

Educational Function of Native American Art Shops in Flagstaff, Arizona

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This thesis investigates the educational function of Native American art shops in Flagstaff, Arizona. Research was conducted in six Native American art shops: Puchteca Indian Art, Winter Sun Trading Company, Painted Desert Trading Company, Thunder Mountain, the Jonathan Day Collection, and the Museum Shop in the Museum of Northern Arizona. The researcher discusses early and modern influences on the Southwestern Native American art market, and efforts to educate the public about Southwestern Native American art and culture. These influences included the Fred Harvey Company, the Santa Fe Indian Market, the Museum of Northern Arizona, the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, and popular and scholarly books and periodicals. This information served as a background for comparing the interactions between customers and staff that the researcher observed in Native American art shops in Flagstaff, Arizona. An analysis of the literature and the observations reveals that much of the general public was not aware of the cultural differences among Native

American tribes or that these differences were reflected in the art forms of each Native American tribe. The staff and owners in Native American art shops in Flagstaff, Arizona, attempted to clarify this misunderstanding to customers. This indicated that Native American art shops in Flagstaff, Arizona, serve an educational function.

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