Chapter 16
Ancestral Pueblos and Modern Diatribes: An Interview with Antonio Chavarria of Santa Clara Pueblo, Curator of Ethnology, Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Antonio Chavarria and Rubén G. Mendoza

Abstract In an effort to solicit the advice and counsel of an American Indian advocate concerned with addressing the activities of anthropologists and museums, in June of 2010 Mendoza convened an interview with Museum of Indian Arts and Culture Curator of Ethnology Antonio "Tony" Chavarria at the Laboratory of Anthropology in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Antonio expresses an American Indian perspective on how anthropologists and other social scientists should proceed when evidence for prehistoric or recent Amerindian social violence, and or unsound eco-cultural practices are encountered. First, Chavarria advises scholars to share their interpretations of the data with the affected descendant populations well in advance of publishing research findings. He contends that the protocol in question presents native people with the opportunity to offer alternative interpretations and insights into the scholarly interrogation of that evidence recovered. While he acknowledges that Amerindians are fully capable of engaging in unsound environmental practices despite popular characterizations to the contrary; he acknowledges that some instances of natural resource depletion by ancestral Pueblo groups are directly attributable to the imposition of Western strictures regarding private property. He contends that both Hispanic and American systems of land tenure ultimately disrupted longstanding traditional Pueblo patterns that called for the cyclical abandonment of exhausted farmsteads, and the interim (re)settlement of other viable lands and outliers, in a manner essentially constituting a form of shifting cultivation. Ultimately, Chavarria does not condone the obfuscation or censorship of data not in accord with traditional or popular cultural beliefs, but rather, advises anthropologists to establish and maintain open lines of communication with descendant communities.

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Introduction

This transcribed narrative constitutes an effort on the part of the editors of this volume to capture the personal sentiments and anthropological perspectives of one who continues to devote himself to the preservation, protection, and perpetuation of ancestral and modern Pueblo Indian cultures and traditions. With formal academic training in anthropology, an impressive track record safeguarding and preserving American Indian art and culture, and ancestral family ties to Santa Clara Pueblo, the editors sought to capture the perspectives of this guardian of the arts and heritage of New Mexico. In order to achieve this end, Mendoza traveled to the Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico, in June of 2010 so as to conduct this interview of Pueblo Indian leader and Amerindian scholar Antonio Chavarria. In the final analysis, it was determined that only the more salient elements of the extensive transcript produced would be retained, and as such, commentaries by Mendoza have largely been excluded, and those of Chavarria have been significantly pared back in this instance. A preliminary transcript of those digital audio recordings produced was prepared by CSU Monterey Bay graduate student Shari René Harder. Because the interview was conducted over the course of several days, and Mendoza sought to revisit key elements of this narrative repeatedly, the transcript has been significantly reworked to address the essential content conveyed by Antonio Chavarria in this instance (Fig. 16.1).

Fig. 16.1 Antonio Chavarria of Santa Clara Pueblo, Curator of Ethnology, Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 2006

Part 1: Hypothetical Scenarios

Mendoza: We are going to start with a hypothetical scenario posed by fellow anthropologist Richard Chacon. The scenario is as follows: A young graduate student is particularly troubled by what he or she has encountered while conducting field work among an Amerindian group. We will refer to the group as Tribe X. The student has recovered evidence for armed conflict and other forms of social violence among those identified with Tribe X. The student similarly found evidence indicating that the social and cultural behaviors of Tribe X have resulted in the degradation of the natural environment. The first question, therefore, is as follows: How might Tribe X come to be harmed by the reporting of such data?

Chavarria: Basically, it is not necessarily the initial reporting of this data in peer reviewed journals that is problematic, but rather the down the line transmission of that data. By the time it hits the media it takes on a life of its own. There was an example reported on NPR of the so-called Mozart effect. In other words, the initial report noted that when Mozart's creations were played in classroom contexts, student achievement was noticeably improved. This version of the story soon morphed into another that concluded that if you played Mozart to children, their intelligence quotient would increase dramatically, and they would therefore do far better on scholastic achievement tests. Despite the fact that the original one-page story regarding the Mozart effect acknowledged the temporary nature of the improvement in question, the report nevertheless took on a life all its own. Something very similar resulted from initial reports regarding Kennewick Man. All of a sudden, and out of nowhere, the story evolved into one centered on the extreme antiquity of the earliest Caucasian in the Americas. The report intimated that Kennewick Man may represent a race of Caucasians who originally settled this land, but were subsequently exterminated by the latter arrival of Native American populations. This in effect represents for me one of those ways in which a group may be harmed. Such reporting effectively serves to perpetuate stereotypes that are so predominant in the media. American culture continues to perpetuate this "Cowboys and Indians" mentality. Once again, Manifest Destiny and its post-Modern crusaders continue to beat back hostiles, who are soon divested of their respective histories, and therefore, the historical realities in this instance are compromised.

It is as though the media feels entitled to distort and embellish critical scientific findings and information in order to get the story, and so it was with the Turners' *Man Corn* (Turner and Turner 1999). Archaeologists around here have issues with *Man Corn*, particularly given the fact that most of those sites from which key data was taken, and which received the most attention in the media, are less than conclusive where evidence for cannibalism is concerned. Ironically, other Southwestern sites, where the evidence for cannibalism is far more dramatic and clear cut, receive far less attention. The problem, I believe, is once again with media representations of anthropological content. A key problem created by the Turners' concerns the fact that their book presents cannibalism as a cultural practice among the Pueblos. Isolated evidence for cannibalism among ancestral Puebloan peoples is no more conclusive evidence for widespread Southwestern cultural practices than those

interpretations that might be taken from the excavated human remains of the ill-fated Donner party. As far as I know, evidence for cannibalism from the Donner party camp in the Sierras has yet to be interpreted as indicative of mid-nineteenth-century Anglo American subsistence patterns – and clearly falls short of being deemed a cultural practice.

Interpreting some of these human behaviors in terms of concrete cultural practices is particularly problematic when each case is different, and such evidence may be an aberration or other clandestine activity. Presenting such information publicly only serves to ruin bridges to native communities, who might have otherwise discussed such practices as witchcraft as possible explanations. As a result, we may not now be able to talk to native communities about why they believe cannibalism would or would not be practiced. What tribal peoples would never tell them now is out of fear related to witchcraft. Witchcraft is counter to and contradicts acceptable behavior. Discussing witchcraft could well reveal examples of cannibalism which tend to happen in secluded areas where such may well have been the practice. While cannibalism may have served a purpose in such rituals, it was very likely an aberration to the mainstream traditions of the ancestral Pueblo people (Figs. 16.2 and 16.3).

Mendoza: Given your concerns about preserving and accurately representing your ancestral traditions, what was your initial response to the Turners' *Man Corn*?

Chavarria: My first thoughts were that this was more of the same, that again. I thought the Turners' advanced overreaching conclusions, and sought in their findings evidence for widespread cultural practices; and that, with the same body of evidence that I saw as evidence for little more than isolated incidents. I knew the press was going to eat it up, and they did. Cannibalism is one of those American taboos that continue to generate widespread media attention. American culture maintains a morbid fascination with the horror of it all. Perhaps there's a need for such findings, particularly if it is found to exist in all times and places. I suspect, though, that we still see these older, ancient, and ancestral traditions, in a different light. In other words, the ancestral Pueblo, for instance, are seen through an evolutionary lens that renders them more primitive, less complex, and wholly unlike us. Clearly, ethnocentrism is central to such perspectives, and shields us within the cloak of "science" for the simple reason that we embrace science – whereas the other end of the spectrum is shrouded in primitivism and such nefarious practices as cannibalism. Where Americans are concerned, this all goes back to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century cannibals and headhunters encountered by American and European explorers in the Pacific. It may not have been the Turners' intention to construe what they found in terms of widespread cultural practice among the Pueblos. Nevertheless, that's how the media read the Turners' message, and now, the ancestral Pueblo have been characterized as cannibals.

Mendoza: You repeatedly reference concerns about the emphasis on social violence among such groups as the ancestral Pueblo. Why do you believe that Western scholars in particular are so fascinated with such topics? Are these topics of legitimate scholarly concern despite the potential damage to indigenous communities, and the fallout that may accrue from the same?

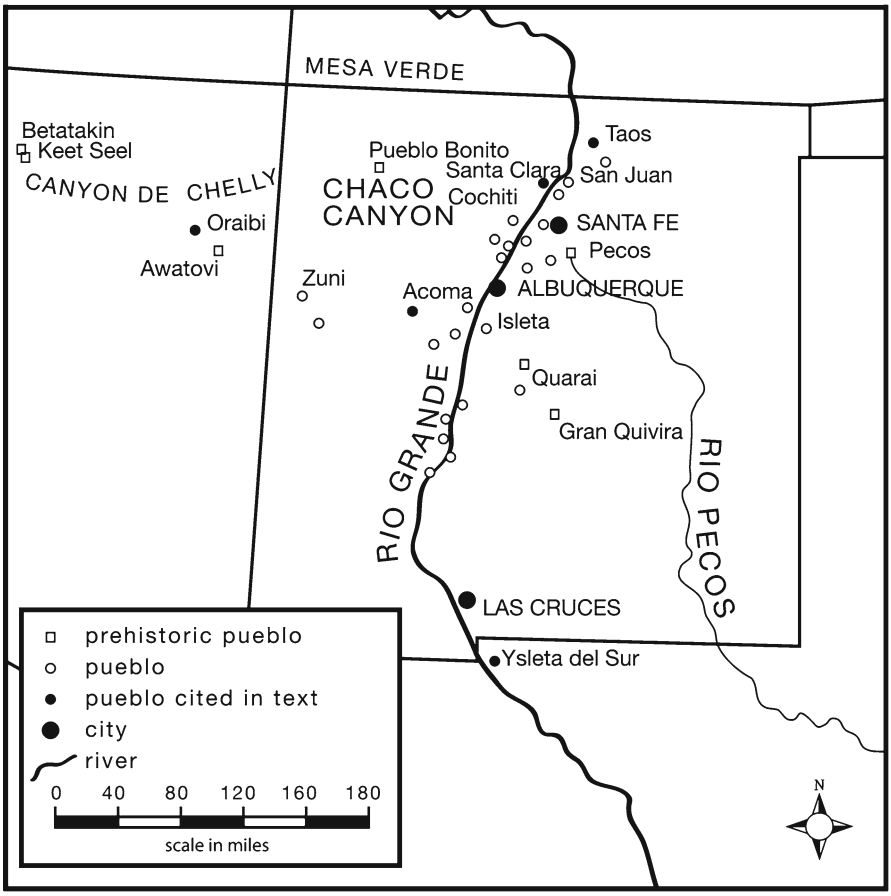

Fig. 16.2 Ancient and modern Pueblos of the Southwest. Note: Only those pueblos and towns cited in text are identified by name. Map drafted by Emily H. Nisbet, 2011

Chavarria: Our fascination, obsession, with social violence is central to how we teach our respective histories. We teach history through the lens of conflict, through warfare. I recall my early grade school fascination with how the history of the United States was taught. First, you start with the Revolutionary War, move on through the sweep of the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Mexican American War, the Spanish American War, and thereafter, World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict, Vietnam, and most recently, the Gulf War, the Gulf War II, and so on and so forth. In one sense this is how we've always taught our history; and that by way of armed conflict. And so I think we have a tendency to look for evidence to support conflict, social violence, and other self destructive pursuits, and that to the detriment of addressing stability and peace in a given region. As such, we create analogies for the present based on the past, and in some cases, such as those pertaining to Mexico, combine archaeology and history in our pursuit of the evidence. We must confront often contradictory streams of evidence, often borne of wholly different cosmologies of social violence. Many of us continue to get a handle on the extent of that

Fig. 16.3 View of the main apartment compound at Taos Pueblo, New Mexico. The Pueblo Indian leader *Popé* planned and launched the decisive Pueblo Revolt from Taos Pueblo in August of 1680. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 2010

social violence documented to this day. How does one understand daily life in a world where literally tens of thousands were sacrificed to placate the gods? Then again, in a few hundred years, it's likely that they'll be asking the same questions about us.

Mendoza: Speaking of Mexico, today, drug-trafficking syndicates and other forms of organized crime are taking a massive toll on the wellbeing of the Mexican Republic and its people; with kidnappings, torture, beheadings, dismemberment, and other forms of social violence now seemingly common place. While I see in today's escalating social violence analogies to the past, particularly as regards Epiclassic Mesoamerica (550–900 AD), do you fear that such perspectives hold the potential to spur ethnocentric and racist characterizations of the Mexican people and the social violence that presently afflicts their country?

Chavarria: As with any people, we don't want to be defined by social violence and warfare, especially we Americans, or for that matter, the Pueblos. If asked whether or not you live in a warlike society, people in the Middle East, for instance, are generally hesitant to be defined as a culture steeped in violence, or violent. I think that's why some people really embrace the notion of the Noble Savage. For once we're not seen as violent aggressors. On the other hand, we're these docile peoples in a paradise ruined by the arrival of the Spaniards. It swings both ways, so I think for the

Pueblos and other American Indians it's a reaction to being portrayed as violent aggressors. Otherwise, I generally don't have a problem with anthropologists studying violence within indigenous communities; for the simple reason that this is done within an academic context. That's part of the process, part of the pattern of academic review, part of the back and forth, particularly in anthropology and archaeology. In the end, we're not a clear cut hard science, and so there's still a lot of gray area to grapple with…we're still very much a part of the humanities. Nevertheless, I know of incidents where scholars have deliberately refrained from reporting results; and that for issues such as social violence, otherwise deemed controversial. In one instance, a kinship study based on genetics found that 20% of people within particular families within a given community had different fathers. So the investigators deliberately withheld that information. They excluded such information from their reporting because of the sheer number of problems it would create in the community, and for the investigators. Publishing such information regarding a community comes with an ethical obligation and responsibility to refrain from harming the community.

Mendoza: Should we as anthropologists resort to presenting our results in generic fashion, or for that matter, within a cultural vacuum, so as to avoid harming our informants and their communities? Where do we draw the line, especially when it comes to addressing issues pertaining to social violence within indigenous communities; and by extension, as this regards museum representations?

Chavarria: One example related to museums is with the use of the term Anasazi. The most common definition for Anasazi is based on the Navajo or *Diné* word meaning "ancient enemy." Publishing such terms despite ongoing interactions and dependence on descendant communities is a real problem, so the term Anasazi has fallen into disuse, particularly within the National Park Service. The NPS use of "ancestral Pueblo" as opposed to Anasazi has begun to trickle down everywhere else, so now you really don't see the earlier usage at Chaco Canyon or Mesa Verde. The new usage has created other problems, particularly as there remain archaeologists who believe that Anasazi is the proper term because it continues to distinguish cultural differences between the ancestral groups, such as Anasazi versus Mogollon, or Sinagua and Salado. The Anasazi were clearly different from the Mogollon, so one could argue that using ancestral Pueblo over Anasazi doesn't make sense as they were all Puebloan groups (Figs. 16.4 and 16.5).

Mendoza: Do you believe that it ultimately took the introduction of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act to empower descendant communities, particularly as this regards interactions with social scientists and other interested parties who handle native human remains?

Chavarria: Not necessarily, I believe that our sensitivity to human remains existed long before. I do believe that the reverence Pueblos hold for human remains predates Spanish contact, although that mindset may be influenced by Catholicism. Before that time, evidence for secondary burials exists in the Southwest, so apparently ancestral human remains were displaced for a variety of purposes. Exhumed

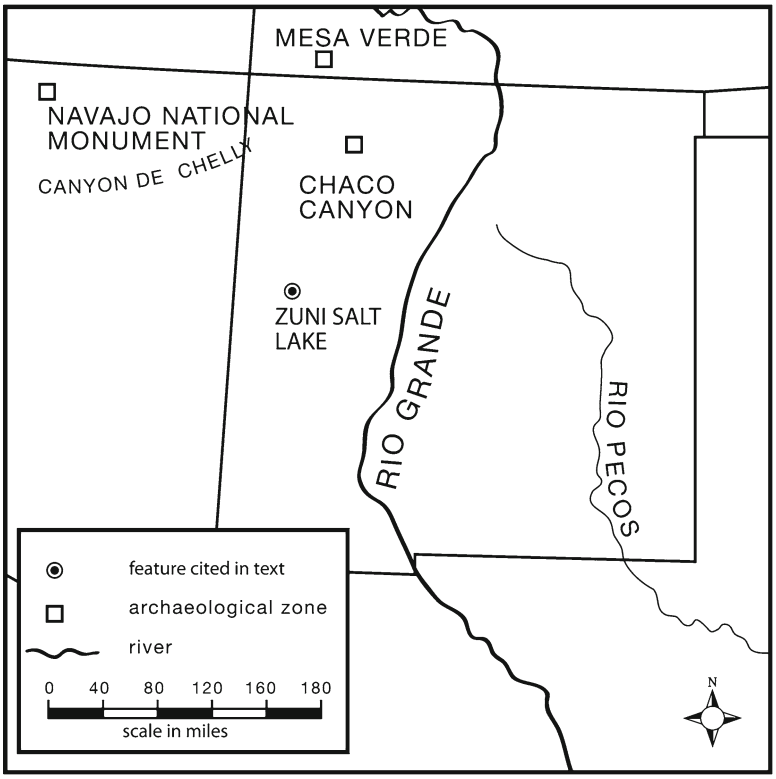

Fig. 16.4 Ancestral Pueblo areas relative to the location of the Zuni Salt Lake. Note: Only those Ancestral Pueblo national parks cited in text are identified by name. Map drafted by Emily H. Nisbet, 2011

long bones and crania were frequently unearthed and re-housed as secondary burials, perhaps of family members. So there were such practices prior to European contact, of secondary burial. Today, we speak of Pueblo taboos against having anything to do with human remains. This Puebloan practice, in which contact with human remains has become something very, very, negative, and something to be avoided, is relatively recent. This recent trend regarding excavated human remains and their display in museums is one that leaves many Pueblos feeling very uncomfortable. Although the Pueblo example is very local in this case, taboos against handling or displaying human remains are not commonplace belief among American Indians in other areas of the United States. Certainly, many indigenous cultures express discomfort with human remains, particularly where their ancestors are concerned. Today, there's clearly sensitivity to remains being displayed, touched, or otherwise left exposed; and that's what NAGPRA ultimately achieved. It was really more about making academics and other outsiders realize the level of native discomfort with human remains and their handling. That's what NAGPRA contributed to building sensitivity to our customs and beliefs.

Fig. 16.5 The Three Turkey Ruin constitutes a pristine and formidable example of those Ancestral Pueblo defensive measures taken to minimize vulnerability to attack in the thirteenth-century Southwest. The site, located in northeast Arizona, is but one of a host of such sites in the Canyon de Chelly National Monument. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 1982

I suspect that Catholicism may have played a role in the Pueblo aversion to contact with human remains; or perhaps, such beliefs and taboos evolved indirectly over time with the influence of Catholicism and its mortuary customs. Even before NAGPRA, there was this Pueblo sensitivity with local burials. Even with the few burial practices that I know of here, there has been this concern with the idea that once something is buried it should stay buried. This is particularly true of funerary items that were buried with the ancestors. Interestingly, whereas funerary objects are seen to belong to the dead, and only to the dead; objects from non-burial contexts are seen as products of the ancestors that one can use again, even if the secondary use is wholly different from the object's original use. Ancient projectile points, for instance, are often used again, but in a different way. These are basically seen as a gift of the ancestors, and are thought to remind one of that past so they can be used in ceremony, and thereby take on a different context and meaning. So, if it's not burial associated, Pueblos can reestablish direct contact with the objects and things of the past. Puebloan visits to prehistoric sites may exclude burial areas, but other areas of these same sites that were used for daily life are not off limits. Ancestral Pueblo descendants can still access these places directly in another sense, through memory, songs, or prayers, especially when talking

Fig. 16.6 After the burning and destruction of seventeenth-century mission churches in the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, the pueblos continued to adopt select Hispanic Catholic customs into their traditional belief system. Ultimately, the revolt had the effect of ousting the Spanish from New Mexico for some 12 years until the re-conquest of 1792. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 2010

about migration histories, or tracing tribal origins or family ties. Elders often mention these older places… each one a center place, and although tradition says that there was only one center place… there are many, and this is not seen as a contradiction (Fig. 16.6).

Part 2: Descendant Communities

Mendoza: Let us say that an investigation into ancient Maya mortuary customs produces evidence for ritual violence, warfare, environmental degradation, or any related host of factors that might lead to a derogatory interpretation of the earlier tradition; how might that fact be addressed when conveying such information to descendant communities?

Chavarria: When such secondary findings are not necessarily related to the original research question, but might be interpreted as significant, despite the potential for other derogatory impressions that may arise, my personal feeling is that such findings warrant reporting. Reporting such finds should serve to open lines to further

research. Even so, it still behooves the researcher to talk to the descendant communities and to communicate information and interpretations regarding what has been found. Soliciting interpretations and the perspectives of members of the descendant communities is very important. Communication may result in the discovery of surviving oral histories regarding relevant practices that might provide avenues for explaining such finds.

Mendoza: For the sake of argument, let's say that an investigator who initially sets out to study ceramics in archaeological contexts uncovers local evidence for social violence, and corroborates this with historical accounts. The descendant community, however, is unwilling to address the issue by cooperating with the investigator. How then does one proceed given such unanticipated findings, particularly as the findings were not identified in advance by way of the original research objective? In effect, should we permit the descendant community to decide whether or not the evidence should be excluded from consideration, or for that matter, published?

Chavarria: No, that depends on how the original project started. If the research was based on a university project, it would behoove the investigators to report the results fully. But in working through issues raised by the descendant community, particularly if the community expresses concerns with the reporting of results, such issues should be documented by way of publication. The investigator should proceed to report original findings, while acknowledging the concerns of the descendant community, particularly if said community does not agree with any of the investigator's conclusions.

Mendoza: So you're saying that we should give descendant communities a voice in articulating concerns and disagreements about what the info means and how it is interpreted?

Chavarria: Affording descendant communities the opportunity to articulate disagreements can lead to new avenues for future research as well. It can be just as sensitive an issue when dealing with other academically-trained people working within the tribes. Such engagements can be emotionally draining, heated, or otherwise contentious, but that's still part of what makes the dialogue. In those instances where a tribal member may have undergone university training, and then returns to the tribe to address problematic findings and evidence for topics otherwise considered taboo; even then problems may arise. In other arenas, particularly those that might offer evidence of community violence against outsiders, it might not bother them. I know of an area tribe that found evidence for the burial of a mutilated Franciscan priest, and the consensus was that it probably dated back to the Pueblo Revolt or another local rebellion (Fig. 16.7).

Mendoza: So, what you are saying is that the community chose to interpret the burial in this instance in that way; as the burial of a priest killed in the Pueblo Revolt?

Chavarria: Yes.

Fig. 16.7 Antonio Chavarria is charged with safeguarding the religious heritage and cultural patrimony of the Pueblo communities of New Mexico in his capacity as Curator of Ethnology of the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture in Santa Fe. Antonio's role has proven instrumental in assuring a proactive and honorable relationship between the Pueblos and the Museum. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 2006

Mendoza: Were there no questions regarding the likelihood of witchcraft or a problematic collaboration with outsiders?

Chavarria: No, in this case red hair was recovered with the remains, making it clear that this was an outsider.

Mendoza: Oh, I see, it was a European in this instance?

Chavarria: Yes, they figured that it was possibly a priest based on other objects recovered with the remains.

Mendoza: Do you believe that perhaps another more appropriate protocol would have permitted the Hopi to address the matter at hand?

Chavarria: When we talk about ethical responsibilities, I think along with that is the need to gain the trust of communities participating in our studies. That's not to say that with trust we should refrain from fully reporting our findings, but rather, that you as the investigator should make every effort to maintain open and honest communication; and that will work both ways. You need to let them know where you stand, and that your studies are based on your training, and that is a big part of one's ethical responsibility to fully report scholarly findings. In the event that you

are working a project on behalf of the tribe, it may be that they don't want drawings or photos from burials included in the final study, so that's something you have to come to agreement with first, and immediately.

Mendoza: So, establishing a mutually acceptable protocol with the descendant community should be done in advance, and this in effect is critical to maintaining open relations with said community?

Chavarria: Yes, so that there are no surprises later on. For instance, if you come across evidence for large-scale social violence, and that is the subject of the study, the means by which you are going to deal with such findings has already been addressed with the descendant community. As part of my ethical responsibility, it has been made clear in advance that I have an ethical responsibility to report my results, but then again, we also have an established protocol and a prior agreement as to whether or not photographs of burials and other like matters can or should be addressed in the final report or monograph. The investigator can then note that out of respect for the tribe photographs of burials were not permitted, and therefore not included in the monograph. In this way, there are no surprises for the parties involved.

Mendoza: So, one could almost say there is a prenuptial agreement of sorts, and that certain conditions and protocols may apply in advance of the study?

Chavarria: Yes, this is especially so if you're working on tribal lands.

Mendoza: Do you believe that research protocols should be distinct for those projects that entail studies on tribal lands versus non-tribal or public lands?

Chavarria: Yes, we need to maintain a distinction, because if it's a tribal project, then you're dealing with a host of other issues; particularly as we then need to negotiate quasi-sovereign relationships and the mandates of tribal governments. While we may not like the need to negotiate research agendas with the tribes, particularly as some may consider this a form of anti-science that serves to compromise our agendas, in the end that is the tradeoff for being able to work on tribal lands. Not publishing photos of burials and such may in the end prove a minor compromise given the goodwill that may result.

Mendoza: I suspect that issues regarding the photography of burials may have complicated Richard Chacon and David Dye's 2007 edition of *The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts as Trophies by Amerindians*, particularly given the amount of visual content in the volume (Chacon and Dye 2007). Speaking of human trophies, what was your initial reaction when you first heard about the release of the Chacon and Dye edition in question? Do you believe that the book opened a can of worms regarding such matters, or that it reflects negatively on indigenous communities?

Chavarria: When I first heard about the book, yes, I was concerned that it sought to identify such evidence for an expose. I was also worried that it had the potential to add to existing stereotypes about American Indians, and that the ancestors were largely violent trophy hunters. However, after careful consideration, I understood

that Chacon and Dye's (2007) work was not intended to denigrate the heritage or history of the American Indian. They in fact went to great lengths to review the sources underlying trophy taking and violence on a global scale. It's ironic, because someone at our American Anthropological Association symposium on the ethics of studying indigenous violence cited a World War II memoir of trophy collecting by American soldiers in the South Pacific. I recall reading that book, *Helmet for My Pillow* (Leckie 1957), in high school. The author argued that the trophy collecting was largely the work of rear echelon troops that weren't actively engaged in combat. He mentions one lieutenant in particular who was not respected by his soldiers because he was irresponsible and whatnot. The memoir recalls instances of rear echelon troops collecting gold teeth from dead Japanese soldiers.

Mendoza: Granted that we like to think of American civilization in terms of civility versus barbarity, and are more open to discussing such contentious or disturbing issues where other societies are concerned, why is it that we appear unable or unwilling to come to grips with or acknowledge the taking of human trophies by American soldiers? Do you think that practice, in and of itself, is sufficient to denigrate, demean, or undermine the otherwise heroic efforts of US soldiers in the Pacific?

Chavarria: No, I don't believe that the book was intended to demean US soldiers. The book tries to make the case that such practices were an aberration, and that trophy hunting of human remains in general was an abomination. However, this implies that such aberrations only happen outside of civilization and that when discharged, these soldiers prefer not to admit their role in such behavior. In another sense, whether or not we were talking of gold teeth, samurai swords, Japanese flags, or so many other military objects, all were acquired as war trophies. Of course, knocking out a dead man's teeth with the hilt of a dagger is so much different than collecting other forms of memorabilia. What we need to keep in mind is that for some descendant communities the collecting of human trophies is seen as tradition, not as an aberration, and while not something done today, it was a tradition. But as you say, placing such objects into context provides another basis for understanding such behavior. Rather than asking why a given tradition produced necklaces from human mandibles, perhaps it's better to understand these things as part of the game in its own setting. Even with the exhumation of the remains of Oliver Cromwell, which occurred after the English Commonwealth dissolved and was reborn as a Kingdom, Cromwell's body was decapitated and his head was hung outside of a saloon for three years. For the English, it was a trophy that acknowledged who was now in power, and who specifically was in charge. Co-opting the past in this way is something that happens globally. Beheading captives was essential to creating terror and using ritualized violence to assert power and authority.

Mendoza: So do you think that contextualizing such practices on a global scale would help deflect the potential for findings of social violence to generate denigrating stereotypes about American Indians? By extension, do you believe that globalizing such "cultural" practices is perhaps ingenuous, particularly when we choose to focus on ancestral practices or traditions that perhaps the tribes don't wish to discuss or acknowledge?

Chavarria: I could see where some people would say that's disingenuous, that yes we are dehumanizing them, or simply generating an excuse for showing how violent a given tribe may have been. And therefore, they're no different than any other violent culture or violent history from any other world area. So, I can see where that's coming from, but then again, there's no utopian society on record that I can think of…that managed conflict solely through peaceful means.

Mendoza: So, what you are essentially saying is that there were no peaceable kingdoms, and therefore, no "noble savage" or "nature's gentleman" ala Dryden? (Dryden 1883).

Chavarria: No noble savage in this lot. Every human group has had to contend with conflict. If you talk to the tribes, I mean, really talk to them, especially in informal settings, they will talk about their traditional enemies. When tribal peoples cross paths, especially in areas where they compete for the same resources, there's going to be conflict. Whether between Pueblos or Athapaskans, Pueblos and Plains Indian groups, or later on between the Pueblos and the Spanish, conflict was inevitable. Ironically, after the Spanish *entrada* in the Southwest, the Pueblos enlisted the Spanish government and its soldiers as a buffer against marauding Athapaskan groups entering the area. So, there are those areas of conflict that some Pueblos consider dirty laundry that you don't want to air in public. Also, tribal people can get so caught up in issues of protecting the tenuous sovereignty they hold where land rights are concerned that they seek to minimize those elements of the past thought unflattering to our modern sensibilities. So, I think that's when we see the suppression of anthropological or other social science information related to conflict and social violence. I believe that the effort to avoid such matters is in part a response to that, because of the economic and political realities of the moment. Just trying to hold on to their often tenuous, semi-sovereign, status is often cause enough for avoiding characterizations that labels the tribe as conflict ridden. Besides, what court is going to find for a sovereign or semi-sovereign nation that has a long history of conflict and social violence, particularly where land claims are involved?

Mendoza: The government has been known to invalidate land claims on the basis of the failure of the parties in contest to present all pertinent documentation for ancestral claims, and despite that fact, some tribes are still unwilling to respond to questions that may bring to light traditions of conflict and warfare deemed problematic or inappropriate. Moreover, there's a tendency by outsiders to present the tribes as peaceable kingdoms, or as the unwitting victims of the aggression of outsiders. Do you believe that's really a legitimate stance or characterization of the Pueblos, or just one that patronizes these communities with attempts to create an apologist stance that serves to obscure longstanding patterns for intertribal conflict and social violence?

Chavarria: There's always the risk that by avoiding dialogue on such disturbing issues in tribal histories, we promote an apologist's stance that can go to the other extreme. By painting the Pueblos as only peaceful, we also run the risk of completely stripping them of any type of agency in their respective histories. To portray

us as these peaceful, loving, beings in harmony with the universe is unrealistic. This generates the idea that we were all peaceful farmers. Ask any farmer about what it takes to farm the land, and he or she will tell you that farming relies on schedules; farming generates conflict when you are forced to fight for your land. There are the struggles with attempting to control the environment, or working against the balance of nature when exploiting already stressed resources or ridding the landscape of insects and other parasitic creatures. In the end we can go too far with this apologist stance, and so I completely agree with the dangers of stripping the Pueblos of their role in history by painting them as hapless victims of intruders.

Part 3: Cultural Accommodation

Mendoza: History tells us time and again about the Pueblos' timeless capacity to accommodate change in a rather fluid and organic fashion. Despite this fact, there remains a longstanding essentialist tendency in anthropology and the social sciences to characterize these communities largely in terms of a symbiotic and eco-friendly relationship with the earth. Given the prevalence of essentialist frameworks that continue to paint the Pueblos as societies locked into unchanging eco-friendly traditionalist frameworks, what harm do you believe may accrue when the relationship of these communities to their environments is idealized in such a fashion?

Chavarria: Earlier generations of ethnographers came to the Southwest seeking a pristine Puebloan past free of outside influence; free of Hispanic and other influences. These ethnographers were basically looking for something that never existed; the Southwest has always been a region of continuous change and adaptation. Different peoples populated the Southwest, and they produced many regional pottery traditions. These were then diffused or traded and adopted into a wide range of differing Pueblo traditions. So, the only thing that you can really say for certain is that our traditions are constantly changing. As they say, change is the only constant (Fig. 16.8).

Mendoza: And yet, this perspective of yours flies in the face of arguments by outsiders, particularly anthropologists, who continue to argue that all of this introduced change and accommodation, particularly, that pertaining to Hispanic acculturation, was little more than a form of ethnocide. In other words, these essentialist frameworks continue to promote the view that such introductions ultimately destroyed the Indian way of life; as though the Pueblos were immune and invulnerable to change and accommodation. They continue to argue that the Pueblos are now little more than hapless victims, as opposed to people with agency and self-determination, and control, over their economic and political relationships, and thereby, cultural fate. American Indians are seldom seen as people who accommodated, adapted, selected, and changed. They in fact co-opted, modified, and influenced the Spanish to adapt to their respective ways of life; however hybrid these may appear in the wake of such accommodations and patterns of assimilation. Of course, this latter view flies

Fig. 16.8 Despite a long history of challenges to their political sovereignty, and cultural and religious traditions, the Pueblos continue to maintain key elements of their Ancestral Pueblo past. Acoma Pueblo, located on a promontory or mesa in west-central New Mexico, has seen continuous occupation since the thirteenth century. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 2006

in the face of the idea that the Spanish introduced this pervasive and monolithic cultural tradition itself immune to change. Do you believe that the Spanish were fundamentally changed by way of intercourse with the Puebloan tradition?

Chavarria: I think both of your observations are relevant. Certainly, some aspects of the Pueblo way of like were dramatically changed. Where Catholicism is concerned, most Pueblos certainly didn't have a choice about whether to accept conversion. We also found it necessary to accommodate Spanish forms of government, and that's why we have governors, lieutenant governors, *alcaldes*, and the like. These were essentially Spanish forms of government introduced into traditional Pueblo contexts. On the other hand, despite the Spanish origins of these non-traditional forms of government, accommodating such forms into traditional Pueblo practice, and making it work, was in essence an original indigenous innovation. Before then, *Kiva* societies and other sodalities, whether sacred or secular, dominated traditional practice. These collective and indigenous forms of governance served as the organizational framework for the accommodation of Spanish forms. And while the *Kiva* groups were mainly religious or spiritual, the Pueblos found ways to accommodate Spanish forms of governance and make these work despite the secular nature of these latter forms…and these were then adopted as a blending of the two. While the Spanish forms are still seen as originating with outsiders, the internal mechanisms

Fig. 16.9 Those subterranean structures identified with the Ancestral Pueblo *kiva* remain but one of those dimensions of the Ancestral Pueblo past that continue to play a sacred role in the present. This *kiva,* at Pecos Pueblo, New Mexico, is located within the heart of the ancient Pueblo that saw the construction, and subsequent destruction, of a Spanish mission church. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 1982

that permit this blend to work are still rooted in the traditional Puebloan system (Fig. 16.9).

Mendoza: What you're saying, then, is that the Pueblos accommodated aspects of Spanish custom and belief as deemed appropriate or necessary, and were thereby able to reconcile the two despite continuing tensions arising between these often divergent and polarized cultural systems?

Chavarria: This is particularly true when addressing accommodations related to the intersection of material cultures, with the Pueblo adoption of metal tools ultimately representing one of the more significant accommodations. Of course, the Spanish *casta* or caste system of social stratification, where the Indians were assigned to the bottom of the social hierarchy, was clearly problematic for the Pueblos. Even then, intermarriage was not uncommon between Pueblo and Hispanic peoples. Like New Spain or Mexico, Hispanic and Pueblo intermarriage represents a traditional accommodation quite unlike that practiced by the British colonials of the eastern coast of North America. This difference is made apparent when one compares and contrasts the numbers of indigenous peoples and communities that survive in Latin America versus those areas dominated by the British and early Americans.

Mendoza: It would appear that change swept virtually every dimension of the Pueblo world, yet ethnographic purists nevertheless contend that each accommodation

constitutes yet another denigration of the pristine Puebloan tradition, a form of ethnocide. Was there ever a purely Puebloan tradition recalled by the elders; in the sense of one characterized as uncontaminated by external cultural influences?

Chavarria: No, because again, Pueblo traditional elders speak of many linguistically and ethnically different groups that came together to form our communities. These were groups not necessarily or specifically Anasazi in the sense of those who occupied ancestral places so identified. These were different Puebloan peoples that came together and were able to live near one another, and share resources without major conflict. Even with those conflicts that we can identify, conflict within communities was uncommon. In the past, when conflict or differences became unbearable, individual groups or clans just broke off and migrated to other places where they created new villages; this then started the process all over again. This was the status quo for Puebloan social organization, and despite the fact that each group or clan maintained similar customs and cultural practices their languages were often quite different. Often, these differences were on the level of wholly different language families, and that's not including Zuni. Zuni represents a completely distinct and isolated language all its own, and even now, one of the largest Puebloan populations.

Mendoza: Historians continue to portray the Pueblo Revolt (1680) as a singularly unique incident in the history of the Southwest, and for the Pueblos in particular. Moreover, many continue to believe that the Pueblos were a people pushed by the Spanish to such an extreme that they ultimately resorted to widespread violence to throw off their oppressors. Such apologists argue that social violence was not part of Puebloan character, and that they were not prone to conflict. Despite such arguments, the Pueblos clearly orchestrated a decisive, large-scale, revolt that delivered a severe blow to Spanish imperial ambitions along the Rio Grande. The catastrophic results of the revolt ultimately forced the Spanish out of the region for some 12 years. How then can one explain the fact that such a people, who'd purportedly never taken to the battlefield, managed a coordinated, and decisive, military response if in fact they were the peaceable villagers characterized in most accounts?

Chavarria: The notion that the ancestors were docile, peace-loving, non-violent farmers, flies in the face of our histories, and is to my mind, the result of essentialist thinking in the extreme. Our stories tell of both pre-historic and contact period accounts of cooperation between rival villages against common enemies. Pueblo war societies or sodalities existed then much as today, and included war captains and councils, because part of their responsibility was to build up a force of warriors when needed, whether it was for the purpose of raiding, retaliation, or defense. Yes, they were farmers, but they were no less brave warriors for their people. The tools and weapons of hunting were also the instruments of war, including clubs, bows and arrows, projectiles, and Pueblo shields that appear from the earliest of times in our rock art and *kiva* murals. So, the evidence for war and weaponry is ubiquitous, and although I wouldn't argue that there was a warrior class as such, it does appear that the job of warriors was a part-time occupation.

Mendoza: How does it make you feel when outsiders in particular attempt to pacify the past by painting your ancestors as non-violent, read docile and compliant, victims of superior European and American weapons and warfare? In other words, your ancestors were so enraptured by their love of all things of the earth that they simply rolled over in the face of overwhelming or otherworldly odds, except when absolutely pushed to the extreme as in the case of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680?

Chavarria: Even today people talk about how the Pueblos weren't looking for conflict with outsiders, and that's why our forbearers were so accepting and accommodating to the earliest Spanish and other Euroamerican colonists. They also argue that it wasn't until things turned really ugly that the Pueblos found it necessary to respond with force to the threat in question. Even with the original Spanish colonization near San Juan, when the Spanish established a village there the Pueblos reached out to the settlers and welcomed them to stay, and made offers to help them with their crops. In response to such hospitality the Spanish demanded that the Natives dig a ditch. People say that because of their generous nature, these outsiders took advantage of the Pueblos and pushed them to the extreme. Some people say that's why weaving died out, and the generosity of the Pueblos dwindled to a trickle. That was in large part because the Spanish demanded so much in tribute that it became easier to feign a lack of resources or skills, or for that matter technology and mastery of the environment, with which to assist the Spanish in their efforts to adapt to the new land.

Mendoza: You could say that this in effect constitutes a form of self-imposed ethnocide by default. In other words, do you believe that when challenged by outside interference of a predatory nature, the Pueblos retrenched, and thereby selectively permitted elements of traditional practice to go dormant rather to go on supplying the Spanish in the face of their excessive demands for tribute?

Chavarria: They're always going to grow crops either out of necessity or tradition, but in each instance the costs of cooperating with the Spanish and other Euroamerican groups needed to be weighed in terms of the ultimate costs to the Pueblos themselves.

Mendoza: It's a medieval paradigm of sorts in which vassalage frames the dependency, but in this instance, it would appear that both self-interest and the need to assess the cost–benefit equation of doing business with outsiders were recurrently revisited by the Pueblos? Now you have something here that appears to paint the Pueblos as savvy political economists, as opposed to the victims and pawns of a primitivist paradigm perpetually deployed by scholars who continue in their attempts to account for the dynamics of Puebloan social organization and survival at the most fundamental level of analysis. Invariably, scholars continue to resurrect such primitivist scenarios in an effort to brand the Pueblos as victims of progress. Do you think that this represents an accurate analysis of the Puebloan pattern of interaction with outsiders?

Chavarria: Yes, particularly when faced with weighing the cost–benefit analysis as well. For instance, growing cotton, the sheer amount of land, water and resources, how much of that is required to make one manta as opposed to pottery production

where the resources are readily available. The processing doesn't take as long, or it can be processed much faster, for example, than growing cotton. So with pottery making, you could still continue to produce that, even if you were making other resources for the Spanish. So again it's a decision that could be made. Yes, we will continue to do this, and we can still trade with other villages that don't make pottery in exchange for other crops. Or, with villages further away, trade for bison or other types of material.

Mendoza: But Tony (and I'm playing Devil's Advocate here), I've long held this romantic vision of the American Indian as connected to the earth; all of the people's decisions made in strict harmony and a balance with the earth and its gifts. But what you're telling me here flies in the face of that cherished idea. In fact, now what you're telling me is that the Pueblos sought, and continue to seek, rational decision-making based on prevailing logic and logistics; and that based on observation, experience, and the self-interest or political economy of the moment? That in effect implies that the Pueblos did not base their relations and decisions on a longstanding tradition of "touching the earth," or otherwise respecting Mother Earth…at any and all cost?

Chavarria: I would counter that such practices, however profane they appear, do in fact honor the earth and the ancestors. Our world view permits us to see this all as one seamless continuum. Even where particularly difficult (secular) decisions need to be made about how to best manage the earth's resources, we don't see the need to seek a separation of the sacred and profane, because these two dimensions coexist in the Pueblo world. Each decision ultimately requires that we draw from both worlds, from both the secular and the sacred. We know that for the ancestors the Earth Mother didn't hide in order to avoid exploitation of her clays for pottery making, for the clay remains available to this day. So, they continued to mine the earth as we do today, because they knew, as do we, that her gifts would go far and wide in many other forms. And that's the point, that these were still the original gifts of creation. Even the products of weaving are another such creation. While a whole other process, weaving can be learned, taught, and relearned, and therefore it can never be completely lost to our traditional life ways. Where North America is concerned, I believe that it's only in the Pueblos where indigenous practices might be permitted to lay dormant and go extinct, only to be resurrected and relearned. Perhaps it's curious that the Pueblos can allow an entire tradition to die for the moment, only to go back and revitalize the lost arts of the elders or ancestors. What's perhaps even more amazing is that despite so many different language groups, and slightly different takes on ceremonies and such, whole traditions can be reborn over whole regions. Despite the large-scale abandonment of ancestral Pueblo lands in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, whole towns were relocated and entire traditions resurrected, and with stylistic and organizational uniformity, and consistency. I believe that longstanding patterns of responding to the vagaries of the ecology and host of diverse traditions of the region allowed the Pueblos to adapt and morph into new settlements and communities. In sum, I believe that it's still all about our connection to the earth, and to speaking to the earth and to the heavens; while at the same time recognizing that even the supernaturals recognize the need for very practical decision-making where the earth's gifts are concerned (Fig. 16.10).

Fig. 16.10 The Hopi Mesas of northeastern Arizona represent one of the longest continuously inhabited settlements of North America, with the pueblo of *Orayvi* or Oraibi bearing evidence or occupation since shortly before AD/CE 1100. At the end of the thirteenth century, the population grew exponentially after refugees of other area pueblos sought refuge on the Hopi Mesas as the result of the great drought of that time. In 1690, the First Mesa village of Walpi was established here as the result of the relocation of a pre-existing pueblo that sought protection from the Spanish after the Pueblo Revolt. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 1982

Mendoza: Given our constitutional mandates for the separation of church and state, we Americans tend to see things solely in black and white, with no gray areas to blind us to this polarized perspective regarding the separation of the sacred and the secular. What you're implying here is that the Pueblos of the Rio Grande melded the two dimensions into a singular vision, particularly as it would appear that the largely secular or profane transactions of the political economy were seamlessly intermeshed with the sacred realms of the religious system and spiritual world in this instance? In other words, traditional beliefs about the spiritual realm are not necessarily incompatible with the profane worlds of the economic and political, and yet prevailing post-Colonial paradigms and their advocates often contend that this constitutes a conflation of the two that is and was untenable and unacceptable. How do you respond to the notion that this in effect constitutes a misconception or corrupt idealization of the pure faith of the ancestors?

Chavarria: These outsiders may argue that practice based on compromise only serves to corrupt the pure faith, or that participating in the modern market does not represent traditional practice, but for the Pueblos we believe that our actions here do

in fact serve the spirit world. Whatever you do in this life has a very real impact in this other world. Alfonso Ortiz's early studies of the Pueblos revealed a cosmology based on functional parallel opposition; or stated differently, what we do in this life is mirrored in the afterlife, and this is true even if our decisions have an adverse impact on our traditions (Ortiz 1972). For example, permitting basket making or cotton weaving to go dormant or lapse may have consequences for the world of material things; but that's because through both thought and prayer, and other forms of communication with the supernaturals, we still seek to understand what the ancestors and supernaturals are trying to tell us about how best to live in this world. Who knows for sure whether or not permitting basket making or pottery to die was in fact one of their instructions, but it could well be that it was one. Not cooperating with the Spanish in creating such items may foster the death of an old and valued tradition for the moment, but that decision or instruction may have come to us from the spirit world.

Mendoza: And by extension, this cosmology of the Pueblos serves to frame the belief that we have this mirror into the other world. And as such this same cosmology provides a justification in this life that clearly makes it necessary and appropriate to resort to either the abandonment of a tradition, advocacy or contradictory actions, and sometimes violence where deemed necessary. I can now see how one can reconcile these seemingly contradictory decisions in the Puebloan world view, because in the end our actions here are mirrored in the other world. If not dealt with here, then there will be repercussions to be had in the realm of the supernaturals. And, this latter thought provides a direct segue into my next question; that of how the Pueblos now address the perceived costs, benefits, and repercussions that accrue as the result of practices that result in environmental degradation. In other words, how then would the deforestation of areas near Chaco Canyon, for instance, translate in terms of this cosmology of functional parallel opposition? How would the Pueblos have reconciled that fact, or for that matter, how would they have justified warfare with the marauding Athapaskans? Can that be reconciled within the framework of Puebloan cosmology?

Chavarria: Yes! What we're seeing therefore is not a lack of concern for the environment, particularly where the evidence indicates that ancient hunting practices or the clear cutting and deforestation of entire regions resulted in the collapse of the ecology of a given area. Rather, what we are seeing are responses born of the challenges of a marginal environment. In other words, those decisions needed for maintaining a balance with the environment, and that despite perceived excesses that seemingly undermined the delicate ecology of the region in the first place. What is particularly evident is that the Pueblos frequently moved across the landscape, migrated from place to place; and that as the result of growing population densities and demands. This fact required an adaptive strategy centered on their ability to relocate on a moment's notice. Their ability to move from place to place, harvest resources until they were depleted in a given area, and then uproot and move to another place in response to drought, was critical to the survival of the Pueblos. For instance, when the Great Drought swept the region in the thirteenth century the

Fig. 16.11 As with many Ancestral Pueblo settlements of the Four Corners area, both defense and ecology were prime considerations in site selection. The site of Betatakin, now part of the Navajo National Monument in northeastern Arizona, represents a particularly well preserved example of a thirteenth-century cliff shelter. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 1982

people relocated and converged on the Rio Grande rather than return to their defensive mesa-top villages and Pueblos in other widely dispersed areas of the Southwest. So, while the Pueblos maintain a careful, although tenuous relationship to the environment, population densities may permit or restrain our use of available resources. When depleted, we simply uproot and leave such fragile areas, allowing such areas to recover. Upon recovery, we eventually seek a return to these villages that form part of our adaptive pattern; that borne of a cycle of migration and abandonment. Today, archaeology itself has revealed that the Pajarito Plateau is replete with evidence for cycles of settlement, abandonment, and reoccupation by the ancestors (Fig. 16.11).

Mendoza: In *The Pueblo Revolt and the Mythology of Conquest* (2009), Stanford University archaeologist Michael Wilcox relies in part on a rather deterministic explanation predicated on Hispanic violence against the Pueblos as the root cause for the patterns of post-Contact migration and abandonment in the Rio Grande Pueblos (Wilcox 2009). At least this aspect of his argument would appear wholly untenable given what you are now relating to me of your ancestral traditions. In effect, what you're saying here is that such patterns of interaction constitute a traditional adaptive mechanism to a marginal ecology with particularly deep roots in the Southwest urban tradition?

Chavarria: It was a pattern that worked, and what didn't work was what appears to be this disregard for the environment introduced by the Europeans. This disregard for balance with the environment comes into play with the Spanish *entrada* or colonization, and that by way of their system of land tenure. What worked in the past, in other words, that older mechanism of migration and abandonments was curtailed and each Pueblo was forcibly tethered to a singular place. Each Pueblo was granted a single three-league-square plot of land on which to subsist and farm. That pattern continued under the American system, to which were added Indian reservation lands that were ever more marginal. So, the ancient Pueblo adaptive pattern was no longer tenable, and as such you could no longer uproot and move to another place, thereby permitting the land and resources of a given area to recover. What you see is this pattern in which the Pueblos remain in a given area and use all available resources until they are depleted and the local ecology declines. This post-Contact pattern is most evident in nineteenth and early twentieth-century photographs taken at Santa Clara. The photos clearly indicate that the entire village is reduced to a single marginal environment. There's not a single tree in sight, and few cottonwoods remain. Pretty much everything else has been chopped down, denuded, used for architecture, firewood, and everything else imaginable. Eventually, the people of Santa Clara are forced to search an ever-widening area for basic resources, like firewood, and that in large part because they no longer had the mobility and or those options available to the ancestors.

Mendoza: So, what you are in effect saying is that for the Pueblos this was a traditional adaptive response thousands of years in the making? With the arrival of the Europeans and Americans, we see the introduction of the notion of private property with clearly defined and demarcated boundaries, and that in tandem with the introduction of the Spanish *reduccion*; or, reduction of dispersed populations into established sedentary towns. As such, it would appear that the longstanding pattern of adaptive mobility, or the Puebloan system of mass migration and resettlement was akin to that represented in the Mesoamerican "solar system" of market interchange between communities reminiscent of Oaxaca, Mexico (Smith 1974). The Pueblo pattern, therefore, was actually a traditional adaptive response to environmental change and resource scarcity? It would appear then that the arrival of the Europeans, with their tendency to define private property, ultimately abrogated or undermined traditional patterns of resettlement to the extent that it then led to the

collapse of the most ancient aspects of the Puebloan system in question. So, in reality, the European and American predilection for defining property boundaries posed a greater threat, and produced a more devastating pattern of consequences for the Pueblos, than heretofore acknowledged in the literature? I would contend that this idea is relatively new to the mix as we tend to define the Pueblos as fully sedentary agriculturalists with fixed relations to their agriculturally circumscribed land base; a pattern that is better suited to characterizing the Euroamerican occupation of the region.

Chavarria: So, under the European system of land tenure a village that might lie closer to the river, for instance, was now denied access to ponderosa pine forests that were formerly part of their extended land base. This had an immediate impact on the use of the evergreens used in dances and so forth. Therefore, finding a way to access the ponderosa's now proved problematic for maintaining traditional practices of resource exploitation.

Mendoza: In effect, this undermined preexisting Pueblo migratory patterns and traditional practice? Is there a name for these migratory patterns or movements? I'm curious, is there a term that is relevant here, for identifying that dimension of the social system so noted? As previously noted, Wilcox (2009) contends that a fundamental variable underlying the post-Contact Puebloan abandonment of "traditional" towns or *pueblos* was an immediate defensive response to the fact that the Spanish in particular encroached on traditional lands, and thereby, ruined a pristine sedentary pattern thousands of years in the making. What you are saying, then, is that such migratory patterns of Pueblo abandonment and resettlement were in effect but one aspect of a larger Southwestern sociopolitical pattern. A broader pattern based on a long-term or traditional adaptive response to environmental perturbations and conflict in one of the harshest and most unpredictable environments of North America? As such, this would appear to have been an adaptive response, or sociocultural and political pattern, that persisted for over a thousand years. In other words, one reliant on a form of semi-sedentary or cyclically abandoned and reoccupied Pueblo towns or places of refuge and retreat in this instance?

Chavarria: The migrations were dependent on established refugee sites or centers, and some of these could very well have resulted from the reoccupation of earlier sites, such as Puyé at Santa Clara Pueblo. The reoccupation of Puyé in its guise as a place of refuge is known for the period of the Pueblo Revolt, or subsequently during the Spanish *reconquista* in the siege of Black Mesa, when the people occupied the room blocks at the summit of the mesa that forms Puyé. This was a reoccupation of a cyclically abandoned ancestral place formerly occupied prior to the Spanish *entrada*, the revolt, and later, the *reconquista*.

Mendoza: So, you could say that they were the ultimate recyclers, particularly as whole towns figured into the process? Do you think this might have a bearing, for example, on Chaco Canyon? I say this because Chaco maintained these massive road systems connecting distant outliers in the hinterlands to the primate center; and those outliers looked much like Chaco, but only as smaller mirrored images of the

Fig. 16.12 The ancient town of Pueblo Bonito, now part of the Chaco Culture National Historical Park of west-central New Mexico, constitutes one of the largest such Ancestral Pueblo settlement areas of the period spanning the ninth through twelfth centuries. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 1982

center. Could it be that the Puebloan adaptive strategy considered here, in which people responded to resource volatility by way of mass migration, was endemic to recurrent patterns of drought and scarcity in the canyon? Tony, I believe that you've just provided an indigenous model for perhaps how it was that Chaco functioned in reality, and this new model in turn implies that the abandonment of Chaco was not the catastrophic model of abandonment that it has been made out to be in the final analysis. Would you say that were it not for the collapse of the canyon's proximate resource base and the Spanish entrada in the centuries thereafter, some of the outliers, if not the canyon itself, would have remained viable as part of this Chacoan "solar" settlement system (Fig. 16.12)?

Chavarria: Yes, and then you have those settlements of the Gallina wedge near Chaco, with seemingly minimal interaction with the canyon. I've always wondered about Chaco's role in all of this, and particularly about the idea that if Chaco wasn't a permanent settlement, was it used only during different times of the year, or in varying years, as a place of convergence? But then again, maybe it's this earlier practice that was already in place and was revisited at the time of the Pueblo Revolt. In other words, might it be that this pattern of convergence was already in place as a hedge against adversity, and Chaco Canyon was the buffer zone. In all likelihood, regional moieties, local clans, different sodalities, and different headmen bringing

together resources and manpower from the outliers in times of social upheaval or external threat? Interestingly, they date the All Indian Pueblos Council to the planning of the Pueblo Revolt, and if the role of Chaco is any indicator, then it may well be that the All Indian Pueblos Council simply represents the resurgence of an age-old pattern of adaptation with very deep roots in the Southwest.

Mendoza: I would think that some of those who may have converged at Chaco as part of this extended council, or heterarchical arrangement so prevalent in other areas of the Americas, may well have been southerners from as far away as Casas Grandes, northern Chihuahua, Mexico. And, moreover, I would contend that those who seek to minimize the significance of Mesoamerican products and peoples in the Southwest; by arguing for tenuous long-distance trading relationships, may well have overlooked the likelihood of substantive social relationships and a more formidable record of population movements over vast distances in order to buffer against the vagaries of environmental and social change and conflict.

Chavarria: We've already seen with Coronado's *entrada*, that the people were quite capable of communicating over vast expanses of the Southwest via various translators. Therefore, such interactions across diverse cultural zones didn't really pose a barrier, and that irrespective of the fact of the many language groups and dialects to be addressed across the region. Some, for instance, spoke in the Zuni tongue, while others negotiated a host of northern Mexican Indian languages. Such transactions had to have been commonplace, as for instance those groups in northern Mexico who obtained buffalo hides by way of working the crops of the Zuni far to the north. So, clearly, there is a very long history of migration and migrant labor that extends well back into the prehistory of the Southwest.

Mendoza: Well, it would appear that most believe that migrant labor only dates back to the Mexican *Bracero* era of post-World War II agriculture in the United States of America?

Chavarria: No, that's what Kurt and Polly Schaafsma pointed out; that there was one group in northern Mexico that had buffalo hides acquired from the Zuni (Schaafsma 1994). The question then became one of where were the Zuni getting their buffalo hides from…as they would have originated on the Great Plains, and Zuni is one of the westernmost Pueblos located at a considerable distance from the Plains. So, you can argue that people were trading over great distances, whether by down the line forms of trade, or by direct contact with merchants and migrants who brought in the hides from distant regions. As with the northern Mexican site of Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, we again have a major Puebloan trading center, replete with macaws, parrot cages, quantities of turquoise, and such; and all having particularly great importance in this region as well. You also have the Chacoan outlier of Aztec Ruins National Monument whose cultural traditions align closely with those of Chaco itself. So it does make sense that there were places where moieties based in such satellite sites took part in pilgrimages, along with other initiates, because even in the recent past the ancestors trekked from one sacred site to the next leaving behind rock cairns to mark their passage. By extension, the Zuni Salt Lake, located

Fig. 16.13 By the mid-eleventh century the dozens of Great House settlements and Great Kivas of Chaco Canyon were connected to some 150 distant Great House sites by a massive system of roads extending beyond the canyon. The Great Kiva of Chetro Ketl, depicted here, is but one of the many at the epicenter of Chacoan society that served a constellation of distant outliers and regional settlements beyond what is today the Chaco Culture National Historical Park. Photo by Rubén G. Mendoza, 1982

about sixty miles south of Zuni Pueblo, essentially became a demilitarized zone due to salt's importance to the Pueblos (Fig. 16.4). In fact, the Old Salt Woman's spiritual significance mitigated against the possibility of intertribal warfare, particularly as each community understood that they had to share her gifts from the earth. The salt lake became a site of pilgrimage, much like Chaco, but with both religion and resource use as central to the goings-on of that place (Fig. 16.13).

Mendoza: What we're talking about, therefore, centers on these sizeable population movements that formed a traditional dimension of Puebloan patterns of adaptation in which entire towns were seen to uproot and reappear elsewhere on an ongoing basis, and perhaps in a recurring cycle. In this way the Pueblos were able to maintain a relatively harmonious balance with an environment seemingly on the brink of collapse, and this despite the region's marginal character. As such, they managed to accommodate the region's limitations even so, but did so by way of forming regional coalitions and uprooting and relocating entire towns on a regular basis, and in turn, in an orderly fashion. This is virtually unheard of where sedentary agricultural communities and towns are concerned, and yet that is precisely what transpired in the pre-Contact era. This pattern appears to fly in the face of the notion that American

Indians, and the Pueblos in particular, sought to maintain harmony by way of a static and fixed relationship with ancestral lands and their environment, not to mention the broader social landscapes of the Southwest. This sounds rather like shifting cultivation, in which Mesoamerican farmers are seen to crop an area of the rainforest until the soil is depleted of all nutrients, and thereby rendered unsuitable. Once this happens, swidden agriculturalists then uproot and move on to the next patch of ground, and thereby restart the cycle all over again.

Chavarria: A dramatic example of this pattern of resettlement concerns the Tewa community of Hopi. We have always seen that as pre-dating the contact period and colonization by Europeans in the period after 1540. The Pueblos have always seen the Tewa relocation to Hopi as having taken place prior to Spanish contact, while others argue that it was in the post-Contact period when this occurred. The story here is that the Hopi came to the Pueblos and asked for help on three different occasions in order to fend off the invaders in their region, very likely Athapaskan intruders. The Tewa eventually went out there to live among the Hopi. As such, an entire Pueblo uprooted and relocated to support the Hopi, and this as a response by the Hopi call for assistance in their fight against the intruders.

Mendoza: So, while I understand that it was the Hopi who essentially solicited military support, who was it specifically that responded in this instance, and what was the incentive to the Pueblo that joined them in the fray?

Chavarria: It was a Tewa Village that joined the Hopi. Some people say that they came from the Gallisteo Basin south of Hopi, but others claim that they came from the north, near modern-day Chimayo, a Tewa village that basically agreed to go live among the Hopi. In exchange they were permitted to remain at Hopi forever. The offer was that this one place on First Mesa would remain theirs forever. So basically this entire village of men, women, and children uprooted and relocated to join the Hopi. They remain there to this day!

Mendoza: So, the idea that an entire town might uproot and relocate in order to accommodate such an exigency would appear to reinforce the idea that such symbiotic relationships, or systemic linkages, between communities, social networks, and clans or lineages were quite ancient, pervasive, and very powerful. And, these forces would appear to have been so powerful and pervasive that whole towns and populations were prepared to relocate as called upon to do so, and on a moment's notice?

Chavarria: More interesting yet is that these were Tanoan-speaking groups, in other words Tewa, who joined a group of non-Tanoan speakers, the Hopi, in an effort to come to their aid despite the need to completely uproot and relocate their village in the process. For me this is clearly a case where it did not come down to the Pueblos fleeing in advance of the Spanish *entrada*, but rather, an event that pre-dates the *entrada* and the introduction of Spanish and Euroamerican systems of land tenure.

Mendoza: Ultimately, viewed through the lens of the Pueblos world view, it would appear that such practices were little more than the people's response to the vagaries

of resource scarcity in the Southwest. Like swidden agriculture, one could say that the Pueblos responded to the dying earth through a reconciliation borne of migration and resettlement, thereby giving the earth time to heal in the wake of its exploitation and injury. Do you see a contradiction between the notion of American Indians living in harmony with their environment (in other words the idea of Iron Eyes Cody standing on the edge of a polluted river with tears welling up in his eyes), and this Puebloan model for harvesting the resource base through to exhaustion, and then moving on to new sites in order to replenish their resource base?

Chavarria: I would argue that such practices still demonstrate a commitment to working in harmony with the land. It's certainly not an ideal approach, and definitely not one that today we would think of in terms of sustainability, but it's certainly what the Pueblos thought of in terms of sustainability with the ecology of the region. For the Pueblos this was part of a larger effort to strike a balance, and one in concert with the wishes of the supernaturals. Without the benefit of draft animals or metal tools, the Pueblos modified the natural landscapes of the Southwest by clear cutting scrubby trees and junipers, and harvesting the giant Ponderosa pines for use in construction; and thereby building monumental towns and cities like Chaco or Mesa Verde. Later, with the aid of Spanish tools, they continued the same practices, but did so within the context of non-renewable, and fixed and bounded settlement systems based on Euroamerican notions of land tenure first introduced by the Spanish.

Conclusions

A host of particularly salient and relevant Puebloan issues and anthropological observations emerged from this discussion with Antonio Chavarria. Of these, three primary areas of concern were addressed, including (a) Pueblo concerns with the publication of works that address social violence and a less than sustainable relationship with the ecology of the Southwest; (b) engaging the concerns of descendant communities where our studies are concerned with said issues; and (c) cultural adaptation, including Puebloan responses to environmental degradation, and the assimilation or accommodation of external influences emanating from beyond the Puebloan world. Clearly, current understandings within and beyond the scholarly community will require reconsideration in light of some of those dimensions of Puebloan world views addressed here regarding conflict, social violence, and relations with the earth and its resources.

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