou, 20.

Mystery of America.

Manitou Cliff Dwellings Preserve and Museums.

Welcome to Manitou Cliff Dwellings.


Ibid., 11. Italics added.


Mesa Verde (Cortez, CO: Interpark, 1977), 4 and 17.

“Mesa Verde National Park: Far View Motor Lodge,” Copy available in the Colorado Historical Society Files, “Mesa Verde Brochures,” [VF 978.84], Denver, CO.

Winkler interview.

Ibid.

This information comes from the author’s observations of tour guides while working for the NPS at Mesa Verde National Park from 1993-1996 and 2001-2002.

Mesa Verde National Park (Mancos, CO: Aramark, n.d.).


The personal experience of the author who was a tour guide for Mesa Verde Tours in 1992 and visited with guides for Mesa Verde Tours while he was a ranger at Mesa Verde between 1992 to 1996.
204 Jeep Tours (Santa Fe: n.p., n.d.).
205 Crawley's Monument Valley Tours, Utah/Arizona (n.p., n.d.).
206 Crawley's Monument Valley Tours, (n.p., n.d.).
214 Ojo Caliente Mineral Springs (n.p., n.d.).
215 Salmon Ruins (n.p., n.d.).
Figure 11 (Above).
Manitou Cliff Dwellings looking south. Photo by author.

Figure 12 (Left).
*Cliff Palace in 1270 A.D.*
by Paul Coze.
Courtesy of the Mesa Verde National Park Research Center (MEVE 9069).
Chapter 9 – “With Haunting Memory of Age and Solitude:”
The Literary Interpretation of the Ancestral Puebloan Past

Like eyes they were, and seemed to watch him. The few cliff-dwellings he had seen— all ruins— had left him with haunting memory of age and solitude.\(^1\)

\[\textit{~ Zane Grey, Riders of the Purple Sage (1912) ~}\]

In the mid-1920s, George B. Seitz brought a crew of talented actors to the Southwest to film an “epic-scale historical melodrama” loosely based on The Vanishing American, a novel by Zane Grey.\(^2\) In his silent movie of the same title, Seitz portrayed the sweep of human history in the American Southwest as a prelude to the central plot concerning the mistreatment of an Indian tribe by their reservation agent. The opening scene of Monument Valley began with a text card that read:

A little while— as nature reckons time— its rocks resounded to the march of feet and clash of battle or echoed softly the contented babble of a people at peace. Then— stillness again— the hush of the ages. For men come and live their hour and go, but the mighty stage remains.\(^3\)

Then, the scene transitioned to a caveman couple climbing cautiously through a rocky canyon, followed by a Basketmaker clan coming through the same canyon, then the “Slab-House people,” illustrating the succession of cultures, each one usurping the place of the other, each of the older cultures “vanishing” in turn. The next scene opened on an inhabited cliff dwelling, modeled after Betatakin.

The setting was extravagant. Ladders rose from a small village below, complete with a kiva, to the cliff dwelling above. Homes, perched on the very edge of the cliff, rose to three stories. It looked defensive and the plot confirmed that impression. The text intimated a warning, hearkening to the age-old fear of the cause of the fall of republics. “The people had grown soft and lazy in the safety of their cliff houses. . . . Long years of peace had dulled the religious sense of the people.” A text card next explained that their
chief worried about their indolence, fearing an end to their ideal state. Then there came a “younger, fiercer, harder people, driven by urge of hunger or desire . . . The first of the race we now call “Indians.” At that point, the audience learned that the cliff dwellers were not Indians, but a race doomed to “vanish.” The invading hordes attacked with hundreds of men from a single nomadic band. The battle was ferocious, “Of all the cliff dwellings, soon but one remained.” The defenders shot arrows, poured boiling water over the cliff, and even toppled the walls on to their attacking foes, but to no avail. The marauders brought denuded tree trunks to climb the cliff. The defenders threw over one tree, killing all the climbers upon it, but the hordes still came. Several foes climbed on to the kiva roof, which collapsed. Still they came. Finally, the cliff dwellers’ chief was pushed off the ledge and carried away on the spears of the enemy. The race was no more.

The plot was premised on the idea of the “Vanishing Anasazi.” During the twentieth century, this concept often underlay the literary plots of stories set in the Southwest. Since Americans preferred western novels and western movies to archaeological reports, popular writers were much more influential in perpetuating the myth that the Ancestral Puebloans had vanished. The air of mystery of an abandoned cliff dwelling was such a useful image it appeared in the scenic background of many Western novels. The romantic style that led explorers and archaeologists to attribute Southwestern ruins to the Pueblo Indians and a “long-forgotten race” now manifested itself in the popular media that celebrated the West. The public learned about cliff dwellings and “Aztec ruins” through essays, novels, children’s literature, poetry, and movies more often than through visitation at national parks commemorating the Puebloan heritage.

Literary plots used Southwestern ruins in two ways. Some recreated the Ancestral
Puebloan past and made that the focus of their story. Others merely used the ruins as a backdrop to provide ambience. Novels also bore two distinct messages concerning the Ancestral Pueblos: scholarly literature invariably confirmed the Puebloan link and praised the technical ability of these people. Dime novels and popular culture, on the other hand, suggested that the “Anasazi” had “vanished,” denying Pueblo Indians their heritage – for if they had “vanished,” they left no heirs to their culture and achievements.

**Nineteenth-Century Literature**

Emma Hardacre and Thomas Moran introduced audiences around the country to the existence of Southwestern ruins with the essay “The Cliff Dwellers” that appeared in *Scribner's Monthly* in 1879. Hinton followed this up ten years later with “The Great House of Montezuma” in *Harper's Weekly*. These articles conditioned the public to see a vanished race in the history of Southwestern ruins. However, as Adolph Bandelier began his studies, he learned otherwise from his Pueblo Indian friends. Dismayed at the poor understanding most of his contemporaries exhibited toward the Indian, he responded by writing a novel, attempting to recreate the Ancestral Puebloan past as it might have been.

Bandelier published *The Delight Makers* in 1890, the same year the first volume of his “Final Report” appeared in the papers of the AIA. In the preface, he was forthright with the reader as to his purpose.

I was prompted to perform this work by a conviction that however scientific works may tell the truth about the Indian, they exercise always a limited influence upon the general public; and to that public, in our country as well as abroad, the Indian has remained as good as unknown. By clothing sober facts in the garb of romance I have hoped to make the “Truth about the Pueblo Indians” more accessible and perhaps more acceptable to the public in general.  

Throughout *The Delight Makers*, he connected the empty villages and archaeological sites of the Rito de Los Frijoles Canyon to the Keres people, and the ruins of northern
villages to the Tewas. There are no mysteriously "vanished" people in his account.

The Tehua Indians of Santa Clara assert that the artificial grottos of what they call the Puiye and the Shufinne, west of their present abodes, were the homes of their ancestors at one time. The Queres of Cochiti in turn declare that the tribe to which they belong, occupied, many centuries before the first coming of Europeans to New Mexico, the cluster of cave-dwelling, visible at this day although abandoned and in ruins, in that romantic and picturesquely secluded gorge called in the Queres dialect Tyuonyi, and in Spanish: El Rito de los Frijoles."

Tyuonyi became the setting for Bandelier's story, and the Pueblo Indians he knew best became templates for the characters in his novel. The plot centered on Okoya's family and their struggle against the evil Koshare, named Tyope. Tyope accused Okoya's mother, Say, of witchcraft, but her father, Topanaskka, the War Chief, protected her. After a wandering Navajo band killed Topanaskka, his body was found by the people of Tyuonyi who blamed his death on Puyé, the village to the north. Tyope led a retaliatory force against Puyé, but his ex-wife, and Say's friend, Shotaye, fled to Puyé to warn them. As a result, the men of Puyé plotted an ambush and annihilated the force from Tyuonyi. While the raiding party was away, other Navajo destroyed Tyuonyi. Refugees, led by Okoya, then established a new village near the Lion Shrine on the Pajarito Plateau. Thus, Bandelier explained the abandoned villages as part of the history of Puebloan migrations.

How many of the details came from his Pueblo informants is not clear; however, Bandelier used Keres and Tewa words throughout, giving the story an air of authenticity and accuracy. He described the village of Tyuonyi the way archaeologists today believe it looked. He related details of daily life, including the workings of the clan system and the tedious chores of grinding corn and tending fields, to a degree that those with knowledge of Ancestral Puebloan culture would concur. His description of Puebloan religion lent a depth to his novel suggesting the complexities of their worldview, but it may have gone
too far in the eyes of the tribes. The text also includes the Pueblo story of the sipapu, a description of a Corn Dance, and a discussion of prayer plumes.

At the same time, some elements of Bandelier’s story are disturbing to the modern reader. Reminiscent of nineteenth-century attempts to classify the races by their dominant attributes, some passages sound racist today. Given Bandelier’s acceptance of Morgan’s theories of an evolutionary hierarchy, this is not surprising. Bandelier ascribed some cultural traits categorically to all Indians. He asserted that, “[t]he Indian knows not what conscience is . . .,” “[t]he Indian is quite indifferent to the sights of nature . . .,” “and “[t]he Indian is a child whose life is ruled by a feeling of complete dependence . . .” While these statements may reflect the attitude of the dominant culture in America at that time, they also enabled Anglo readers to feel superior to the “primitive” culture of the Indian. Readers could be thankful that they were not so superstitious, primitive or naïve.

Unfortunately, The Delight Makers failed to win a wide audience. While there was enough interest to warrant keeping it in print, it was never a bestseller. Although archaeologists and anthropologists praised it for combining both literature and science, the book “took the adventure out of the old west.” It removed the mystery and America, fearing the close of its frontier in 1890, perhaps did not want all its western mysteries solved. The nation needed some mystery in its recently settled West to hold the illusion of lands yet to be explored, sights yet to be discovered. At any case, The Delight Makers had little impact on the growing myth of the vanishing cliff dwellers. It helped scholars to link Southwestern archaeology to Pueblo Indians, but the majority of Americans remained unaware of the link. Despite his wish, Bandelier’s imagination did little to counter the perception that a “vanished people” once inhabited the Southwest.
Charles F. Lummis, a close friend of Bandelier also took up his pen in defense of the Puebloan past. After experiencing a stroke brought on by overwork and "strenuous living," Lummis gave up his position in California and moved to New Mexico for a time to enjoy a slower pace of life. There, the Pueblo of Isleta adopted him and he met Bandelier, who taught him the rudiments of the science of archaeology. At the same time, he wrote articles for the popular press, took thousands of photographs documenting the countryside of his adopted state, and continued his writing career. 

From the dispatches he wrote walking across the continent, Lummis pulled together a popular book, *A Tramp Across the Continent*. Exploring New Mexico, he made friends among the Pueblo tribes, particularly at San Ildefonso, Isleta, and Acoma. In Arizona, he saw the cliff dwellings of Walnut Canyon, just east of Flagstaff. Of these, he wrote, "Here I found my first ruins of the so-called cliff dwellers, who were, as modern archaeology has fully proved, only Pueblo Indians like those among whom I live to-day, and not some extinct race." Thus, he placed himself squarely in Bandelier's camp.

In 1891, he elaborated his stance in *Some Strange Corners of Our Country*, wherein he exulted in the geography and history of the country. In speaking of the Pueblo Indians, he marveled at their "civilized" customs, referred to their homes as "interesting and remarkable," and dubbed their villages "forts." This was a lead-in to a description of the ruins, in which he strengthened his earlier stance and reiterated his position.

It was long supposed that the so-called "Cliff-builders" and "Cave-dwellers" were of an extinct race; and much more of silly and ignorant surmise than of common-sense truth has been written about them. But as soon as there was any really scientific investigation... like Bandelier's wonderful researches, the fact was firmly and finally established that the builders of those great ruins were nothing in the world but Pueblo Indians. They have not "vanished," but simply moved. 

Later, he introduced the reader to many of the Puebloan heritage sites of the Southwest,
including Pecos, Montezuma’s Castle, Montezuma’s Well, Canyon de Chelly, the Rito de Los Frijoles Canyon, and El Morro. This book became a standard work on the Southwest for over 30 years and thousands of readers benefited from its descriptions. It is strange then that this journalist was not able to put an end to the myth that the cliff dwellers vanished. This attests to the power of popular misperceptions and the strength of the romantic impulse Americans had attached to Southwestern ruins and their builders.

At the end of his career, Lummis planned a new edition of Some Strange Corners of Our Country, but ended up writing a new book instead. Mesa, Cañon and Pueblo (1925) retained the jingoism of his early work, but he updated it for the automobile traveler. Indeed, as he boasted in the foreword, “The ‘Strange Corners’ are still as wonderful, but no longer so unknown.” He expanded his list of Pueblo heritage sites by including an extensive section on Chaco Canyon and photographs of Mesa Verde, and he extended his comments on the Jemez Plateau to two chapters. The passage linking cliff dwellers to Pueblo Indians remained. However, now he compared the pueblos favorably to the nation’s skyscrapers, noting they were the earliest of this form of architecture.

Lummis was not the first to compare the pueblos to skyscrapers, as Hardacre also made the comparison. In 1893, Henry Fuller reversed the analogy to write a critique of the American city. In his novel, The Cliff-Dwellers, he is not referring to a “vanished race” in the Southwest, but to tenants in Chicago’s towering apartment houses. The cliff dwellings became a metaphor as he re-defined modernity. Chicago became a land “eroded” by commerce into “great cañons – conduits, in fact, for the leaping volume of an ever-increasing prosperity.” Creating a claustrophobic picture of the city, he continued, “Each of these cañons is enclosed by a long frontage of towering cliffs, and
these soaring walls of brick and limestone and granite rise higher and higher with each succeeding year, according as the work of erosion at their bases goes onward."\(^{14}\)

Lummis' best-known work during these years is a collection of essays on New Mexico, titled *The Land of Poco Tiempo* (1893). In it, he described New Mexico in three memorable words, "Sun, silence and adobe,"\(^ {15}\) and laid the groundwork for the popular perception of the state. He also introduced Americans to the Hispanic and Pueblo cultures of the Southwest. Of the two, he was noticeably more positive toward the Pueblos. He described the architecture of Acoma, feast day celebrations at Cochiti, and the foot races at Isleta with remarkable detail and sympathy. More to the point, he related the wanderings of Cochiti Pueblo, making it clear again that the ancestors of the Pueblos built the ancient villages ruins of the Southwest. He noted

The fable of the so-called Cliff-builders and Cave-dwellers, as a distinct race or races, has been absolutely exploded in science. The fact is, that the cliff-dwellers and the cave-dwellers of the Southwest were Pueblo Indians, pure and simple. Even a careless eye can find the proof in every corner of the Southwest.\(^ {16}\)

Like Bandelier, Lummis ascribed the archaeological site of Tyuonyi to the migrations of Cochiti as their first recognized home, and he provided a written reconstruction of the village.\(^ {17}\) Similarly, he wrote accounts of the next three sites Cochiti occupied before arriving at their modern village, the first two of which are also within the bounds of the present-day national monument. He ended by extolling the marvel of the Lion Shrine, opposing both the vandalism of the site and a proposal to uproot the stone lions and put them on display in Washington. Significantly, he related how a treasure hunter placed powder beside the shrine and blew it up looking for the "lost" riches of an ancient race. Lummis' essay made it clear that the Lion Shrine was the work of Cochiti's ancestors.\(^ {18}\)

In the final essay of *The Land of Poco Tiempo*, Lummis forcefully countered the
myth of “vanishing” peoples in the Southwest with a description of Abó, Quarai, and Gran Quivira. He made it clear the Spanish knew the populations of the “mysterious” abandoned villages and that their history survived in the Spanish archives. Guided by Bandelier’s research, Lummis helped lay the groundwork for the eventual establishment of Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument.

Before that day, however, these empty villages attracted “treasure-seekers” who imagined fabled wealth that could be found in the homes of “vanished” peoples. In this case, the myth of wealth received a boost through the prominent myth of Quivira drawn from the chronicles of Coronado.19 In his essay, Lummis described how gullible parties looking for a way to get rich quick attacked the “Pueblo of Tabira.” Vandals “pried in the debris-choked lower rooms of the pueblo, and gophered under the mighty walls of the temple.” They “drilled down through a hundred feet of the eternal bedrock in quest of buried treasure,” so deep that the site was “so peppered with their shafts that it [was] unsafe to move about by night.”20 Lummis lamented this vandalism of history, which he saw resulting from ignorance and greed, and celebrated the fact that “conclusive researches have forever laid the myth of Gran Quivira” to rest. While Lummis claimed victory for the Salinas Pueblos, known to the historical record, other writers were turning to older Pueblan sites to promote a landscape that was increasingly popular with “Wild West” enthusiasts who helped popularize the genre of the Western novel.

The Novels of Zane Grey

By the second decade of the twentieth century, Zane Grey had emerged as the foremost propagandist of the Western novel. His biographer, Erwin Bauer, estimated in 1960 that “More people read his books and stories than those of nearly any other
American author. While Bandelier's scholarly prose was difficult for those unfamiliar with Native American culture and Lummis' writing lacked the appeal of fiction, Grey wrote novels that were easy to read and influenced millions. Less often realized is his role as a romance writer. Many of his plots center on lovers finding each other in the West. His plots allowed readers to escape into a world of adventure in a West full of independent men, beautiful women, and breath-taking landscapes.

Grey grew up in the hardwood forests of the Upper Ohio River where he spent a childhood swimming, fishing, and exploring. An enthusiastic ballplayer, he attended the University of Pennsylvania on an athletic scholarship and in 1898, he became a dentist with a practice in New York City. However, he was not happy, and with his wife's encouragement, he threw his dental practice to the wind after publishing his first novel, Betty Zane, and moved west to become a fulltime writer. With the phenomenal success of Riders of the Purple Sage in 1912, he found his niche as the writer of the modern Western. Before his death in 1939, he authored 71 books, which publishers translated into many other languages, giving his point of view worldwide exposure.

Grey chose the Southwestern landscapes of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah as the setting for his novels, helping to popularize what to many had been simply uninteresting scenery. He peppered his novels with exotic descriptions of the desert and its "purple sage." Among these descriptions readers found references to the mysterious cliff dwellings of a "vanished" people. They helped create an ambience of mystery in novels like The Vanishing American (1925), Lost Pueblo (1927), and Riders of the Purple Sage.

The Vanishing American took issue with the allegedly corrupt Indian service and was unique for having an Indian protagonist, Nophaie, a hereditary war chief who fell in
love with the schoolmarm. Nophaie was a leader of the fictitious Nopah tribe – a tribe that closely resembled the Navajo in Grey’s writing, even down to the detail of being enemies with their neighbors, the Nokis, a pseudonym for the Hopi. The Nopahs were having trouble with their Indian agent and looked to Nophaie for help. Building on the anti-German sentiment of World War I, Grey made the agent a German. The agent abused the tribe until Nophaie gave him a well-deserved thrashing. Then, knowing his life was in danger, Nophaie fled to a distant corner of the reservation. Here, in a remote canyon, where he solemnly reflected on the course he would take, were a “thousand undiscovered and untrodden nooks and corners, caves and caverns, cliff-dwellings and canyons in miniature.” The cliff-dwellings added to the ambience and identified the setting as the Southwest. After becoming a hero in World War I, Nophaie died in the arms of his love, ironically after saving the villains from an angry mob. It was a shallow death, but saved Grey from having to confront the miscegenation that his romance would have created otherwise. It also emphasized the tragic “vanishing” Indian.

Paramount produced the silent movie based on this novel the same year it appeared. Apparently, Grey had struck a nerve in the American conscience. Richard Dix played Nophaie, Lois Wilson, the schoolmarm, and Noah Beery, the agent. Filmed at Betatak and Monument Valley, the photography emphasized the grand scenery of the Southwest. The plot closely followed the book, down to the tragic ending. However, the opening scenes in the movie, depicting the succession of ancient cultures, were not from Grey’s book, *The Vanishing American*. They resembled scenes in another Zane Grey story, *Blue Feather*, which he did not publish until 1934.

In *Blue Feather*, Grey attempted his own interpretation of the Ancestral Puebloon
past, following Bandelier’s lead. The hero was again a Nopah Indian, Blue Eagle. The tribe was moving into the land of the cliff dwellers, seeking to confiscate the riches of the cliff dwelling Rock Clan. Grey made the Rock Clan a lighter skinned people, noticeably more ingenious than the Nopahs. Blue Eagle befriended the Rock Clan to spy on them and learn of their defenses. However, the Nopah plan failed when he fell in love with the chief’s daughter, Nashta, who had been kept out of the sunlight since her birth. His forbidden love was discovered and he was thrown in a dungeon. The Rock Clan was about to execute him when the Nopahs attacked. Incredibly, they assailed the cliff dwelling with catapults and siege ladders. The Nopahs gained the ledge, but the Rock Clan drove them back by tossing heavy boulders on them, pouring scalding water over the parapet, and raining flaming torches on their heads. That evening, Nashta entered the enemy camp and agreed to lead them by a secret passage through the cliff and into the village in order to save her love. The next day, the Nopahs massacred the Rock Clan and left the cliff dwelling in ruins. Yet, the two lovers survived to meld the races.

Obviously, there was no attempt for accuracy on Grey’s part. It was not a full-length novel, and the reader wonders if he wrote it with any degree of seriousness. The catapults, dungeons, and pure white maidens had more in common with medieval Europe than the desert Southwest. The emphasis on lighter skin as a symbol of an advanced race was a remnant of a racist view still held by many Americans. Readers who chanced upon this lesser known work would not have the painstakingly researched facts of Bandelier’s novel, but a fantasy with no connection to Puebloan culture. They would have read a story of a “vanished” tribe with details reminiscent to medieval warfare.

In Lost Pueblo (1927), the plot centered on a vanished cliff dwelling. It concerned
a young archaeologist, Phil Randolph, who had come west to make a name for himself excavating archaeological ruins in the Southwest. However, the archaeological culture Grey described in this novel was far from realistic. While Randolph dug in a ruin by himself, a wealthy Mr. Endicott brought his daughter, Janey, west to vacation at a nearby dude ranch. Concerned that the 1920s urban scene was corrupting Janey, he secretly hoped she would fall in love with Randolph, who was the son of a close friend.

When they met, Randolph described his work to Mr. Endicott as "treasure hunting" and explained that he was trying to uncover "the prehistoric ruin . . . buried here somewhere." This is confusing to any archaeologist familiar with the Southwest as the ruin he was looking for was a large cliff dwelling. Large cliff dwellings are not difficult to spot and why anyone looking for a cliff dwelling would spend his days digging at the base of a cliff, Grey never explained. However, Randolph was staking his reputation on finding the "Lost Pueblo" of Beckyshibeta in the canyon where he was digging. This Pueblo was entirely a fiction, although it appeared Grey loosely based it on Betatikin. Unlike Bandelier, who used real sites in his story, Grey made up his landscape, basing it only roughly on reality. In the end, Janey found Beckyshibeta by following a hand and toehold trail, but she let her new love, Randolph, claim the honor.

Interestingly, Grey identified the site as a "Pueblo," and Randolph indicated he would know the site when he found its kivas. Yet Grey never identified the builders of the pueblo except to say that they were "cliff dwellers." Grey portrayed Randolph as someone who was studying a vanished people, depicted the site he was digging as a "grave," commented on the "weirdness of the scene," and described the windows of the ruin as being like a vacant stare where "Human eyes had gazed . . . ages ago." The only
tribe ever identified with the site was the Aztecs, though that was done partly in jest.\textsuperscript{33} These descriptions helped create an ambience of mystery, but they also helped perpetuate the myth of a “vanished” race instead of a Puebloan heritage.

Cliff dwellings were also central to the plot of Grey’s first bestseller, *Riders of the Purple Sage* (1912). This story was a double romance with most of the attention focused on the gunman, Lassiter, and his relationship to the town matriarch, Jane Withersteen. The other romance, between Jane’s friend Bern Venters, saved by Lassiter from a public whipping, and the “Masked Rider,” the mysterious lieutenant of a cattle rustler and outlaw known as Oldring, took place in a valley of the cliff dwellers. The reader only learned that the feared “Masked Rider” was a woman after Venters shot her and another man in self-defense while investigating the disappearance of Withersteen’s cattle.

When Venters took off the mask, he discovered he had shot a woman and was mortified. He tried to save her life by carrying her to his camp and doctoring her wounds. Afraid of Oldring, he sought a more secure site and stumbled upon a toehold trail made by cliff dwellers. He climbed it, expecting to find “a huge cavern full of little square stone houses, each with a small aperture like a staring dark eye.”\textsuperscript{34} In fact, he found a long shelf of cliff-dwellings, with little black, staring windows or doors. Like eyes they were, and seemed to watch him. The few cliff-dwellings he had seen—all ruins—had left him with haunting memory of age and solitude.\textsuperscript{35}

Once again, the cliff dwellings created an ambience of mystery.

As the Masked Rider’s condition improved, Venters discovered her name was Bess, and together they explored the valley, which contained a natural arch, a balancing rock, a stunning waterfall, and the cliff dwellings.\textsuperscript{36} Aspens, silver spruce and great oaks covered the valley. There were beaver ponds, rabbits tame enough to eat out of their
hands, and birds that sang to them from the trees as they worked — a Disneyesque paradise in southern Utah. The idyllic setting was central to the plot and to the mystery of the cliff dwellers. Venters explored the cliff dwellings and found little houses, stone axes, potsherds, manos, metates, and pictographs of hands. He gathered bowls and utensils to use back at the camp, where he nursed Bess back to health and surprised her by cooking from a cliff dweller’s pot. Later, when Bess was mostly recovered, the two of them went together to the cliff dwelling. They had a romantic adventure exploring the rooms

She dragged forth from corners and shelves a multitude of crudely fashioned and painted pieces of pottery and he carried them. They peeped down into the dark holes of the kivas, and ... into the little globular houses, like mud-wasps nests, and wondered if these had been store-places for grain or baby cribs, or what; and they crawled into the larger houses and laughed when they bumped their heads on the low roofs, and they dug in the dust of the floors. And they brought from dust and darkness armloads of treasure which they carried into the light.

Most mysteriously of all, they found “whitish stone which crushed to powder at a touch and seemed to vanish in the air,” which Venters identified as human bone. When Bess inquired who these people were, Venters told her these were “Cliff-dwellers. Men who had enemies and made their homes high out of reach.” When she asked why they had to fight, he replied, “For Life. For their homes, food, children, parents — for their women.” The cliff houses then became a springboard for a deep discussion on the meaning of life between Bess and Venters as they fell in love. Throughout the rest of the story, the cliff dwellings were there, looming in storms and reflecting the sunshine.

Grey left no question as to what happened to the cliff dwellers, “They died, vanished,” but left “the Pass ... full of old houses and ruins.” Before then, they lived in this paradise as truly noble savages would. Grey suggested other elements of nobility and savagery as well. They must have regarded the stone bridge as “an object of worship.”
They had gazed across the beautiful valley. They had laughed and they had loved. Grey used them to pose philosophical questions and to foreshadow the book's climax. Venter's discovered the balancing rock had been hacked by the cliff dwellers. With a little push, it would fall and block the only way into the valley.

It had been meant for defense. The cliff-dwellers, driven by dreaded enemies to this last stand, had cunningly cut the rock until it balanced perfectly to be dislodged by strong hands.

Venter's was worried by this balanced rock every time he climbed the toehold trail until he and Bess left to see the world together. Before they left, they stocked the valley with a year's worth of supplies given to Venter's by Jane, so her Mormon tormentors would not obtain them. Venter's even managed to start a small cattle herd with calves he rustled from the outlaws. Lassiter followed Venter's to the toehold trail and discovered the valley. When Venter's and Bess left, they met Lassiter and Jane fleeing from her burning ranch and a posse. Jane discovered that Venter's, for whom she had felt affection in the opening pages, had another love. Lassiter discovered Bess was his niece. They all discovered friendship for one another and then separated – Venter's and Bess for the East, Lassiter and Jane for Surprise Valley. At the top of the toehold trail, with the posse in pursuit, Lassiter, pushed the balanced rock over with Jane's blessing, sealing them in the hidden valley. However, there were the supplies Venter's and Bess left and it was paradise.

What did the more than 1.2 million people who bought the book learn about the cliff dwellers? The lesson was clear. The Cliff Dwellings were a mystery. The people who built them "disappeared." Their homes were now a part of the Southwestern landscape – a landscape painted by Grey with his words and noted by his readers to be "rich," "gloriously described," and "surrealistcally painted."
Equally important, Hollywood made *Riders of the Purple Sage* into a movie three different times. The first, in 1925, was a silent movie produced by Fox. In 1931, Fox did a remake with sound and in 1995, Turner Home Entertainment produced their version. The 1995 version followed the plot closely, and the script took some of the dialogue verbatim from Grey’s prose. However, the producer deleted several characters, combined several scenes, and fit the wild topography of the story into the reality of the Utah landscape where it was filmed. As a result, Surprise Valley became a single cliff dwelling perched precariously above the canyon. In the movie, Venters found the toehold trail with the assistance of mysterious petroglyphs carved nearby. He took care of Bess with water from a black-on-white Mesa Verde bowl and, once she was well, they had a similar discussion about the cliff dwellings. When examining the balancing rock, Venters noted that the cliff dwellers “all vanished and here the rock still stands.” For moviegoers, the message was the same. The cliff dwellers “vanished.”

Following Grey, other Western writers employed Ancestral Puebloan sites to provide ambience. For instance, Will Henry made an ancient village one of the landmarks for the hidden gold mine in *MacKenna’s Gold* (1963). The Hollywood movie by the same name transformed the village into a cliff dwelling and placed it in the Cañon del Oro for which the characters searched. There, the hero and heroine climbed a hand and toehold trail to get away from the villain; when he caught up to them, they fought beneath the ruin. Thus, *MacKenna’s Gold* connected the Ancestral Puebloans to a lost treasure.

*Autobiographical Narratives and Biographical Essays*

During the Depression, another archaeologist-turned-writer presented the story of the Ancestral Puebloans in a more accurate light. In *Digging in the Southwest* (1933),
Ann Axtell Morris, the wife of Earl Morris, who shared his trials and hardships, recorded her memories of that life in an intriguing collection of essays. In these essays, she rejected all theories that placed the Ancestral Puebloan sites in the Aztec scheme of development or suggested they “vanished.” Instead, she saw them clearly as stages of cultural development, culminating in modern Puebloan culture.

The authentic blood of the Cliff Dwellers, even of the wildest Basket Maker ancestors, still flows in Pueblo veins. Their arts and crafts, their religious ceremonies and their civic government are as directly descended from antiquity as are the people themselves.46

Like Bandlier’s novel, the critics liked her book, but most Americans were unaware of it.

While Nusbaum was superintendent of Mesa Verde, his stepson, Deric, loved living on and exploring the mesa. It was every child’s dream world. There was no school in the park, so he was home-schooled by his mother, Aileen. He spent his days tramping about the woods, exploring the canyons, and prowling through the cliffhouses. With his mother’s help, he recorded his adventures in a book entitled Deric in Mesa Verde (1925). In it, he gave insights into his family’s life at Mesa Verde. He narrated how a ringtail cat once broke into their home through the chimney, how his family picnicked and explored the ruins on holidays, and how his stepfather took him on expeditions to excavate ruins.47 This last experience left a lasting impression on the youth, for in later years, like his stepfather, he became an archaeologist. In the opening pages, Deric asserted that the cliff dwellers,

were not so different from the Pueblos of today. I guess some of them are the descendants of the Cliff-Dwellers all right. Most of the archaeologists believe that the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest used to live here and at Chaco Canyon, Canyon de Chelly, and in the Kayenta country.48

The book went through five printings before the Depression, and as Deric wrote for a younger audience, it may have helped other young boys imagine the life of an
archaeologist with greater accuracy.

Another writer of the 1920s would have a greater impact on the perception adults had of archaeology, specifically the story of Mesa Verde. Willa Cather grew up on the plains of Nebraska and entered journalism while teaching high school in Philadelphia. Her writing career began with the publication of a collection of poems in 1903. After several successful novels, she wrote *The Professor's House* in 1925. A work of fiction, it so closely paralleled Richard Wetherill's life, it was semi-biographical. Sympathetic to Wetherill, Cather portrayed him through the character of Tom Outland who went East to persuade the government to prevent the ruins from being destroyed by relic-hunters. He returned to the Southwest defeated, then went to Michigan to study under the professor. Paralleling Wetherill's life, he died young, but in Europe during World War I.

Outland's story of his "discovery" of Cliff Palace actually had more in common with Al Wetherill's sighting of the cliff dwelling than Richard's tale. This may be because when Cather came to the Southwest to research her novel, Richard had already been dead five years, and she spoke to one of his brothers instead. In her telling of the story, Outland tied his horse and went up the canyon alone, when he glanced up and saw it. "Far above me, a thousand feet or so, set in a great cavern in the face of the cliff, I saw a little city of stone, asleep." What captivated him was the round tower (perhaps Cather was revealing something of her own experience here).

It was beautifully proportioned that tower, swelling out to a larger girth a little above the base, then growing slender again. There was something symmetrical and powerful about the swell of the masonry. The tower was the fine thing that held all the jumble of houses together and made them mean something.

The words she used to describe the scene spoke of death.

Such silence and stillness and repose — immortal repose. That village sat looking
down into the canyon with the calmness of eternity. The falling snow-flakes ... gave it a special kind of solemnity.

Fittingly Outland adds, "I knew at once that I had come upon the city of some extinct civilization ... it had been the home of a powerful tribe, a particular civilization."\(^{51}\)

If this sounded like a vanished civilization, later Outland related it to the Pueblo tribes. "Like all pueblo Indians, these people had had their farms away from their dwellings." He even related it to the modern Pueblos, saying, "I had been to Acoma and the Hopi villages, but I'd never seen a tower like this one."\(^{52}\) Vacillating like this while romanticizing the moment was not new, of course. However, the riveting moment of discovery linked it to a "dead" race. This book, read by millions, helped perpetuate the idea that the cliff dwellings represented an "extinct" civilization, with only a tenuous relationship to the Pueblo tribes.

After World War II, with the economy booming, a new writer set a different tone for writing about the desert. Widely read, he composed articles celebrating the beauties of the wilderness and of climbing in slickrock country. He wrote novels of environmental activism and monkey wrenching. His was a voice for preservation and his writings inspired many to become involved with the environmental movements of the late-twentieth century. He also commented on the cliff dwellings of the desert country and of the people who inhabited them, imparting the same romantic, mixed message as Powell, Cather and so many others. His name was Edward Abbey.

Abbey produced some of his best writing in *Desert Solitaire* (1968), a book ostensibly about a single summer he spent as a ranger in the then-undeveloped Arches National Park. It was not a book about the desert per se, as much as it was a collection of his "impressions of the natural scene." In this volume of wilderness essays, he ranted at
the misplaced values of consumer civilization, described one of the last float trips through
Glen Canyon, and tried to convince his readers to leave their cars behind when exploring
the national parks. He both identified the cliff dwellings as Pueblos and fell for the
"vanishing Anasazi" motif. He stereotyped Indians and provided ethnographic data. His
was a complex look into the preservationist mind.\textsuperscript{53}

In \textit{Desert Solitaire}, Abbey used the cliff dwellings, petroglyphs, and ruins of the
canyon country of southeastern Utah to provide both ambience and a culture in which to
weigh twentieth-century America. While exploring an o\textsuperscript{f}sho\textsuperscript{tt} of Escalante Canyon on
his float trip, he found a collection of Ancestral Puebloan petroglyphs and reflected.

Others have been here before. On a mural wall I find petroglyphs – the images of
bighorn sheep, snakes, mule deer, sun and raincloud symbols, men with lances.
The old people, the Anasazi . . . As I sit there drinking water from cupped hands, I
happened to look up and see on the opposite wall, a hundred feet above the
canyon, the ruins of three tiny stone houses in a shallow cave. As is the case with
many cliff dwellings, the erosion of eight centuries has removed whole blocks of
rock which formerly must have supported ladders and handholds, making the
ghost village now inaccessible.\textsuperscript{54}

Elsewhere he described the petroglyphs and pictographs near Moab and compared them
to twentieth-century art. Not surprisingly, twentieth-century art came out the worse.

As for the technical competence of the artists, its measure is apparent in the fact
that these pictographs and petroglyphs though exposed to the attack of wind, sand
rain, heat, cold, and sunlight for centuries still survive vivid and clear. How much
of the painting and sculpture being done in America today will last – in the
merely physical sense – for even a half-century?\textsuperscript{55}

As to the matter of who built the cliff dwellings and carved the petroglyphs,

Abbey ascribed them to the "Anasazi." As to who the "Anasazi" were, he wavered. At
one point, he made it clear they were ancestral to the Puebloan tribes.

But now they are gone, some six or seven hundred years later, though not as a
race extinguished: their descend\textsuperscript{en}nts survive in the Hopi, Zuni and other Pueblo
tribes of Arizona and New Mexico\textsuperscript{56}
Yet, when pondering the reasons they abandoned their villages, he contradicted himself, showing his susceptibility to the myth.

Or could it have been, finally simply their fears which poisoned their lives beyond hope of recovery and drove them into exile and extinction?\(^{37}\)

Another autobiographical account examined contemporary fascination with the “Anasazi.” In 1998, Reg Saner, a professor of English at the University of Colorado, brought forth a series of essays in which he asked why “Anasazi” ruins attract so many. He failed to find an answer, although he did provide some interesting reflections. In *Reaching Keet Seel: Ruin’s Echo and the Anasazi*, Saner rose to the descriptive level of Abbey as he captivated the reader with his descriptions of the desert and his sojourn in the canyons looking for Ancestral Puebloan ruins.

Saner’s essays clearly identified the “Anasazi” with the Pueblos, although he refused to bow to contemporary sentiments and call them Ancestral Puebloans instead of “Anasazi.”\(^{38}\) The book opened and closed with an experience at Hopi. At the beginning, he described a Hopi panhandler and his realization that “his forebears had been among those prehistoric and varied peoples we now call . . . the Anasazi.”\(^{39}\) At the end, he watched a Hopi boy and girl scamper in play and thought, “had they been born less than two hundred years earlier, they’d have continued being hard to tell from Anasazi.”\(^{40}\)

He connected the sacredness of the ruins with the sacredness of Pueblo ritual. Yet, Saner was clearly a student of the secular world and he could not quite figure out what this word “sacred” meant. He explored the meaning of “sacred” while he traveled to Casa Rinconada for the solstice sunrise, to Hovenweep Castle for the solstice sunset, and to Horseshoe Canyon to see the Great Gallery. He described New Age notions of the sacred
that he heard visitors applying to the "Anasazi," but objected to these as well. He did not share their view of "Anasazi" sacredness, noting, "that a great many people do seem to be looking for 'something' doesn't alter the fact that any 'something' so wishfully, wistfully, harmlessly vague has little to do with Indian ideas of the sacred." He connected his search to the rootlessness of American culture in words Abbey would have applauded. One of the delights in reading this book was watching him struggle with this dilemma. Saner was at his best pondering the attraction of ruined villages. He suggested we find satisfaction guessing at what was missing, or enjoying "the humility that our admiration implies." In a morbid way, he suggested we enjoy being reminded that we are not the only ones who are mortal. We all must die and they could not escape this truth either.

A journalist who shared Saner's fascination with the Ancestral Puebloan past was David Roberts, who like Saner, refused to give up the word "Anasazi." *In Search of the Old Ones* described his meanderings about the region, seeking a connection to the past. After finding an intact corrugated pot, he realized it was not the artifact he sought.

My travels . . . have nonetheless been, in some sense, a pursuit of that very pot. Not of the pot itself, not of a ceramic object, however beautiful. What I sought instead was some connection with the Anasazi that I could feel beneath my fingertips as well as in my mind. The pot I looked for was—though I hesitate to use the word, with its facile evocation of the spiritual—a pot of communion.

Roberts had no trouble attributing the sites he visited to the Ancestral Puebloans and his essays posed intriguing considerations of the role of oral tradition and the role of the Pueblo tribes in the scholarly reconstruction of their past. He also made some pointed observations about the management policies of the NPS that deserve consideration.

Saner's and Robert's essays culminated a century of literary reflection on personal encounters with Ancestral Puebloan villages. They began with what we know,
and asked questions ultimately pertaining to who we are. They tried to understand and convey important impressions of the Puebloan past. In this regard, they were at home with Bandelier, Lummis, Morris, and Abbey. However, this scholarly reflection was often missing in more popular works. Yet, one of the most surprising books written on the Ancestral Puebloan past came from one of the most popular Western writers.

**The Westerns of Louis L’Amour**

Although Abbey was widely read, he did not have the reach of the next great writer of the Western genre, Louis L’Amour, who first appeared in bookstores in 1953 with *Hondo*. L’Amour boasted that he came from a family that was “always on the frontier,” arriving on the continent in the early 1600s and having an ancestor who was scalped by Indians. He enjoyed a wide variety of occupations and experiences before settling down as a writer, including working as an elephant handler, circling the world on a freighter, and sailing a dhow on the Red Sea. As a writer, he found his niche, and between 1953 and 1987 produced over 100 books, selling 230 million copies. Almost all of his books were Westerns, including his highly successful Sackett series. As such, he mimicked Zane Grey’s successful formula, while adding his own stamp to the genre.

Like Grey, L’Amour placed cliff dwellings in his novels to provide ambience and mystery. In *Desert Death Song*, they were features of the desert where the protagonist, Nat Bodine, hid out. In *Ride the Dark Trail*, the fifteenth novel in the Sackett series, L’Amour’s protagonist, Logan Sackett, rode through the canyon country to escape his enemies and felt “the ghosts of the old ones” watching him. He defined these spirits as “the ones who came before the Indians,” presumably ones that vanished. In a long soliloquy, Sacket commented on the cliff dwellers, whom he used to justify his violent
behavior. He described them as a passive race, which because of their passivity lost their lands to the wilder tribes — the Navajos and Apaches. The moral was clear to him. If only they would had stood and fought like men, they would still be here.

I'd ridden all over the Rio Grande, Mogollon, Mimbres, La Plata, and Mesa Verde country and what I saw was a lesson.

The Indians there were good Indians, planting Indians. For a long time they lived in peace and bothered nobody, and then Navajo-Apache tribes came migrating down the east side of the Rockies. . . . Those nice, peaceful tribes were shoved right off the map. Some were killed, some fled to western lands and built cliff houses, but you couldn't escape by running. The Navajo followed them right along, killing and destroying. Had they banded together under a good leader and waited they might have held the Navajo off, but when danger showed, a family or group of families would slip away to avoid trouble, and those left would be too few to hold the enemy.

Finally most of them were killed, the cliff houses fell into ruins, the irrigation projects they'd started fell apart. The wild tribes from out of the wilderness had again won a battle over the planting peoples . . . so it had always been.

. . . They'd pull out rather than make a stand, and they saw all they'd built fall apart, saw their people cut down, and their world fall apart.69

Finally, they even killed "a farmer at work or [shot] his wife off of a ladder where she climbed with her child."70 The lesson to him was to stand and fight. The lesson to the reader was that the cliff dwellers vanished because they were cowards.

L'Amour chose the contemporary Four Corners for the setting of his final book, *Haunted Mesa* (1987), written while he was dying of lung cancer. This plot involved another attempt to re-create the culture of the Ancestral Puebloans, but in a unique way. It was an intriguing plot, far outside his usual style of writing. In it, he not only offered an explanation for why the "Anasazi vanished," but attempted to tell what happened to them in the meantime. The incredible story he wove together was in many ways more fantasy than Western and proved a shock to some of his fans.71

*Haunted Mesa* told the story of a young sleuth, Mike Raglan, known for his
investigations of the supernatural and his exposure of fraudulent claims. Raglan went to
the remote wilds of southeastern Utah to save his friend, Erik Hokart, who had written a
mysterious letter asking for help. Hokart was building a home next to an abandoned
Ancestral Puebloan site on a remote mesa when he uncovered a strange kiva. It had no
sipapu, but it did have a strange “window.” When Raglan arrived, Hokart had vanished,
leaving his logbook. Then strange hoodlums appeared and tried to steal the log.

Eventually Raglan pieced the puzzle together and discovered that Hokart went
through “The Sipapu” (the window in the kiva) to the third world, a parallel universe
where the “Anasazi” still live. Suddenly, L’Amour had transformed an authentic
Puebloan belief into a plot fit for the “X-files.” L’Amour built on the four worlds of the
Hopi worldview, but altered it slightly by affirming the “Anasazi” did not just have to
leave the third world, they had to flee an unspeakable “evil” in it. This “evil” created the
conflict that brought the story to its climax.

Hokart was taken prisoner by an autocratic civilization that feared innovation, and
was held in a complex maze, complete with a hall of mirrors and dusty archives. Raglan
rescued him with help from a confusing cast of characters. One was an attractive
“Anasazi” girl who came to his world, only to vanish back to her home. Another was the
archivist from the third world, hungry for knowledge of the fourth world. An additional
ally was the local chief of police, who was investigating a mysterious fire in the café
where Hokart was abducted. Finally, an authentic Western cowboy, who vanished
through “The Sipapu” while he was rounding up steers fifty years earlier, helped Raglan
with his intimate knowledge of the landscape of the third world. The book had many sci-
fi features: riverboats that vanished into another dimension; dinosaur-like, man-eating
lizards; ancient idols with bulging eyes, fat cheeks, and gaping mouths; and friendly Sasquatch wanting to help. Of course, it also contained the shootouts, fistfights, and romance requisite in all Westerns.

L’Amour attempted accuracy with ethnographic details drawn from Puebloan culture to describe the “Anasazi.” However, the plot was not plausible and contradicted core Puebloan values. On the question of what happened to the “Anasazi,” L’Amour accepted the Pueblo connection – he had to or his Sipapu/parallel world plot would have been thin. He suggested that a drought and depredations by “nomadic, raiding Indians” were too much for the Ancestral Pueblos, “their cliff palaces were deserted, their fields abandoned – the “Anasazi disappeared.” However, he had it both ways by writing

Some evidence indicated that a few Anasazi had merged with other groups to become the Hopis. Others might have joined other Pueblo groups, but the greater part seemed simply to have vanished.

Or not really to have “vanished,” for Raglan had found them by using his detective logic.

Suppose, when the drought persisted and the attacks increased, that some of the Anasazi elected to return to the Third World from which they came?

With this idea, L’Amour solved the “mystery” of the “vanished Anasazi” while maintaining the link to the Pueblo Indians needed to give the sipapu legend credence.

Also prevalent in this attempt to re-create the Ancestral Puebloan past were elements that easily lent themselves to the New Age movement emerging at the time L’Amour wrote. The emphasis on Hopi mythology, occult spiritual practices, and the kiva as a place where strange happenings were possible, all could have contributed to New Age interest in Ancestral Puebloan sites. Similarly, L’Amour described the landscape as a special place with mystical powers that could create a window between parallel worlds not only in the kiva, but also throughout the nearby canyons and mesas.
He never said the words “power vortex,” but to readers involved in the New Age, the possibility was there. Furthermore, his suggestion that archaeologists and those investigating the Ancestral Pueblos “were inclined to ignore, as an intrusion, anything that did not fit previously conceived ideas” provided ammunition to those who questioned the authority of academia and championed their own kind of knowledge.  

*Mystery Novels*

Other literary genres besides the Western have contributed to the myth of the “vanishing Anasazi.” One of the most important in recent years has been the detective novel. When these novels are set in and among Ancestral Pueblos sites, they tend to capitalize on the “mystery” of the “vanished” people to create a double mystery. Not only can the reader ponder “who-done-it,” they can ponder the mystery of the “Anasazi” as well. For example, James Doss placed a small Ancestral Puebloan village in his description of the land in *The Shaman’s Game*, a mystery that took place on the Ute Mountain Nation. He noted the time of its people was now “long-forgotten.” He described their religion as one with “blood sacrifice” needed to keep the sun alive. For a murder mystery, this worked; for Pueblo Indians, it was a gross distortion of their culture.

Foremost among southwestern mystery writers is the journalist-turned-novelist, Tony Hillerman, who is best known for his ability to mix elements of Navajo culture into his mysteries through his two Navajo protagonists, Lt. Joe Leaphorn was a pragmatic, intelligent, and contemplative Navajo detective who was non-traditional, although he understood the customs. He grew wiser through the series as his wife died and he learned to cope with upstart officers on the force. One of these was Jim Chee, a traditionalist, who was young and reckless. It was their knowledge of Navajo ways that enabled them to
solve the troubling cases they investigated.

Another element in all Hillerman's Navajo detective novels is his accurate descriptions of the landscape. Black Mesa, Tsegi Canyon, Shiprock, the Chuska Range, all come alive through his words — so much so that one aspiring entrepreneur has even made a map of "Hillerman Country" to sell to tourists. It is here in these detailed landscape portraits that the reader comes across the cliff dwellings and archaeological sites of the Ancestral Puebloan past. In some of his early novels, like Listening Woman (1978), one of the best shoot-em-up action novels in his series, he described cliff ruins only in passing. Elsewhere, the cliff dwellings, and knowledge of the cliff dwellers, become central to the plot. In these novels, the identity of the cliff dwellers shifted back and forth between a pre-pueblo people and a "vanished" race. Depending on which novel the public read, they would have had a different take on the Ancestral Puebloan identity.

In The Blessing Way (1970), Hillerman's first novel in the series, he centered his story on a fictional Many Ruins Canyon, so-named because of its Ancestral Puebloan sites. Although the canyon was fictional, it was obvious that it would have been located near Canyon de Chelly National Monument, as he placed it on the west slope of the Lukachukais. In his story, an ethnographer, Bergen McKee, and an archaeologist, Jeremy Canfield, camped out for a summer's fieldwork: the ethnographer to study witchcraft and the archaeologist to poke around "into the burial sites of the Anasazi, the pre-Navajo Cliff-dwellers." However, an urban relocation Navajo was also there with a mafia hire to spy on missile testing overhead. The Navajo acted like a witch to keep other Navajos away and killed those who knew too much, like Canfield. The murder of another man, a minor felon, brought Leaphorn into the story.
The story climaxed when the Navajo "witch" captured McKee and a young woman friend of Canfield's, Ellen Leon, at gunpoint. He imprisoned them in an ancient room in a cliff dwelling high above the canyon. It made a nice prison, for when the villains removed the ladder, it appeared there was no way out. However, McKee knew Hopi ethnography and identified the room as a kiva. He also knew that, "they always built an escape hatch at the bottom of a wall." He found his way out, discovered the toehold trail he knew the cliff dwellers would have built, and climbed to themesa top. His knowledge of the Hopi and of the Ancestral Puebloans enabled him to become a hero and win the affection of Ellen Leon.

Hillerman briefly discussed the identity of the "Anasazi" for the reader. At first, he said they were "pre-Navajo Cliff dwellers," but he explained that some of the cliff houses were "rebuilt – restored by one of the later Pueblo people who used the canyon before the Navajos arrived and drove them out." What he meant by a "later Pueblo people" was perplexing and never elaborated. It appeared as if the Hopi were not descendents of the cliff dwellers, but of another Pueblo people who came after them.

In The Dark Wind (1982), Hillerman clarified the question of the identity of the Ancestral Puebloans for those aficionados who kept reading. In this story, Chee tried to solve a mysterious plane crash involved in a narcotics shipment. The crash occurred on the Navajo-Hopi Joint Use Area and in trying to unravel the mystery, Chee persuaded his Hopi friend, Sheriff Albert Dashee, to take him to interview a Hopi elder, Sawkatewa, at the fictional village of Piuutki. Answering a question concerning a Hopi shrine, in the traditional way, Sawkatewa retold the tale of the sipapu. In so doing, he described the migrations to the end of the continent in the west, and the end of the continent to the east, and the frozen door of the earth to the north, and the other end of the
earth to the south. He told how the fog clan had left its footprints in the form of abandoned stone villages and cliff dwellings in all directions.83

In this novel Hillerman accepted the Hopi claim to ties with their ancestral sites.

*A Thief of Time* (1988) was Hillerman’s thriller that dealt most directly with the “Anasazi.” He incorporated rich descriptions of Ancestral Puebloan sites, both cave dwellings and Chacoan outliers, petroglyphs and pictographs, potsherds and pottery, and the Kokopelli icon. To cite but one example, when the missing woman, Ellie Friedman-Bernal, was walking up Many Ruins Canyon, a different fictional canyon with the same name, she saw a rock art mural.

The moon lit only part of the wall, and the slanting light made it difficult to see, but she stopped to inspect it. In this light, the tapered huge-shouldered shape of the mystic Anasazi shaman lost its color and became merely a dark form. Above it a cluster of shapes danced, stick figures, abstractions: the inevitable Kokopelli, his humped shape bent, his flute pointed almost at the ground; a heron flying; a heron standing; the zigzag band of pigment representing a snake.84

The plot involved pothunters, murderers, ancient ruins, academia, and an anthropologist, Randall Elliot. Elliot had run amok to win the love of a fellow anthropologist, Maxie Davis, who scorned his elitist background. When Leaphorn interviewed the anthropologists, they talked about archaeological theories and facts surrounding the “Anasazi.” The emphasis of their research was on the question “where did the Anasazi go?” Elliot was using migration studies and genetics to find “a way to solve the mystery, once and for all, of what happened to these people.”85 This might have seemed to imply that he would work with modern Pueblos, which would have enabled Hillerman to make the link explicit, but he did not. Elliot was only using a mutation in the structure of the jaw of skeletal remains to track migration routes between Ancestral Puebloan sites.

The book was full of references, not to a pre-pueblo culture, but to a “vanished”
people. The opening chapter began with Ellie admiring the rock art mural. She thought a
pictograph of a horse must be a modern addition, “since the Anasazi had vanished three
hundred years before the Spanish came on their steeds.” Later, as Leaphorn arrived at
Chaco Canyon to interview the superintendent, he asked himself questions about the
Ancestral Puebloans. “Where had they found their firewood, Leaphorn wondered, the
vanished thousands of Old Ones who built these huge stone apartments?” The question
was legitimate, but the assumption they “vanished,” was not. Elsewhere, Hillerman
described the “Anasazi” as a “lost people,” a “vanished people,” and a “mysterious
people.” Such descriptive adjectives helped create an air of mystery useful to the plot,
but hardly corresponded to Puebloan tradition or archaeological knowledge.

Hillerman was not the only mystery writer to use the cliff dwellings as a site for
cryptic and enigmatic goings-on. Nevada Barr chose the spectacular setting of Mesa
Verde to tell a story of death, middle-age crisis, and toxic waste dumping. Barr became
well known as a fiction writer whose serial mysteries centered on the career of the
fictitious Anna Pigeon, a law enforcement ranger for the National Park Service. Barr
herself worked as a ranger at several national parks and drew on her experience in telling
the story. However, sometimes this experience was detrimental as she exposed the reader
to thinly veiled gossip against her co-workers. Each mystery was set in a different
national park, and one, Ill Wind (1995), revolved around the cliff dwellings at Mesa
Verde. In this novel, Pigeon attempted to solve the mysterious deaths of park visitors and
employees, including some of her friends. At the same time, Pigeon dealt with a mid-life
crisis and ghosts from her own past, adding a personal dimension to the plot.

The abandoned villages of the cliff dwellers form an interesting backdrop for
Pigeon’s ruminations. Following other writers, Barr uses them to provide an ambience of mystery once again. In her first description of a cliff dwelling, she writes:

These were not tents for folding and slipping away silently into the night. These were edifices, art, architecture. Homes built to last the centuries. If the builders had been driven out, surely the marauders would have taken up residence, enjoyed their spoils?90

When a child died at Cliff Palace, Barr paused in the story to give details of the site, “two hundred seventeen rooms, twenty-one kivas, and at the far end a four story tower.”91 There was something eerie in reading these cold statistics about an empty village and then reading about the little child’s condition. She heightened the drama with the setting.

Ignoring the reality of NPS policy, Barr depicted Pigeon wandering Cliff Palace after closing time to reflect on the crime.92 Cliff Palace allowed her to think out her problems and provided some solace as well. Repeating a theme prevalent since the days of Powell’s explorations, the abandoned Ancestral Puebloan villages appeared to be great places for contemplation and reflection.

Despite the fact that Nevada Barr once worked as a ranger at Mesa Verde, Ill Wind asserted repeatedly that the “Anasazi vanished.” In the first chapter, she told the reader “the Old Ones had vanished.”93 When Pigeon was meditating at Cliff Palace, she wondered, “If the Old Ones had not died and they’d not left of their own volition and they’d not been driven out . . . Then what?” Significantly, Pigeon then suggested the empty villages were “Plots for von Daniken,” a reference to the well-known pop-theorist who suggested Pre-Columbian “mysteries” could be solved by allowing that aliens from outer space visited Earth and built the mysterious sites.94

Novels of Ancestral Puebloan Life

Late in the twentieth century, as the genre of prehistoric fiction became popular,
novels appeared in profusion telling tales of the Ancestral Puebloan past. Such novels often built on widespread public perceptions about the "primitive." Although some writers of the genre displayed a willingness to investigate the anthropological theories behind their subject, other writers willingly ignored the science in pursuit of legitimating their own peculiar ideas. As a result, novels about the Ancestral Puebloan past sometimes attributed the archaeology behind their story to Pueblo Indians and sometimes did not. Quite often, they did both, relying on the concept of a "lost civilization" to generate interest, but somewhere in the text, often in an obscure passage, suggesting that the culture continued among the Pueblo tribes.

Sometimes authors built plots from wild ideas popularized in the mass media but discouraged by science. One of the most peculiar was the idea that Viking warriors encountered the Ancestral Puebloans. Despite the distance from the Atlantic shore, this remote possibility of contact intrigued several writers. A. Tanner Smith was one of them. A retired oil company executive, he wrote *The Anasazi and the Viking* in 1992. In it, he told the fantastic tale of a Viking warrior who befriended the ancestral community living at Spruce Tree House. When an Athabaskan people attacked, the Viking, a kind of superman, cameto their rescue and taught them how to defend themselves, for, as the elders of Spruce Tree House explained, "We are peaceful people . . . We know nothing of how to fight an enemy." After many harrowing experiences—killing a giant condor terrorizing the villages, throwing a malicious cliff dweller over the parapet at Balcony House, rafting the Colorado in the Grand Canyon—he led the people of Mesa Verde to Canyon de Chelly. Here, Smith had some of the people stay, pointing out that there was archaeological evidence for this scenario. However, he then depicted the Viking leading
the rest to the Grand Canyon, where they joined the Havasupai, a non-Pueblo tribe.

Smith never mentioned the modern pueblos, even though the characters passed close to both Hopi and Zuni in their journeys. He carefully researched the life ways of the Ancestral Pueblos from archaeological reports that relied on Puebloan ethnography. Yet, he never connected the modern culture to the ancient one. For example, he explained that the cliff dwellers were matrilineal, but never indicated how this detail connected the cliff dwellers with their descendants.

Another writer who placed Vikings in contact with Ancestral Pueblos was Linda Lay Shuler in *She Who Remembers* (1988), the first book of a three-part series. Shuler’s female protagonist, Kwani, had blue eyes because a Viking ancestor raped a Puebloan woman after sailing up the Mississippi and the Arkansas rivers. This Viking left the contested runestone at the Heavener site in Oklahoma on the way. Moreover, the story suggested that another Viking warrior, Thorvald, was the friend of Kokopelli. Shuler placed Kokopelli in the story as a charming, intelligent, and sexually active pochteca from Mexico who wandered the Southwest with his flute and parrot. While some scholars have suggested this interpretation, she amplified it until the novel took on aspects of soft pornography.

Jean Auel’s successful prehistoric novels on Cro-Magnon peoples in Europe, the Earth’s Children Series, influenced Shuler to try the same storyline with the American Southwest. Auel’s influence is evident in many ways. Auel’s protagonist, Ayla, was a woman ostracized because she was different; Shuler’s protagonist was ostracized for the same reason. Like Ayla, Kwani possessed special spiritual powers that made it hard for her opponents to discount her. In both series, the heroines became recognized spiritual
leaders. Finally, like Ayla, Kwani began a journey that spanned the continent.

The setting for *She Who Remembers* included sites at Mesa Verde, Chaco Canyon, and Pecos. In the story, an unidentified Ancestral Puebloan village banished Kwani and she moved in with a Ute hunter. When he mistreated her, Kokopelli rescued her. He took her to Cliff Palace and became her lover, as well as the lover of her rival. Though the people of Cliff Palace welcomed Kokopelli, they disliked Kwani. Eventually, the respected medicine woman, “She Who Remembers,” adopted Kwani and trained her to take her position upon her death. She accomplished this with the aid of Kokopelli and spiritual visions that came to her at Sun Temple. While Kokopelli was away, she fell in love with another man, Okalake, who journeyed to Chaco Canyon, where an Apache killed him. After Kokopelli returned with the Viking, the three of them – Kokopelli, Thorvald, and Kwani – traveled to the Rio Grande. They visited Zia, and other pueblos in the valley before finally settling at Pecos. At Pecos, Kwani fell in love with yet another man, Tolonqua, and Kokopelli, realizing he had lost her, returned to Mexico.

Shuler’s plot tied the Ancestral Puebloans of Mesa Verde to the Rio Grande pueblos. However, she was not as explicit as she could have been. She used the term “Anasazi” and her Ancestral Puebloan characters referred to themselves as such. Okalake reminisced how he “learned to be the kind of man an Anasazi was expected to be.” She portrayed the “Anasazi” as a distinct race, who knew the Tanoans, Keresans and other pueblo tribes. Instead of describing the “Anasazi” as ancestral to all Pueblo Indians, she labeled the “Anasazi” a tribe, like the Pueblos in culture, but not the same people.

Kwani knew that the Keresan, like the Anasazi, were one of a number of Pueblo tribes. They did not speak the same language, but they shared a common culture; they were farmers, fine potters, and expert builders in stone.
Ancestral Puebloans probably spoke several different languages while sharing a common culture, but it is incorrect to make “Anasazi” one of them. Archaeologists never meant the term “Anasazi” to designate a group apart from the Pueblo tribes.

Shuler used Pueblo ethnography to supply many of the details in her book. Her description of a “Corn Dance” was close to that found in many of the Rio Grande pueblos. The story she told of the Masauwu, the Hopi guardian of the fourth world, was accurate enough to make a traditional Hopi uncomfortable. On the other hand, her knowledge of such key elements as clan and village organization was extremely weak. There were inaccuracies in the toehold trails she described along the cliffs at Mesa Verde, the directions cliff houses face, and the views possible from the dwellings. There were serious problems with ceremonies she described that make the Pueblo Indians appear licentious in a fashion that while arousing, can hardly be considered authentic. One example of the latter is the adoption ceremony for Kwani. The people of Cliff Palace made her crawl between the legs of every woman in the clan in a symbolic re-birth and then suckle at their breasts.

Shuler took a strong stance on several archaeological questions, making her opinion appear correct without explaining the complexities of the debate. She suggested the Toltecs did not just influence Ancestral Puebloan architectural achievements at Chaco Canyon, but directed the construction. Her fictional Kokopelli recalled how the Toltecs built Pueblo Bonito.

He headed south for the [Pueblo Bonito] built long ago by the pochteca, Toltec traders like himself, who supervised construction by local artisans and taught them much. At one time, the city was renowned for its splendor and importance.

Similarly, Shuler described Kwani making a pictograph of a deer to call the deer into the
hunters’ trap – one possible explanation for a pictograph, but certainly not the only one.\textsuperscript{108}

In the second book of the series, \textit{Voice of the Eagle}, Shuler continued the story of Kwani and her family. In this book, which was set at Pecos, Tolonqua, Kwani’s new husband, moved the town from the Forked Lightning site to the mesa top where Pecos stood at the time of the Entrada. As the story progressed, it focused increasingly on Kwani’s children: her daughter, Antelope, who became “She Who Remembers” after her, and her son, Acoya, who became the Pecos “chief.” Kwani’s rival for Kokopelli’s love moved to Pecos with her son by Kokopelli, Chomoc. Kwani was instructed in a dream to return to Mesa Verde, where she died. Chomoc became a trader, like his father, and married Antelope. The second book ends with Chomoc leading a trading expedition to the lands of the Mound Builders along the Mississippi. Their lives in the East with the Mississippian culture became the subject of Shuler’s third book, \textit{Let the Drum Speak}, which dealt little with the Ancestral Puebloans.

In \textit{Voice of the Eagle}, Shuler continued the fiction that the “Anasazi” were a separate race from the Tanoans and Keresans. She specifically stated the Towa were separate from the “Anasazi” and implied Pecos was inferior to the “Anasazi” as well.\textsuperscript{109} In this book, Puebloan cultural details were mixed with Navajo customs. Her recounting of healing ceremonies, the treatment of the dead, and ritual orations all had Navajo parallels.\textsuperscript{110} Elsewhere, the native wisdom the elders imparted sounded more like stereotypical “noble savage” speeches or New Age theology.\textsuperscript{111}

When Kwani arrived at Mesa Verde, she saw Cliff Palace in ruins; the walls had crumbled, the windows stared with “vacant eyes,” foreshadowing the way the reader could experience it today. Then, in Kwani’s last vision, she saw white men riding horses
and the “Old One” told her that

“They will come. Terrible beings from across the Sunrise Sea. Our people will suffer, become slaves, die.”

The “Old One” told her one of her descendants would one day lead the Pueblo Revolt.

“But one man will save us. One whose ancestor you are. He alone will unite us and drive the foreigners from our homeland. The blood of She Who Remembers will be renowned forever. . . .”

This would seem to be a strong link tying ancestral and modern pueblos, but unless readers knew Puebloan history, they probably would not make the connection.

Shuler’s books helped readers imagine what the Transitional Puebloan Period was like. However, they contained too many references to New Age beliefs to be good archaeological reconstructions. They titillated readers more than they instructed. Because she treated the “Anasazi” as a separate tribe, she kept the pretense of a “vanished race,” while allowing for a migration that fit her larger plot. Pueblo Indians have a difficult time with writers like Shuler. Hopi elder Orville Talayumptewa stressed that this genre “trivializes Hopi . . . to fictionalize it really does not in any way reflect Hopi.”

Moreover, Peter Pino at Zia noted that writers like Shuler are “making a lot of assumptions . . . when you start doing that, you are playing with reality.”

Another series introduced during the 1990s, attempted to reconstruct the Ancestral Puebloan past. This time, the writers were a pair of archaeologists who had extensively researched the ancient Southwestern sites. Kathleen O’Neal Gear and W. Michael Gear won accolades from reviewers for their First North Americans Series. Written to portray the various cultural regions of prehistoric North America, People of the Silence (1996), the eighth installment, was set at Chaco Canyon. The Gears tell a moving story involving several extended families immediately preceding abandonment.
While their story adheres to the facts, it develops a Western-style theme of power and greed. Like Shuler’s novels, their fiction is troublesome for Pueblo peoples.

The story revolved around a young man, Poor Singer, and a young woman, Cornsilk. Unaware of their real parentage, they were secretly related to the ruling family of Pueblo Bonito by illegitimate couplings that must be kept hidden. The Gears described the violence in gory detail, depicting pueblos being sacked and destroyed as the Chacoan world came unhinged. Their scenario alleged corruption at Pueblo Bonito as they imagined a new ruler who was both immature and devious. In the end, his machinations almost destroyed the town by leaving it open to attack by a Mogollon community. This attack resulted in the leaders of the town being carried into captivity, including Poor Singer and Cornsilk. Following the volcanic eruption of Sunset Crater, the disheartened Chacoans refused to remain after so many catastrophes and began to leave. Yet, the eruption saved the lives of the central characters due to the earthquakes, Poor Singer’s vision, and an ironic twist that exposed his grandfather as the Mogollon leader.

The story was gripping, the ethnographic details were accurate, and the plot was plausible. However, in the foreword, the Gears continued to muddle the waters of cultural identity. While they stated, “make no mistake, those grand prehistoric peoples did not ‘vanish,’” as some books and television shows would have you believe;” they also called the Pueblo Indians, “the most likely descendants of the Anasazi.”115 While this is accurate science, many probably interpreted it to mean that no one really knows where they went.

Perhaps more important, since many readers of fiction do not bother to read the preface, is that the introduction opened not on a prehistoric scene, but on modern day Pueblo Bonito. Their tale began with a fictional ranger of Keres descent, Magpie
Walking Hawk Taylor, bringing her grandmother, Slumber Walking Hawk, to the site because she had a dream that told her to come and she was dying of cancer. While Magpie met with members of a hiking club opposed to the NPS plan to honor Puebloan religious concerns, her grandmother strolled about, found an ancient stiletto, met a ghost, and died. One of the hikers heard a strange voice asking if she wanted to leave. The inference was that he heard the spirit as well and that the place was sacred . . . or haunted.

The Gears continued their focus on the Ancestral Puebloans with the Anasazi Mysteries Series, a series of three books that revived the story of People of the Silence several generations later. What made the series unique was the fact that it told two stories at once: one, a tale of the Ancestral Puebloans migrating around the San Juan basin during the chaos that followed the collapse of the Chacoan system; the other, a story of archaeologists excavating the same ancient sites a thousand years later.

Accepting theories the Katsina religion began at this time, the Ancestral Puebloan story centered on a group of Katsina believers who were opposed by traditionalists, dubbed “the Fluteplayer believers.” They migrated back to Chacoan sites trying to find the original first kiva to fulfill Poor Singer’s prophecy, stating that if the kiva could be restored, it would bring an end to the fighting. Browser, the war chief, and Catkin, his female lieutenant, did their best to protect the Katsinas people from the White Moccasins, marauding assassins bent on destroying the new faith. At the same time, a diabolical witch, Two Hearts, plotted the murders of their elders and Browser’s uncle, Stone Ghost, a kind of prehistoric detective, helped him solve the murders by using logic and his keen powers of observation.

The archaeological tale involved a young archaeologist, William “Dusty” Stewart, whose father, an eminent archaeologist, killed himself when his mother, a renowned
anthropologist, ran off with another man. Another archaeologist and friend of the family, Dale Robertson, took Stewart in and raised him around archeological field camps and among the Hopi, where he was initiated into a kiva society. Stewart had made a name for himself with his unconventional field methods, but these excavations needed the work of a competent physical anthropologist. Robertson brought in Maureen Cole, a Canadian with a Mohawk background. The Gears creatively use these two characters, Stewart and Cole, to argue methodology and theory through their discussions and site analysis.

In the first book, *The Visitant*, the Gears crafted a plot to explain the McElmo architecture at Chaco Canyon, postulating that a group, like the Katsinas people, came back for religious reasons, reinhabited the old sites, and tried to fulfill a prophecy. When the archaeologists uncovered the burials of Two Heart’s victims, they became detectives as well, though Stewart sensed witchcraft. They brought in Walking Hawk Taylor as a tribal consultant, as mandated by law. She brought her aunts to monitor the dig. Stewart’s knowledge of Puebloan witchcraft, the presence of a Pueblo Indian monitor, and the discussions of the archaeologists, all made it clear that these sites are Ancestral Puebloan.

In *The Summoning God*, the story continued with another dig located on private land along the Animas River. The owner was planning a housing development built around the archaeological site as its theme. The site had evidence of a tragic fire that killed dozens of children. The simultaneous Ancestral Puebloan tale revealed that the Katcinas people sent the children to the kiva during a ceremony and the resulting tragic fire, set by Two Hearts, almost destroyed the community. The owner, a Holocaust survivor, magnanimously determined to turn the site into a museum to honor the dead of another massacre.

The final book of the series, *Bone Walker*, took place back at Chaco Canyon. This
time the series reached its climax when a small battle broke out between the Katsinas people and the White Moccasins in the thirteenth century and the "witch" reappeared in the guise of a twentieth century psychopath determined to kill Robertson. \(^{120}\) Walking Hawk Taylor was still there, her character keeping the tale centered on Puebloan culture and history.

However, the Gears were writing for a more scholarly audience. Like Bandelier, their use of ethnographic details were lost on many readers, some of whom found it to be just "too much information." \(^{121}\) Their books lacked the attraction of Grey's Westerns and the seductive action of Shuler's prehistoric romances. Thus, they did not reach the vast majority of Americans, who continue to believe that there is a "lost civilization" in the Southwest.

While the Anasazi Mystery Series clearly drew the connection between the modern pueblos and the Ancestral Puebloans, other aspects of these fictional works bothered Pueblo Indians. They found the emphasis on warfare and the suggestion of cannibalism to be disturbing. They knew well how popular culture can overreact and focus solely on the violence without placing it in the context of the archaeological story. Most disturbing is the idea of taking a controversial idea to the masses through the medium of fiction. This remains an unsophisticated method to win acceptance for one's ideas.

The power of fiction must not be underestimated. Literature instructs while it entertains. Although readers know on one level that they are reading fiction, on another level they accept it as reality. One customer review for *The Summoning God* asserted, "The story is probably one of the most violent and graphic of all the Gear's books, but that was what it was really like back then." \(^{122}\) When it is seen as a story and as truth, fiction becomes a powerful way to win public acceptance for a theory. Whether a story postulates that the Vikings were compatriots of the Ancestral Puebloans or that the Ancestral Puebloans live in
a parallel universe today, writing a story gives it credence it otherwise lacks.

By 2000, a century of literary endeavor had created a dichotomy in the public mind. Scholarly literature, following the cues of archaeologists and anthropologists, insisted the Ancestral Puebloans were ancestors to the Pueblo Indians. Bandelier, Lummis, Morris and the Gears accepted this premise. At the same time, popular writers ignored the experts to focus on the myth of a “vanishing” race. Grey imagined his Western heroes in a paradise where a “vanished” race once lived. L’Amour took it further by placing the “Anasazi” in a parallel universe. There were also writers who straddled the fence, knowing the sites are Puebloan, but falling into a literary trap of populating scenes with “lost civilizations.” Hillerman and Abbey both illustrate this romantic route.

Therefore, one of the most compelling reasons for the perpetuation of the myth of a “vanished Anasazi” is the popular literature that continues to assert the idea. Writers use their creativity to help the reader imagine history by restoring the crumbled walls and filling the plazas with people again. Yet, the same authors often turn to literary clichés of “vanished” peoples, for it allows them to grant the “Anasazi” whatever attributes they wish. Since the people “vanished,” nobody can question their depictions. However, while this literary device does not hurt Anglos, it does hurt Pueblo Indians, who can do little more than watch as their history is denied, and worse, outright appropriated. In a modern day contest over access to sacred sites, the denial of their heritage allows for these sites to be appropriated by those who do not understand their religion. The literary personification of the Ancestral Puebloan past, relying on a “vanished” race, helps fuel New Age interpretations of the “Anasazi” that contest the sites themselves.
Notes:


3 Ibid.


5 Ibid, 3.

6 Ibid., 118, 195 and 208.

7 Ibid., xix.


9 Charles Fletcher Lummis, A Tramp Across the Continent (Albuquerque: Calvin Horn, 1969), 240.


12 Ibid., viii.

13 For a discussion of Fuller’s use of scientific objectivity to parody the city, see Leah Dilworth, “The City in Ruins: ‘Cliff Dwellers’ in the American Imagination,” unpublished manuscript in possession of author.


15 Ibid. 3.

16 Ibid. 137-8.

17 Ibid. 141.

18 Ibid. 149-150.

19 Ibid. 291.

20 Ibid. 303. Italics in original.


22 For an analysis of Grey’s role as a romance writer and his subtle use of sexual imaging, see Arthur G. Kimball, Ace of Hearts: The Westerns of Zane Grey (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1993).

23 Colonel Ebenezer Zane built a wilderness road, known as Zane’s Trace, to help settle the Ohio Valley. For his effort, Congress awarded him a land grant that became the town of Zanesville, Ohio. Ibid.
24 Biographical information on Zane Grey is located in *Ibid.*


28 Grey, *Blue Feather and Other Stories*, 54-56.


31 *Ibid.*, 47, 52 and 120.


34 Grey, *Riders of the Purple Sage*, 82.


46 Ann Axtell Morris, *Digging in the Southwest* (Chicago: Cadmus Books, 1933), 74.

47 Deric Nusbaum, *Deric in Mesa Verde* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1926), 94-100, 112-114, and 155-165.


51 Ibid., 180-181.

52 Ibid., 181-182.


54 Ibid., 201.

55 Ibid., 115.

56 Ibid., 117.

57 Ibid., 202.


59 Ibid., 7.

60 Ibid., 200.

61 Ibid., 28.

62 Ibid., 78-81.


64 Ibid., 66, 83, and 205.

65 Ibid., 24-26 and 108.


69 Ibid., 79-80.

70 Ibid., 81.


73 Ibid., 35.

74 Ibid., 114.

75 Ibid. Italics added.

76 Ibid.
Ibid., 182.


Ibid., 169.

Ibid., 168.


Ibid., 111.

Ibid., 6. Italics added.

Ibid., 27.

Ibid., 2, 13, 197.

In 1995, the superintendent at Mesa Verde National Park would not approve *Ill Wind* for sale in the bookstore because the portrayal of certain park employees in her book was too obvious.


Ibid., 71.

In reality, the NPS only allows rangers to visit the sites after hours by special permit and these cannot be obtained with the ease demonstrated by Pigeon when she wandered through the cliff dwellings.

Barr, *Ill Wind*, 2.


Ibid., 22.


For information on the Kokopelli legend as scholars understand it, see Dennis Slifer and James Duffield, *Kokopelli: Flute Player Images in Rock Art* (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1994).


For example, she has one clan occupying each cliff dwelling, i.e. Cliff Palace is the exclusive home of the Eagle Clan. She states the clans are matrilineal and matrilocally, which is the best guess of many scholars. However, if that were the case, all the men at Cliff Palace would not be Eagle Clan. They would have married in from other clans and thus, the entire hierarchy of chiefs she describes, makes no sense.


Peter Pino, tribal administrator, interview with author, 18 April 2002, Zia Tribal Headquarters, Zia, NM.


PART IV:
THE EFFECTS OF THE MYTH

Chapter 10 – “The Atmosphere of Mystery and Magic:”
Results of These Interpretations

Question: What motivated you to visit Chaco?
Answer: The atmosphere of mystery and magic.
~ Visitor to Chaco Canyon (1995) ~

On 16 August 1987, more than 1,500 people congregated at Chaco Canyon. They came to celebrate the Harmonic Convergence, the dawn of a new age, at one of the world’s “power points.” José Argüelles, an art historian at the University of Colorado, had predicted that when the Mayan calendar ended the next morning, it would begin a period of cleansing “to prepare the earth for contact with alien intelligence.” The planets were supposed to be perfectly aligned to provide “cleansing energy.” It did not matter to the thousands of believers that archaeologists and astronomers were scratching their heads over Argüelles’ reasoning. If nothing happened, it was still a good excuse for a big party and a chance to act out a dramatic spiritual role in the company of other New Age believers. Around the world, at Machu-Pichu in Peru, at the pyramids at Gaza, and elsewhere, gatherings celebrated the event with dancing, meditation, chants, and prayer.

Casa Rinconada was the center of the activity in New Mexico. Self-proclaimed witches, who called themselves Jesse and Star, coordinated the burning of incense, the singing of Hawaiian purification chants, and an ongoing concert of bells, flutes, and drums, all in the Great Kiva of the Ancestral Puebloans. Although the archaeological site normally closed at sunset, that night the NPS relented, on the advice of its lawyers, to let the participants stage an all-night ritual in the Great Kiva with drums beating out an incessant pulse. While the sunset faded and lightning flashed in the sky, people sat
within the circular roofless structure, chanting New Age prayers and watching meteorites cross the heavens. At dawn on 17 August, participants lit a “sacred fire” and prepared for the rebirth of Quetzalcoatl. Towards mid-day, a man and a woman rose, walked to the center of the ancient edifice, and raised a big crystal to reflect the sun’s rays around the kiva. As they left, a man with a leather pouch approached them weeping and said, “That was one of the most profound acts I have ever witnessed.”

Unfortunately, most Pueblo Indians did not share that perspective. In fact, one Hopi informant expressed how it upset him. It made him want to “go there and tell them to get out of there.” Leigh Kuwanwisiwima felt strongly that these New Age rituals were “intrusive and insensitive.” He explained that the practitioners did not know what the essence of a kiva was and what it meant to a Hopi person. Peter Pino was more blunt, stating simply, “we are offended. They are practicing a religion they do not understand.”

The myth of the “vanishing Anasazi” made such insensitivity possible. Because popular culture perpetuated the idea that the “Anasazi” vanished, many Anglos saw no reason not to use the archaeological sites for their own ends. Since the tourist industry promoted the idea that the Ancestral Puebloans had “vanished” and had long advocated that visitors come up with their own answer to the mysteries, many people had created outlandish stories allowing for the appropriation of the sites. Jim Berenholtz, one of the organizers for the Harmonic Convergence, exemplified this reasoning when he told the *Albuquerque Journal* why Chaco Canyon was important to the event.

There’s even a possibility . . . that the ancient Anasazi may have left the planet as Arguelles says the Maya did. Archaeologists have reached no universally accepted explanation for the disappearance of the Anasazi. One wonders what could be more “universally accepted by archaeologists” than the
Pecos Classification. Yet, the NPS had themselves created this dilemma by being too cautious. They had misled the public into believing that the NPS was not sure what had happened to the Ancestral Puebloans. By using romantic statements that referred to a “vanished” people, they had increased tourism; at the same time they had created an expectation that was at odds with the requirements of modern park management.

Since the public often did not understand how the management of archaeological sites belonging to a “lost civilization” could require input from modern tribes, they behaved in ways that alienated Pueblo Indians. The NPS felt obligated to honor the requests of New Age practitioners, given their understanding of the First Amendment. These conflicts could have been avoided if Anglo culture had not wavered in its interpretation of Southwestern archaeology by encouraging the myth of a “vanished race.” By postulating the disappearance, the creators of the myth had promoted popular explanations that showed little respect for Pueblo tribes.

When new federal laws at the end of the twentieth century forced the NPS into consultation with Pueblo Indians, the laws offered the possibility for a harmonious relationship between the two groups. The NPS had a mandate to preserve lands that the tribes also wanted preserved. Because archaeologists had linked the modern Pueblos to their ancestral sites from the start, the NPS extended legal recognition to the tribes as “culturally affiliated” to the ancient masons. However, as the NPS had earlier contributed to the myth of the “vanished Anasazi,” they too began to confuse Puebloan achievements with those of nearby non-Puebloan tribes. This confusion led to strained relations because the NPS granted non-Pueblo tribes a role in the decision-making that affected the Puebloan past, thereby creating a new barrier between the NPS and Native Americans.
The New Age and the Ancestral Puebloan Past

The New Age movement encompassed an amorphous body of beliefs, many of which had ties to the late-nineteenth-century movements of Spiritualism, Theosophy and New Thought. Kate and Margareta Fox initiated the Spiritualism movement in the mid-nineteenth century. They believed it was possible to communicate with the spirits of the dead and devised ways to speak with them. H.P. Blavatsky, fascinated with the potential of the mind, founded the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875. Influenced by Gnosticism and the scriptural interpretations of Emanuel Swedenborg, Theosophists believed they possessed mystical insights into the nature of divinity. At the same time, a Christian healing movement in New England, known as the New Thought Movement, blossomed into a wider interest in comparative religions. All three movements shared an emphasis on personal transformation, a belief in the correctness of individual insight and intuition, and an interest in the paranormal. In the mid-twentieth century, these movements combined with the Human Potential Movement and Transpersonal Psychology to create the intellectual underpinnings of the New Age.

Practitioners recognized the New Age was not new. They believed they were rescuing tenets of ancient wisdom that were too hastily discarded by modern science. Those who identified themselves with the New Age often looked to ancient civilizations or other cultures for inspiration. In this way, the movement shared qualities with the Romantic period of the nineteenth century. In particular, New Age practitioners looked to Native American spirituality as an example of alternative spirituality in their own backyard. The ideas of Carlos Castaneda, purporting to be authentic Yaqui Indian ways of knowing, helped fuel New Age flirtations with Native American religion and
conveniently allowed for experimentation with drugs at the same time. Since the most accessible Native American religious beliefs were those of Northern Plains tribes, sweat lodges, vision quests, and prayer bundles became popular.

Believing ancient peoples possessed knowledge that modern cultures had lost, New Age followers sought access to ancient wisdom outside the critical scholarly approach. The lost continent of Atlantis emerged as a favorite civilization. In part, this was because believers could ascribe practically any belief they wanted to the Atlantians. Since Atlantis was conceived as a “vanished” culture, there was no way to verify the beliefs of its people. Thus, Frank Apler, in Exploring Atlantis, developed the myth that the Atlantians powered their civilization by tapping into the cosmic power of crystals.

The New Age was also part of what one religious scholar, Robert Ellwood, called a “longstanding tradition” of “alternative spirituality” in Western European thought. However, the New Age was less an intellectual movement than a popular culture phenomenon. The Beat movement of the 1950s and the Hippie culture of the 1960s created a large populace looking for alternatives that could match the earlier intellectual movements with an audience willing to question established institutions.

The Harmonic Convergence offered the press its first real look at the emerging New Age sub-culture. Satirized by Garry Trudeau in his popular Doonesbury comic strip – Trudeau dubbed it the “Moronic Convergence” – the press brought word of the phenomenon to thousands of Americans, who were both sympathetic and skeptical. The expression “New Age,” though used within the sub-culture earlier, was not widely adopted by the general populace until the Harmonic Convergence. The term alluded to their belief that a “new age” was dawning, an age of peace and enlightenment that the
Hippies had called the Age of Aquarius. After the Harmonic Convergence, American society applied the term "New Agers" to people immersed in this alternative belief system or who expressed sympathies in tandem with one of its core beliefs. William Gray, an instructor of philosophy, defined these beliefs as,

Every aspect of the paranormal, including clairvoyance, precognition, telepathy, psychic surgery, psychic healing, healing crystals, psychokinesis, astral travel, levitation, the Bermuda Triangle mystery, unidentified flying objects (UFOs), plant consciousness, auras, and ghosts. The movement also has revived many ancient occult beliefs – demonic possession, reincarnation, astrology, palmistry, and fortune telling – and it includes numerous psychological techniques for heightened awareness. Its central philosophy is that we create our own reality.¹⁹

To these, Ellwood added channeling, mineral power, and "the quasi-magical manipulation of 'energies.'" He noted that what many of these beliefs hold in common is the belief in "the acceptance of detached spiritual entities . . . to personify the cosmos by spreading between the Impersonal Absolute and the human realm a rich assortment of intermediaries."²⁰ These intermediaries provide experiences that can include the recollection of past lives, the channeling of spirits, and visits by UFOs.

The New Age became interested in Ancestral Puebloan culture and ruins for four main reasons. Since it was an ancient civilization, New Age followers could claim the sites contained ancient wisdom. Second, New Agers generally conceded the Ancestral Puebloans were a source for Native American spirituality. Accepting the archaeological interpretation that the ancient culture used the kivas for religious purposes, the sheer number of kivas at the sites suggested the ancients possessed esoteric spiritual wisdom. Third, the proximity of Ancestral Puebloan culture made it more attractive than Egypt, Peru, or other ancient civilizations they admired. Fourth, like Atlantis, the Ancestral Puebloans were popularly believed to have vanished. If Ancestral Puebloan sites lacked a
connection to a contemporary people, they could be appropriated for whatever purpose New Agers desired. If these sites were once used for ancient “pagan” rituals, but the builders had “abandoned” them, then those who believed in the New Age could claim they were using the ruins for what they imagined to be the same ancient “pagan” rituals.

Early purveyors of New Age ideas included Tom Laughlin and Delores Taylor, whose movies about a “mystical half-breed Vietnam Veteran” named Billy Jack became cult classics. The plots of their movies contained numerous affirmations of both Indian spirituality and the sacred nature of Ancestral Puebloan architecture. In the second movie, simply titled *Billy Jack*, the narrator introduced the hero by informing the audience that

No one knew where he lived. Somewhere, way back in the ancient ruins with an old holy man who was teaching him secret Indian ways and preparing him for a sacred initiation ceremony.  

 Later, the film showed where he lived; it turned out to be Montezuma Castle. The initiation was an important sub-plot of the film. The ceremony took place at what appeared to be Tuzigoot Pueblo in the Verde Valley. Billy Jack dressed in the beaded buckskin dress of Northern Plains tribes and those around him dressed as Pow-wow dancers. Changing locations, a procession took Billy Jack to Tyounyi, where they circled around a kiva for a blessing. Once he was alone, he allowed a rattlesnake to bite him repeatedly, fell into a trance, returned to Tuzigoot Pueblo and channeled the spirit of Wovoka, the Paiute religious leader of the nineteenth century, to address the students. Pointing to the kiva, he said, “The Great Spirit, messiah, the Christ, are here in this pit.” In another scene, the students climbed to Ceremonial Cave at Bandelier National Monument. There they buried a prematurely born baby on a scaffold (like those used by the Northern Plains tribes) above the kiva.
In the third movie, *The Trial of Billy Jack*, Billy Jack went on another quest, but this time at Canyon de Chelly. The ceremony again began in a ruin where Billy Jack entered through a T-shaped doorway to gather with the medicine people, played by Navajos. Next, he was lowered by rope over the cliffs in Canyon del Muerto into what appeared to be a kiva, where his vision subsequently took place. Viewers could not fail to perceive the association between the ruins and Billy Jack’s vision, suggesting a new spiritual pathway for the millions who watched this movie in the mid-1970s.

However, a wide gulf separated what the movies imagined the rituals to have been like and actual Puebloan practice. Phillip Tuwaletstiwa was forgiving, believing that the behavior of the New Agers spoke “to a larger spiritual deficit in American society where these people are searching for something their own culture doesn’t provide.” However, he felt if New Agers would examine their purpose carefully, they would see that Puebloan religion could not provide the answer because “Hopi religion, Hopi attitudes [are] so tied to the landscape . . . It is a closed environment and these people don’t see that because of their own need for spiritual satisfaction.” It was this profound sense of spiritual emptiness and the perceived emphasis on spirituality in Ancestral Puebloan culture that led New Age practitioners to flock to Ancestral Puebloan sites. Once there, they also sought to appropriate the sites of Puebloan religious heritage for themselves.

**Popular Theories of the Vanished “Anasazi”**

The 1915 pamphlet published by the Railroad Administration invited the traveling public to “conjure up an explanation” for the “vanished” peoples of the Southwest. Over the years, many tourists have done just that, and popular culture, building on the romantic construction of the Ancestral Puebloan past, created a hegemonic discourse that assumed
Anglos were in control of Puebloan history. Ignoring the legitimate claims of Pueblo Indians, purveyors of popular culture misconstrued the origin of Southwestern archaeological sites. Anglo culture created a story that profited private industry and benefited those who could create a compelling tale, no matter how ludicrous it might sound. The result was to hide the heritage of Puebloan peoples by allowing popular mystical beliefs to achieve prominence. When the movement began, New Agers put forth their ideas in unqualified statements, which persuaded many people of their validity. Unlike archaeological theories, which were couched in uncertain terms and vacillated between romantic imagery and scientific method, these statements were written with such clarity that they held great weight with people searching for spiritual truth.

By the time the Westward movement targeted the Southwest, Americans had experienced the ruins of the mound-builders, and debates over their architects helped spark an animated discussion on the identity of the cliff dwellers and ancient villagers of the Southwest. Ranging from dwarfs to giants, and from Toltecs to a “vanished race,” the public engaged in a fascinating discourse as they tried to solve the “mysteries.” Although such speculations continued in the twentieth century, they assumed a pseudo-scientific bent. With the help of popular writers, tourists seeking the fantastic in the “mysteries” of the West invented far-out tales crediting crystals, vortexes, Vikings and aliens from outer space with the Puebloan achievement, as well as with causing their “disappearance.”

In 1995, a woman dropped by the Mesa Verde Research Library across from the museum and inquired about information concerning Sun Temple. However, this was just a ruse for the story she really wanted to share – her own ideas about the “true purpose” of Sun Temple. She explained to the volunteer librarian that she had been to the site and it
had revealed to her that the large round room to the west had a feminine-powered vortex and the large round room to the east had a masculine vortex. When a person was sick, they placed their hands in the little windows and a medicine man diagnosed them as needing more masculine, or more feminine, power. They sent the patient to the proper room with a member of the opposite sex to have intercourse to get well. The fact that she related her explanation with all seriousness, and refused the scientific reports she originally came in for, demonstrated to the librarian how much she believed her tale.\textsuperscript{27}

The next year, another visitor with New Age proclivities asked a ranger at Cliff Palace how she could receive permission to enter the ledge rooms above the cliff dwelling. When the ranger looked perplexed, she explained that in a former life, she had played in one of the storage rooms on the ledge and she wanted to see if it looked as she remembered it.\textsuperscript{28} In 2000, a visitor to Chaco Canyon expressed his belief to a ranger that “Kokopelli was a Norseman ‘nomad’ who brought fancy tools and taught the people how to build the pueblos.”\textsuperscript{29} A visitor to Cliff Palace in 2001 asked a ranger about the use of peyote by the Ancestral Puebloans, then proceeded to tell the ranger his theory about the “Anasazi” disappearance. He believed they

Closed up every opening in the kiva and smoked [peyote] all day in order to hotbox the kiva. After that . . . they came out into the surrounding area and were so stupefied at that point that they would just fall off of the edge and that was what was responsible for their demise.\textsuperscript{30}

After the press reported Christy Turner’s speculation about cannibalism among the Ancestral Puebloans, the public often misconstrued the story, fulfilling the fears of Pueblo tribes who knew popular culture would overreact to Turner’s theories. At Balcony House in 2000, a visitor suggested the “Anasazi disappeared because they all ate each other up.”\textsuperscript{31} Similarly, a visitor to Chaco Canyon argued that “population declined [due}
to a disease similar to Mad Cow disease” that affected them because they ate each other.32

The most common perception of those who believed the “Anasazi disappeared”
saw aliens from outer space as somehow responsible. This idea built on the theories of a
Swiss hotel manager, Erich von Däniken. In Chariots of the Gods? (1968), he postulated
that “unexplained” archaeological sites around the world were the result of astronauts
traveling to earth. These astronauts either built mysterious edifices, or left such an
impression on “primitive” minds that archaic cultures created inexplicable designs to call
the “gods” back.33 According to von Däniken, “The past teemed with unknown gods who
visited the primeval earth in manned spaceships.”34 In his view, these extraterrestrials
created the monoliths of Easter Island, the lines on the Nasca Plains, and the Gate of the
Sun at Tiwanaco, Bolivia. While he did not specifically mention Ancestral Puebloan
sites, believers in his theories were quick to apply his notions to the Southwest.35

By the end of the twentieth century, visitors to the Puebloan heritage parks and
monuments often commented to rangers about aliens from outer space landing in the
Southwest. A ranger at Mesa Verde reported hearing questions about extraterrestrials on
almost every tour in the early 1990s.36 At Chaco Canyon, a visitor told a ranger “aliens
told the Anasazi how to construct the buildings and took [the Anasazi] away when they
left.”37 One visitor implicitly related her understanding of von Däniken by asking about
the archaeological evidence in South America and if there was a chance that
extraterrestrials had visited Mesa Verde as well.38 Another visitor told a ranger that

It’s been known since the ‘30s that the “Anasazi” disappeared because an alien
group needed a large amount of blood to do research. They chose this area
because they could land their craft easily.39

Yet another visitor explained to a ranger giving a talk at Sun Temple that the site was
actually a “space port.” According to the visitor

There was a huge polished stone at Cliff Palace that was aligned with a huge polished stone at Sun Temple. During the full moon the reflections between these stones would signal a landing spot at Sun Temple. The three kivas were actually signal flares so the craft could land.

The ranger politely smiled and ended her tour.  

Many visitors influenced by von Däniken come to the Pueblo heritage parks and monuments more willing to accept an outer space connection than a Native American one. The idea that aliens abducted the Ancestral Puebloans is so entrenched in popular culture that it even made an episode of the “X-files” television program. In the episode entitled “Anasazi,” Agent Mulder spoke to a Navajo elder, who asserted,

There was a tribe of Indians who lived here more than 600 years ago, their name was Anasazi. It means “the Ancient Aliens.” No evidence of their fate exists. Historians say they disappeared without a trace. They say that because they will not sacrifice to the truth . . . Nothing disappears without a trace.

Mulder then asked, “You think they were abducted?” He replied, “By visitors who come here still.” This episode had an impact on park visitors. In 2002, two young boys followed a ranger on a tour of Spruce Tree House and asked about the cliff dwellers, explaining they had heard on the “X-Files that the “Anasazi” had vanished.”

In 1995, the NPS commissioned Martha E. Lee and Douglas Stephens to conduct a study on visitation patterns at three Pueblo heritage parks and monuments: Mesa Verde, Wupatki, and Chaco Canyon. One of their questions was “What motivated you to visit Chaco?” The answers revealed much about the public conception of the architects of these ancient monuments. Some visitors came because they had read novels by Tony Hillerman or Louis L’Amour. One person answered, “the atmosphere of mystery and magic,” another cited his “continuous pursuit of the Anasazi,” and yet another to “feel the
spirits that linger here.” Very few cited the goal of understanding, appreciating, or investigating Puebloan culture as a reason. The second most common reason for visiting Chaco Canyon, after a general interest in history, was “a desire . . . to seek meaning in a humanistic or spiritual context.” In the minds of most tourists, these Southwestern archaeological sites are far removed from contemporary connections. The heritage of these sites is no longer Puebloan; it is the concept of a “mystery.”

In the Lee-Stephens study, one respondent said he came to perform his “own personal ceremony in Casa Rinconada.” In fact, after the Harmonic Convergence, many New Age ritualists were drawn to Casa Rinconada as a kind of New Age Mecca. The Harmonic Convergence initiated the New Age practice of leaving “offerings.” By 1996, visitors were leaving over 100 “offerings” at this archaeological site each year, severely damaging the provenance of the site for archaeological research. The problem was not limited to Chaco Canyon. Rangers have found offering left in the kivas at Pecos National Monument and elsewhere. For many Pueblo Indians, the problem was larger; it implied a deep disrespect for their religion.

Theories about aliens and Vikings gained credence because popular culture persisted in the belief the “Anasazi” vanished. In the minds of most tourists, the heritage of these sites is not Puebloan. The word “Anasazi” contributes to the confusion. Many visitors to the Southwest sincerely believe “Anasazi” refers to a people who “vanished” without a trace. The New Age Dictionary defines “Anasazi” to mean “Ancient Ones, pre-Navajo people of the Southwest,” rather than people ancestral to Pueblo Indians. Defining the term by who the “Anasazi” are not rather than who they are, perpetuates the belief that there is no connection with anymodern tribe.
Visitors often think “Anasazi” identifies an actual tribe and few understand the subtle nuances that the Pueblos find insulting. When travelers go to Rome, they hear about the Ancient Romans; in Greece, they learn about the Ancient Greeks. Accustomed to this language, visitors would find it more natural to refer to Ancestral Pueblos, clarifying the connection with modern Pueblo Indians. The NPS has already adopted this practice, but many popular writers are reluctant to follow their example.50

**Psychic Histories**

Even before the New Age romanticized the culture of the Ancestral Pueblos, nineteenth-century spiritualists tried to solve the mystery of their “disappearance” by communicating psychically with their spirits. Although never popular with a wide audience, their books demonstrated how absurd the field could become. Within their limited circles, these works were influential. All of them premised their work on the idea Ancestral Pueblos had “vanished,” and that only the psychic abilities of the spiritualists could answer questions concerning their way of life and why they “disappeared.”

In 1891, when the people of Durango brought Norenskiöld to trial for attempting to transport antiquities out of the country, the judge who heard the case, Mr. Newcomb, believed he could talk to the spirits of the “Anasazi.” He gave Norenskiöld a book in which “the old Moki [sic] Indian kings” told him their history. Subsequently, Newcomb informed Norenskiöld about the earliest settlements in Scandinavia as revealed by other spirits, a discourse Norenskiöld wrote “was worse than being put on trial ten times!”51

Another psychic to write the history of the Ancestral Pueblos was Emma F. J. Bullene, who took the genre further with *The Psychic History of the Cliff Dwellers* in 1905. Bullene divined the ancient past by holding relics in her hands and letting images
coming to mind, a methodology she dubbed "psychometry."

Whenever an object is subjected to examination by that method, pictures of the personal characteristics or various environments essential to the description are formed upon the mind of the sensitive as a photograph may be reflected upon a screen. A fragment of pottery, or any relic from cliff homes, when held in the hand, would give relations of the most delicate nature clearly portrayed, forming a complete chain of causes and results.\(^{52}\)

Desiring to earn the respect of the scientific community, Bullene recommended her methodology to science.

Should students of science accept Psychometry, it would prove an invaluable aid to scientific research, and demonstrate that Nature has provided an exact system for promoting scientific discovery which rests upon fixed principles, though always subject to rational methods of examination.\(^{53}\)

However, despite Bullene's claims, the history this method revealed was so absurd that no scientist, including Hewett, who allowed her to study his collection of artifacts at the New Mexico Normal University, gave it a passing thought.\(^{54}\)

According to Bullene, the cliff dwellers were part of a massive emigration, which led 10,000 people from Scandinavia to immigrate to America nearly 5,000 years ago.\(^{55}\)

This White race provided the genius for all subsequent technological achievements on the continent. They became the Mound Builders, the Toltecs, the Aztecs, and the Cliff Dwellers. The latter built cliff dwellings and "surface dwellings" in the Four Corner states, and "so great was their prosperity that happiness and communal harmony prevailed throughout their dominions."\(^{56}\) Bullene proceeded to offer her vision of Utopia by ascribing all the traits she admired to these people. Their prosperity was possible because the mineral wealth of the Rocky Mountains produced "magnetic waves," which combined with the "electrical vibrations" of raindrops to produce a vernal paradise.\(^{57}\)

Those who lived in New Mexico preserved "the old Norse spirit of freedom" while those
in Arizona were visited by warriors on horseback, who came to spy on their defenses.58

According to Bullene, the end of the cliff dwelling civilization came with a volcanic eruption. Citing Cecil Dean, who had written for the Manitou Cliff Dwellings, she claimed that lava flows and “poisonous, vaporous clouds” started the decline. The heat “shriveled all verdure into a shapeless mass” and a “race of noble people was destroyed.”59 However, some survived. These were weakened by “interblending” with inferior tribes, destroying “in their descendants the distinguishing features of a White race.”60 Ultimately, they became the “corrupted” Pueblo Indians.61 Though she connected the impressive architecture indirectly with the Pueblo tribes, it was clear she disparaged the contemporary Pueblos. It was equally clear to anyone familiar with the Southwest that psychometry was incapable of providing an accurate history of the Ancestral Pueblos.

Although attempts to rely on spiritualism to investigate the Ancestral Puebloan past lapsed in the middle of the twentieth century, the New Age brought it back to prominence. Claiming she had received instruction from a Native American shaman, Mary Summer Rain emerged on the literary stage just as the New Age was beginning. She used her “shaman,” a blind “Chippewa” woman living in the mountains of Colorado, to substantiate her blend of New Age theology.62 Once she was established as an author with a following among New Agers, Summer Rain turned to the imitation of Ancestral Puebloan spirituality.

In Ancient Echoes: The Anasazi Book of Chants (1993), Summer Rain claimed to reveal the actual prayers and chants of the “Anasazi,” recording them along with short sketches describing their use. She disregarded all Puebloan traditions, and reveled in the belief she had located the truth that had escaped scientists. Her methodology, which she
dubbed “spirit memory recall,” paralleled Bullene’s psychometry. Her “shaman” helper advised her to walk “the Sacred Trail that passed through the Sacred Ground where the chant reposed in the Ancient Time where only spirits could perceive their reverberating echoes.” Her description of the process left little doubt it involved no systematic study, but simply the writing of what she felt moved to record.

The information Summer Rain obtained through this technique did not correlate with the ancestral knowledge Pueblo Indians possess, nor with information archaeologists can verify. Her chants bore no relation to religious practices among the Pueblos, and her description of “Anasazi” society contradicted all the studies archaeologists have painstakingly assembled about the Southwestern past. The “Anasazi” ceremonies that she suggested, such as the “Phoenix Dance,” are unknown among Pueblo Indians. Indeed, her suggestion that this dance was held “twice a year” contradicts Puebloan practice.

Summer Rain declared the “Anasazi” came from the stars, and that they had a particular chant to call their relatives from the skies because:

Even small children recognized the importance of their star relation’s imperative need to remain undetected in this new and strange land. They were different from Earth’s native people and, although the star visitors utilized vehicles across the Anasazi lands, their prayers were clearly effective due to present-day consternation over the “road tracks” discerned by puzzled archaeologists.

She observed the “Anasazi” traveled about in “star vehicles” that sounded like thunder, and they traveled in rain clouds to avoid detection. According to Summer Rain, they still travel in these vehicles today, explaining why storm clouds gather in Southwestern skies. Other chants and explanatory sketches contend that the “Anasazi” believed

Crystals were a precious and most sacred aspect of lives because they were the only remnants of their former home [in Outer Space]. Each household or individual dwelling had crystals that were programmed with information equivalent to a modern encyclopedia, and it was all members’ responsibility to
continue their own learning and expand their mind’s potential.  

In 1994, Summer Rain recorded her New Age explanation of the “Anasazi” more dramatically in a novel entitled, The Seventh Mesa. In this work of fiction, she connected the “Anasazi” with Ancient Egypt by means of a special cavern beneath a mesa. The plot revolved around four strange characters brought together by a spiritual quest in the Arizona desert, where they entered the caverns of the Seventh Mesa. Summer Rain drew on one of these characters, Dr. Theodore Weatherbee, to poke fun at academia and to suggest that those who work hard to acquire knowledge are not as smart as those who simply proclaim they are knowledgeable. Another character is an Indian, Emmy, descended from “star beings.” She openly has an affair on campus with her professor, Michael. Weatherbee possesses a “papyrus” with writings in three languages – Egyptian, Native American (as if Native Americans spoke a single language), and a language “from the stars,” which Michael and Emmy manage to translate. This “papyrus” must be returned to its origin beneath the Seventh Mesa and thus they travel to Arizona, enabling Michael to get in touch with his Cherokee roots. It is obvious that Summer Rain understands little about the diversity of Native American culture or geography.

Historian Ferenc Szasz points out that everyone loves a mystery, and in the American West the democratic atmosphere invites everyone to offer their opinion. These texts of psychic history demonstrate the negative potentialities latent in the idea of a “mystery,” when every untutored soul who wants to be noticed can publish fiction as fact. The Pueblo tribes watched as Anglos appropriated their history and claimed the sacred sites of their ancestors as their own. However, once the political climate began to change during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, they no longer
remained passive. Increasingly, they spoke with federal land managers, filed complaints, petitioned bureaucracies, threatened lawsuits, and lobbied for supportive legislation. When Congress passed unprecedented legislation recognizing Native American concerns in the last quarter of the twentieth century, they were quick to perceive the changing political environment, and to demand that their concerns be recognized.

*Native American Action and Government Legislation*

The decision to place “Esther” on display in the Mesa Verde Archaeological Museum upset native peoples around the nation. As American Indian activism increased among the young during the Red Power movement of the 1960s and early 1970s, the display came under attack. The American Indian Movement (AIM), founded in 1968, opposed the display and demanded that the NPS remove it. Bill Winkler remembered quieting a group of Indian activists in the Mesa Verde Museum parking lot at that time. What struck him particularly was that these were not Pueblo Indians. The fact that they were from other tribes underscores the extent of the opposition to the display. One of the most eloquent voices raised in opposition to the exhibition of human remains, such as “Esther,” was that of the poet, Simon Ortiz, from Acoma Pueblo. In “A Designated National Park,” he poignantly described what it was like to see an ancestor on display.

PRESS BUTTON
(on a wooden booth)
“For a glimpse into the lives of these people who lived here.”
Pressing the button, I find painted sticks and cloth fragments in a child’s hand her eyelashes still intact Girl, my daughter, my mother, softly asleep.
They have unearthed you.”
In the early 1970s, when AIM threatened to blow up the museum if something was not done to remove this "sideshow," the NPS quietly relented. Supervisory Ranger John Kenoyer went in one night to remove her remains and placed them in storage at the research lab. This made Zeke Flora upset. Discovering "Esther" had been his one claim to fame and if she were not on display, he risked being forgotten. He lodged a complaint with the NPS, alleging they removed the body rather than give him credit for her discovery, claiming the body was rotting away, and demanding it be put back on display. The NPS responded by writing they were under no obligation to continue the exhibit. For years afterward, some visitors were also upset. When they returned, hoping to show the Indian mummy to their children, they found the display removed. However, the Native American community had made their point: the remains of their ancestors were not appropriate attractions in a national park.

During the 1960s and 1970s, AIM and other organizations of the Red Power movement awakened the country to its poor treatment of Native Americans. As a result, the nation reappraised its traditional attitudes toward Indians and their place in society. Many Americans interpreted the war in Vietnam, environmental degradation and the attack on the Civil Rights Movement as symptomatic of a national ethos of racism and imperialism. The youth counterculture, in particular, adopted a revolutionary stance seeking to reverse the perceived inequities of the nation. In this atmosphere, the countercultural movement began to believe that Native American lifeways offered a better model. Historian Robert F. Berkhofer Jr. noted that

If alternative ways of life were proposed as the solution to America's problems, then the communal and spiritual foundations of Indian life offered a superior example. If affluent White lifestyles raped the earth and polluted its atmosphere, then the traditional Indian land ethic and economy demonstrated native ecological sense.
valuable to the very survival of the nation and the world. If countercultural dreams and profound truth emanated from drugged states of consciousness, then here too the Indian provided precept and practice as well as peyote.\textsuperscript{78}

The renewed interest in American Indians easily transferred itself to legislation, and in the 1970s, Congress passed several bills aimed at fulfilling the promise of self-determination for native peoples.

The last act of this decade was the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (AIRFA). Echoing the sentiment of the Indian New Deal of the 1930s, it promised Native American religious freedom and suggested that the Religious Crimes Code would be an artifact of the past when it proclaimed “their inherent right of freedom to believe, express, and exercise” their traditional religions.\textsuperscript{79} It also appeared to protect traditional Native American religious sites by requiring public land managers to consider native religious claims in the management of their districts.\textsuperscript{80}

However, problems stemming from the unique nature of nonliterate religious traditions and questions about what constituted “traditional” plagued the legislation, and by the 1980s, judicial decisions almost neutralized the major provisions of the act.\textsuperscript{81} Federal agencies, including the NPS, made cosmetic changes in their procedures, but any effort toward accommodating Indian religious practices on lands controlled by federal bureaucracies moved very slowly.\textsuperscript{82}

Another challenge AIRFA faced in the Southwest was the secrecy adopted by Pueblo tribes to ensure the protection of their sacred sites.\textsuperscript{83} Although the secrecy was historic, the New Age movement was a blunt reminder that it was still warranted. Puebloan resistance since the Spanish Entrada had involved “going underground” with their religion, which led to “deep seated restrictions of strictly enforced secrecy requirements.” These restrictions prevented revealing the precise locations of sacred spots, or how and when the
elders used them. They also mandated an oath of secrecy that tribal members could not break without serious temporal and spiritual repercussions.\textsuperscript{54} However, land managers, such as the NPS, often found this secrecy exasperating. They believed they needed to know exact locations and reasons in order to properly care for the sacred sites. The weaknesses of AIRFA led President Clinton to sign Executive Order 13007 in 1996, mandating that the federal agencies work with native peoples on a government-to-government basis to “accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites.”\textsuperscript{585}

Stronger legislation came twelve years after AIRFA, with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). After years of lobbying by the Native American community, Congress extended the same protection to Indian graves that other Americans enjoyed. The legislation protected Native American religion by preventing the trafficking of sacred objects used in traditional religious practices. NAGPRA also made it illegal to sell or purchase Native American human remains and cultural items. The act mandated institutions receiving federal funds to inventory their collections of human remains and cultural items, and identify the tribes that were culturally affiliated with each item. The act required institutions to notify the tribes that they held objects related to their nations. Tribes were to consider if they wanted the items returned. If they requested an item, the institution had to return the property. Finally, the legislation established a Review Committee to monitor the implementation of the act.\textsuperscript{56} Sadly, the legal wording of the law treated the remains of native ancestors as property.\textsuperscript{57}

NAGPRA also mandated that federal agencies consult with the affiliated tribes to protect cultural items on lands their agencies protected.\textsuperscript{58} This provision transformed the
relationship between Pueblo tribes and the Pueblo heritage parks and monuments.

**The Establishment of Petroglyph National Monument**

One of the first tangible signs of this changing relationship was the creation of Petroglyph National Monument, which occurred during the same year that the NAGPRA legislation passed. The fight to preserve the petroglyphs on the West Mesa across the Rio Grande from Albuquerque partnered Pueblo tribes with the National Park Service. This was the first time Pueblo Indians became actively involved in the creation of a national monument to preserve the heritage of their ancestors. Unlike other national monuments that invited the Pueblo tribes to participate long after the government established them, Petroglyph National Monument involved the Pueblos from the beginning.99

On the volcanic escarpment of the West Mesa, Ancestral Pueblos had carved thousands of petroglyph images by removing the patina that covered the basalt blocks.90 These images hold profound spiritual meaning to Pueblo Indians, but they have been reluctant to explain their significance due to religious concerns.91 However, when development threatened the West Mesa, the Pueblo Indian community spoke out. William Weahkee, a member of Cochiti Pueblo and the former executive director of the Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos, explained that the West Mesa escarpment was where their ancestors communicated to the spirit world. Here, his “Pueblo ancestors ‘wrote’ down the visions and experiences they felt.”92 Weahkee confirmed that Pueblo holy men still bring sacred items to the West Mesa escarpment and continue to use the landscape in a traditional way.93 In a position paper they prepared for the AIPC, Ted and Joe Jojola, from Isleta Pueblo, also confirmed that the petroglyphs “were made to convey symbols and comprise elements of Pueblo legends.” The Jojolas stated, “the petroglyphs represent a great heritage
which has considerable religious and cultural importance to Pueblo Indian people today.\textsuperscript{994}

By the late 1960s, local businessmen were eyeing the West Mesa as a site for potential development, leading to a public debate between preservationists and developers that continues today. During the post-War economic boom, Albuquerque grew from a small town with a population of 35,500 in 1940, into a major urban center of more than 200,000 in 1960.\textsuperscript{95} Most of its non-native citizens were unaware of the petroglyphs, although some of them used the escarpment for parties, and as an informal junkyard and shooting range. Local marksmen even used the petroglyphs for targets.

In a ploy reminiscent of the myth of the “vanishing Anasazi,” developers attempted to deny the authenticity of the petroglyphs. In 1995, articles and letters to the editor of the \textit{Albuquerque Journal} claimed that Boy Scouts, picnickers, and partiers made the petroglyphs.\textsuperscript{96} Discrediting the Pueblo Indian past, one journalist noted, “Albuquerque old-timers say that back when they were kids, they made significant contributions to the collection at Petroglyph National Monument.”\textsuperscript{97} Other townspeople bolstered these claims when Congress studied the feasibility of creating a national monument.\textsuperscript{98}

Polly Schaufisma, widely recognized as the expert on Ancestral Puebloan petroglyphs, called such claims “garbage.”\textsuperscript{99} She and other archaeologists could point to the amount of patina that had re-covered most of the petroglyphs as proof that the designs are several hundred years old.\textsuperscript{100} Weahkee related the contemporary movement to discredit Indian religious use of monument lands to the earlier religious persecution brought by Spanish missionaries and conquistadors. He stated:

Petroglyph National Monument is one of the last remaining sacred sites for Pueblo people. In the name of the “public good,” or because “it will cost less,” the Indian people have had our religious sites destroyed.\textsuperscript{101}
Although the dislocation and change that accompanied the Spanish conquest led to a decline in petroglyph making activity, Pueblo peoples never stopped making petroglyphs. Herman Agoyo, governor of San Juan Pueblo, testified before Congress in 1989, that in continuing to uphold our past traditions and religion that is embodied in the petroglyphs, we still use certain areas of the escarpment for sacred ceremonies that have been going on for centuries before the time of the Spanish Conquistadors and the white man.\textsuperscript{102}

Few people during the first half of the twentieth century considered rock markings valuable. Archaeologists were more concerned with larger ruins and overlooked panels with rock markings as inconsequential. This was particularly true at the Pueblo heritage national parks and monuments. These parks contained petroglyphs, but visitors and rangers alike overlooked the rock markings in favor of the more spectacular village ruins. One exception was Nusbaum, who reported finding a petroglyph panel in 1924 and built a trail to it the same year.\textsuperscript{103} Now called Petroglyph Point, Hopi elders who visited the site in 1942 offered the rangers at Mesa Verde their interpretation. They explained that the images told the story of the sipapu and subsequent Puebloan migrations. The emphasis on their religious beliefs at the site was unmistakable.\textsuperscript{104} Yet, the panel attracted little attention from most visitors, and petroglyphs held little significance for the park as a whole.

In 1970, New Mexico commissioned the architectural firm of Chambers, Campbell, Isaacson and Chaplain (CCIC) to study potential areas to expand its system of state parks in the Rio Grande corridor between Bernalillo and Belen. Their Rio Grande Valley State Park Plan of January 1969 identified the 27-kilometer-long West Mesa escarpment with its petroglyphs as an area for a potential park because of its historical value. It did not indicate which portion of the long escarpment should be acquired.\textsuperscript{105}

At this juncture, D. W. Falls, developer of the Volcano Cliffs Subdivision on top of
the mesa, stepped forward. He owned most of the escarpment, but recognized his company could never effectively develop the rocky slope. Falls understood the historic value of the petroglyphs and vowed his subdivision would pay “attention both to the needs of the future residents and the environment.” He worried about the destruction and vandalism the petroglyphs faced, knowing some people were stealing them for their homes. He contacted CCIC and suggested he donate part of his land in Boca Negra Canyon for a city park. He would give a segment without cost to the city in return for approval of his subdivision. This became the forerunner of the national monument.

The City of Albuquerque asked the State of New Mexico for a share of the Federal Land and Conservation Funds to help develop amenities for the park, and they agreed, provided it became a state park. CCIC designed the facilities, and the fund provided a loop road, signs, and picnic tables. Jerry Widdison, an early park employee, created a brochure with input from Schaafsma and local petroglyph enthusiasts, who conducted archaeological surveys of the West Mesa. In 1973, Indian Petroglyph State Park began operation.

Popular interest in petroglyphs and pictographs increased with the Glen Canyon Project and other salvage archaeological projects in the Southwest. When Cochiti Pueblo lost a petroglyph site they considered sacred because of the construction of Cochiti Dam, Pueblo tribes and scholars grew concerned. Their new enthusiasm led to the formation in 1974 of the American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA) to further the study of petroglyphs and pictographs. Elsewhere in the Southwest, amateur archaeologists conducted surveys of numerous sites with rock markings. One petroglyph enthusiast was Isaac Eastvold, who had wandered the California desert photographing petroglyphs for the Bureau of Land Management before moving to Albuquerque in 1985. Concerned about
the continued deterioration of the petroglyphs that Falls had noticed, Eastvold organized the Friends of the Albuquerque Petroglyphs in April 1986. Its goal was “to promote sound planning, protection, and public education for the magnificent array of Indian and Hispanic rock markings found along Albuquerque's West Mesa petroglyph area.”

In the mid-1980s, Eastvold approached the NPS with the idea of a national monument to preserve these petroglyphs. A potential problem was land ownership. Other monuments had been carved from federal lands, but this area was private. The Westland Development Company, organized by the heirs of the Atrisco Land Grant in 1967, owned the southern third of the West Mesa escarpment, including its petroglyphs. However, Eastvold’s proposal would help the company by guaranteeing a buyer for its lands during the economic slump in the local economy. Two other developments on the West Mesa went bankrupt in the Savings and Loan crisis of the 1980s, clearing the way for the monument.

Vandalism and threats to the petroglyphs had concerned the local chapter of the League of Women Voters since 1979, and they supported Eastvold’s proposal, along with anthropologists, archaeologists and the ARARA. Manuel Lujan, President George Bush’s Secretary of the Interior, was from New Mexico, and he wanted to leave his state a lasting legacy of his tenure. With the support of the Bush administration, the plan moved forward. On 20 October 1986, when subdivisions were about to appear above the escarpment, the NPS agreed to undertake a feasibility study for a national monument for the petroglyphs, placing Doug Faris in charge. New Mexico’s Republican Senator Pete Domenici, Albuquerque Mayor Ken Schultz, Faris and Eastvold agreed on tentative boundaries for the monument that included the entire escarpment, the State Park and the Piedras Marcadas Ruin. Eastvold achieved a minor success in November when the National Register of
Historic Places accepted the entire escarpment as a National Historic Site.\textsuperscript{119}

The proposal met with a mixed reaction in the city. When the city's Environmental Planning Commission deferred action on the Volcano Cliffs subdivision until the NPS completed its study, property owners were not happy. Jerry Falls, son of D. W. Falls, stated the monument was "the worst possible plan."\textsuperscript{120} The \textit{Albuquerque Journal} weighed in favor of a temporary ban on development in late November and letters poured into the paper on both sides of the argument.\textsuperscript{121} At a public meeting held on 15 December by the NPS, Domenici tried to address landowner concerns as distressed citizens crammed the room.\textsuperscript{122}

It was then that Eastvold encouraged Pueblo Indian involvement in the effort to create a national monument. He went to the AIPC with his plan and invited Agoyo, the chairman of the AIPC, to accompany him to the West Mesa. Since Agoyo was from San Juan Pueblo, some distance north of Albuquerque, he had never been to the escarpment. As he walked with Eastvold, the petroglyphs profoundly moved him.\textsuperscript{123} Agoyo was chairman for four years and worked with Eastvold to see the movement to create the monument through to completion. Eastvold created a poster, with support from the Pueblo tribes, to help prevent vandalism on the escarpment, and conceived the idea of making a video at the site with Pueblo elders to promote the monument idea to interest groups and to Congress. This worked well, although one of the elders was rebuked by his people for telling something he should not have shared about the petroglyphs.\textsuperscript{124}

A preliminary report, written in March 1987, included an acknowledgement by the supervisory archaeologist that Pueblo Indians in the area still used shrines on lands proposed for the monument. The report recognized the regional interest in Puebloan culture, the significance of the Rio Grande petroglyph style, and the importance of the Piedras Marcadas
Ruin.125 Archaeologists Matthew Schmader and John Hays stressed the connections between the symbols of the Las Imagines Archaeological District (as archaeologists called the area) and the modern Pueblos, particularly Zuni, Hopi, and Cochiti.126 The National Park Service hired Schaafsma to conduct another study of the petroglyphs, and her report stressed the area's significance to contemporary Pueblos, stating, "in the Rio Grande style are preserved the roots of contemporary religious iconography."127 These studies unanimously approved of the idea of a Petroglyph National Monument on Albuquerque's West Mesa.

As plans for the monument evolved, the NPS regional office in Santa Fe joined the effort. Letters went to all the Pueblos inviting them to a hearing for the proposed monument. Several Pueblo Indian representatives at this gathering were quiet throughout the formal meeting. Afterwards they asked for another consultation specifically with the Pueblo tribes. At this meeting, there were representatives from Acoma, Santo Domingo and Zia. They stressed the importance of the monument's landscape, but were reluctant to go into details. There were topics on the table they could not talk about easily. They explained this reticence by commenting that there would be spiritual consequences for them if they said too much.128

On 19 February 1988, the AIPC officially took a stand in favor of Petroglyph National Monument with AIPC Resolution Number Eight.129 The fact that the Park Service had been discussing the monument for two years before the AIPC made a statement is not surprising, given the Pueblo need for consensus before taking action, and their emphasis on a good decision rather than a quick judgment. The fact that all nineteen Pueblos in New Mexico could agree on a statement of significance for the proposed monument only two years after the Park Service proposed it, is notable.

On 11 October 1988, a subcommittee of the House of Representatives held hearings
on the proposal for a national monument. They toured the escarpment with NPS rangers to view the petroglyphs, then convened at the AIPC Cultural Center to hear testimony. New Mexico Congressman Bill Richardson, a key supporter of the legislation, said the hearings “should have been held long ago,” and this was an opportunity to “preserve our heritage, our culture, and do something about economic development and tourism.”

Agoyo and Eastvold next addressed the subcommittee. Agoyo upheld the Pueblo past as he explained certain of our societies and clans regularly visit these sites or shrines in the way of our ancestors. To us, these petroglyphs are not the remnants of some long lost civilization that has been dead for many years, but a living continuous reminder of our past, our present and our future, and they are a part of our living culture.

Linking the monument to the modern Pueblos, Agoyo said more perhaps than the Pueblos wanted known, but it was important to be frank in order to save this part of their culture.

The Senate held hearings on the proposed monument in Albuquerque on 28 April 1989. Eastvold and Agoyo attended to speak in favor of the bill. Agoyo stated that the cultural and religious significance of the petroglyphs, and that their protection by the Federal Government will help insure for the Pueblo Indians their First Amendment rights under the United States Constitution, and also under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978.

He added the etchings made by our ancestors were used as a way of reaffirming the beliefs and the way of life of the Indian people, and to communicate with the higher spirits. Thus, through these ritual drawings our ancestors created a temple of worship that is truly worthy of our humble efforts to recognize and elevate the petroglyphs as an aesthetic national treasure for all peoples to enjoy.

On 24 January 1990, the legislation passed the Senate by unanimous consent. New Mexico representative Steve Schiff introduced the bill in the House; on 2 June it also passed unanimously. Because of attached amendments, the bill went back for another vote, but on 27 June, Bush signed the legislation creating Petroglyph National Monument.

With the monument established, the Park Service moved to create an advisory
commission to allow a Pueblo voice in its management. Alfonso Ortiz represented the Pueblo tribes on the commission, and after him, Wilford Garcia of the AIPC. Consultation continued with the AIPC and with Puebloan representatives. When Agoyo expressed concern over specific petroglyph images on the jacket of an official document for the monument, Acting Superintendent Diane Souder changed the pictures. When work on the General Management Plan began in 1992, the Pueblos were present on the core team.

The West Mesa, with its complex iconography, has always been significant to Pueblo Indians. When development threatened this landscape, it appeared the petroglyphs would disappear. The Pueblo tribes took action once Eastvold started the process. Moving in the slow, steady pace that marks Puebloan society, the AIPC took steps to present Puebloan culture to Americans and to fight for the preservation of their religion. The Pueblos took a stand and helped to create a national monument honoring their religious heritage. More than that, Pueblo peoples had entered a new relationship with the NPS. The establishment of the monument was one of the first endeavors by the NPS to acknowledge Native American religious use of the lands under their protection.

Further expansion of the City of Albuquerque continued to endanger the petroglyphs. City growth created a dilemma for the NPS in the late twentieth century, as the city mayor pressured the federal government to allow the extension of Paseo del Norte. It was proposed that this six-lane freeway be built up the escarpment, damaging what many perceive to be the integrity of the monument and threatening the religious freedom of Pueblo Indians. Although the possibility of the road’s construction was vaguely understood when Congress created the monument, all parties avoided the issue in the hope it could be addressed once the primary goal—establishment of the monument—was obtained.
In 1991, five conservation organizations filed suit against the city in order to protect the integrity of the escarpment, claiming the city had not done all it could to minimize the impact of the highway on historic resources. The tribes asked the city to meet with them individually to discuss the construction, and they warned that it could take as many as four meetings with each pueblo before a consensus was reached. William Weahkee Jr. helped organize the Sacred Alliance for Grassroots Equality (SAGE) that led the opposition. The resulting stalemate kept the project in limbo as the new century began.

**NAGPRA and the Doctrine of Affiliated Tribes**

With the passage of NAGPRA, Mesa Verde National Park moved to the forefront of efforts to establish Native American consultation committees in the national parks to discuss land management issues. The Mesa Verde Native American NAGPRA committee soon spoke out on activities involving their ancestral sites, which they felt were questionable. One of these was the farolitos displayed in the ruins at Christmas time. During the 1980s, Mesa Verde had begun a Christmas tradition of lighting luminarias in Spruce Tree House on the evening of a holiday open house with caroling and cookies. In 1993, when the NPS asked tribal delegates if they objected to this tradition, they responded that they felt it was inappropriate. As a result, park management decided to discontinue the activity. The decision at Mesa Verde had a direct impact at Aztec Ruins National Monument, where a similar holiday tradition had begun. Accepting the dictum that “farolitos should not be placed in the ruins,” the tradition at Aztec also ended.

The 1993 consultation meeting also brought up the issue of museum displays that were culturally insensitive. Although the NPS had removed “Esther,” there were still concerns about displays showing religious elements, and the committee suggested the
museum place a sign warning visitors that some of the artefacts “may be culturally sensitive to viewers.” Delegates to the consultation meeting the following year were able to be more specific. They requested the removal of five displays, including an open medicine bundle, that were religiously sensitive.139

In the mid-1990s, when the Division of Interpretation produced a new orientation video for the auditorium of the Chapin Mesa Archaeological Museum, they asked tribal representatives on the NAGPRA committee for their input. As a result, they had to rework the script, but the final product was an award winning video. Mesa Verde: Legacy of Stone and Spirit made the connection between the Ancestral Puebloans and modern Pueblo Indians explicit and left no room for a “lost civilization.” Since its production, it has helped many visitors understand the archaeology and culture of the region.140

In the mid-1990s, the ritual use of Casa Rinconada by New Age practitioners led to similar action from Pueblo tribes. When members of Zuni Pueblo traveled to Casa Rinconada on a religious pilgrimage, they found an Anglo “shaman” in the kiva performing her own ceremony, sprinkling something on the heads of other Anglos seated around the wall. Upset, they videotaped the scene and showed it to the Hopi and other Pueblo tribes.141 Kuwanwisiwima reported how he felt.

When you have New Agers coming in without any of this kind of emotional feeling [toward their ancestor’s use of the kiva] and basically saying “kivas are religious kind of things, we’ll go over there and get a special permit” and the Park Service gives it to them. Then presto, you have the Zunis encountering this kind of activity, seeing mimicry of different kinds of offerings . . . crystals, beads, prayersticks. . . . It is simply offensive to us. It’s disrespectful in some cases. It’s desecration of these structures really.

The Pueblo tribes filed complaints with the superintendent of Chaco Canyon.

The situation came to a head when New Age followers began to leave the
cremated remains of loved ones in the Great Kiva. One particularly disturbing event occurred when a Navajo ranger caught a woman dumping the ashes of her husband into the site. When he rebuked her, she became upset. It seemed she thought Indians would appreciate her gesture; however, they saw it as disrespectful. Besides the disrespect it showed, it was a flagrant violation of the law. The ashes threatened various kinds of archaeological studies, and required removal, which risked damaging the structure. Three times in five years, non-Indians placed ashes in the kiva. In order to ease the removal of offerings and ashes, the NPS added 25 centimeters of fill to the floor of the kiva, which had the unintended effect of obscuring some features of the kiva from view.

Now the NPS had an archaeological argument to support the action the tribes advocated. In July 1996, C. T. Wilson, the superintendent of Chaco Culture National Historical Park, closed the interior of Casa Rinconada to the public while his staff prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the possible permanent closure of the site. In the management objectives of the EIS there was no mention of Puebloan disquiet, but there did not need to be. It was clear the New Age practice of leaving offerings and cremated remains was risking the integrity of the site without bringing in their concerns. The EIS listed three management alternatives, with the preferred alternative being the closure of the interior of the kiva to the public. It lamented the fact that with the closure, no kiva in the canyon would be accessible, but emphasized that with barricades in place, they could remove the backfill and allow better interpretation of the kiva’s features. In early 1997, the closure became permanent.

While these decisions met with the approval of the Pueblo tribes and showed a willingness by the NPS to listen to native concerns, another decision by the NPS severely
damaged the good rapport NAGPRA and the creation of Petroglyph National Monument had engendered. NAGPRA had mandated that government institutions determine the affiliated tribes for any human remains, funerary and sacred objects in their collections. Specifically, it required the NPS to determine the cultural affiliation of “shared group identity which can be traced . . . between a present day Indian tribe . . . and an identifiable earlier group,” thus precluding the possibility of a “vanished race.”

In the cultural affiliation report for Mesa Verde National Park, Kathleen Fine-Dare and W. James Judge reviewed the anthropological literature and discussed the history of archaeological research, noting that the value of the Pecos Classification lies in its ability to demonstrate continuity through time with respect to various architectural and material cultural traditions. . . . It is this continuity which enables us to verify the deep roots in the past that are integral components of present-day pueblos, both eastern and western.

They considered oral traditions and archaeological evidence. In concluding their discussion of the evidence for material culture affiliation, they wrote

The similarity of artifacts, the continuity of styles from past to present, the evolution of architecture – all lend ample archaeological evidence to demonstrate that present-day pueblos are the descendants of the Anasazi.

There was no room for a “vanished race” or extraterrestrials here. They noted, “in terms of cultural affiliation the Mesa Verde area can definitely be classified as ancestral Pueblo.” If there were any lingering doubts about a “lost civilization,” the final conclusion from the archaeological evidence should have dispelled them.

It is our opinion that Mesa Verde collections, to the extent they represent, and are represented by, the archaeologically defined prehistoric Mesa Verde culture area, are ancestral to and thus affiliated with the present-day Keresan and Tanoan pueblo tribes, and with the Zuni and Hopi tribes. Based on an examination of the archaeological evidence alone, therefore, the cultural affiliation of the Mesa Verde collection is ancestral Pueblo.
Two other Pueblo heritage parks, Chaco Culture National Historical Park and Aztec National Monument, also identified the Pueblo Indians as affiliated tribes. As other national monuments began the process, the Navajo complicated the proceedings when they stepped forward to claim cultural affiliation as well. This was surprising, because most anthropologists and archaeologists did not see a connection between the Ancestral Pueblos and the Navajo. Fine-Dare and Judge had noted they could not “certify the Navajo as culturally affiliated to Mesa Verde, based on the archaeological evidence.”

The 1994 consultation meeting at Mesa Verde raised the issue of non-Pueblo Indian affiliation, but participants decided to defer the question until the 1995 meeting. The Navajo had been included in the consultation meetings from the beginning, along with the Southern Utes and Ute Mountain Utes. The Pueblo tribes appear to have accepted the Navajo as having an interest in the park, but not as being culturally affiliated. When the Navajo came forward at the meeting in August 1995, only three months before the inventory reports were due, to announce they were descendent, they took Anglos by surprise. The press noted, “archaeologists were taken aback. The Hopis were outraged.” Leigh Kewanwisiwima exclaimed “it borders on cultural thievery.” Roger Anyon, the director of the Zuni Heritage and Historic Preservation Office, said Zuni would not agree, and they joined Hopi in “objecting to Navajo affiliation and the processes by which their cultural affiliation was determined.”

In January 1996, Acoma told NPS officials they objected “to the Navajo being involved in the repatriation and reburial issues.” In February, Zia told the same delegation that they were “interested in identifying affiliation only to say that the remains were Pueblo, not Navajo.” The administration at Chaco Culture National Historical Park
accepted the Navajo claim and moved forward anyway. When the NPS prepared a Memorandum of Agreement in 1997 for the repatriation to take place, the Hopi tribe refused to sign it and threatened legal action if the NPS went forward with its plans with the Navajo as a signatory. In January 1998, the Navajo Nation made its position clear by asserting “the Anasazi should properly be viewed as the ancestral population of all of the contemporary tribes who reside on the southern part of the Colorado plateau.”154

As a result, on 5 February 1999, the Hopi tribe presented the NPS with a formal notice of dispute. On 22 April, the AIPC supported the Hopi and Zuni in the dispute with Resolution 1999-12 that passed unanimously. The resolution noted “the flawed application of the process to determine cultural affiliation at Aztec National Monument, Chaco Cultural National Historical Park and other parks” and recommended “the establishment of specific guidelines” to determine cultural affiliation.155 On 2 May, Governor Malcolm B. Bowekaty of Zuni wrote the NPS expressing his support for Hopi against the NPS in the “incomplete and inadequate compliance” to NAGPRA and revoked their earlier approval for a Repatriation Agreement.156

The dispute went to the NAGPRA Review Committee for a decision and on 16 April 1999, the Hopi laid out their position in a carefully worded report to the committee. They did not dispute the fact the Navajo could be descended from Ancestral Puebloans through intermarriage, nor that they had a cultural connection to the geographical sites in question.157 Their dispute was with the way the NPS had determined cultural affiliation to the human remains, funerary and cultural items under the provisions of NAGPRA. They pointed out the relationship that NAGPRA envisioned was not based on descent by blood, but by cultural affiliation. It seemed nonsensical to assert that the Navajo were
culturally affiliated when their lifestyle and customs differed so markedly from Pueblo culture. What was at issue was participation in cultural decisions regarding repatriation.

The Hopi tribe maintained that the NPS implementation of the law was "gravely flawed" and "inconsistent with the dictates of NAGPRA, both procedurally . . . and substantively." They found it difficult to believe that a faithful implementation of the act could result "in the Navajo and the Hopi (or Zuni, or other Pueblo people) receiving the same designation of cultural affiliation." Whereas NAGPRA had called for a "preponderance of evidence," the NPS had accepted Navajo claims using "any piece of evidence, no matter how remote" and giving this evidence "equal weight to all other evidence, no matter how compelling." Negative evidence that strongly suggested the Navajo were not in the region until the fourteenth century or later had not been considered. Furthermore, the Hopi argued that affiliation had to be considered independently for every item on the inventory. Otherwise, "Archaic period remains and objects, B.C. 2900, long before any claims that Navajo ancestors might have been in the Southwest" would be affiliated with all tribes. Because of their geographical affiliation, some items might be Navajo, but that could only be determined on a case-by-case basis. Equally disturbing to the Hopi was the fact that they had not been consulted on a one-to-one basis, but had to voice their concerns in a public forum.

What was at stake was important. "Navajos [had] not been initiated into Pueblo religious societies and thus [did] not have the cultural knowledge needed to re-inter Puebloan ancestors." They pointed out that the administration at Chaco Canyon had refused to affiliate the Jicarilla Apache tribe, another southern Athabaskan tribe like the Navajo, on the basis that "the timing of their arrival . . . is believed to be ca. A.D. 1575."
They also noted that the Forest Service and the American Museum of Natural History had not determined cultural affiliation of Ancestral Puebloan remains to the Navajo. They asked “How do tribes respond to and deal with these contradictory determinations?”

On 10 January 2000, the NAGPRA Review Committee sent their decision on this case to the NPS. They found that “the complaints made by the Hopi Tribe have merit” and recommended that the NPS “reassess its determination of cultural affiliation.” The NPS in turn refused their recommendation, believing none of the Review Committees’ recommendations for determining cultural affiliation were required under NAGPRA. The dispute then went to the Advisory Board of the NPS for consideration. In their report of 12 June 2002, they also found merit in the Hopi protest and serious flaws in the way that cultural affiliation was determined. Specifically

the term “traditional associated peoples” as used by the NPS describes a relationship connecting contemporary people with places to which they have ancestral ties, i.e., to the park itself.

In contrast, as it is used in NAGPRA “cultural affiliation” is a relationship between Native Americans and cultural items, i.e., those cultural items in a park’s collection subject to repatriation under NAGPRA.

They recommended the NPS clarify the meaning of cultural affiliation to reflect the intent of NAGPRA and treat with the tribes individually.

However, the NPS refused to alter its determination of cultural affiliation for Chaco Canyon and the same review process appeared necessary to challenge the decision by Mesa Verde and Aztec. With few options left, the Hopi tribe wrote to Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton on 14 July 2003 and requested her intervention to compel the NPS to adopt the recommendations of the NAGPRA Review Committee and the NPS advisory board. With no other alternative, the Hopi tribe prepared to take their dispute to court.

The controversy over the determination of cultural affiliation at Mesa Verde,
Chaco Canyon, and Aztec occurred because the NPS had wavered in their twentieth-century interpretation and encouraged the concept of a “vanished race.” This entire legal wrangling could have been avoided if public historians had been clear about Ancestral Puebloan identity from the start. This myth and similar romantic notions allowed the NPS to accept a Navajo connection where most anthropologists and archaeologists did not see one. The NPS determination provoked all Pueblo tribes as it represented another attempt to disguise their heritage and remove them from the discourse over their ancestral past.

_A Hidden Heritage_

In describing the NAGPRA dispute between the Hopi tribe and the NPS, the _Arizona Republic_ stated, “The Anasazi mysteriously abandoned their pueblos about 500 years ago and vanished.” That claim, if true, would have made the entire dispute meaningless. Though the writer went on to say that Pueblo Indians “traditionally claim the Anasazi as their ancestors,” doubt had already been planted in the reader’s mind. It gave the appearance that the Pueblo tribes based their claims on nothing more than non-literate traditions. It did not portray the reality as fact, but as fiction.

The myth of the “vanishing Anasazi” began with romantic notions of ruins and a belief that the Indian race was on the road to “extinction.” Explorers enamored of the glory of the Aztecs could not imagine the Pueblo Indians as capable of the architectural achievements they admired in Southwestern archaeology. Scientists, who knew better, romanticized the image of a “long-forgotten people” that left the impression of a mystery where there was none. While some Anglos might have forgotten their ancestors in Europe, the Pueblo tribes never forgot their migrations. Ultimately, this romantic attitude toward ruins was the impetus for setting aside lands with cliff dwellings and ancient
structures as national parks and monuments.

Inadvertently, archaeologists helped sustain the myth with their well-meaning reluctance to state facts unconditionally, even while they were willing to indulge their imaginations when describing the sites. Despite the emphasis on archaeology in the interpretation by the Park Service, the need for a compelling story to draw tourists in and win their approval helped perpetuate the myth. Entrepreneurs selling an escape to travelers believed mysteries attracted more buyers than scientific facts, and writers drew on the same mysteries to make their fiction persuasive.

Today, newspapers continue to refer to the “Anasazi” in their travel sections. Somewhere near the end of the story may be words to the effect that the culture might still survive among the Pueblo tribes, or, as the *Albuquerque Journal* recently wrote “To them, it is the home of their ancestors, whose spirits still live there.” 167 Such sentiments seemingly disregard the fact that to archaeologists these sites are ancestral to Pueblo tribes. The popular press feeds the need of those who want a mystery, those who need to believe the earth can be contacted by benevolent aliens, or those who think they can divine secrets scientists cannot. It must be remembered that because archaeologists avoided stating categorically that the descendants of the “Anasazi” were Pueblo Indians, New Agers could say “star beings” abducted the imagined “Anasazi.”

As a borderland, the American Southwest has been an arena for conflict since Coronado sought the Seven Cities of Cibola. However, not all conflicts are played out on battlefields or in courtrooms. The image of the “vanishing Anasazi” conflicts with the reality of the Puebloan heritage, a heritage that has unfortunately remained hidden from the mainstream of America.
Notes:


3 “Believers Unite Worldwide.”

4 Barron, “Dancing at Dawn in Rite of Cosmic Harmony.” In reality, there was no alignment of the planets at that time. That astronomical event happened a few years earlier. Shawn Duffy, interpretive ranger, interview with author, 7 April 2004, Bloomfield, NM.

5 Atwood, “Harmonic Convergence Begins Slowly.”

6 Sipchen and Weisman, “Harmonic Convergence: A Braver New World?”

7 Brewer, “Believers Mark Dawn of ‘New Age.’”

8 Hopi Interviewee Three, interview with author, August 5, 2003, Hopi Cultural Preservation Office, Kykotsmovi, AZ [Hereafter HCPO], audiorecording, HCPO.

9 Peter Pino, Zia tribal administrator, interview with author, 18 April 2002, Zia tribal headquarters, Zia, NM.

10 Brewer, “Faithful Gather at Chaco Canyon to Save Planet.”

11 This discussion of New Age beliefs has benefited from the essays edited by James R. Lewis and J. Gordon Melton in Perspectives on the New Age (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).


17 Weisman, “Harmonic Convergence: A Braver New World?”


22 Ibid.


24 Phillip Tuvaletstìwa, geodesist for the Solstice Project, interview with author, 16 January 2003, Kykotsmovi, AZ, audiorecording, HCPO.


27 The volunteer librarian who heard this story was my wife, Chris Tee Weixelman, who shared it with me.

28 The author was the ranger on this tour and it took place on 17 July 1996.

29 “Chaco Canyon Interpretive Log: Visitor Comments on the ‘Vanishing Anasazi,” 30 June 2000. During the summers of 2000-2002, the author asked rangers at Mesa Verde National Park, Chaco Canyon National Historical Park, and Aztec Ruins National Monument to record comments visitors made concerning the “vanishing Anasazi.” They recorded these comments in a special logbook. Subsequently, the logbook at Aztec National Monument was misplaced. However, the logbooks at the other parks were retrieved. Where the ranger gave a name, that name is cited, otherwise no name was recorded.

I was surprised by the high percentage of comments that somehow dealt with beings from outer space being responsible for the “vanishing.” Ranger logs in possession of author.


31 Mike Cipra, “Mesa Verde Interpretive Log,” 16 September 2000.


35 Cheeseman-Meyer, “Exploitative Spirituality.” While von Däniken did not mention the Pueblo tribes in his first book, his lecture entitled, “Chariots of the Gods?” delivered at the UFO Conference, in Roswell, NM, on 3 July 1997 did. He suggested then that because the Katsina spirits are associated with clouds, they could be a link to ancient astronauts.


38 Mike Cipra, “Mesa Verde Interpretive Log,” 15 September 2000.


42 The author was the ranger on this tour, 17 July 2002. Notes in possession of author.

43 Visitor Response, “Responses Regarding Personal Fulfillment and Spirituality,” 100 and 163.

44 Ibid., 97 and 99.

45 Lee and Stephens, Anasazi Cultural Parks Study, 23.


48 Judy Reed, cultural resources manager for Pecos National Monument, interview with author, 15 May 2000, Pecos National Monument, NM.

49 The New Age Dictionary, s.v. “Anasazi.”


53 Ibid., xxx-xxxi.

54 Ibid., 27.

55 Ibid., 34-38.

56 Ibid., 183.

57 Ibid., 226-227.

58 Ibid., 191, 185.

59 Ibid., 208.

60 Ibid., 223-225.

61 Ibid., 36.

62 Mary Summer Rain, Spirit Song (Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing, 1985), 21-27. The Chippewa call themselves the Anishinabeg or Ojibway. Most members of the tribe prefer the latter terms.

63 Mary Summer Rain, Ancient Echoes: The Anasazi Book of Chants (Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing, 1993), i. This review of her book was previously published by the author online at Amazon.com. in a slightly different form. See “Ancient Echoes is Not about Anything Ancient,” 7 March


65 Summer Rain, Ancient Echoes, 188.

66 Ibid., 118.

67 Ibid., 144.


69 Ibid., 199.

70 Ibid., 160-161.


72 William Winkler, former president of Mesa Verde Company, and Merrie Hall Winkler, merchandise manager for Mesa Verde Company, interview with author, 23 June 2003, Cortez, CO, audiorecording in the Southwest Oral History Collection, Interview 648, Center of Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College, Durango, CO.


78 Ibid.


81 Handbook of American Indian Religious Freedom, ed. Christopher Vecsey (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1991). In this collection of essays, Sharon O’Brien asserted that the courts have applied more stringent tests to Indian religious cases than to other First Amendment cases and hints that the reason for this is their lack of understanding of Indian religious beliefs. Sharon O’Brien, “A Legal Analysis of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act,” in Handbook of American Indian Religious Freedom, 42.

82 Steven Moore analyzed the Supreme Court case of Lyng v. Northwest Indian Protective Association as a case study in the ineffectiveness of AIRFA. In it, the Court ruled that AIRFA did not “imply that incidental effects of government programs, which may make it more difficult to practice certain religions... require government
to bring forward a compelling justification for its otherwise lawful actions." Steven Moore, "Sacred Sites and Public Lands" in Handbook of American Indian Religious Freedom, quoting Lyng, 91. Moore goes on to say that the "incidental effects" in question would "destroy the 'very core' of their beliefs and practices," according to the Forest Service's own expert anthropologist. Numerous participants at the First National American Indian Listening Conference, held in Albuquerque in 1994, were in accord with this statement. First National American Indian Listening Conference: May 5-6, 1994, Albuquerque, New Mexico: Conference Proceedings, ed. Carol L. Whittaker (Tucson: Office of Government Programs at the University of Arizona, 1994).


84 First National American Indian Listening Conference, 42.

85 William J. Clinton, Executive Order No. 13007, 24 May 1996.


89 A complete history of Petroglyph National Monument is yet to be written. Historian Michael Welsh is working on a book that, when published, will go a long way in filling this gap. See Michael Welsh, West Side Stories: Land Use, Environment, and Social Change in Albuquerque's Petroglyph Area, manuscript copy, Petroglyph National Monument Archive Collections, Albuquerque, NM [hereafter PNMAC]. Although brief, some historical information is included in Susan Lamb, Petroglyph National Monument, ed. Ron Foreman (Tucson: Southwest Parks and Monuments Associations, 1993).

90 The cracks and crevices of the West Mesa formed approximately 110,000 years ago with a volcanic eruption that left a layer of basalt along the west side of the Rio Grande. Time covered this volcanic stone with a dark layer of iron and manganese oxide commonly called desert varnish, or patina. This patina can easily be abraded with a harder rock to reveal the lighter colored stone remaining underneath. "The Geologic History of Petroglyph Site Bulletin," (n.p.: NPS, 1997).

Petroglyphs, which are etched into stone, are often confused with pictographs, which are painted on the rock. It is common to refer to both as "rock art." However, this term is a misnomer. I use the term "rock markings" here on a suggestion from the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office as it more accurately reflects the Pueblo Indian view. Terry Mogart to Leigh Kewanisiwma regarding Review Comments on Preserving a Sacred Landscape . . . by Joseph Owen Weixelman, 24 September 1998. HCPO. Pueblo Indians do not create these images for the same reasons that Europeans created art, and the English term does not capture the religious motivation behind Puebloan petroglyphs and pictographs. For a discussion of the term, "rock art," see George Esher, "Memorandum on the use of the term 'rock art,'" to Chief of Planning, Petroglyph National Monument, 4 October 1991, PNMAC.

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91 For a discussion on Puebloan reticence to discuss religious issues, see Michael J. Evans, Richard W. Stoffle and Sandra Lee Pinel, *Petroglyph National Monument Rapid Ethnographic Assessment Project: Final Report* (Santa Fe: National Park Service, 1993); Suina, “Pueblo Secrecy Result of Intrusions,” 60 - 63. Two recent congressional hearings also focused on this issue. See the minutes of the Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Native American Affairs of the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives, 10 June 1988 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1994) and the First National American Indian Listening Conference.

92 Bill Weahkee, “Petroglyph Area is Sacred Place for New Mexico Pueblos,” *La Pintura* 23 (Fall 1996), 1 and Diane Souder, chief of interpretation, Petroglyph National Monument, interview with author, 19 February 1998, Petroglyph National Monument, Albuquerque, NM.


97 Hartranft, “Rock Art or Boy Scout Graffiti.”

98 Congressman Steven Schiff from New Mexico received four affidavits from local Hispanics claiming that in the first half of the century, when they herded sheep on the West Mesa, they did not see any petroglyphs. Richard Marks to Steven Schiff, 9 May 1990, PNMAC.

99 “Rock Art or Boy Scout Graffiti.” Schaafsma was not above pointing out rock art she believed to be bogus, such as pictographs near Santa Rosa that Boy Scouts did make. Schaafsma, *Rock Art in New Mexico*, 157-58.

100 Although there is no precise way to date the petroglyphs, scientists believe that the patina takes centuries to accrue. Schaafsma, *Indian Rock Art of the Southwest*, 13-14.

101 Weahkee, “Petroglyph Area is Sacred Place,” 2.


105 David Johnson, New Mexico States Parks Director, telephone interview with author, 30 March 1998, audiorecording in possession of author.

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165 Wayne Taylor, Jr., Chairman of the Hopi Tribe to Gale Norton, Secretary, Department of the Interior, 14 July 2003, HCPO.

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CHS  Colorado Historical Society, Denver, CO.

CSPL  Colorado Springs Public Library, Colorado Springs, CO.

CSW – FLC  The Center of Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College, Durango, CO.

CSWR – UNM  Center for Southwest Research, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

FACH  Fray Angelico Chavez History Library, Palace of the Governors, Santa Fe, NM.

HCPO  Hopi Cultural Preservation Office, Kykotsmovi, AZ.

HM  Heard Museum, Phoenix, AZ

LAA  Laboratory of Anthropology Archives, Santa Fe, NM.

MVRC  Mesa Verde Research Center, Mesa Verde National Park, CO.

PNMAC  Petroglyph National Monument Archive Collections, Albuquerque, NM.

SRCA  State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, NM.

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