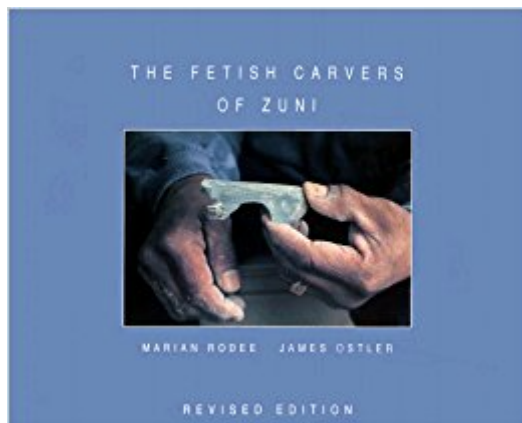


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# The Fetish Carvers Of Zuni



## Synopsis

Zuni pueblo in western New Mexico is renowned for its small carved stone animal figurines, or fetishes. A fetish is an object, natural or manmade, in which a spirit is thought to reside and which can be used to effect either good or evil. According to legend, when a man finds a rock that resembles an animal, he has in his possession one of the original animals turned to stone by the children of the Sun Father. Such a fetish has the soul or breath of the animal inside. In recent years the market demand for fetishes from Zuni has spurred an increase in the number of carvers. Published in 1995 and now available from UNM Press, *The Fetish Carvers of Zuni* studies both the history of fetishes and Zuni's major contemporary fetish carvers, their art, aesthetics, and business.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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Studies both the history of fetishes and Zuni's major contemporary fetish carvers, their art, aesthetics, and business.

Great book on Zuni fetish carving - history and skills. It also includes information on specific carvers, their families and photos. Fun to read and keep to reference when purchasing a carving.

I've been collecting the carvings of the Zuni for some years now and have found this book to be the most valuable and useful source for information not only on the carvers, but on the meaning of their creations. It is an excellent introduction to the carvers, but I also find the family trees very helpful. I keep track of the carvers whose work I have in my collection and this book is the only one I've found that helps me to do that. It is also as honest a guide to this culture and the carvers as you will find. It is very difficult to keep up with the carvers and their families, but this book is as helpful a source as you will find.

Very interesting - love the book

This is a fantastic book. It provides prehistory and history of Zuni, the history and context of fetishes, Zuni aesthetics, and the materials and techniques of fetish carvers. It includes photographs of Zuni life in the village, of Zuni carvings and fetishes. Most interesting to me, was the profiles of 26 Zuni families known for their fetishes that also include photographs of the people and a sampling of their carvings. This was valuable to me, as I have fetishes from several of these Zuni carvers. The beauty of Zuni is that it is a culturally intact Native American reservation. Approximately 6000 Zuni live in this village as they have for generations. Their worship of animals is a way to relate and connect to their higher powers. Zuni fetishes, considered some of the most powerful in the world, are carved to represent the animals who become mediators to their higher powers. I have been remiss in the care and feeding of my fetishes. The Zuni Indian fetish must be cared for with offerings of cornmeal and kept in turquoise encrusted pots or pouches. Zunis believe that the amount of care a fetish receives is directly proportional to the protection it will provide. I enjoyed this book greatly. I recommend it to anyone with an interest in fetishes and Native American Indian culture. In the back of the book, the authors have recreated a genealogy chart, as best they could, and an excellent bibliography and index.

Now in a newly revised and updated edition, *The Fetish Carvers Of Zuni* is collaboratively written by Marian Rodee (Curator of Southwestern Ethnology, Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, University of New Mexico) and James Ostler (Pueblo of Zuni Arts and Crafts) and offers a thoughtful, fascinating, and informative look at the Zuni Native American tradition and art form of carving fetishes. 103 halftones and 94 color photographs profusely illustrate the history of fetish carving, works of art, and its practice today. Personal testimonies of modern Zuni fetish carvers as well as scholarly appraisals of this art form round out this book about a unique and fascinating Native American art form. The

Fetish Carvers Of Zuni is a welcome and much appreciated contribution to Native American Studies reference collections and supplemental reading lists.

When collecting Native American fetish carvings, one important factor in determining a piece's value is the availability of the artist's name. This book provides the only source I've ever seen into the lives and work of modern Zuni carvers. It includes several family trees which show how the particular styles of carving were passed down through families. I have found this book to be a great resource and a fascinating view of these peoples lives

This book is worth the effort it usually takes to track down. It is well written, easy to read (lots of white space and illustrations). Now we just need for them to write another volume, it's been a while since this was written, and the Zuni fetish world is always evolving.

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