Early Formative Basketmaker
Wetherills

• Discovery of Cliff Palace in Mesa Verde - 1888
  • Richard Wetherill, Charlie Mason, and Akowitz (Ute)

• Richard, John and Al Wetherill – 1893
  • Use of Stratigraphy led to discovery of Basketmakers

• Richard explored Mesa Verde, Grand Gulch, Kiet Seel, and Chaco

• Homesteaded and set up trading posts in Southwest – the first at Chaco Canyon near Pueblo Bonito
Nordenskiold

- Gustav Nordenskiold of Norway,
  - continued excavating Cliff Palace in 1891 and sent artifacts and burials back home to Norway
  - 1893 – Cliff Dwellers of the Mesa Verde, Southwestern CO
- Initiated a lawsuit that led to the Antiquities Act of 1906 that;
  - Made it illegal to destroy archaeological resources
  - Established a permitting process to excavate legally
  - Gave President the authority to designate national monuments to protect scientific objects
Cliff Palace
Cliff Palace Today
Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act requires;

- Museums and agencies to return human burials, grave goods and patrimonial objects to tribes
  - Tribal affiliation determined by
    - Direct living descendants
    - Tribes living in the geographic area
Alfred V. Kidder

• Alfred V. Kidder – 1915 to 1929 Pecos Excavations
• Systematic examination of stratigraphy and chronology
• 1924 – Introduction to the Study of Southwestern Archaeology
• 1st synthesis of North American prehistory based on professionally excavated data
• Initiated Pecos Classification System – 1927
• Pecos Conferences – 2nd weekend of August each year
Stratigraphy and Chronology
Pecos Conference 1927

Basketmaker I – 8000 BC to AD 1
Basketmaker II – AD 1 to 500
Basketmaker III – AD 500 to 700
Pueblo I Period – AD 700 to 900
Pueblo II Period – AD 900 to 1100
Pueblo III Period or Great Pueblo or Classic Pueblo AD 1100 to 1300
Pueblo IV Period or Proto-Historic AD 1300 to 1540
Pueblo V Period or Historic AD 1540 to present day
Gordon Willey and Philip Phillips in 1958 ‘Method and Theory in American Archaeology’ propose these stages:

- Lithic stage
- Archaic stage
- Formative stage
- Classic stage
- Post-Classic stage

- Pottery
- Weaving
- Reliant on Agriculture (food production)
Natural Domestication

Teosinte
(Wild Plant - Zea Mays)

Mutated Hybrid
(Primitive or Intermediate Maize)
Natural Landrace

Maize
(Modern Corn)
Evolution of Corn
Basketmaker II

• Pithouses and Cists
• Aceramic = no pottery
• Lithic artifacts – large atlatl points
• Basketry
• Horticulturalists
DuPont Cave
Fig. 2.—Diagrammatic section of Cist 9.
FIRST EXPOSURE OF THE MATTED DÉBRIS
SMALL COILED BASKET
(Diameter 4½ in.)
Baskemaker III

- Type site = Shabik’eshchee (AD 500 – 700)
- 7 miles southeast of Pueblo Bonito, Chaco Canyon
- Excavated by B. H. Roberts in 1926 and 1927 for the Smithsonian
- Early pottery
- Pithouses and cists
- Great pithouses
- Horticulturalists
San Juan Basketmaker Style