

Producing "Generations in Clay"

Kinship, Markets, and Hopi Pottery

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In November 1992, "Hisi" or Camille Nampeyo, a 28-year-old great-great-granddaughter of the famous potter Nampeyo, was profiled as one of two Hopi potters destined to carry on her ancestor's tradition (Jacka 1992). While women in the First Mesa villages on the Hopi reservation in northeastern Arizona have made pottery for trade or sale to the outside world at least since the turn of the century, only in recent decades has

some of it come to be appreciated as American Indian art. Marketplace discourse uses language such as the "destiny" of named artists and the "blessing of the Nampeyo family." This language both constructs the value of Hopi pottery as art and obscures the social networks through which it is produced (Monthan and Monthan 1977; cf. Myers 1991).

I will show in this article how specific marketing practices have led to the genealogical reckoning of a Nampeyo "potter dynasty," now extended to five generations of potters subsequent to Nampeyo. This genealogical reckoning

has been produced and canonized in various media from the end of the 19th century to the present. Today, genealogies can be found prominently displayed with Hopi pottery for sale in shops as a guarantee of its authenticity. The canonization of the Nampeyo lineage in various media has structured the market for Hopi pottery in ways that create a demand for specific, named potters and particular styles of work. Furthermore, Western cultural values, which define objects as art and isolate individuals as artists, work against local First Mesa values of producing social persons.

Potters and Traders (1890–1920)

Decorated Hopi pottery of the 19th century was principally produced in the village of Walpi, the oldest Hopi village on First Mesa (Figs. 2, 3). Nampeyo, the best known First Mesa potter of the 20th century, was born to a Tewa mother and a Hopi father around 1860 in Hanoki, or Hano, the village settled in the late 17th century by Tewa immigrants from New Mexico. Thus, Nampeyo and her matrilineal descendants are of Tewa descent. Yet they and their pottery have been

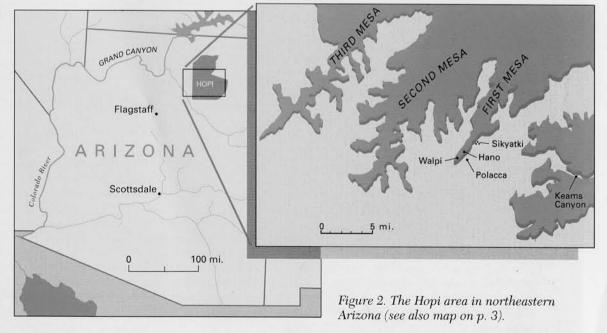




Figure 3. Polacca polychrome jar, Style C. This style of painting shows design influence from the pueblo of Zuni, where Hopis migrated on several occasions due to drought. famine, and epidemics in their villages during the 19th century. Polacca polychrome was prevalent at First Mesa throughout the century. Beginning in the 1880s, the trader Thomas Keam commissioned potters to reproduce designs found on "ancient wares" recovered from ruins. The Polacca decorative style was gradually replaced by the Sikyatki Revival style in the 20th century. Courtesy Peabody Museum of

Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University; cat. no. 43-39-10/25890, neg. no. N31355. Photograph by Hillel Burger. Ht. 22.0 cm, Dia, 27.0 cm

reckoning kinship, Nampeyo was born of her mother's Corn clan and born for her "ancient America." eager to acquire images and products of "ancient America." father's Snake clan. The women of her peyo, which means Snake Girl or potter (Nequatewa 1943).

Nampeyo's paternal grandmother was a well-known potter from Walpi, and since her father often took her there, Nampeyo learned to make and especially to decorate pottery from her grandmother. By the time of Nampeyo's second marriage in 1881 to a Hopi man from Walpi named Lesou, she was already known as a good pottery designer using the "old Hopi" designs of that village (Nequatewa 1943).

As a young woman Nampeyo met and became familiar with white people. She kept house for her brother, Tom Polacca, who supplied food and lodging for the 1875 Hayden Survey (Frisbie 1973:243). White people found her immediately intriguing. Struck by her beauty, William Henry Jackson, a member of the Survey, photographed her and created an image that became a popular representation of pueblo "maidens" (Fig. 1). This was the first of many photographs of Nampevo local men.

identified consistently to the outside taken by famous photographers and world as Hopi. In the Hopi manner of widely circulated to a public increasingly

In 1875 Thomas Keam opened the father's clan gave her the name Nam- first trading post to serve the villages of First Mesa. Keam had a particular inter-Harmless Snake. This is also the name est in pottery. He and his assistant, with which she achieved her fame as a Alexander Stephen, explored local ruins and removed pots from them, especially

> "the Sikyatki Revival style of pottery decoration was an instant success with the traders"

from the ruin of Sikyatki where notable 15th and 16th century polychrome vessels were found (Figs. 4, 5). Before 1890, Keam commissioned some First Mesa potters to make reproductions of Sikyatki vessels (Fig. 6; Wade and McChesney 1981:455). By 1895, Jesse Walter Fewkes was formally excavating the site for the Smithsonian Institution, employing Nampeyo's husband, Lesou, among other

Through her associations with Keam and Fewkes, Nampeyo had both direct access to designs on pottery recovered from Sikyatki and encouragement to use them. She readily adopted the style because, according to Fewkes, she "found a better market for ancient than modern ware" (Stacey 1974a:37). Nampeyo instructed other Hano women in the new style; nevertheless, her work surpassed theirs. Walpi women were critical of Nampeyo and those she taught (Nequatewa 1943:89), a point to which I will return.

Whether or not Nampeyo was the sole potter decorating in the Sikvatki Revival style, and exactly when she switched from the "old Hopi" designs of Walpi to designs inspired by the pots recovered from Sikyatki (Fig. 7), are matters of some debate. What is significant, however, is that the Sikyatki Revival style of pottery decoration was an instant success with the traders. who bought it in large quantities and sold it to the outside world (Frisbie 1973:235: Nequatewa 1943:89). Traders such as the Hubbells and Tom Pavatea sometimes sold pottery directly to the public, but more frequently they sold wholesale to firms such as the Fred Harvey Company, which operated a chain of restaurants serving the Santa Fe Railway and a tour service in the Southwest (Fig. 8).

Notable among the Harvey Company's endeavors was a tourist attraction called Hopi House adjacent to the luxurious El Tovar Hotel at Grand Canyon (Figs. 9, 10). Nampeyo was encouraged to demonstrate at Hopi House by John Lorenzo Hubbell, one of the traders to whom she sold or traded her work (Frisbie 1973. Kramer 1988). She first demonstrated there in 1905, a task that involved considerable logistics in temporarily relocating herself and ten members of

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Figure 4. Protohistoric and prehistoric pottery with contemporary baskets and photographs displayed in Thomas Keam's "curio room," ca. 1901. Keam opened his trading post near First Mesa in 1875. UM neg. no. S4-139897

those accompanying her were her husband, their two- or three-year-old daughter Fannie, their oldest daughter Annie Healing, and Annie's husband and daughter Rachel, who was a year younger than Fannie (Kramer 1988:48-49). Nampeyo demonstrated at Hopi House again in 1907. Pots which she produced there sold well and were marked with stickers, "Made by Nampeyo, Hopi."

In 1910, she again demonstrated pottery making, this time at Chicago's United States Land and Irrigation Exposition, in a railway exhibit planned by George A. Dorsey of the Field Museum and Herman Schweizer, buyer and head of the Indian Department for the Fred Harvey Company. Because of her painting skill and the commercial success of this new decorative style, Nampeyo is widely credited with reviving the Hopi pottery tradition, which was then considered by scholars to be in decline.

Through her pottery-making demonstrations and widely distributed photographs of her taken by Curtis, Vroman,

her family for three months. Among and photographers of the Harvey Company, Nampeyo became an icon of Hopi culture. She came to symbolize not only its pottery, but its people, and in the larger sense all that Hopi represented: the exotic and primitive, remote but domesticated American Southwest. In this way the name Nampeyo became a tourist commodity. By the first decade of this century, Nampeyo's name was known throughout the United States and Europe, and every visitor to the Southwest brought home a souvenir of her work (Hough 1915, Kramer 1988),

The result was that, although other First Mesa women continued to make and sell pottery, some in the newly popular Sikyatki Revival style, Nampeyo's was the pottery most sought after.

The other potters' work didn't receive the attention perhaps that Nampeyo did...; if they had had the opportunity to go to Grand Canyon and demonstrate, their name would have been on the forefront, too. But as it was Nampeyo got most of the credit because



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Figure 5. Late Sikyatki Polychrome jar, ca. 1600. An excellent example of the painting style characteristic of pottery widely considered to be the finest produced in the Hopi area.

Courtesy Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University; cat. no. 43-39-10/25129, neg. no. N33206. Photograph by Hillel Burger. Ht. 26.0 cm, Dia. 34.5 cm



Figure 6. An early example of a Sikyatki Revival polychrome jar. The author's analysis of the Peabody Museum's Keam Collection has identified at least three potters other than Nampeyo working in the new style at the turn of the century, but these potters remain anonymous. No Sikyatki Revival vessel in the Keam Collection is documented as having been produced by Nampeyo.

Courtesy Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University; cat. no. 43-39-10/25140, neg. no. N28794. Photograph by Hillel Burger. Ht. 24.3 cm. Dia. 34.5 cm

she was out there, just one of those marketing things that happen. And so when [tourists] came in [to trading posts in Keam's Canyon or Polaccal, they would ask for Nampeyo [pottery].

Interview with William Bruce McGee, owner of McGees Beyond Native Tra-October 21, 1992

was evident.

Pride and Price in Art (1920 - 1960)

With the inception of Santa Fe's Indian Market (1922), Gallup's Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial (1922), and the dition Gallery in Holbrook, Arizona, Museum of Northern Arizona's annual Hopi Craftsman exhibit (1930; see arti-The success of marketing named pottery cles by Eaton and Westheimer, this issue), outlets for the sale of Indian

handicrafts became more diversified. Marketing also became more restricted in the 1920s and 1930s, as standards and criteria for the evaluation of Indian arts were established. Other fairs and exhibitions followed that became important outlets for Hopi pottery (Heard Museum Guild, 1955; Scottsdale National, 1961; Pueblo Grande, 1976), but the first markets remained the most prestigious of the judging venues.



Figure 7. Nampeyo was photographed outside her house in Hano by A. C. Vroman in 1901. Notice the quantities of her Sikyatki Revival pottery surrounding her. Courtesy Southwest Museum: neg. no. N30539

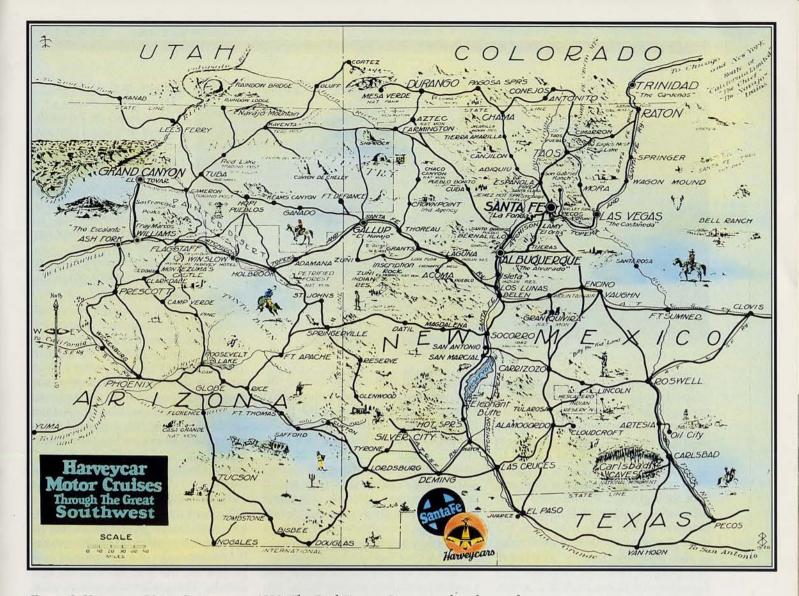


Figure 8. Harveycar Motor Cruises map, 1928. The Fred Harvey Company played an early and major role in making the Southwest and its sites accessible to the outside world. UM neg. no. T35-2050 (lantern slide no. 1653)

In the 1920s, with Nampeyo's evesight failing but the demand for her pottery soaring, other members of the family painted for her, including her husband and her daughters Annie and Fannie. In fact, some First Mesa potters whom I have consulted claim that Lesou was the painter. Nampevo encouraged her daughters to continue producing pottery as a way to make a living (Maxwell Museum 1974, Monthan and Monthan 1977). Traders, as mediators between producers and consumers, also encouraged her offspring and in specific ways.

Traders continued to play an important role in the promotion of Indian crafts by selling pots wholesale to fairs and markets. They often served as "sponsors" for individual artists by signing works in pencil with the artist's name and conveying to the artists what kinds of objects won recognition in the form of

ribbons and cash. Traders always provided ready cash or trade for objects. Potters could bring work at any time and not have to wait for fair dates, nor be concerned about whether or not their work would sell at a fair. This role of traders remains important even in today's

The period following World War II saw the institutionalization of evaluative criteria for Indian art. Some consider that, as a result, pride of workmanship was achieved on a more widespread basis; members of Nampeyo's family, especially Fannie, were already thought to take pride in their work. Along with criteria of technical and aesthetic accomplishment came higher prices for works that met these criteria: thus an equivalence between "excellence" and "price" was established in the sale of Indian handicrafts.

"Generations in Clay" (1960-1980)

In 1938, the Keams Canyon trading post was taken over by the McGee family, who also purchased the Polacca store from Tom Pavatea. The McGees continued buying from Nampeyos, especially Fannie who began signing pots "Fanny Nampeyo" following her mother's death in 1942. In 1947, the McGee family hired Byron Hunter to work at their stores, at first during summers and in 1963 on a full-time basis at the Polacca store. A paved road to and across the Hopi reservation provided direct access to First Mesa, inducing greater tourist travel to the Hopi villages than had been achieved by railroad. Guidebooks (such as Hepburn's 1963 Complete Guide to the Southwest) oriented tourists to the sights of the Southwest that were easily

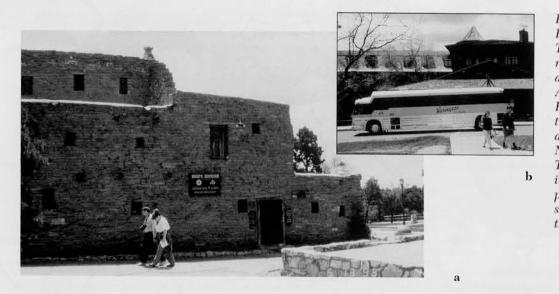


Figure 9a, b. (a) Hopi House and (b) the El Tovar Hotel, on the south rim of the Grand Canyon, as they appear today. Although still run by the Fred Harvey Company, these tourist attractions are also maintained by the National Park Service. The "Harveycar" tour bus in front of El Tovar provides transportation to scenic locations around the canyon.

reached by car, including its indigenous inhabitants. Byron Hunter continued to work with the Nampeyos, especially Fannie and her daughters, critiquing the quality of the work they brought in, as Byron Hunter.

Arizona Highways, a publication of the Arizona Department of Transportation, promoted tourism in the state. Issues featured photographic essays, in lavish color, produced by Arizona Indians. of the landscape and its inhabitants. Beginning in 1960, the magazine produced special issues on Indian crafts. fairs and markets came profiles of indi-

an Arts (Fig. 11). Photographs by Ray did Bruce McGee who was trained by Manley and Jerry Jacka accompanied texts written by anthropologists, archae-In conjunction with guidebooks, ologists, and museum personnel, as well as staff writers. Arizona Highways became the primary medium for promoting the sale and consumption of items tery issues, one on prehistoric and one on

By this time, buyers were differentiated into those purchasing curios and souvenirs and those seeking Indian art, decade. The prehistoric pottery issue Along with coverage of prizes awarded at i.e., quality work of specific artists as featured excerpts of Fewkes's Bureau defined by market outlets and publica- of American Ethnology reports and a

photographed with a prize-winning rib- art, and due to the promotion she bon), and the traders and galleries that received "she was [known as] the greatrepresented them, including the Byron est Indian pottery maker alive" (Kramer Hunter Trading Post and McGee's Indi- 1988:534). The steady supply of Nampeyo pottery was assured by both traders' encouragement of her offspring to "carry on the tradition" and by the media of

In 1974, Arizona Highways began a Collector Series and produced two potcontemporary pottery. These issues were but two examples of a profusion of such publications which appeared during that vidual artisans, their work (often tions. Nampeyo's pottery was defined as discussion of the beginning of the



Figure 10. Contemporary Hopi pottery for sale inside Hopi House at the Grand Canyon. The work of many potters other than members of the Nampeyo family are now sold there. Photograph by Christopher Burnett

Sikyatki revival by Nampeyo (Stacey 1974a:36-37). The publication thus served to reify what was by now the myth that the revival resulted solely from Nampeyo's artistic talent. Although the contemporary pottery issue featured the work of various Hopi potters, preeminent among them were "five potters and four generations of the Nampeyo family" (Stacey 1974b:20-21). The issue also included promotions for two forthcoming exhibits featuring Nampeyo and her descendants, one devoted exclusively to the Nampeyo family.

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In the 1970s, exhibits devoted to the Nampeyos or featuring Nampeyo and her descendants were organized by museums or cultural centers (Museum of Northern Arizona 1973, Muckenthaler Cultural Center 1974, Maxwell Museum 1974) Pottery by Nampeyo and from 16 to 27 of her descendants was included. These exhibits were often accompanied by catalogues that included genealogies of the Nampeyo family, both creating and demonstrating the continuation of this "pottery tradition" (Fig. 12; Collins 1974, Maxwell Museum 1974).

During this decade, the newest generation of potters included Hisi, who was 10 years old in 1974. The daughter of Dextra Quotskuyva, Hisi is also the granddaughter of Annie and Willie Healing's daughter Rachel, who as a small child accompanied Nampeyo on her first demonstration at Hopi House. In turn, this was a period when Dextra herself tradition. was receiving considerable attention in

the media, including recognition in the collector's issue of Arizona Highways (Stacey 1974b) and a profile in American Indian Art (Monthan and Monthan 1977). Thus, this new generation of artist-potters was composed of the offspring of the first potter to produce a commodity for public consumption, now defined as an art form.

Hisi, then, was socialized into the practices and institutions of marketing pottery from the outset. By the 1970s, the marketing of pottery had become

"The Nampeyo dynasty of potters has been critically evaluated and shaped by dealers and the media"

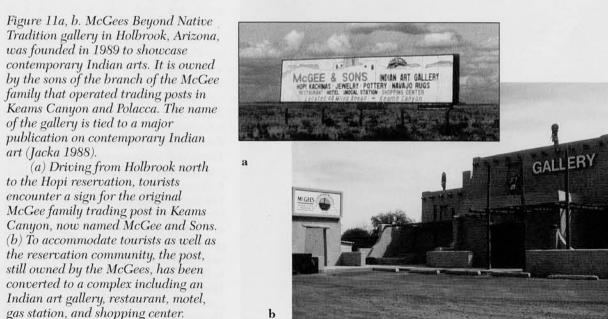
good business, with pots commanding "impressive prices" and receiving "recognition as works of art." With four generations of experience in market practices preceding and preparing her, it is not surprising that the offspring of a Nampeyo descendant whose own reputation as an artist was well established would be encouraged to "carry on the

media fostered brand-name buying, and a "consumer-direct" trend began: the consumer/collector could go directly to the source, that is, the potter, without the mediation of a trader. Nevertheless, traders were still actively structuring the market. Any member of the family who wanted to make pottery was encouraged to do so, and Nampeyo pottery began to saturate the marketplace. By 1983, 45 Nampeyo potters were featured in an exhibit held, significantly, in an Albuquerque gallery, rather than an anthropology museum. Hisi was among them. By now she was nearly 20 years old.

This exhibit catalogue's genealogy lists 64 Nampeyo descendants and affines (persons related by marriage), including the offspring of Nampeyo's male descendants (notably those of Tom Polacca, Fannie's son) along with the offspring of her female descendants (Anthony 1983). The market was recognizing descent indiscriminately, that is, according to Euro-American bilateral rather than Hopi matrilineal criteria. Even male relatives by marriage were encouraged to make and sell pottery.

What's in a Name? (1980 - 1990)

The Nampeyo dynasty of potters has been critically evaluated and shaped by dealers and the media during the last decade. Gallery 10 in Scottsdale, for example, an elite gallery with branches in The education of the public by various New York City and Santa Fe, instituted



annual Hopi shows in 1984 (Fig. 13). In ualized styles, the market was also open-1986 the gallery mounted a series of exhibits defining new trends in Native American art which included Hopi potfrom the Hopi Mesas," "A Month of Amazement"). In these exhibits only certain members of the Nampevo family were featured, notably Dextra and Camille (Hisi) Quotskuyva and Tom, Gary, and Carla Polacca, along with other Highways released its "New Individualists" issue, profiling Dextra and Tom, along with Rondina Huma, a Hopi-Tewa potter from Hano, and Al Quoyawayma (Jacka 1986).

While marketing strategies instituted by dealers and the media were encouraging specific Nampeyo potters to refine their work and to develop more individ-

ing up to other potters. Many of these develop their names as artists and to have (such as Rondina Huma) had won prizes collectors seek out their work is to have it at Indian Market. Others, such as Helen tery ("Treasures of the Western Native Naha (Feather Woman) and Joy Navasie in Arizona Highways or appearing Americans," "All That's Really Worth- (Frog Woman), both First Mesa potters in a gallery advertisement in American while in American Indian Art," "Images of Tewa descent, had won prizes and Indian Art). The person responsible for were featured in tourist publications accomplishing this kind of publication is such as Arizona Highways and Ray Manley's Collecting Southwestern Indian Arts and Crafts (1979). The Navasies and Nahas have begun to receive media attention and some genealogical reckon-Hopi artists. In the same year, Arizona ing (i.e., expectations for the next generation), but not to the extent of the Nampeyo family. It still remains the case that no other potters have received as **Production and Social** much attention as Nampeyo and her offspring. A significant recent publication promoting the work of individual artists features the work of five living Nam- is not easy, as it involves social networks peyos, two deceased Nampeyos, and four other Hopi potters (Jacka 1988).

The primary means for potters to published in a "book" (i.e., photographed the dealer. Prize winning, of course, is another important means of achieving recognition. Both work together to create and build an individual's name as an artist in the marketplace.

The Work of Pottery Recognition

The work of becoming a named artist and values from differing cultural systems that often conflict. Many potters have inadvertently severed relationships with dealers by complaining when they did not feel they received a "fair" price for their work, what they considered to be adequate compensation, however illdefined the concept. A dealer may feel that a beginning potter's work needs to start out at a lower level and be built up gradually through his efforts (dealers are principally male), establishing some consistency to the product. Dealers also attempt to control the volume of an individual's work in the marketplace at any given time, so as to build and keep its value high. Potters not familiar with



Figure 12. Hopi pots for sale in a Scottsdale, Arizona, shop. Established in 1969-70, the Old Territorial Shop was one of the first devoted to American Indian art to open in Scottsdale. The town is now a major locale for the sale of American Indian art. A Nampeyo family genealogy with photographs excerpted from Seven Families in Pueblo Pottery (Maxwell Museum 1974) accompanies pots made by members of the Nampeyo family.

these and other market practices are often insulted by dealers who do not accede to their requests for pricing or other considerations.

Nampeyo was the first Hopi potter to

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become a named artist. Her name was an identity given her by the women of her father's matrilineage as part of her larger social identity constructed through First Mesa kinship networks. Whether conscious or not, in allowing this name to be commoditized and promoted she precluded recognition of the larger work of pottery production that was recognized at women of her father's matrilineage. At the time Nampeyo learned to make pottery, potters worked collectively to produce their wares. Pottery thus objectified valued social relations where sharing with individuals not of one's matrilineage was both important and necessary for households to function. By engaging in social networks of a different cultural system with different values. Nampeyo's actions negated the values of the First Mesa community. At First Mesa, wide kin networks are recognized in constructing social personhood (cf. Weiner 1976). Individuals have commented to me that pottery making did not belong to Nampeyo. She was not the first potter, and the women who taught her and her husband to paint and shared their potting knowledge with them and contributed importantly to her work. This no doubt accounts in part for the criticism she received from Walpi women. At First Mesa the work of an individ-

ual, when it is recognized, is specific to that individual and does not carry through generations. Individuals decide for themselves when and how they will begin to take up pottery and use it for their living. Women (and now men) may encourage their daughters or sons, but only after these individuals have demonstrated their own interest in the work. This is true also for Hisi, who, after becoming trained in computer technology, decided to return to First Mesa to make her living by pottery (Jacka 1992). Nevertheless, her decision was also encouraged by the social relations of the marketplace, with which she is now fully familiar. She can and does claim the Nampeyo name. But the "generations in clay" of which she has been selected to be the contemporary representative are a product of Western art market practices and discourse.



First Mesa, especially among the Hopi Figure 13. Gallery 10 in Scottsdale, Arizona, was founded in 1978 to provide an environment for showing "significant American Indian art." These small Hopi pots, along with baskets and miniature pottery from other Southwestern pueblos. are displayed in a locked case. Information is not included in the display, but the gallery maintains an extensive library of published works on Indian art for. consultation.

Acknowledgments

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