Session One
Thursday, July 20, 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

PRESENTERS

Dayna Rajha, University of New Mexico – Anthropology

*Objects of Transnational Identities: Perspectives on Ethnographic Collections of the Near East*

By exploring the archival material and ethnographic collection of the Near East, I examine object characteristics, cultural classifications, diplomatic donor activity, and their relationship to orientalism, population diversity, and the emergence of the nation-state. I use the blurred cultural boundaries of two geographic areas as case studies to build a base of comparative knowledge: The Levant and India/Pakistan. I reflect on both the positive dimensions of the collection and its representational limitations. Finally, I discuss avenues of further research and possible theoretical considerations.

Michaela Shifley, University of Montana Missoula – Anthropology

*Tracing the Footsteps of Ancestors: An Examination of the Historical and Social Economics of Blackfoot Moccasin Construction*

Moccasins as footwear were a staple item of clothing for the indigenous peoples of the western North American Plains for thousands of years. Historically, the Niitsitapii, or Blackfoot, whose traditional cultural territory spans northern Montana and southern Canada, participated in this ‘moccasin economy,’ first as makers and users and later as sellers. Drawing on data collected from object-centered analysis, as well as museum records and archival materials, the picture that emerges of the social
economics behind moccasin construction raises a number of questions. For what purposes were moccasins made, and how can we tell? What factors influenced moccasin circulation within Blackfoot communities? What can moccasin materials, such as beads, thread, and hide, tell us about the Blackfoot economy? By combining data from moccasins in museum collections and later work with Blackfoot descendant communities, I hope to explore this topic in greater depth.

Jessica Bittner, College of William and Mary – Anthropology

**Gender and Cosmology in Eastern Cherokee Basketry**

Weaving metaphors and basket imagery abound in Cherokee oral traditions, poetry, and literature, and are often used to express feminized relationships with the sacred. Variably deployed as sacred symbols, commodities, or items of quotidian use, baskets can also be viewed as material arenas in which Cherokee artists negotiated status, reaffirmed connections to family, community, and landscape, and encoded worldview through aesthetic design. Drawing on the Eastern Cherokee baskets in the NMNH Anthropology Collections, I trace the symbolic and mythic connections between men, women, baskets and cosmology, and consider wear marks and leavings within baskets as proxies of past economic and subsistence practices. By comparing these perspectives, I explore ways in which ontological conceptions of gender align or contrast with daily life on the Qualla Boundary during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

**DISCUSSANTS**

Amy Stambach (University of Wisconsin, Madison)
Jason Jackson (Indiana University, Mathers Museum of World Cultures)

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**Session Two**

*Thursday, July 20, 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.*

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**PRESENTERS**

2017 SIMA Faculty Fellow Presentations

Dr. Amy Stambach, Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professor, University of Wisconsin, Department of Anthropology

Dr. Andrew Bickford, Associate Professor, George Mason University, Department of Anthropology

Dr. Arianna Huhn, Assistant Professor, California State University San Bernardino, Department of Anthropology
**PRESENTERS**

**EMILY LEISCHNER, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA – ANTHROPOLOGY**

**BETWEEN THE WARP: A CLOSE-LOOKING STUDY OF TUMPLINES ON THE NORTHWEST COAST**

The National Museum of Natural History houses nearly thirty tumplines from the Northwest Coast. These intricately woven and colorful bands of fabric have been used as carrying straps attached to baskets or bundles and slung across the body or forehead. Historically, tumplines have evaded research interest, reflecting in part a bias in how Northwest Coast collections have developed. Through close-looking, material analysis, and collecting records, I examine elements of consistency and diversity present in making techniques, materials, and design of these tumplines. By unpacking the connections to land and makers embedded in these objects, I hope to better understand why they have evaded museum interest.

**NINA SANDERS, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY – AMERICAN STUDIES, ANTHROPOLOGY**

**CONTINUITY AND TRANSFORMATION: ARTISTIC AGENCY AND THE APSÁALOOKE BEADWORKER**

Historically, the Apsáalooke (Crow) people of south central Montana created various alliances with many neighboring communities and individuals for the purposes of trade, and marriage, effectively influencing Apsáalooke beadwork design and production over time. By examining collections records and object materials to see how beadwork design elements changed over time, what remained continuous, and what was shared between communities, I hope to situate beadwork objects within a place in time, and to view them as “events” which initiated contact between the communities, individuals, oral histories, and belief systems of the Crow that highlight the continuity and power of artistic agency of Apsáalooke women.

**DANIEL SMITH, UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA MISSOULA – ANTHROPOLOGY**

**FASCINATION WITH THE MINIATURE: CHANGES IN JAPANESE NETSUKE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF WESTERN TRADING AND TOURISM**

Netsuke, first crafted in Edo period Japan, changed in form and function amidst the introduction of Western trading and tourism in the mid-nineteenth century. Nearly a century and a half later, the commodification and allure of the miniature sculptures persists throughout social interest groups across the world. Drawing upon historical narratives, materiality, collector-collection relations, and human fascinations of the
"miniature," I explore Japanese netsuke for insight into human-object relationships as well as a contemporary craft movement deeply rooted in historical, economical, and socio-cultural dimensions.

DISCUSSANTS
ARIANNA HUHN (CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SAN BERNARDINO)
JASON JACKSON (INDIANA UNIVERSITY, MATHERS MUSEUM OF WORLD CULTURES)

Session Four
Friday, July 21, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

PRESENTERS

ALLISON ADLER, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA – ANTHROPOLOGY

TRACING THE TRAILS OF A COLLECTION OF TARAHUARAMA OBJECTS

The Eugene Boudreau collection contains over 1,000 objects from the Northern Mexican states of Chihuahua and Sinaloa collected from the 1960s-1980s. The majority of these objects belong to the Tarahumara (Raramuri), who inhabit some of the most remote areas of the Sierra Madre. While the objects in this collection embody the knowledge and traditions of the Tarahumara, they are also living records of the pathways that led to their collection and the pathways through which they circulated after they passed into the collector’s hands. These “trails” are registered on the surfaces of the objects and archival documents, and can be traced through the flow of photographs and illustrations that extend the physical objects. Both the objects and their extensions speak to how this collection and its originating culture became part of a narrative in which the Tarahumara are cast as isolated, pre-industrial stock characters in the adventures of travelers to the Sierra Madre. At the same time, the objects in this collection disrupt notions of the Tarahumara as remnants of an isolated, pre-industrial way of life, a condition that complicates the collector’s rendering of the Tarahumara and provides a platform for further inquiry.

JOSH BICKFORD, KENT STATE UNIVERSITY – ANTHROPOLOGY

THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE MCGHEE COLLECTION

Former US ambassador to both West Germany and Turkey, and a former director of Mobil Oil, George McGhee stood at the center of an expansive network of agents, ranging from art dealers, galleries, and Mobil Oil employees. Acquired during the 1970s, McGhee’s Melanaesian collection comprises a wide variety of objects, ranging from small, seemingly innocuous carvings to large architectural components from the
Sepik River. Viewing these objects in the context of the larger network of relations, and tracing these relations through intermediaries and back to source communities, I hope to better understand the ethnological context of this collection and to place it within the wider context of the so-called “primitive” art trade of Melanesian artifacts.

Amanda Sorensen, University of British Columbia – Anthropology

Early Reservation Representation: Eli W. J. Lindesmith and Cheyenne Material Culture

During his time as a U.S. Army chaplain from 1880-1891, Eli W. J. Lindesmith collected Cheyenne materials from U.S. Army Scouts and other Army officials. A survey of the Cheyenne material collected by Lindesmith reveals a broader social network of access and exchange. One object in particular that illustrates access and exchange within this network is a cradle which Lindesmith commissioned from the wife of a Cheyenne U.S. Army Scout named Wolf Voice. The cradle is representative of both exchange and access and reflects the network of relationships among the U.S. Army scouts and their families. This and other Cheyenne objects acquired at Fort Keogh, Montana provide a unique view into the history of ethnographic collecting and representation in museum practice during the late nineteenth century.

Kevin McDonald, University of Maryland College Park – Anthropology

“All Who Have Good Dreams Can Eat Pine Nuts”: Southern Paiute Ethnobotanical Specimens in the John Wesley Powell Collection

In the 1860s and 1870s, John Wesley Powell, the then-future head of the Bureau of American Ethnology, made numerous trips to the Colorado Plateau and Great Basin regions of the United States. While traveling, Powell engaged in a wide range of activities, including mapping, geological surveys, ethnography, collecting, and more. Botanical samples taken among the Southern Paiute provide important clues to Powell’s collecting strategies and itineraries, as well as the ethnobotany of the Southern Paiute during a period of regional ecological disturbance due to increased presence of Euro-American settlers, travelers, and other factors. The samples represent both an extant material record of Powell’s collecting practices and philosophies and a complicated record of Southern Paiute subsistence at this time. Finally, the question of these samples as material culture will be taken up – what do several-dozen bags of seeds mean in a museum context? What frameworks most effectively evoke the meaning(s) of these objects?

Discussants

Mary Jo Arnoldi (National Museum of Natural History)
Andrew Bickford (George Mason University)