Cultural Traditions of the Southwest
Sedentism

- Population Growth
- Environmental Deterioration
- Territorial Constriction

- Each become caused by humans once large populations become sedentary

- Leads to further resource stress
Resource Depression

• A reduction in the availability of a resource caused by humans

• Over-exploitation is a common cause

• Soil deterioration from farming is an important one
The Development of Towns

• Represent technological/organizational change
  – Focal economy of farming
  – Provides surplus
  – Food production = high resource compaction
  – Can be risky (crops can fail)

• Out of this grow regionalism
Endpoints

• Sedentism evolved to town settlements
• Population grew substantially in most areas
• Large sites
  – Snaketown – Hohokam (Gila, Salt confluence)
  – NAN Ranch Ruin – Mimbres (Rio Mimbres)
  – Chacoan Great Houses – (Chaco River)
  – Black Mesa Anasazi
  – Mesa Verde Anasazi – San Juan river
Santa Cruz Bend site
800 BC to AD100

Valencia Vieja
AD 500 to 700
Chaco Canyon

• Great Houses, Pueblo Bonito peak and are gone by AD 1130

• Preceded by Shabik’eschee
Mesa Verde region

- **Yellow Jacket Pueblo**  AD 1000 – late 1200s
Duckfoot Site

- AD 750 – 900
- Roomblocks
- Associated pithouses

Figure 2.1. Architectural suites at the time of initial site construction. Pit Structure 4 and Room 17 were added later as part of Architectural Suite 2 (see Figure 1.3).

Lightfoot & Etzkorn 1993
Continuity & disruption

• The point is…
  – Cultures evolved in each area over time
  – Populations waxed and waned
  – We will look at each region independently
Cultural transmission

- The movement of information
- Sharing of ideas
- Can be spatial
- Can be temporal
Movement of ideas

• Transmission
  – Inheritance = intergenerational movement of ideas

  – Diffusion = intragenerational movement of ideas
Cultural Units

- **Components** = empirical unit of cultural expression at a site
  - Material culture of an occupation of a site
  - Analogous to a band, village, or neighborhood

- A **Phase** = A set of culturally uniform components
  - Analogous to a culture
  - Technically, Hohokam, Anasazi, Mogollon = phases
How ideas move

- *Tradition* = a temporal continuum of persistence of forms through time
  - Artifact styles that persist
    - Empirically demonstrable
    - One can see the link in form through time
  - Pottery traditions (e.g., black-on-white)

- Traditions = empirical records of *inheritance*
How ideas move

• *Horizon* = a spatial continuum of persistence of forms across space
  – Artifact styles that are common at one time across large areas
    • Empirically demonstrable
    • One can see the link in form at one time in many places
  – Anasazi mugs

  – Horizons = empirical records of *diffusion*
Cultural transmission

C = Component
P = Phase
H = Horizon
T = Tradition

Figure 5.4. Philip Phillips and Gordon Willey’s model of the interrelationships of components, phases, traditions, and horizons.

Lyman & O’Brien 2003
Cultural Evolution

Figure 2.2. A. L. Kroeber's (1948:260, figure 18) tree of biological evolution (left) and tree of cultural evolution (right). Note the simple branching structure of the former and the reticulate (branching and intersecting) nature of the latter.
## Phases

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### Pottery
- **AD 200**
- **BC 200**

### Beans
- **AD 200**

### Corn & Squash
- **AD 200**
- **BC 200**

### Hunting & Gathering
- **AD 200**
- **BC 200**

### Farming
- **AD 200**
- **BC 200**

### Storage
- **AD 200**
- **BC 200**
How do we recognize phases?

• Artifact typology
  – Pottery types
  – Architectural styles
  – Basketry

• What are types?
  – “nodes of individuality” in artifact form
  – Analytical constructs or mental templates?
Two positions

• Subjectively, archaeologists recognize non-random “clusters” of artifact form (intensional)
  – A process of describing the average specimen

vs.

• Objectively, archaeologists create categories for particular analytical purposes (extensional)
  – A process of defining groups membership
Historical types

- These are styles of artifacts that have limited temporal occurrences
  - They are time markers

- Mesa Verde Black on White pottery
  - Dates to late Pueblo III period (AD 1150 to 1300)

- McElmo Black on White pottery
  - Dates to early Pueblo III
Reality

• Phases and types are artificial constructs

• Artifact variability tends to be continuous

• So does cultural variability

• We chunk up the continua to communicate
Summary

• Cultural integration
• Cultural interaction
• Conceptual foundations
• Use of material culture
• Culture areas