

American Indian and Multicultural Connection



Baskets at Pricketts Fort

In the American Indian culture, the actual weaving of the basket was usually done by women, using whatever material they could find at hand—simple grasses, split bark, or even twigs. Their colors were the dull browns and blues of the sun-baked prairies, the creamy yellow of willow tops, the reddish brown of the redbud bark, the glossy black from the stem

of the maidenhair fern. For still more variety of color, they prepared vegetable dyes that deepened and grew mellow with age. Great pride in their work and infinite patience were the admirable qualities of this craftswoman. They experimented with new materials, dyes, and weaves. We trace tribal connections today through the basketry stitches and borders that the tribeswomen wove; similar workmanship shows cultural connection among the tribes who made them. To the Indian, the interweaving of fibers represented many arts. Woven into each product was tradition, folklore, history, poetry, art and religion. (Tod, Gallinger & Benson)