CHAPTER ONE

An Indian Corner in your home adds to the artistic effect.
Advertisement for the Hyde Exploring Expedition, 1902

Unpacking the Indian Corner

In 1903, the magazine *The Papoose* published seven photographs of the "Indian corner" installed by the cartoonist and publisher Joseph "Udo" Keppler in his Manhattan home (figure 1). The photographs reveal three connected spaces: a large "den" that includes a desk and seating area, a small alcove with a day bed, and a connecting hall dominated by a glass case (figure 2). Each space teems with Native American artifacts accented by simple furnishings. Keppler's collection was not unique. The Indian corner was a widespread home decoration fad that was promoted by illustrated magazines, Indian traders, and urban marketers, including department stores. Owners of Indian corners ranged from people of modest means who kept a few items on a shelf to large-scale collectors such as Keppler, many of whom accumulated valuable and important pieces that later became the core of museum collections across the country.

While many photographs of Indian corners were published at the turn of the century, the *Papoose* photographs of Keppler's display offer an unusually rich document of such a space. They show objects drawn from a wide variety of Native American nations. On one wall of the study, the rounded forms of southwestern basket plaques mingle with dangling beaded bags gathered from Plains tribes.

FIGURE 1 Joseph "Udo" Keppler's study, from *The Papoose*, March 1903, 1.

FIGURE 2 Alcove in Joseph "Udo" Keppler's home, from *The Papoose*, March 1903, 6.

The other wall bears a collection of Iroquois false-face masks. Navajo blankets cover the floor and several pieces of furniture, their contrasting geometric patterns providing a dazzling display. A print portraying a Sioux warrior is wedged into the corner. In other photographs, we can see a hearth surrounded by clubs, arrows, masks, and Hopi trays; a standing case filled with more plains beadwork; and an alcove appointed in a similar fashion to the main room.

Photographs of other Indian corners from contemporary publications reveal Keppler's collection as elaborate but typical (see figure 3). Indian corners routinely included handicrafts of diverse materials and cultural origins. Such diversity is reflected in a 1904 article on this decorating "fad," which described a room thus: "a Winnebago curtain drapes an ample doorway, an Iroquois blanket stains the wall with brilliant color, and one of Navajo weave conceals a couch."[1] As in Keppler's home, collectors clustered objects made of the same materials together, sometimes in a special case or set of

FIGURE 3 "Part of One of the Earliest California Collections," from *The Basket* 2.1 (1904), 20.

shelves. Even if the collector focused on a single kind of object, such as baskets or weavings, the display generally juxtaposed examples of the medium from different tribes and areas resulting in an array of diverse shapes, patterns, and ornaments. A graphic representation of an Indian—a calendar or a photograph or, perhaps, a framed print—usually accompanied the handicrafts.

Such pictures were known as "Indian portraits." They came in a variety of mediums and sizes. They could also conform to different styles. The Sioux man on Keppler's wall resembles the straightforward, almost ethnographic, busts of nationally known Indian painter Elbridge Ayer Burbank (figure 4). In 1898, the Chicago-based magazine *Brush and Pencil* published an article on Burbank that included copies of his portraits that could be cut out and framed.[2] The magazine published other Burbanks in subsequent issues and also offered copies via mail order.[3] Prints weren't the only form of Indian portraiture—photographers such as Frank A. Rinehart vended their wares

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FIGURE 4 Elbridge Ayer Burbank, *Chief Blue Horse, Sioux*, 1899. Oil on canvas. Edward E. Ayer Collection, The Newberry Library, Chicago.

through advertisements, and art dealers and *Brush and Pencil* also promoted so-called Indian calendars, proclaiming one "The Sensation of the Year."[4] In keeping with their title, Indian portraits were usually annotated with the name of the sitter. But they tend to position the sitter as passive. Chief Blue Eagle, for example, doesn't attempt to engage the viewer's gaze, but instead looks away, as do the subjects of the portraits on Keppler's walls. These isolated figures are usually depicted in traditional dress and engaged in a "timeless" activity, such as caring for children, or doing nothing at all.

In many ways, the Indian portraits are the key to the Indian corner, for this simulated presence of the original makers and users of the objects on display highlights their assumed absence from modern domestic space. Indian corners define their owners as *not* Native and thus also as having none of the qualities associated with indigenous people. Not dependent on preindustrial tools, collectors are able to appreciate them for their aesthetic value alone. The ability to collect such objects is a hallmark of a modernity

presumed available only to European Americans. A poem by Alvida Kelton Lee published in 1899 highlights this impression:

Down from my study walls they gaze,
  These grave, grim men of alien race;
They make me dream of some dim forest maze
  Or wild trail leading on to wilder place.

. . . From that dark frame a brave old warrior looks
  His calm disdain upon my pampered ease,
Till I could trade my easy-chair, my books,
  For mat of rushes by the brown tepees

. . . They give me strength, each pictured face,
  They teach me scorn of petty ills,
And courage to press onward in the race,
  Up to the summit of life's highest ills.[5]

Lee's poem repeats the Indian corner's pattern of juxtaposing two antithetical worlds, the wild forest and the comfortable study. But though the writer describes the natural world as having greater appeal than her own, she presents it as one impossible to reach. Similarly, the portraits in Keppler's corners do not offer windows onto actual Indian lives but situate their models in blank expanses of space into which the viewers can project their own interpretation. Rather than document individuals' and tribal nations' complex negotiations with their changing circumstances, these portraits and the collections of which they are a part are designed to stimulate the collector's imagination.

Discussions of the Indian corner frequently link it to "antimodernism," a term coined by T. J. Jackson Lears to describe the "recoil from 'overcivilized modern existence to more intense forms of physical or spiritual experience," identified with preindustrial culture.[6] The fact that many collections were installed in Adirondack cabins, hunting lodges, and suburban dens—places associated with male retreat from bureaucratic labor and urban commercialism—reinforces this interpretation. These associations are not incorrect, but they are incomplete, most obviously as they fail to account for the ways in which collecting Native American art was also a means of embracing modern culture. As I will show, the acquisition of Indian handicrafts at

the turn of the century must be understood as an aspect of, as well as an antidote to, the spread of commodity culture. The accumulation and display of these goods demonstrated a sensitivity to the material object and a capacity for taste that were distinctly modern pleasures.

The craftspeople who supplied the work displayed in these collections also negotiated modernity's promises and challenges. While Euro-American collectors may not have known it, many of the designs, techniques, and forms of the objects they owned were innovations developed by craftspeople aware of non-Native markets. It is thus useful to understand the Indian corner as a "contact zone," a term defined by anthropologist Mary Louise Pratt as a space of intercultural negotiation in which European Americans and Natives encounter each other's practices and values, albeit under conditions of radical inequality.[7]

In this chapter I explore the modernity of the Indian corner by reading it in relationship to the spread of the culture of consumption. In doing so, I look closely at both the contents and the display of collections of Native American art. Key to my argument is the fact that indigenous handicrafts were both purchased and displayed in urban contexts. Departing from studies that emphasize Indian traders based on or near reservations, I look at marketers and collectors located in major cities, particularly New York. The cosmopolitan nature of the city allows me to explore the participation of Indian people, including Native artists, in the culture of consumption. During this period, Indian people regularly flowed through the cities of the United States on diplomatic missions, as members of performing groups, en route to government boarding schools, and increasingly as individuals in search of the employment and social opportunities offered by a modern city.

This work bears a debt to earlier work on the marketing of Native American art. Early studies of Indian traders have been joined by examinations of curio dealers in western cities.[8] To this date, however, few have paid attention to the sale of Native handicrafts in eastern cities. The lack of scholarship here is a shame, because ignoring the urban component of this history can unintentionally reinforce the very primitivism that studies of so-called tourist arts seek to challenge, by associating Native American art with western reservations and tourist depots perceived as removed from cosmopolitan modernity. Phil Deloria has noted the persistence of the cultural trope

of the primitive Indian to this day, despite the fact that we all know better. "According to most American narratives," he writes, "Indian people, corralled on isolated and impoverished reservations, missed out on modernity. . . . [However,] a significant cohort of Native people engaged the same forces of modernization that were making non-Indians reevaluate their own expectations of themselves and their society."[9] By acknowledging the role of Native art in the metropolitan phenomenon of the Indian corner, we can reinsert Native Americans and their art into the modern history of which they were a part.

THE ORIGINS OF THE INDIAN CORNER

Personal collections of Native American objects date to the earliest years of European settlement of the American frontier. Thomas Jefferson installed some of the materials brought back by Lewis and Clark at Monticello, and a fair number of military officers picked up souvenirs on western postings.[10] But the spread of this taste beyond individuals with regular contact with Indian people is a Victorian development, facilitated by advances in both domestic decoration and the distribution of Native American handicrafts.

The Indian corner is an example of the "cozy corner," a type of domestic space developed in the mid-nineteenth century. The first cozy corners were outfitted with pillows and textiles from the Middle East, reflecting an Orientalist association of the region with comfort and luxury, but Japanese themes were also common. Cozy corners reflect the shifting association of middle-class homes in the second half of the nineteenth century from sites of work to retreats from the workaday world.[11] This change defined a new role for domestic decoration: to provide cheer and nurture individuality. Because of the increasing array of manufactured and imported furnishings available in the Gilded Age, the selection of household decorations was influenced not only by their comfort and convenience but also by the emerging notion that taste was an expression of personal identity. Cozy corners provided casual spaces for familial interaction that were filled with objects with stimulating forms and textures from exotic locations that epitomized the association of home with escape from modern urban culture.

This phenomenon was influenced by the ideas of the British critics John Ruskin and William Morris, which spurred an international arts and crafts movement. The term "arts and crafts" has been associated with an unreal-

istic desire to return to a premodern utopian age; Eileen Boris suggests the term "aesthetic reform" as a more appropriate description of the efforts that followers of Ruskin and Morris undertook to influence the culture of the Progressive Era.[12] The movement placed particular emphasis on the value of household furnishings, suggesting that exposure to simple, well-designed, often handmade wares in the home could help assuage what Ruskin called "the anxieties of the outer life" and develop character and taste.[13] Aesthetic reformers praised cultures perceived as untainted by modern industrialism, celebrating the craftsmen of the Middle Ages and Renaissance and looking in modern vernacular traditions for examples of honesty and simplicity in materials and design. Aesthetic reformers celebrated the material culture of rural areas such as Ireland as survivals of premodern traditions. They also looked to non-European culture as a source, especially cultures falling under the political and economic influence of European superpowers.[14] Handcrafted exotic objects from Asia, including Indian paisley shawls, Arabian carpets, and Japanese screens, were brought into the bourgeois home as more "authentic" and healthful than the machine-made bibelots of Western culture. This rhetoric also facilitated the market for Native American objects. While all types of cozy corner were grounded in notions of the exotic, each had particular associations. As I will discuss below, for American audiences, Indian corners were understood to address a variety of cultural needs arising at the turn of the century, particularly the desire for an individual and national sense of mastery in the face of the increasing alienation brought on by industrialized work, urban life, and international trade.

The origins of the Indian corner reveal it to be an artifact of the very modernization it was thought to ameliorate. Specifically, this collecting practice is intimately linked with western expansion. The Indian corner idea was probably inspired by the collections of two prominent New Englanders intimately linked with the investigation of Native life: the writer Helen Hunt Jackson and the ethnographer Frank Hamilton Cushing. Both traveled extensively in the West in the 1880s, the period when the reservation system was becoming codified. Jackson was a travel writer whose exposure to the condition of Native Americans led her to pen the best-selling Indian reform–oriented novel *Ramona*.[15] Cushing conducted ethnographic expeditions to the Southwest, first under the auspices of the Smithsonian and later

for the Boston philanthropist Mary Tileston Hemenway. Each was the subject of admiring profiles in the periodical press, some of which mentioned their collections of Native American art.[16]

These early models notwithstanding, the Native version of the cozy corner was dependent on the development of off-reservation distribution of Native American handicrafts. Native Americans had traded baskets, blankets, apparel, and tools with their non-Indian neighbors since the beginning of European settlement. In some areas, such as Niagara Falls, craftspeople also produced curios to sell as souvenirs to tourists.[17] The marketing of Native American art exploded at the end of the nineteenth century, when traders began addressing urban consumers directly through advertisements, special sales, and mail-order catalogues, enabling them to purchase goods from a wide array of areas without leaving the city. One well-informed writer claimed in 1901 that $18,000 of Indian goods was being sold in New York annually.[18]

Who was buying this material? Otis Mason's *Aboriginal American Basketry*, first published as an annual report of the National Museum (now the Smithsonian Institution) but republished in 1904 by Doubleday, includes an eight-page appendix listing the collections of prominent Americans such as John Wanamaker, Phoebe Apperson Hearst, and Mrs. Leland Stanford, as well as those of other, less well-known individuals spread across the country.[19] A closer examination of one such collection, that of Udo Keppler, will reveal some of the reasons for this popularity.

Following in the footsteps of his father, Joseph Keppler Sr., Udo worked as a political cartoonist for *Puck*, the magazine founded by the elder Keppler in 1876. He took over direction of the magazine upon his father's death in 1894. By the late 1880s, however, he was devoting time to his interest in Native American culture, particularly to his work with the Seneca of upstate New York. Keppler corresponded actively about matters related to culture and politics with several prominent Seneca "culture brokers" (Native people who work as intercessors between Indian and non-Indian worlds), including the chief, Edward Cornplanter; his son Jesse, a writer and artist; and the ethnologist Arthur C. Parker.[20] Along with his friend Harriet Converse, an amateur ethnologist who had been adopted into the Seneca nation, Keppler conducted research on ceremonials that resulted in a lengthy paper on false-face masks published by the Heye Foundation in 1941.[21]

When Converse died in 1903, Keppler was given her place in the tribe. He worked against the allotment of New York reservations and was involved in other issues pertaining to Seneca sovereignty. Keppler was also involved in the welfare of numerous individuals; his correspondence describes visits he made to a number of families and gifts and favors that he shared with them. Keppler socialized with other European Americans interested in Native American culture. He numbered among his friends Theodore Roosevelt and George Gustav Heye, the megalomaniac collector of American Indian art, whose collection became the core of the current National Museum of the American Indian.[22] Much of Keppler's own collection became part of the Heye Foundation's Museum of the American Indian, where he served as vice president for a time. He also made generous gifts to his friend Charles Lummis's Southwest Museum in Pasadena, where he spent winters.

Keppler's collection reflects these scientific and personal connections to Indian people. The false-face masks that dominate his study relate to his scientific research. But at times, Keppler would set up the sale of a valuable object, such as a mask, to a non-Indian collector, which he explains as motivated by a desire to provide the original sellers with income, and there is no indication that he made a profit on these sales. He also writes of purchasing, and often reselling, corn husk dolls, slippers, moccasins, baskets, and other inexpensive items for Native artists. Other objects have no connection to his scientific activities. These include decorative objects from the West and Southwest, such as the Navajo weavings that line the floors and embellish chairs in every room of his Inwood home. Some pieces are clearly well-made treasures that have been handed down through generations, but others appear to be items produced during Keppler's time explicitly for intercultural trade. While his papers don't record his source of non-Iroquoian objects, they were undoubtedly purchased through middlemen—western dealers, urban retailers, or even Indian reform organizations. Keppler had connections to each of these. For example, *The Papoose*, which published the photographs of his collection, was owned by the Hyde Exploring Expedition, a trading company based in Arizona that reached urban audiences through mail order and through outposts in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Newport, and Los Angeles.

The range in quality and value of Keppler's objects poses a challenge to those who would try to fix him within a certain category of ethnographic

collector. Was he primarily an ethnographer, interested in making scientific study of the false-face societies? Was he an aesthete interested primarily in the formal qualities of objects? Or was he a sentimental consumer who used his purchasing power to solidify personal relationships and aid the needy? Could his taste resemble the superficial interest of the tourist? Since the beginning of the twentieth century, critics have divided collections of non-Western objects according to the writers' support of different disciplines, particularly anthropology and art. These categories reinforced the professionalization that both the art world and the social sciences experienced at the end of the nineteenth century, something reflected in the creation of public museums with collections organized along scientific and aesthetic lines before these disciplines were fully integrated into the academy. These museums distinguished themselves from the eclectic dime museums of an earlier generation, whose collections invoked a variety of associations from the historical to the sensational.[23]

Turn-of-the-century commentators used these categories to distinguish between "serious" collectors and dilettantes. For example, a 1904 article accused "popular" collectors of "promiscuous and unintelligent buying," while the "true lover" had a "far more genuine" interest in Native American culture.[24] More recently, Molly Lee has written of the need to look closely at the diverse engagement of collectors. She has distinguished different strains of collecting of Alaska Native objects, ranging from acquisitions by tourists with a brief and superficial relationship to Native culture to those of specialized collectors with an ongoing, often professional, relationship with specific indigenous communities, and to aesthetic reformers who appropriated indigenous art to support their larger social goals.[25]

Lee acknowledges the difficulty of this task, for while academic disciplines were emerging at the turn of the century, they had not finished doing so—if indeed they ever have. Still more challenging is the fact that the same objects and even the same collection could take on a different meaning in a new context. The collecting of Native American art, especially by museums, has become an important scholarly subject in the past two decades.[26] Historians have noted both the means by which indigenous objects left their communities—gift, trade, sale, theft, and so on—and the ways in which these dislocations were attended by changes in the objects' meaning. These changes in meaning refer not only to the shift from an indigenous user to

a non-Indian collector, but also the shifts undergone as collected objects change location. Thomas Jefferson's collection of artifacts from the Lewis and Clark expedition later were owned by the showman P. T. Barnum and eventually came into the collection of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard. Each venue invited viewers to relate differently to the objects on display. If the significance of individual objects is controlled by context, then it is nevertheless possible to draw conclusions about the significance of a collection as a whole. For the act of assembling collections has its own history.

The effort to evaluate and categorize collectors relates to this history, particularly to the spread of collecting in the late nineteenth century. The widespread creation of domestic collections is related to the spread of a culture of consumption. As T. J. Jackson Lears has argued, the urbanization and industrialization of the nineteenth century dislodged older notions of subjectivity whereby one might develop a sense of self in relationship to work, religion, and community. Capitalist society, which connected producers and consumers across geographic expanses via an invisible market, challenged the perception that identity was something fixed and innate. Consumption became one means to redress this alienation or "feeling of unreality," as Lears put it. Social critics, religious leaders, and marketers alike urged people to reintroduce a sense of authenticity into their lives through "therapeutic" leisure.[27] As Lears wrote: "In the embryonic consumer culture of the late nineteenth century, more and more Americans were being encouraged to 'express themselves' . . . not through independent accomplishment but through the ownership of things."[28] Increasingly, people linked their identities to the objects with which they surrounded themselves and saw the act of consumption as an opportunity to be affected by objects as well as to express some inner taste.

The culture of consumption introduced the notion of taste as a signifier of social class. In the late nineteenth century Thorstein Veblen invented the term "conspicuous consumption," or the "wasteful" consumption of goods not to meet physical needs but as a visible sign to others of one's wealth and power. The standards set by what Veblen calls "the leisure class" then become the standard to which the middle and lower classes hold themselves and upon which their reputation is based.[29] As the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has explained, the notion of "taste" has served to naturalize the elite

status of those with the power to consume more by masking the relationship between wealth and discernment.[30]

Collecting inherently fits Veblen's category of wasteful consumption, as it removes objects from use. This gesture was recognized by early scholars of domestic collecting, such as Walter Benjamin, whose 1931 essay "Unpacking My Library" describes the collector as someone with "a relationship to objects which does not emphasize their functional, utilitarian value—that is, their usefulness—but studies and loves them as the scene, the stage, of their fate. The most profound enchantment for the collector is the locking of individual items within a magic circle in which they are fixed as the final thrill, the thrill of acquisition, passes over them."[31] Jean Baudrillard has similarly commented on how the collector overwrites the historical and cultural meaning of an object by inserting it into a context where it refers only to its new owner.[32]

Michel Foucault has connected collecting and display with a modern Western system of power. Many critics in his wake have seen collections of non-Western materials as an embodiment of Euro-American colonial domination, noting, for example, that the Smithsonian's collecting accelerated in the 1870s, when ethnologists thought more knowledge of the Indians would help the U.S. government subdue them.

Such an interpretation is not inappropriate for the Indian corner. Keppler's records do not include a statement of the meaning of his collection, but the captions to his photographs suggest that it is an index to his character. One is captioned, "Where he studies and works and entertains his friends" (figure 5), suggesting a surrounding associated with "authenticity" and leisure.[33] A more extensive meditation on the meaning of the Indian corner is provided by the Indian "expert" George Wharton James, who traded in, wrote about, and lectured on Native American art extensively in the first decade of the twentieth century.[34] James was a British immigrant who began to meet and photograph Indians and establish business ties with Indian traders while in the Southwest recovering from an illness. He wove together his own ideas with those drawn from ethnographers and aesthetic reformers to extol the superior moral and physical benefits of the "simple" life in the American Southwest. James praised collectors as having "wide sympathies, broad culture, and . . . refined mind[s]."[35] The home decoration expert Alice Kellogg suggested that surrounding boys with Navajo weavings

FIGURE 5 Joseph "Udo" Keppler's study, from *The Papoose*, March 1903, 5.

and Plains textiles could stimulate their competitive drive and quest for knowledge.[36]

This rhetoric was tinged with nationalism. The Indian craze was the homegrown successor to the "Japan craze," a similar collecting frenzy that dominated the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Spurred by the Japanese exhibit at the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia and the increasing trans-Pacific trade during the Meiji empire, Gilded Age Americans began decorating their homes with Japanese objects. A wide variety of goods of Japanese manufacture were sold in America, ranging from inexpensive paper fans and lanterns, metal *tsuba* (sword guards), and carved ivories to more expensive enamels, lacquer work, ceramics, and carved and painted screens.[37]

In the 1890s and 1900s, critics used a positive comparison to Japanese art as the basis for the aesthetic qualities of Indian handicrafts. Olive May Percival argued that the quality of Indian art was equaled only by the Japanese

and proclaimed, "The collector of Indian baskets knows that a really perfect specimen is quite as rare as a piece of genuinely antique Satsuma."[38] Irene Sargent compared the workmanship of California basketry with Japanese art. As she put it, "The Japanese who glorifies his tea-cup and his screen, is followed in the same path, although with unequal steps, by the Indian woman who realizes in the form, texture and decoration of her food basket conceptions of beauty which no school can justly criticize."[39] Interestingly, such a comparison builds on an earlier trend of comparing Indian people with the Japanese. As Neil Harris and Eunyoung Cho have discussed, the Japanese became America's primary cultural "other" in the 1880s, establishing a standard against which other primitives would be compared.[40] Travelers to the American West frequently described Indian people, especially Indian women, as being physically similar to the Japanese. One Boston woman even saw Dakota Sioux women's buckskin dresses as a variation on the kimono.[41]

Native American art was seen as a distinctly superior form of decoration, in keeping with the increasing nationalism and protectionism of the nation at the time. Native American art allowed people of the United States to combine these nationalist and colonialist interests, by appropriating the material culture of subjugated indigenous people as an expression of national aesthetics. They embraced the fact that Indian art was made out of local materials and described its various forms as a reaction to the national landscape. Most important, critics urged collectors to buy Native products instead of sending money overseas. As one writer put it, "Americans send hundreds of thousands of dollars every year to Germany and Japan for hampers, scrap baskets, clothes baskets, market baskets, work baskets, fruit, flower, lunch and candy baskets,—money which, by every right, should be earned by our needy, capable Indians."[42]

This desire to flex American muscle occurred on a small as well as an international scale. Collectors of Native American art often relate the story of acquisition as a kind of conquest. Consider an anecdote related by journalist Julian Ralph describing his acquisition of a pair of earrings from a Cree girl at a train station: "Among all the Indians there it was the only bit of finery, the only ornament, the only link that connected them with their past. It was all they had. I got it. I put a quarter in the Cree girl's hand, and

almost tore the rings out of her ears—for the whistle had blown and the wheels were turning. I have often wondered since whether she cared to part with them."[43] The story's title, "My Indian Plunder," confirms the writer's enjoyment of this triumph.

Keppler clearly had a more congenial relationship with the Natives who provided the objects in his collection. His correspondence reveals this trust. In 1904 Delos Kittle, a Seneca, wrote to say that Keppler was the only one to whom his mother would sell her false-face mask, and that she had rejected earlier offers. While this may only have been rhetoric designed to make the sale, Keppler demonstrated his respect for Kittle by loaning the object back for use in tribal ceremonials at least twice.[44] While Kittle's family seemingly parted with the mask willingly and were compensated for it, it is nevertheless possible to read a narrative of power in this transaction. Keppler's collection was assembled during a time of dramatic cultural change for the Seneca, and poverty, leading some to feel they had little choice but to work with the non-Indian "gleaners" who came through searching for traditional objects.[45] Moreover, while Keppler recognized Kittle's desire to use the mask in a ceremonial way, he displayed this powerful object as a domestic decoration, leading another Seneca, Edward Cornplanter, to warn him about his careless handling of "dangerous materials."[46]

The *Papoose* article on Keppler's home is titled "A Rare Collection," with a preciousness that typifies this discourse in which Indian objects and the understanding thereof are shown to be hard to come by. Such rhetorical strategies not only add value to the works displayed, but also celebrate the tenacity of the collector. Keppler's collection is ultimately not a sign of the artistry of the craftspeople from whom he got the objects, but of his own skill in assembling the collection, his bravery in making contact with primitive craftspeople, and his persistence in finding the definitive explanations of the objects in his possession. Carolyn Kastner has read the collection of the Chicago industrialist Edward Everett Ayer (figure 6) as "a visual metaphor of his power over the collected cultures." She locates this power in his ability to name the objects and define their meanings. In Ayer's Indian corner, pieces whose uses once relied on their manipulation in space during work or ceremonial are stilled for contemplation by Ayer and his guests. When Ayer donated these objects to the Field Museum, he failed to include

FIGURE 6 Elbridge Ayer Burbank, *Edward Everett Ayer*, 1897. Oil on canvas. Edward E. Ayer Collection, The Newberry Library, Chicago.

information about their origins or makers. Works of diverse artists, periods, and regions became pieces of Ayer's collection, rather than artifacts with individual histories.[47]

Narratives of conquest could also be found in the very placement of Native objects in the European American home. Indian corners frequently appeared in spaces caught between nature and culture such as porches and verandas, providing a metaphoric claim on the wilderness. Such associations were made clear by writers; for example, Gustav Stickley suggested that placing Navajo rugs on porches helped turn them into "peaceful outdoor living rooms."[48] Keppler's interweaving of weapons and hunting trophies with the more peaceful handicrafts in his collection similarly associates the assembly of the collection with conflict and struggle.

Lears finds the desire for a sense of mastery a common response among the American middle classes faced with the challenges of modernity. The arrangement of Indian corners suggests an association with serious study that highlights the power of their owners. George Wharton James surrounded his

FIGURE 7 George Wharton James's collection, from G. W. James, *Indian Basketry* (Pasadena, Calif.: self-published, 1902), 190.

installations with the attributes of the scholarly life: leather-bound books, old prints, and references to classical antiquity (figure 7). In some corners, such as that of Mrs. Jewett of Lamanda Park, California, objects have taken the place of books, offering their own shapes and decorations as "texts" to be read (figure 8). Informed viewers can see order in the variety included in these displays. For example, Jewett's baskets come from a wide variety of West Coast cultures, from Pomo to Tulare to Tlingit, providing a catalogue-like impression that is enhanced by the ways in which the baskets' different positions highlight the variety of materials (feather, shell, grass, bark) and techniques (twining, plaiting, wicker, coiling) utilized. Articles on collecting recommended such variety; *The Papoose*, for example, suggested that "a basket collection without a Washoe is like the play of Hamlet with Hamlet omitted."[49] The Washoe tribe, whose land spans the California-Nevada border around Lake Tahoe, produced coiled basketry known for its tiny stitches and intricate designs. The author may have been referring specifically to the work of Louisa Keyser, also known as Dat-so-la-lee, whose fine work became

FIGURE 8 "Part of the Jewett Collection," from Olive M. Percival, "Indian Basketry: An Aboriginal Art," *House Beautiful* 2 (1897): 153. Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, New York.

well known through her work for a Carson City clothing store, Emporium Company, where she demonstrated and sold her work.[50] Collectors went to great effort to have objects from as many tribes as possible in their displays. Articles focusing on the traditions of a specific tribe or region or medium created categories to be filled. For example, between 1897 and 1905, *House Beautiful* ran articles on Chilkat blankets, Navajo weaving, Pueblo pottery, and diverse basket traditions.[51] The adherence of Indian corners to an ideal of order and classification complemented this scholarly drive for complete representation.[52] Even Keppler's eclectic collection has a certain tidiness, with each object occupying its own space and similar materials assembled together on walls or shelves, or in cases.

Encounters with nature could promote the characteristics needed for such mastery: physical and psychic health, energy, sincerity.[53] As John Higham has explained, "Nature . . . represented that masculine hardiness and power that suddenly seemed an absolutely indispensable remedy for the artificiality and effeteness of late nineteenth-century urban life."[54] Native objects perceived as belonging to nature rather than culture because of their materials and the nonindustrialized mode of their production and exposure

to Indian culture was part of the drive to redress the effeteness of civilization. The fine craftsmanship, durable materials, and romantic associations of Native American handicrafts were perceived as therapeutic. For example, one article encouraged the use of Indian motifs as nursery decorations to stimulate a young boy's imagination.[55] The same boy might have joined the Woodcraft Indians, an early rival of the Boy Scouts, or be sent to camp in the Adirondacks as he grew older to continue the healthful influence of the natural world.[56]

The display strategies involved in the Indian corner enhanced this notion of an encounter with "authentic" primitive life. Without letting the eye dwell on one individual object, Indian corners impress the viewer as dynamic, visually and physically stimulating spaces. Leaning against the wall, draping jauntily off furniture, trailing fringe and feathers, stacked on shelves or hanging in clusters, the objects in Keppler's Indian corner spark the desire to enter the space and pick them up, set them into balance or merely run our fingers over their varied surfaces. Articles promoting Indian corners suggest the therapeutic value of making contact with another, more authentic culture. Native qualities such as hard work, spirituality, and commitment to community are described as immanent in beautiful, well-made, "traditional" wares.

Following Lears, several scholars have emphasized the way in which American Indian art is associated with spaces and ideas seemingly antithetical to urban modernity. Elizabeth Cromley, for example, emphasizes the association of Native handicrafts with nature: "In rustic settings close to nature such as lodges and camps . . . Indian objects were allied with natural objects—antlers, boulders—and reinforced the nature theme in these interiors. . . . In these rooms, Indian objects stand for the admired 'simple life,' in which overcivilized bourgeois owners could be revivified by nature."[57]

For Indian corners to work the way many collectors said they did, it is necessary to see Native American art as the product of a premodern world cut off from contemporary life. Writers at the turn of the century worked hard to maintain this cultural and temporal boundary by emphasizing the value of objects made using so-called traditional forms and materials. This celebration of so-called traditional art as pure and unchanging disregarded the actual history of several artistic traditions. Navajo weaving, for example, had always been produced for both community and external use and had

changed continuously in response to new materials and markets. When the Navajo migrated to the Southwest in the sixteenth century, they learned to weave cotton on upright looms from the Pueblo people they encountered there. Not long afterward, the Spanish arrived with flocks of churro sheep, and the Navajo began working in wool. The imprisonment of the tribe by U.S. troops in the 1860s disrupted shepherding and weaving, but also exposed the Navajo to European American clothing and textiles. In 1869, with the establishment of the Navajo Reservation and the increasing influx of European American manufactures into New Mexico and Arizona, new materials, new designs, and new uses for Navajo weaving were introduced, including the transformation of wearing blankets into rugs. Many weavers were attracted to the brilliant colors achieved by using synthetic dyes made in Germantown, Pennsylvania, and used them instead of the traditional natural dyes. The expanded palette available with these new materials inspired weavers to create designs that incorporated many colors in one piece, creating a new style of blanket called an eye-dazzler (see plate 1). Weavers also broadened the motifs used in their work. Early Navajo weaving was dominated by stripes, crosses, and lozenges, all forms whose symmetry reflected the Navajo aesthetic of *hozho*, or beauty derived from harmony and balance.[58] During the nineteenth century, weavers introduced motifs derived from Mexican sarapes, and increased their incorporation of pictorial designs representing animals, trains, buildings, letters, and other aspects of their changing surroundings.[59]

Collectors could be critical of these developments. Many rejected the brilliant eye-dazzlers and criticized patterns they found nontraditional. Some dealers developed ways to discourage such practices. John Lorenzo Hubbell hired Elbridge Ayer Burbank to paint copies of "traditional" designs to hang on the walls of his trading post in Ganado Arizona to serve as a model for weavers.[60] Other traders refused to buy textiles with chemical dyes in the wool.

Weavers weren't the only ones to suffer such criticism and control. George Wharton James accused a Native Californian weaver of "vicious imitation" for putting English letters into her design in what he saw as a ploy to attract a customer.[61] Such critics abhorred Native artists who reminded buyers of the commercial strategies of their own culture—pursuit of novel or inexpensive materials, exploration of fashion over tradition, strategies

designed to tempt the customer. These biases still wield influence, as many of the major collections in American museums were put together by the collectors who held them. As Ruth Phillips and Christopher Steiner have pointed out, both anthropologists and art historians have ignored the study of indigenous handicrafts made explicitly for trade, seeing them as a poor container for the "pure" cultural or aesthetic values they cherished.[62] Yet these objects provide a privileged venue for the exploration of cultural adaptation and intercultural exchange. With the interruption of traditional lifeways due to U.S. expansion in the nineteenth century, many indigenous groups had expanded handicraft production. Craftspeople used their work to explore ways to be simultaneously modern *and* Indian. Craft production was an aspect of traditional culture that was not viewed as threatening to American assimilationist efforts. It offered a means of physical and cultural subsistence, helped usher in a cash economy, and sometimes spurred artistic innovation.

The primitivist rhetoric of the Indian corner suppressed this history, however. And the association of Indians with the preindustrial past and the interpretation of their goods as "natural" products at the time certainly reinforces the impression that collectors were conservative traditionalists. But there is equally strong evidence that collectors of Native American art embraced the potential of modern culture. This is well illustrated by the fact that the largest group of collectors were women. Mason's book on basketry served as a vital guide and handbook for collectors.[63] Significantly, his appendix listing prominent collectors includes far more women than men. While there is no evidence that women routinely collected different objects than men, women collectors clearly related this activity with female gender roles. The Indian portraits in women's Indian corners are frequently pictures of Native women and children, reminding viewers that much of what is on display is women's work, and women collectors may have taken inspiration from Native American artists in their own needlework and craft projects.[64] The painting accompanying Mrs. Jewett's basket collection (see figure 8) resembles the portraits and genre scenes Grace Carpenter Hudson painted of the Pomo living near her Ukiah, California home (see plate 2). In addition to working as a successful artist, Hudson and her husband assembled an extraordinary collection, much of which was acquired by the National Museum in 1899 for $3,260.[65]

Women began collections as part of a broader exploration of new social roles of the time. Some women used their interest in Native American art as a springboard to public social and professional work. Many of the articles on Indian handicrafts were written by women, who were entering the field of journalism: Olive May Percival and Irene Sargent, whom I mentioned earlier, as well as Neltje Blanchan Doubleday and Claudia Stuart Coles.[66] Many allied their interest in Native American art with their philanthropic work on behalf of Indian people. Women's entrance to the professional world at the turn of the century occurred first in fields that were perceived as compatible with feminine concerns. Teaching, nursing, and social work built on women's familial responsibilities. Women had been an active force in the American Indian reform movement since its founding in the late 1880s, citing a sympathy for the disadvantaged that had also involved them in abolitionism and urban social reform movements.[67] By the end of the century, missionaries and reformers frequently became involved in the marketing and sale of Native American art as a means of raising money for the communities they worked in and drawing attention to their cause. In 1901, Doubleday, who was a member of the Woman's National Indian Association, encouraged fellow members to create Indian corners, saying, "The Pueblo *jardiniere* in the drawing-room naturally turns the conversation of many callers toward Indian pottery and then toward the Indian."[68]

Clearly these women did not reject modernity. Involvement in the Indian reform movement allowed them to circulate in the public sphere, gaining cultural authority and for some, economic independence. Rather than see them as antimodern, it may be more useful to read them as primitivists. Gail Bederman has analyzed the utopian writings of Charlotte Perkins Gilman in this light. As she notes, women participated in the ideology of the strenuous life, capitalizing on its arguments for the advancement of civilization while changing around the terms of the ideal sought to one in which women's role was vital to resolve the problems brought on by modernization.[69] Margaret Jacobs's important study *Engendered Encounters* looks at the complex desires of American women who advanced their own modern agendas through careers emphasizing the preservation of Native American culture.[70] Cultural primitivism, defined as the celebration of a culture perceived to be of a lower order than modern Western society, has often been optimistic about

the potential to improve modern life.[71] Collectors of Native American art proposed this reformation could come about through one of the most modern routes of all: consumption.

WANAMAKER'S "WIGWAM OF INDIAN CURIOSITIES"

The modernity at the heart of Indian corners is not a secret, nor does it require knowledge of the biography of their owners. It can be seen in their very appearance; this dynamic display that I noted above borrows heavily from contemporary commercial installations. Photographs of department store counters and show windows reveal a similar aesthetic of abundance, variety, and tactility to great effect, as an illustration of yard goods department in L. Frank Baum's 1900 treatise on dry goods merchandising illustrates (figure 9). The colored walls, glass cases and windows, and dramatic lighting that appear in Keppler's retreat have been described by William Leach as visual strategies developed in the late nineteenth century to stimulate consumer desire.[72]

Leach has traced the origins of shopping to the department stores that emerged in the late nineteenth century. Prior to this, consumers went to the store to fill their needs, and clerks generally retrieved items from behind the counter. With the increased sale of manufactured and luxury goods (or "fancy goods" as they were called), stores changed to inspire people to purchase things they didn't need. Store interiors became more elaborate and elegant to encourage women to prolong shopping trips. Restaurants, lecture halls, and even meeting rooms offered to women's social organizations encouraged women to feel their every need could be met within the stores' walls. The use of new technologies such as electric lighting, elevators, and even plate-glass display cases enhanced the excitement and modernity of the shopping experience. Displays within department stores reinforced this sense of spectacle. Employees arranged goods to give an impression of luxury and abundance—goods were arranged in stacks and piles and sited so that customers could spot them from afar and investigate color and texture up close. Such displays encouraged viewers to seek out experiences that held visual pleasures independent of moral or narrative meanings.[73]

The similarity between Keppler's abundant display and the cases at Marshall Field's demonstrates that this culture of display was widespread. Tony

FIGURE 9 "Interior," from L. Frank Baum, *The Art of Decorating Dry Goods Windows and Interiors: A complete manual of window trimming, designed as an educator in all the details of the art, according to the best accepted methods, and treating fully every important subject* (Chicago: Show Window Publishing, 1900), 216. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

Bennett has argued that the cultural changes of the nineteenth century precipitated a broad "exhibitionary" complex that influenced the design of "history and natural science museums, dioramas and panoramas, national and, later, international exhibitions, arcades and department stores."[74] Exhibitionary culture relies on the nineteenth-century idea of putting the world on display as an expression of the desire to collect and organize knowledge. These institutions were committed to objects' ability to convey information and even influence their viewers, an idea that is essential to both museums and purveyors of commodities.[75] Bennett stresses that these institutional spaces facilitated the examination of other people as well as objects, and links these sites to the rise of a new social order under which individuals increasingly police their own behavior in response to the omnipresence of public surveillance.

Department store display influenced the display of objects in other spaces, such as art museums and anthropological collections. Neil Harris, for example, has argued that turn-of-the-century museums moved away

from crowded exhibitions emphasizing education or aesthetics toward more spare and elegant displays because of the increasing power of department stores. He quotes John Wanamaker, who stated, "In museums, most everything looks like junk even when it isn't, because there is no care or thought in the display. If women would wear their fine clothes like galleries wear their pictures, they'd be laughed at."[76] In 1918, M. H. de Young recounted the influence that modern emporia wielded on him when he was planning the Golden Gate Memorial Museum, the San Francisco art museum that later came to bear his name. "In New York I went through the curio shops, second-hand stores and odd corners. There, too, I went to Tiffany's, and there my education in museums went several steps ahead. My training in museums went along step by step like a baby's education in life. When I thought I knew a good deal about them, I found that I didn't. At Tiffany's I learned some more."[77]

While Bennett and Harris do not discuss private collections, the Indian corner makes it clear that individuals shared display strategies with museums and department stores, which were, significantly, the other spaces in which urban Americans most frequently encountered Native American handicrafts. For, while it is romantic to assume that Indian corners demonstrated their owners' actual contact with Indian people, it is likely that most were assembled by collectors with limited experience of this kind. Many would have obtained their collections in one of the spaces described by Bennett, such as a World's Fair or a department store. Even Keppler may have done this. His collection included many items from the West and Southwest. We cannot rule out the possibility that he collected baskets and beadwork during trips across the country, but even in that case it is unlikely he had the same intimate contact with Western artists that he enjoyed among the Seneca. Moreover, within walking distance of the *Puck* offices were several purveyors of Native goods, including curio shops, private dealers, and department stores.

In March of 1898, the *New-York Tribune* announced that a special display of "Indian Curiosities" had opened at Wanamaker's Astor Place emporium.[78] Although he is well known as a social reformer with a particular interest in Native American culture, Wanamaker was not unique in marketing Native American art.[79] His rival Frederick Loeser held a sale of Navajo rugs in June the preceding year.[80] De Young's beloved Tiffany's and Macy's

also frequently carried selections of Indian goods, and New York's shopping district boasted at least four stores specializing in Native American merchandise over the course of the first decade of the twentieth century. In point of fact, residents of most major American cities had multiple local sources for Native American art during the Indian craze. According to an advertisement in *House Beautiful*, the Chicago retail giant Marshall Field's was a source for "baskets, weapons, pottery, pipes, bead and porcupine embroidery, and many other interesting and decorative articles, handiwork of the Sioux, Apache, Winnebago, Chippewa, Moki and Maricopa Indians."[81] Field's had competitors in Chicago from the department store Schlesinger and Mayer and an outpost of the Fred Harvey Company, a concessioner affiliated with the Santa Fe Railroad, which set up business in the Auditorium building in 1903. Residents of Washington, D.C., could visit Woodward and Lathrop for their needs, and citizens of Boston, Philadelphia, Seattle, and southern California had sources as well.

Scholars have known that department stores sold Indian handicrafts for decades, since the earliest studies of traders. But studies have ignored the urban market for Native goods, a market fueled not only by department stores, but also by furriers, saddleries, and special "Indian stores" often operated by agents of western curio dealers, all of which vended Native handicrafts in the heart of the commercial districts of America's largest cities. In addition, western dealers often advertised in the newspapers and magazines read in eastern cities, offering potential customers specific goods or catalogues. Recent scholarship on curio shops is beginning to introduce purveyors who were not necessarily acquainted with the artists; but, by focusing on shops that specialized in Native American materials, it misses the way in which the display and marketing of Native American art was not special, but rather was typical of the transformations in commercial culture of the turn of the century.

Exploring the role of department stores in this history reminds us that Native American art was marketed using the most up-to-date strategies of the day and presented alongside diverse objects of high monetary and aesthetic value. This is because the power of indigenous objects at the beginning of the twentieth century was related to the power given to all objects at that time, undermining the argument that Native objects gained meaning from their perceived distance from the world of commodities. The Native

FIGURE 10 Navajo blankets for sale in the window of the Marshall Field's department store, Chicago, 1899. Inv. no. 82–1428, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

objects for sale in these venues were frequently produced for sale to a geographically remote and anonymous buyer, like many of the "fancy" items available in department stores, such as Japanese fans or Rookwood pottery, reminding us that commodities made for sale to an unknown and anonymous buyer need not be industrially or mass produced.

The meaning of Indian handicrafts during the Indian craze was thus to some degree conditioned by the other objects that surrounded it. At this time, department stores offered a wide array of goods, from clothing and furniture to food, sewing supplies, and plants. Inexpensive wares were presented alongside pricey luxuries, including artistic ceramics and silverware and even oil paintings. Department stores were intercultural marketplaces, weaving together foreign and domestic, rare and quotidian, high and low. A photograph of a collection of Navajo blankets for sale in a Marshall Field's window from 1899 gives a sense of how well suited nineteenth-century serapes and eye-dazzlers were to this form of alluring display (see figure 10).

Advertisements from the period give further insight into the place of Native American art in the turn-of-the-century department store.

The most comprehensive record of department store marketing of Indian art in this period comes from John Wanamaker's New York store, at the time the largest department store in the nation. Wanamaker touted his stock of Native goods immediately after acquiring the store in 1896. One advertisement from 1897 reads: "The quick intelligence of New York, Greater New York and the vicinage is realizing that this store is at the natural center of local travel." Further down it says "In preparation for exhibition: Antique Textiles, some notable pictures, Navajo Blankets and Curios."[82] Wanamaker's store took advantage of the increased links between distant nations of the time to offer wares from a variety of cultures. His store boasted halls dedicated to Egypt, Greece, and the Near and Far East, all of whose stock changed regularly with the arrival of new shipments from distant ports, which were duly noted in newspaper ads.[83] New shipments from Alaska or the Southwest were similarly noted.

As with Keppler's collection, Wanamaker's offerings of Native American art were quite varied. Advertisements describe different kinds of objects from a wide array of places and at varying prices. They list objects that range widely in value, suggesting a need for diversity in display. For example, one notice mentions a Navajo blanket valued at $150, a beaded baby carrier on sale for $75, and a Poma [*sic*] feather basket offered for $65, alongside other items valued from 25 cents to a dollar.[84] In addition to articles of clothing and house decoration, Wanamaker also stocked feather headdresses, birch bark canoes, and bows and arrows.

In addition to listing items on sale, advertisements demonstrate the rhetoric used to sell Native handicrafts. They often describe potential uses for the objects on sale, recommending Navajo rugs for dens or porches, for example, or suggesting sweet grass baskets for holding Easter eggs, sewing, or calling cards. It is possible that Wanamaker displayed some objects in a simulated domestic setting that encouraged shoppers to envision the use of Native goods at home, something done for the products of other non-European cultures. For example, it is known that Marshall Field and Company's Carpet Hall displayed Near Eastern carpets and tapestries in an Orientalist setting.[85] Baum's illustration of "a Cozy Corner" utilizes a similar strategy (see figure 11).

FIGURE 11 "Cozy Corner-Welch," from L. Frank Baum, *The Art of Decorating Dry Goods Windows and Interiors: A complete manual of window trimming, designed as an educator in all the details of the art, according to the best accepted methods, and treating fully every important subject* (Chicago: Show Window Publishing, 1900), 220. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

Many of the themes struck by department store advertisements rehearse the rhetoric of power discussed above. For example, in 1903 Wanamaker advised readers of the *New York Times* that "a glass case in the Indian Section holds a small, but intensely interesting collection of relics" assembled by a former U.S. marshall.[86] The collection is said to "bring up with vivid distinctness scenes of Indian life and warfare on the Western prairies and mountains." Specific objects are linked to leaders in the Indian wars, including Sitting Bull, Little Wound, and Hard Heart.

As this advertisement indicates, department stores sometimes exhibited and sold the private collections of local citizens and people passing through. In this example, Wanamaker used a glass case to highlight the value of a selection of objects within the larger "Indian department." Objects enclosed in cases were no doubt surrounded by abundant displays of less expensive goods that customers could handle without assistance. In 1901, Wanamaker invited George Wharton James to exhibit part of his collection during the

author's lecture tour of the East Coast. An invoice sent by James to Wanamaker shortly thereafter lists a large number of Navajo weavings, some southwestern and California baskets, and a handful of pottery, as well as some tools such as small looms, a spindle, and a seed cleaner. The invoice indicates that some of the treasures, such as James's famous "railroad blanket" (see discussion below) and a "fine Mono rattlesnake basket," were for display only and gives wholesale and retail prices for the others.[87]

James gave three public lectures during the exhibition of his collection.[88] The use of "experts" to authenticate the value of the works on display was a common marketing strategy of the time. James's collection was installed in Wanamaker's Art Gallery, a space more frequently given over to the paintings of Alma-Tadema and Bouguereau, and this gesture added still more to the value of the works on display. James routinely used aesthetic language to describe both the form and the meaning of Native American art. Referring generally to ideas drawn from Ruskin and Whistler, he argued, "The basket to the uncontaminated Indian meant a work of art, in which hope, aspiration, desire, love, religion, poetry, national pride, mythology, were all more or less interwoven. Hence the work was approached in a spirit as far removed from that of mere commercialism, passing whim or fancy, as it was from that of levity, carelessness, or indifference. There was an earnestness of purpose, a conscientiousness of endeavor in the gathering of the materials, their preparation, their harmoniousness, and then in the shape, the design, the weave, the *tout ensemble*, that made basket-making to the old Indian as almost an act of religion."[89]

Reinforcing the bias against Native culture that betrays an interest in modernity, James celebrated the "uncontaminated Indian" and made reference to the Kantian ideal of autonomous art whose value lies outside the parameters of history and daily life. Consumers would not have been surprised to encounter artistic language in a retail establishment. Wanamaker and his peers were some of the most avid supporters of both academic and contemporary artists well into the 1920s, offering dedicated galleries for the display of paintings and including works of art in the more public spaces. While some journals and galleries dedicated to the cultivation of modern art often distanced themselves from the commercial world, it appears that artists embraced the opportunity for exposure that the stores offered. James's

tone is another illustration of the overlapping concerns in the artistic, scientific, and commercial worlds and the reliance of all on public display.

As seen in the example of Dat-so-la-lee mentioned above, retailers also invited native craftspeople to demonstrate their work. Wanamaker's hosted an Abenaki weaver and her daughter during a special sale of woodlands baskets.[90] During the woman's "performance," the store also featured a wigwam and a selection of woodlands material culture, including birch bark canoes, dolls, and moccasins, making her seem like a live version of the portrait at the heart of an Indian corner.

Wanamaker's strategies reflect widespread practices in the marketing of Native American art from the time. Like department stores, dealers described practical uses for Native objects. They also sought to enhance the value of their wares by exaggerating their age or rarity. And they certainly capitalized on a romantic nostalgia for the old West. The exhibition of a craftsperson alongside objects for sale was particularly common. Beginning with the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, World's Fairs had featured live exhibitions of Native people (see figure 12). As the market for Native American handicrafts spread, organizers of both ethnographically oriented exhibitions and commercial displays encouraged Indian people to demonstrate and sell their work. As I explore further in chapter 3, artists accepted such work for the income it offered and sometimes also because of the opportunity to travel, meet other Natives and non-Natives, and perhaps to serve as culture brokers mitigating the damaging aspects of Indian-white interaction of the period. Dealers in Native handicrafts picked up on this idea as well. The Fred Harvey Company provides perhaps the most dramatic example of this phenomenon.

Harvey initially provided refreshments and lodging for passengers on the Santa Fe Railroad, but in 1902 the company capitalized on passengers' interest in Native handicrafts by establishing an "Indian Department." The department opened handicraft stores in Chicago, Albuquerque, and at the Grand Canyon. In addition, it organized exhibitions for international expositions to highlight the products made along the railroad's route. The Harvey company regularly used artist demonstrators to promote their wares in both of these venues. Among these were the celebrated Hopi-Tewa potter Nampeyo. Nampeyo was known for her Sikyatki-revival style vessels, which in-

corporate forms and decorations from shards found at an abandoned Hopi village near her home on First Mesa. Through her association with the trader Thomas Keam and anthropologists working in the area, she became the best-known Pueblo potter of her generation. In 1904, the Harvey company built "Hopi House," a three-story building modeled on Hopi dwellings, to showcase and sell southwestern Native art and to offer tourists a chance to see artists at work. Nampeyo lived with her family on the top story for parts of 1905 and 1907, and other artist-demonstrators occupied the building when they were absent.

Another important artist who worked for the Harvey company was the Navajo weaver Asdzaa Lichii' (Red Woman), known as "Elle of Ganado," who worked in the Indian Building—Harvey's museum and showroom in Albuquerque—beginning in 1903. (see figure 13).[91] Elle was featured prominently in Harvey marketing materials and was selected to weave blankets to be presented to important people, including President Theodore Roosevelt. San Ildefonso potters Julian and Maria Martinez, who later became famous for their black-on-black ware ceramics, also worked as artist-demonstrators for the Harvey company early in their careers.

While department stores employed strategies used by other promoters of Native American art, it is important to note that their tactics resemble the packaging of other kinds of commodities as well. Glass cases, abundant displays designed to entice the senses, and packaging and educational programming designed to spur the consumer's imagination were all part and parcel of the department store experience. While some contemporary scholars argue that the largest market for Indian art at this time came from tourists seeking souvenirs of a western trip that served to contrast Native and modern life, department stores integrated Native American art into a highly modern experience.

For many turn-of-the-century viewers, looking at Native American art was part of an experience that demanded that it be viewed alongside other kinds of commodities. While it is clear that this was the case in department stores, the ads placed by dealers on the pages of eastern magazines might be said to have had a similar effect. The columnar layout of turn-of-the-century advertising created juxtapositions as stimulating as those on department store floors. For example, an ad placed by Fred Harvey in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in 1903 appears adjacent to promotions of kid gloves, mantles for

[Duke University Press does not hold electronic rights to this image. To view it, please refer to the print version of this title.]

FIGURE 12 Charles H. Carpenter, "Jane Walters, Chippewa, at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition." Gelatin silver print, 1904. Inv. no. CSA14488, © The Field Museum, Chicago.

FIGURE 13 "Elle, of Ganado, Ariz., One of the Best Living Weavers," from George Wharton James, *Indian Blankets and Their Makers* (1914; New York: Tudor Publishing, 1937), plate 141.

gas lamps, and champagne.[92] Department stores were committed to the ideals of order and hierarchy. These values are implicit in the separation of goods into different departments and into areas geared toward shoppers with different amounts of money to spend. At the same time the presence of diverse objects in the same space encouraged comparison between them. The juxtapositions provided within department stores allowed Native arts to be valued in a variety of ways from works of art, to children's toys, to utilitarian objects. This is no less true in ads. For example, while some ads listed Native goods alongside exotic wares from the Far East, others compared Indian objects to similar goods made in Germany or England, presenting their value in terms of utility and affordability.

The exoticism of Native American art was another selling point. It is significant, however, that this exoticism played out across the shopfloor. This point is well illustrated by a display of linens assembled into a diorama of Venice reproduced in Baum's manual on dry goods marketing (figure 14). Significantly, the "Indian Section" of Wanamaker's was located adjacent to, and sometimes within, the "Oriental" department, something that reminds us that earlier marketers of Native American art routinely used the successful marketing of Japanese goods as a model and a referent. One ad reads "Orient and Occident alike contribute lavishly to the vividly interesting collection held by our . . . Curio Store." The claim is followed by a list of wares from America, Japan, China, and the Near East.[93]

The weaver in Wanamaker's store in 1901 may have been a craftsperson who had worked at the Buffalo Fair that same year. She may have also been one of the many Indian people who had moved to New York City after studying at a boarding school in the hopes of finding employment and, perhaps, of living in the modern metropolis. The pages of local newspapers of the time frequently featured stories of Indian men and women working as janitors or factory workers who enhanced their income by serving as "professional Indians" when the opportunity presented itself—posing for artists, participating in pageants, or making "Indian" art.[94]

Many of these individuals who made money "playing Indian" had attended U.S. government boarding schools or otherwise been subject to federal efforts to assimilate Indian people into mainstream society. Indian schools and religious and secular reservation reform projects pursued this goal by immersing Native people in the English language, Christian religion, and

FIGURE 14 "A Scene in Venice," from L. Frank Baum, *The Art of Decorating Dry Goods Windows and Interiors: A complete manual of window trimming, designed as an educator in all the details of the art, according to the best accepted methods, and treating fully every important subject* (Chicago: Show Window Publishing, 1900), 107. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

Western notions of individuality. As these efforts coincided with the arrival of the "culture of consumption," reformers incorporated wage labor and the concept of therapeutic consumption into Indian education (for more on this, see chapter 2). But Indian people also learned of the mainstream desire to see them engaged in nonindustrialized work and through this became indoctrinated in the exhibitionary complex.

If we want a full understanding of the marketing of Native American art at this time, we must consider the fact that Indian people may also have made up a portion of the department store's urban clientele. Indian shoppers were participants in the culture of consumption, but they also brought their own experiences of discrimination to bear on their understanding of how indigenous art was sold. The complexity of this experience might be extrapolated from the experiences of Luther Standing Bear, an Oglala Sioux leader who was educated at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. As he recounts in his memoir *My People the Sioux*, Standing Bear became particularly familiar with the culture of consumption when he went to work in Wanamaker's Grand Depot.[95] The origin of the job was philanthropic. John

Wanamaker had visited Carlisle and had been impressed with the ambition of the school head, Richard Henry Pratt, to inculcate a superior moral integrity and work ethic on his students. According to Standing Bear, who had internalized much of Pratt's social Darwinism, Wanamaker invited Pratt to send two boys to work in the store to help demonstrate the capacity of Indian people to be "civilized." Starting out as a clerk, Standing Bear was quickly promoted to a job on the floor, where he worked locked inside a glass vault, unpacking and labeling precious jewelry. Having literally entered the display case, Standing Bear could be seen as having a particularly acute experience of the department store's staging of private character. His hard work, his honesty, and of course his exoticism were all part of the show. Standing Bear later put this familiarity with staging the self to use as a performer with Buffalo Bill Cody's *Wild West* troupe and an actor in western films. During these experiences, Standing Bear worked to improve the conditions of Indian people employed in these exhibitionary positions, negotiating travel itineraries with Cody in the 1890s and helping to organize Indian labor in the film industry in the 1910s.

Natives who hadn't been to boarding schools as Standing Bear had could also respond critically to modern life. This can be seen in developments in indigenous art. Consider the famous "railroad blanket" that was part of George Wharton James's collection[96] (see figure 15; the blanket is also visible in figure 7). The multicolored blanket depicts a crowded scene of trains crossing and recrossing the pictorial space. The trains pull people, cattle, and cargo and, in an ingenious touch, a sleeping car with passengers depicted on stacked berths. In a possibly spurious account, James noted that the weaver traveled to Gallup to examine the trains that had begun invading the fields around her home in the 1880s.[97] Regardless of the weaver's actions, the blanket seems to give visual form to destabilizing experiences of a modern annihilation of time and space. Birds take flight and people crowd together as if disturbed by the intrusion of this powerful machine into their world. The asymmetrical design contradicts the stability and order that are the hallmarks of earlier Navajo weaving, suggesting a surge in creativity inspired by the disruptions of history.

When Indian handicrafts appeared in Indian corners, they *were* cut off from the meanings and uses they had traditionally held in their tribal communities. But this was part of a larger transformation being experienced

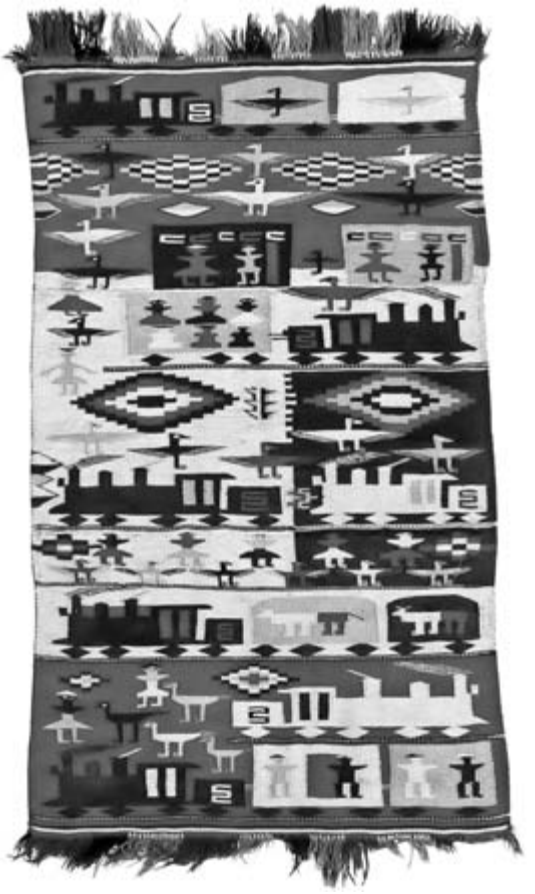

FIGURE 15 Unknown Navajo weaver, Germantown blanket, ca. 1880. Wool with natural and synthetic dyes. San Diego Museum of Man.

and responded to in Native America. While I do not want to downplay the ongoing damage caused to Indian people by this history, it is useful to look more closely at how Native material culture records an intercultural response to the disruptions of modernity, criticizing it while embracing its underlying structures, using it to create points of identification and distinction between cultures. Ruth Phillips has recently argued for a need to study indigenous objects made for intercultural markets as a means of coming to terms with the Native experience of modern history. She writes that such objects, long rejected by the critics informed by the primitivism of the early twentieth century as "inauthentic," simultaneously reinforce cultural divisions between Native and non-Native culture and break them down. She explains that while they led to a fixing of iconographic and generic types, "the exchanges themselves were inherently dynamic, continually destabiliz-

ing the stereotypes by stimulating new appropriative acts that threatened, in turn, to blur the outlines of otherness that defined each of the parties involved."[98] Thus we might see handicraft production as part of a complex indigenous reaction to the profound pressures to adopt mainstream cultural, economic and political values during this period.

This chapter has argued that while Native American material art is often thought of as a collectible available only to adventurous tourists, it was in fact widely available in the early years of the twentieth century. Urban consumers encountered Indian handicrafts in the same contexts in which they came in contact with other commodities, and collecting Native American art was part of a broader exploration of commodity culture. Rejecting rhetoric that would describe the taste for Native art as conservative or antimodern, I propose that both the consumption and the production of Native American art of this time was quintessentially modern. In the chapters that follow, I continue to integrate Native American art and Native American people with a discussion of the cultural and aesthetic developments facing the country as a whole at that time. My purpose is not to erase the difference between the experiences of people from different ethnic backgrounds, but, rather, to see these differences as essential to understanding the landscape of modernization, something Indian people have experienced intensely and responded to in a variety of ways.