

4-1-2015

## Southwest Talks: A Conversation with Polly Schaafsma

Sandra Lauderdale Graham

Polly Schaafsma

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr>

---

### Recommended Citation

Graham, Sandra Lauderdale and Polly Schaafsma. "Southwest Talks: A Conversation with Polly Schaafsma." *New Mexico Historical Review* 90, 2 (2015). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr/vol90/iss2/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in *New Mexico Historical Review* by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [amywinter@unm.edu](mailto:amywinter@unm.edu), [lsloane@salud.unm.edu](mailto:lsloane@salud.unm.edu), [sarahrk@unm.edu](mailto:sarahrk@unm.edu).

## Southwest Talks

A Conversation with Polly Schaafsma



---

INTERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION BY SANDRA LAUDERDALE GRAHAM

I met with Polly Schaafsma at her house south of Santa Fe, New Mexico, twice in January 2013 to record this interview. Why, you might ask, would an historian of nineteenth-century Brazil with no professional involvement with rock art, take up this task?

Polly and I first met on a river trip down the San Juan in 1998. A year later, my husband and I moved to Santa Fe and started a work-in-progress seminar that continued for ten years. Polly became a frequent contributor and we became friends. Over the years, Richard and I have travelled hundreds of miles by car, foot, and mule with Polly and Curt Schaafsma, and spent many hours climbing over rocks and car-camping in remote places to see rock art. It has been a wonderful and ongoing introduction to the Southwest and to a discipline and subject not my own.

Whether in seminar discussions, out in the places where images were pecked and painted on stone, or in casual conversations, we acknowledged our methodological differences and the wholly divergent kinds of sources and evidence we each rely on. Polly seeks big patterns over extensive geographic regions and

---

Born in Montana, educated in Colorado, living now in New Mexico, Sandra Lauderdale Graham is at home in the Rocky Mountain west. After completing a master's degree in sociology from Cornell University, she taught at La Trobe University in Melbourne and then returned to the United States to attend the University of Texas, where she earned a PhD in Latin American History. She has taught history at Mount Holyoke College, the University of New Mexico, and the University of Texas. She writes about nineteenth-century Brazil, focusing on women—free and slave, African-born—as well as those who employed, owned, sold, and sometimes freed them. Currently she is at work on a book that explores the ways Brazilian families in past times coped with disease, death, poverty, conflict, and divorce. She and her husband live and work in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

she traces changes over centuries, while I look for the particular in the up-close examinations of identifiable persons—a young slave woman, an old woman from a powerful family, or a freed African-born street vendor—confident that these single cases can speak to larger matters.<sup>1</sup> For Polly there can be no named persons. She can never know who precisely made the art she labors to interpret, but she can lay out the orderings of images and compare regions, periods, and peoples to arrive at plausible and grounded interpretations. In one important way, though, we share a common purpose: we both aim to retrieve the meanings that shaped past lives. We gather evidence to reconstruct the context of past events, persons, and cultural expressions. Context gives shape and confidence to interpretation. E. P. Thompson, writing long ago about anthropology and history, argued that “the discipline of history is, above all, the discipline of context,” and that each fact “can be given meaning only within an ensemble of other meanings.”<sup>2</sup> Building those ensembles of meanings is endless and essential to both history and archaeology.

I came to see that Polly has had a major influence on how rock art in the Southwest was transformed into a legitimate subject of inquiry, but I did not fully understand why until this interview. In this rich conversation, she not only relates her own story to the broader study of rock art, she also recounts how she borrowed and adapted her methodology from the practices of art historians. Embedded in this working methodology, she explains, is a critique of archaeology’s dismissal of rock art as having no accessible meanings. I encountered that dismissal first-hand on a field trip near Santa Fe with a well-known visiting archaeologist who had been pointing out man-made marks on rocks. One of my companions on the trip asked what all these markings meant anyway? The archaeologist threw up his arms in resignation and replied, “Anything you want them to mean.” Rock art, he was saying, is outside our understanding. Everything Polly does overturns that view. By taking seriously the admittedly difficult task of interpretation, she registers her respect for the cultures of Native peoples who lived in the Southwest and inscribed their meanings across this rock-strewn landscape.

Out of this interview comes a history of doing rock art in the Southwest. It is fitting that the *New Mexico Historical Review* decided not only to publish it, but to dedicate an entire issue to the ways Polly’s work has altered the study of rock art over her nearly fifty-five-year career. It has been a pleasure to do this interview, and to have worked with Erika Bsumek and Durwood Ball to bring it to the *NMHR*.

Sandra Lauderdale Graham: Polly, I am struck by the fact that you grew up in Vermont, went to school in Massachusetts, and then ended up in New Mexico, a long way from either of those places. How did that happen?

Polly Schaafsma: Oh, well, that is easy to explain. I got tired of Vermont when I was ten years old. I went to a cowboy movie and decided that Vermont was really boring, and the West was for me! That movie alerted me to the fact that there was a bigger world outside of small Vermont towns, and I wanted to get out into that world. When I was in college I got a summer job at Mesa Verde and that changed everything! When I got out here, I quickly found out that Indians and cliff dwellings were a lot more interesting than cowboys and horses, and I decided I wanted to be an archaeologist.

SLG: But why the focus on rock art? Why did rock art attract you?

PS: It really didn't—I hardly knew anything about it—and no one was interested in it. I used to hike out to Petroglyph Point on Mesa Verde. I liked being all alone out there in the quiet under the cliffs by the big firs, the smell of the junipers and piñons in the hot sun, and listening to the buzz of the cicadas. The petroglyphs were only a destination, and I thought that they were pretty uninteresting—even irrelevant. What could you learn from that jumble of lines? My background at Mount Holyoke College was in art history, but I never thought much about bringing what I had learned from those classes to archaeology at all. As a matter of fact, I didn't have a plan, but I had a general interest in southwestern archaeology after spending two summers on Mesa Verde, waiting tables for tourists. When I went to graduate school, I decided to go into anthropology. At that time Curt [Schaafsma] got a job as an archaeologist—it was quite accidental getting into rock art, actually—Curt got a job with the Laboratory of Anthropology on the Navajo Reservoir Project, where they were doing excavations before they built the dam. They needed somebody to do the rock art study, and since I was getting a degree in anthropology and I had one in art history, they thought maybe I would be interested in recording the rock art. I never really set out to study prehistoric art at all. It just happened that way. But it was early in the history of rock art studies in the Southwest, so I got in on the ground floor.

SLG: You've been recording and interpreting rock art over half a century. From your perspective, how has the study of rock art in the Southwest changed over that period? Or has it?

PS: The history of rock art, let's just say in general, rock art research took off in the early 1960s. My first publication on rock art was in 1963 on the Navajo Reservoir. In 1962 there had been some regional surveys published by Robert Heizer and Martin Baumhoff, major surveys of the rock art mostly in the Great Basin and California. Things were beginning, rock art was beginning to be noticed, but the construction of Navajo Dam and Glen Canyon Dam were

the first places in the Southwest where professional archaeological projects were conducted that included rock art. I worked on the Navajo Reservoir Project in 1961 and '62, and Christy Turner was working for the Museum of Northern Arizona recording rock art in Glen Canyon at the same time. The University of Utah was also recording rock art in Glen Canyon. The University of Utah studies were never published, but the Museum of Northern Arizona published Turner's work in 1963. These early reports and monographs, throughout the West, mainly followed the kind of pattern that science is apt to follow. You go out and say, well, what's there? You simply document it and then organize and describe what you've found.

SLG: You make an inventory.

PS: Yes, and you figure out—you recognize stylistic groups and the figure types that characterize them and the fact that different styles occur in specific regions. You begin to discern the patterns of rock art over the landscape, and then, if it's possible, and it certainly is more possible in the Southwest than almost anywhere, you begin to associate the styles with particular ancient cultures. If you can link rock art to a particular phase, time period, culture, you can then start to ask broader questions. In the early years rock art research was largely about documentation and recording and mapping it out.

SLG: Description.

PS: Recording, describing—and of course that is still going on. That will never end. But once enough information is accumulated, then you can ask, why were people making art and how does the art help in understanding their world-views, cultural values and concerns, and even cultural landscapes? Patterns of imagery suggest patterns of thought, conceptual systems. What was the function of rock art? To whom did it communicate? How does/did it continue to communicate long after it was made? How does the presence of imagery on stones change the perception of place in the landscape where it occurs? Many studies early on had to do with function, and still do. Studies of the function and meaning of art in the landscape go through fads, and often those fads are determined by the investigator or the culture of the investigator. For example hunting magic was a popular interpretive strategy for a long time. In the early '60s, Heizer and Baumhoff espoused hunting magic as an explanation for why people pecked sheep and hunting scenes on the rocks of the Great Basin. Later interpretations have presented these scenes as metaphorical and shamanic.

It's somewhat different when rock art corresponds to the religious iconography of an ongoing culture. In my Navajo Reservoir study, because some of the rock art was so recent—early eighteenth century or maybe late seventeenth

century—it had a continuity with the present in terms of the figures represented and the styles and, because this was religious symbolism and rather standardized, I was able to do some interpretive work right off the bat because I could relate it to the ethnographic descriptions of Navajo culture, and the content of Navajo sand paintings.

SLG: The approach that you first took to interpreting the rock art came out of the particular kind of rock art that you were studying—specific to the Navajo case—but over this intervening period of fifty years, have your own methodologies changed?

PS: No, not really. What has changed have been the questions I ask regarding purpose, meaning, the nature of imagery—how does rock art function in a cultural context? What was its role, and which members of a cultural group made it? These questions are now being broadly asked by lots of rock-art scholars, because researchers are becoming more sophisticated about what can be talked about, like the power that imagery exerts or is perceived to embody. I guess researchers today, myself included, are asking many more questions than formerly. If you had talked about power in imagery in 1960, people would have laughed, but that has changed significantly. Jane Young's research on rock art in the Zuni region in the 1980s certainly explores this dimension in concert with the Zunis themselves.

SLG: Do you think the attitude toward the questions that can be asked—maybe not finally answered, but discussed—is partly because of you?

PS: To some degree, probably, because at least my work has helped to validate rock art research and thus provide a platform on which others can stand. But you would have to ask somebody else [laughter]. That is not for me to answer.

SLG: You talk about art history as a methodology, but you locate yourself as an archaeologist. Are you an archaeologist with an art historian's bag of tools?

PS: Right, right, exactly. One of the advantages I feel I had was my background and training in art history. Sometimes when you're going through these educational processes you're really unaware of what is happening, but on reflection I realized, even though I had been looking at the art of Western Europe—it doesn't matter—art anywhere, you are taught, actually trained to perceive styles and nuances and where something comes from—geographic patterns and time frames and, in the case of Western art, even who painted it. You are taught to be aware of the fact that the production of imagery is culturally conditioned and it has a timeframe and you can begin to identify the place and time where something was produced. The same principles apply to imagery anywhere. So that gave me confidence in being able to work out and define rock art styles

that belonged to a specific time and place in the Southwest. The problem is that most archaeologists don't have that background. They don't have any confidence in identifying a style and are not willing to acknowledge that the forms rock art takes are cultural constructs—they often seem to harbor the notion that image-making is a whimsical thing and brush it off.

So I'm bringing art history into the archaeological discussion, using it as a tool to understand the past—as a means of access. If you go to Bluff, Utah, and look at the cliffs, for example, at one site you'll find different styles made by several different cultural groups over several thousand years—Archaic hunter-gatherers, Basketmakers, later Ancestral Pueblos, Utes—okay, there are four right there. They're easily distinguishable and anybody can learn to recognize those distinctions. It is important. In terms of what you just asked, I do think—okay, okay, go back. Yes! My work was influential in pioneering the styles and timeframes for rock art on a broad scale in the Southwest and the northern Colorado Plateau. Nobody else had done that. To that extent I have made a major impact on describing and organizing the art, placing it in time and with its cultural associations, establishing a framework from which to proceed with new insights and modifications.

SLG: Over time have you revised those connections between time and style?

PS: I'm just trying to think—time slips and slides, particularly in regard to the Archaic styles. And some rock art stylistic categories are pretty indefinite, as opposed to others. Take for example the Mogollon and the abstract things and little stick figures in red paint. That is a very nebulous area that I might try to deal with differently today, but overall the main categories have held up, so actually that's very gratifying. In addition, new styles have been identified in subsequent work by others.

SLG: As more people got involved in rock art over this period, have influences also worked the other way? Have you been influenced by what other people are doing in the Southwest?

PS: Well, of course. One is constantly influenced by other people's work. Jane Young's research at Zuni has been very influential—on me, at least—in regard to strategies of rock art interpretation, particularly because of her collaboration with the Zunis and her perspectives on the “power” that rock art entails. She has also demonstrated ways in which interpretations can change rather rapidly, a valued insight when one works with Native people. Also in the 1980s, rock art research beyond the Southwest and interests in shamanism and its link to rock art propelled me to reexamine the Barrier Canyon and other styles in Utah and to look for content with symbolism of out-of-body experiences and interpret these styles as evidence for the practice of shamanism in the past—by far the

most satisfactory approach for the truly ancient rock art in the Colorado Plateau Tradition for which there is no continuity with the ethnographic present. In both cases, Jane's work at Zuni and research by people like Solveig Turpin in the Lower Pecos have influenced my thinking and interpretive approaches.

SLG: How do you account for the growing popularity of rock art?

PS: For one thing, people simply like imagery. All kinds of things came together in the 1970s to make rock art popular. One of the problems at the time that I started working in the Southwest was that the general public was getting interested in archaeology, and amateur archaeologists wanted to dig sites, but digging a site is destructive, so there was a movement to encourage nonprofessionals to record rock art, a practice that isn't destructive. So suddenly by the early 1970s, a huge number of people throughout the West were beginning to come together as rock art aficionados. In 1974 the American Rock Art Research Association was established, partly by professionals but largely fueled by the interests of amateurs who wanted to organize themselves so they would have a means of communicating and a publication and meetings—but this association has always straddled the amateur-professional boundary. Curt and I are charter members, but I was hesitant about joining because I realized that forming this association would tend to separate the rock art research from traditional archaeological studies. Archaeologists in the Southwest like imagery only when it occurs on pots because, rather ironically, pottery designs are crucial—along with physical characteristics—to the identification of pottery types. So they put a lot of faith in images on “dishes”! There is also a bias that the things out there in the landscape do not have the validity of the things in the kitchen or the kiva—a dichotomy, to put it simply, between inside controllable space and outside space perceived as wild and chaotic. Likewise with imagery that occurs there! Anyway, I feared in 1974, when the American Rock Art Research Association was founded, that it would mark a split in the road, separating rock art research from the rest of archaeology. And that tendency has remained in spite of some major exceptions.

SLG: Are you saying that archaeologists generally who work in the Southwest would not, still do not respect rock art as valid archaeological subject matter and evidence?

PS: It is hard to get them to. They respect it—sort of, but on the other hand, they generally fail to incorporate the wealth of information rock art provides into their reconstructions of the past. Yes, there is still an enormous resistance to bringing rock art into the general discussion. I have noticed, for example, on the Colorado Plateau in studies on thirteenth-century violence and the depopulation of the Four Corners, that the archaeologists who are doing the research never cite the rock art which is full of shield figures and evidence of stress at

that time even though stress goes hand-in-hand with the abandonment. So even though the rock art supports their findings, the archaeologists working there never bring it into the conversation, ever.

SLG: That relegates rock art to the amateurs. Why do you think that resistance is there?

PS: Well, as for amateurs completely taking over the field, certainly not! There are a number of professional archaeologists engaged in rock art research making excellent contributions. But as for the profession in general—at this point, anyway, and its willingness to incorporate this information when reconstructing the past, I honestly think that there is a degree of laziness in all of this. Rock art is just one more thing to have to consider, a bother perhaps. And some southwestern archaeologists also regard rock art, or perhaps even art in general, with suspicion—I suppose, as an unreliable data set. If you look at the larger picture, this is actually very strange, because elsewhere in the Americas, especially throughout what is now Latin America, and in the Old World the graphic imagery, along with everything else, produced in the past is understood to be a valuable line of evidence for understanding past social behavior, political and social alliances, the history of and patterns of religious beliefs, continuity and change, and so forth. Rock art in the American West is by far one of the most prolific sources of graphic imagery. Part of the problem seems to be that it is in the landscape, not within the traditional situation of a site. But the good news is that archeologists are beginning now to realize that the cultural landscape needs to be understood as a vital aspect of indigenous peoples' worlds, both past and present.

SLG: In their thinking, is rock art not scientific?

PS: Perhaps. But anthropology is really a combination of the humanities and science. The argument that rock art cannot be dated or is hard to date is easily overridden in the Southwest where like-images occur on ceramics or as figurines for which dates are well understood due to their situation within the contexts of sites and datable stratigraphy. And other technologies for dating are fast becoming available. Yet dirt archaeologists very rarely include the information rock art provides.

In particular one place that rock art has been grossly ignored, of course, is Chaco Canyon, except for the Fajada Butte spirals where light filters through cracks onto the spirals on the summer solstice and the equinoxes. If you can tie petroglyphs or rock paintings into astronomy and measure “interactions,” that’s “science.” But otherwise there has been no professional work ever done at Chaco Canyon that has considered the rock art in understanding what Chaco was about or how it sits within the region. And further, at Chaco it is even worse because a lot



Polly Schaafsma recording petroglyphs on a boulder in Weritos Rincon, 1971. Photograph courtesy Polly Schaafsma.

of recent work addresses landscape and place and migrations and pilgrimages—activities that involve the landscape. But Chaco rock art doesn't fulfill the grand expectations that have been conjured up for Chaco. So they leave it out. You can't do that. It is part of what Chaco was. You have to look at it, and if it changes your ideas, well, so be it. But it has been ignored. I mean, terribly ignored.

SLG: All the various cultural products that a people produces—architecture, pots, clothing, rock art—they don't have equal weight?

PS: Of course. But you still have archaeologists who will tell you, wrongly of course, that rock art doesn't mean anything! I really don't know what they are thinking or how they would justify that. How can they claim that it is somehow "disengaged" from a culture when it is a statement by members of that culture about cosmology, religion, and values and ideas pertaining to rain, fertility, conflict, the hunt—the stuff of life! Attitudes toward religion and cosmology—these realms have not been primary areas of investigation until recently. What has been primary through the twentieth century is economy and how people lived. You know, what they ate, the rainfall, the crops they could grow. There is a lot of focus on material goods, or how cultures responded to their environment according to how many calories they had available. And these approaches to the past, of course, stem from Western perspectives and what we deem important. Let's go back to Chaco in regard to religion and cosmology. There have been all these studies on architecture, alignments, and orientations—measurable factors

that all line up with the seasonal movement of the sun, by which these people are believed to have coordinated their agricultural cycle, that then determined their ritual cycle, and so on. We like timekeeping, we like calendars, and so if other people were marking time, keeping calendars even via rock art, we can relate to that. But archaeologists won't extend their interest to all these little wiggly figures or flute players and animals—figures that occur elsewhere throughout the canyon telling us that Chaco thinking was consistent with that of other Ancestral Pueblo people. But that doesn't fit the idea of Chaco as a dominant polity overseen by elite nobles or as a pilgrimage center—two models that are on the table to explain Chaco's grandiose architecture—so the rock art is simply ignored.

SLG: From your vita it is clear that you did an enormous amount of the describing, recording, survey kind of work. And you did it in big regions: New Mexico, Utah, and the Southwest in general. You acquired a sense, not just of a little bit of rock art in one place or another, but of entire regions. And I know from tagging along sometimes and listening to you talk about specific sites that you are able to make comparisons with other places, other times. You always put what you are looking at into a regional context. Those years of doing survey work served you well. Why don't other people do it? Context seems so important.

PS: It is never too late to readdress rock art on a regional scale, and since I did those surveys, a lot of gaps have been filled in and some regions much better understood—such as the Hohokam, the Grand Canyon region, and the Sinagua in northern Arizona. But because I was engaged in these broad-scale surveys early on, I guess I did acquire a perspective on some of the dynamic aspects of and changes in ancient cosmologies and religion in the Southwest that ran against the grain of conventional knowledge. Well, that's what got me into trouble with the kachina cult! This whole new data set! The rock art survey of New Mexico really revealed the pattern of how the kachina complex and related imagery developed in the Southwest because this development was prolifically documented on rocks, beginning perhaps as early as the twelfth century in southern New Mexico. People liked to think it originated at Hopi and Zuni because that is where it survives today in public performances. The rock art in the Rio Grande corridor with thousands of depictions of masks does not support a Hopi (or Western Pueblo) origin for kachinas. Conceptually kachinas are linked to a cosmology that is Mesoamerican. Masks also occur to a lesser degree and with fewer elaborations in the Western Pueblos about the same time, but much less extensively.

SLG: Why deny any evidence that corroborates what you're trying to say? It seems that archaeologists would find rock art helpful to them.

PS: I've talked to Chaco archaeologists and it simply has never occurred to them to look for petroglyphs in connection with built features in the canyon. Why hasn't it occurred to them? Because it has not been standard practice, and it is unconsciously assumed that rock art would not contribute much to the problems and questions that interest them.

SLG: Would you do it the other way around?

PS: Yes. How rock art is situated in regard to other archaeological remains is extremely important, and when rock art has a patterned relationship—one that is repeated—with other archaeological remains or even topographic features, that relationship may tell you something about the significance or purpose of the imagery. In the Great Basin, for example, and elsewhere, rock art has been studied in conjunction with camp sites, topographic features, game trails, salt trails, hunting blinds, and so forth right from the beginning. In the Southwest, features like mountains, springs, cracks, caves with their access to the underworld, all have symbolic significance in a cosmology related to water and rain, and rock art may be directly associated with these features. Of course researchers may disagree about how rock art functioned, but that is part of the ongoing dialogue. You have to think about the whole picture. So that's an interesting challenge: bringing all the cultural processes together. We need more of that in the Southwest. Imagery needs to be taken into account—even simply its presence—even though often you don't know what it means.

SLG: And the basic argument for that is that within the culture that you're trying to understand, pottery imagery and rock art were not isolated from each other or independent of each other.

PS: You cannot arbitrarily chop out a piece of the archaeological evidence because you don't like it. Culture is a seamless whole. And as for rock art—casting it aside is an egregious act since there is so much of it!

Some of this gets back to the old southwestern attitudes toward cultural landscape—the territory beyond the village and the meanings ascribed to it. In the Western world we separate sites from landscapes so often or only consider their value in regard to economic exploitation. For us landscape has no meaningful connection to religion, but this connection is of overwhelming importance to indigenous peoples.

SLG: You have talked about how archaeologists as a profession have ignored southwestern rock art, ignored the visual imagery that could provide them access to ancient belief systems. What about some of the ethnographers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Did they talk about rock art?

PS: On occasion, but it was never a major concern. They didn't really address it. I may be wrong, but it was either largely forgotten by Pueblo people or they just didn't want to bring it into the conversation, especially in the Rio Grande Valley. So many ethnographers who went into the pueblos never considered in any depth things outside the villages. Once in a while, if a specific issue came up, rock art may be mentioned, but it never is addressed as something worth investigation in its own right. Cushing and Matilda Coxe Stevenson did occasionally talk about some of the rock art near Zuni. In addition, of course, Jane Young's much later 1988 book, *Signs from the Ancestors*, is all about Zuni rock art.

SLG: You're saying that you need to see the village in relationship to its hinterland and, if you do, you will see it very differently?

PS: Yes, yes. At least you view the village and the activities that took place there in a holistic context and see its broader cosmological relationships.

SLG: I want to return to the Navajos. When you worked on Navajo rock art—and those were some of the first sites you wrote about—you were saying that in the rock art the Navajo portrayed their mythological—

PS: —their holy people, the *ye'i* and other supernatural beings.

SLG: And that later rock art done by Navajo doesn't have that?

PS: They stopped portraying the holy people in a ritual context—lines of figures akin to those in sandpaintings—by the mid-eighteenth century, or by the beginning of the nineteenth.

SLG: Is it understood why they stopped?

PS: No, not really. But there was a big change. According to oral tradition as related to me by Will Tsosie, after the world was created and made safe for human beings, the holy people physically went away, but they left their images on the rocks so that they would not be forgotten. Of course they still persist in spirit form and visit the Navajos in their ceremonies. But later historical rock art pictures sheep and horses, material things they especially valued. Coffee pots even! Rock art became somewhat secularized. Maybe the later Navajo felt that their sacred imagery was threatened or even dangerous. There certainly was some reason why they stopped making sacred images on the rocks, but their religious traditions didn't stop. But when they made these same images in sandpaintings to compel the spiritual presence and to aid the beings pictured for blessing and curing, they destroyed the sandpainting at the end of the curing ceremony because the sands are understood to have absorbed the illness of the patient.

SLG: Are there other regional rock art styles in which the nature of the subject matter changes?

PS: Everywhere. Change is constant, but it can be sudden or gradual. Pueblo rock art evolved on the Colorado Plateau step by step by step from Basket-maker times just as their culture changed slowly. Change occurred incrementally over centuries. Then came an enormous shift at the end of the thirteenth century when everybody left the Four Corners area and migrated south and east. And what happens after that? There are changes in architecture, changes in pottery, changes in rock art. These are tectonic shifts, big and sudden. New figures appear in the art forms that reveal a new religion and new ideology that quickly replaced what had been or was overlaid on what had been. I wouldn't say replaced because you don't need to throw out everything, but the old imagery is overwhelmed by a tsunami of a new iconography and eventually dropped. The point here really is that new ideas expressed in rock art are accompanied by major shifts that are also evident in the rest of the archaeological record. Large aggregated sites indicate social changes. And the rock art documents these social changes such as the presence of new institutions like the kachina religion and warrior societies, all of which cross-cut the traditional clan lines and enabled people to get along socially in larger aggregated pueblos. The imagery speaks volumes. Without it we would not necessarily understand exactly what provoked these changes.

SLG: You're saying that rock art not only documents change over time, but lends insight into the nature of this change.

PS: Rock art changes when the sociopolitical organization and belief systems change.

SLG: Polly, what is the relationship between the kiva murals and rock art? Very early on you were at Pottery Mound, and again you were recording what was going to be destroyed.

PS: Well, yes, part of the site was falling into the Rio Puerco, but mainly it was a University of New Mexico [UNM] field school excavating rooms and recording murals. And Frank C. Hibben was looking for murals. It was an interesting time, 1957, the middle of the twentieth century and the imagery was, well, people were dealing with it reluctantly because the prevailing view of Pueblo imagery was focused on spirals, simple stick figures, mountain sheep, and flute players. Kiva murals, the first ones discovered were at Kuaua, Coronado State Monument, in the 1930s, and they pictured elaborately costumed ceremonial figures that didn't fit the preconceptions about Pueblo art at that time. Soon afterwards in the

1940s, the Peabody Museum was excavating on Antelope Mesa at Hopi and they found similar murals, and the Hopis were comfortable with what they saw in the murals because the images were closely related to contemporary Hopi religion. But there was obviously that big break in art style that archaeologists had not fully come to grips with. When Frank Hibben discovered the murals at Pottery Mound, he tried to push them as being unusual, although he mentions the murals at Hopi and Kuaua only in passing in his 1975 book. When I was there as a student in 1957, we were not provided with any historical perspective or context. We were told that they were “Mexican.” In addition there was little understanding that the imagery in those kivas was replicated in rock art throughout the landscape of the Rio Grande Valley, because people were largely unaware of the rock art. Hibben makes one remark somewhere: “Oh, well, the star figures are on the rocks of the West Mesa.” He had seen them, but he didn’t tumble for the implications of what that might mean.

SLG: Many years later, you organized a seminar sponsored by SAR [School of Advanced Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico], and you invited to it people who had been at Pottery Mound in those early years doing the recording. One of the questions you asked was: what have we learned about Pottery Mound or about kiva art or about rock art since then? What was the conclusion of the seminar?

PS: Oh, there was no single conclusion as such. One of the reasons I organized that seminar was to give Pottery Mound a firmer footing with the archaeological community in general. Hibben was prone to some fancy elaborations in the course of his career and, because the work at Pottery Mound had been done under his tenure, the murals—which were/are spectacular—were dismissed by some as another Hibben fabrication. The archives at UNM with all the photos and student drawings dispel that notion quickly, although some of the final reproductions made under Hibben’s tutelage of the first murals discovered pushed things a bit. However, the rumors that he added weapons to the hands of shield-bearers and other warriors in the murals are completely unfounded—petroglyphs of weapon-wielding warriors up and down the Rio Grande Valley are good testimony to that! The primary purpose of the seminar was to bring together the available information on the site in general and, of course, the murals are a big part of the site’s significance. The seminar and resulting book also address the history of the archaeology of the site, updated maps, information on pottery, and various aspects of the murals. I was trying to get something published that was up-to-date—some chapters by people who had worked on the murals. Gwinn Vivian had been field director in 1957. Pat Vivian, who recorded murals beginning in 1958, and Helen Crotty, who later made a study of the prehistoric wall paintings in the Southwest, also contributed chapters.

I was able to relate the murals to rock art in the landscape, a connection that would have been impossible during the Hibben years. And there were other thought-provoking contributions. Kelley Hays-Gilpin and Steve LeBlanc looked at the Sikyatki designs in the Pottery Mound murals—designs normally thought to have been common only to Hopi. The nature of the Hopi connection here is uncertain—this is a design style best known from Hopi ceramics, but curiously better represented on Pottery Mound’s kiva walls than in the Antelope Mesa Hopi murals painted at the same time. Hays-Gilpin and LeBlanc propose this was a design style spread via painted textiles, which have since vanished. I think the textile information—the recognition of the importance of painted textiles—is one of the more important things that came out of this book. We know that Pottery Mound had painted textiles and used painted textiles because they are pictured in the murals, and not just as textiles in the abstract, but as costume elements. Laurie Webster’s chapter is on the costume elements, all of which of course have disappeared because they are all perishable, but are preserved visually in the murals. This is a conceptual breakthrough. If Pueblo people communicated by painted textile designs, that marks a whole new means of communication in the late precontact period that generally goes unrecognized. And the murals preserve that visual record.

SLG: How does rock art figure into this means of communication?

PS: Rock art communicates on a multitude of levels and through time. For the people who made it, it confirms belief systems, values, establishes social boundaries, defines place, and, in essence, socializes the land. It does all this all at once. And because it may last for centuries—even millennia—it continues to send messages to everyone who sees it from then on, although what is communicated changes, depending on the observer, and that includes rock art scholars.

SLG: The rock art, being in the landscape—anybody who enters that landscape can see it if they want to. They’re allowed to. The murals—

PS: —are secret in the kivas? At least we presume that access was restricted.

SLG: How do murals communicate to anybody outside of that village? What was their role?

PS: Well, kiva murals and rock art served very different functions. Within the kiva, painted walls would have been a background for ceremonies with altars placed in front of the murals and ceremonies performed in front of the altars, dancing, singing. They were short-lived as far as their role went—that is evident by the practice of plastering over the murals and then painting new ones. Out there in the cultural landscape imagery has many roles, although what they were

in any particular instance is not always clear. The presence of rock art changes one's concept of place. In some cases, reasons for making it may have been dictated by whimsy. In other cases, rock art marks shrines, places inhabited by particular supernaturals, or possibly certain figures served as petitions for rain. If you're picturing supernaturals in the landscape, they may even be attracted to their image. The Navajos say that when they paint a picture of a *ye'i* in a sand-painting to cure a patient, the being that is represented cannot resist occupying that spot. They're so flattered they are compelled! That image becomes powerful. You can then use that power to cure somebody or make offerings for rain or whatever you want to bring about. Similarly, imagery empowers the land. As opposed to murals, rock art endures, and once its primary role has passed, it continues to affect everyone who encounters it, and in this process it is subject to reinterpretation and being ascribed new meanings.

SLG: When kachinas began to appear in the rock art, what did they mean?

PS: They are rain-bringers. When a kachina mask appears on the rock, is it a petition for rain? Quite possibly, there are plenty of reasons to think that this was the case, among them their presence at springs and water tanks, or on high places in the landscape that may have functioned as symbolic mountains—all of which are viewed as sources of rain. I've recently been looking at the medium of cotton cloth and how representations of textiles might have functioned in this way as well. These designs on rocks after around AD 1100, or so, in context with the development of cotton technology, indicate that they are not only producing cotton textiles, but that these textiles had a symbolic role. Today cotton plays an enormous role in Pueblo religion—cotton is white and fluffy like clouds. Like produces like. Strings of cotton are used to make roads for the clouds to follow. You have to have cotton cloth for rain sashes and dance kilts, synthetic look-alikes are not acceptable—they have no power! I could go on and on. So what are these extraordinary designs doing on cliffs and boulders? People have asked, what are they for? Well, they say, there's a woman, she's advertising weaving. She wants to promote her craft—oh, yes, this Western bias for a straightforward economic explanation. I'm saying they are prayers for rain. If this is the right hypothesis, then the kachina mask is a continuation of the same function. The image has changed, but it is still a rain petition. The image simply shifted to the kachina.

SLG: But wait, let me back up just a little bit. The designs that are used in textiles, when they're present in textiles, are they also a petition for rain?

PS: That is what I'm thinking, yes. The designs in themselves are usually symbolic of clouds. The terraces and other stepped patterns inherent to weaving technology are little clouds. They're part of the—

SLG: —part of ceremonial dress. What you describe also refers to the link between economy and well-being because the rain will produce more vegetables.

PS: Rain, more corn, blessings, flowers, well-being for people—it's an integrated piece. But you have to take care of and acknowledge the spirits out there otherwise they will not pay any attention to you. You have to make offerings, prayer sticks—the rock art can tell you about how people interacted with their landscapes. There is a major focus in Pueblo iconography on rain and water.

SLG: Did you ever pause and think, is this crazy? Am I the only one who sees this?

PS: Well, sometimes, yeah.

SLG: Did you wonder sometimes whether you were making it all up?

PS: Well, not really, because ultimately what is pictured fits together so logically and, furthermore, ethnography (when available) supports these observations. But sometimes when I expect other people to say, yes, that's right, they don't necessarily. But it seems that familiarity with and eventual, even partial, understanding of any given iconographic system and the values it projects is not unlike learning another language. I find this one of the most exciting aspects of rock art research in the Southwest—discovering the network of relationships that bind together conceptual packets, so that you begin to understand the visual metaphors from another cosmology that are right in front of your eyes. It is the kind of experience that rearranges all your own cultural biases and leads you into new mental frameworks and spaces.

SLG: I want to ask you—this is another question about ethnographers and the corpus of work that they left. Do you think it is legitimate to use ethnographic accounts as evidence for the past?

PS: Ethnography? It's very useful, but you have to be very critical and cautious about using it because culture is not frozen in time—change is constant. And you have to evaluate everything on a case-by-case basis. Conceptual frameworks and the visual symbolism that pertain to rain-making have been rather persistent going back hundreds of years, and we might not recognize some of the pictorial metaphors were it not for ethnographic descriptions. I do think ethnographic information is a great help if used appropriately.

For example we just talked about cotton, but ethnographic descriptions also shed a lot of light on the symbolism of pottery—the significance of a bowl or jar pictured in a mural. A pot is a container of water, but it can also symbolize a spring from which, according to Pueblo and Mesoamerican worldviews, clouds and rain emanate. When you see a pot represented in a kiva mural, it is usually clear that it is much more than just a jar or bowl—it is a container of water, even storms. Also

kachina masks may take the form of a pottery vessel, which in turn compounds the message that they are bringers of rain. Knowing the current role of pottery in ritual, for example, helps you understand the ancient pictorial record.

SLG: You have talked a lot about change, change being involved in all of this and, yet, if you use ethnographic evidence aren't you saying there has been no change between the past and now?

PS: No! Not at all—you use it only as a potential guide to interpretation. With warfare iconography, a lot has changed because conflict and war societies became less important by the end of the nineteenth century. The significance of the Morning Star, that is so prominent in war-related petroglyphs in late Pueblo rock art, is hard to evaluate on the basis of ethnographic information because much has been dropped or perhaps even forgotten. In the rock art and murals, stars—not just stars, but stars with feathered headdresses and arrows—are depicted in the context of warrior ceremonies, on shields, or with warriors with shields. They also occur with horned serpents, or by themselves. There is not much left in the ethnographic record about that, except that the Morning Star is feared and is associated with war and scalping. In this case, because it is apparent that a lot of the ideas after 1300 were Mesoamerican in origin, if you look at Mexico and find an extraordinary development regarding Venus and the Morning Star—that wraps warfare, rain, and the growth of corn into one conceptual bundle—one that seems to have been present in the Southwest in abbreviated form.

SLG: But it does not appear that way in the ethnography?

PS: Only in bits and pieces. Ideas about warfare seem to have slipped away to a significant degree, and I could only glimpse remnants in the ethnographies, a link between warfare, Morning Star, scalps, and rain.

SLG: You're saying, you can use ethnographic sources to help you see what was going on in the past. It could corroborate what you think might be going on in the past, but what are the costs of not using it?

PS: If you don't use it when you are studying the rock art legacy of living people, as I just described, you miss the symbols and metaphors that are unfamiliar to those of us in the Western world. And there is the very real danger of then being "free" to "make it all up" according to our own biases without any tethers, without checks and balances inherent to the culture that made the imagery. Without those we are free to reconstruct the past according to our own "vision" of the world—and these reconstructions are often a mirror of ourselves, usually quite off the mark. I think that there is a certain arrogance in tossing out ethnographic information, although some archaeologists actively advocate it! Sometimes, it's

true, ethnography doesn't provide a clue, especially in regard to older rock art styles and traditions. Then you are dependent on the content itself and on the patterns of relationships that you can find in the iconography alone for suggestions of meaning. But, sometimes general models *derived from the ethnographic record* can be proposed to explain what rock art is all about—models that provide insight and avenues to a potential understanding of the original intent.

SLG: Then I want to ask you, how have Native people, Pueblo people responded to the study of rock art? And maybe there is not a single response.

PS: There is by no means a single response. Not at all. Pueblo and Navajo people recognize the rock art as the work of their ancestors. Sometimes they relate it to their current concerns. Sometimes sites were forgotten. Jane Young took a Zuni elder out to Hant'lipinkia, and he said something to the effect of, "This is where we should have been leaving our prayer sticks." A lot of the women Jane consulted about individual rock art elements didn't relate to them in terms of place or landscape, but said, "Oh, this is the kind of design that goes on a pot. This is appropriate for pottery, this is a pottery design." They related it to their own craft, but didn't offer a wider perspective. Here in the Rio Grande Valley, Native communities are more aware of rock art today because of the establishment of Petroglyph National Monument. They easily relate to it because the content is consistent with imagery they know and is present in their traditional religions. Of course as to its meaning, people are understandably reluctant to discuss that.

SLG: An extension of that question is how do Native people respond to the work you and others do in interpreting the rock art? Do they approve? Do they disapprove? Do they care?

PS: That varies too. When we were working with the people from Sandia and Cochiti in establishing Petroglyph National Monument, they were interested in the petroglyphs and saw them as part of their legacy and, because they were interested in having the monument established, they shared their general feelings about the West Mesa as a whole and its place in the landscape. There was very little interpretation of the petroglyphs as such. But to better answer your question, I do know that one of the problems the Pueblos have with some interpretative enterprises is that if certain kinds of information discovered by outside researchers is published, this may be information that in the Pueblo world is held in secret and only available to initiates of particular societies. If this information is published in books and read by non-initiates, then the societies controlling that information are robbed of their power. In this way, anthropologists may damage indigenous societies, often unknowingly.

As far as interpretation goes, even in collaboration with Native people, there are other issues. Many images are multivocal—they can have several meanings simultaneously. I think that indigenous interest in the past is contingent on how it affects the present. They are less interested in the past—the past as a fixed entity—the past for its own sake, I think, in contrast to archaeologists. We keep returning to this issue of change which is happening all the time, so that what was depicted on the rocks in 1450 may be subject to reinterpretation today. As an archaeologist, I am interested in knowing what it meant to the people who made it in 1450, or whenever, but a modern reinterpretation is equally as likely when you're talking to contemporary descendants.

SLG: Do Pueblo people ever speak out and say, you have the wrong interpretation, we reject this, it wasn't like that, we aren't like that?

PS: Disagreements are more often about authorship than interpretation. At times—on occasion one tribal group will try to appropriate someone else's rock art. Some Hopis feel that any image they can recognize over here in the Rio Grande Valley was done by their people, by Hopis, even though we know it was done by Pueblo people here. In the past they have asserted ownership over a sweep of territory on the basis of rock art, claims that archaeologically can't be substantiated. Another example is an extreme case in the Galisteo Basin where Comanche elders have claimed Comanche origins of petroglyphs of Pueblo warriors, although there is no doubt as to their Tano Pueblo origins. In another case, at Taos they attribute it all to witchcraft.

SLG: All rock art?

PS: Apparently! That's it—the explanation—witches. The rock art was made because somebody was trying to hurt somebody. And the people from Taos Pueblo that I knew wouldn't go near those sites.

SLG: Do you understand why they want to distance themselves from it?

PS: I think they regarded them as "dangerous." I think, partly, it's—I don't know—it has never been made explicit of course, but I'm assuming it is the influence of Christianity, of bringing everything into the village. There was a time in medieval Europe when everything inside the church was sacred and outside the church was regarded as evil, a place of bad spirits. I tend to think it was a medieval legacy that was carried into the Pueblos and which some Taos people I knew still harbored. I can't think of any other explanation for it, really.

SLG: Do they talk much about it?

PS: Oh, no. It only came up because I showed a Pueblo friend images from a Pueblo site and I showed her the same images from a kiva. The rock art she

attributed to witches and the kiva paintings she was intrigued with—positively. It was the same imagery. Then I began to get antsy about what she thought about me, her friend, “studying” this stuff! But I guess she wasn’t afraid of me, because she eventually gave me a fetish for protection.

SLG: I want to ask you what direction you think rock art studies are going to take from this point on, and what direction would you like to see them take?

PS: Well, of course, I would like to see rock art research integrated to a much larger degree with broader archaeological considerations. Rock art research is not an end in itself. If we are to address past cultures holistically, then rock art has to be part of the action. Visual imagery is not only a substantial aspect of the archaeological past but, as I keep saying, it is key to understanding cosmologies, social organization, and it is a sensitive indicator of the history of broad interregional relationships. Almost everywhere else in the world, iconography is part and parcel of the record of the past and is examined by scholars. Notice that you cannot pick up a book on Mexican archaeology that is not loaded with graphic imagery. In the Southwest ancient graphic imagery is primarily on rocks, and it’s been given short shrift. Currently great strides are being made to overcome the perception of wild chaos and to integrate the reality and order of cultural landscapes into consideration of cosmologies and religion. Today there is much more interest in ancient religions, and this is manifest in a great many more publications that address religions in connection with iconography and landscape, including rock art. I think that interest will continue to increase and that archaeology in the Southwest and elsewhere in North America will incorporate rock art more often in its considerations. I certainly expect that.

Another issue—there are so many differences between Western society and Native societies—is how land is regarded. Land for the West [Western culture] is a resource, it’s an economic resource, a recreational resource—owned and managed and has no sacred value. Sacredness is contained in the churches. But for American Indian communities, the whole land is sacred and rock art interacts with that sacredness. This opens the door to numerous ethical issues when Western development invades Native space, especially landscapes where shrines and rock art exist.

Ethical issues are coming to the fore as indigenous peoples have a greater voice and archaeologists are listening. As for rock art, there is the issue of interpretation and problems of interpretation have become more complicated as we deal not only with Native voices but also those of our anthropological contemporaries asserting ethical judgments. Shamanism was a big topic of investigation for a while, especially in the 1960s and ’70s, coinciding with the use of

mind-altering substances and such. A lot of rock art, from my perspective—and that of many colleagues, as well, working in the American West—was created in the past, particularly by members of hunter-gatherer societies whose spiritual leadership was in the hands of shamanic practitioners, to document visionary experience—out-of-body journeys to a supernatural realm in order to acquire the power to cure, control the weather, and respond to other needs of their people. However, some anthropologists say that you cannot talk about shamans because to do so implies that other people—those vision seekers—are irrational. These anthropologists contend that, in fact, everyone is as rational as we Westerners are! (An assertion that in itself bears some looking into!) I address this in my recent book because, from my perspective, this denies Native people an essential means with which they have addressed and coped with the world.

Warfare is another contentious issue. Warriors depicted on rocks have different implications for different people. Fortunately, there is a wonderful book written about Northern Plains rock art by James Keyser, *Art of the Warriors: Rock Art of the American Plains*, who talks about warriors on horseback. This is historical rock art that honors their warriors, and much of the imagery was proudly painted to show their bravery. In the Pueblo world, there is this myth about the peaceful Pueblos, and a belief that the white community looks down on war-like people, and casts them in a negative light if they're seen as war-like. Tony Chavarria has elucidated this very well in a recent interview published in 2012, in *The Ethics of Anthropology and Amerindian Research: Reporting on Environmental Degradation and Warfare*. In order to be regarded favorably in the eyes of the white community, Pueblo people don't want to be seen as having been warriors, even though warriors and war societies were once highly regarded and honored by their own people. The rock art leaves no doubt as to this! But when it comes to trying to interact with the Western world, well, there is some fear on the part of the Pueblos that they might not look so good in Western eyes if they extol their own warrior past. In turn, in reinforcing these feelings, Western society is socially remiss in pressuring them to be ashamed of a proud legacy. Is this not in itself unethical? And none of this takes into consideration the much more complicated role of Pueblo warfare in the past and its role in Pueblo cosmology and in the reciprocal relationships between the spirit world and people. But acknowledging that it can be used to cast aspersions on Native people, what do you do when you find all this evidence for warfare on rock art? Do you report on it? Of course you do. I'm saying as an anthropologist you have to be honest to your discipline and report on it. Pueblo warfare cannot be interpreted and evaluated in our terms. These are a few of the moral issues that intervene between the anthropologist

or archaeologist and the Native communities. It is also ironic that our own society, mired in one war after another, has a negative attitude toward others who engage in conflict. Doesn't everyone?

Another very different ethical consideration is one that involves popular interest in rock art to the point of seeing how many sites you can visit—a mindset in which interest in rock art becomes an acquisitive pursuit—something like stamp collecting. Public interest in rock art often leads to vandalism, and too many visitors also leads to environmental degradation of the sites. Rock art sites, by their very nature—their high visibility and the fact that they are in unprotected places in the landscape—renders them vulnerable, which, in turn, puts a lot of responsibility on government agencies and other landowners to provide surveillance and protection. In this situation, site steward programs have been helpful.

But to get back to “stamp collecting”—trivialization is one outcome. Rock art images, apart from their landscape setting and symbolic frameworks, quickly become catchy icons appropriated for a variety of uses in the Western world. Rock art designs appear on t-shirts, as logos, and jewelry, and then you find rock art showing up in commercial contexts all over the place. Is this a problem? We cannot build walls between cultures, and image-borrowing is something people do all the time, but appropriation is certainly a major ethical issue.

SLG: You are talking not just about trivialization, but about commodification, aren't you? Artifacts are turned into commercial objects that can be transported to other places, sold, displayed, copied, worn.

PS: Exactly, and so what do we do about this? I think Erika Bsumek also deals with some of this in her book, *Indian-made: Navajo Culture in the Market Place, 1868–1940*.

SLG: With regard to the Navajo, yes, exactly.

PS: One approach has been to try to “hide” from the public elements in the rock art regarded as sacred, as has been done at Petroglyph National Monument recently. Figures of Pueblo supernaturals rarely appear in promotional material for the monument. But, by leaving them out, the rock art then becomes mundane—I'm painting with a big brush here. It becomes trivialized if you downplay religious content to please the Pueblos. And they probably don't care if what is most sacred to them is not promoted and are just as happy not to have, for example, the kachina imagery publicized. But trivializing rock art leaves it open to exploitation.

SLG: What's next for you? What project would you like to do next? What project will you do next?

PS: I really don't know. As for a project as such, I have nothing major in mind currently, but I am increasingly interested in how Western ideas and conceits impact our views of indigenous cultures, leading to misunderstandings and distorted perspectives. Exploring these issues brings to light amazing revelations on both sides of the cultural rift, including our own unconsciously held biases. As far as rock art goes, I expect that my recent book, *Images and Power: Rock Art and Ethics*, will lead to more debate along those lines.

SLG: If you were going to do it all over again, would you do it differently?

PS: Differently? I don't know how I could do it differently [sighs]. When I started out in the Southwest, rock art was just one big blur. It hadn't been organized—time frames needed to be established and cultural associations needed to be made, rock art needed to be described in terms of time and space, so I don't think that could have been any different. It's really hard to answer that. It was the way to move forward.

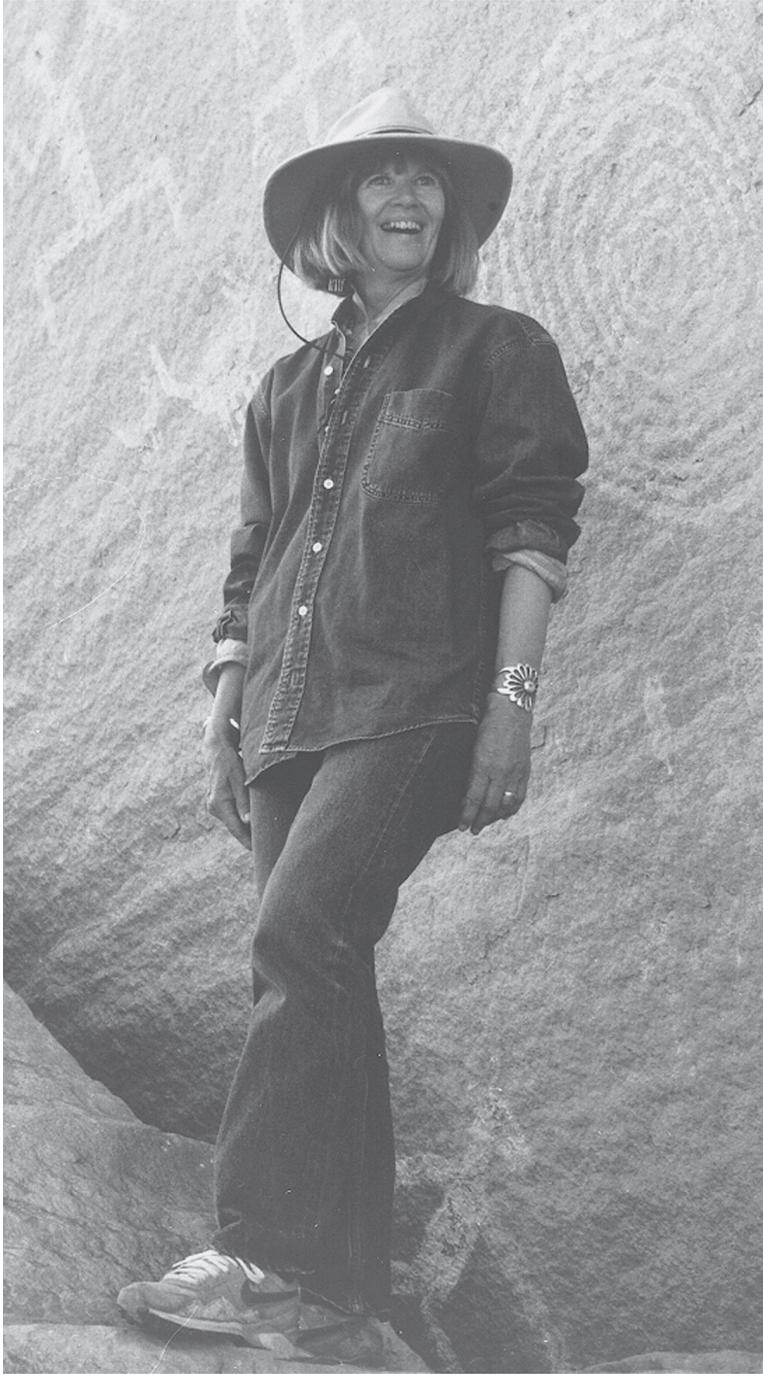
But my compelling interest in whatever I do, my particular interest, is trying to understand what it is about, the meaning, the religion, the worldviews that are incorporated into all the art forms, whether it be figurines, kiva murals, rock art. Each is a way of understanding another cosmology and worldview as well as the history of ideas about this place. It opens doors to another perspective on the Southwest that is just plain exciting, and opens up the possibility that you're not locked into one particular perceptual system—a perceptual rut! Granted, knowledge of something for the sake of itself is pretty much a Western value—I admit guilt! But nevertheless, that's what motivates me in all of this. *Personally*. It is to go beyond the world presented to me. I don't live in Europe. I don't know the places my people are derived from and I don't believe in "tribal memory." I live here and I want to know how people related to and still understand the Southwest. Understanding place is important especially today when people are increasingly detached from their natural environment. I think we need to pay attention to the relationships between ourselves and the land and the metaphors that "explain" the processes going on around us, and what they can tell us, and in the Southwest, about the seasons, and the rain, and the dry times—all that. Native Americans have been here for hundreds, thousands of years. During this time they have pictured their inner and outer worlds on cliffs and boulders. Knowing about these images is one way of understanding how they have lived in and with the Southwest. So that is one of my motivations, my personal motivation for studying rock art. I guess it was the cicadas!

SLG: This is a wonderful way to end. Thank you.

## Notes

1. Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No: Women's Stories from a Brazilian Slave Society*, *New Approaches to the Americas* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); and Sandra Lauderdale Graham, "Being Yoruba in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro," *Slavery & Abolition* 32 (March 2011): 1–26.

2. E. P. Thompson, "Anthropology and the Discipline of Historical Context," *Midland History* 1 (spring 1972): 41–55, 45 (quoted).



Polly Schaafsma in Canyon del Muerto at Standing Cow, ca. 1992. Photograph courtesy Polly Schaafsma.