



Photo courtesy K. Larkin

From the Editor

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For this issue, we asked our members to write about how they are managing, presenting, and (re)thinking heritage in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. We received a broad range of submissions covering tourism, heritage management, and teaching field schools during the pandemic and these are found in our **Heritage in the Field** section. Like many archaeologists, my field plans were cancelled or postponed this year due to the pandemic. While I have been fortunate to be in and out of lockdown with my three daughters in Toronto, my interactions with colleagues and friends

have been severely curtailed; the sense of isolation has been at times enormously difficult to manage. At the same time, however, I have developed an extensive online network of friends and colleagues across North America. I have been attending webinars, language classes, online lectures, and working groups, some of which I would not have even known about in the pre-COVID world. On May 13, 2020, for example, HVIG sponsored an online webinar and discussion on heritage reimagined during the COVID-19 pandemic. Emilia Ismael presented a synopsis of her recent article published in *Klastos*, a Mexican online publication on research and cultural criticism, and we are fortunate to present an English translation of this piece in this issue of our newsletter (see **Special Features** pp. 16-21).

Ismael is critical of what has become the common response of many of Mexico's cultural institutions to the pandemic: putting their collections online. She argues that this gesture, while perhaps providing entertainment, does little to help people understand what is happening in the world, nor does it support new ways of thinking about and making culture. Rather, Ismael proposes, the pandemic could be a time for us to reimagine what culture is, how we make it, who can make it, and how we experience it. Ultimately, this is a call for democratization of the space taken by cultural institutions in our lives.

Ismael's webinar and discussion also occurred just a few days before the killing of George Floyd at the hands of police in Minneapolis and the global protests that followed. In response, the Society of Black Archaeologists sponsored what has become one in a series of webinars and workshops on archaeology in the time of Black Lives Matter. Central to the series has been the "present-ness" of the past and the more-than-symbolic relationship of public monuments to historical events and figures who participated in the African slave trade or fought for the Confederate side during the American civil war. These monuments, situated often in public spaces, were never about history, but about power and promotion of an historical narrative of white supremacy (see also Barker 2018; Beetham 2020; Duhé 2018).

In Canada, where I live, protests focussed on police treatment of Black and Indigenous peoples and on missing and murdered Indigenous women. In Montreal, protesters dismantled a statue of Sir John A. Macdonald, the father of Canadian confederation, yes, but also the architect of the Indian Act, late 19th century legislation (still in effect in amended form today) that made Indigenous nations wards of the Canadian state and sought to further colonize Indigenous bodies and minds

through ordinances establishing the reserve system, the conditions of status, and residential schools, to name but a few. He has also been criticized for implementing a head tax on Chinese immigrants and the acquisition of Rupert's Land (including the Metis Red River Settlement) and for his handling of the subsequent Northwest Resistance.

I came away from these webinars wondering how my work as an archaeologist and a university lecturer could and should change in light of the pandemic and protest, particularly in terms of my teaching. I had been questioning for some time the canon of people and ideas that we teach to undergraduates, and had made several shifts in the way I teach upper-level classes. I'd been trying to convey the idea that archaeologists are not, and really never have been, the only stewards of the past, despite, perhaps our "best" efforts. We certainly have something to offer in the kinds of data that we collect and our interpretations of them, but we provide one of perhaps several interpretations on any one place, time, object, or event. This does not mean that "anything goes" but that part of our job as archaeologists is understanding how different publics make and value heritage (sensu Harrison 2018). At times this may conflict with how archaeologists understand the past, but meaningful relationships can emerge from respectful dialogue and careful listening. I'd already reframed my third-year North American archaeology class through the lens of two-eyed seeing (sensu Bartlett et al. 2012). I'd also built a course on public archaeology that allowed fourth-year students to engage with the literature in critical heritage studies and to partner with cultural institutions. But what about first-year students taking an introductory course who just want to see what archaeology is all about? Or those for whom my archaeology class is filling a breadth requirement?

This summer I was also lucky enough to become part of an informal online gathering of scholars across North America interested in anti-racist pedagogy and our discussions have been enormously helpful to me. This group reminded me I was not alone in my pedagogical quandaries and our few meetings have helped me to shape what it is I think is really important for first-year students to know about archaeology and why. After a summer like this one, I felt I couldn't go back to teaching standard intro topics such as the origins of farming, or if I was going to do so, it would have to be in a very different framework than I had done in the past. I want my students to learn not just about events in the past, but the importance of evaluating historical narratives that they encounter all the time, often passively, through education, public monuments and plaques, and national parks; this is perhaps best explored through heritage, rather than archaeology per se. Recent volumes edited by Bender and Messenger (Bender and Messenger 2019a; Messenger and Bender 2020) frame archaeology and archaeological education through a lens of critical heritage studies as a means of making it relevant to more students, making the discipline "political and socially viable in this new century" (Shackle 2019:xi).

Students also need to see how contemporary archaeologists are thinking about the past, that non-archaeologist-publics sometimes engage with and value the same places that we do, though perhaps for different reasons. Importantly, however, I'd like my first-year students, many of whom will not go on to become archaeologists, to start "seeing" the past as they move through the world, appreciating it, engaging with it, and be able to critically evaluate its relationship to power. As Upton (2018) writes with respect to Confederate monuments, they are situated in landscapes of other kinds of commemoration,

but also in this example, other forms and institutions of white domination. And so while there are, I think, a variety of ways that communities may choose to contend with these and other contested monuments, it is not revisionism to remove them. Colston made a fortune in the buying and selling of Africans and that fact exists whether or not his monument is fished out of Bristol harbour or not; Macdonald is still the architect of this Indian Act, whether or not we see a statue to him in Canadian public parks. Would removing statues that commemorate them help us shift the narrative from one that restates national myths to one that is more inclusive and self-reflective? I'm hopeful that it would. My students might not reach the same conclusion in all cases of contested monuments, but I'd like them to appreciate why conversations about heritage, commemoration, and the experience of public spaces are important and why they become the focus of protest.

And if I am going to tackle the deep and global history of our species through an archaeological lens (which I am still doing to some degree), I'm throwing out progressivist frameworks and language. I selected a text that starts from the premise that we need to reimagine the way in which we think about the past and that it is contested. Yes, there are facts (and these matter) but the value of different events, objects, places are negotiated.

James Baldwin was right: "History is not the past; it is the present. We carry our history with us. We are our history. If we pretend otherwise, we are literally criminals" (*I Am Not Your Negro* 2016). And as several others have said in so many words (Bender and Messenger 2019b; Harrison 2018; Lerner and Effland 2019), the past we value and engage with in the present shapes the possibilities of our future. If students in my first year Archaeology class can take this one lesson away from their time with me, then I'll consider it a success.

If you are interested in submitting a piece for our annual newsletter, please contact me (Katherine Patton) at katherine.patton@utoronto.ca.

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Heritage in the Field

Adapting Heritage Education at Travelers' Rest State Park

Kaitlyn E. Davis (University of Colorado, Boulder and Montana State Parks) and Leah Schulson (Montana State Parks)

Travelers' Rest State Park, located on the traditional homeland of the Selis Qlispe (Bitterroot Salish), marks the intersection between cultural and natural history. Along the banks of Lolo Creek, near Missoula, Montana, visitors explore the landscape used for centuries by Indigenous nations, visited twice by the Lewis & Clark Corps of Discovery, and home to a wondrous diversity of plants and animals. It is the only archaeologically-verified campsite of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and it has been an important travel stop for Indigenous peoples for thousands of years.

Two hallmarks of the park are our school programming and our interactive visitors center. COVID-19 required us to significantly adjust both of these. In early April, we surveyed teachers to get a sense of how their schools were transitioning to online teaching. Based on their responses, we created two different types of offerings. We adapted the park's Journaling for Jefferson field trip, in which students learn about the Expedition's documentation and then practice their own observational skills, into a take-home packet that students could complete on their own without computer access. We also had thirteen classes from six different schools sign up for an interactive online lesson via Zoom, which included a virtual Archaeology Walk or a modified Reliving History with Replicas, in which students collected their own camping items from their house and compared them with the park's replicas of items used by the Bitterroot Salish and the Expedition in the early 1800s. This spring, we reached over 160 students

(including some siblings who decided to sit in and join the fun!), with additional classes potentially using only the packet option, and are prepared to continue offering virtual field trips in the fall, should circumstances require it.

We also created pre- and post-trip materials for teachers to use with their classes, both for the spring field trip season and moving forward. We created a brief introductory video to the park for students to watch before their trip; collected a list of recommended videos and readings that can provide useful background; and developed sets of post-trip activities that students can complete from home or the classroom, with a focus on assignments that encourage students to engage with the material through writing, drawing, and creation--giving them a break from all that screen time! Since the park grounds have remained open throughout the spring and summer, we have also been encouraging local students to come on their own and have encountered a few of these families visiting the park for the first time.

For the visitors' center, hands-on displays have been replaced with objects under glass to limit contact and there is plenty of room between cases to maintain a safe social distance (Figure 1). This has given us a chance to create new exhibits and bring in additional voices and images for informational signage, telling the stories of this place through the words, photographs, and sketches of the people who were here, rather than through the touch-table replicas. We have made a series of small exhibits so that they are more mobile and can be rotated frequently. We also adapted a bingo/scavenger hunt activity (Figure 2) to help kids stay engaged as they go through the exhibits in the visitors center.

To learn more about Travelers' Rest, visit <https://www.travelersrest.org/home.html>.

Figure 1: Photo of COVID 19-Adapted Visitors Center Exhibits

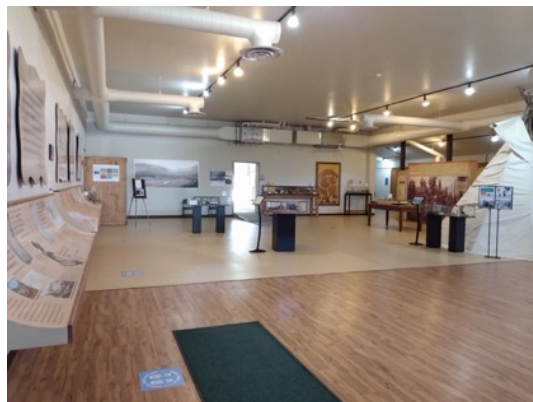


Figure 2: Scavenger Hunt Bingo Card

Travelers' Rest State Park Scavenger Hunt Bingo

Instructions: Search the park grounds and visitor center to find items or places that fit the clues in the grid below. When you find something that fits a clue, stop and draw, write a description, or take a picture of that item or place and cross it off the grid! Once you've gotten a bingo (found five things in a row diagonally, horizontally or vertically) or a blackout (found something for every square on the board), return to the visitor center and show a staff member your board to win a prize!

A home that can be packed up and moved around	Trail marker #1	A place where archaeologists found evidence of a campsite	Somewhere you'd go when you've "got to go"	Animal tracks
A heart shaped leaf	A bird that is more than one color	The Salish name for Travelers' Rest	A trail guide pamphlet	The silhouettes of two famous explorers
This goes over, water goes under	Something that helped Lewis and Clark see	FREE SPACE SOMETHING YOU'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE!	A tree whose needles are in bundles of 3	A "Creek Access" sign
Something that lives in water	A place where park rules are listed	A flag	Something colorful you can see from the trail	Something people used to make fire
A thing that helps you get from one place to another	Something that came from an animal	A place where you can rest while enjoying the trails	Something with more than four legs	Somewhere an animal might live

Travelers' Rest State Park
 travelersreststateparkmt

Field School during the time of COVID: To dig or not to dig?

Karin Larkin (University of Colorado Colorado Springs)

Is offering an archaeological field school during a pandemic a good idea and is it even possible to run one safely? These are the questions we had to address both to ourselves and our administration before we could

proceed with offering our regularly scheduled field school course. I recognize all field opportunities that involve students had to address these questions. I also recognize none of the people making these decisions had any past precedent or even consistent information and messaging to guide how to navigate the pandemic. Some of the largest institutes that offer field opportunities for students cancelled their seasons. A message posted on the website of the Institute for Field Research dated June 4, 2020 read, "We hope that you and all those whom you love are staying healthy and safe as we all reflect on the urgent need for transformation in our society. In April 2020, in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, IFR canceled our Summer 2020 field school season and laid off our staff" (Institute for Field Research 2020). Some took more individualized approaches to decision making. For instance, the Archaeological Institute of America noted on their website, "COVID-19 Project Notification: Please be aware that many projects are cancelling upcoming fieldwork seasons and their current status may not be reflected in AFOB. We rely on project directors/organizers to provide any updated information in the AFOB database..." (Archaeological Institute of America 2020). Some field programs decided to continue their field plans. These decisions were made on a variety of different levels from the individual instructors to the institutional. Because each decision maker could only use the information available to them at the moment when they had to make these decisions, and the information seemed to be changing by the day, the decisions varied widely. Here, I discuss our decision making process and some lessons learned.

Since our university had gone remote for the spring and summer, the viability of offering a field school was in question since this type of class cannot be offered in a "remote" format.

With all the uncertainty coming off the Spring 2020 semester, many students were emailing our department to question whether we would offer a field school this summer. Because so many field opportunities were being cancelled across the country and around the world due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, students were panicked that these cancellations would impact their future opportunities. I couldn't blame them for these concerns; most were getting ready to graduate and had already applied to graduate schools. Delaying field school would either cost them time or money. With the added complication of cancellations, these students were concerned they would have to delay graduation to await the next field school opportunity or pay graduate fees to attend a field school after they had graduated. Our department was weighing these student concerns with whether offering a field school would be safe or even feasible.

I would like to give a little background on our typical field school format for context, as it played into our decision-making process. Our field school is generally offered every May/June for 4-6 weeks. We rotate our archaeology faculty in the Anthropology Department and offer the field school primarily for our students, since it does not overlap with faculty research interests. The field school for 2020 was originally scheduled for May 18th through June 12th. However, our campus had mandated all faculty, staff, and students to work and learn remotely through the end of June as cases were rising in the state of Colorado. Our field schools are generally offered at sites that are local, which had a couple advantages. The advantage for our students is that many of them are non-traditional with jobs and families that make it hard for them to attend field schools away from home. The fact that it is local allows students to return home each night. This was also an advantage when considering whether to run a

field program, in that returning home each night would help minimize contact that might otherwise take place while sharing sleeping and eating quarters, as one would in a field camp. So, with all of these factors in play, we decided to give field school a try with a few modifications. We changed the dates to the month of July when we thought cases would have leveled off or decreased. We developed a protocol of social distancing that included only holding class outside, mandating masks even in the outdoor setting (Figure 1), taking temperatures of students regularly, mandating they stay home if they feel ill, and creating a plan for dealing with a COVID exposure or case. Here are a few lessons learned from this experience.

Figure 1: Field school students working, wearing masks, and physically distancing



1. Students were and are craving meaningful in-person class interactions. I'm sure no one will find this surprising to hear since we are all feeling the low-level depression caused by months of social distancing. The shut-down at the end of spring semester alienated some students for a variety of reasons ranging from family pressures, to lack of appropriate technology or internet access, to frustration, among other factors. Some of our best students in class had completely disappeared in the shift to remote learning. Even the students who successfully negotiated the abrupt move to remote learning were very appreciative for the opportunity to participate in an in-person field school. One student told me daily how appreciative he was to have the

opportunity and all of the others expressed the same sentiment at least once during the course.

2. Working in the field all day in a mask is uncomfortable but necessary. You are probably thinking...of course wearing a mask all day in the field is uncomfortable, we all know how uncomfortable they are at this point. But imagine you are working outside in 90+ degree weather for 7-8 hours a day, doing field work. Because we were working outdoors and regulations are generally more relaxed in outdoor settings, you might think we considered relaxing the mask requirement. We could not. We were working in a very populated public park that required all visitors to wear a mask--this included our field crew. You may also be thinking that I heard a lot of complaining about having to wear masks, but not one single student complained (they are even smiling behind those masks in the photo...I promise; Figure 2). I personally think they were too happy to be able to take the class in person and didn't want to risk having the field school shut down due to lack of compliance.

Figure 2: Students enjoying a break during a long hot day of field work.



3. You should always have a back-up contingency plan. Everyone who has taught field school knows there is generally one student who can spoil the experience. In this case, that one student approached me the beginning of the second week and said

his roommate and their friends had just returned from a trip to Las Vegas. The friends tested positive for COVID but his roommate had tested negative. I had already decided what I would do in such a situation and sent the student home immediately. For some reason, he had decided it would be best to come to the field and tell me in person that he had potentially been exposed. Even though he wasn't exhibiting any symptoms and his roommate's test was negative, I had him get tested and stay home until he had those results, at which point I would have to make a decision. Had he tested positive, I would have had to shut down field school. Luckily his test came back negative, but it reminded me of a few important points. Each of us in a class are reliant on each other to behave responsibly. While we may trust our students (or maybe not), we are not just in the field with each student. We are also in the field with each student's friends, family, roommates, partners, and whomever else they come in contact with each day. This point doesn't just apply to the field school, but to all our classes and life in general at the moment. I guess that point hadn't really hit home while I was planning our social distancing protocols for the class. I was mostly focused on how to control our environment in the field and admittedly didn't think of much outside that. This situation made me question whether making the decision to offer field school was a good idea after all. I am lucky that the outcome was favorable in this situation, but it certainly shifted my perception of the threat.

I think we are still unsure of the greater impacts this pandemic will have on field research, heritage management, and education. Despite the fact that this field school turned out well, I am not sure holding

an in-person field school was the best decision. However, I also am not sure there was a right or even good decision to make during these unprecedented times. The impact of cancelling field schools will not just impact students as they move forward seeking graduate degrees or careers; it will also impact research productivity for archaeologists, and heritage management and preservation efforts overall. Perhaps it is time to start reimagining what field schools look like in the future, but I will leave that for others to decide.

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The Schreiber Wood Project at the University of Toronto Mississauga: Running a Field School in the time of COVID.

Michael Brand, Trevor J. Orchard, and Sarah Ranlett (University of Toronto Mississauga)

The Schreiber Wood Project, in conjunction with the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) Department of Anthropology's archaeological field school and work-study program, investigates the cultural landscape created by the Schreiber family when they moved onto lands that now comprise part of

the UTM campus. The Schreibers moved from Toronto to the community of Springfield (now Mississauga, Ontario) in the late 1870s and early 1880s. The field school has run annually since 2013 and consists of two weeks of fieldwork at the end of August, followed by a semester of lab work and analysis. More detailed collections work occurs in the context of the work-study program. The 2020 field school ultimately proceeded in-person under a strict set of COVID protocols, while the work-study has shifted to remote work. Here we reflect on our experiences of carrying on the work of the Schreiber Wood Project, and operating a field course with COVID restrictions in place.

The pandemic's disruption of the field school began immediately, as students usually apply for the field school at the end of March, which this year coincided with the cessation of all on campus activities due to COVID-19. At that time, it was unclear when in-person instruction would restart, and this uncertainty meant that acceptance into the field school was delayed. By the time permission to run the in-person field school was received, enrollment was down to roughly half the number of students that would normally have participated. We have no data on why students decided not to enroll, but fear of in-person meetings after five months of lockdown likely influenced some of their decisions.

Behind-the-scenes, our discussions began in early May about whether we could, or even should, proceed with the field school. Would we be putting students and staff at risk? Ultimately, we felt that we should proceed, if possible, as this hands-on apprenticeship style learning through fieldwork is an important part of archaeological education. The course trains our students in practical, applied aspects of various field and lab methods, which often leads to direct employment in the cultural resource management (CRM) industry. The

CRM industry had already been mobilized in the early stages of the provincial COVID-19 recovery process as a component of critical infrastructure projects, and many of our graduates were already in the field or expected to be in demand with revival of such projects as the economy reopens. Discussions and planning were ongoing, one might even say relentless, throughout the summer. Although ultimately worthwhile, this planning was accompanied by persistent stress and often a sense of futility given that we had no clear sense of whether the course was likely to proceed. More intensive, targeted planning began in late June, including weekly meetings with various members of the university administration and department staff, to compile detailed protocols for submission to the university administration and provincial government. These COVID protocols were based on industry standards, including recommendations released by the Canadian Archaeological Association, the LiUNA union guidelines, and local CRM companies' field protocols. All this planning paid off, and permission to operate in person was received approximately one week before the field component start date. We felt confident that with the protocols in place we could operate safely.

The biggest fieldwork changes came from restrictions on sharing field equipment and the need to maintain physical distancing. In past years, fieldwork proceeded in a more casual manner, with shared field equipment brought to the site on a daily basis. Students drew equipment from this shared supply as required, with little need to consider the sterilization or cleaning of shared equipment. In contrast, the protocols we developed for the 2020 field program aimed to minimize equipment sharing by assembling individual field kits for each student. To outfit each kit, the purchase of additional equipment was necessary,

particularly items such as compasses and 30m tapes that were typically shared under non-COVID conditions. This revised approach to field equipment was hugely successful, and we anticipate maintaining aspects of this approach in future years, though perhaps with a less rigid need to avoid sharing equipment once the COVID-19 pandemic is no longer a concern.

Limited numbers of larger pieces of equipment, such as screens and shovels, necessitated redundant disinfecting when switching users, a process wherein the touch-surfaces were disinfected by both the outgoing and the incoming user. Disinfecting was accomplished with a simple dilute (70%) ethanol solution as per UTM Environmental Health and Safety guidelines. Photography was restricted to teaching assistants to reduce the potentially negative effects of constant disinfecting camera equipment. Handheld GPS units usually borrowed from the Library's GIS department were unavailable. Our librarians found GIS apps that students could use on their phones to collect location data for later use in GIS exercises.

In previous years, students have worked in small, rotating groups, but to maintain physical distancing this year, students were divided into "pods" and had to remain with their pod for the entire field component. As a result, students did not have the opportunity to work closely with one another, while the constant wearing of masks also placed a barrier in the way of typical social interactions. With field school traditionally being a time where many make lasting friendships, this restricted approach may have negatively influenced the field school experience.

Field activities such as pedestrian survey were little affected, as this occurs with students spaced at intervals. Shovel testing, in contrast, was now completed individually,

instead of in pairs, to ensure physical distance was maintained. Excavation proceeded with three students per 1m-by-1m unit as in previous seasons. Individual roles were more rigidly restricted than in the past, with one student excavating, one screening, and the third taking notes, all working in separate areas demarcated by spray paint on the ground. Physical distancing also prevented staff from working closely with students in units limiting what is generally fruitful interaction.

On a less tangible level, operating this course was extremely stressful for staff due to the constant worry about everyone's safety. We were only the second course at UTM permitted to run in-person under COVID. This meant that all eyes were on us, not just the university administration, but also colleagues who had cancelled their own field schools. Fear loomed constantly that someone would contract COVID and the ramifications of that, both personally and for the course, ran wild in our minds. This anxiety was difficult to turn off at the end of the day. Our students, however, were fantastic. Everyone followed the rules and protocols, including wearing masks at all times, even outdoors, during two weeks of hot, humid weather. They accepted that this needed to be done and there were no complaints at all.

Some of our fears were nearly realized when two team members developed cold-like symptoms midway through the fieldwork. Following protocol, each stayed home and sought COVID tests. Both, fortunately, were false alarms, though unevenness in the speed of COVID testing meant that one student did not receive their results for four days. Unfortunately, after missing a significant portion of the field component, the student chose to drop the class. This experience highlighted for each of us how this disease and the logistics of testing for it impact the lives of our students in very real ways, even when tests are negative.

The COVID-19 pandemic also presented considerable challenges to maintaining important ongoing collections-based work through the work-study program. While the field school provides an excellent introduction to general field and lab methods, these formal course components are insufficient to fully prepare artifact assemblages for long-term curation, nor do they facilitate report writing or detailed research. For several years, we have improved this situation by hiring work-study students to work more intensively with organizing and maintaining the collections. As of summer 2020, the administrators of the work-study program mandated that all positions be completed entirely remotely. This posed some clear challenges to work that is inherently tied to physical archaeological collections.

While we initially considered cancelling this component of the project for this year, we ultimately realized that this presented us with an opportunity to work on the larger goals of collections analysis. The myopia inherent in detailed collections work had sidelined a broader understanding of the picture emerging from that work. The shift away from campus provided physical and psychological distance from the collections that allowed us to focus on maintaining and improving the project's digital data files and catalogues. Students used these digital databases for independent research, which we were able to mentor from afar.

With the pivot towards student-led research, we have deepened and diversified the nature of student engagement with the archaeology of the site. As a result, students have been able to use digital databases of our collections to contribute to a more complete narrative of the past, which will inform the ongoing work of both the field school and the work-study program. We are now planning to mobilize that engagement by working with the students to disseminate the results of their

research through conference presentations, also in a virtual forum, this fall.

Upon reflection, our choices to proceed with our 2020 field school and to continue our ongoing collections management work remotely posed considerable challenges and created additional stress for us in terms of the organization and running of an archaeological field school. Despite these challenges, we feel that both the field school and the ongoing remote collections work have been highly successful. As both of these projects are ongoing, we can only speculate as to their impact on the students involved. But we feel that, while perhaps not typical of field school experiences under “normal” conditions, the students have gained a valuable, practical educational experience and have not missed out, to any critical extent, on the expected benefits of completing a field course in archaeology.

FEMA Environmental & Historic Preservation Section – Rocky Mountain Region COVID-19 Activities

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*Nobody told me there'd be days like these.
Strange days indeed, most peculiar Mama.*
– John Lennon

My name is Charles Bello. I am a member of the Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists (CCPA) and work for the Federal Emergency Management Agency – based out of the Denver Federal Center. I am an advisor in the Environmental and Historic Preservation compliance section, but also wear a few other hats – archaeologist and tribal liaison.

These days I am primarily involved in our Agency's response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic in Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, and North/South Dakota – including the twenty-nine tribes contained within these states. Most of the FEMA workforce has been teleworking from our residences for the past seven months – when we might return to the office/field is the big question. I am working with various State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs/THPOs) and other Federal/State agencies/departments on project compliance reviews relating to the Coronavirus Pandemic response. My Section helps facilitate Federal efforts for the emergency response and recovery, management, and reduction of immediate threats to public health and safety, such as establishing and approving various sheltering/testing sites that support emergency medical care, providing PPE, sanitizing supplies, other commodities and equipment in support of the public health and medical response.

Even though the Federal COVID response is still developing and hurricane season is upon us, our attention is highly focused, and the Coronavirus Pandemic remains a priority. Our normal work on disaster response and recovery and other grant programs has not missed a beat. With specific reference to our colleagues in the Native American community – the current isolation and restrictions on travel in and out of remote communities make business interactions (i.e., project consultations in my case) interesting. I have been working with staff from Tribal Historic Preservation Offices in the Rocky Mountain Region for over a decade and have developed good professional and personal relationships. In these most unusual times, I find that even though many tribal colleagues are taking on “other duties as assigned” they are also

somehow managing to still handle their normal workload.

I have contacted quite a few Tribal Historic Preservation Officers and their staff over the past seven months – both related to projects and also out of friendship. Fortunately, I have their personal cell phone numbers or they are friends on Facebook, and the ability to connect is easy. When I do contact these colleagues, they are often outside – sometimes on official cultural resources business, but quite often working on a variety of things directly related to the health and welfare of tribal members – especially elders, the sick/otherwise compromised individuals, and children. We always have a bit of time to talk personally about their views concerning the Coronavirus Pandemic in Indian Country – its spread, the potential medical, economic, and even sociological ramifications, and the various responses all forms of government are taking. These conversations invariably lead to interesting stories. Two poignant examples are where a THPO from the former Great Sioux Nation is putting long hours in on the night shift as a volunteer policeman staffing remote outposts and checking travelers passing in/out of the Reservation during lockdown. This individual is an elder, a traditionalist, and *Akicita* (Lakota language for warrior/protector). Another individual has spent a few weeks plowing and disking over 60 vegetable garden plots as a voluntary contribution to the Brave Heart Society, supporting cultural practices of the Lakota, Nakota, and Dakota peoples.

I leave these conversations feeling glad to be associated with these extremely honorable individuals. This is what helps me get by in these very strange days.

FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.

Insights into Chachapoya Tourism, Heritage and Online Engagement

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In recent years, the Chachapoya region in northeastern Perú has made it onto top travel lists like [National Geographic Expeditions](#) and [New York Times' 52 Places to Go](#), and sites such as Revash have been placed under the [World Monument Fund](#) watch. Now more than ever, Chachapoya culture, history and archaeology is in the spotlight of tourism and heritage development. However, despite the construction of a novel cable car to the archaeological complex of Kuélap, heritage places managed by rural communities are experiencing relatively little change (Figure 1).

On March 2, 2017 then-president [Pedro Pablo Kuczynski inaugurated a 20-million-dollar cable car system](#) to the archaeological complex of Kuélap. The cable car was built by a consortium between Peruvian construction company ICCGSA and French firm Pomagalski S.A. (POMA). Since the inauguration of the cable car, Kuélap saw an 83.7% increase in tourists from 2016 to 2017, a significant number of which were Peruvian nationals (see Figure 2). In fact, the cable car ride has become its own source of attraction as it is the only system in the country. Additionally, 2017 also marked the [reintroduction of direct flights between Lima and Chachapoyas](#), which further stimulated travel by allowing city dwellers to make a quick trip to the northern cloud forest region. Tourism agencies located in the Amazonas capital began to promote short travel packages that prioritize visits to Kuélap (for example: [Turismo Explorer](#); [Discover Chachapoyas](#)).

Figure 1: Discrepancy in tourist growth between Kuélap and community-managed heritage sites.



*Graph produced by the author with data sourced from [datosTurismo](#), Ministerio de Cultura – Dirección Desconcentrada de Cultura de Amazonas. Note two big changes: 2017 marks the inauguration of the cable car system. 2020 marks the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Figure 2: Increase of tourists after the inauguration of the Kuélap cable car in 2017.

Heritage Site	Total Tourists in 2016	Total Tourists in 2017	% Increase
Kuélap	56,010	102,905	83.7
Museo de Leymebamba	14,293	19,287	34.9
Karajía	6,298	8,472	34.5
Revash	2,961	4,779	61.4

Data collected by Perú's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism ([datosTurismo](#) [MINCETUR](#)) reveals a discrepancy in tourism development between multinational-run Kuélap and community-managed heritage places. While [officials claimed](#) that the large-scale development of Kuélap would benefit communities across the region, heritage sites managed by rural communities are seeing much slower growth. Tourists flock to Kuélap but less than 20% visit heritage places such as the Community Museum of Leymebamba or the funerary complexes of Karajía and Revash. Furthermore, both the Leymebamba Museum

and Karajía saw only a 34% increase in tourists from 2016 to 2017.

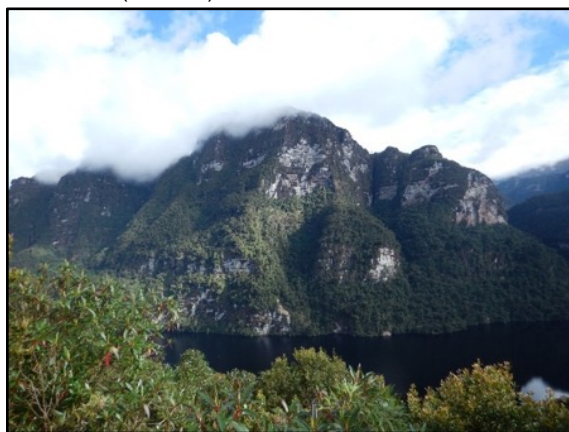
The [Leymebamba Museum](#) is one of the world's top facilities for the preservation of mummies, and it houses 219 mummy bundles that were rescued from the mausolea of Laguna de los Condores in 1997. The [museum](#) was designed and built for and with the community, using local pounded-earth technology (tapia) to make display rooms and activity areas that are used today by school groups. Karajía and Revash ([ACTUR Revash](#)) are just two of many mortuary complexes found across the Chachapoya region, and both these sites are maintained by community tourism associations. Aside from these more frequented community-run heritage sites, numerous other places are overlooked by visitors despite the efforts by local communities to maintain them: [Laguna de los Condores](#), [La Jalca and Ollape](#), [San Jeronimo and the Sarcófagos del Tigre](#), La Congona, Molinete, Cataneo, La Petaka and Diablo Wasi, [Atuen](#) with its highland lakes and Inka-Chachapoya sites (see Figure 3).

The effect of large-scale transformation of Kuélap into the predominant representation of Chachapoya heritage is not only reflected through tourist numbers but it is also observed in the everyday experiences of rural guides and hospitality workers. While cable car fees are paid to the multinational corporations who built the system, rural towns along the road to Kuélap are now virtually overlooked. Locals comment that the previous "slow" tourism of traveling 2-hours by car to Kuélap allowed restaurants and artisans to sell food and crafts to visitors. When I visited Kuélap in 2016 via van, it was part of the standard package to stop for lunch at one of the many restaurants along the road. Now instead, tourists are quickly transported from the mountain valley to the plateau in 20 minutes, entirely missing the

rural towns and all they have to offer along the way.

Similarly, locals observe how little tourism at Kuélap impacts rural communities. A flood of tourists reaches Kuélap but only a trickle makes it to community-run heritage sites. For example, Chachapoya tourism agencies transport busloads of tourists directly to the Leymebamba museum, yet few stop for an overnight stay or a visit with one of the many local artisans. Community members in Leymebamba shared with me that they are looking for ways to have visitors stay in town rather than returning to Chachapoyas. For the few that do, the tourist dollar is quickly distributed throughout the community through restaurants, cantinas, grocery, lodging, trekking guides, horse rental, landowner or entrance fees, and artisanal experiences ([weaving](#), [woodworking](#), [cheese making](#), [baking](#), [ceramics](#)). Fortunately, more ethically conscious tourism agencies ([Nuevos Caminos Travel](#); [PHIMA Voyages](#)) are working to promote sustainable and slow tourism in rural communities. The global COVID-19 pandemic has further revealed a need to slow down, reflect on our engagement with heritage places and how we travel.

Figure 3: Two heritage places managed by local communities - Laguna de los Condores, Leymebamba (top) and Sarcófagos del Tigre, San Jeronimo (bottom)



The pandemic has entirely halted any form of tourism in the Chachapoya region since March 2020. The economic and social effects of the ongoing pandemic on the livelihoods of rural communities remain undocumented, but conversations with local collaborators suggest that many families turned to subsistence agriculture to support their households. With folks unable to work or travel, families are taking the opportunity to spend time on the land, at their farms and country cabins. Spending time in the *campo* is also one of the few activities permitted by the state during quarantine and it is rather easy to social distance outdoors. Friends and community members are sharing their experiences via Facebook exploring highland lakes, cultivating potatoes, or taking in one of the many majestic views of mountains and cloud forest. As local communities celebrate culture and nature heritage online, this pushes archaeologists to consider their position in these visual and virtual conversations.

With Facebook being one of the more accessible online platforms in rural Perú, due to mobile company promotions, social media is one way to stay connected with local communities. My archaeology project's [Facebook page](#) and [minimal-computing website](#) are two ways that I am working engage with local communities online. My goal is to use these platforms to curate and share

archaeology content to provide the public with a more diverse understanding of Chachapoya heritage beyond Kuélap. Active engagement online has also helped me learn about myriad ways local youth are celebrating their heritage (for example: [Chachapoya-design streetwear](#)) and how to support rural communities in developing sustainable tourism. This is a time for researchers to sit back, listen and reflect on the emerging needs and interests of communities. Visual and online engagement is just one way we can begin to do this and take seriously the diverse interests of community members.

Special Feature

“Wake me up after the pandemic is over:”¹ Cultural institutions and the lost opportunity of digitization²

Emilia Ismael (Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla)

Prelude

This article was written in response to an invitation from the online cultural supplement [Klastos](#). The editorial proposal was, first, to tell (in Spanish *contar*) other stories of the developing COVID-19 emergency. The word *contar* in Spanish has a double meaning, to tell and to count. The pandemic is mostly expressed in numbers across the world (confirmed cases, deceased, tests performed, respirators, days in quarantine, months to a vaccine...); it was necessary to tell other stories. Second, the proposal was to tell the story from

a “local” standpoint. What this meant was not to attempt a meta-explanation of a global predicament or the ultimate sociopolitical theory of what is happening or what caused it, or what is going to happen to the neoliberal world order, but rather to try to reflect and address a particular dynamic that readers could put their hands on and respond to.

When the domino effect of emergency declarations, social distancing restrictions, and general quarantine measures started in the western hemisphere, I was struck by three dynamics that were developing in my networks. First, the number of memes that were circulated (at least in Spanish speaking populations), though not a novel social phenomenon, was very telling about how people’s anxieties were playing out.

Second, I was fixated on the terms in which the emergency was being narrated, the absolute apocalyptic scenario: an unprecedented crisis, widespread chaos, complete uncertainty, the greatest contingency ever experienced, and especially, “nothing like this has happened before”. Yes, nothing exactly like this has happened before and the shift has been dramatic, but let’s not forget that *similar* things have happened before. I reflected particularly about this as I came across the digital image of a historical document from 1918. A Health and Sanitation office’s publication in a local newspaper advised people on the best way to stop the Influenza epidemic: stay home, don’t socialize, do not hug or kiss, isolate at home if you have mild symptoms, seek medical advice if the case turns severe... go easy on the alcoholic drinks.

¹ A paraphrase of this popular Latin-American rock song: <https://open.spotify.com/track/3uMYq07Kj5m564OQwd5CrD>

² Originally published online at [https://ladobe.com.mx/2020/04/despertame-cuando-](https://ladobe.com.mx/2020/04/despertame-cuando-pase-la-pandemia-las-instituciones-culturales-y-la-oportunidad-perdida-de-la-digitalizacion/)

[pase-la-pandemia-las-instituciones-culturales-y-la-oportunidad-perdida-de-la-digitalizacion/](https://ladobe.com.mx/2020/04/despertame-cuando-pase-la-pandemia-las-instituciones-culturales-y-la-oportunidad-perdida-de-la-digitalizacion/)

Examples like this made me think about the implications of living through the emergency with ostensibly no orientation, no reference. Like vertigo, we lose our ability to imagine anything beyond the distress we are experiencing. I then started thinking about art and cultural institutions' role in the whirlwind we are living and the reassembling to come. So, the end of the world is coming and you want me to look at the Mona Lisa laughing at me online?

Consequently, the third emergent dynamic that moved my writing was the widespread response of cultural institutions going digital and granting free access to their archives. Typically, they are offering virtual tours, the video streaming of archived concerts, opera performances, and plays, among others. This could be understood as an expected kneejerk reaction but, at the same time, we shouldn't expect that to be it. Recently, a local museum I featured in the article published a statement online. They asserted they have no answers to the current crisis and they don't pretend to--they are waiting, purportedly, like everybody else. Is that all they can do?

Once the groceries have been properly wiped down, we ought to engage in a debate about the meaning and function of cultural institutions in their widest definition, as well as about their functionality, in the ongoing reorganization of life. We need to examine how they participate in the assemblage of our local environments. By local I mean not a geographical or political delimitation, like our municipalities or even countries, but the network of relationships that constitute our scope of experience. We need to imagine how they can be active agents in the rearrangement of relationships, practices, customs, rights, policies, ethics, economies, affects and ways of life. The following is my contribution to start the debate.

“Wake me up after the pandemic is over:” Cultural institutions and the lost opportunity of digitization

It is spreading even in those areas that were long considered secure.

—Isabell Lorey, *State of Insecurity*

Scarcely was the pandemic declared before chats and social networks became inundated with well-intentioned messages with resources for coping with social distancing, the most effective strategy for the containment of SARS-CoV-2. In addition to the WHO's health recommendations and lists of basic provisions for containment, we received extensive lists and links to museums, publications, opera houses, secretariats, ministries, and art and cultural institutions in general that were offering free access to their archives and multimedia collections.

Institutions with the longest histories and budgets that had already entered the digitization race made a rapid transition to operating exclusively virtually. From the State Hermitage Museum to MoMA and smaller local museums, virtual tours and archives of conferences and interviews they had accumulated over the years are now being re-launched. The most motivated institutions have fast-tracked the creation of online seminars or short tutorials to enliven their collections and generate traffic. Other institutions, those with fewer resources or public interest, have simply closed, waiting for things to return to "normal."

What has become clear is that culture seems to have, even in this emergency, only two hegemonic purposes: the preservation of heritage and entertainment. Art and cultural institutions offer “access” to heritage that has given meaning to identity—especially national— and to socio-political order, and to activities encouraging entertainment and

contemplation, now exclusively at home. Digitization and digital engagement seem, on the one hand, to resolve the psychological crisis of isolation and, on the other, to justify the relevance of these institutions in the midst of what may be a catastrophe for human life.

However, COVID-19 makes even more evident the vacuum that art and cultural institutions have left us in for many years. In the face of the emergency, institutions retreat and hide behind their virtual tours, archives, and collections, which provide little more than a distraction, an experience in self-absorption. They dip into the secure content they already have while they wait for the storm to pass. Despite the paraphernalia of their digital display, they reveal their notorious inability to produce that which justifies their own existence: culture.

In Mexico, the federal Ministry of Culture launched the program *Contigo en la Distancia: Cultura desde Casa*³ (<https://contigoenladistancia.cultura.gob.mx/>), a website that offers access to the digital resources of the different institutions and programs managed under the public administration of culture in the country. There, you can choose from a virtual tour of different museums and exhibitions, interactive games, downloadable books, and cooking guides— a portion of the digital archives that has been generated in recent decades and, in particular, those that are clearly related to national identity. In sum, this represents an overwhelming (and difficult to navigate) offering of the heritage and digitized contents curated in the country's art and cultural institutions.

One part of the site includes a listing of current calls for proposals

³ <https://contigoenladistancia.cultura.gob.mx/> "With you in the distance," a reference to the famous bolero.

(<https://contigoenladistancia.cultura.gob.mx/#convocatorias>). This contains the only programs created expressly for the COVID-19 emergency—or mostly for that purpose, because some of them, like those from the Tijuana Cultural Center (CECUT) and the Digital Culture Center in Mexico City, have only been rechanneled to the site. Many of these new calls for proposals are for both the general public and artists, designed to be submitted in a few weeks due to the urgency of the matter; and, in short, their purpose is, once again, encouraging the use of culture as entertainment: "[f]or you to escape from boredom ..." Suggestions include proposing virtual games, sharing recipes, and anecdotes for this time of social isolation. How ingenious!

Only some of these calls, those for artists and cultural workers, have to do specifically, albeit superficially, with themes related to the pandemic: social distancing, the health emergency, confinement, and domestic violence. The invitation is just that— thematic. Small stipends are offered in exchange for artwork on a related topic. At their core, they do not call for new modes of cultural production in the face of the emergency and/or raise specific questions about the changes that the virus will bring to our ways of life, to the practices of artistic work, and to new priorities and awareness of issues beyond Phase 3. Nor is the transition to the virtual even questioned; on the contrary, it is assumed to be a kind of miraculous response since all of the calls will result in cultural products that can be circulated through digital means.

We see here the usual policy of offering limited economic incentives for the production of work and the partial and indirect support of the sector.⁴ Between 60 and 85 grants will be

⁴ Historically, Mexico's cultural policy has been strongly based on State funding through social programs, scholarships, awards and short-term stipends for art

awarded through a call for “Independent Scenic Spaces in Resilience.”⁵ This is far from a long-term institutional support structure, however, since more than 500 spaces were reported in a census done by an independent party in 2019. But moving forward with the call fulfills the customary view of “support” held by the public—i.e., so that no later report can say that there was *not* support—but what is lacking is a sustainable strategy for the sector as a whole.

With this example from the central apparatus for culture in Mexico, it is evident that, in the face of the emergency, strategies for producing cultural resources are not being imagined from within the institutional sphere beyond using digital reproduction to circulate the same content and reproducing the standard work practices and modes of production which are, now, justifiably precarious.

In this sense, we should also consider that the institutions’ current digital strategies legitimize and reinforce a scenario of greater vulnerability for cultural workers facing the looming recession, leading to the perpetuation of the exchange economy in which artistic work that does not enter the art market is expected to be a pro bono activity. Above all, in the present scenario, it is assumed that cultural production must be freely given for the good of all and that its social contribution is priceless. Artists and cultural workers without institutional support participate in the social emergency as agents providing affective care,

production. Beginning in the late 1980’s, there was a move towards a hybrid model that would allow private subvention. However, the role of the State, although limited, continues to be the main source of funding: in the first decade of the twenty-first century Mexico’s budget for cultural programs was an approximate 6.6 USD/PC; by the end of the second decade, they received only 0.15% of the federal public spending, whereas it generated 3.3% of the gross domestic product. (Sources:

but not as economic agents, at least not in terms of the current digital response.

What this situation makes evident is that institutions have long since stopped seeing the dynamism of relationships established between human and non-human agents (people, the environment, the material and, yes, also viruses) as culture. Rather than respond by proposing new arrangements, connections, and dependencies, in the face of an emergency of this magnitude, they take refuge in their digital collections.

By suspending this collective, emergent, and relational dimension of culture, institutions push us unto a state of fragility; a state where, *in the presence* of culture, we assimilate what has already been said for us and can only parrot it back in order to feel sheltered and protected, leading to a state in which we don’t have a voice. In the same fashion, those 85 independent scenic spaces will be housed for a few months under the only option offered to them, that of generating digital content in exchange for a stipend, but without the opportunity to contribute towards designing long-term strategies out of their own experience.

The generalized response of cultural institutions in Mexico and around the world in the face of the health emergency shows that our withdrawal had already begun a long time ago, making us unable to sustain more inclusive social relations, supportive economic structures, and an environment emphasizing a more horizontal political structure. We have

Ejea, Poder y Creación Artística en México, 2011; <https://www.proceso.com.mx/522121/la-cultura-recibe-22-veces-menos-en-gasto-publico-de-lo-que-aporta-al-pib-graue>.)

⁵

<https://contigoenladistancia.cultura.gob.mx/detalle/espacios-escenicos-independientes-en-resiliencia>

lived for a while in a state of contingency where fear of the other and individual vulnerability imprisons us. Now, we are urged to prostrate ourselves for good before the image of Saint Geronimo in his study⁶ or The Orphans,⁷ but online.

We have not only the virus to fear, but also the possibility that the pandemic will leave us in the same place as before, but with a smaller budget and one that has become justifiably precarious. The economic and social proposals being imposed on us will have implications of a cultural nature, but cultural institutions are, for the time being, notably absent in the debate regarding this possible reordering and re-integration of society.

Culture is reassembled in a hasty and desperate way from the balconies, through windows, on mobile phones, in the spaces that are being given up and those that are being reoccupied, in the new ways of remembering and recounting, in the emerging chains of distribution and solidarity, in complex domestic aesthetics. Meanwhile, cultural institutions are waiting for the vaccine that will return us to "normal."

We can, of course, argue that in any case we do not need cultural institutions for this process, or that at present we cannot ask them to do more than preserve heritage, but we should not dismiss their role as creators of representations, imaginaries, structures of economic production, and as agents involved in advancing and legitimizing practices.

We now turn to the supposed contemplative refuge of art in isolation because that is what institutions are promoting. Can't they do more than that? We must not accept the idea that cultural institutions are immobilized by this situation

and allow the narrative of this process to be constructed elsewhere, calling forth the usual terms of "uncertainty," "unprecedented," a lack of referents, the generalized crisis.

Worse still is to grant that the new structures that must be generated to survive this cultural blackout will continue to be built exclusively in dominant regions, through the usual mediums and from the same political and economic spheres. Can we not demand that cultural institutions take a leading role in mobilizing their institutional platforms to produce a reorganization in other ways that are more participatory, horizontal, heterogeneous, and inclusive so that we can free ourselves from the roadblock of uncertainty?

Isabell Lorey's quote at the beginning of this essay does not refer to a virus: it refers to fear and vulnerability as conditions of our existence; to "live with the unexpected, in a State of uncertainty" in the global system of socioeconomic relations that has dominated the last several decades. That fear has also spread to the place where we used to feel most secure, the cultural sphere. Art and cultural institutions have proved to be reactionary; they hide behind the digital curtain, avoiding the task of producing new experiments and imaginaries, dependencies, ways of working, modes of survival, networks and, above all, the symmetrical and responsible ethics that we need not only among humans, but also with non-humans.

This virus—like climate change or the earthquakes that we know better than COVID-19 here in Mexico—reveals itself to be an agent with an overwhelming capacity to alter the order of life, to restructure our physical existence, and the ways that we recognize, identify, and relate to ourselves and to each other; that is, how we produce new cultural

⁶ <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/antonello-da-messina-saint-jerome-in-his-study>

⁷ <https://mnsancarlos.inba.gob.mx/objetos?obj=4170>

strategies. Our cultural institutions, on the other hand, definitely do not.

Heritage Values Interest Group

HVIG is concerned with how the past is valued in, and by, contemporary society. A principal objective is to advance understanding regarding the complex concept of heritage and its burgeoning and significant role in the current discipline and practice of archaeology. As such, it endeavors to provide an open forum for exchange and dialogue that acknowledges the multiplicity of the past in contemporaneous representations of material cultures and landscapes. The group seeks to provide an environment for SAA members to explore the ways in which heritage is constructed and construed and to what extent that composition coheres with or contradicts value systems ingrained in diverse discourses, such as national paradigms, international standards, codes of ethics, management schemes, collective memory, and shared or dissonant identities. It explores the multifaceted meanings of the past, probes the ensuing derivation and ascription of value, and embraces international and interdisciplinary lines of inquiry.

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