CONDUCTING ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH IN THE ARCHIVES:
MAPPING THE ACTIVIST AND ARTISTIC SUBJECTIVITIES OF FRANK LAPENA

A Thesis

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Valerie Marie Garcia

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Department of Anthropology
Abstract

of

CONDUCTING ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH IN THE ARCHIVES:

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Archives are critical sites for investigating intersections in contested history, for mapping the social and material landscape upon which humans engage with one another—violently, unsteadily, compassionately, creatively—and for expanding the depth of our understanding of human nature in cultural context. Personal archive collections provide a partial but focused interpretation of this history—our history—through the eyes, heart, and mind of someone who was there, struggling with it, documenting the gains, the losses, the uncertainties, the firmly entrenched obstacles in the road and the creativity with which people transcend them everyday. The personal collection of Native artist and activist Frank R. LaPena (Wintu-Nomtipom), held by the Special Collections and University Archives, California State University, Sacramento, is a particularly powerful site for loosening the grip of oppressive forces and revealing the varied dimensions of human existence and experience that have been silenced for centuries.

Based on my ethnographic research on LaPena’s collection, I highlight the ways that art and action can reshape history and make it more whole, more consistent, and more “truthful.” The broad scope of LaPena’s life and the wealth and breadth of materials he bequeathed—which include personal and professional correspondence, artwork, photographs, manuscripts, project files, and newspaper clippings—make this collection a particularly evocative and relevant site for
anthropological investigation, one that has the power to bring to light the actions of those individuals who make it their responsibility to reconcile the social inequities that humans create and reaffirm everyday.

_______________________, Committee Chair
Terri A. Castaneda, Ph.D.

______________
Date
DEDICATION

For Frank LaPena, and all the artists and activists who light up their rightful time.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

People live their lives inwardly as much as they do outwardly. Archival records and documents provide a window into both aspects of subjectivity. They thus provide a landscape for mapping the inner dimensions of a person’s reality, the cognitive and material organization of that person’s life, as well as the outer, public dimensions. Archives are “alive” with the ideas, thoughts, actions, and feelings of those individuals written into them. Archived collections of personal papers are especially vibrant sites for ethnographic study because they represent the social, cultural, political and historical world as filtered through the lens of a singular subjectivity (Bellardo and Bellardo 1992). It is the reading of a person reading the world, working their way through the intricacies, complexities, and contradictions and creating some thing—a human life—in the process. This thesis, based on the Frank R. LaPena Papers located in the Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA)\(^1\) at California State University, Sacramento, speaks to the process of reading and telling the lives produced by and inscribed in archival records. I seek to do this in a way that is respectful, truthful, and mindful of the many subjectivities involved in archival research. Thus, I approach the archives and archival ethnography as a form of storytelling, as the construction of a “lettered” life from which we can develop a more informed and more nuanced understanding of history as it is lived and reinterpreted by a human being (Stoler 2009).

\(^1\) The primary mission of the Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento, is to “support teaching, learning and research” and “identify, preserve, and make available for use the records of California State University, Sacramento deemed to be of enduring historical value” (Department of Special Collections and University Archives 2007a). SCUA holds a number of special collections including the records of the main administrative offices as well as records drawn from academic departments and campus programs. In addition, the Archives houses faculty papers and faculty publications, published and unpublished, to “provide insights into teaching and learning and the role of faculty in the broad university community” and document their achievements and creative endeavors in and out of the University (Department of Special Collections and University Archives 2007b).
Frank LaPena’s personal archive presents an especially vibrant site for studying the intersubjective nature of archives because of the artistic and activist projects to which Frank LaPena has dedicated his time and talents, most of which center around Native American identity, expression, sovereignty and self-representation. However, the influence and resonance of these projects reach far beyond any clean and clear boundary of “Indian knowledge,” “Indian art” or “Indian understanding.” Through his archive, LaPena articulates the inviolate connection between people and things, and shows that any discussion of Native Americans that does not allow for concurrent discussions of the United States as a settler state, the West, indigeneity, and (post)colonialism is untenable, especially within the space of the archive.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The broad scope of Frank LaPena’s life and the breadth of materials he has personally deposited—which include personal and professional correspondence, artwork, photographs, transcripts, published work, and newspaper clippings, to name a few—make this collection a particularly evocative and relevant site for anthropological investigation. The substance of LaPena’s collection reflects the many roles he inhabits, especially those of artist and activist, and brings to life to the complexities of identity and subjectivity as they intersect and interact with larger social, political and cultural processes.

This archive is revealing not just for the context LaPena brings to a particular historical moment and memory, but also for the emotional depth of his work and his commitment to inspiring a deeper understanding of the world, which is found in the thousands of documents and materials he collected. As a whole, the collection comprises the thoughts, emotions, feelings, artistic and spiritual philosophies, scholarly interests, strategic responses, and character of a person. But no person is an island; as LaPena would say, we are all connected as we are all
This collection is a reflection of LaPena’s connections, or connectedness, to the many people, institutions, organizations, movements and ideas he has been involved with and dedicated his life to supporting. The archival materials act as remnants of those connections, as proof of the connectedness of life, of a particular life; they may be but a sliver of a person’s history and heritage, but for the very fact that they were collected, stored and passed on, they retain meaning, they retain life. It is for this reason that the personal papers of Frank LaPena provide fertile ground for a systematic and poetic study of his life history.

Archives are particularly ripe for ethnographic fieldwork because the archives not only represent a state power or apparatus, but in cases where a special collection is given to an institution by a key figure, like Frank LaPena, they represent an active—agential—engagement with and resistance against such institutionalized powers of “official” authority (Ortner 2006). In addition, the fact that Frank LaPena is living and continues to give materials from his personal archives to SCUA, and has an established relationship with the University and Archives, presents a situation that is at once more complicated and more fruitful in its potential to offer a portrait of an individual, a living individual, and the myriad physical and spiritual dimensions in which he has mapped his existence in this world. Such a narrative must be mindful always of the life inscribed in these documents and of the potential effects it may have on the person and all that he/she has come to represent to the world.

Elaboration of the Problem

Archival records are not “dead” things relegated to the some dark corner of the archive—

they are living objects with memories and tales to tell. If this is so, then, in the case of the Frank R. LaPena Papers, who are the people imbued and inscribed in all of this material, these objects,

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2 Fog Road and East Path Rising, 1976, in Western Psychological Association Annual Conference folder, Public Activities Series, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
documents, and records? What do these objects mean, what could someone do with this material and information, and what stories, what human stories, is this collection trying to tell? What happens when we focus on the ‘social life of things,’ of objects, whether those objects are letters, paintings, a transcript of a speech, or an invoice for a piece of artwork (Appadurai 1986; Henare 2005)? Taken together, these things compose the life of a person and all the intimate and not so intimate relationships that connect this person to other persons, and to institutions and movements, be they political, social, academic, or spiritual. In addition, archives as cultural institutions and producers of knowledge have their own stories to tell.

Frank LaPena and His Collection

Frank Raymond LaPena was born in 1937, in San Francisco, California. His mother was a member of the Wintu-Nomtipom nation and his father was of Asian descent. LaPena’s father died when LaPena was five years old. Soon after, LaPena was sent to live at a federal Indian boarding school, first to the Stewart Indian School in Carson City, Nevada, and then to Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon. While in the eighth grade, he was put in foster care where he was able to enter the public school system for the first time. LaPena’s mother died in 1957, but he did not learn this until he was able to reconnect with his relatives many years later. It was later in life, as an adult, that LaPena began to learn more about his Wintu-Nomtipom heritage and his family, the Towendolly’s, and to participate in traditional dance-related activities (LaPena 2004:2-3). After high school, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from California State University, Chico, a teaching credential at San Francisco State, and a Master of Arts degree in anthropology at Sacramento State. He is a Professor Emeritus of Art and Ethnic Studies and was Director of Native American Studies at Sacramento State, from 1975-2002. LaPena started teaching professionally in 1969. He is an accomplished artist who has exhibited in museums and
galleries throughout the United States and Europe, as well as New Zealand, Mexico, Cuba, Canada, and South America. He identifies as a Wintu-Nomtipom American Indian and continues to live in the Sacramento area. He is a tireless educator of Native American culture, a poet and an activist for Native American and human rights. He is also the Dance Captain and a founding member of the Maidu Dancers and Traditionalists, a Native group dedicated to the revival and preservation of the ceremonial traditions of his own, and other Northern California Indian communities. These are just a few of the roles that Frank LaPena has inhabited in his professional career and personal life.

In 2001, SCUA began receiving accessions from LaPena, starting with 35 record storage cartons from his garage. Currently, his collection consists of more than 79 linear feet of material comprising over 70 record cartons, including oversize material such as posters and vinyl records. The collection includes subject files on topics concerning Native Americans, including institutions, people, programs, laws, and events. In addition, files relating to his time teaching and participating in campus programs at Sacramento State University since the late 1960s are part of the collection. This includes records documenting LaPena’s involvement with various public/community projects, organizations, and activities, among them the California Commemorative Seals Advisory Committee, California State Capitol Commission, the California Indian Days Art Show, American Indian Historical Society, California Native American Heritage Commission, California Arts Council, Deganawidah-Quetzalcoatl University, Native American Heritage Commission, and the California Indian Education Association. A significant portion of the collection deals with LaPena’s artistic work and philosophy, his participation in museum and art gallery exhibitions, and his scholarly contributions to the art world and art criticism, especially as it concerns contemporary Native American art. Some of the materials included are: professional correspondence and personal letters; committee reports and notes; exhibition
catalogues, cards and programs; art work; posters; photographs; manuscripts with marginalia; books, magazines, journals, newspapers, news clippings; and artifacts.\textsuperscript{3}

\textbf{METHODOLOGY} \\

This thesis is an extension of an internship in the Department of Special Collections, Library, California State University, Sacramento, undertaken during the spring, summer, and fall terms of 2013. This work involved engaging in the initial stages of what archivists refers to as “processing” the Frank LaPena Collection.\textsuperscript{4} I created a survey of the materials comprising the collection, organized them according to subject matter and overarching “themes” or “series,” and physically arranged the series into chronological and/or alphabetical order. These tasks allowed me to gain an in-depth, comprehensive knowledge of the nature and content of the collection. I began my ethnographic analysis of the collection in September 2013, first creating a timeline of California and American Indian activism along which to plot LaPena’s life in “major” and “minor keys” (Stoler 2009). Over the course of the following year, I sought to draw out the markers of subjectivity inscribed in the Collection.

Although the Collection at present consists of 70 record cartons of documents and records, I focused my research on the core of the Collection, the first 35 record cartons bestowed by Frank LaPena, which include the subject files he kept during his time as a professor and director of Native American Studies at Sacramento State. I chose to concentrate on this first accession because it marks the moment when this individual, Frank LaPena, created his own archive with the intention of having it accessible to the public—to students, researchers, faculty,

\textsuperscript{3} The collection is not currently available to the public for research and is still in the beginning stages of processing. For more information on access to the Frank R. LaPena collection or for a preliminary finding aid, contact the Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

\textsuperscript{4} “Processing” is the formal terminology assigned to the task of arranging and describing the papers of an individual, family, or the records of an organization held in an archive (Roe 2005).
staff, anyone who might be interested in his life and work. Unlike the later acquisitions to the Collection, the original order of these cartons is more logically and physically apparent. The first ten boxes were organized by LaPena alphabetically according to subject, and the remaining 25 boxes were organized by LaPena according to theme, sometimes with the assistance of Sheila K. O’Neill, Head of Special Collections and University Archives. These 35 boxes consist of over 7 thousand items; each item was documented and recorded in an electronic file during the initial stages of processing. This dataset forms the foundation of my ethnographic analysis. Through a careful reading and rereading of the archival documents in the collection, I developed a familiarity with the material, a deep familiarity that allowed me to identify broad themes from which to organize my data into a cohesive and comprehensive narrative. My goal was to reach a common understanding between myself and LaPena, to find a space that we could share and where I could challenge my own preconceptions and prior understandings of his world, my world, and the space in which both worlds meet—the archive.

*The Archives on Display: Exhibit Design as Preliminary Analysis*

I had the opportunity to engage in some preliminary analysis of the Collection in the fall of 2013, when I curated an exhibit based on Frank LaPena’s papers for SCUA’s front lobby and reading room area. Working on the exhibit alerted me to the difficulties and constraints of taking a large set of what is often “messy” data and turning it into something manageable and meaningful for all interested parties. Coming up with an exhibit design proved to be both a real joy and an education. It was also a real challenge, mainly because there is just so much material in the collection, a lot of it visually captivating as well as intellectually-stimulating. The difficulty then became, how do we slim down this vast collection significantly and still create an appropriate and representative sample of the Collection and LaPena’s life? I worked closely with
Sheila O’Neill to decide what the main themes of the exhibit should be—we both agreed that these themes should correspond to those found in LaPena’s Collection, in the intellectual and physical organization of his personal papers. The process was one of revealing the cultural models upon which the collection was built by following LaPena’s lead and paying close attention to his words and his original arrangement of his archives.

We aimed to inform the public not only about LaPena’s work at the university and as an artist, activist, and a traditionalist, but to also map the larger social, cultural, and political environment in which he and his collection are situated. The goal was to envelope the viewer in this story—into the narrative—that was embodied by the collection itself; to bring the viewer into LaPena’s world with the hope that the viewer, as an active participant, would find something in it that they could relate to, connect with, and that would, hopefully, expand their view of the world in some meaningful way. To achieve this goal, four overarching themes for the exhibit were developed that provided a solid representation of the collection in general and of what it has to offer researchers, Native communities, and the general public.

The first theme centered on the biographical elements of the collection; those materials that pertain to LaPena’s personal story; from his time spent in Indian boarding schools and foster care as a child, away from family and his home, to his eventual journey back to Northern California, his home, where he was able reestablish a connection with his family, the land, and his Wintu culture, while also attaining a higher education and finding ways to work within “dominant” institutions with the purpose of bringing to light the history, diversity, and continuity of Native culture. This leads into the exhibit’s second theme, which focused on the importance of LaPena’s elders to his traditional education. We mapped his journey from being a pupil to becoming an elder himself, and continuing that tradition of passing on this knowledge to the next generation of culture bearers. The third theme focused on depicting the broader social and
political environment in which LaPena started his career as a professional Native artist and educator, in particular, the era of the Red Power Movement that was gaining momentum during the sixties and the seventies, when the Civil Rights Movement and social activism were at an apex in American society.

These three themes lead into the fourth and final theme, which focused on LaPena’s long career as an exhibited artist. His artwork has been widely exhibited locally, nationally, and internationally, but in order to present a small and significant sampling of his extensive career as an artist, it was decided to focus on two international exhibitions in which LaPena participated that were especially important to him: “El Auténtico Pueblo,” or The Real People, which showed in Havana, Cuba, in 1979, and “Ceremonial,” which showed at the 1999 Venice Biennale. Both were highly publicized group exhibitions that focused on bringing contemporary Native art to the foreground in a way that did not disregard or decontextualize Native history and tradition or cultural continuity. And this has been the overarching theme in LaPena’s artistic career as in every dimension of his public life. It is this thread that tethers the collection together to create a whole, and it is this thread that I use in my ethnographic work to tie all the loose endings together into a narrative that corresponds to LaPena’s personal, professional, and cultural story and to the larger story of Native American culture, tradition, and history. The themes of this thesis expound upon those visualized for the exhibit. The exhibit provided a starting point from which to write a multidimensional interpretation of this archival material that should be valuable to different social groups, Native and non-Native, academic and traditional.

*Ethnographic Encounters*

I came to know Frank LaPena and his work only two months before I started working with his personal papers. Originally from southern California, I had moved to Sacramento the
previous year to work on my master’s degree at Sacramento State. My thesis advisor, Dr. Terri Castaneda, invited me to an event at the Maidu Museum in Roseville, California, to hear LaPena speak about his relationship and experiences with Maidu artist and storyteller Frank Day. My first impression of LaPena was that he was…interesting. Not quite sure what to think of him at first, I felt a bit intimidated and remember being too shy and scared to even make eye contact with him—he was an enigma. Another graduate student from Sacramento State happened to be at the event that night as well—Sigrid Benson, a student in the Public History program. Sigrid had been working on processing LaPena’s Collection at the University Archives for some time, but was still in the early stages of her work, a significant component of which entailed working with LaPena to update his curriculum vitae. Sigrid agreed to give me, Dr. Castaneda, and another graduate student a tour of LaPena’s Collection at SCUA. This is where I met Sheila, the Head of the SCUA, who would later guide me through the process of engaging with archival collections and documents and act as my supervisor as I began to process the collection to make it accessible to researchers.

I remember first stepping into the hallowed space of the archives: it was quiet, serene, clean, and filled with massive amounts of objects, stacks of books, posters, documents just waiting to be peered through. Being an avid reader and self-described “pack rat,” I felt instantly at home among all these objects. Sigrid and Sheila had laid out some materials from LaPena’s Collection for us to look at; this included artwork, beautiful glossy black and white photographs, correspondence between him and the anthropologist Cora DuBois as well as Leonard Peltier, the Native American activist. I was just amazed by how much stuff there was. Dozens of boxes of materials, including documents, letters, magazines, newspaper clippings, art by LaPena and by other artists, museum reports and exhibitions programs and cards, birthday and holiday cards, recordings of lectures and performances, photographs and art slides. All of it was to be sorted and
organized and documented for research access. I kept looking at this treasure trove and thinking, “What does all this stuff mean? Why would a person give all of this—some of it very personal and private—to an institution, even one to which he has a professional and personal connection?”

I kept trying to match up this man I had seen speak at the Maidu Museum with the individual that was imbued and inscribed in all of this material, these objects, documents, and records. I thought, “Well, what do these objects mean; what could someone do with this material and information; what human story is this collection trying to tell?” And then I started thinking, “What could I do with this material?” After all, I was in need of a thesis topic, one that suited my passion for social justice as well as my literary, artistic bent. Professor Castaneda must have read my mind, for she suggested to Sheila that I intern at SCUA and work on the collection myself as a possible subject for my thesis. And so I did. And as I began to get acquainted with the breadth and depth of the collection, I thought to myself, “What did I get myself into?” But the more I combed through LaPena’s files, the more I realized just how much they were speaking to me. I started to see that these records were not “dead” things. Rather they were alive and they had a story to tell. This is what I wanted to focus on: the life of things, of objects. In the same way that these objects were speaking to me, so was the archive itself. Archives as cultural institutions have their own histories, philosophies, sensibilities, sense of time and space, and sense of feeling.

Materiality and Virtuality

My approach to conducting ethnographic fieldwork in the archives was not unlike that of all anthropologists attempting to gain access to another time, place, and way of life—I made it my goal to immerse myself in the world I had chosen as my field of study. In his ethnography Coming of Age in Second Life, Tom Boellstorff (2010) reveals the advantages that studying a virtual world like Second Life can afford us as scholars. In particular, studying virtual worlds can
reveal to us how we have always “in a sense” lived our lives virtually; that is, we have the ability to imagine whole worlds informed by the physical but also transcendent and transformative of it. These imagined and constructed virtual worlds are just as relevant and important as our “real” worlds.

Virtual worlds and the physical, “real” world do not exist on separate planes of reality or consciousness. Virtuality and reality are reflexively dependent on each other; or to be more precise, our humanity and our understanding of ourselves as humans and as individuals depends both on a sense of ourselves as virtual humans and as real or physical humans. Boellstorff argues that this virtuality seems more apparent when engaging in ethnographic fieldwork in a virtual world than it does among flesh-and-blood people. However, virtuality is experienced and can be observed in any place or space in which anthropologists chose to conduct ethnography; we need only look a bit closer or from a different vantage point to see it. Like virtual worlds, archives are especially powerful sites for conducting ethnographic research on human virtuality.

Much scholarship has been written about the materiality of ‘things’ (Bourdieu 1970, 1977; Foucault 2002, 2010; Gell 1998; Latour 1999; Miller 1987, 2005) and ‘the archive’ (Buckley 2005; Derrida 1995; Dirks 2002; Farge 1989; Steedman 2002). Materiality is an important aspect of archival research; navigating an archive, searching the stacks, combing through files one item at a time, feeling the fragility and granularity of the documents between your fingertips, breathing in the dust and mold that have been accumulating for decades. But as much as archival work is based on the tangible, it is just as much a window into the virtual worlds documented by the archival documents and records under study. Archival collections give us access to the materiality of a person’s life; but by touching objects that our subjects have touched, feeling what they have felt with their own hands, we are transported to another reality; one that is tethered to the material we touch but which extends into the imaginary, interior, virtual worlds in
the minds of those who created those objects, and whose subjectivities were tied to those objects in some unique and compelling ways. As Arjun Appadurai (1986) and Amira Henare (2005) demonstrate, objects have the power to shrink the distance between people and places, between hearts and minds; they also have the power to reveal a more nuanced portrait of those who write the archives and those who produce the documents and objects in archival collections.

_A Life History_

My principal aim is to demonstrate how LaPena’s archive can be read as a life history with significance to California and Native American history, issues of self-determination and cultural continuity, and to the history of anthropology. As Sally McBeth (2002) states, “A life story is more than a recital of events. It is an organization of experience…life histories provide a context in which to reconsider anthropological methods and to question the rationale of ethnographic inquiry” (xi). I collected data in the collection according to the significance it held to LaPena (as stated in published or unpublished works, letters, notes, etc.) and to wider socio-historical movements and events and based on their frequency within the collection. I then sorted this material chronologically and by subject or ‘theme,’ creating a map or storyline of the collection, which served as a template for the life history. Since the original order of the LaPena Collection is somewhat “scattered”—fragmented chronologically and by subject—there is no straightforward entry to theme. As Ann Laura Stoler (2009:9) explains, “Navigating the archives is to map the multiple imaginaries” that make one event or action significant at one moment and insignificant at another, and in order to reveal the archives’ underlying ‘story’ one must determine how the events, ideas, and actions they reflect matter, and “to whom, when, and why they [do] so.”
A core of 35 cartons of reference files serves as the foundation for the entire collection and provides a rubric for understanding, organizing and analyzing the rest of the papers. These references files and their subject headings served as the coordinates by which I sought to map LaPena’s life history, drawing meaningful connections between people, places, events, ideas, and sensibilities. However, as Stoler (2009:12) reminds us, subject headings of archival documents can “both conceal and reveal what they [contain] and what constitute[s] the political rationalities that [produce] them.” Thus, it is necessary to look beyond the “common sense” of the archives to seek a deeper comprehension of how the archival materials do or do not work as a whole, or as a cohesive life history.

I draw on the profuse published journal and news articles collected and preserved by LaPena, as well as on the unpublished manuscripts, speeches, lectures, letters, and notes to more fully discern the slippages in information and understanding between various individuals, communities, institutions and agents of power. This allows me to discern what Stoler (2009:19) refers to as “the pulse of the archive.” By emphasizing what Stoler (2009:22, 39) calls “archiving-as-process,” and treating the archival field as “storeyed” meant in the sense by Roland Barthes (1977:87)—that is, as both the “unfolding of a story” and “its construction in storeys”—we get a better representation of the ‘architecture’ of the collection, of its frame of understanding, its “epistemic formations.”

Arlette Farge, whom Stoler cites in regard to our natural tendency to think we “know” what we are reading when we first enter the archive, offers a caution which is worth including here at length:

When the archive…seems easily to give access to what one expects of it, the work is all the more demanding. One has to patiently give up one’s natural “sympathy” for it and consider it an adversary to fight, a piece of knowledge that isn’t to annex but disrupt. It is not simply a matter of undoing something whose meaning is too easy to find; to be able to know it, you have to unlearn and not think you know it from a first reading. [quoted in Stoler 2009:22]
A careful, intensive, and critical reading of the LaPena Collection with the acknowledgement of my own biases and those of the institutions of anthropology and “the archives” is necessary. Such a process will challenge the conventional historical narrative and elicit new modes of mapping the archival terrain, ones that highlight marginalized sources and unspoken (or unwritten) contexts. As Patricia Pierce Erikson (2002:66) states:

By decentering our knowledge-making institutions we are reimagining the sites where anthropological knowledge is produced, seeing Native American communities not as a frontier of discovery or somewhere “almost out of this world” but as new zones of contact in which Native American peoples choose to initiate or participate in dialogues that create knowledge about them.

My goal is to demonstrate the humanistic, interpretive, social, and academic value of conducting ethnographic fieldwork in the archives by revealing the life history embedded within Frank LaPena’s Collection in a way that ‘decenters’ western systems of knowledge and creates a ‘new zone of contact’ with Native American peoples, knowledge, and history (Clifford 1997; Pratt 1991).

*A “Useful” Approach*

In this thesis I show the ways in which Frank LaPena’s Collection instantiates and comments not simply upon LaPena’s own lived experience, but also upon larger social and political movements, particularly those involving the Native American and Civil Rights Movement, Indian education development, the expression and preservation of traditional Indian heritage, the lingering effects of colonialism and projects of decolonization, and the representation of Native American contemporary art. Going into the field, I anticipated that my research and analysis would present an example of the different forms and media in which life histories can be expressed, and provide a social context and an individual, unique perspective on crucial moments in modern history, especially in the Northern California region, where LaPena’s
work as an Art, Ethnic Studies and Native American Studies Professor, a member of the Maidu Dancers and Traditionalists, a community member of the Wintu-Nomtipom, and a Native American artist, scholar and lecturer has contributed much to the continuity of traditional culture, to the improvement of Native American quality of life, and to the respectful and lawful recognition of Native American ways of being and thinking in modern society. Thus my ultimate intention and methodological approach is to make this work “useful instead of repetitive,” as Devon A. Mihesuah (2003:325) implores all indigenous and non-indigenous writers and scholars of Native studies to do in their work—useful to the histories, cultures and peoples they write about. If writers fail in this regard or refuse to acknowledge the prejudices inherent in their disciplines, then colonial power structures will be sustained and the status quo will never be adequately challenged (Smith 1999). I propose to engage in a project of challenging the status quo by showing the many ways Frank LaPena challenges the colonial systems of oppression, within and beyond the U.S. settler state, that have impacted and restricted his life, the lives of his peoples, and of Native Americans in the postcolonial world.

LaPena’s life history is useful to others, Native and non-Native alike, because it teaches us how to protest—how to participate in activist projects, how to negotiate terms of self-representation and power, how to be respectful of ‘others’ of all kinds and to open our minds to new systems of thought and action. In other words, LaPena’s life teaches us how and why not to give in to apathy, ignorance, and indifference as it concerns issues of racism, discrimination, representation, and colonization. His life is also an example of the difficulties indigenous activists face when engaging in such projects and activities, and the voluminous amount of resources, time, money, and number of people it takes to create and maintain social change. A wealth of data is found in LaPena’s collection, data that reflects these areas of his involvement with Native American communities in California, as well as data mapping the larger social, political, and
historical processes that connect to local movements and interpretations. These findings will help to develop a more human and humane portrait of Native American life in modern society, one that does not ignore the continuing effects and enduring institutions of colonization, and that does not marginalize the many voices that have spoken against the apparatuses of power and oppression.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

In the analysis that follows I focus on three spheres of life and realms of subjectivity that animate LaPena’s archive collection. Each of these intersects with the others, but for the purposes of this work I foreground their distinction. In Chapter Three, I focus on the realm of indigenous social activism as it has developed during the last fifty years. Through the voice and the archive of LaPena, I offer a unique and multisited view of indigenous engagements with concepts of identity, politics, and power. Indigenous identity is diverse and always shifting as indigenous peoples find new ways to articulate their cultural, political, and economic survival. LaPena documents these shifts as he works within and against structures of settler colonialism. Chapter Four expands on LaPena’s activism by focusing on his engagement in Native American revitalization movements in both academic and traditional forums. The “heritage work” LaPena performs underlines his subjectivities as both an educator in the academy and a traditionalist and Elder in the Native community. In Chapter Five, I explore the realm of contemporary Native American art as LaPena navigates his way through Western conceptions of art and Native expression and helps to redefine and reimagine Native representation and identity in the arts. LaPena’s long and successful career as an artist, art critic, educator, and curator allows for a rich and varied understanding of the ways Native Americans negotiate the terms of their representation and authority with state institutions such as museums, arts agencies, and
government bureaus. The final chapter provides a reflection on the power of archives to tell both particular and general stories of indigenous survival. I look ahead toward other potential sites of archival life histories that complement LaPena’s life story, and I offer a guide for exploring the possible futures of articulating indigeneity in the archives.

The following chapter provides a literary review of the anthropological methodology and theory that I use to root and route my discussion of archives, anthropology, life histories, and indigenous identity. As early sites of ethnographic fieldwork and technologies of colonialism, the archive is often perceived by ‘former’ colonized societies as a symbol and a mechanism of state control and oppression. But as this study of LaPena’s archive demonstrates, they also offer a space for engaging with alternative histories of indigeneity, anthropology, and colonialism—through his documents and the words and actions they imbue we are presented with a grounded understanding of how indigenous identity is imagined, interpelled, rearticulated, and performed in the postcolonial world.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

As sites of cultural production, archives tend to magnify the binary relationship between those who share a particular worldview and those do not. However, because issues of power and identity are so salient within this space, we as anthropologists can use them as an opportunity to critically reflect on how discourses of indigeneity conflict, contest, and reinforce regimes of power, and the ways our own biases, beliefs and practices reinforce discourses of domination. Archives, thus, present sites in which anthropologists can intervene in issues regarding Native identity and apply their skills to effect social change that extends beyond their disciplinary walls. At the same time, the archives of indigenous subjects provide access to the shifting, integrated subjectivities of colonial and postcolonial subjects, revealing the ways in which they work within and beyond colonial structures—including the archives—to articulate their own agency.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOGRAPHY IN AND OUT OF THE ARCHIVES

The Frank LaPena Papers can be viewed as an expression of this type of subjugated knowledge; as the attempt of a person to reveal or subvert the inherent power of cultural institutions (such as archives) through the donation of materials that resist and contest such hegemonic, colonialist structures of power and knowledge. LaPena, as creator of “the collection,” can be viewed as a powerful agent who accumulated and organized his personal archives. He is reading ‘against the archival grain,’ in that his collection includes all the “extraneous” material noticeably missing or marginalized in conventional archives. Thus, it is necessary to read along the archival grain when analyzing LaPena’s collection to get a feel for what Stoler (2009) refers
to as the “sensibilities of the everyday” as they are interpreted, negotiated, and realized by him and those who share his social reality.

*Anthropology, Colonialism, and The Archives*

In order to properly reflect on the ways LaPena’s archive, as well as LaPena himself, work against the archival grain of the colonialism from an anthropological vantage point, we must first undertake an exploration into the foundations of anthropology, its complicated relationship to colonialism, and the study of colonial archives in anthropology as both an elucidation of the hidden narratives and suppressed subjectivities involved in the construction of “the colony” and as a critique of the history of anthropology (Pels and Salenink 1994, 1999). Peter Pels (1997) offers an extensive review of “the anthropology of colonialism,” revealing the “murky” territory that colonialism traced on the land and on the people who became circumscribed within the complexes of Western governmentality. Instead of reading colonialism and the structures of governmentality it naturalized as a condition of our historic past, Pels stresses the necessity of treating them as emergent and particular; this allows them to rewrite our histories (including those of anthropology, colonialism, history, and culture) of the present (1997:163). Anthropology’s identity as a discipline and a profession is often (re)defined according to its relationship with colonialism, evolving from one of complicity—as “handmaiden” of colonialism and projects of social “progress” and modernization—to one of opposition to neocolonial powers and support of indigenous struggles against such powers. It has only been in the last four decades that anthropology has reimagined colonialism as an ongoing process involving struggles and negotiations of power and resistance (Dirks 1992b; Stoler and Cooper 1997). But Pels asserts, “The anthropology of colonialism is also always an anthropology of anthropology, because in many methodological, organizational, and professional aspects the discipline retains the shape it
received when it emerged—if partly in opposition to—early twentieth century colonial circumstances” (1997:165). Thus to study colonialism is to study the context in which anthropology was born and from which it continues to derive its practical and theoretical parameters—the field of ethnography (Pels and Salemink 1999). Technologies of governmentality or state domination and control—including processes of identification, registration, and (self) discipline—that developed as a dialogue between the colonies and European states are at least partly based on ethnography (Cohn 1987, 1996; Pels 1997). Early anthropologists were tasked with negotiating the differences between ethnic, civilized, and savage identities in the colonial context—differences based upon universalist notions of “Us” versus “Them” but necessarily placed within particularistic struggles of rule (Pels 1997; Stoler and Cooper 1997).

As the practical process of decolonization began in mid-twentieth century, scholars began studying colonialism and those who had been colonized in earnest (Deloria Jr. 1969a; p’Bitek 1970). Talal Asad’s *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (1973) led to a profound consideration of the power-relations inherent in anthropological theory and methodology, especially in regard to research subjects. Asad forced anthropologists to critically reflect on the role of colonialism and power within the discipline, past and present, and to contemplate their individual roles within the larger postcolonial system. Asad’s critiques address problems that continue to haunt anthropology and unsettle the ground upon which anthropologists claim their professional identity and authority.

Recent literature suggests a more dynamic approach to studying colonialism, one that focuses on relationships between people, states, ideas, and practices, as well as the struggles of rule occurring in colonies as people contested and negotiated the conditions of empire. Both Michel Foucault’s (1980) emphasis on the relationship between knowledge and power in
sustaining conditions of domination and Bernard Cohn’s work on the “self-conscious” projects of collecting and organizing knowledge for empire (1980) deeply impacted the active study of colonialism in the late twentieth century. Cohn insisted on studying both the colonized and the colonial together within the same field of analysis, a call that was answered by, among others, Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper (1997), who emphasize the need to explore the “grammars of difference” that colonizers used to classify and surveil colonial subjects in their daily life, including the construction of categories of race, gender, and class that reinforced cultural differences and justified various forms of violence. In particular, Stoler and Cooper state the need to view the relationship between the metropolitan state and the colonial state as a dynamic one in which competing strategies and competing agendas for maintaining control created ambiguous and sometimes permeable boundaries of exclusion and inclusion. These destabilized the colonial encounter as “agents of empire” struggled with the definitions of empire in the colonial state, and colonial subjects found ways to resist or rearticulate the conditions of colonial rule (1997:6). Stoler and Cooper thus call for “post”-colonial study of colonialism that sees ambiguity, ambivalence, and subversion as part of colonial and postcolonial experience and strategizing—one that examines how the categories of colonization have been and continue to be redefined and reworked in the postcolonial context.

Archives, Sovereignty, and Materiality

A discussion of the anthropology of colonialism lays the groundwork for discussion of the archive as an effective tool of colonial statecraft, as well as a site of struggle. As a point of entry into this complicated and conflicted terrain of colonialism and technologies of Western govern mentality, colonial archives demonstrate that although Manichaean dichotomies of otherness prevailed, the colonies, far from being a “Manichaean world of high colonialism,” were
punctuated with “multiple layers of oppositional discourse and politics” (Stoler and Cooper 1997:8). Colonial archives document the everyday struggles over how these technologies are articulated on the ground by diverse social actors. If colonial archives have the ability to show the daily struggles of lives “out of sync” in the colonies, then what can an archive such as Frank LaPena’s reveal to us about the conditions, effects and affects of colonialism? The effects of colonialism still foster “lives out of sync” for indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in the postcolonial world, and ‘The Archive’ remains an active site for engaging in new and old projects of colonialism. However, by situating LaPena’s archive within the postcolonial context, we can view his archive as a resistance to the conditions of colonialism, as well as a re-articulation of colonialism and its categories of difference from an indigenous and postcolonial perspective. In the same way that colonial archives function as sites for exploring the construction and maintenance of modes of colonization, archives of indigenous persons such as Frank LaPena reify the need to recognize and critique the colonial contexts in which disciplines such as history and anthropology developed and the ways in which these disciplines continue to inform ideas and processes of indigeneity, difference, and culture.

The Power of the Archives

Archives are not the stable, authentic repositories of the past that they have traditionally been conceived as, but are instead shot through with political motivations, social and cultural processes of control and change, and divergent histories and contexts (Levy 1998). Much has been written about the inherent power within the archive as it is variously defined; the archive is an institution with a physical building, it is the materials and records that comprise it, it is the philosophies, methodologies and theoretical frameworks that inform its practice, and it is the lives that are inscribed in it (Foucault 2002, 2010; Harris 1996, 1997; Schwartz and Cook 2002).
Archives do something as well; they facilitate and “shape the direction of historical scholarship, collective memory, and national identity, over how we know ourselves as individuals, groups, and societies” (Schwartz and Cook 2002:2). Like museums, art galleries and other institutionalized producers of knowledge, archives are imbued with power from within and without:

Archives have always been about power, whether it is the power of the state, the church, the corporation, the family, the public, or the individual. Archives have the power to privilege and to marginalize. They can be a tool of hegemony; they can be a tool of resistance. They both reflect and constitute power relations. They are a product of society's need for information, and the abundance and circulation of documents reflects the importance placed on information in society. They are the basis for and validation of the stories we tell ourselves, the story-telling narratives that give cohesion and meaning to individuals, groups, and societies. [Schwartz and Cook 2002:13]

Those who use the archives as a site of research and consult archival records as a source of primary ethnographic data are implicated in the power dynamic as well; the way the archives are employed by scholars brings about postcolonial concerns over representation, identity, structures of power, subjectivity, otherness and colonialism—concerns which require explicit articulation by anthropologists, historians and other frequent users of the archives (Cook 2001; Dirks 1992a, 1992b; Schwartz and Cook 2002; Stoler and Cooper 1997; Trouillot 1995). Likewise, Nicholas Dirks (1999, 2002) reminds all anthropologists and historians of the necessity of historicizing the archive—of understanding the contributions of anthropological and historical knowledge to colonial archives before entering the “field.” Only then can the assumptions of power and “truth” embedded in archives, and in the anthropological theory and methods we employ to study the archives, be properly managed.
Jacques Derrida (1995) describes archiving as the process of “inscribing” the past that involves both lived experience and experience as it was remembered or imagined, one that envelopes the present with the past. He describes the process of “uncovering” those archived inscriptions as a kind of fever that overcomes the researcher, a fever that derives from an inescapable archival hegemony. Michel Foucault (1991, 2010) similarly sees the archive as a site in which the state expresses its governmental control over its subjects, and exerts power through technologies of knowledge. Both Derrida (1995) and Foucault (1980), however, also conceive of archives as sites where hidden or silenced voices can be “excavated” (in Foucault’s terms) through careful reading and scholarship. One way of doing this is to read against the archival absences (against the grain) to make those silences speak (Pels 1997); another is to read along the archival grain to identify ways in which silences are managed by the creators of archived documents (Stoler 2009). Both approaches are discussed below.

Frederick Cooper’s (2011) work with the archives of French West Africa reveals the basic differences between the past as it is presented in the colonial archives of the elite and the past as it remembered by the people, making the project of reconstructing an “authentic past” untenable. However, Cooper also notes that memory, like the archive, is also a mediated construction of the past filtered by personal experience and time. According to Stoler (2009), the role of archives, especially colonial archives, is to actively construct society and culture through the process of building an archive; that is, archiving documents literally creates, reproduces, and legitimizes both the state apparatus and systems of cataloguing and classification through which it asserts its power. Integral to Stoler’s discussion is the “authenticity” of the archived past and what counts as knowledge in and out of the colonial archive.
In her work on the Dutch colonial archives at The Hague, Stoler (2009) demonstrates the advantages and necessity of reading “along the archival grain.” She emphasizes the “force of writing,” the “feel of documents,” and the “lettered lives” they trace; archives are about “commitments to paper, and the political and personal work that such inscriptions perform” (2009:1). Reading along the grain as a method reorients the researcher to not take for granted the ‘texture’ of the archive—it means “not following the frictionless course” but rather entering “a field of force and will to power,” that “attend[s] to both the sound and sense therein and their rival and reciprocal energies” (2009:54). By conducting fieldwork in the Dutch colonial archives, Stoler makes two observations about the ethnographic enterprise: first, that it should be necessarily concerned with archives as a valid and rich site for ethnographic research, and that archives are not neutral zones of material collection, but culturally constructed spaces imbued with the ideologies, histories, policies, and lives of those who contributed to the production of the archive (2009:1). Stoler looks at the archive as a window into the “sensibilities of the everyday,” the friends, family, coworkers who touched the bodies and minds of civil servants and allowed for the slippage of information (2009:249). She is not just interested in the structures of colonialism in Indonesia, but in how these structures are enacted, embodied, and lived by those burdened with the responsibility of implementing them on the ground, structures which never neatly map onto the human population they are meant to contain. Affect thus becomes a salient marker of the ways in which colonization ruptures the colonial mind, causing a break in reality, between what is and what should be (Stoler 2009:40). Archives are places of knowledge production, and places imbued with memory and the life of those inscribed in the documents and objects. The documents and records in the archives, the objects of the archives, are windows into the “sensibilities of the everyday”—the sentiments, the emotions, that constitute our judgments,
assessments and interpretations of the social and political world (Stoler 2009:249). This range of feeling is palpable within archival resources, and especially in personal archival collections.

Arjun Appadurai (1986:25) suggests that the best way to understand how people use and value things is through an approach of “methodological fetishism,” as “devices for reproducing relations between persons,” things have, “careers,” “biographies” and “social lives” that must followed. Amira Henare (2005) likewise asserts that within every object is the curious force to disable space and time, to bridge the distances between people and the gaps in history. She states that it is the materiality of the object that makes it so valuable and so profoundly real and meaningful for people. The material is vital, precisely because of its tactility; by being able to grasp an object, to hold onto it, to touch it, to feel it, we connect to that object, and to the humanity inscribed in it. When we create objects and when we use them, we instantiate our selves, our cultures, our identities, and our worlds in them. The object has the ability to collapse our senses of time, space, place, and memory. It is a looking glass through which we may more clearly or more truthfully see ourselves, see our taken-for-granted understandings of the way the world works, see our resistances (however small or profound) to the injustices that we encounter everyday, and understand our responses to the contradictions we continually face and try so hard to reconcile in our homes and in our communities. Objects tether us to the world and to others, they ground us as much as they elevate us; they are proof of our existence, proof of our will and capacity to sustain and to flourish, to give meaning to our lives. The objects in LaPena’s archive offer a unique perspective on the diverse ways in which place and identity are rooted and routed (Clifford 2001) along a range of indigenous locations within the post- and neocolonial context. Indigeneity exists in different locally and globally articulated forms, and with shifting political motivations as it becomes entangled with hegemonic structures of power. The social life of LaPena’s archive is located in the dynamic and dialogic articulations of indigenous claims to
sovereignty, self-determination, and representation that the documents reveal; that is, the “productive processes of consensus, exclusion, alliance, and antagonism that are inherent in the transformative life of all societies” (Clifford 2001:473). The materiality of LaPena’s archive provides another ‘linked’ articulation of indigeneity, one that encapsulates as well as expands upon the ongoing struggles for indigenous independence from imperial forces and the processes of making, unmaking, and remaking tradition and culture that occur when Indigenous societies negotiate interdependencies with settler state formations and global structures.

Archives of Resistance and Self-Determination

Archives are not just a reflection of society, its functions, memory, and desires, they are also a reflection of the desires, roles, intentions, and interests of the creator of archival documents and collections, be they states, organizations, communities or individuals. Archives are thus non-neutral spaces, sources of knowledge and power in the Foucauldian sense, and essential for identity formation, both personal and social (Dirks 2002; Foucault 1977, 1991; Schwartz and Cook 2002). Ann Laura Stoler (2009) treats archives and the records they house as “contested sites of power” and technologies of governmentality that actively create the histories and social realities they purport to merely describe. However, Stoler, as well as Patricia Pierce Erikson (2002) and Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (1991, 1992), also acknowledges archives as instruments of subversion, as sites in which “subjugated knowledges” can be “excavated” and recontextualized as valid and meaningful to history and to those whose voices have been systematically silenced by hegemonic structures of power/knowledge (Foucault 1980:81). The Comaroffs state that “reading against the archival grain” is necessary in order to get a more complete if “fractured” representation of a particular period, thus “textual traces” of historical movements should be sought both within and outside of the archives for their relevance and
ability to “speak” outside the institutional confines of the archival record (1992:33). In other words, historical ethnography should go “beyond explicit narrative, exegesis, even argument...For the poetics of history lie also in mute meanings transacted through goods and practices, through icons and images dispersed in the landscape of the everyday” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:35).

Colonial and postcolonial archives reveal “the complex intersections between official archives, constructs of state power, and national definitions”; the appraisal, acquisition and content of an archive show the institutionalized process of making history and memory (Blouin and Rosenberg 2011b:255). National archives in particular are thought to serve a utilitarian function of preserving the national ideal and reinforcing a sense of national unity. They also have the ability to silence subordinate cultures and voices, as in the case of archives left by slavery and emancipation (Dubois 2011; Eiss 2011). Laurent Dubois has responded to this problem by looking outside the archives (e.g., to the novel) to “uncover the voices and actions of slaves and ex-slaves...to understand their struggles” (2011:254). Paul K. Eiss (2011) suggests that “archives of redemption” are used to structure an official narrative of Yucatan “emancipation” that vastly differs from the collective experience and memory of the people. But national archives can also be used as places of memory where the past is a matter contestation and dispute rather than a source of unity (Graf 2011; Wilson 2011). Rebecca Scott (2011:283) illustrates how state archives can be used as places of “active remembering rather than simply a place of documents.”

The archive, in this case the Provincial Historical Archive of Cienfuegos in Cuba, became a site for Scott and her colleagues to collaborate, reconfigure their methodologies, and uncover—or recover—a history of slavery, rebellion, and freedom that has been silenced in the postemancipation national narrative.
Scott’s work demonstrates the social life of archives, something which Brian Williams and William K. Wallach (2011) illustrate in their study of the shifting function of national archives as nation in-transition, South Africa, re-identifies and redefines its national past in the aftermath of apartheid. As the authors write, “The archives become not only a place to document South Africa’s ‘untold history’ but also a center to support a more inclusive writing of the nation’s history as it moves from a society that privileged one group over another to a ‘non-racial, non-sexist democracy’ envisioned by [Nelson] Mandela” (2011:321). Mandela understood that the archive was a powerful tool that could be used to both conceal and reveal; his intention was to use the archives of the African National Congress to reveal the struggles and resistances, the distortions and institutionalized “forgetting.” Liam Buckley (2005) also writes about the “social lives” of colonial photographs and, taking a cue from Elizabeth Edwards (2001:88), explores the ways these images continue to “perform” and “provoke” in the postcolonial context. Elizabeth Edwards (2003:83) sees colonial archival photographs as “a site of intersecting histories—the visual legacy and historical deposits of sets of encounters and relationships.” Nevertheless, these histories have been “produced and controlled through sites of authority of the collecting society—archives, museums, universities.” But Edwards is also interested in the ways that photographic archives empower indigenous communities through visual repatriation and re-engagement. She emphasizes the importance of tracing the social biography of objects such as photographs as they move from site to site, come into contact with different communities, are endowed with culturally specific meanings, and given new life, a process Edwards refers to an “infinite recodability” (2003:84). Visual repatriation is about “finding the present for historical photographs,” and recognizing that it is through this infinite recodability that objects like photographs can “make sense of the past in the present and make it fulfill the needs of the present” (84). Terri Castaneda (2002:313) discusses the potential of archives housed at indigenously-run tribal colleges to
perform social identities and provoke new and diverse understandings of histories of the past and their relations to histories of the present: “Preserved as ‘Special Collections’ not only for their subject matter and capacity to repatriate indigenous knowledge, but also for their uncommon social biographies, they represent the complicated entanglements, both future and past, of indigenous peoples and their anthropological others.” Castaneda’s work with the tribal archives at D-Q University in Davis, California reinforces the insistence by other scholars to pay attention to the social lives of archives and objects and the ways they intersect with the social lives of anthropologists, ethnographers, colonial subjects (in Pels and Salemink’s [1999] complex conception of the term), and with the discipline of anthropology, leading to a kind of repatriation of knowledge for both indigenous communities and the anthropologists who study them.

Given that ‘The Archive’ has become paradigmatic of the processes that have silenced indigenous voices,” Edwards (2003:85) states that projects of visual repatriation require “the recognition of differently valid ‘visual economies’ in which ‘The Archive’ is decentred, and the visual economy extended and refigured through inclusion, recognition and liberation of the ‘indigenous voice.’” The notion of visual economies can be extended to personal archive collections like LaPena’s, which incorporates a variety of ‘visual’ material, including photographs as well as artwork, flyers, and posters. Even documents are as much about the visual as they are about the textual or material. All of these materials give voice to particular histories, negotiated subjectivities, and rearticulated identities. Colonialism, indigenous sovereignty, cultural heritage and identity are dealt with—struggled with and against—in these materials and in the archive itself.

The objects and documents in LaPena’s archive have a social life as well. They have made their way from national conferences to private meetings, to museums and galleries, across oceans, to LaPena’s office on campus and into his home, and into the archive, where people,
especially Native people, will be able to access these objects, give them new meanings, new readings, new engagements with indigenous knowledge. My thesis is about exploring the social life of these objects, of this archival material, and about the ways in which LaPena’s archive has the potential to act as a site of articulating tradition, identity, and culture—for unlocking alternative histories and evoking emotional and intellectual responses from which new articulations can be rendered.

*Personal Archives of Resistance from a Postcolonial Perspective*

Personal papers are defined as “the private documents accumulated by or belonging to an individual,” including but not limited to letters, memoirs, reminiscences, scrapbooks, photograph albums, speeches and lectures, and professional papers—all of which are included in Frank LaPena’s Collection (Bellardo and Bellardo 1992:25). According to the Society of American Archivists, personal materials “provide essential clues to the past,” clues that allow researchers to “study and understand much about the history of particular families, communities, businesses, and organizations, the history of specific events, and broader societal trends, and the history of the United States in general” (1994).

Despite the social, historical and local value of personal papers, the ethnographic study of personal archival collections has not been as extensive as that of institutions, organizations and the archives themselves. Catherine Hobbs (2001) and Riva A. Pollard (2002) discuss this neglect in archival and social science theory, stating the tendency to view government and corporate archives as the “objective” records of historical events or “facts” and social organization. Personal papers have been marginalized as too subjective, too partial, and too personal to be of scholarly or practical value (Pollard 2002:138). Robert A. J. McDonald and Christopher Hives (1994:62), however, see archival records as “a reflection of who we are as people—our collective
memory…[I]f we are to understand our history, and hence ourselves, [it is imperative that] we find ways to preserve this patrimony.” Sue McKemmish (1996:26) likewise argues that personal “recordkeeping is a ‘kind of witnessing’”; “it is a way of evidencing and memorialising our lives—our existence, our activities and experiences with others, our identity, our ‘place’ in the world.” McKemmish further states the need to understand how records are related to the various roles people take in society and culture, as well as the documentary form that people chose their records to be in—all such considerations matter when looking into a personal archive.

In addition, Hobbs (2001:26) examines the “character” of personal archives and suggests that “by seeking to reflect the characters and interiority of individuals within archives, archivists will better represent the creator not just as social agent, but as the creative individual forging his or her own life through time.” According to Hobbs, personal archives provide an “intimacy” not found in corporate, collective record keeping systems. They offer the “official,” public transactions between people and institutions, but just as importantly they provide “glimpses of the inner souls,” of the personal struggles, the daily habits, the intimate relationships of an individual; “it is the site where personality and the events of life interact in documentary form” (Hobbs 2001:126-127). From the marginalia inscribed on an unpublished manuscript to notes scribbled on the back of an envelope or museum program, all of this “extraneous” data has a place in the archive, it has meaning for the personal perspective of life’s experiences, and for how a person envisions and enacts their life, privately and publicly, inwardly and outwardly. Personal documents are “in many senses creations of the self and participate in a process of storytelling and de facto autobiography—of the self presenting and representing the self” (Hobbs 2001:131). Thus, personal collections are not neatly framed portraits of a person’s public persona, but are instead “site[s] of multiple constructs—of a person upholding and struggling with ideas, of self
and of others, while simultaneously contradicting, convincing, and contriving” (Hobbs 2001: 132).

Frank LaPena’s archive can be read as a person reading against the archival grain, against colonialism, and providing a new archive of history that allows for novel and emergent definitions of identity, difference, and postcolonial projects of decolonization. If objects have the power to shrink the distance between people and places, between hearts and minds, then they have the power to reveal a more nuanced portrait of those who write the archives, those who produce the documents and objects in archival collections. LaPena’s archive serves as an example of what Paul Starr (1992) refers to as information out of place, which occurs when some practices, ideas, or people fail to fit into a state’s system of classification. LaPena’s archive reveals how Native American populations, lifeways, histories, and culture are often conceived as ‘out of place’ in American society. Archives of “the (so-called) Other” challenge the authority of anthropology, the West, and the State to speak for the Other by revealing the inconsistencies and limitations in their systems of classification. The following section maps the shifting authority of anthropology as “Others” all over the world sought ways to assert their right to self-determination and self-representation in the postcolonial world.

CULTURAL SELF-REPRESENTATION AND ETHNOGRAPHIC AUTHORITY

During the second half of the twentieth century, the foundations of anthropology and ethnography were being challenged and disrupted from within and without. Anthropologists were forced to come to terms with the problematics of working with and speaking for the Other in a postcolonial world and with the discipline’s complicity in contributing to projects of colonialism. Anthropology became a lightening rod for criticism from non-Western scholars who questioned the ethnographic authority of anthropologists to interpret the cultural realities of the Others
without contextualizing the colonial and postcolonial realities in which anthropologists construct these interpretations (Clifford 1988; Marcus and Fischer 1986).

The term ‘postcolonial’ refers generally to the period after 1950, as colonial empires were breaking apart and formerly subjugated peoples were gaining independence from their oppressors; but the term also refers to the study of the interactions between colonial empires and the people they colonized, as well as the formation and maintenance of empire and the impact of colonialism in the postcolonial world (Bahri 1996). Since the 1970s, postcolonial studies in anthropology, history, and literature have aimed to uncover the often mundane and deeply embedded nature of domination, showing that the process of decolonization would necessarily involve more than the formal political independence of the colonies. Formerly colonized peoples were finding their own voice during this period, using it to articulate their experiences of colonialism in a postcolonial context, often in ways that revealed the complicated and shifting boundaries between the colonizer and the colonized in matters of rule and authority (for instance, Chinua Achebe 1958; Aimé Césaire 1955, Frantz Fanon 1961; and Albert Memmi 1957). Asad’s (1973) critique of anthropology illuminated the complex and variable role of anthropology and anthropologists within imperial projects, while also insisting that anthropologists examine the ways their own theories and methods intersect and overlap with discourses and practices of colonialism, both in the past and in the present. Edward Said (1978) employed the scholarly discourse of Orientalism to investigate the construction of the ‘Oriental Other’ as an ideological, biological, and cultural contrast to the West and its dominant position in the world; his analysis uncovers the systematic misrepresentation of the non-Western world, particularly in literature and art, and the unequal power relations upon which such representations thrive. By the close of the twentieth century, it was clear that anthropology could no longer claim the positivist and confident ethnographic authority that early anthropologists like Malinowski, Evans-Pritchard,
Radcliffe-Brown, and Boas established as the foundation of the discipline’s scientific knowledge. Any representation of the “other” had to be conceived as a negotiated construction involving the culturally and politically-situated anthropologist, their subjects, the discipline, and a host of other interested parties.

Anthropologists responded to this ‘crisis of representation’ by critically re-assessing the foundations of their discipline, and, in particular, ethnography. Writing culture was revealed to involve more than objective observation and description—ethnography itself was determined to be a cultural construction or interpretation of both the postcolonial subject and the ethnographer. In other words, intersubjective—a provocation that both reinforced ethnography as the core of the discipline and further decentered the “ethnographic authority” of anthropology (Geertz 1973, 1986; Marcus and Fischer 1986; Rabinow 1977; Rosaldo 1989). James Clifford (1983:133) emphasizes the multi-vocality of ethnography, based on Bakhtin’s concept of “heteroglossia,” which conceives of ethnography as the “constructive negotiation” of “politically significant subjects” and subjectivities. Some anthropologists also began to investigate and deconstruct foundational concepts like “culture” and to question their underlying ontological assumptions. Virginia R. Dominguez (1991) entreats researchers to unpack assumptions underlying discourses of “the self” and its relation to other entities such as individuality, subjectivity, and identity, all of which have significant consequences for the ways in which anthropologists design, conduct, and analyze their research and relate to their subjects. Lila Abu-Lughod (1991) warns against the inclination of anthropologists to generalize about communities, reminding us that the attribution of cultural traits and patterns to whole groups of people discounts the particulars that exist in any given location, no matter how circumscribed that location may appear. As an anthropologist who conducts research “at home” in her native community, Abu-Lughod is particularly interested in how these terms apply to and affect the work and positionality of native anthropologists. She
states that the concept of culture, as it has been constructed in anthropology, engenders generalizations based on cultural difference, which operate in “anthropological discourse to enforce separations that inevitably carry a sense of hierarchy” and institute inequality (1991:138). She asserts that ethnographic representations are not just “partial truths” as Clifford (1986:6) and others have argued, but that they are also “positioned truths” situated in relations of power (1991:142). Cultural statements that portray culture as timeless, cultural difference as self-evident, or overemphasize the coherence or discreteness of communities, reinforce systems of power and domination. Abu-Lughod implores researchers to subvert such definitions by “writing against culture” and focusing intently on the particular and myriad ways individuals engage with their world without disregarding connections to larger forces and processes or smoothing “over contradictions, conflicts of interest, and doubts and arguments, not to mention changing motivations and circumstances” (1991:153).

Postcolonial analysis recognizes that the so-called Other must be appropriately struggled with so as to engage in a critique of colonial modes of representation (Clifford 1983; Said 1978). Within the space of the postcolonial, reading against the grain or against the grasp of any single authority thus becomes an opportunity for decolonizing, or decentering such colonialist modes of representation. Reading against the grain is especially critical for native anthropologists who study their own cultures and negotiate their roles as both ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ with respect to their native communities (Abu-Lughod 1991; Jacobs-Huey 2002).

Native Anthropology and Self-Representation

Appadurai (1988) argues that “natives” are inventions of the anthropological imagination, idealized Others constructed through the writing of culture, and criticizes the disciplinary practice of representing cultures as bounded wholes. Gayatri Spivak (1988) questions the whole endeavor
of speaking for subalterns, no matter how well-intentioned the effort may be, arguing that since they always occupy a subaltern position in the hegemonic system of power—both within and outside their native communities—any attempt by subalterns to speak for themselves ultimately falls on deaf ears. Deloria, Jr.’s (1969a) tirade directed specifically toward “anthros” expresses Native Americans’ deep discontent with the exploitative elements of anthropology and the those anthropologists who claimed to ‘speak’ for them. Yet towards the end of *Custer Died for Your Sins* (1969b:275) Deloria also notes that is in the discipline of anthropology—along with Congress and churches—that he places “the greatest amount of hope for the future” of American Indians. How, then, do native anthropologists deal with the problem of the Other in anthropological discourse when they are positioned as the Other? That is, how do they speak for or represent the self/other while also problematizing the concepts of the self and the other in the anthropological discourse and encouraging a decolonized future? I am particularly interested in the ways that Native Americans have contributed to anthropology, as subjects and as researchers, as how they respond to the ever-present problem of cultural representation.

Native Americans have been key subjects of American anthropology since its inception. Early anthropologists viewed Native Americans as a “vanishing race.” Believing that they would inevitably ‘die out,’ anthropologists felt a desire and a need to “salvage” what they could of the languages and lifeways of these cultures for the benefit of science and future generations. Franz Boas trained indigenous persons who seemed to have a proclivity for analyzing their own cultures to help him conduct research. He worked with many Native American women, including Zora Neale Hurston and Ella Deloria. During his time at University of California, Berkeley, Alfred Kroeber and his colleagues worked with Native northern California people, most famously Ishi. Most of this early “salvage anthropology” was focused on recording Native languages and Native American folklore and mythology. Given this intimate and complex relations between
anthropologists and Native peoples, American Indians continue to be wary of anthropologists, both Native and non-Native, and struggle to reconcile their long history as subjects and informants of anthropology (Medicine 2001:4-5).

Lanita Jacobs-Huey (2002:791) considers the practice of reflexivity a useful tool for native and non-native anthropologists to re-evaluate the precepts of anthropology and confront “the historical role that our discipline has played in Western colonialism and its creation of ‘Third World’ territories.” A common goal of native/indigenous/Other anthropologists is the decolonization of Western anthropology by employing more reflexive approaches to deal with issues of representation and to critique taken-for-granted assumptions. Kirin Narayan (1993) discusses the complicated dimensions of being a native anthropologists in the field and the various and sometimes conflicted subjectivities that come into play when working within home communities. But by revealing the ways in which they negotiate their identity in the field, native anthropologists expose the contradictions inherent in anthropological theory and practice and the problematics of applying concepts like “culture,” “the self,” and “identity” to groups of people who have historically been othered by the discipline ( Jacobs-Huey 2002). For some Native American anthropologists working in their own society, this means ditching esoteric academic language and deconstructing their identities as ‘native scholars’ (Mihesuah 1998). Bea Medicine (2001), a Native Lakota anthropologist, discusses the dilemmas she faced as she considered an anthropological career grounded in the study of her own culture. As she confronted the contradictions within the discipline and academia in general, Medicine had to find a way to settle the ambiguities inherent in being an anthropologist while remaining a “Native.” Overall, Medicine emphasizes the need for Native (and non-Native) anthropologists to be involved in the

The capitalization of “Native” is meant to connote a distinction from my use of the lowercase “native” elsewhere, with Native referring to Native Americans or indigenous peoples native to North America, but specifically the United States. I use the term “native” more generically to refer to all people who identify as indigenous in the world.
Native community and to demonstrate a commitment to the integrity of Native practices, traditions, and beliefs while also making anthropology meaningful to Indians.

LaPena’s archive has the potential to make anthropology meaningful to Native Americans; it is an act of as well as a site for engaging with and appropriating mechanisms of anthropological thought and colonialism that have historically been used to control indigeneity. But it also has the power to strengthen indigenous articulations of tradition and identity in the postcolonial world.

LIFE HISTORY

I look at personal archives as a kind of narrative, a life narrative, to be more specific, in which an individual is engaged in the always emergent and fluid process of telling his/her personal story, or life history. Narrative is as old as we are, as old as humanity. The concept of narrative has been around in some form since the first story was told by one person to another, from the first moment that humans reflected on their lives and their place in the world.

An analytic framework, “narrative” can be traced back to antiquity with Aristotle’s (1996) foundational treatise on literature, Poetics. Narrativity is viewed as the “essence of humanness,” as the mark of human creativity and rationality (Johnstone 2001:365). Heidegger’s observation that one’s life story begins with birth and ends with death, that one’s identity is always configured from the perspective of its ending (death), may seem self-evident now, but it was a reflection upon which he established his compelling idea of “self-authorship” (1962:78). According to Heidegger, when we assume the responsibility for our life plot and for undertaking those decisions and actions that further this plot, we are engaging in self-authorship, we are engaging in a narration of our lives. For Heidegger, our sense of self, our identity, is dependent
on our ability to construct a unified self through narrative. If we fail in this regard, life is experienced as fragmented, dispersed and alienated (Heidegger 1962:129).

The last three decades of the twentieth century witnessed the “narrative turn” in anthropology and the social sciences in general. This shift was marked by a turn away from a ‘cold, calculated’ analysis of narrative and toward a more reflexive, phenomenological approach. Gelya Frank (1979) provides insight into the phenomenological approach to narrative and points to the research of others as examples of how this approach can be both qualitatively and quantitatively rigorous. Phenomenology deals with experience from a first-person point of view as the means by which ‘entities’ are given meaning; it refers to the ‘appearance of things’ as they appear to us in our experience of them, it is our way of understanding the world, of deriving meaning from it. Within anthropology, this subjective approach has been particularly fruitful when applied to life history; many ethnographers have used life histories as data to investigate the “insider’s point of view” and draw connections between cultural patterns and individual particularities (Frank 1979:70). However, she notes that life history is neither self-evident, nor does it “speak for itself”; rather, life history is constructed by both the ethnographer and the subject in the process of research (1979:71-72).

Similarly, Michael Agar (1980:223) views life history as an “elaborate, connected piece of talk presented in a social situation consisting of an informant and an ethnographer.” When studying life stories, what is of interest is the subject’s perception of things, not the accuracy or actuality of events. In his analysis, Agar uses the life story elicited from his informant and analyzes the discourse for schemata; in other words, he looks at the way the life history is organized, by the subject and by those who work with or read it (Agar 1980:227). These insights are useful for discussing the inherent complications of working with life histories in their various forms and the need to make explicit the theoretical, methodological and philosophical
assumptions of researchers when undertaking an ethnographic study of an individual’s life history.

*Life as Narrative*

Humans use narrative as an instrument of interpretation and coherence, we use it to make sense of our past and to project ourselves into the future. But narrative is also used to give form and meaning to our lives as a whole; it is only through a narrated life that one’s personhood is manifested and given “life” in the world. It is precisely because we understand the self as progressing through time that we require a narrative structure of the self (Polkinghorne 1991). According to Jens Brockmeier (2000:51), within the process of autobiographical identity construction “a particular synthesis of cultural and individual orders of time takes place—the result is autobiographical time, or the time of one’s life.”

Autobiographical time is the process by which we are socialized in our culture, but it is also the process through which we become unique individuals and learn to express our individuality. When we tell about our life we look backward in time, thus engaging in a retrospective reconstruction of our life history. According to Brockmeier, the autobiographical process overlaps with the process of identity construction, since both are processes of understanding one’s self in time (2000:52-53). Bruner (2004:691) offers a constructivist approach to narrative; he asserts that “world making” is a fundamental operation of the mind, stories do not “happen” in the real world but are created in our imaginations. Bruner states that narrative seems to be the only way for us to describe lived time and remarks that there is no such thing as “life itself”; life is “a selective achievement of memory recall…it is an interpretive feat” (2004:693). Bruner (2004:698) finds that in constructing their stories, narrators construct a dual landscape:
landscapes of action (on which events unfold) and landscapes of consciousness (the “inner worlds” of the subjects involved in the action, including what they believe and feel).

The process of constructing one’s own self story differs in significant ways from the process by which literary authors construct novels that use imaginative settings, characters, and events (Polkinghorne 1991:146-47). For one, life stories include the “extraneous static” of a person’s life—the extra, routine stuff. In addition, in life stories we are engaged in many projects at once, not all of which mesh into larger projects, and these often conflict with one another, and they do not follow a single, uniform plot. Life stories are living stories—they are still being lived (Polkinghorne 1991:146).

Life stories do not stop at the self, but are extended to include other individuals and communities—family, friends, work, country, and so on. Thus, by extension, other people’s stories become part of one’s own story, self, and identity (Polkinghorne 1991:147). By incorporating others into our self-narrative in a meaningful way, we are incorporating them into our self-identity, and in this way we are extending ourselves, our stories, beyond the limits of birth and death. This is the “amplified self” that David Carr (1986:165) describes as including both “future prospects and the past background.”

Life Narratives

Ochs and Capps provide a comprehensive account of the expansive field of narrative studies in their two texts “Narrating the Self” (1996) and Living Narrative (2001). They define narratives of personal experience as “verbalized, visualized, and/or embodied framings of a sequence of actual or possible life events” (Ochs and Capps 1996:19). Self-narratives can consist of a variation of genres, including story, novel, diaries, letters, or in this study, archival documents. Personal narrative is both shaped by and gives shape to experience; thus, narrative
and self are inseparable (Ochs and Capps 1996:20). Like archives, personal narratives are partial representations of the world as we come to understand or “know” it. Stories of personal experience are thus always “fragmented intimations of experience” that allow for fragmented and multiple self-understandings (Ochs and Capps 1996:21). Humans actualize and organize our selves through the act of narrating (Ochs and Capps 1996:27-8).

**Current Approaches to Life Narrative**

Herbert W. Luthin and Leanne Hinton (2003) argue that the telling of conventional stories is a form of life narrative; these tell us as much about the teller as they do about the teller’s culture. Through an analysis of Ishi stories and storytelling, the authors demonstrate how these stories act as remnants of Ishi’s autobiography; he is not just telling a story, he is telling a story about himself, about his place in the world. Similarly, LaPena’s ‘stories,’ his collection, can be used as a reflection of his world, his culture, his history, his singular personality.

Alisse Waterston and Barbara Rylko-Bauer (2006) address the complexities of engaging in what they term an “intimate ethnography.” They bring into focus the role of emotion, subjectivity, truthfulness, and positionality in ethnographic work and life history, and they show how individual histories fit into larger ones (2006:397). Their analysis shows what life history can do for people in terms of healing wounds; turning ‘telling’ into ‘witnessing’ helps trauma victims recontextualize their experiences, reinterpret them in a way that is more healthy and constructive.

Ben G. Blount and Kathi R. Kitner (2007) present a rigorous historical and content analysis of African American fishermen on the Georgia coast. By analyzing life narratives for “keywords” that are indicative of cultural models—the nuts and bolts of cultural knowledge—we can hope to find the cultural in the personal (2007:109). According to Alexandra Georgakopoulou
(2006), narrative research studies—studies using life narrative data—have tended to use past events of personal experiences in a narrow and privileged manner (2006:235). In response, Georgakopoulou redefines research on narrative by viewing life narratives as “ongoing projects in which improvisation, contingency, contradictions and fragmentation are equally plausible and worthy of investigation as coherence, structure and totality” (2006:254). She argues that researchers must shift their analytical lenses to obscure, “small,” or “unofficial” and “fragmented” dialogues that exist at the margins of sanctioned “official” sites or in “unofficial” spaces (2006, 2007).

LaPena’s archives consist of one-sided conversations to LaPena from friends, colleagues, and business associates, handwritten notes and letters scrawled on envelopes and exhibit program, and fragments of dialogues—of stories—that taken together paint a more dynamic narrative. LaPena’s files are treated as a political project, one that ties into larger social processes, including colonization, globalization, indigeneity, and self-determination. They are recognized as an act of “witnessing,” of engaging in a telling of one’s life as one is living and experiencing it—as it is happening. Thus, his personal archives present a record of history, one that rewrites or recontextualizes the master narrative of dominant society.
Frank LaPena’s archive is full of action. People organizing grass-roots efforts to correct the imbalances of power; people writing letters to their public representatives calling for justice, concern, and respect for their lifeways, or coordinating protests and occupations when such entreaties seem to continuously fall on deaf ears. LaPena’s archiving is part of this process, part of the action. He reads the local and national tribal and non-tribal papers for news concerning Native Americans. He collects them, cuts out the articles that document the contestations, protests, occupations, and struggles. He writes the date and source of publication in the margins, places them in a folder or a large scrapbook for reference, for remembering, for sharing. As I was reading through these documents, I realized I was reading along with LaPena. I was witnessing the events that affected him—that he connected with through a sense of shared identity, a shared experience of colonization. I was privy to the policies, practices, and rhetoric that troubled him, that stirred him into action. To read along with LaPena is to be exposed to his articulations of the inequalities and inconsistencies in his world. LaPena does not merely document his activist engagements or those of others; his collection is an activist engagement in itself. His archive is an active, agential attempt to bring the voices that are usually hidden or silenced in the archive, especially the colonial archive, into the foreground. By focusing on the actions, words, and positions of Native Americans, he is making a statement about the authority of Native Americans to speak for themselves. By viewing LaPena’s archive as both a record and a project of Native activism, we are able to read along with him as he acts against the grain of hegemonic discourses of knowledge and power. LaPena’s archives are useful for revealing the problematics of
practicing and conceiving identity, representation, and activism in the postcolonial context. Through the story he constructs in his archive we have the opportunity to engage in a nuanced discussion of Native identity, representation, and activism.

MAPPING THE COMPLICATED TERRAIN AND SHIFTING PLANES OF NATIVE AMERICAN IDENTITY

Indigenous articulations of identity and belonging are constantly being negotiated and shifted as the local and global power relations in which they are embedded change (Friedman 2007). Frank LaPena’s papers must be rooted in a conversation about the complexities of Native identity before a grounded discussion can take place of the ways in which LaPena articulates his particular identity and projects of representation and activism. James Clifford (2013:45) suggests placing indigenous identity within the context of “realism” using a “portable toolkit” of analytic concepts to study indigeneity on the ground in a way that does not ignore, reduce, or overdetermine the influence of various forces of power on indigenous interactions with different histories. He uses this approach to trace both the ‘roots’ and ‘routes’ of indigeneity as native people navigate and negotiate their cultural survival and emergent identity in local, national, and global communities and imaginations. Clifford (2013:85) states that the continuity (as defined by Friedman 1993) and ethnogenesis (as defined by Hill 1996) “at work in these processes of survival/emergence includes articulations, conjunctural performances, and partial translations.” Clifford (2013:15) defines indigenous not as the ‘cultural similarities’ or ‘essences’ of a society deeply rooted to a particular place, but rather uses the term to refer to a diversity of communities with “comparable experiences of invasion, dispossession, resistance, and survival.” Indigenous peoples articulate (connect to, disconnect from or reconnect with) dominant narratives and historical practices as they perform their identities for different audiences, which allows for the
possibility of new translations of culture and identity that are deeply dialogic and always open-ended.

Jessica R. Cattelino (2010, 2011), like Clifford, stresses the importance of analyzing the United States as a settler society when discussing indigenous identity. This approach “integrates indigenous and non-indigenous lives, while sustaining attention to power, by attending to the ways in which all of our conditions are structured by the legal, historical, cultural, and economic formations that are characteristic of settler societies” (Cattelino 2011:2). These formations include Native peoples’ “claims to multiple and uneven citizenships—often to tribal national and settler state” that “create dilemmas for the settler national aspirational project of equal, undifferentiated civic spaces” as well as claims to sovereignty based on “ongoing collective political distinctiveness, treaties and constitutional recognition by the United States and colonial powers, and other forms of recognition, including recognition by other tribal nations” (Catellino 2011:2-3). Catellino (2011:3) points to a dearth of anthropological theory dealing with the “long history of indigenous sovereignty claims or to the everyday lived experiences of sovereignty for American Indian and other Native peoples.” Frank LaPena’s archive provides a location from which to fill in the gaps in the literature, offers a glimpse into the everyday lived experiences of sovereignty, and provides an opportunity to understand indigeneity on its own terms. Ethnographies that analyze indigenous sovereignty within the context of the settler state also reveal the instability of settler state sovereignty. Indigenous sovereignty claims question the very foundations of the state’s authority to control territory and people, and reinforce the interdependency between settler state sovereignty and indigenous sovereignty for engaging in economic, cultural, political or social transactions (Catellino 2010, 2011). Throughout his archive LaPena engages in such claims, and he maps the terms, contexts, and experiences in which he and others root and route those claims.
Native American Identity in the U.S. Settler State

Within the American context, Native Americans occupy a complicated and shifting position, one that is distinguished from other ‘minority’ groups whose disadvantaged or oppressed position is not situated within the context being indigenous in a settler state. As a group, Native Americans have historically faced massacre and land displacement at the hands of white settlers, were pushed off of their lands and onto reservations and forced to participate in political projects of assimilation (Hoxie 2007; Mihesuah 1998; Wolfe 1999). However, this shared experience of continuous dispossession does not mean that Native American identity is the ‘always already’ identity that it is sometimes taken to be. Native people practice their identity in an effort to elicit cultural transformations that better reflect their experiences, their histories, their realities, and their beliefs and traditions (Abu-Lughod 1991; Clifford 2013). Although Native American identity is based on a common recognition of shared cultural heritage or similarity of characteristics with another individual, group, or idea (de la Cadena and Starn 2007; Fixico 2007; Hoxie 2007; Nagel 1995; Weaver 2001), it is an ongoing process; it is always ‘emergent’ (de la Cadena and Starn 2007).

Pre-contact Native Americans identified themselves in relation to other Native Americans, and this is the way some Native Americans choose to identify themselves today, as members of their own particular tribal nations as opposed to being grouped into the pan-ethnic category of ‘Native American’ (Weaver 2001:242). Fredrik Barth (1998:15) states that in order for an ethnic identity to be meaningful, it has to be based on notions of power and exclusion, thus, what defines a group, what makes identity meaningful, are its boundary markers, not the ‘cultural stuff’ of which it is comprised. Boundaries are maintained from within and without; both powers of governance as well as the members of the group influence the lines of social division and the
limits of inter- and intra-ethnic relations. Native Americans’ identity has been intimately tied to their relationship with the U.S. government and its various institutions.

The U.S government’s relationship with Native Americans developed out of a policy of diplomacy based on treaty-making (through 1870), a practice adopted from the English (Wilkins 2010; Williams 1990). This relationship, as well as the legal definitions that mark the boundaries of Native Americans’ identity within the settler state, has evolved over time. This began with the Supreme Court decisions of the 1820s and 1830s which established their identity as “distinct political communities having territorial boundaries within their authority is exclusives,” continued with the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act that defined the “inherent rights” of federally recognized tribes, and moving into the “self-determination” legislation of the 1960s and 1970s that emerged in response to the anti-indigenous sovereignty policies of allotment and termination. As Vine Deloria, Jr. states, Native American identity is much more an effect of “historical process and political ideology rather than racial and cultural homogeneity” (quoted in Wilkins 2010:105).

The category of ‘Native American’ is comprised of a diverse population of individuals and groups from different lands and characterized by different values and traditions; such an ‘all encompassing’ identification ignores or dismisses internal diversity (Biolsi 2005; Deloria, Jr. 1969b; Deloria, Jr. and Lytle 2010). Eva Marie Garroutte (2003) maps the complexities of defining and assigning Indian identity by investigating how it is constructed in the U.S., and how these constructions become interwoven with issues of nationhood, sovereignty, and access to resources. These ideas are deeply personal and often conflicting for Indians today. Garroutte, a Cherokee sociologist, states that the continuity of Indian identity is tied to Indian survival over 5 hundred years of colonialism, but that the way in which survival is interpreted and practiced varies widely over time and across space. She outlines the problematics of using ideas about
“indianness” deployed in discourses of law, biology (blood and race), culture, and self-identification to delimit Indian identity or tribal citizenship. Garrouette emphasizes the agency that Native communities and individuals use to articulate identity, whether it means expanding or contracting tribal citizenship and identification. Circe Sturm (1998) delves into the social and political construction of Indian identity and shows how national, hegemonic understandings of blood, race, skin color, and culture have been internalized, articulated, and challenged in various ways at the local level by Indian communities, resulting in a “continuing dialectic between the national and the local” wherein identity is often expressed in contradictory or constrained terms.

In his discussion of the relationship between Indian identity and the historical narratives of Native Americans in the United States, Hoxie (2001:13) states that ‘thinking like an Indian’ is “something plural, changing, and unpredictable…we cannot know in advance what “Indianness” will be. Nor can we predict what an Indian will think.”

Renya Ramirez (2007) demonstrates the fluidity of indigeneity in the U.S. by showing how the connection of Indian identity to tribal land is maintained via Native “hubs,” which provides spaces for Native people to create and maintain a viable and active sense of community, culture, and identity across geographic and virtual landscapes, including memory and storytelling. The Native hub “has the potential to strengthen Native identity and provide a sense of belonging, as well as to increase the political power of Native peoples” (Ramirez 2007:3). Similarly, Thomas Biolsi (2005) discusses the different political spaces in which American Indians “imagine” their struggle for sovereignty in the U.S, and the ways that Indian communities traverse these “imagined geographies” for different projects of activism, identity, and sovereignty.

Although external delineations of indigenous identity may not be considered by Natives as legitimate or meaningful to their experiences as indigenous peoples, policies and laws still affect how Native identity is ‘measured’ within and without the Native American community.
There is much at stake in the processes of Native identification; issues revolving around who controls indigenous representations, who benefits from such representations, and who decides what “Native American” actually means (Sturm 2011). All these issues carry great weight for the social, political, cultural, and economic realities of Native American identity. Native American identity is thus an indigenous identity that is conceived of as separate within the settler state; it is about “rooting” a consciousness that in some way opposes the state and its regimes of power and forces change within the larger structure of the state (Biolsi 2005; Mihesuah 1998, 2003, 2004; Niezen 2003). Both the settler state and indigenous peoples are part of a wider global system wherein they are continually informing and resituating each other. These larger, continuous global processes are implicated within indigenous movements, allowing for the possibility of novel expressions of tradition, culture, history, and feelings of indigenous social belonging.

ARTICULATING AND DOCUMENTING NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY

LaPena’s Collection consists of legal briefs, legislation summaries, newsletters, newspapers, mailers, letters, notes, and essays dealing with issues concerning Native Americans’ right to practice their culture and identity as sovereigns living in a settler state. Native American communities across the nation converged around issues of sovereignty during the 1960s and 1970s, protesting the encroachment of the settler state on their access to basic rights, lands, valuable resources, and equitable social services, and locating sites that provided the potential for new representations and performances of indigeneity in America and beyond. One of the most salient issues concerning Native American sovereignty is the right to practice religion, and with that the protection of the sacred sites that are vital for practicing religion. LaPena was deeply concerned with the protection of sacred lands; he followed closely state and federal legislation regarding protection of burial sites and Indian education, sitting in on state council meetings or
offering his testimony in support of legislation that asserted the sovereignty of Native people and their rights to determine the expression of their culture and identity, or serving as a liaison for his community and the federal government. “Why is it that the state does not step forward and recommend that Indians be allowed to testify along with the so-called experts who are usually “white” and do not know about the specific feelings nor beliefs relating to the dead and in some cases probably do not care[?],” asks LaPena on a piece of notepaper attached to a letter from the director of Department of Parks and Recreation requesting feedback on the Departmental Native American Task Force’s recommendations for the Department of Parks and Recreation to improve services to the Native American community. The notepaper and letter are filed between a thick stack of California Assembly Bills, state ordinances, and newsletters from the 1970s regarding the preservation and protection of sacred sites. LaPena’s archive is a crucial location for understanding how he and other Native Americans were personally struggling with the dictates of the settler state in an articulated and involved way. On a smaller, 4 inch by 6 inch leaf of notepaper filed in the same stack of documents, LaPena implores the government to not just enact but implement legislation protecting Indian burials and sacred sites:

a public statement of the law and philosophical position of the state would help clarify the status of how the state perceives the violators of grave sites and cultural site of the native California Indian population. It would be reasonable to expect both law and philosophy to be made in public as most of the information has been “in-house” and to state agencies, usually in Beaches and Parks. And it is not getting public exposure. Public Health should be sent the state’s position as well as Indian rural and urban health boards. Federal services such as Forestry, BIA and county executive councils or boards should also be notified.

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6 Note by Frank LaPena, circa 1970s, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

7 Handwritten note, circa 1976, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
This explicit frustration with the government and the general public is repeated throughout LaPena’s archive. It articulates a common feeling of disrespect and distrust among Native people, but it also reflects the constant negotiations over indigenous identity and rights that LaPena and other activists engage in with the settler state.

One event that continues to have a profound effect on Native American articulations of identity and sovereignty is the 1988 Lyng v Northwest Indian Cemetery Association case, which made national headlines, drawing attention to the beliefs and practices of American Indians and the government’s unwillingness to respect and protect the religious traditions of Native peoples. With Lyng, the United States Supreme Court overturned two lower court decisions and effectively ended constitutional protection for traditional Indian religions, a decision which has since colored the rulings of all cases dealing with the protection of Native American religious freedom. But in terms of cultural identity and the struggle for representation, the Native community’s active and ongoing response to the case after and prior to this ruling, not the ruling itself, is just as important to the significance of Lyng.

Before the Lyng case made it to the Supreme Court, it was referred to informally as the “G-O Road” case, after the plot of land between the towns of Gasquet and Orleans in Northern California, an area that is considered sacred “high country” to members of the Karuk, Tolowa, and Yurok Indian tribes; it is a place where religious practices have been conducted by Native peoples for centuries. This plot of land was the site proposed by the U.S. Forest Service for a six-mile, paved road connecting the two towns and a timber harvesting plan. In 1979, the Forest Service commissioned a study of American Indian cultural and religious sites in the area. The study was conducted by the Theodoratus Cultural Research consulting firm, led by Dr. Dorothea

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8 The G-O road was eventually stopped due to economic concerns, the protection of timber on the proposed land, and the availability of unprotected wilderness for building an alternative road in the area. The defeat of the G-O road was thus an outcome of environmental issues, not religious freedom.
Theodoratus. It was a comprehensive ecological, historical, and archaeological study of the Chimney Rock region of the Six Rivers National Forest intended to determine the effects the proposed road would have on the area. Theodoratus and her team concluded that the road would cause irreparable damage to the area and recommended that the G-O road not be completed. Theodoratus is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and Native American Studies at California State University, Sacramento and acted as LaPena’s thesis advisor during his time in the Master’s program at Sacramento State. She and LaPena created an informational packet to bring awareness to this case and to spur political mobilization.

Lyng provides a point of interest for understanding how Native Americans have fought for their identity and for their right to practice their identity within the dominant culture of legalism and capitalist democracy. But to stop there would be to preclude a deeper recognition of the many ways this kind of legalism constricts and also inspires social activism among Native American communities. On the day of the hearing of the Lyng case by the U.S. Supreme Court, activists engaged in a day of fasting for “meditation, prayer, and concern for the protection of sacred places and religious freedom.” After the ruling of Lyng in April 1988, a dinner and dance

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10 Ibid.
13 Informational Packet composed by Frank LaPena and Dorothea Theodoratus and announcement of November 30, 1987, as a Day of Fasting, in GO-Road/Religion folder, Reference Files Series, Subject Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
benefit for the No G-O effort was announced in August, to be held on the tenth of September.\textsuperscript{14}

The No G-O protests were grassroots efforts mobilized by Native American traditionalists and concerned citizens to bring awareness of the controversy to policymakers and the general public. Activists proclaimed that “the religious beliefs of Indian people are entitled to the same Constitutional protection from government interference as are non-Indian religious beliefs,” and that “the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 directs all Federal Departments (including the Department of Agriculture) to protect and preserve the religious rights of Indians.”\textsuperscript{15}

Similar events were occurring all over the United States and beyond, as can be observed by flipping through the pages of Indian-run periodicals like Akwesasne Notes, a newspaper publication started in the late 1960s as a compilation of news articles concerning Native Americans from other sources. The breadth and scope of the publication was impressive, and one could read about indigenous rights claims in the U.S., Canada, Nicaragua, Brazil, and Australia alongside articles covering internal dissension within and between Native communities as well as the often deplorable conditions in which many Indians lived. Issues of Notes are scattered throughout LaPena’s files, as well as many other newsletters, magazines, and journals dedicated to providing a platform for Native Americans to address and highlight issues concerning their welfare and to offer outreach to those in need of legal, public, or social services. Many of the articles in these publications cover the sundry political occupations that American Indians engaged in during the 1960s and 1970s, a time of wide-spread social upheaval and deep

\textsuperscript{14} Informational Packet composed by Frank LaPena and Dorothea Theodoratus and announcement of November 30, 1987, as a Day of Fasting, in GO-Road/Religion folder, Reference Files Series, Subject Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

\textsuperscript{15} News Release from Indian Custom and Rights, Eureka, California, 1987, in GO-Road/Religion folder, Reference Files Series, Subject Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
dissatisfaction with the manner in which the U.S. government and its white populace treated its minority groups. American Indians, African American, Chicanos and other Latin Americans, and women took their grievances to the American public and incorporated the media in a way never before possible. In addition, news print publications written and published by Native American organizations that were directed at issues concerning Native American lifeways were becoming more widely circulated. Newsletters and newspapers such as *Smoke Signals, Treaty Council News, The Early American* (California Indian Education Association), *Indian Affairs in California* (California League of American Indians), *the Race of Sorrows* (Northern Indian Cheyenne), *The Morningstar People* (Northern Cheyenne Indian), *Drumbeat* (Susanville, California), the *Native American Rights Fund* newsletter, the *California Indian Legal Services* newsletter, *Wassaja*, and *Indian Historian*, published by the American Indian Historical Society. In addition to Indian publications, major newspaper publications located near Indian country provided broad and continuous coverage of the many political battles American Indians were fighting in their efforts to improve their quality of life. LaPena collected hundreds of newspaper clippings on “California Indians” and “Northern California Indians,” mostly from local newspapers such as *San Francisco Chronicle, Record-Searchlight Redding, Sacramento Union*, and the *Sacramento Bee*. The following section discusses the rise of Red Power activism using the archival documentation from these and other sources found in LaPena’s papers.

*The Red Power Movement*

In the late 1960s, a sea change occurred in the Civil Rights movement brought on by centuries of colonialist policies and ongoing social and political oppression. Across the country, historically marginalized peoples mobilized to assert their identity and culture in public forums, demanding equal representation under the law and social justice in all sectors of society. Within
this broad Civil Rights Movement, American Indian activists sought justice for the long history of genocide, land displacement, and forced assimilation experienced at the hands of the U.S. government. At the core of the Red Power Movement were claims to sovereignty and self-determination, and an assertion of their rights to land and self-representation in all aspects of law and society. This was an effort to re-write history, to show the country and the world the perseverance and continuity of Indian life, culture, and identity, even in the face of constant trauma and adversity.

*Reclaiming Indian Land and Fighting for Self-Determination*

Throughout the 1960s, there were fishing rights demonstrations at rivers in the Northwest. But by the end of the decade and into the next, a number of audacious occupations of abandoned government facilities occurred, along with the occupations of the Bureau of Indian Affairs headquarters in Washington, D.C. in 1972, and Wounded Knee in South Dakota in 1973. Four occupations in particular were extensively documented by LaPena and included in his archive, three of these taking place in Northern California and involving Northern California tribe members.

This section provides a broader understanding of the issues facing Native Americans and the terms in which they asserted their cultural identity and rights, as well as a more personal view of an individual’s effort to track these events, and the personal and cultural experiences to which they speak. Of the four occupations LaPena tracks, the most well-known are the occupations of Alcatraz Island in 1969 and Wounded Knee in 1973, both of which bookend the Indian activism of the period as it was witnessed by the larger, general public. From November 20, 1969 to June 11, 1971, a group called Indians of All Tribes, Inc., made up of Bay Area, relocated, American Indians from across the country, occupied Alcatraz Island; the occupation was initially led by
Richard Oakes, a Mohawk Indian. Their occupation of the island was a protest against the United States government’s unjust and paternalistic policies toward American Indians, and in particular, federal laws that took aboriginal land away from them in order to destroy American Indian cultures. An earlier, shorter-lived occupation of the island occurred in 1964; it lasted about four hours and was carried out by a group of five Sioux, who demanded the island be turned over for an Indian-run cultural center and university. The 1969 occupation reiterated the demands of the 1964 occupation.

The newspaper clippings scattered throughout LaPena’s collection record these demands as well as the toils experienced by those on the island, as they alternately clashed and negotiated with state officials. To read through all the articles and survey the photographs taken by the press is to realize the complex of emotions and subjectivities involved. A diverse group of individuals used the resources at their disposal to bring attention to the plight of American Indians who hoped to practice their indigenous identity within the confines of the settler state. The picture that these images paint is that activism itself—the act of activism—was and continues to be a vehicle for American Indians to articulate their sovereignty in ways that serve their present needs, aspirations, and traditions. By using new media for challenging the status quo of the dominant society (such as occupying surplus land owned by the government, or enlisting print and television news media to extend the reach of their political presence), Native Americans are finding new ways to be indigenous, new ways to connect to each other and the world, and new ways to root and route identity.

The Alcatraz occupation did not so much ignite a protest movement as articulate a particular expression of indigenous identity and sovereignty to a wide range of audiences as it was happening in the moment. But for some individuals with a more limited understanding of the Indian activism during this time, the Red Power Movement began with Alcatraz and culminated
with the occupation of Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation of the Oglala Sioux in South Dakota in 1973. On the night of February 27, 1973, arriving in a caravan of cars and trucks, some 200 Oglala Lakota (Sioux) and American Indian Movement (AIM) activists converged on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation, seizing the major buildings in town and taking its residents hostage as police quickly cordoned the area. LaPena not only kept a file on the Wounded Knee occupation containing news clippings and other published material, but he kept a scrapbook that includes dozens of articles from multiple news sources documenting the day-to-day events as they were unfolding. For 71 days, the protesters held the world’s and LaPena’s attention—demanding redress for more than a century of wrongs committed by the U.S. government, including the government’s financial support of corrupt tribal governments. The events that took place on this small stretch of land would bring to mind past injustices committed against American Indians—particularly the massacre of 300 Sioux at Wounded Knee in 1890 by the U.S. Seventh Cavalry—as the media documented the steady incursion of heavily armed FBI agents, federal marshals and BIA police, who cut off the occupiers from electricity, water, and food.

The events and the circumstances surrounding the occupation remain controversial for both Indians and non-Indians. This is partly due to the presence of the American Indian Movement (AIM)—a militant political and civil rights organization founded by Russell Means, Dennis Banks, and other Native leaders in 1968. AIM had been involved in the occupations of Alcatraz in 1969 and the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C., in 1972. AIM, along with the Oglala Lakota who joined them, demanded that the U.S. Senate launch an investigation of the BIA and all Sioux reservations in South Dakota, and that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hold hearing on the many Indian treaties broken by the U.S. government. The protesters traded gunfire with the police regularly, and by the time the occupation ended, two American Indians were dead.
LaPena was not involved with AIM, nor is there any evidence that he supported the particular methods they employed to achieve redress; however, he did pay close attention to their various activities, and he kept a file on Dennis Banks—who he would later work with at D-Q University. The file includes information about Banks’ activities outside of AIM as an advocate of Indian-directed education programs. LaPena’s political and cultural consciousness was routed across the country, and he mapped these routes through his papers, giving them order and thus meaning in his archived world. Selecting and saving materials assumes that those materials have a purpose or a significance beyond the here and now, that there is a benefit to having access to this material in the future. The materials in LaPena’s archival files bring the past into the present and move us to consider, as LaPena did, what these materials mean to future generations. As Rose Delia Soza War Soldier (2013:19) notes, historical consciousness of Indian activism in the twentieth century has tended to narrowly focus on three or four activist events that took place during the late sixties and early seventies, Alcatraz and Wounded Knee being two of the most recognized. She thus calls for a “broadening” of the discussion to include other forms of advocacy and activism during the 1960s and 1970s beyond those most referenced in the media and by scholars. The archive is one site at which one may seek new forms of Indian activism. The following discussion looks at Indian activism in the late twentieth century as a continuation of the activism of the past, but set within a postcolonial political landscape and articulated in a diversity of cultural expressions and geographic locations.

*Rooting Identity in the Land*

Two other notable occupations LaPena documents in his archive show how the Indian activism that marked the Red Power Movement fit into a personal as well as historical awareness of indigeneity in the U.S., as well as the ways that this can be articulated in an archive. On
November 3, 1971, Native American students occupied the site of a former U.S. army communications facility near the city of Davis, California to focus attention on the need for an Indian-run university. Earlier in the year, General Services Administration declared the site surplus land. The occupation was initiated by Indian and Chicano educators who formed a coalition to secure federal surplus land at Davis for a university. On January 12, the occupation ended, and the Corps of Engineers assigned the site to D-Q University on January 15. D-Q University was named after the founder of the Iroquois Federation, whose full name is not used outside sacred contexts, and Quetzalcoatl, an Aztec deity. The official transfer of property to D-Q University occurred on April 2, and on July 6, the university held its first school sessions. D-Q University is situated on 647 acres of flat farmland in Yolo County, and as originally governed by a board of 32 trustees elected annually—16 Indian, 16 Chicano. Former CSUS Professor of Education and Native American Studies, Morgan Otis, served on the Board of Trustees, along with UC Davis Professors Jack Forbes (Powhatan) and Davis Risling (Hoopa).

The university was initially divided into four colleges: the Tiburcio Vasquez College, which encompassed the general offerings of the University, including the Junior College and vocational programs, Hehaka Sapa College of Native American Studies, Quetzalcoatl College of Chicano Studies, and the Institute for Indian and Chicano Studies Expertise. It was the first surplus land returned to Indians for educational purposes in California, the first Chicano-Indian coalition in California, the first school for higher learning for Indians and Chicanos in California, and one of the first six tribal colleges in the United States. It had a culturally based education, one that included Native American history, language, culture, and spirituality to help prepare Indian students for the culturally diverse world. The school lost its accreditation in 2005 and closed its

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16 See educational and organizational materials, 1972-1996, Teaching Files Series, D.Q.U. Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
doors amid allegations of mismanagement. Since then, the Board of Trustees has struggled to keep the school open and functioning. Recently, they have been working with community organizations and government agencies to reopen the university (Costabile 2012).

The Toyon-Wintu Center was formerly a government camp located in Redding, California. In 1969, the 61-acre Jobs Corps camp closed, and was turned over to the Bureau of Indian Affairs by the U.S. General Services Administration in 1971. That same year, a group of Wintu and Pit River Indians jumped the fence and occupied the site with the intention of establishing a rehabilitation center and homes for families in need. Within a few days of the occupation, a small group of Wintus and members of other local tribes moved in and occupied the vacant buildings, claiming Toyon as their ancestral land. Control over the site was contested by Wintu Indians, Pit River Indians, and the Inter-Tribal Council of California, but the land was eventually ceded to the Wintus. In 1973, The Wintu Indians were granted temporary permit to stay at the center. From 1971 to 1987 the site was federally recognized; the site included housing, a gym, sawmill, and its own electric supply and water system (Frank LaPena, personal communication, September 17, 2014). Many cultural activities were hosted on the land during this period, but by 1989, the Wintu people were forcefully removed by Bureau of Indian Affairs officials and Shasta County Sheriffs, and the remaining buildings demolished. Many legal disputes resulted over rightful ownership of Toyon until 1989. Since then, the land has been vacant (Bishop 1988).

LaPena worked as a consultant on the Toyon program and proposal in 1970, helping to write the by-laws and constitution and filing the necessary papers to incorporate the Center. In 1971, he served as an elected member of the Board of Directors for the Toyon-Wintu Center,
Inc. In his essay on the Wintu culture published in the *Handbook of the North American Indians: California* (1978a), LaPena expressed his hope in a brighter future for the Wintu people and the Center: “Perhaps with the reacquisition of the Toyon Conservation camp (1973 Wintu tribal land) and the incorporation by the Wintu of the Toyon-Wintu Center Inc. there will be Wintu people working for the local Indian community and concerned about solving some of their problems.” In 1984, a negotiation was initiated between United States government and the Toyon Wintu Tribal Council whereby a reorganization of the tribe was given to a special committee chosen by the community on which LaPena served. The committee was able to reconnect the water and electricity and create a new Indian roll; however, the efforts of the committee were short-lived (Frank LaPena, personal communication, September 17, 2014). The Wintun community consists of three major groups spread around the Redding area in Northern California—the Wintu, Nomlaki, and Patwin, each with several tribal divisions. Disputes over leadership provoked tensions among certain of these divisions, and although some Wintu groups have successfully fought for federal recognition, most remain without access to land and federal protections and services (Frank LaPena, personal communication, September 17, 2014).

Indigenous identity is deeply tied to ancestral connections to land; land provides a place for Native peoples to root their indigeneity (Clifford 2013). Land is also one of the primary mechanisms through which Native Americans have continuously experienced the decimation and denigration of their cultural practices and traditions. Whether through a policy of Manifest Destiny, treaty making, reeducation in Federal Indian Boarding Schools, Indian termination and relocation, or a policy which ignores the sacredness of land to Native Americans and their

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17 Proposal for Promotion, February 1983, in ARTP files, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
worldview, the loss of land is ongoing threat for Native Americans. As such, land loss is an issue that is often employed in discourses of Native identity, and one that tethers present experiences with land to the past—the struggles remain even as time passes. One’s family story, one’s cultural heritage, is wrapped up in stories of the land, and thus these stories invariably involve the incursion by outsiders. Whether embodied by settlers, vigilantes, missionaries, government bureaucrats, military, or corporate capitalists, Native Americana identity becomes intimately and irrevocably tied to the U.S. government and its institutions. LaPena briefly recounts his own family history, and invokes the land, his family’s cultural connection to it, and their displacement from it by outside forces:

My tribe, The Wintu-Nomtipom, are a mountain river people of Northern California. My mother’s mother was from the upper-Sacramento River canyon from the Cedar district around Slate Creek. She was a Young. Grandma Rose married Garfield Towendolly from the Trinity Center area. The family held “head rights” and was responsible for the maintenance and preservation of tradition. My great uncle was Grant Towendolly, the last trained traditional leader. He never formally filled this position because the Trinity Wintu were forced to move from their traditional homeland to the upper Sacramento to avoid the military and roving vigilante groups in the 1860s and 1870s who were trying to kill them off. He was a practitioner of the Bear medicine. [LaPena 1978:73]

Maintaining a connection to the land is an arduous process, especially for those tribes who lack federal recognition. Recognition confers tribes and groups certain rights and benefits from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, for many Natives recognition means a validation of past wrongs committed by the government and the American public.

One of the most important things about recognition is legitimizing the elders’ stories and talk of culture for the young....Recognition legitimizes you in one sense. But you have to overcome a lot of inertia—and there’s a lot of historic amnesia at work here. Non-recognition treats the destruction of culture as a legitimate process. [LaPena 1978:73]

Although federal recognition can create internal dissension within a particular tribal group and provoke debate over how tribal membership is defined and conferred, it can also bring different groups together. After contact, many California Indians with different cultural practices,
languages, and regions were forced to live together on reservations or attend Indian boarding schools together. As a result, many tribes share similar ceremonial traditions, and continue to gather in ceremony, dance, and song (LaPena 1992a). The Patwin, Pomo, Nomlaki, Pomo, Maidu, Miwok, Wintu, and Washoe continue to gather together and engage in ceremonies that preserve tradition, maintain a spiritual and physical connection to the earth, and celebrate the continuity between the past and the present. Cultural differences are acknowledged between these groups; however, there is also an acknowledgement of the shared history of forced assimilation and acculturation. There are different levels of boundary marking within the process of identification; these boundaries can be circumscribed according to language, linguistic family, region, traditions and practices, family name or blood ancestry, or according to a broader understanding of socio-historical experience. The importance or dominance of any of these boundaries and the identities they mark shifts in time and space and according to social context. Frank LaPena’s life, words, and articulations of Native American identity speak to the complex nature of ethnic identity and boundary making in American society, and within the dominant white culture in which Native American identity is circumscribed.

Native American identity has always been political in the sense that it is an identity that has been forced on a diverse group of peoples by the U.S. government and the dominant society whose identity is defined in opposition to Native American identity. Land use rights further complicate the political nature of Native identity, especially as tribes and groups who are able to legally “prove” their Native heritage are given access to valuable resources and rights via government agencies. This affects how Indians bound their identities. But so do shared experiences of cultural destruction and social stratification, which over time can become part of one’s cultural heritage, part of the oral traditions handed down from elders to the new generations, part of the cultural traditions practiced by one or more Native communities, part of
the discourse in which social activism is produced, and part of the terms in which American Indians challenge the power and dominance of U.S. ideologies, institutions, and policies. Who speaks for whom, for what, and to whom, are enduring questions in this postmodern, postcolonial period, but the ways these questions are embodied and enacted in Native American identity is constantly changing, and changing in a culturally continuous manner. Despite the negative stereotypes attributed to Native Americans and the racism they experience everyday, many Native Americans choose to celebrate their cultural heritage, to find strength in suffering and struggle, and to continue the practice of their lifeways. Native identity is embedded in every dimension of Native life.19

The occupations of Alcatraz, Wounded Knee, Toyon and Davis demonstrate the different ways Native Americans articulate their connection to and identification with land and place. They also demonstrate the broad and localized dimensions of Native identity and social activism. In one sense, there is a recognition that Native Americans across the United States experience similar social and economic circumstances as a result of institutionalized discrimination and everyday racism, and this shared experience fosters a shared understanding of what it means to be Native American in this country; that is, what it means to be identified as Native American no matter where you are or how you may identify yourself. The effect of this shared experience is that Native American tribes and communities often share similar goals, such as respect for Native American worldviews and practices, interest in the protection of sacred sites and religious rights, concern for the preservation of cultural traditions (including those that involving fishing, water, and land rights), and implementation of a policy of self-determination (according to which decisions affecting Native peoples should be placed in the hands of Native people, not the government [Hoxie 2001]).

19 The next two chapters will further illustrate the complexity of Native identity as it shapes and it shaped by traditional and academic teachings as well as art, museums, and galleries.
When we read about cases like Toyon and Davis, the goals become more specific in terms of cultural beliefs and practices and the social and historical context. Indian activism like this was happening all over the country on small and grand scale, and it continues to occur today. Rights over land and water use are still challenged by tribes and their supporters, sacred sites continue to be desecrated or encroached upon by prospective builders, and Native communities continue to organize their bodies and minds to creating new sites for expressing indigeneity, all the while attempting to create a stream of understanding which Native and non-Native people can approach without trepidation. It is a difficult maneuver, but one that has allowed for a thriving community, even as Native Americans continue to struggle with the same issues 50 years later. Alcatraz was not the beginning, nor was Wounded Knee the end; they are both part of a broader continuity of Native American identity and culture from which indigeneity is constantly emerging.

SEARCHING FOR IDENTITY IN THE ARCHIVES

In April, 1976, Raymond L. Markwick, Sr., Chairman of the Toyon Wintu Center Board of Directors, sent a letter to Mr. Herman J. Viola, Director of the National Anthropological Archives of the Smithsonian Institution. In the letter, Markwick relays the Board’s unanimous vote to nominate LaPena for the American Indian Cultural Resources Training Program. The Board believed that because of his “interest and past experience,” he would “be of great value to the program as well as being of benefit to the Wintu people.” The research was funded by a history research grant under the Cultural Resources Training Program with the National Museum

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20 Letter from Raymond L. Markwick Sr., to Herman J. Viola, April 12, 1976, in Wintu Ethnography Revised folder, Reference Files Series, Project Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
of Natural History. The program sought Indian persons who were “considered effective and knowledgeable in their home communities.”

After receiving a letter of acceptance into the program, Frank LaPena traveled to Washington, D.C., where he spent the summer of 1976 conducting research at the Smithsonian Institution. Through the program, LaPena was able to work with mostly unpublished archival materials on the Wintu written by Jeremiah Curtin and J.P. Harrington. LaPena was a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology at California State University, Sacramento at this time, and used the data collected during his one-month stay at the institution as the basis of his Master’s thesis research. LaPena supplemented this research with data gathered from unpublished material from the archives at the Old Shasta Historical Society and Museum in Shasta County as well as from talking to elders of the Wintu himself (LaPena 1978b:1). LaPena describes his thesis as a “revised ethnography of the Wintu Indian tribe of Northern California,” one that reflected new data compiled since the publication of Wintu Ethnography, in 1935, by anthropologist Cora Du Bois (LaPena 1978b:i). As LaPena (1978b:2) states, this project was more than historical, it was personal:

I became involved in this thesis for personal interest and a need to research and find what material was available on my tribe. I was also interested on how tribal information correlated with what was printed. My concern was also prompted by the fact that my uncle was the tribal historian for the Nomtipom area of the Wintu.

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21 Letter from Herman J. Viola, Director of National Anthropological Archives, National Museum of Natural History, to Frank LaPena, March 19, 1976, in Wintu Ethnography Revised folder, Reference Files Series, Project Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
22 Letter from National Museum of Natural History to Frank LaPena, June 29, 1976, in Wintu Ethnography Revised folder, Reference Files Series, Project Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
23 See in Wintu Ethnography Revised folder, Reference Files Series, Project Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
24 LaPena’s ethnographic research on Wintu culture was included in the prestigious Handbook of the Northern American Indian, Volume 8: California (1978), a standard reference book used by anthropologists and historians published by the Smithsonian Institution.
Early Anthropology and Contemporary Rewritings

Jeremiah Curtin, J.P. Harrington, and Cora Du Bois represent an early period within the history of anthropology. Raised in rural Wisconsin and educated at Harvard, Curtin (1835-1906) was an ethnologist, folklorist, and mythologist who, in 1864, went to Russia as Secretary to the American legation headed by Cassius Clay. Upon returning to the United States, he worked for the Bureau of American Ethnology (which would later become part of the Smithsonian Institution) where he specialized in American Indian Languages (Eastlake 2014).

Harrington (1884-1961) was, like Curtin, a prominent figure within American Indian studies. Raised in Santa Barbara, California, he developed an interest in the languages of the local Mission Indians. After graduating from Stanford University, Harrington began a career methodically studying and documenting the languages of Native Americans. In 1915 he was hired as a Research Ethnologist for the Bureau of American Ethnology, allowing him to devote the next 40 years of his professional career to conducting intensive linguistic field research and to collecting data on over 125 languages in California and the Far West (Golla 1994). LaPena considered Harrington’s archival notes as most important to understanding the Wintu, for they include material about the early part of the twentieth century and Harrington’s work with religious leaders.

Born in New York City, Cora Du Bois (1903-1991) was a first generation Swiss-American. Du Bois took her first course in anthropology in 1926-1927, during her final year as an undergraduate at Barnard College, the women’s college at Columbia University. She was taught by Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict, and upon graduating from Barnard, studied under Alfred L. Kroeber and Robert Lowie at the University of California, Berkeley. In the spring of 1929, she began her ethnographic fieldwork among the Wintu of northern California. She received her Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from Berkeley in 1932 and stayed on as a research associate until
1935. After engaging in a number of applied anthropology posts for the government, Du Bois eventually settled back into academic life as Zemurray Professor of Anthropology at Harvard, where she became the first women to teach anthropology at the institution (Harvard University Library). 

On October 27, 1972, Cora Du Bois wrote a letter to Frank LaPena in response to his inquiry for information regarding her work with his people, the Wintu. The following is a transcription of the letter sent to LaPena, typed on Harvard University Letterhead:

Dear Mr. La Pena,

I am delighted to hear that you are concerned about the history and culture of the Wintu. I would be glad to put at your disposal any note or memories of my field work among your people in 1929 and 1930. Unfortunately, in the last forty-two years my memory of those very interesting and formative days has faded, even more unfortunately, my field notes have been lost in the course of many moves. I believe that most of my observations were reported in a series of papers published either by me or jointly with Dorothy Demetracapoulous (now Dorothy Lee). Dr. Lee was the linguist of the team and she returned to Wintu territory at least once or twice after my last trip (1930?).

I would like to be of assistance, but it seems unlikely that I would be of much help short of prolonged, evocative interviews. As you know, Dr. Lee and I encountered the Wintu in the last phase of their “acculturation.” There were very few bilinguals left and fewer still monolinguals. Of the culture there were few survivals. Of the society there was, to the best of my memory, no evidence except a few small nuclear family groups. A study of Wintu culture and society is essentially archival and historical, today, as well as in my time.

Your present interest in your Wintu origins is, of course, admirable, and I wish you every success.

Sincerely yours,

Cora Du Bois
Zemmuray Professor (Emerita)

26 Letter from Cora Du Bois, October 27, 1972, in Wintu Ethnography Revised folder, Reference Files Series, Projects Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
The notion of contemporary Wintu culture as “essentially archival and historical” is one of which LaPena was not convinced, for he wrote to Dorothy Lee two months later on December 29, 1972.27

Dear Dr. Lee,

I have written a letter to Cora DuBois asking if she could let me use her field notes, or tell me some personal experiences among the Wintu. (She wrote back, but unfortunately could not help me.) I am a Wintu interested in writing our history. Did you, or have you a list of words and of what area? Who were the bilingual or monolingual people you can recall? Can you share some personal experiences of yours in our area?—with people, land, or tribe?

I understand someone is making a Wintu dictionary[,] can you get one for me? I will gladly pay for it. Or if you know of what institution the person is I could make the request from my college. I would appreciate a list of your linguistic notes done in the field, if possible.

Can you recall some of the things happening in our area in the 1930’s?: how were the people making a living, what were some of the ceremonies observed, where were the meeting places in use who were some of the individual Indians you can recall, what were some of the problems of this time.

I am aware of assimilation and transition but I feel there is much cultural value carried over—and this could be seen and observed by a keen observer such as yourself.

I hope to do some work in linguistics dealing with values and the carrying over of those values. Can you help me. I realize correspondence is not the best way but—that is all I can do at this time.

My family is the Towndolly.

Sincerely,

Frank LaPena

LaPena’s efforts to document and recover the cultural values and practices of his Wintu people, regardless of any “assimilation and transition” they may have endured, is clear. In his thesis, he writes, “In spite of much change from their precontact culture, traditions and language, the Wintu still maintain an appreciation of their Indian territory” (LaPena 1978b:2). The field notes of Du Bois and Lee are not cited by LaPena in his thesis. Thus, Du Bois’ *Wintu Ethnography* is the

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27 Letter from Frank LaPena to Dorothy Lee, December 29, 1972, in Wintu Ethnography Revised folder, Reference Files Series, Project Files subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
primary document from which LaPena drew data on what Wintu life was like during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Based on this archival and literary fieldwork, LaPena set about doing his own ethnographic fieldwork in Wintu country and among his people.

My curiosity and trips into the countryside to look for landmarks and sites helped establish not only my own heritage and the locale for many of the stories and historical happenings, but it also allowed those of us involved to have a mutual experience as Wintu. It was easier to talk of many things which would remind us of other times and more questions. It was the experience of oral and tribal history, the connection between young and old. This thesis represents a rewriting of earlier material combined with new research. [LaPena 1978b:2, emphasis added]

LaPena’s thesis marks an early attempt to engage with “dominant” institutions such as anthropology, the academy, and the government and its agencies from a decidedly American Indian perspective, with the intention of bringing to light the history, diversity, and continuity of Wintu culture. It represents a “rewriting” of earlier material, not just because it brings Wintu culture out of the past and into the present, but because it presents a “rewriting” of Wintu culture that allows for a future tense, something which was not necessarily of concern to early scholars of American Indian studies, especially those ethnographers and anthropologists who purported to study “the vanishing races of Native America.” LaPena employs the methodology and theory of anthropology to investigate and recontextualize the work of anthropologists like Curtin and Harrington, Du Bois and Lee, to make it more meaningful and useful to those whom these works and these anthropologists claim to know. In essence, LaPena is challenging the discipline of anthropology, preempting Said’s (1989:212) questions, “Who speaks? For what and to whom?”

What happens when the ethnographic authority enjoyed by non-Native scholars shifts and becomes decentered? Native Americans have challenged discourses of colonialism and regimes of power and knowledge since contact using the technologies at their disposal. In the wake of the Civil Rights Movement of the fifties and sixties, more and more minorities used the technologies of dominant white society to challenge systems of hegemony from within and without,
anthropology being one of them. Although there is a recognition by contemporary anthropologists that any representation of identity and culture can be but a partial one, there is also the recognition that some representations may be less partial than others, or rather, more representative. This is a notion that Native American communities have continued to assert. Rewriting history, in this sense, becomes an act of identifying the external systems of colonialism and regimes of power behind “authoritative” representations of American Indians and a simultaneous act of self-identifying as part of a community and as an individual within that community. But rewriting history happens in different ways and on different scales. History is rewritten with every occupation, every protest, every symposium, and published work, and it is also rewritten with every traditional ceremony—every Big Time dance, every hunt, every retelling of a familiar story to unfamiliar ears. That LaPena was able to crosscheck the information in *Wintu Ethnography* with that remembered and recounted by Wintu elders is something of an inspired moment in Wintu history. It provided cultural continuity for the Wintu and cultural identification for LaPena. LaPena (1978b:73) concludes his thesis with a statement on the survival of the Wintu people, their culture, and their physical and spiritual connection to the land:

> Change makes new history and causes physical alteration to the land. How one uses the land and relates to the land tells us something about the historical relationships and gestalt of the Wintu. Because land is so important for identity and spiritual being, and because non-Indians emphasize history and overlook the philosophical and present-day cultural relevance to the Wintu.

Though there is much restriction of land use and one cannot hunt or fish or practice some of the ceremonial ways, there is still an understanding and concept about the world as it was and how it is, that the Wintu culture has given us. There is a belief in sacred things and practices. Though times have changed there is still a need to understand and appreciate life. There are specific plants, animals and ways of looking at the world which are valid, but we have to understand them before we can appreciate and use them wisely. The Wintu practice and live their culture today.
A deep, spiritual connection to the land is a common theme in Native American discourses regarding culture, tradition, and identity. Not only does the land support life by providing food and shelter and balance, it is the source of all life, and for the Wintu it is from the land that the Wintu people and their culture emerged (LaPena 1978b:73).

There is a story of struggle within this discussion of Native American identity that so often gets glossed by talk of “tribal politics” and “blood wars.” This struggle is so crucial to know and to understand not because it is the basis of Native identity, but also because it provides a basis for understanding Native American identity in its present context, because this suffering is part of a collective memory that finds solace and strength in its past and uses it to inspire a future in which suffering is not a condition of everyday living. This is where the archives enter the scene.

The thousands of documents in Frank LaPena’s Collection color this world with the emotions, hopes, plans, struggles, silences, humor and creations of American Indians through space and time. LaPena’s Collection shows that there is considerable variation within any group, no matter how precisely a group may define itself; it provides an account of Native American identity and representation that does not justify or discount the particular injustices inflicted on Native Americans throughout American history and into its present. One should not assume, however, that this or any archival collection is a clear “window into the past” or that these records provide access to a moment in time when Native American identity was defined as “this” or “that.” Instead, we should look at archival collections and documents as a way of reading and being aware of the continuity of time and space.
“Thank you” letters seem like an odd, or at least banal, place to draw out the influence of a person’s actions on others. LaPena’s archive is full of them. Letters from fellow CSUS faculty members and other colleges and campuses across the country, Native-run cultural centers, artists, community organizers, state agencies and institutions, students, government officials, museums, and curators—all expressing appreciation to LaPena for his commitment to helping improve the status of Native Americans in and out of the academy. But many of these letters go beyond the formal “thanks for your participation/support/time on this or that project” and reveal the relationships behind all the “thanks you’s”—the vast network of (Native and non-Native) people and institutions invested in furthering cultural and community life for Native Americans. Some of the letters reference projects or activities that are never mentioned again in other documents, while others are attached to larger project files that include incoming and outgoing correspondence. But all of these letters give a glimpse into the day-to-day life of LaPena, along with his personal calendars; the latter of which are full of his jagged handwriting documenting all the activities, the meetings, ceremonies, speaking engagements, exhibits, trips out of town, cultural events, friends, coworkers and elders that filled his everyday world. Oddly enough, these letters and calendars are a vital component of LaPena’s archive—they show the connections between people, places, and things (archival material) as they come into contact, share ideas and space, and decide to work together to create new articulations of indigeneity, of realizing the persistence and continuity of Native American identity and culture.

LaPena spent over 40 years as a public educator, 31 of those years were at Sacramento State University, where he taught in the Art and Ethnic Studies departments and directed the
Native American Studies program. Thus it is no surprise that a significant portion of his files pertain to his time at CSUS; these files flesh out his philosophies as a teacher of Native American art, history, and culture. Through his archive, LaPena tracks his career as a professor at CSUS through memos with other faculty, staff, and administrators regarding official matters of university policy, departmental needs, and professional development. He spent a great deal of time working with other departments and faculty on campus to develop programs that served the special needs of underserved communities, especially the local Native American community.

Just as much of LaPena’s time was spent off-campus visiting high schools and talking to students about his culture, his art, and his history; attending conferences and talking to other scholars in his field; or speaking at cultural events where he was able to share his knowledge and experiences with a larger, general audience. He also supported educational programs, from primary to post-secondary, that serviced the American Indian population, by offering his services as an organizer, committee member, program director, lecturer, and consultant. As an elder in the Native American community, he remains deeply committed to sharing his traditional knowledge with younger generations so that they too can benefit from knowing who they are and where they come from, and so that they can use the tools of their past to negotiate their way through the constantly shifting political, cultural and economic landscapes that shape their world. This chapter maps the shifting terrain that LaPena has navigated as he made a space for himself in the academy and the traditional, spiritual world of his ancestors, finding innovative ways to bring the two worlds together. As LaPena states, “As an artist and a person interested in tradition, I don’t see any conflict between what I do and who I am. What misunderstanding there is comes from
others who do not understand the importance of continuity and the value of changing forms, while maintaining the essence of symbolism.\textsuperscript{28}

It is in the space of the archive that we can involve ourselves in LaPena’s lifelong efforts to promote Native American heritage in and out of the academy; we can hear the voices of the individuals who worked with LaPena, who fought alongside him for common causes, and who understood that a meaningful connection with tradition required continuity with the past and that such continuity required constant effort, constant attention and action in the present. The “ways of knowing” history, of teaching it to others and living it everyday, are “ways of articulating” indigenous identity with contemporary circumstances. LaPena’s archive provides a window into these articulations, a window into the different ways of knowing Indian identity and culture.

WAYS OF KNOWING: TRADITIONAL EDUCATION AND THE ACADEMY

One of the main ways in which the beliefs, values, and policies of Native American communities are instilled and institutionalized is through education, both traditional and academic. Traditional education refers to the instruction of cultural heritage practices, beliefs, and customs by bearers of that culture, usually elders or traditionalists who retained the invaluable knowledge of their elders and have taken the responsibly of keeping tradition alive by passing on that knowledge to future generations. Traditional education incorporates learning about one’s culture from those who know it best in a social context that emphasizes the importance of the physical and metaphysical world, of the sacred places that are so embedded in the worldview and everyday life of Native American communities (Goulet 1998). Thus, students learn by listening, observing, and doing—storytelling is the primary mechanism through which traditional knowledge is transmitted, and this oral history is embodied and enacted in the ritual practices of a

\textsuperscript{28} Eleventh Biennial Native American Art Studies Association Conference abstracts, October 1997, Public Activities Series, Art Activities Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
particular Native American culture. It is the practical application of knowledge that makes it meaningful for Native peoples,

Academic education is based on a Western system of learning and knowing (Goulet 1998). Counter to traditional education, the primary means through which academic knowledge is conveyed is through literature, usually literature that has been sanctioned by academic institutions as having “scholastic authority” and thus worthy of being used as part of the curricula. There are many reasons behind the choice of some textbooks over others, and departmental politics, economics, and the bureaucratic nature of the academy often have a strong influence on these decisions. Students are taught “subjects” or “disciplines” that are compartmentalized instead of integrated holistically, so that the Sciences are separated from the Humanities, the Social Sciences, the Arts, and so on. Much of the literature used in the classroom lacks cultural diversity and awareness and often excludes the history and achievements of minority groups or provides a “linear” or “objective” interpretation of history and culture (Barnhardt and Kawagley 2005:11).

In addition to the materials that are used to transmit knowledge to students in an academic setting, the social context in which they are instructed differs from that of traditional education. The classroom is the place where all knowledge is specified, and within this setting, students are expected to sit, listen, and consume the information given by the instructor, who has been sanctioned by a state-accredited institution as a credible source of knowledge. Rationality, lineality, and logic are the predominate ways of knowing in the academy (Gross 2005:123). Knowing is achieved in degrees—both in the degrees you receive as you complete high school, an undergraduate education, and then graduate level work, and the degree to which you achieve competency in a particular course, which is usually measured by grades and grade point average. In the Western context, knowledge is attained individually not communally. Academia as a cultural institution is set apart from the non-academic environment—it is not inherently involved
or concerned with traditional knowledge or its practical application in day-to-day life and understanding. For most, attaining an academic education, especially a “higher education,” means access to better job opportunities and higher wages. Traditional knowledge and education, on the other hand, is “holistic”; it involves all aspects and dimensions of life, spirituality, and the physical world. It is not separated from the family, religion, the arts, economic production, political organization, or land.

The difference in ideology and pedagogy between traditional and academic education systems often means that Native Americans get left behind in and out of the classroom—both as students and as scholars and faculty members—and that indigenous ways of knowing are marginalized and devalued by the larger society. Frank LaPena has had to reconcile these two worlds in both his personal and professional life. He is both a traditionalist, an elder of his Native community, and an academic teacher who instructs both Native and non-Native students about Native American art and culture.

LaPena has struggled to bring his traditionalist knowledge into the classroom in a way that legitimizes his authority as a scholar of Native American studies and art within the university environment. As a scholar who does not hold a doctorate in his field of study, Native American Art and History, LaPena experienced the limitations of the university’s tenure and promotions policy early in his career as a professor of Art and Ethnic Studies at CSUS. LaPena first began teaching art history courses on Native American culture and art in the Department of Art in Fall 1971. Although he did not hold a degree in Art beyond a Bachelor’s, LaPena was hired as an instructor of Native American Art History because of his “special insights into Indian life and

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29 Frank LaPena often discusses the “holistic” nature of Indian lifeways in his writings. See publications by LaPena in Appendix A and References Cited, and the Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
LaPena incorporated his own knowledge and experience of Native art and culture as both a traditionalist and an artist into the classroom, and he also made an effort to place Native American art within the context of the dominant Western discourse on art.

I pursue an active and participatory role in traditional and Native American Arts and Crafts and activities—it is true this is not Art History in the common mold, but is in fact Art History and Art and Culture of the Native American. Also, I include the Indo-European comparison to Native American Art History to establish credibility to the course and to establish an over all view of art.31

On May 30, 1979, LaPena filed a grievance with the School of Arts and Sciences, Academic Affairs, and the President of CSUS under Executive Order 301, in response to being denied promotion to Associate Professor in the Department of Art and to the omission of his name from the School of Arts and Sciences 1979 promotion list.32 The primary grounds for LaPena’s grievance included:

(1) Actions which were arbitrary, unreasonable and not consistent with appropriate criteria and standards. A major item in this category is the application of a Ph.D. requirement for promotion in my case.

(2) Discriminatory treatment. This includes promotion of other individuals in the Department who did not possess the Ph.D. and who were comparable to myself in other relevant respects.

(3) Failure to take into account substantial evidence favorable to me. This includes inadequate consideration of evidence from the Ethnic Studies Center, with which I hold a joint appointment.33

LaPena had previously been passed over for a promotion to Associate Professor in the Department of Art; as a remedy he sought promotion to the position of Associate Professor

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30 Memo from Frank R. LaPena to W. Lloyd Johns, President of California State University, Sacramento, September 13, 1979, attachment, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Department of Special Collections and University Collections, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
31 Ibid.
32 Letter from Frank LaPena to W. Lloyd Johns, President of California State University, Sacramento, May 30, 1979, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
33 Memo from Frank R. LaPena, to W. Lloyd Johns, President of California State University, Sacramento, September 13, 1979, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
retroactive to the beginning of the 1979-1980 academic year. Part of the complications regarding LaPena’s promotion concerned his joint appointment in both the Art and Ethnic Studies departments; since the University Appointment, Retention, Tenure and Promotion procedures for joint appointment were still under review at the time, it was hard to account for LaPena’s time as a full-time faculty member splitting his teaching schedule between the two departments. In fact, LaPena was considered a qualified candidate for promotion the previous year based on his “vocational” experience as a community leader and scholar, his teaching experience, and his recent completion of his Master of Arts degree in anthropology; however, he was not promoted due to limits in the budget.

In his grievance, LaPena details his ‘qualifications’ in the areas of art and Native American studies citing his work with Indian elders and traditionalists in Northern California and his work as a studio artist who has exhibited professionally since the late 1950s. An especially revealing component of LaPena’s grievance files is “written evidence” from colleagues and professional associates on and off campus which consists of many letters of support for the promotion of LaPena. Like the “thank you” letters, these letters could represent the “run-of-the-mill” letters of recommendations that colleagues write for co-workers; however—again, like the “thank you” letters in LaPena’s archive—these letters of support demonstrate LaPena’s deeper connection to his community. This includes not only the local Native community, but also the state agencies he worked with and within, and the community on campus that he helped to develop as a relevant site or “hub,” to use Ramirez’s (2007) concept, for Indian education and cultural transmission. Brian Bibby, former instructor of Native American Studies at CSUS and fellow member of the Maidu Dancers and Traditionalists, writes of LaPena, “In my opinion, Frank LaPena is one of the few people who can maintain his cultural and professional relationships while continuing to work in these sometimes contrasting and conflicting modern
situations. He does all this by bringing his traditions and roots to the academic world. This sentiment is repeated throughout the letters—LaPena’s ability to negotiate diverse roles as an indigenous person, educator, administrator, artist, scholar, and traditionalist. LaPena won his grievance and was promoted to the level of Associate Professor for the academic year 1979-1980.

The grievance files demonstrate the confluence of LaPena’s subjectivities as a teacher, artist, and traditionalist within and outside of the academy. For LaPena, the knowledge he has attained from his elders and the teaching and practicing of his traditions in his public and private activities has equipped him with the tools for engaging in projects of heritage renewal in both a "traditional" and academic setting—for rearticulating older forms of social connectedness and cultural transmission and performing them in new and shifting contexts for different audiences (Clifford 2013:21). An archival collection like LaPena’s provides a site in which to identify and acknowledge the presence of what Clifford calls “the transformative survival and growing vitality” of indigenous societies (2013:21). This chapter illustrates LaPena’s roles as an educator in both the academy and the Native community and the ways in which he has used different ‘ways of knowing’ to improve the cultural and scholastic achievements of indigenous peoples in the country.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF “THE OLD ONES”

LaPena’s traditional education provides the foundation for his understanding of the world as a unified whole, and it is this knowledge that informs all other dimensions of his life, especially his role as a practitioner and teacher of Native culture. Many of LaPena’s files contain documents relating to his public activities—lectures, speaking engagements, poetry readings, ceremonial dance and song performances, and art activities—almost all of which are connected in

34 Memo from Brian Bibby, Instructor of Native American Studies, to Evaluation Committee, Charles Roberts, Chairman, CSUS, December 21, 1977, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Department of Special Collections and University Collections, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
some personal way to his life and identification as a traditionalist of his Wintu culture. Whether exhibiting his contemporary art or speaking about art, religion, medicine, identity, or sovereignty, he continuously emphasizes the importance of his elders to his own education; “the old ones” as he affectionately refers to them. He considers the oral teachings of his elders to be just as significant as his college education, and perhaps even more so because they have given him a broader understanding and appreciation for the world as a whole. In the catalog for Ancestral Memories (Falkirk Cultural Center, San Rafael, California, 1992), an exhibition designed as a “visual tribute” to indigenous elders and ancestors, LaPena writes:

These elders, who were wise and gentle people, were singers and medicine people—practitioners of the sacred traditions, customs, and ceremonies. We are taught to respect the earth, for it is a place of mystery, wonder, and power. The earth and the universe are alive, and living entities.  

For the Ancestral Memories exhibition, participating artists were commissioned to make one to two pieces of art commemorating the life and work of historical figures in Native American history who have contributed to the survival and continuance of their cultures—LaPena chose Mabel McKay and Wallace Burrows.

I am indebted through respect and love to the Pomo healer and medicine woman [sic] Mabel McKay for her love of the world and for her friendship, and to the Nomlaki singer Wallace Burrows for the discovery of what love means in song and dance. Both of them accepted me as one of their family. It is in ceremony that I pay respect to both of them, and to all things. We are one with the earth and the universe.  

Elders are responsible for giving meaning and vitality to the traditions, knowledge, and ceremonies they pass on to the young ones. The old ones teach the young how to live, think, and breathe in the world in a positive manner—in a way that brings together all aspects of the universe for the purposes of sustaining life and preserving culture. The significance of stories of

35 Ancestral Memories exhibition catalog, 1992, in Exhibitions Series, Group and Solo Exhibitions Subseries, the Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
36 Ibid.
the old ways lies in their ability to tether various dimensions of knowing, being and belonging in
the world—they make vital connections between the past, the present and the future, they put
people in touch with the sacred, and tie them to the land. For LaPena, without elders who are
willing to make sacrifices to protect and maintain tradition and keep ceremony alive, culture and
ceremony would not have the meaning and strength it has today. These are the gifts of tradition
given by elders to the new generations of culture bearers:

The world is a gift from our old ones. This sacred gift was created through love
and respect by those elders who understood the beauty of their surroundings.
Their understanding encompassed the total meaning of life within their
environment. The old ones paid close attention to the sacred earth and to all
nature. They were involved with mysterious and magical dimensions of reality.
The evidence for the representation of the earth as a mystical and magical place
was given embodiment through the experiences of those who made visits to
sacred places. The power of knowledge was revealed to medicine people and
traditionalists involved in its pursuit.37

This section maps LaPena’s relationships with three of his elders as he finds ways to
articulate his indigenous identity using his elders as guides and sources of inspiration and as he
forms new configurations for practicing tradition in a postcolonial context that nurture a strong
sense of Native community, identity, and heritage for future generations of Native peoples.
LaPena’s archive not only documents his indigenous articulations throughout the years, but it also
provides another site in which he articulates his identity as a practitioner and teacher of
indigeneity. It is within the space of ‘the Archive’ that his archive has the potential to be
translated by a wide spectrum of audiences, indigenous and non-indigenous alike. Perhaps its
value for all is as a resource that shows how and why Native tradition survives as an integral
dimension of indigenous identity.

37 The World is a Gift gallery guide, The Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Santa Fe, New
Mexico, 1988, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers,
Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University,
Sacramento.
“The Old Ones”

As conveyed in the Ancestral Memories exhibition, Frank LaPena was greatly influenced by his elders Mabel McKay and Wallace Burrows. LaPena worked with both of them in various capacities and would often write or talk about his memories of them. In October 1989, he participated in a panel discussion entitled “Religious Art, or Art as a Religious Nature” for the Sources of a Distinct Majority Symposium hosted by the San Francisco Art Institute. In the draft of his presentation, LaPena reminiscences about his time with McKay, about her insights and her influence on his worldview:

What she [Mabel McKay] reminded me about…was that you need to look at the world and think positive and say good of everything in the world. At the same time, you should acknowledge and understand that there is bad, and understand what that means, but don’t accept it. That was the main thing she was saying. So as you go through life, talk and live in the positive manner, because it is by your words and actions that you help create a positive universe.38

Born in 1907 in Lake County, California, Mabel McKay was the last member of the Long Valley Cache Creek Pomo Indians. Mabel grew to be a world-renowned basket weaver who was also known for her exceptional doctoring skills. She was also a Dreamer; Dreamers replenish a tribe’s history and culture and direct people in the proper ways of performing sacred activities. McKay connected basket making with her healing work as an indigenous doctor and would give patients their own baskets. She passed on her knowledge and skills of doctoring and basket weaving to others, and was the last of the Dreamers to pass on the legacy of Pomo Indian customs which connected tribal members to the spiritual world. McKay was a respected scholar of her Pomo culture who would often speak at local universities and museums on Native American culture and the art of basket weaving. She was a unique storyteller and would often weave in and

38 Religious Art, or Art as a Religious Nature, paper presented at Sources of a Distinct Majority Symposium, San Francisco Art Institute, October 13, 1989, Public Activities Series, Art Activities Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
out of a story, giving the appearance of incoherency, but like the expert lines and weaves of her baskets, her stories were deliberate and guided by a deeper spirituality and sense of cultural identity. McKay’s uncommon gift for conveying her experiences, dreaming, and world made her an expert cultural broker; one whose work with anthropologists and other scholars helped to nurture greater understanding and respect for the nuances of Native California identity and history. She was an incredibly active public figure until her death in 1993. She served as Commissioner of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), an organization that, like her, was dedicated to the preservation and continuation of the traditional ways of California Native peoples.\(^3^9\) LaPena worked alongside McKay as a consultant for the NAHC to develop programs for Indian artists, they both participated in group art shows together as well as other art, educational, and ceremonial events. He shared his memory of her with others in order to keep her influence and spirit alive.

Wallace Burrows was a renowned singer and ceremonial leader of the Nomlaki Dances at the Grindstone Rancheria in Glenn County, and one of the last fluent speakers of the old, conservative Nomlaki language. He and his wife, Edith, who was of Patwin descent, served as vital links to the old ways.\(^4^0\) Born in 1886, Burrows came of age at a time before white settlers had to moved to the Sacramento Valley. His vast knowledge of the old ways and his tireless commitment to keeping the ceremonial life of the roundhouse intact by training new singers and dancers helped to maintain the continuity of tradition until his death at age 102. LaPena had a very close relationship with Burrows: “I have respected no man more than Wallace Burrows: for his knowledge, which he was always ready to share, and for his kindness. He represented the

\(^{3^9}\) The Native California Indian Newsletter 1(3), 1979, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

traditional elder, wise and a good teacher. Without him, today’s ceremonies would not have the vitality and meaning they do” (LaPena 1992a:47).

Burrows instructed the young ones in the ways of ceremony, song, and dance. The Hesi ceremony, in particular, is a tradition that Burrows helped to sustain. The Hesi ceremony, also known as the Big Head ceremony, is a celebration of the continuation of life and the source of all life, the earth. It is performed at least twice a year by both the Pomo and Wintun peoples. The ceremony is a symbol of the survivance of tradition and culture, and of the will and determination of elders past and present who kept the dance alive, and thus their people. That the ceremony is still performed centuries after European contact and conquest is itself miraculous. The performance of the ceremony today thus serves as a recognition of the survival of the Hesi dance as well as culture of the Pomo and Wintu despite the continuous destruction of Native cultures and land. During a time which environmental degradation is of increasing concern, the Hesi has come to represent a more sustainable way of living on and of the earth (LaPena 1992a:43).

Another elder LaPena often cites as a great influence is Frank Day (1902-1976). Day was a Konkow Maidu artist from Berry Creek, California, and a bearer of his culture’s traditions and customs, of the language, history, and legends that formed the foundation of his Maidu heritage, all of which are deeply bound to the physical landscape. As an artist and Maidu traditionalist and leader, Day was moved to bring Maidu tradition into the present, to give tradition continuity in a changing world. In a piece for the magazine News from Native California, LaPena (1989:14) writes:

Frank Day was creative in his art, storytelling, and he was a culture bearer in his singing and sharing of his traditions….Frank learned a sense of dedication and hard work from his elders, encompassing not only social and communal mores but also the rich ceremonial and traditional practices of the headman’s family.

Day’s father, Billy Day Twoboe, was a respected leader in his Konkow Maidu community. As such, he assumed the role of keeper of Maidu knowledge as well as its
transmitter, for knowledge of Maidu tradition is only meaningful if practiced, if lived in every
moment of the day. Frank Day continued his father’s work by passing his knowledge on, keeping
the knowledge alive through his vivid and figurative paintings. Day’s paintings and his work in
the community stand as testimony to the persistence of tradition in a world where Native tradition
was at least marginalized, and more often abolished. As an artist and a traditionalist, Day
continues to inspire the work of others, passing the torch to those willing and committed to the
maintaining the continuity of tradition. LaPena worked as a consultant for an exhibition
documenting the life and work of Day, curated by anthropologist Rebecca Dobkins for the
Oakland Museum. The exhibition was a long-term project based on Dobkins’ doctoral research.
Since LaPena was one of Day’s close friends and pupils, Dobkins wrote to LaPena in 1992 asking
if he would help her with her research. Over the next several years, they met and corresponded
with each other, each pointing to different dimensions in Day’s life. A symposium was organized
around the opening of the exhibition in 1997, where artists and traditionalists including Frank
LaPena, Brian Bibby, Dal Castro, Harry Fonseca, Judith Lowry, and Frank Tuttle were able to
express gratitude for Day’s profound influence on their work and knowledge of tradition.41
LaPena also contributed an essay about Day for the exhibition catalog.

Like McKay and Burrows, Frank Day was also a singular storyteller with a unique vision
and wide breadth of knowledge. His commitment to preserving the old ways moved him to
contact anthropologists, such as Don Jewell, and record his stories and knowledge of Maidu
history and culture. His life is an affirmation of the insistence of Native Americans to give voice
to their worlds, to speak the truth of their experiences, and to shine a light on their struggles.
Frank LaPena was at the forefront of a broader movement to bring to life a new tradition, or to

41 See files in Public Activities Series, Consultant Work Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of
Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento. See also
Dobkins (1997).
give new life to familiar tradition—one that acknowledged Konkow ways of being as central to
everyday modern life. But he was also concerned with ‘shooting our imaginations’; with showing
non-natives a different view of Native Americans, one that was self-determined and self-
represented.42 Eager to bring to light the significance of Maidu lifeways and keep the Spirit of
Maidu culture alive for his people, but also unsatisfied with the limitations in language and
understanding faced by non-Maidu anthropologists and historians who tried to preserve and
record Maidu traditions, LaPena took the helm and painted what he knew.

As elders of tradition, McKay, Burrows, and Day taught a new generation of “tradition
bearers” how to translate tradition to others in an ever-changing world so that when they
eventually become elders they could continue to teach future generations the ways of tradition.
As Clifford (2013:239) explains,

The status of “tradition bearer” is a recent development in North American
indigenous heritage contexts where new social roles (artists, curators, translators,
tour guides) have been emerging. It denotes, loosely, individuals of deep cultural
experience who are not (yet) Elders. There latter designation depends on
traditional usage and local consensus—which may, of course, include
disagreement. Tradition bearers can include people more or less of mixed
background who in recent decades have studied and adopted Native ways,
reactivating old crafts, stories, languages, and subsistence practices. The title
denotes an explicit commitment to transmitting community values and
knowledge, to mediating between (deeply knowledgeable) Elders and (relatively
ignorant) youth, performed for new and diverse audience. The translator, in Ezra
Pound’s familiar phrase, “makes it new.”

Wallace Burrows, Frank Day, and Mabel McKay are three elders whose teachings and
knowledge have had a profound influence on LaPena’s understanding of tradition, on his ability
to “make new” ceremony, song, dance, art, and the sacredness of life. Their knowledge has
become his knowledge, and although they have passed on, their spirit remains in their teachings,
as former students, like LaPena, become Elders and continue the tradition of imparting this
knowledge to the next generation of culture bearers.

42 Ibid.
After decades of learning from his elders, how to translate tradition to others, Native and non-Native, and discovering new ways to articulate or reactivate the old tradition and make them new for a wider range of audiences, LaPena has earned the status of culture bearer and teacher and the obligations that come with it. He has committed his life to finding sites where indigeneity can be “practiced” (de Certeau 1984), “activated,” and “made meaningful” (Clifford 2013). These sites do not have to be rooted to ancestral land or a tribal “home,” but, as Fienup-Riordan (2000) and Ramirez (2007) demonstrate, can be performed in range of sites, urban, rural, far from home or in the center of it. Identity and connectedness to the land is rooted and routed in different ‘diasporas’ or ‘hubs’—it is the performance of indigenous articulations that gives them meaning and the potential for new translations. However, as Clifford (2013:85) notes,

Diasporic consciousness expresses contradictory experiences of loss and hope, despair and messianism (Clifford 1994). Thus, in thinking about indigenous diasporas, one necessarily confronts the disastrous histories of oppression that have created them, while simultaneously recognizing the sociocultural connections that sustain a sense of peoplehood and, in tangled political-economic situations, project a rooted, expansive future.

LaPena’s archive provides a window into the ways in which he continues the practice of rooting and routing tradition, even within the context of colonialism and persistent experience of oppression, discrimination, and marginalization in the settler state. LaPena has found futures for his heritage and identity in new and old places, creating a complex network of cultural exchange and transmission. The heritage work he performs in these spaces allows for the “preservation and revival of specifically indigenous values and traditions” and is “central to the struggle over how to participate in capitalist modernity on Native terms—a struggle whose outcome is far from guaranteed” (Clifford 2013:221). The following discussion traces the ‘performative sites’ that LaPena has activated and used in his efforts to continue the survival of indigenous lifeways, both within the academy and without.
Keeping Tradition Alive: Sites of Cultural (Re)Production

Nothing happens in a vacuum. There are dances and ceremonies because singers, dancers, and traditionalists make great sacrifices to protect and maintain them for each new generation. [LaPena 1992a:47]

It is not enough to have individuals willing to teach their knowledge to others, for a community is not merely a collective of individuals, but a communion of people who share a common perspective, worldview, a common desire for recognition of shared difference. It requires teachers who are willing to teach and students eager to learn, the support of the larger population, as well as a “safe” space in which community can be enacted and practiced everyday. In his writings, LaPena often reflects on his experiences traveling throughout the Northern California region, finding places where he could not only find work and a home for him and his family, but also places where he could engage in his culture and be involved with other practitioners of tradition.

Even though I had been involved with different tribes, it was not until I moved from San Francisco and returned to Redding as an adult to raise my own family that I became involved politically with my own tribe. I moved to my allotment on the old Grant Towendolly place at Salt Creek. I had been in contact with my aunts and grandmother, but it was not until my friend Albert Thomas took me to the Grindstone Reservation that I became involved in the Hesi Ceremony. Grindstone has the oldest dance house in continuous use in California. There I met some very fine people who accepted me into their family as one of them. This was the beginning of my most important education. They taught me many important things dealing with tradition and culture. Part of this process was “just riding around,” going to places or visiting people. Because Albert Thomas and Wallace Burrows were Wintun, their teachings returned to me some of the history and identification I needed to connect myself to places and events in Wintun territory. [LaPena 1989:4]

The Grindstone Indian Rancheria in Glenn County, California, was an important site for elders like Albert Thomas and Wallace and Edith Burrows to continue and teach indigenous identity and performativity to eager students like LaPena. Gladys Joaquin Mankins’ ranch in Janesville, California, was also a vital site, one that allowed for an intertribal revitalization of the Bear Dance. The Janesville Bear Dance, as it was called, was sponsored by Gladys Mankins from
1953 to her death in 1988. This was a crucial period for Indians living in the Honey Lake Valley of Northern California. The population was dwindling as a result of Federal Indian boarding schools, and Indians moving from rural to urban centers in search of better economic opportunities. Within the larger context of Indian activism and civil rights, the Bear Dance represented a political enactment of cultural rights. During this period, culture and politics had become ever more inscribed within one another—the dance was at once a political assertion of cultural identity and an act of cultural preservation. LaPena was the lead singer for the Bear Dance for a period. He explains his multisited and multidirectional journey to Janesville as such:

In 1971 I moved to Sacramento to teach at California State University which coincided with the opening the Pacific Western Traders, an important center for California Indian art and culture. It was through the gallery’s founder, Herb Puffer, that Frank Day was able to teach and share his tradition of the Concow Maidu around Berry Creek. Frank Day and Herb Puffer were responsible for the organization of the Maidu Dancers. Many a time I drove Frank around over the countryside and got to see some of the country he painted. Going to the Mountain Maidu Bear Dance ceremony at Gladys Mankins’ ranch in Janesville was the beginning of learning about this ceremony and eventually becoming the singer for the dance. [LaPena 1989:4]

After Gladys Mankins’ passing, it became difficult for her heirs (who were not Indian) to continue the tradition, and for a while the U.S. Forest Service agreed to host it.43 Now the Bear Dance is held in Susanville, California, and hosted by the Honey Lake Maidu (Tolley 2006).44 But a new site of performance was found at Pacific Western Traders (PWT). Established in 1971 by Herb and Peggy Puffer and located in Old Folsom, California, PWT was an important center for the expression of California Indian art and culture. Upon its opening, the site was dedicated with prayers and sacred smoke by Mabel McKay, a longtime supporter of PWT and dear friend of

43 Letter from Malcolm Margolin, Heyday Books, to Frank LaPena, December 18, 1992, in News From Native California folders, Reference Files Series, Project Files Subseries, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
the Puffers (Nabokov 2011). During its formative years, PWT served as a place where people could connect with “the old ways” through the teachings and storytelling of Elders born around the turn of the century, including Tom Epperson, Herb Young, Bryan Beavers, Lizzie Enos, Marie Potts, and Betty Castro. PWT’s regular clientele included artists, singers, dancers, activists, tribal politicos, scholars, environmentalists, and herbalists. Its diverse patronage is often attributed to Herb Puffer’s commitment to the preservation of Native American lifeways. Puffer was dedicated to building a space in which Native communities from around the region could feel at home, a space where they could express and take pride in their cultural heritage, where Elders like Wallace Burrows, Frank Day, and Mabel McKay could share their knowledge, art, and spirit with others in the community.

In 1973, Frank Day began teaching the songs, dances, ceremonies, and language of his culture to younger Indians eager to learn and be instructed in the traditional ways. Among the young pupils were Frank LaPena, Brian Bibby, and Joe Marine, and on Sundays they would convene at Pacific Western Traders. This marked the establishment of the Maidu Dancers and Traditionalists, a dance group that continues to perform throughout the California region and beyond. During these gatherings, Day would tell stories, jokes, and share memories of the past. The group created a site for remembering the past and reinterpreting it and reintroducing it into the present. Wallace Burrows, although of Nomlaki heritage, also taught the dancers Maidu songs he had learned during his youth while living in the Chico area. Although the dancers are predominantly Maidu, the group also includes members of Miwuk, Wintu, Pomo, and Washo tribes. The Maidu Dancers have been practicing, performing, and passing down their knowledge for more than 40 years now, and in that time the pupils have become the elders and have stepped into the roles that Burrows, Day, and McKay left behind.
For over 40 years, Pacific Western Traders served as a meeting ground for artists, students, and traditionalists active in the Native American community. The site functioned as an exhibition space, a crafts store, a museum of archaeology, an archive of tradition and history, a bookstore and library, and a locus of conviviality. PWT was not just an arts and crafts store or a gallery; it was a cultural center, one dedicated to the display and support of Native art, to the preservation of tradition, and to fostering community spirit and cultural identity. LaPena’s work could be seen hanging on the walls, and he often lectured about his art and traditions and engaged in song and dance at cultural events sponsored by PWT. Early in his professional career as an artist, PWT provided a site for LaPena to exhibit his work in solo shows, something that was hard to come by for any contemporary Indian artist.

Herb Puffer passed away December 6, 2012, and PWT closed its doors in the summer of 2014, but its legacy as a cultural institution for California Native peoples will remain, especially as culture bearers like LaPena continue to practice and teach tradition in different spaces. LaPena continues to sing and lead the dance alongside his son, Vince LaPena, both instructing new generations of young men and women in the ways of their people, giving the traditions, stories, customs, and beliefs life and meaning. LaPena’s daughter, Sage LaPena, was also brought up within the tradition, was a member of the Maidu Dancers and Traditionalists (MDTs), and worked for PWT. She continues the work of her father and her ancestors as a lecturer and a teacher and a traditionally and clinically-trained herbalist specializing in herbs native to northern California.

The MDTs are devoted to performing the old, traditional dances, and preserving and expressing the spiritual knowledge embedded in them in new ways, new venues and to ever-changing audiences. LaPena and the MDTs are always willing to demonstrate their old and new traditional values and practices to others; their performance schedules and LaPena’s resumes
illustrate just how busy they are and how much they travel around Northern California to participate in a range of cultural sites—private seasonal rituals, social gatherings open to the public, educational events sponsored by private organizations, state agencies and institutions. Although there is no way to predict how long the MDTs will continue to practice and perform their songs and dances, the group represents the continuity and ingenuity of indigenous survival. The MDTs may be rearticulated into something different by future generations, and though the form may change, as long as new articulations of indigeneity continue the heritage work of those who came before, the function will remain.

Another performative site of heritage work that LaPena has helped to establish is *News from Native California* (NFNC), a quarterly magazine published by Heyday and devoted to California's indigenous people. Established in 1987, the magazine features articles that emphasize Native Californian points of view, both historic and contemporary. NFNC started as a calendar of native cultural events and quickly grew into a full magazine with regular columns addressing California Indian languages, the arts, books, education, and law. The magazine also features poetry, short stories, plays, and literary non-fiction by California Indian writers. Malcolm Margolin, one of the founders of NFNC and the founder of Heyday Books, has helped to establish a cultural institution in California, one that is aimed at promoting widespread awareness and celebration of California’s many cultures, landscapes, and iconoclasts in the Native community. Margolin along with NFNC’s regular contributors have cultivated a personal and professional relationship with Native writers, leaders, activists, and organizations based on respect, friendship, and action, contributing to a close but widespread network of community activism. Through public events, programs, and publications promoted by Heyday and NFNC, a dynamic community of readers, writers, and thinkers has developed and flourished in California. Frank LaPena has been a contributor to NFNC since its first issue. His column, “The Arts,” has become
a staple, and he has contributed many articles concerning the maintenance of tradition and the protection of the cultural rights of Native tribes and nations. Correspondence from Margolin and other NFNC staff since the magazine’s inception demonstrates the deep ties and lasting relationships that LaPena has fostered over time, and the ways that these relationships often branch out to include other individuals, organizations, ideas, practices, and obligations. LaPena inscribes his heritage and identity in everything he does, creating new possibilities for articulating, performing, and translating his culture to others.

*News from Native California* continues the vital tradition of reporting the successes of local Indian programs and activities, as well as documenting the struggles still faced by Native peoples in the region and beyond. So does the writing of Frank LaPena. LaPena uses his words and imagery to create a new site for translating his heritage, engaging in heritage work, and for reaching new audiences and encouraging new generations to become tradition bearers in their Native communities—to make tradition new. Early in his career, LaPena published two books of poetry under his Wintu name, Tauhinduali, *The Gift of Singing* (1976) and *Sunusa Stopped the Rain* (1979). Both were published by Chalatien Press in Sacramento, and both dealt with the practices and oral traditions of his Wintu culture. His archive includes drafts and correspondence from the dozens of articles he has contributed to magazines, newspapers, peer-reviewed journals, scholarly textbooks, anthologies, and exhibition catalogs. As a Native American writer LaPena states,

> History needs to be pointed out from the Indian point of view….Colonialism tends to make history appear from the perspective of the colonial power—the native cultural perspective is lost. History describes people in a certain way, but doesn’t allow the people to have their day in court. Every writer is concerned with some kernel of reality, and I’m concerned about keeping and maintaining a certain oral tradition.45

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45 Quoted in draft for “Frank LaPena—Artist, Historian,” by Jim Wake, Turtle Newsletter, Winter 1980, Reference Files Series, Project Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
Writing is a site for performing and reinscribing heritage, both for the benefit of the public and Native people. As was seen in his Master's thesis, the process of writing and researching provides LaPena with a dynamic mode for articulating his identity. It is an opportunity to rewrite history from a contemporary, more relevant and reflective point of view. Through his writing, LaPena has been able to reach a broad audience of diverse readers, giving his indigenous articulations new life and new cultural translations.

INDIAN EDUCATION, NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES, AND THE ACADEMY

Frank LaPena began teaching at CSUS in the fall of 1971 and became acting director of Native American Studies in 1974. At CSUS, LaPena developed lasting relationships with a network of scholars active in on campus and in the community. Prior to teaching at CSUS, he helped establish the first Native American Studies courses at Shasta Junior Community College in Redding, California, where he worked as an instructor and a curator for the Museum for the Study of Man from 1969 to 1971 (Frank LaPena, personal communication, September 17, 2014).

LaPena entered academia during a transformative period. Prior to 1970, American Indians were largely ignored in U.S history courses, and only eight colleges and universities offered courses on Native American history. But with the political movements of the sixties and seventies came a national sea change in the way academic departments were organized in colleges and universities (Crum 2006:153). In addition to political protests, change in public policy allowed for a greater exchange of intramural ideas and resources regarding race and ethnicity in America. The socioeconomic reforms of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson fostered a new era in which equality was of immediate concern, and a reorganization of society was viewed as necessary in order to achieve it. In 1961, Congress passed the Area Redevelopment Act and the Public Housing Act. In 1964, Johnson signed two key pieces of
legislation: the Civil Rights Act, which banned discrimination based on race and gender in employment and ended segregation in all public facilities, and the Economic Opportunity Act, which established the Office of Economic Opportunity. In addition, educational programs like Head Start and Upward Bound were built into the curriculum at schools with a high population of Native Americans.

As Native Americans and other underserved groups entered the public discourse with greater frequency and primacy, interest in and awareness of these groups increased, especially in the academic world. This resulted in a market for courses relating to ethnicity, race, gender, and the contributions of marginalized groups to the development of the United States (Crum 2006:166). Outside of academia, Native Americans were taking the helm developing forums for the inclusion of Native voices in the writing and implementation of policy affecting their communities. The California Indian Education Association (CIEA), for example, was formed in 1967 to encourage—or perhaps convince is the appropriate word—educational institutions, including postsecondary schools, to introduce Native culture and history in the classroom.46 The findings of the CIEA presented to Congress during its hearings on Indian education in 1967 and 1968 were included in the Kennedy Report of 1969.

In 1970, Native American scholars, students, and activists gathered at Princeton University for a convention titled “The First Convocation of American Indian Scholars.” The convocation was sponsored by the American Indian Historical Society (AIHS), founded by Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry in 1964, with the purpose of asserting “the leadership and authority of the American Indian in all fields affecting [Indian] history, culture, economic

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46 See California Indian Education Association folder, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
improvement and social development.” LaPena worked for Costo and Henry at the AIHS in San Francisco in 1969, was a member of the CIEA, and attended the Convocation as a presenter. The Convocation was significant in that it allowed for American Indians to openly critique the academic establishment in its neglect of American Indian history, and to do so on a very prestigious ivy-league campus. In addition, the Convocation echoed a policy of self-determination that had been gaining traction during the 1960s. At this point in time, both Native and non-Native people were calling for the inclusion of Native American history into the curriculum, but Native Americans were asserting their right to determine the direction and implementation of Native American studies and education. This Native-led education policy was to be established in opposition to the assimilationist policies of the BIA, in particular, Indian boarding schools which removed children from their families and tribes (Crum 2007:2).

In the 1969-1970 academic year, several California universities established courses and programs devoted to Native American. These campuses included San Francisco State University, UC Berkeley, UCLA, and UC Davis (Crum 2007:12). Native Americans Studies (NAS) provided an important site for tackling the complexity of Native identity, challenging persistent negative stereotypes, and emphasizing the agency of Native Americans in history. Elizabeth Cook-Lynn (1997:11) explains how Native Americans Studies differentiated itself from other disciplines, namely history and anthropology in two ways: “it would emerge from within Native people’s enclaves and geographies, languages and experiences, and it would refute the exogenous seeking

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47 Rupert Costo, The First Convocation of American Indian Scholars program, 1970, in American Indian Historical Society folder, Reference Files Series, Museums/Organizations Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
of truth through isolation (i.e., the “ivory tower”) that has been the general principle of the disciplines most recently in charge of indigenous study.”

Some Native educators and activists were not satisfied with NAS programs established in mainstream postsecondary institutions and instead favored an Indian-run college or university. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Alcatraz and Davis political occupations of federal surplus property were both rooted/routed in a call for control over Indian education through the establishment of a tribal college that would be run by Native Americans for Native American students and focus on nurturing pride in Native American identity and culture. Although the Alcatraz occupation ended with the removal of the occupants by government officials, the Davis occupation led to the establishment of D-Q University on the former site of an army facility. The Davis occupation and D-Q University had the backing of two UC Davis NAS professors, Jack Forbes (Powhatan) and David Risling (Hupa), both of whom helped found the CIEA. It was Risling, with the authorization of the CIEA, who identified the Davis site as federal surplus property that could be used for educational purposes (Crum 2007:15).

LaPena was deeply involved in the early years of DQU, CIEA, AIHS, as well as the long-term development of the Native American Studies program at CSUS. In the summer of 1972, He served as the director of the Hehaka Sapa Indian Education Workshop, part of the Department of Housing, Education and Welfare Desegregation Project at D-Q University. During this time LaPena also served on the Indian Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee for D-Q University. The purpose of the Indian Education workshop was to increase the accuracy of information about Indian history and culture through a dialogue between the Native and non-

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48 There has been much recent criticism regarding the limitations, inconsistencies, and deficiencies of NAS programs across the U.S., which reveals the deeper, institutional issues that Native scholars face when they enter the academy. See Cook-Lynn 1997; Mihesuah and Wilson 2002; Wilson and Yellow Bird 2005; Yellow Bird 2007, 2008.
Native teachers and consultants participating in the workshop. The intention was to develop a curriculum that stressed local history and could be used by local school districts. The workshop sought to promote the idea that what is said about the cultural heritage, tradition and customs of American Indians is best stated by those knowledgeable about such things, the keepers of tribal knowledge and tradition. The workshop revealed the biases and ignorance of non-Native teachers and administrators about Indian culture and education. As a result, it was a step forward in fostering awareness and sensitivity among non-Native and Native educators. In addition to the workshop, LaPena edited four publications for Hehaka Sapa College Desegregation Project. One of these was an educational resource guide for American Indians that included a list of resources and organizations available to educators in order to better understand the culture, needs, and everyday concerns of American Indian students and their parents.

LaPena’s archive is full of documents relating to Indian education; legislation affecting Indian education since the early 1900s, BIA reports and resources for educators, surveys and studies conducted by Native-run organizations, tribal researchers and government agencies, news clippings about grass roots efforts to improve the self and community image of Indians, scholarly articles on the history Indian Education in the U.S., proposals and evaluations of education programs from across the U.S. targeting American Indians, handbooks and guide for teaching Indian students, materials from conferences on Indian education, newsletters from the CIEA, and of course the many files recording LaPena’s work with various state, federal, and Native agencies to improve the state of Indian education and the status of Indians in the settler state. For example,

49 Hehaka Sapa College Indian Education Workshop publication, 1972, Teaching Files Series, DQU Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
50 Ibid.
51 American Indian Education Resource Guide compiled and edited by Carolyn Saindon and Frank LaPena, 1973, Teaching Files Series, DQU Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
LaPena was a member of the Johnson O’Malley (JOM) Evaluation Chapter Committee for the California Department of Education in 1971 and 1972. The committee was formed to develop Indian education programs that focused on improving academic progress as well as increasing pride in cultural heritage and self-image. JOM funds are government funds usually given to states by the BIA, which then contracts with local school districts regarding funding allocation. JOM funds were discontinued under the termination policy of the 1950s, but were reintroduced in California in 1969. LaPena also sat on the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) for the San Juan Unified School District Indian Education Program from 1974 to 1980. The purpose of the committee was to identify the educational needs of American Indian students living in the district and make recommendations to the School Board regarding the allocation of Title IV funds under the Indian Education Act of 1972. The PAC consisted of parents or guardians of Indian children attending school in the district. Consequently, the implementation of programs emphasizing the development of positive self-image, leadership skills, and tribal kinship among Indian youth was a high priority, along with providing students tutoring and remedial services. The Indian Education Program was meant to coordinate the activities of teachers, administration, tutors, parents, and students to better serve the cultural and intellectual development of Indian children.

In 1976, LaPena also worked as a consultant for the Paiute and American Indian Understanding through Teacher-Training and Education Project, a bilingual/bicultural language program coordinated through the University of Nevada, Reno, between the State of Nevada and McDermitt Indian Reservation. LaPena felt strongly that the teacher aides and Indian community

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52 The Native American Speaks, 1973, JOM folders, Public Activities Series, Community Activities Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
53 See files relating to Parent Advisory Committee, Indian Education Program, San Juan Unified School District, 1974-1980, Public Activities Series, Community Activities Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
of McDermitt should be the ones to determine the code used to transcribe the legends in the proposed language textbook, and after meeting with one of the members of the Reno Advisory Council, the committee agreed to have LaPena evaluate the project and present his findings to the council. In 1974, he helped to formulate the initial plans for a leadership conference on career development hosted by the BIA Sacramento Area Office. The conference was meant to expand awareness of bureau programs, to acquaint participants with the concept of career development, and to foster relations between BIA education and employment assistance personnel, tribal leaders, JOM project directors, and parent advisory board members. LaPena participated in conference sessions and workshops and also offered CSUS college credit for attending the conference. In so doing, he hoped to encourage Native American students to take advantage of government training and education programs, and to engage in networks of information exchange and face-to-face interaction with community leaders. LaPena has continuously fought to find places to include indigenous ways of knowing; whether from the top or the bottom, he has negotiated the terms of the settler state’s systems of legalism, neocolonialism, and neoliberalism, and helped to cultivate an expansive network of heritage workers in different sectors of society, especially his home-base within ‘the academy,’ CSUS.

THE UNIVERSITY AS A SITE OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM

As Director of the Native American Studies program and Professor of Ethnic Studies and Art History, LaPena was concerned with developing a CSUS program that was “sound in depth and aware of the national history and culture of the Native American Indian as well as the

54 Letter and attachments from the Reno Advisory Council, University of Nevada, Reno, to Frank LaPena, August 21, 1975, Public Activities Series, Consultant Work Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
55 See files in Public Activities Series, Consultant Work Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
California Indian in particular.” Part of this process has involved expanding the library of media concerning Native American culture, art, and history as well as developing programs that bring Native American traditionalists, artists, and scholars to the campus.

**Third World Writers and Thinkers Symposium**

The Third World Writers and Thinkers Symposium was just such a program. Conceived in 1975 as an occasion for writers, thinkers, artists, musicians and creators of all kinds to gather and share their talents, perceptions and visions, the Third World Writers and Thinkers Symposium was formed and organized by CSUS faculty and students. LaPena was one of the founders of the symposium. His archive includes flyers, programs, memos between faculty and staff, meeting minutes, grant proposals, and the many letters to participants and potential participants; his files map the intensive planning and execution of the event throughout the years. LaPena helped to organize sessions, he gave introductions to guest speakers and performers and hosted individual participants in his own home. He invited Native American artists, activists, and educators like Leatrice Mikkelsen, Harry Fonseca, Brian Tripp, Wendy Rose, and Jack Forbes to participate in sessions focused on Native American issues and modes of cultural expression.

These symposia are both celebrations of the accomplishments of people of color as well as cultural and spiritual events in which the experiences of people of color are given a venue to be expressed and understood. The symposium purposely focused its attention on national and international issues of import to Third World people, and thus to humankind. The inaugural

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56 Proposal for Promotion, Fall 1974-1979, in CSUS/ARTP folders, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

57 See Third World Writers and Thinkers folders, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
symposium was held in 1975, when the first symposium was held as part of an on-going series of Third World symposia that began at CSUS. The Third World Writers and Thinkers Symposium was an offshoot of the Third World Poetry Readings series, organized and designed as EOP benefits by CSUS student Manuel Caro and English and Ethnic Studies professor Eugene Redmond. The poetry series featured CSUS poets and professors Frank LaPena, Jose Montoya, Ronald Tanaka, as well as dozens of other campus and community bards.

The Third World Writers and Thinkers Symposium was viewed as an extension of centuries of dedicated struggles and commitments to developing communities in which people of color could engage in projects that enhanced social consciousness and promoted self-determination. The symposium was created during a moment in history when Educational Opportunity Programs and Ethnic Studies Departments were established on campuses across the nation in response to calls by minorities for equality of rights and greater representation in all sectors of American society, especially education and industry.

Symposium on the Status of the American Indian In The CSU and the CSUS Burial Advisory Committee

In 1993, the Symposium on the Status of the American Indian in the CSU was formed in order to inform the CSU system’s leadership of the many serious issues surrounding the status of American Indian faculty, students and staff, in the largest university system in the world. High on the symposium committee’s agenda was exploration of the relationship between various campuses and the surrounding American Indian community. In order to provide CSU campuses with a talent pool of American Indian students, the committee recognized the necessity of improving the institutional relationship between the CSU system and schools both public and post
secondary, as well as provide an accurate count of American Indian students currently enrolled, and a snapshot of support service availability.  

The symposium sought to examine the most successful CSU programs and propose solutions for faculty and staff recruitment, retention and promotion. Initiated in the early 1990s as NAGPRA was being debated, interpreted, and instituted on campuses nation-wide, the symposium also took issue with the often painful and widely misunderstood issue of the repatriation of American Indian human remains and associated burial goods warehoused on many of the CSU campuses. The goal was to make real progress on this sensitive matter of human dignity and religious freedom at this meeting. The symposium was hosted by CSU Long Beach and chaired by CSU San Bernardino English Professor Rodney Simard. It was attended by a convocation of Native peoples, representing at least 26 tribes and nations.

The symposium was part of a larger effort by the CSU system to address longstanding issues concerning Native Americans and to create a more inclusive environment for Native faculty, staff, and students on campus. Its impetus was the CSU’s American Indian Advisory Committee (1992-93), of which LaPena was a member. This committee met with the CSU Chancellor and his staff to inform leadership of the very serious and recurring problems faced by Indian students in the system. Aside from seeking assurance that Indian students receive sufficient support from their university and program, the committee was also deeply concerned with the often overwhelming responsibilities assumed by American Indian faculty and staff on and off campus. Many faculty and staff shared their experiences with “burnout” dealing with teaching a full-load of courses, mentoring students who are not part of their program, and dealing with academic departments and policies that often discounted or ignored the community projects.

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58 Symposium program, 1993, in Status of the American Indian in the CSU Symposium folder, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
they engaged in off-campus—all of which had negative effects on the retention and promotion of Native faculty and staff. The symposium was an opportunity for the committee to share its experiences and concerns.

LaPena participated on a number of panels at the symposium in sessions concerning the future of American Indian studies, the identification of American Indian students on CSU campuses, and the repatriation of American Indian artifacts and remains then housed on CSU campuses. The disposition and repatriation of sacred artifacts and the protection and preservation of burial sites has been an issue that has caused much consternation and despair in the Native American community. A profound lack of understanding and sensitivity on the part of the non-Native community allowed for the excavation of countless sacred sites and the pilfering of human remains and artifacts belonging to American Indian communities. Repatriation is of great personal interest to LaPena:

There are certain human rights which recognize feelings of respect and honor for the dead. This right extends to the burial areas, burial grounds and cemeteries of the native California Indian people. There are some people who have not shown the same consideration toward these sacred areas that they ask to be shown to “their” own burial areas. Under California law no archeological site can be disturbed. But many have been, and the guilty people have not been prosecuted or fined. Under California law burial sites 200 years old or “less” are protected. And yet I know of burial areas where family graves of living individuals have been violated and yet not a thing is done to the violators.  

Much of his work on and off campus engaged with issues of repatriation in some way, and, of course, the policy of self-determination included the right of Native peoples to determine how the humans remains and artifacts of their ancestors should be properly handled and cared for. LaPena took it upon himself often to educate the non-Native public on the topic from an Indian perspective. He was also concerned to open a dialogue with archaeologists and anthropologists

59 Handwritten note, circa 1970s, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
seen as “legitimizing” the practice of digging up burial and sacred sites and using the human remains and artifacts in the name of “Science.” He called for reevaluation of the code of ethics of anthropology and for a reconsideration of the relationship between anthropologists, their work and their practices, and the Indian community, which is often the subject and object of their work. In a paper written for an anthropology class he took while enrolled in the CSUS anthropology graduate program, LaPena states that the ethics of archaeology are not concerned so much with the people to whom the objects they study belonged, so much as the objects themselves—the objects are disembodied, their owners disenfranchised in the process of disposition. LaPena saw this as a clash between two disparate cultures, where Indians believe that burial sites should be left undisturbed and disinterred human remains should be reburied, while Western scientists value remains for what they can tell us about human history. In the paper, LaPena recommends that anthropology be more accepting and respectful of the Indian community’s beliefs about burials and the protection of sacred sites, and states that Indians should be the ones to educate anthropologists about Indian perspectives and practices, or that non-Native anthropologists should be replaced with qualified Indian people. Indians should, in his view, determine the terms of representation, and those who claim to represent the image and values of American Indians should be “policed” both within and without the discipline.

LaPena continued his efforts to educate from an “Indian position” as a member of the Burial Advisory Committee (1991-1992), an ad hoc committee designed to develop CSUS policy on Native American burial remains and associated artifacts. Scrawled on a piece of manila envelope used as a makeshift file divider for his “CSUS Burials” files, LaPena documents his

60 Indian Burials: A Question of Ethics, for Dr. Dorothea Theodoratus, Anthropology 206, Fall 1976, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
process of archiving, “I gathered materials from all over [the] USA to make [a] point. [CSU] Chancellor [W. Ann] Reynolds [1982-1990] was supportive. But took next [state] congress to pass bill before California CSU system and Governor agreed.” Beginning in the 1960s, LaPena collected materials relating to the protection of sacred sites, including legislation, newspaper clippings, and proposals from private and public agencies whose projects involved access to tribal or sacred lands.\(^{63}\) The committee was part of a larger CSU system-wide effort to outline the collections, policies, and status of repatriation for the twenty campuses. The state legislature had recently passed the Katz Bill AB 2577 (1990), which protected the Native American burials sites and addressed the repatriation of burial remains and associated artifacts (the bill was later vetoed, then reintroduced after the passage of NAGPRA and signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown).

One of the committee’s tasks was to make recommendations to the Academic Senate regarding the holdings of the Anthropology Department. Since the burial remains and artifacts were relatively recent, they were readily identifiable. Thus it was proposed by the committee that the process of repatriation be initiated in a timely manner as outlined in the then-new state legislation known as the Katz Bill.\(^{64}\) A primary objective of the committee was to be as responsive as possible to the concerns and desires of the Indian community regarding repatriation and disposition, and to develop policy that “respects the dignity and spirituality of Native Americans, past and present, and promotes intercultural understanding.”\(^{65}\) In the event there was an item determined to be of important scientific value, it was the responsibility of the Anthropology Department to “request permission to study the items and negotiate a timeline for

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\(^{63}\) LaPena was often contacted as a Native American consultant by the State due to his involvement in Indian rights and legislation.


\(^{65}\) Ad hoc Committee to Develop CSUS Policy on Native American Burial Remains and Associated Artifacts meeting minutes, February 1992, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
repatriation from the receiving tribal group.” In his account of the committee’s progress in developing a policy, LaPena relates:

Trying to meet the demands of an orderly return of burials with their associated goods is difficult and not as simple as it appears to be…In order to understand the problem, guidelines need to be drawn up. These are being done with a survey of other state and federal agencies. We at CSUS have a continually growing source of data. In addition we have asked for professional counsel from Native American Indian Heritage Commission, Dr. Dorothea Theodoratus and the Attorney General’s Office; and there has been dialogue in the CSU-Sac Burial Committee created by the faculty senate. There are seven members representing anthropology, faculty senate, science, Native American Studies and a native American student. Fortunately our task is made easier by being able to use actual cases of working with the native American community and burial upatriation [sic]. In many respects this enlightened viewpoint makes it clear there are acceptable approaches to the native American community on these sensitive issues.

In another letter to the Burial Senate Committee, LaPena discusses both the successes and the limitations of the committee’s power to enact legislation. LaPena states that:

Even though this was a positive example of the creation of policy and action in regard to the burial legislation ongoing considerations and questions of accountability were unclear….a recommendation [was] put forth that the chancellor’s office follow through with an inquiry to the California State Universities in the system of how they are meeting the mandate of the Burial Repatriation legislation.

In the end, the university administration, the government, and the committee were all able to work together and initiate a policy. On January 21, 1992, after about two years of discussions interpreting the law and bringing in specialists, the committee sent their recommendations to the faculty senate for approval.

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66 Committee to Develop Policy on the Disposition of Native American Human Remains and Associated Artifacts, 1992, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

67 Burial, draft dated December 10, 1991, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

68 Burial Repatriation, essay, 1992, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
The university worked in concert with the Native American Heritage Commission to coordinate repatriation of its sacred materials to the most appropriate tribal group. The NAHC has been working with Native communities, state departments, and private institutions since it was established in 1976 to address the California Indian community’s demand for the protection and preservation of burial groups from vandalism. This, as LaPena states, gave the Ad Hoc Committee an advantage in developing a university policy for repatriation and establishing procedures for working with Indian communities. The NAHC is comprised of nine members appointed by the Governor, at least six of whom must be elders, traditional people, or spiritual leaders of the California Native American tribes. LaPena had been involved with the NAHC since its inception. When legislation enacting the NAHC was introduced by California Assemblymen Knox and Keene in 1976, LaPena wrote to Knox with his concerns:

As a native California Indian I am interested in which Native American organizations are to be contacted; I am hoping some of the Indian communities who practice their traditions (and religious ceremonies) will be contacted and they will have a chance to make their feelings known. There are numerous people who would qualify…One fear is publicity and consequential destruction and desecration of these traditional sacred places. As happens in bad communities with burials and sacred shrines as they become known to the “grave robbers” and vandals are not persecuted [sic] as would happen if the same thing were to happen to non-Indian burials and shrines.69

LaPena has reiterated these concerns using a broad array of modes of communication. A common theme in his interactions with state officials, is the need for and benefit of maintaining meaningful connections between the settler state complex and Native communities. LaPena views such entanglements as inescapable, but forces of hegemony do not predetermine the form in which

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69 Handwritten notes on envelope addressed to Frank LaPena from Monica Otis, Department of Health, Sacramento, circa 1976, Teaching Files Series, CSUS Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento. The letter was a response to the Assembly Bill 4239, introduced by Assemblymen Knox and Keene, amended in Assembly May 3, 1976, an act to repeal and add Chapter 1.75 (commencing with Section 5097.9) of Division 5 of the Public Resource Code. Otis references LaPena’s letter in her letter to Honorable John T. Knox dated May 19, 1976, which is also includes in the LaPena’s files.
they take—they are negotiated in everyday performances of identity and in dynamic accommodations and resistances to power. For decades, LaPena has found ways to engage in a wide spectrum of heritage work; he acts as a liaison in disseminating and interpreting laws affecting Indian communities, he has helped tribal groups applying for federal recognition, and has consulted with California Native American organizations and individuals concerned with the protection of Native American cultural resources and human remains. He has worked on an ongoing basis with state agencies, including the Department of Parks and Recreation and the California Arts Council, to increase public awareness of Native American rights and needs. He works with museums, colleges and universities, and works hard to influence public policy, supporting legislative bills that expand the rights and protection of Native Americans and their heritage. LaPena has always actively sought ways to insert Native voices and experiences into the dominant narrative, and education has been an incredibly vital site for identity and heritage work. Whether is he educating Indian students, Native community members, government officials, or the general public, LaPena finds ways and spaces to keep tradition going, to keep it new and relevant to contemporary life in the postcolonial settler state.

“Keeping Tradition Alive in Art and Practice”

Today the continuation of the old and the development of new dances and ceremonies and current expressions of tradition-inspired art are a counteraction to the problems of maintaining culture. [LaPena 1988]

Native Americans across the country have struggled to sustain a worldview and identity that often conflicts with that of the dominant society. The constant marginalization and deracination of Native American ways of being and knowing by the dominant society has historically made keeping essential practices and beliefs alive nearly impossible. LaPena’s

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70 Taken from the title of LaPena’s article Keeping tradition alive in art and practice, 1988, News from Native California 1(6):18-19.
archive illustrates how policies of indigenous rights and recognition offer spaces for oppressed groups to engage in heritage work, in projects of cultural revival, and in identity-based political and social movements. Even though this work is interpellated by systems of Western hegemony, there is always the possibility for “transformative” articulations of indigeneity that have yet to be “fully imagined” (Clifford 2013; Hale 2002). LaPena knows the struggles that come with employing the technologies and ideas of the dominant society; as an activist, teacher, and artist, he has had to negotiate his way through such mechanisms of domination while also understanding the limitations and advantages of alternative modes of activism. But for LaPena and other Native American activists, the primary mechanism for maintaining culture is through practice, through the *doing* of it, finding new ways to extend tradition into the present.
One of my favorite objects in LaPena’s archive is a small model of his one-man show at the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian’s Hastin Klah Gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The show was entitled “A 20 Year Retrospective,” and it was open to the public from November 5, 1988 to February 15, 1989. The model is not particularly impressive; it does not look as if it is constructed to scale, thick gobs of glue keep the partitions of dusty white cardboard precariously held together, and the installations have shifted a bit at an angle, as if a strong wind had blown its way through the narrow entrance of the gallery. But there is something about this object that kept me fascinated. Every now and again I would take it out and gaze down upon those makeshift walls and imagine myself there. I loved the physicality of it and its playfulness (to create is to play, after all), and I liked that he kept it after all those years and that he gave it to SCUA as part of his archive. I wondered why. The exhibition was quite an accomplishment for LaPena as an artist. Solo shows are hard to come by for Indian artists, especially for contemporary, living artists, as LaPena has expressed in his writings; “20 Year Retrospectives” are not common either. Bruce Bernstein, former assistant director of the Wheelwright and friend of LaPena, and Carla Hills, LaPena’s partner and collaborator, helped LaPena plan the exhibit, draft the gallery guide, and promote the show, a project that took over two years to complete. The model is a remnant of that experience, of that time and place, and of that recognition. It creates a link between the user of the archive and its creator—as you move through that person’s life, file by file, object by object, you learn how to ‘read’ it from the inside and the outside.
The wonderment of LaPena’s archives is deep—compelling, luring one back to certain objects, words, and images. Frank LaPena is a well-known and highly regarded artist. His work has traveled all over the world, and he has had the opportunity to help coordinate, install, and promote exhibitions in different cultural environments and for a variety of audiences. He has exhibited in solo shows, in small private galleries, “fine art” museums, indigenous cultural centers, anthropology museums, schools, and festivals. He has curated and consulted for a number of widely attended exhibitions, and has helped to evaluate and develop public programming for museums throughout the Southwest. LaPena’s archive is colored with exhibition proposals, posters, catalogs, essays, loan agreements, floor plans, and publicity. His archive creates a site for exploring various histories and subjectivities of Indian art, the heritage work in which Indian artists and activists participate, and how these intersect with histories of colonialism, indigenous resistance, and decolonization.

DEFINING NATIVE AMERICAN ART

Indian art continues to evolve as any living entity should in spite of denial of its existence, questions of its practitioners, and a whole lot of questions about what it should or should not be. And looking at “Indian” art is not without its political ramifications. Actually it is not the viewer I am speaking of but the artist who is doing the looking. I believe good art always has some element of challenging the status quo. It makes us see things in a new way or forces us to think about something in an extended fashion.71

The question of “What is Native American art” is often a question of what it means to be Native American, or to identify or be identified as Native American, and Native Americans are often faced with having to prove by outward expression their cultural heritage, their ethnicity (Jonaitis 2002). The “authenticity” of their experience depends on its alignment with long-standing, stereotypical notions of what an Indian is, how they look, act, speak, and create

71Manuscript, Myths to Live and Die By, by Frank LaPena, 1992, in Heyday: News from Native California folders, Reference Files Series, Project Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
(McCaffrey 2002; Phillips 2002). There is still limited awareness of the diversity of Native American cultures in the country, not to mention the diversity of their experience, history, and creativity. This lack of understanding of the complexity of Indian identity by the larger society has consequences for how people “see,” interpret, and market Native artists and art (Glass 2002; Rickard 2002). This, in turn, affects how Native artists see and market their work, and the identities inscribed in it.

Within this discourse of Indian art is a forced dichotomy between “traditional” or “primitive” art and “contemporary” or “modern” art. This Western dualism divides Indian art into two neatly packaged segments, each of which is ready for mass-market consumption in galleries, museums, crafts fairs, and Indian markets across the global (McCaffrey 2002). Labels such “traditional” and “contemporary” may be intended as descriptive, but more often they homogenize the heterogeneous aspects of Native identity, culture, and perspectives and reinforce persistent stereotypes of American Indians as “primitive,” closer to nature, and uniform in belief, custom, and tradition (McChesney 2012; Price 2007; Smart 2012). Indian artists have always had to contend with the attribution of “the ethnographic present” to their work and to their lives. Native Americans have challenged these ideas since contact, but with the establishment of national museums in the mid-nineteenth century and the proliferation of public and private art galleries and collections in the twentieth century, Native Americans have found new sites in which to challenge the status quo by inserting their own voices into spaces of dominance (Biddle 2012; Bouchard 2012; Erikson 2002; Lonetree 2012; Peers and Brown 2003). However, it was also within these spaces that notions of traditional and primitive Indian art were (re)produced and reinforced by scholars, anthropologists, and collectors. The objects—the curios and artifacts—collected during this early period of museums and galleries continue to stand as authentic
representations of “traditional Indian art”—that which all current Indian art is compared against in determination of its classification as either “traditional” or “contemporary” (LaPena 1992b).

The display of Indian art as artifacts or curios abstracted from their social, historical, cultural, and individual contexts is of constant concern to Native communities, especially because many of these objects are considered sacred and inappropriate for public display. This also affects Indian artists who deal with traditional subject matter that is considered private or cultural property (Berman 2012). For those Indian artists who choose to be inspired by traditional practices and themes, being labeled as traditional or contemporary is often beyond their control. If a piece of Indian art deviates from the standard form, content, function of the “original,” “traditional” art, it is usually categorized as “contemporary,” and with that designation the implication that it is “authentic.” This bifurcation of Native identity and art creates identity “trouble” in and out of the gallery, but Native Americans have been challenging “troubling” identifications and representations continuously for centuries (Berman 2012).

The stage for asserting identity and challenging prejudice and ignorance in the art world changed dramatically beginning in the 1960s, allowing for a greater opportunities for including Native American voices to be heard, ones that spoke to the diversity of cultural and individual aesthetic experiences (Lonetree 2012). The social, political, and ideological changes brought on by the Civil Rights Movement were reflected in the art world; the realm of Indian arts was a particularly vital and vibrant site for the negotiation and contestation of identity and its aesthetic expression. What must be understood, however, is that Indian artists during this period were not creating art for the sole purpose of protesting or disturbing hegemonic forces of oppression; these were professional artists who had been working (and struggling) within hegemonic systems of power and economy, and whose art did not fit precisely into the Western categories of “primitive” or “contemporary.” They thus took it upon themselves to assert their own text and context into
the discourse. This is not to say that the artistic and the political do not intersect with one another, for any assertion of identity (especially indigenous identity) has political motivations and ramifications. The point is that there is such variety, such individuality in Indian art that any categorization automatically misinterprets its form, content, and context and forces a predetermined ‘Western’ conception of what Indian art is at any given moment in time. For as Frank LaPena states, Indian art is always evolving—it is always living.72

Interestingly, LaPena’s artist’s statements, resumes, and short biographical narratives—which written for inclusion in an exhibition’s text, program and/or catalog—offer a window into how art and identity are articulated over time and in different contexts. What artists choose to say about themselves within the limited space of an artist’s statement can actually convey a lot about how they position their art and identity to the public and in the marketplace. Similarly, the projects that an artist chooses to highlight in their resumes and the list of ‘selected exhibitions’ that often proceeds artist statements in exhibition text and catalog narrow the scope in which his/her work is viewed while also painting a particular image of professionalism and recognition. The statements, resumes, and bios in LaPena’s archive focus on his Wintu roots, his family, traditions, and spirituality. In them, he seeks to relate the importance and influence of ceremony, dance, and song to his life and work as an artist. He emphasizes his long history as a practicing artist who has been featured in one-man exhibitions since 1960, and exhibiting since the 1950s. He lists his work as an artistic consultant for educational exhibitions and cultural programs aimed at enlarging the general public’s knowledge of the experiences of Native Americans in the U.S settler state. He notes his ability to work in a range of aesthetic styles and techniques, while maintaining the continuity of his heritage through the use of culturally specific symbols, colors,

72 Manuscript, Myths to Live and Die By, by Frank LaPena, 1992, in News from Native California folders, Reference Files series, Project Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
and motifs. He describes the joy of discovering and experimenting through art, and of using art as a tool for communication. But in an artist statement included in his application for a Flintridge Foundation artist grant (which he did not receive), LaPena lays bare the difficulties he has faced in being a practicing and exhibiting Indian artist:

> Most of the exhibitions [I have exhibited in] have been group shows of Indian artists. I have been turned down by galleries because my art is too abstract and by others because it is too Indian. So I found out a long time ago, that it is a good thing I like to do art ‘cause I can’t make a living doing it.\(^\text{73}\)

This statement shows the boundaries by which Native American artists are often circumscribed. But LaPena’s work and life (and archive) reveal how Indian artists negotiate the shift terrain of being identified as ‘too Indian’ or ‘not Indian enough’ and still manage to build careers, and identities not based on niche markets and stereotypical images.

Native American art is as complex and diffuse as Native American identity, and it responds to shifts and changes within and outside of Native communities and to individual experiences.\(^\text{74}\) As Townsend-Gault (1998) demonstrates, contemporary Native art represents a wide range of aesthetic and ideological articulations based on a shared set of historical and social conditions. Contemporary Native American artists continue to use, combine, and develop new and old aesthetic techniques for disrupting stereotypical identifications while simultaneously establishing their own artistic voice or style—their own ways of understanding and interpreting the world. Artists such as Jaune-Quick-To-Smith (Flathead Salish), Judith Lowry (Pit River/Mountain Maidu), James Luna (Luiseno/Diegueno), George Longfish (Seneca/Tuscarora), George Morrison (Ojibwa), Hulleah Tsinhahjinnie (Seminole/Creek/Navajo), Brian Tripp (Karuk)—all artists that LaPena has worked/exhibited with and documented in his archive—have

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\(^{73}\) Artist’s Statement, Flintridge Foundation Visual Artist and Award Program Application file, 1997, in Biographical Series, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

\(^{74}\) See Gerald McMaster, ed. 1998, for a multifaceted narrative study of Native North American identity and aesthetics.
established their own styles, their own articulations of identity, community, place, and art. But these artists do important heritage work as well, as they navigate the contested terrain of cultural identity politics and negotiate their place in global market economies they creatively and visually continue the survival of their indigenous identity and culture.

*Navigating the Art World as an Indian Artist*

One thing that does distinguish the [California] Indian artists is not simply that they are making art, but that they are also reaching out to the larger field of [non-Indian] artists and being accepted. So just getting their work out there is a factor. Another thing about most of the Indian artists I know is that they have some connection to their cultures and they are also involved in the traditional aspects of their cultures. They might be singers or dancers or makers of ceremonial regalia. That’s probably the major thing that distinguishes them as a group. But at the same time every artist is autonomous. Our stuff is individual and differs according to the individual.75

Frank LaPena has been exhibiting his work since the late 1950s. In 1960, he had his first one-person show at the Arts and Crafts Gallery in Chico, California. Since then, LaPena has exhibited in more than 2 hundred shows and curated more than 20 shows. He has exhibited widely in the U.S, and his works have traveled all over the world, including Canada, Cuba, Mexico, Brazil, New Zealand, Italy, Switzerland, and Germany. The types of artwork he has displayed vary according to subject matter, media, technique, and inspiration. He is a painter in acrylic and oil, he is a sculptor, woodcutter, and printmaker. He also makes ceremonial objects such as bows, rattles, and regalia—objects that would be considered “traditional” according to Western categorizations. LaPena describes his understanding of traditional art in relation to his worldview in an artist’s statement:

I do traditional art forms and have shown them but I would much rather do them and use them for the purpose they are made. When I make traditional art, I think about them differently: they are the tradition. When I do art other than the

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75 Interview with Frank LaPena in the book In Stand in the Center of the Good 1994, in Flintridge Foundation folder, Biographical Series, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
“traditional,” the finished art piece reflects and expresses the subjective truth of my thoughts and tradition.\textsuperscript{76}

Although it may seem on the surface that LaPena is invoking Western notions of traditional art, a closer reading reveals the view that all elements of tradition, including ceremony, song, dance and storytelling, are artistic in some meaningful and intended way and all are expressions of culture. Painting with acrylics or sculpting in bronze is also an expression of culture, just in a different medium. Instead of being an idea that stifles creativity of cultural and individual expression, tradition within a local, “native” perspective is for LaPena a source of afflatus—the traditional bridges the past with the present, it creates new paths for discovery and interpretation by guiding creative impulses:

The way I see it, tradition is a catalyst. It initiates an original vision, a form and a design. This is where the validity of the work is created. As an artist, you go from there, not unlike any other kind of art.\textsuperscript{77}

The categories of “traditional” and “contemporary” belie a deeper ideological conflict between the dominant culture’s preoccupation with materialism and exploiting the earth and its resources and a Native American perception of the Earth as a living thing and the interconnectedness of the spiritual and material dimensions of the world.\textsuperscript{78} LaPena notes that the sacred places that tie people to the land, beliefs, and customs still exist, and that the elders who know and pass on tradition still teach. Though the forms of art have changed, art still functions to express the continuity of tradition and change:

The dynamics of change allows an artist to create “the new” in form, design, media. Traditional forms of art and ceremony have changed throughout history, and so today, the Native American Indian artist is also into a transition phase of

\textsuperscript{76} Frank LaPena; Artist’s Statement 1978, Biographical Series, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

\textsuperscript{77} The World is a Gift—A Talk with Frank LaPena, article in On the Wing, 1988, Reference Files Series, Project Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

\textsuperscript{78} The Earth is Singing: The Art of Frank LaPena, exhibition catalog, 2003, Exhibitions Series, Group and Solo Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
change. I participate in the ceremonies but I also paint them. Without my participation in culture, my art would have another meaning. My art is a way to share my culture. My art is a way to express my culture.\textsuperscript{79}

There is a recognition in this statement that change is always occurring, and that there is opportunity in the acceptance of change; opportunity to reproduce culture in new ways or redefine it in light of new experiences or changing conditions in materiality and spirituality. There is also an understanding that all art is a manifestation of one’s interaction with the world, and with culture, however one defines it, and that it is the right of all artists to explore the resources of his or her time. For LaPena and many Indian artists, traditional knowledge and ceremony and the art that inspires and reproduces tradition are profoundly informed by one another:

The term Regionalism as it is used in Western art history is a linear concept of time that establishes a chronology of history, whereas native American Indian art frequently uses themes that transcend a definitive location in time because they are timeless and cyclical. Ceremonies continue today as they have in the past because they pay respect to the earth for its life enhancing bounty. Traditional activities are frequently the subject matter for Native American art. Regionalism for Native Americans is defined by language customs and culture. It is also identified by the local materials available for artistic expression.\textsuperscript{80}

There is a general uneasiness in using Western conceptions of art, time, and space to explain, interpret, or evaluate Native American representations of identity, art, and culture—not necessarily because they are inherently opposed, but because are conceived as such. But Western and Native worldviews exist together. They share the same intercultural space, their interactions with one another take place in the present. Creating a false dichotomy separating the traditional and the contemporary does not undo the long history of interaction between the dominant society and Native American communities. It serves, rather, to preclude an open discussion of this history.

\textsuperscript{79} Artist’s Statement, Frank LaPena, 1978, Biographical Series, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
\textsuperscript{80} Pride of Place: A Native American Perspective, by Frank LaPena, 1997, in De Young Museum folder, Reference Files Series, Project Files Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
and its influence on contemporary conditions. And this is where classifications of traditional and contemporary lose any descriptive or prescriptive power. If Indian art is both of these at once, if it reflects and expresses tradition, ceremony, and community using modern techniques, technology, and knowledge, then what function does it serve to Indian artists and people interested in exhibiting or writing about Indian art?

Embedded within the discourse of contemporary Native art is a concern with being taken seriously as contemporary and modern. Artists of Native heritage may or may not incorporate that heritage into their art in a way that is easily identifiable to non-Native people or to Native people with different cultural or historical backgrounds. The expectation of stereotype, or cliché, in Native art marks contemporary expressions as limited in approach, theme, aestheticism, and reach. But there are Indian artists like LaPena who would want their art to be viewed, reflected on, and critically evaluated by all sectors of society, Native and non-Native alike. Because Native artists are often viewed and evaluated based on the forced binary opposition between traditional and modern art, and because they are perceived to be “unmodern” in essence, their use of modern resources is often regarded as “mimicry rather than intelligent responses to larger human conditions” (Price 2007; Smart 2012). This has created tensions between advocates of traditional and modern Native art, such that there is disagreement about whether one must precede or predominate the other in importance or inspiration. But this again forces a choice between tradition and modernity instead of a recognition of and appreciation for a more fluid understanding of art that does not separate past and present, and does not ignore the dialogic, responsive relationship between Western and Native cultures. As much as Native art is an expression of culture, traditional, social and historical conditions, it is also an expression of personality—of individuality as it is understood in the present. Both are important to art, a point which LaPena often emphasizes in his writing and in his choice of artistic projects. The following
section explores the importance of organizations and institutions both in promoting a more diverse perspective on Indian art and in providing a space for self-representation of indigenous identity.

ESTABLISHING SITES OF INDIGENEITY

Art and activism converged during the 1960s and 1970s in a more coordinated and strategic manner. Art activists were looking beyond the local to find ways of challenging the unequal relationship between the “official” art markets and Indian arts. Two organizations in particular in which LaPena played a role, Atlatl, Inc. and the International Native-American Council of the Arts (INCA), are noteworthy for their goals and their involvement in local, national, and international art programs. These organizations were native-controlled cultural arts organizations aimed at providing services for Native arts, artists, and communities.

Asserting an “Indian” Voice in the Arts

INCA was founded in 1975 with the support of grants from the New York Council on the Arts, the Shaker Foundation, and the National Endowment of the Arts. Its primary goal was to bring an awareness and recognition of “new” Indian art to the public through national exhibitions. LaPena served as a council member to INCA, and in 1979, INCA organized a show in Cuba called El Auténtico Pueblo (“The Real People,” discussed below), for which LaPena served as a coordinator. LaPena also worked as an art consultant for INCA and the Native American Center for the Living Arts (NACLA) in Buffalo, New York, on Spirit of the Earth (1979), an exhibition of contemporary Indian art representing the work of 39 artists from across the United States. Although INCA was short-lived, its influence stemmed from the creativity and action of its members, including George Morrison (Ojibwa), Richard Hill (Tuscarora), Oren Lyons (Onondaga), and Frank LaPena, all of whom committed themselves to the activist projects within
and outside of the arts. Atlatl was another such organization that set about to directly affect the ways in which American Indians were visually represented. Its approach was to reinforce ties with government arts agencies like the NEA. It was believed that doing so would increase Native American organizations’ access to much needed sources of state funding and technical assistance, and thus give them greater control over the design and implementation of the programs and services that such funds would underwrite.

Atlatl is a non-profit Native American arts service organization established in 1977 as a national advocate for Native American art. Atlatl grew out of a 1974 NEA-funded program called the Indian Cultural Consultant project, which enabled Indian Consultants to work with state art agencies in an effort to improve and increase the representation of Indian arts, culture, and identity in the nation. Atlatl worked not only to create a national network for Native artists and organizations and offer technical services and programs, but also to sponsor a Native Arts Network conference seeking to raise the profile of Indian artists in collections, museums, exhibitions, and art programs, and to improve dialogue and interaction between artists, museums, and the public. These conferences provided forums in which Native American artists, scholars, and activists could debate and explore the impact of complex issues enfolding Native arts; specifically, the interplay between notions of representation, identity, the market, and tradition. There was concern that contemporary approaches to displaying the work of Indian artists (even new, “schooled” artists), were too ethnographic in presentation, still held back by old clichés and stereotypical representations of what Indians and Indian art ‘should’ be. It was argued that this

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81 See documents relating to Atlatl, Inc., including correspondences, reports, conference materials, and newsletters, 1977-1997, Atlatl, Inc. folder, Public Activities Series, Art Activities Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

82 Atlatl Native Arts Network Special Report, 1986, in Atlatl folder, Public Activities Series, Art Activities Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
type of museal representation acted to stultify dialogue about art. Instead of being an intimate and worldly expression of the identity and experience, Indian art and culture turned into a discourse of “us” versus “them.” It was recommended that Native Americans be given the opportunities and funding to determine the appropriate visual context for displaying Indian art and culture—something which had been missing in the art world during this time.

As a result of the first conference, Atlatl established a Regional Board composed of Native Americans active in the arts, each representing and reporting on the state of Native arts in different geographic regions in the nation. One of Atlatl’s primary tasks as a service organization was to compose and maintain a current database of resource materials (including a list identifying Indian artists and art organizations across the country) that would be distributed to public arts agencies for the development of Indian art programs. In order to provide the Indian art community with needed resources, Atlatl also conducted surveys of state arts agencies to measure the amount of support given to Native American arts programs. During its initial surveys conducted in the late 1970s, Atlatl found that Indian arts and artists were the least represented in state, federal, and local agencies, even though American Indians had historically had a very involved relationship with the bureaucratic state. In 1979, LaPena worked with the state agency California Arts Council (CAC) as an advisor reporting on the role of California arts agencies in developing and promoting Indian arts and artists. LaPena had just ended an appointment with Atlatl as a Native American Representative for the State of California, and used the information gathered as a representative for Atlatl in his recommendations to the CAC. In his report, LaPena emphasizes the need to strengthen relations between Indians and the state, which he viewed as having a potentially large impact on the protection and preservation of Indian arts and rights. In

83 Ibid.
84 General Statement by Frank LaPena, 1979, in California Arts Council folder, Public Activities Series, Art Activities Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
particular, he suggested that a state delegate be appointed to work with the American Indian population, and that this delegate be an American Indian. He also argued that the policies of state agencies like the CAC often exclude by design tribal organizations by design, especially those that lack federal recognition or non-profit status. Additionally, the use of misleading designations of “traditional arts” and “contemporary arts” by state agencies often means that proposed Indian art projects are evaluated for the wrong reasons or using to inappropriate criteria.

In response to then Executive Director of Atlatl, Inc., Richard Hill’s request for constructive feedback on the organization’s ideas to promote the economic self-sufficiency of Native artists and tribal art cooperatives, LaPena writes,

I am happy to see ATLATL is still on the job and see you are still busy as usual. I read with interest your proposal on organizing Tribal co-operatives and providing technical assistance to the Native American Artist—it is something I have always been interested in; philosophically I support an effort to promote and facilitate traditional artists and the arts. But I also know it will take the big effort you so clearly [point] out in the narrative. It must be a national consciousness and awareness that needs to be tapped.85

He notes the limitations of using the Santa Fe Indian marketplace criteria to affect other Native art markets, and emphasizes the need to address difference when marketing Native artists and traditional arts:

Exposure, explanation, similarities and differences must be pointed out time and again. As a singer and dancer I see how difficult this simple task is sometimes and how necessary it is. It will require an open mind and a simple acceptance: there is no one Indian way, but [an] accept[ance] of all the differences is the accommodating traditional way.86

LaPena has a long history working with the CAC as an advisor and reviewer of its policies and programs. He is also an emeritus board member with the Alliance for Traditional

85 Draft of letter from Frank LaPena to Rick Hill, January 18, 1983, with Hill’s original letter, dated December 10, 1982, attached, in Atlatl, Inc. folders, Public Activities Series, Art Activities Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
86 Ibid.
Arts (ACTA), an organization partially funded by CAC that advocates for the traditional arts and connects artists and communities to technical assistance and funding.

The goals of Atlatl and INCA were bold: to bring awareness to and recognition of contemporary arts, and to build upon the inherent strength of the Native arts by providing a locus of support for Native artists and organizations. Organizations such as these realized that in order to rectify the diminished status of Native Americans in the arts, control needed to lie in the hands of Native artists and scholars. The next section offers a discussion of some projects Frank LaPena participated in that attempted to incorporate Native American perspectives into the museum space.

*Articulating Indigenous Identity in The Museum*

Museums and galleries have a crucial part to play in shaping the representation of Native art and artists for the public (Pratt 1991). Traditionally, museums and galleries have acted as sites for the reproduction of colonialist interpretations of history, with indigenous cultures presented as the link between modern civilization and its primitive past. But as Erikson (2002) and Lonetree (2012) discuss in their monographs, it is the explicit and implicit mission of the museum that matters. The terms of a museum’s mission are most apparent in its regard for Native Americans inside and outside of the museum’s walls, and the degree to which Native communities have control over the representations of culture and identity. Frank LaPena has been involved with a number of museums, galleries, and organizations that are dedicated to creating projects which allow for an active engagement with Native culture and art. Many are educational institutions, while others are considered “fine art” institutions (e.g., the Crocker Art Museum), or institutions that specialize in Native arts and crafts (e.g., California State Indian Museum, American Indian Contemporary Arts, C.N. Gorman Museum, the Heard, the Wheelwright, and Maidu Museum).
Still others are privately owned businesses that act as cultural resources centers for the community (e.g., Pacific Western Traders in Folsom, California, and La Raza Bookstore/Galeria Posada in Sacramento, California).

Museums have a privileged place in modern history, and especially within American anthropology. The history of the museum is inextricably bound to the concept of the nation-state, and to a Western epistemological framework, thus museums are embedded within a Western way of knowing and understanding the world and one’s place in it (Atalay 2006; Handler and Gable 1997). Museums were thought of as key sites for ‘culturing the public,’ for they produce images and narratives that guide the way visitors see themselves and the ‘others’ being portrayed in exhibitions; they thus shape public perception (Atalay 2006; Handler and Gable 1997; Haraway 1994). Museums are imbued with the power, the authority, to represent culture without having to make explicit statements regarding the legitimacy of their information; thus their representations are for the most part taken-for-granted as ‘authentic’ and ‘true’ by visitors. Museal exhibitions, therefore, have the power to affect the way the people orient themselves socially and politically. Museums have always had a crucial role in reinforcing political and national discourses, and have been readily instrumentalized by states as ‘national expressions of identity’ in which narratives of ‘distinction and difference’ and ‘triumphalism’ are employed to articulate certain identities and to marginalize others (MacDonald 2003:3). Although anthropological museums began their ‘life’ as academic institutions in which research, theory and professional training programs were developed, their primary role today is that of educating the public by creating a ‘sensory’ experience that engages participants in a meaningful way. As such, all museums, through the use of museal exhibits, are potentially the most effective mechanisms for transmitting knowledge, specifically anthropological knowledge, and concepts to the public at large (Collier and Tschopik 1954:774, 777).
As Ivan Karp (1992:1) states, museums are “political arenas” in which definitions of identity and culture are asserted and contested. Thus, museum displays are about both “poetics and politics.” The content of a display and its aesthetic representation are one and the same, they inform each other in a critical, non-neutral way. The ‘power to represent’ in the space of the museum is the power to reproduce frameworks of belief and experience, and social belonging—of inclusion and exclusion (Karp 1992:1). Museum exhibitions do not just display the world, but construct it and embed it within social discourses that evoke specific beliefs, values, and experiences of participants. Museums, then, provide ‘scripts’ for participants that direct their attentions toward some social ideas while ignoring others (Karp 1992:5). Social ideas are often set within hierarchies that organize people and beliefs according to moral notions of superiority and inferiority. Museums articulate ideas, but they do so within the larger civil society, thus struggling both for consensus and against the imposition of monochrome identity (Karp 1992:6).

Museums are morally neutral only in principle; in practice they make moral and political statements and represent privileged spaces for projecting the social self (Karp 1991:14-15). As key institutions of public knowledge, museums are intimately tied to ideas of aesthetics, ethics, cultural tastes, and issues of cultural heritage. They are imbued with the authority to discern and display that which is central to a collective identity, which has significance and purpose for all involved.

Native American Identity in the Museum

Museums are often the only places in which the masses actively seek knowledge about Native American cultures and histories. This gives museal displays that portray Native Americans added power in situating the public’s imagination to include Native American culture and identity. What we know about Native cultures greatly depends on the objects, images, words, and
voices that are chosen. Like ethnographies, museums are cultural constructions—*cultural* constructions of culture—thus the context of a museal collection as well as the theoretical assumptions attached to it must be addressed when creating a display. Since the late nineteenth century, museum anthropologists (as far back as Boas), and museums in general, tended to portray Native American culture in the “ethnographic present”; as existing outside time, living forever in an unchanging, ‘traditional’ society immune to influences of the modern world (Bernstein 1989; Bolton 2003). The conception and practice of salvage ethnography by anthropologists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century filled glass cases and storage rooms with the remnants of “a vanishing race;” Native Americans were regarded as a dying people, thus making the collection and preservation of their material culture crucial for the maintenance of national heritage based on racial ideology and cultural difference (Stocking 1985, 1991). Museums were thus places for displaying and looking at ‘dead things’—objects without a present or a future, and disconnected from their past associations.

Coupled with the ‘ethnographic present,’ the concept of ‘a tribe’ constituted a new theoretical framework according to which “each tribe in the ethnographic present was a single homogeneous entity, a single pattern of institution and ideas, and that those who were “in” it shared this pattern uniformly and participated in no other pattern” (Leaf 1979:148). As a result of this synchronic, essentializing discourse, the image of Native American people has often been reduced to artifact assemblages that are ‘representational’ of their culture; for example, California Natives are typically identified with basket-making and Southwest Natives with pottery. There was also a tendency for museums to display artifacts out of context or in no context at all, as ‘curios’ to which onlookers could direct their gaze. This has often translated into displaying ‘tribal’ or ‘primitive’ art in a modern setting, that is, in a setting that abstracts the art from its cultural and political context and embeds it in a regime of value highlighting the individualistic
and universalist, as well as sacred qualities of the art (Price 2007:21-22, 38; Smart 2012:77-84). This primitive-modern dichotomy reinforces the view of indigenous people as “natural” artists or closer to nature (and thus farther from ‘civilization’), and therefore, better able to depict humanity’s essential forms (Palmer 2008:190-191).

Museums are an opportune site for studying the formation, assertion and contestation of identity; they are vectors of cultural and political influence in which public awareness, hegemonic discourses, marginalized identities can converge in a single space (Ames 1992; Clifford 1997; Simpson 1996). The role of museums in developing and maintaining identity entails highly selective and subjective engagements with culture and its artifacts, making “the very nature of exhibiting” a “contested terrain” (Lavine and Karp 1991:1). Fred Myers (2012:175, 185-86) views museums as a “border zone” in which the competing discourses of Western art and indigenous art go toe to toe with one another, dredging up issues of the protection of indigenous knowledge and property law. James Clifford (1997) describes museums as “contact zones”—as spaces in which the practices, ideologies, and agendas of indigenous communities and the museum come into contact and often conflict as both navigate their ongoing relationship within the context of colonialism.

During the second half of the twentieth century, Native Americans demanded control over the visual representation of their culture, identity, and heritage, affirming their right to sovereignty in the space of the museum. In addition, Native Americans sought to develop programs and exhibits that allowed for the visual repatriation and (re)presentation of the knowledge, information, and history of ethnographic objects (collected by early anthropologists, traders, and colonialists) largely housed in the national museums of former colonial states. Museums and art galleries, once vital producers and sentries of colonialist ideology and practices, are continuously being re-contextualized by indigenous communities as sites for the
colonization of state structures, as spaces in which historically silenced voices have an opportunity to project varied histories of the past, present, and future.

This section demonstrates the power of both museums and archives to develop and maintain national narratives of exclusion, as well as their potential create sites for re-engagement and recognition, contestation and empowerment. Shifts in ideology and practice have opened up spaces for indigenous counter-narratives in the museum and the archive. LaPena’s archive provides one such counter-narrative—a personal, particular viewpoint from which to understand the wider issues of the cultural politics of representation, identity, and sovereignty. LaPena has participated in hundreds of exhibitions as an exhibiting artist, consultant, and curator. The following exhibits exemplify the way art is used to reinforce Native identity and culture and to challenge dominant stereotypes about Native American art and tradition in the museal space. As such, they represent autoethnographic (Dobkins 2001; Pratt 1992) engagements to achieve greater control over the political, cultural, and visual representations of Native Americans in society.

Making the Traditional Contemporary

Contemporary Native American artists often wrestle with the generic meanings attributed to “tradition” and “heritage,” words that evoke a sense of the timeless and ancient. But as LaPena states, tradition is always evolving, always changing, and although contemporary artists may be influenced and inspired by tradition, the Indian artist’s relation with tradition is a dynamic one, always already being remade in the present. During a panel presentation at the symposium for the Memory and Imagination: The Legacy of Maidu Indian Artist Frank Day exhibition, LaPena explained his approach to art and tradition in this way:

We are looking at the myths and legends that in a way are static and old, but it’s never old for someone who’s in it, and certainly for an artist, there are all kinds
of things there. Tradition is always new in that way. Who are the ones who help make that new? They are the storytellers. They are the artisans. They are the people who give people hope by being able to look at tradition and discover a freshness and newness and a current meaning for traditional value. That’s what’s neat about art.87

LaPena and other Native artists and curators have struggled to convey this understanding to non-Native audiences, especially within the space of the museum and art gallery where preconceptions about traditional art are hard to displace. But he continues to engage in projects that attempt to disabuse the public of their assumptions about art—all art—in the postcolonial world.

In 1984, LaPena was asked to guest curate an exhibition at the Crocker Art Museum located in downtown Sacramento, California. The Crocker is the oldest public museum in the Western United States, known for its collection of fine art. The exhibition, entitled The Extension of Tradition, was open from July 13 to October 6, 1985, at the Crocker, and traveled to the Palm Springs Desert Museum for display between December 6, 1985 and February 2, 1986. LaPena formed an exhibition planning committee of eight scholars in the field of art and anthropology—Brian Bibby, Jerome Evans, Carla Hills, Kathleen Kelly, George Longfish, and Dorothea Theodoratus. Together they organized a show featuring the work of nine Northern California contemporary artists: George Blake, Dal Castro, Frank Day, Harry Fonseca, Frank LaPena, Brian Tripp, Karen Tripp, and Frank Tuttle. LaPena also worked with Northern California tribes and coordinated the loan of traditional objects housed at museums throughout the Northern California region. Contemporary artwork was displayed alongside traditional objects, historical photographs, legends, and descriptions of the land and Native American cultural values. In his notes for the exhibition, LaPena describes the impetus and inspiration for the exhibit design:

87 Transcription for the proceedings at the Memory and Imagination Symposium, April 19, 1997, in Memory and Imagination folders, Public Activities Series, Consultant Work Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
Northern California has emerged as one of the most fertile and productive areas of artistic activities in Contemporary Indian art. It is not surprising that this northern area is also one of the most persistent in the effort of the tribes to preserve and maintaining their traditional ceremonies and dances. In order to give some indication of the richness of objects of regalia and other traditional objects are shown with nine contemporary northern California artists’ works. Inherent in the art work is a direct correlation to the kinds of designs, shapes, and forms found in traditional art and activities.\textsuperscript{88}

The exhibition was dedicated to showing the continuation of culture and tradition through art, not just “contemporary” art, but all forms: singing, storytelling, dancing, basketry, featherwork, pottery, weaving, and dreaming. All of these art forms have a place in maintaining tradition and adapting to change; all are ways of knowing, sharing, reflecting on, and interpreting the world. In order to further convey this relationship, the planning committee “felt it would be beneficial and informative to offer extended programs demonstrating the making of traditional objects and to sponsor a symposium which would allow the artists to speak about their art, their interests in the world of ideas, and their experiences.”\textsuperscript{89} The Extension of Tradition was a major exhibition that not only consisted of extended cultural programming—including poetry readings, lectures, traditional dances, festivals, and basketweaving demonstrations by, among others, Mabel McKay and Frances McDaniel—but also an extensive 76-page catalog with essay contributions from Clinton Blount and Dorothea Theodoratus, George Longfish and Joan Randall, Lowell John Bean, Craig D. Bates and Brian Bibby, Christopher Brown, and LaPena. The exhibition and catalog covered a wide range of topics, including the relationship between contemporary art and Northern California traditions, issues of the sacred, historical outline of traditional dance regalia

\textsuperscript{88} Exhibit Notes written by Frank LaPena, circa 1985, in The Extension of Tradition folders, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

\textsuperscript{89} Exhibit Notes written by Frank LaPena, circa 1985, in The Extension of Tradition folders, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
and practices, the politics of cultural expression, and Native responses to cultural change. In his drafts and notes, LaPena states,

A general review such as this is important as it forces us to evaluate the importance of the Indian artists working today with cultural ties that are highly symbolic in the paintings and graphics to ceremonies, rituals and dance. It is significant too, that these Northern California Indian Artists are increasingly acknowledged as leaders in the national contemporary Indian art scene and have been included in shows that have gone to Europe, South America, Cuba, Mexico, Canada and exhibitions all over North America.90

LaPena highlights both the rooted and routed nature of these artists’ engagements with their heritage, identity, and art: indigeneity is articulated, performed and translated in public spaces like the museum as much as it is in sacred sites and private gatherings. Art is a vehicle for individuals to express their personal interpretations of culture and tradition. LaPena states, “If a person were to try to analyze Indian art, s/he would find that Indian art is done in different styles, and that all styles are accepted as valid by the Indian community.” For him art does more than depict perceptions of the world and cultural conventions:

Artists are important in helping us to view the world with a different perspective. These artists express their own tribal consciousness and differences. They do this in exciting symbolic fashion by using common things as guides to let us see the wonder and magic of this living earth.91

It is this notion of art as a mechanism for both cultural change and continuity that permeates the artistic projects to which LaPena and his peers commit their time and creativity. LaPena’s archive includes documents from 14 exhibitions that he has curated and/or helped to organize since the

90 The World is a Gift of My Teachers, by Frank LaPena, 1985, in The Extension of Tradition exhibition catalog, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
91 Exhibition Statement, by Frank LaPena, 1984, in Signs and Messengers folder, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
1970s, all the exhibitions articulate the connection between individual technique and style and a “tribal consciousness”—between the new and the old, the contemporary and the traditional.\(^2\)

**Shifting Authority and Claiming Representation in the Museum**

A major source of conflict between museums and indigenous source communities from which they often collected concerns the proper protocols and procedures for collecting, cataloging, preserving, and displaying artifacts (see Lonetree and Cobb, eds. 2008, and Peers and Brown, eds. 2003). Indigenous communities have very strong values and beliefs regarding the proper treatment of their material culture, especially sacred objects, which are often not taken into consideration by museums and staff when developing procedures of care and classification, building facilities, and exhibiting items. Added to this are the different expectations that museums and native communities bring into the museum space, all of which can create strains in the relationship and prevent a true partnership based on respect and trust from developing. Concerns are especially heightened when the objects in question include human remains and sacred objects.

In order to address the challenges raised by indigenous peoples, many museums, especially in North America and the Pacific, have generated institutional documents and policies that encapsulate the guidelines of a national strategy that recognizes indigenous interests. A number have developed Native advisory councils which advise museum staff on a range of issues such as selecting objects for loan to other institutions, assessing museum stock, and providing suggestions for educational programming. In the United States, this resulted in the establishment of the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in 1989, and enactment of NAGPRA in 1990. NAGPRA was the first major federal legislation to recognize the ownership of such items by the indigenous communities from which they originated. NAGPRA addressed the deaccession

\(^2\) Exhibition Statement, by Frank LaPena, 1984, in Signs and Messengers folder, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
and return of all human remains in federally funded institutions, and it redefined the relationship between Native Americans and museums. NAGPRA was built upon the activism of the 1970s and continuous, concerted efforts of Native Americans to challenge the authority and exploitative practices of museums (Lonetree and Cobb 2008). The terms of the relationship between museum and indigenous source communities changed as a result. Museums and Native Americans became partners in the repatriation process, and museums were obligated to treat Native communities and their sacred objects with respect and care. The NMAI was to be the crucible for this new collaborative relationship.

In 1990, LaPena traveled to Boston to meet an architectural and planning firm hired by the NMAI to design the NMAI Mall and Suitland facilities and serve on a Native American Planning Team. He felt strongly that the museum needed to establish the continuity of American Indian arts from ancient and traditional to the contemporary; “These are living arts being practiced today in both traditional and new ways, and all of this work is a valid expression of American Indian arts and crafts.” As an extension of the museum’s approach of collaboration, the NMAI invited LaPena to serve as an advisor to the museum’s consultation meeting with contemporary artists the next year. The meetings were focused on the NMAI’s programming regarding the design and development of architectural spaces for the NMAI Mall and Suitland facilities. The Native consultants were concerned with making the museum “a theatre of living culture” (emphasis added), one that showed the continuation of tradition through varied programming such as lectures, ceremonies, and gatherings of traditional dancers.  

93 Letter from E. Verner Johnson and Associates to Team Members, March 16, 1990, in NMAI/Smithsonian folder, Public Activities Series, Consultant Work Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

94 Meeting minutes for the Contemporary Artists Consultation in Seattle, Washington, 1991, in NMAI/Smithsonian folder, Public Activities Series, Consultant Work Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
These activities lead to his involvement in the development and design of one of three inaugural exhibits planned for the opening of the new George Gustav Heye Center at the NMAI Customs House in New York City. The exhibition was entitled *This Path We Travel: Celebrations of Contemporary Native American Creativity*. Frank LaPena worked as a consultant on the exhibit along with 14 other Native artists of diverse backgrounds, from 1992 to 1995. Together with the support of the museum staff, the consultants designed and mounted an exhibition that was part social commentary, part contemporary artistic expression; it was to reflect the shared concerns of the 15 Native artists as well as the diversity of their beliefs, customs, and histories. The consultants convened at sites across the U.S. and in Canada, each site representing one of cardinal points, to plan the exhibition and expand their understanding of and reverence for the cultures of other Native communities. There was a concerted effort among the Native consultants to make the creative process as collaborative as possible, and to take advantage of the opportunity to insert their voices and their perspectives into a national exhibition. The consultants also recognized that this opportunity came with a responsibility to be mindful of the perspectives of others, Native and non-Native, who might see the exhibition.

The exhibition was designed as a “contemporary expression of ritual and ceremony, based upon an older Native model of cooperation and sharing,” a total sensory experience in which the visitor enters a dramatically altered spatial environment reflective of both the universality and particularity of Native thought, belief, and art. One of the main objectives of the exhibition was to show that Native peoples are still living and are a part of the modern world. Diversity was exhibited thematically in the concept of the sacred four “directions” or “hemispheres”: North, South, East, and West. The exhibit included two galleries that represented “profane intrusions,” which provoked a reevaluation of the ways in which Western forces have encroached upon Indian ways of being. The first gallery depicted a 1930s-era boarding school
classroom and the second a living room of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) house on a reservation. The rearticulation of these two spaces was meant to invoke dialogues of decolonization though an examination of history, stereotypes, culture, land, and gender. This was juxtaposed against the “Sacred” installation of the exhibition, which outlined the importance of ceremonies in maintaining an understanding of and deference to the Earth and humanity. LaPena served as the field editor for the exhibition catalog. In his essay for the exhibition catalog, he discusses the “profane” influences of the colonial West in Native America, one of most limiting and harmful of which is the binary opposition between “contemporary” and “traditional” art.\(^95\)

95 Draft of The Fourth Emergence by Frank LaPena for the exhibition catalog to This Path We Travel, 1994, in This Path We Travel folders, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

There have been many critiques of the NMAI and its policy of collaboration (see Rosoff 2003, and Lonetree and Cobb, eds. 2008, for constructive discussions of the NMAI). Some of the Native consultants of This Path We Travel expressed their confusion and disappointed in the lack of communication, support, and shared authority from the museum’s management staff in an open letter entitled “Celebrations Artists’ Concerns” that was first distributed to the other Native artists in the committee to add their individuals concerns, and then forwarded to Washington. The point of the letter was “not to be malicious, but to insure that the exhibition is successful.\(^96\) To let the museum staff know what our concerns are. Hopefully, we can all come together on a united vision of this exhibit.” LaPena echoed this sentiment in his response to the open letter, emphasizing the need the for cooperation, coordination, and (most of all) communication between all parties involved in order to finish the exhibit:

96 Facsimile from Jose Montano to Frank LaPena, November 19, 1993, in This Path We Travel folders, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
LaPena viewed the exhibition as an opportunity to engage with a larger audience and to build relationships between people, ideas, practices, and things. For him, the process of creating the exhibition was just as valuable as the final product, in that it allowed the Native artists to work within as well as against the strictures of the settler state. The terms of the collaboration may not always have been clear or mutually asserted, but LaPena and his colleagues were willing to make an effort to develop meaningful relations with ‘the museum’ and the NMAI as a particularly ripe site to perform new and old articulations of indigeneity. Whether or not the final exhibition was perceived as ‘successful’ by critics, indigenous communities, and the wider public is not so much at issue as the engagement itself. Engagement is what allows for new, emergent translations of articulated indigeneity, it is what keeps discourses of identity alive, adaptive, and in practice. LaPena’s archive collection is another such attempt to engage with discourses and structures of colonialism and write (or collect) against them from within. Like his engagements with the museum, he uses the archive to reach a diversity of audiences, and open the way for new articulations and fresh translations.

Displays of Decolonization, Self-Determination, and Sovereignty

Although the previous exhibitions were designed to bring a more complex understanding of Native art and culture to the public, the following exhibitions were more political in rhetoric and execution. These exhibits take on the processes of colonization and commodization head-on by mounting shows of contemporary Native American art in global settings. By “insisting on difference,” Native artists mark their identity, defining themselves and their art both as part of the

97 Handwritten draft of letter from Frank LaPena to the National Museum of the American Indian, November 29, 1993, in This Path We Travel folders, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
global art world and separate from it in ideology, historical context, and political motivation. By defining identity as existing outside of national boundaries, these Indian artists unsettled the intellectual and physical terrain upon which American and Western colonial enterprises wrest their power from indigenous populations. The assertions of self-governance and sovereignty were integral aspects of each exhibition, even if they were not explicitly presented as such. As much as these exhibitions were about setting Native identity apart from the settler state, they were also about making meaningful connections with other indigenous populations around the world, about sharing stories and customs, and finding common ground in the world of art. These were attempts to assert a cultural identity based on the policies of self-determination and sovereignty.

As such, they illustrate the ways in which museums have both succeeded and failed as venues for the rehabilitation of Native identity, and pave the way for a more constructive and equal conception of museums as “places that matter” (Lonetree 2012:173). Lonetree focuses on the activism of Native American communities to improve their political, social, cultural, and economic conditions. These are the primary catalyst for the projects of decolonization about which she writes (2012:17-18). Her text thus stands itself as a project of decolonization; one that foregrounds the “subjugated knowledge” of indigenous communities and reveals the complicated relationship between Native tribes and the United States—one mired in a long history of colonization.

As part of a cultural exchange program, LaPena was among a number of Native American artists invited to mount the exhibition El Auténtico Pueblo, or “The Real People,” at Las Casas de Americas in Havana, Cuba. He traveled to Cuba via Montreal for the exhibition, which was hosted by the Cuban government. The exhibit ran concurrently with a sixth conference of 50 “non-aligned” nations held in Havana from September 3 to September 9, 1979. As such, leaders and representatives from around the world had the opportunity to experience the
exhibition. Native Americans share a similar history of colonization with other Third World territories. Known as the Non-Aligned Movement, the conference was founded in 1961 in Cold War Belgrade as an alternative to the U.S. and U.S.S.R. superpower blocs. It was an anti-colonialist in its ideology and increasingly conceived in opposition to the domination of Western nations. The primary principles of the movement were based on notions of sovereignty and self-determination, and sought non-alignment with oppressive, colonialist policies. For this reason, the location of Cuba and the occurrence of the NAM conference made the exhibition particularly significant and politically charged, whether or not such was the intended effect. Richard Hill, Director of INCA—which helped to organize and sponsor the exhibition along with the Six Nations Council—described the goal of the exhibit:

We believe that art exhibits can carry the message that Indian people have the sacred trust to honor and preserve the earth….The Cuban government invited us to participate and is paying part of the costs. But our message is not political. It’s spiritual. We made that clear to the Cuban representatives. We hope that the show finds any Indians who still have a culture in Cuba.  

As a board member of INCA and a participating artist in the exhibit, LaPena was asked to travel to Havana (along with George Morrison and Oren Lyons) to give a presentation on American Indian art. He was honored to accept this request as a representative of North American Indian art and as the Director of the NAS program at CSUS. His unpublished essay “Journey to Cuba” is a reminiscence of his time and experiences in Cuba meeting politicos, eating the local food, touring the cultural sites, talking to the press, and learning about Cuban history. At a

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98 Indian artwork on display in Cuba, *Buffalo Evening News*, 29 August 1979, in The Real People folders, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

99 Memo from LaPena to the CSUS Ethnic Studies Center and the Art Department, 1979, in The Real People folders, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.

100 Journey to Cuba, essay by Frank LaPena, 1979, in The Real People folders, Exhibitions Series, Curated/Organized Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
conference held at Las Casas de las Americas, LaPena lectured on Northern California Indian art and symbolism and read some of his poetry; Morrison talked about the history of American Indian art, and Lyons spoke on the political history of Alcatraz, Wounded Knee and other activist projects. LaPena and his colleagues were curious about the indigenous population in Cuba, and inquired about their culture, customs, and relations with the government. Little, however, was known about the indigenous peoples by the local scholars of anthropology other than that they “chose” to live outside of the bounds of the official government—LaPena expressed his desire to one day meet and exchange ideas with the Native peoples of Cuba about their common history of colonization and marginalization.\textsuperscript{101} The exhibition and corresponding trip to Cuba represent a journey to bring Native American art and history into the “outside” world, to share and make connections with other peoples who may have experienced similar struggles, disadvantages, and oppression locally and globally. Two similar exhibitions that LaPena participated in were mounted in Geneva, Switzerland, and Venice, Italy, in 1984 and 1999, respectively.

\textit{No Beads No Trinkets} was the inaugural project of the American Indian Arts Exchange (AIAE), a native-run organization representing American Indians in all of the arts with the goal of promoting and supporting both traditional and contemporary Native American art and artists. Like INCA and Atlatl, AIAE was directed towards addressing the unequal power relations that Native artists faced as they navigated the mainstream art world, finding ways to promote their work (and their ‘selves’) and identify sources of funding and patronage. The exhibit was held in conjunction with the United Nations Human Rights Session on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities. The invitation was extended as a result of the efforts of the Four Directions Council, which represented the interests of indigenous people within the U.N.\textsuperscript{102} The

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{102} Correspondence from No Beads No Trinkets/American Indian Arts Exchange, 1984, in No Beads No Trinkets folder, Exhibitions Series, Group and Solo Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers,
show was an effort to expand awareness of contemporary Native American art outside of North America, and to share with a wider public the depth of indigenous talent beyond the traditional arts. It was also an attempt to demonstrate that Native Americans are alive and well, that they still exist and are thriving in the contemporary world, not apart from it—a common theme expressed in all the exhibitions that Frank LaPena has participated in. The title of the show was a reference to the “achievements that [American Indians] can make for [their] people in dealing with the international community, this time” in the contemporary world—no beads, no trinkets.\textsuperscript{103} Along with LaPena, the exhibiting artists included Sylvia Lark, George Longfish, Lillian Pitt, Joe Fedderson, and several others.

\textit{Ceremonial} was a groundbreaking exhibition at the 1999 Venice Biennale in Italy. It was a collaborative effort between Native American artists, intellectuals, educators, and the non-profit group Native American Arts Alliance or NA3 (now the Indigenous Arts Action Alliance), based in Santa Fe, New Mexico—a central hub of the Indian arts and crafts market. \textit{Ceremonial} was exceptional for a number of reasons. The eight participating artists included Richard Glazer-Danay, Harry Fonseca, Bob Haozous, Frank LaPena, Simon Ortiz, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Buffy Saint-Marie, Kay WalkingStick, and Richard Ray Whitman. Each artist showed their work at their own expense, taking advantage of the opportunity to achieve self-representation on a global stage. The primary motivation for their participation was neither financial nor based on a desire for artistic recognition—all of the artists were by this time well known and highly regarded in the Native arts community. This was the first exhibition of contemporary Native American art in the one hundred years of the Venice Biennale. The American Indian artists entered the

\textsuperscript{103} Correspondence from Edgar Heap of Birds, 1984, in No Beads No Trinkets folder, Exhibitions Series, Group and Solo Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
Biennale as a sovereign nation, which allowed them to show their art in an international setting without the constraints of the market. The art on display was an expression of the contemporary lives of Native Americans, an attempt to disable the binary opposition between “traditional” and “modern” prevalent in Western ideology, to address histories of colonialism, and to showcase the fluidity of indigenous identity and heritage. In the catalogue for the 1999 Venice Biennale, the exhibit is described as a:

…recognition of the reintegration of art and community. We have taken the responsibility of leadership in transforming native arts from decorative statements to honest self-portrayals. Ceremonial is our tool for achieving personal and social change. It is also a recognized and utilized form of self-transformation for all people….The native artists exhibited in Ceremonial claim a unique heritage. The commonality of loss—loss of land, language and culture serves to relates [sic] these artists to each other. As native people, we are aware of the power of our collective lived realities; the pain, trauma and beauty of our cultures. Self-transformation, community and self-identity are explored as we reflect on our past and our future.  

Ceremonial was more than an attempt to break away from the well-defined and confining marketplace of Indian arts and crafts—it was an effort to delve deeper into the ideological mechanisms that control and bind Indian authorship and production in the arts. Nancy Marie Mithlo (Chiricahua Apache) was the exhibition’s unofficial curator. An anthropologist specializing in indigenous museum curation methods and representations of Native Americans, Mithlo (2004:230) advocated for an “indigenous knowledge systems approach,” one that employs anthropological frameworks to contemplate the various motivations (beyond the economic) driving Indian artists to produce, display, and market their art. In particular, Mihtlo was concerned with artists’ experiences dealing with “curatorial colonialism” which manifests in “internalized notions of disempowerment and subordination” (2004:230). Instead of seeing

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104 Exhibition catalog, La Biennale di Venezia: 48 esposizione internazionale di arte, English edition, 1999, in Ceremonial folders, Exhibitions Series, Group and Solo Exhibitions Subseries, Frank R. LaPena Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Library, California State University, Sacramento.
artistic intent as either individualistic—and thus opportunistic—or institutionalized—and thus compromised—under Mithlo, the NA3 sought to circumvent such curatorial strategies. As she reflects, their efforts were undermined by an “internalized colonialism” evident in the self-censorship of the curators and participating artists (2004:231). Mithlo suggests that instead of reacting to non-Native interpretations and representations of native arts, Indian artists should seek a “proactive stance” that does not start with the needs of “others” but with the desire to define one’s own interpretations of native art, culture, politics, and identity (2004:232). This was the primary goal of the Ceremonial exhibition.

The act of exhibiting at the Venice Biennale was political in that the event was is an elite, international affair well guarded by centurions of “high art.” To be accepted into such company as a sovereign indigenous nation was empowering for a historically marginalized group. The aim was to achieve symbolic control over the artistic and political representations of native art and artists. “Being there” was the final success for this collective of artists and intellectuals. It was an initial step towards decolonizing the global arts, and asserting indigenous power and identity where these had not yet been invited. Ultimately, however, the artists and organizers still faced the challenge of self-censorship, which affected which pieces of artwork artists chose to exhibit, how they were exhibited, and why. Market values and colonial systems pervade the art world in insidious ways, often becoming internalized by those most oppressed by such systems. This continues to be a struggle for the native arts and native artists.

NA3 (IA3) exhibited twice more at the Venice Biennale, in 2001 and 2003, before handing over responsibilities for the exhibit to the Smithsonian’s NMAI in 2005. In a 2006 essay, reflecting on the original intentions of the Biennale exhibits to raise the profile of Native American arts and artists by putting them on display in an international mainstream context, Mithlo counters, “After surviving centuries of genocidal oppression, could we really be rendered
nonexistent merely by being left out of critical arts dialogues?” (2006:88). Instead, she suggests Native arts and artists seek cultural translations that allow for real dialogue with the global arts, instead of just seeking recognition by and inclusion in the mainstream art world. Recognition and acceptance must be owned by the artistic producer first and foremost; authorship and control must be defined in terms of Native American knowledge systems and personal experiences, not restricted by dominant institutions and ideologies (Mithlo 2006:89). The Venice Biennale provided a venue for just a project with its lack of restrictive controls on exhibition design and content. However, as Mithlo notes, the bigger question is whether Native artists should have to engage in cultural translations to accommodate the ignorance of others. Her reply was that cultural translations were only empowering and meaningful if reciprocal; it is only in the act of sharing that we truly find common ground (2006:96).

Although years apart in execution, The Real People, No Beads No Trinkets, and Ceremonial all shared parallel concerns and aims. To a degree, the primary goal of all three exhibitions was to bring Native arts, Native philosophy, and Native politics to the world, to be seen, heard, and valued in a global context. By defining identity as existing outside of the political national boundaries to which Native Americans had been confined to for centuries, these Indian artists unsettled the intellectual and physical terrain upon which American and Western colonial enterprises wrested their power from indigenous populations. The assertion of self-governance and sovereignty were integral aspects of each exhibition, even if they were not explicitly presented as such. But as much as these exhibitions were about setting Native identity apart from the State, they were also about making meaningful connections with other indigenous populations around the world, about sharing stories and customs, and finding common ground in the world of art. As Mithlo (2012) notes, there are many complications in exhibiting Indian art that require further investigation; however, these exhibitions demonstrated that it is the act of
exhibiting that makes a complex and complicated discussion of Indian art possible. Accommodation between discordant discourses seems inevitable, for when any two cultures interact with each other there is an engagement between ideas, customs, and people. But it is only after making an attempt at representation that a more assured understanding of how to proceed emerges. The persistent determination underlying each project that Native Americans have engaged in as activists, educators, artists, and traditionalists has not just sustained Native American communities, but allowed for cultural innovation and continuation.

The Aesthetics of Autoethnographic Articulations

These were all attempts by LaPena and his peers to appropriate ‘art’ and ‘the museum,’ and to reconstruct and articulate these as spaces for continuing tradition in the contemporary world; as spaces for living indigenous culture and identity. It is thus through the museum itself that indigenous peoples have found a way to protect, preserve and continually interpret their world, their desires, their experiences, their subjectivities. LaPena has developed a long history of what Pratt (1992:7) refers to as autoethnography—the cultural expressions in “which colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizer’s own terms.” The relationship between subjugated and dominant groups is a dialogic one in which both sides create and shape each other, albeit within an asymmetrical power structure. LaPena, through his autoethnographic practices and orientations, has helped to transform the art world and the museum into performative sites in which indigenous peoples have authority over the objects, the images, texts, goals and representations of their culture and identity. This has been accomplished with the collaborative efforts of archeologists, curators, federal agencies, academic institutions, and other non-Native entities. Through his artwork, his writing, his artistic projects, and his archive, LaPena rearticulates the ways in which curators, art critics, anthropologists, museum
goers and other outsiders view California Indians. LaPena’s life history and his archive serve as a record and performance of his cultural heritage and indigenous identity, and stand as evidence of his self-determination, creative imagination, and individual memory.
Chapter 6

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

LIFE HISTORY IN THE ARCHIVES

There are many ways to tell a story; you can write it down on paper using a linear narrative plot device of beginning-middle-end; you can set it to a tune and sing it; you can dance it, act it, film it, paint it, speak it. And you can collect it. We construct our stories with the things we do, the places and people we see, the mementos we save. We edit our stories by throwing some things away, keeping others. We choose to emphasize some events over others because of their significance to us, to our communities, to our work, our beliefs, dreams, and hopes. Sometimes we shares our stories, or parts of them, the parts that we feel may have relevance to the stories of others—it is our attempt to connect with others, to create bonds of affinity where there was once only space. The most enduring and relevant stories are not self-serving, but are driven by a desire to enhance human understanding, to clarify perception by standing under the light and reflecting on our image.

TELLING STORIES IN THE ARCHIVES

If archives are full of stories, full of the histories of individuals, communities, organizations, time, then personal archives are full of life stories—life histories. They are self-authored plots that document a life—that try to make sense of place and time from the perspective of an individual. The beauty of life is that it is not lived alone, it is shared with others, and these others become part of our lives and our stories. For some individuals, such as Frank LaPena, life is lived a bit more outwardly and actively than others. Individuals like LaPena work hard to close the space between individuals, cultures, and communities—the space that allows for injustice,
inequity, complacence, and apathy to spread. This is evident in the hundreds of letters from friends, colleagues, artists, scholars, students, government officials and agencies, organizations and people committed to justice and equality for all. Through the words of others we see the reticulate texture of LaPena’s life, and the intricate and interlaced network of social ties.

The Frank R. LaPena Papers as Autoethnographic Text

LaPena’s story has been told before by himself and others—close friends, colleagues, and admirers of his work.105 But his archive tells his story in a different way and from multiple perspectives. For those who are willing to listen, archives are filled with voices, with emotion and action. LaPena’s archive is no different. It is a record of a person’s effort to make sense of his realities, to interpret his world and the world he shares with others (Pratt 1992). This collection stands as a record of LaPena’s ethnography of himself, his autoethnography. The collection is itself an autoethnography created and developed by LaPena—a testament, or testimony both to his own subjectivities and positionalities as an Indian artist, educator, a poet, and traditionalist, and to the effects and affects of colonialism and colonization; to the resistances to colonialist and state apparatuses that LaPena and other Native American activists and artists have taken up as their responsibility to their people, heritage, and posterity—to a decolonized future (Deloria, Jr. 1969b; Fixico 2007; Hoxie 2001; Mihesuah 1998, 2003, 2004).

Within this collection, within this autoethnography, we get a sense of the ways in which LaPena re-articulates various modes of ethnography to fashion a more complex, more subjective, and more human representation of Native American life under colonialism, as it is lived even today. Structures of oppression continue to be embedded within our institutions and relations of power, and Native Americans continue to be subjugated by colonialist policies (Deloria, Jr.

105 See Appendix A for a list of works by and about Frank LaPena.
By taking control of the techniques of representation, artists and activists like LaPena are challenging not only primitivist and essentialist representations of Native Americans reinforced by the dominant culture, but the modes in which such representations are produced.

I did not seek to write a biography; this is an ethnographic investigation into the ways Frank LaPena uses the details of his life to produce a collection of ‘things,’ an archive that speaks to the persistence of tradition, to its articulation, performance, and translation in the postcolonial world. Indigeneity is rooted/routed in a myriad of ways, across vast spaces, in both particular and grand movements. LaPena’s archive shows that articulations of indigenous identity can also be rooted in and routed to the archive, and that archives, despite their colonial ties or perhaps even because of them, provide crucial sites for rehistoricizing the past and challenging modes of power and knowledge that continue to impact the realities of indigenous peoples. By telling his story in ‘The Archive,’ LaPena reappropriates a vital instrument of the colonial government and employs it to serve his interests as an artist and traditionalist, to voice his concerns regarding Native American sovereignty and self-presentation, and to establish his place in the world as an indigenous person committed to ‘community’ action across a broad spectrum of local and global locations.

Collections like Frank LaPena’s provide us with an historical portrait, not precisely framed and abstracted from its context, but one that still evokes the colors, vibrations, and the striations in texture that compose a person’s life. Such autoethnographic portraits bring into focus the expansive landscape upon which Indian activism thrived during the Red Power Movement, as well as the localized community efforts to bring about change and improve relations between the Native and non-Native society. In Chapter Three, I show the many ways identity is articulated in different political and social arenas. Indigenous identity is a multifarious entity—it can be accommodating, resistant, oppositional, localized, or globally-oriented—sometimes all at once.
The study of indigenous identity and activism is also the study of the history of anthropology. Within the context and the space of the archives, LaPena’s Collection gives us another site for challenging the technologies and ideologies of colonialism. The Collection is itself an activist project—an effort to enfold the public into political consciousness and endow them with the knowledge necessary to respond with responded to ignorance and intolerance. It is not merely one individual’s undertaking; it is predicated on the struggles and achievements of those who experience adversity as a systemic condition of life and still find creative ways to continue the survival of tradition and heritage.

The importance of education, both traditional and academic, within the Indian community requires more research, respect, and understanding. Studying Indian education provides a microscope on the sensitive relations between Native peoples and ways of being and knowing and Western traditions of thought and history. In Chapter Four, I show how indigenous knowledge is produced and practiced in two different realms of sociality: traditional spaces and the academy. LaPena’s life and papers relate the importance of people and places in the continuation of heritage and the assertion of identity. Traditional practices become re/de-articulated as the people and places shift and change over time. LaPena’s engagement with the academy presents an extension of indigenous knowledge in locations previously closed off to Native Americans. Indian education has undergone many transformations throughout history, but American Indians have not just accommodated and assimilated—they have developed their own intercultural reinterpretations that are specific to their cultural, spiritual, political, and economic needs and desires. Education is one of the primary means through which Native Americans have asserted their identity, culture, and humanity. Another is art.

Identity, activism, and tradition converge within “the arts,” particularly in the late twentieth century. The complexity and diversity of Indian identity becomes apparent when
looking at how individual Indian artists define their identity, art, and heritage. A resonant example of an ethnographic mode of representation appropriated by LaPena is reflected in his artwork and his aesthetic philosophy. His papers also provide a deeper understanding of how Indian artists and activists worked within the mainstream fine arts institutions to advance their own aesthetic, cultural, economic, and political agendas.

The LaPena Collection affords us with the perspective of an individual who identifies himself as an artist, as well as a Native American, an educator, and a traditionalist. At times these identities overlap, at others they are expressed separately. There is no handbook for how identity is managed, although patterns may be exposed and different situations may call for the attribution of certain identifications over others. For Indian artists, the struggle is often one of negotiating cultural identity and artistic/individual identity in the marketplace and in the “art world.” LaPena’s Collection offers a broad perspective on the difficulties of being an Indian and an artist, as well as on the myriad ways in which Native peoples have toiled to develop support systems for Indian arts and crafts, to increase the visibility and accountability of Native Americans in the mainstream art world, to expand their power of representation globally. This is no small feat, as it has required the collaboration of a complex network of artists, activists, educators, and organizations to clear a permanent space for Native Americans and other indigenous and underrepresented groups in the art world.

By being simultaneously traditional in its themes and content and modern or contemporary in its media, technique, style and conception, LaPena’s art and philosophy acts as a statement against the essentialism of constructed binaries of modern art versus Native, traditional, primitive art (Clifford 1988). His artistic work itself, then, acts as an autoethnography—the art works to complicate the one-dimensional image of Native art and thus challenges taken-for-granted assumptions regarding Native identity and representation. In this way LaPena’s art work
disrupts the easy binary of high art versus primitive or “naïve” art, precisely because these aesthetic categories are rooted in the ideologies and structures of colonialism. LaPena’s subjectivity as an American Indian artist is but one of many. Through art he inserts himself into political discourses regarding Native rights, human rights, education, issues of sovereignty, land claims, self-determination, and representation. All of these interests and subjectivities are intertwined in complex ways. His work is deeply rooted in his spiritual beliefs and traditions, as well as in his commitment to educate the public, Native and non-Native alike, about indigenous ways of knowing and Native history, but as these are situated and lived in the present. In many ways, LaPena’s collection purports to do what Frank Day set out to do through his paintings, that is to “shoot all of your imaginations” about what it means to be a California Indian, by complicating those imaginings, and by bringing them to life—by bringing them into the present where they belong (quoted in Dobkins 2001:22).

As discussed in Chapter Five, the museum is a crucial site for challenging authority over representation and (re)making contact with colonial structures. The latter is an effort to rearticulate the terms and relations between Native and non-Native people, worldviews, and spaces. Like the museum, the archive is also an important site for making contact. LaPena’s archive continues his tradition of performing his heritage and identity for Native and non-Native audiences, allowing for new translations and futures. Through his papers, LaPena engages in a discourse of self-representation and decolonization; he uses his words, his images, his colors, his dreams, his voice to reveal the processes of colonialism that are rooted in our everyday sensibilities. Through his work and his collection, we view a portrait of a person fighting for his identity in a world where Native Americans have to battle for their cultural identity—they are forced to; those are the conditions of colonialism. LaPena is working through and against these ideas, these labels that have been imposed by anthropologists, as well as by art historians, critics
and curators. Instead of looking at his art and aesthetic philosophy as contradictory, or inherently conflicted, we can read them as autoethnography—as a kind of writing back of history, or of bringing history into the present.

*The Archive: A New Site for Life History*

There are a number of eloquent life histories of indigenous activists and traditionalists that reveal underlying mechanisms of power and oppression that Native people work within and against. Anthropologist Sally McBeth’s collaboration with Essie Horne (2002) reflects the themes that shaped Horne’s life narrative; her “connectedness” to her ancestors, her experiences with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and in Indian boarding schools, her work as a teacher and a vanguard for the preservation of Indian lifeways, and her active commitment to improving Indian-white relations were all common themes in her stories. Greg Sarris’ (1994) biography of his elder Mabel McKay, points literary critics and anthropologists in a more focused and culturally-sensitive direction in terms of methodology and writing life history. His text acts as a model of the complexities and complications arising from the researcher/subject power relationship for both literary critics as well as anthropologists. In their historical biography, Lawrence Shoup and Randall Miliken (1999) offer a reconstruction of the life and times of Inigo Polsomi based on a cultural resource management project in California. Their aim is to represent the voiceless in the historical record (those at the bottom of the social and economic hierarchy), by telling their story as they were unable to themselves. Florence Shipek (2003) discusses forced displacement in their life history of Delfina Cuero, a Kumeyaay, who had been removed from her land and home. Because she was never enrolled in a reservation, she was forced to live a semi-nomadic existence in the mountains and valleys between the Gulf of California and San Diego County. The text stands as a record of cultural change and persistence, and of the claim of Delfina to land and
sovereignty, which she viewed as basic human rights that should be afforded to all people. Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins’s (1883) narrative articulates the wrongs and tragedies suffered by her and her people, the Paiutes, at the hands of white people during the mid to late 1800s, as well as her dual subjectivities as an adjudicator for both her people and the Whites. In her case, she uses the white ways and white communications media to expose and indict settlers for their actions towards Native Americans. Grant Arndt (2010) discusses Henry Low Cloud’s efforts to challenge the colonial racial ideologies and institutions shaping the everyday lives of Native Americans in the first half of the twentieth century. Low Cloud was the first Ho Chunk activist to use the then-dominant mode of mediation—the newspaper—as a vehicle for such a project by reporting on local acts of discrimination against Native Americans and the systematic racism of white institutions. And many scholars (Heizer and Kroeber, eds. 1981; Kroeber 2002; Kroeber and Kroeber, eds. 2003; Luthin and Hinton 2003) have taken on the challenge of reconstructing and recontextualizing the life of Ishi, the last Yahi, in respectful and exploratory ways.

Each of these life histories has expanded our understanding of indigenous projects of activism, survival and heritage renewal in different spaces, Native “hubs,” and at different moments in time. In this thesis, I demonstrate that personal archival collections represent another ‘space’ in which processes of ‘muting’ are contested and actively deconstructed. Frank LaPena, as an artist, teacher, writer, traditionalist, activist, and collector, engages in such projects of decolonization, projects of rectifying the wrongs committed against Native Americans. His archive collection stands as a cultural expression of human being, of marking one’s place in situ, and creating something that can live on as testimony to the resilience, persistence, and continuity of life. LaPena’s archive allows us to know him in a multidimensional, multivocal way. The archive is a tool, an instrument that LaPena uses to perform his identity and to keep his experiences and ideas of tradition alive.
There is an underlying chronological structure in LaPena’s archive collection that assumes a self-imposed temporal narrative construction. There are also themes that LaPena emphasizes through his organization of files and documents based on subjects, projects, and activities that are meaningful to him. By following these leads, I traced the narrative inherent in his archive, and delineated the ways in which LaPena frames his personhood, engages his sense of self, and develops his life story. Archives are an expression of individuality; they provide a space for people to shape how others read or interpret their lives, and in that sense they are autobiographical. They play on a person’s memory of time, relationships, feelings, ambitions, and experiences. In this way, personal archives are fluid, they turn with the mind, with experience and reflection. They involve more than just one period in time and space—they develop with the person over time and through space. This is the thrill of personal archives, and it is the source of their power to affect human understanding. Personal archives provide access to landscapes of consciousness in the vein of Bruner—they are reflections of the inner worlds of subjects engaged in certain actions, beliefs, and feelings. They are the “amplified self” that include aspects of past, present, and future selves. The self is projected into a narrative that gives shape and meaning to the collection itself, and to the subject of the collection.

*Life History in the Archives: Potential Sites*

LaPena’s archive is not the only one of its kind; there are many personal archives of individuals who have been integral to the articulation of indigenous identity in the United States. The Rupert Costo Archive of the American Indian, housed in the Special Collections and Archives of the Tomas Rivera Library at the University of California, Riverside, holds the papers of Rupert and Jeannette Costo. This archive includes printed material, film, and photographs collected by the Costos, mostly during the 1960s and 1970s. It deals with water, land hunting and
fishing rights, Indian gaming, sovereignty, language and education programs, as well as their work as founders of the American Indian Historical Society. The collection of Jack D. Forbes at the University of California, Davis, consists of 170 linear feet of articles, reports, publications, microfilm and photographs relating to Native American history, education, and activism. The David Risling Papers, also at UC Davis, includes 43 linear feet of files concerning Indian education, Indian law. As a co-founder of the Californian Indian Legal Services, the Native American Rights Fund and D-Q University, Risling deftly used the law and education as instruments for attaining sovereignty within the U.S. settler state. His archive, which includes newspaper clippings, audiotapes, reports, memos, and legal papers, presents a particularly rich site for mapping the calculated efforts of educators to effect real change in public education.

Vine Deloria, Jr.’s papers in the Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, Yale University Library, consists of 170 boxes (160.25 linear feet) of material documenting his life and work. Writings, correspondence, and subject files make up the majority of collection, but the archives also includes legal files, teaching files, organizational files from the many groups with which Deloria was affiliated, photographs, and audiovisual material. The papers of Beatrice Medicine, held in the National Anthropological Archives at the Smithsonian Institution, consist of 21 boxes of her correspondence, manuscripts and notes. The collection is currently unprocessed, but it could shed (even more) light about the complexities of being a Native cultural anthropologist, and a woman, and working with Native communities to develop ways to make anthropology applicable and meaningful to them. The papers of Gerald Vizenor (Chippewa), an educator, author, poet, and activist, are held in the Minnesota Historical Society Library, and consist of manuscripts, correspondence from others involved in Indian activism, teaching files, correspondence from others involved in Indian activism, teaching files,

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106 Rose Delia Soza War Soldier (2013) presents a complex and in-depth portrait of the Costos and the AIHS based partially on the Costa Archive at the University of California, Riverside, the Forbes Collection at the University of California, Davis.
and project files relating to his social service work, his work for Indian education and employment programs, and his editorial work for the Minneapolis Tribune. Files also include published material related to American Indian legal issues, politics, and the Wounded Knee Trials (1973-1974).

The papers of artist and educator Lloyd H. “Kiva” New are housed in the Archives of the Institute of the American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he was first hired as art director in 1961 and later promoted to President, a position that he held until his retirement in 1978. The papers were donated by New’s widow, Aysen New, in 2011. New was incredibly active in museums, art, and education throughout his life, and the materials in the collection document his activities and philosophies regarding Indian art, multicultural education, and museum development. There are files from his time spent at the Phoenix Indian School as a young boy, as well as files mapping his academic and artistic career working for various institutions, most notably IAIA, and his years in retirement. The collection has been arranged and described and includes writings, speeches, organizational files, reports, publications, drawings, and photographs. The archive of James Luna (Pooyukitchum/Luiseño), a leading contemporary Native American artist, is also housed at IAIA. His archive is notable for its “completeness,” since Luna kept almost every document, including letters and emails, related to his career as an artist. The collection also includes his notes, journals, personal calendars, photographs, posters, scripts and other printer material, the bulk of which date from 1982 to 2010. These personal archives are potentially important resources for expanding my work on archives as sites for exploring indigeneity and engaging in postcolonial discussions of identity and the settler state.
LOOKING FORWARD

The Frank LaPena Collection is an essential and intimate glimpse into the contested and variegated terrain of Native American history, identity, and politics. The Collection maps the social, cultural, and political landscapes of the region both from a broad perspective and a personal point of view, giving life and vitality to the historically difficult and painful realities experienced by indigenous populations not just in the United States, but globally. Thus, the Collection facilitates research and discussion on a number of significant and enduring topics: Indian land, water, and cultural rights, Indian and government relations, contemporary Native American Art, social activism, American history, colonization and decolonization, prejudice and discrimination in America and their effects on education, employment, health, and political representation. Native American Studies has a longstanding history in California higher education, with the California State University, Sacramento being one of the first state institutions to establish an Ethnic Studies department and Native American Studies program into the curriculum. The collection would be of great interest to local instructors and students of Native American studies seeking information on events, people, and institutions relating to Native issues. For this reason, the collection also has national value, in that it provides an in-depth portrait of Native American history over time. The Native community in Northern California is especially thriving and notable for its creative outreach efforts. The desire and need for more publically accessible documents and records concerning Native American history, tradition, and culture is acute.

It is easy to get lost in the debris of the archives; not knowing at first glance what is detritus and what is sacred can be difficult, and we must never assume we know when our time in the archives has come to an end. We can look into the archives, and read, and feel, and ponder, but to know requires an engagement with empathy, and therefore with imagination. It is the
imagination that allows researchers, students, artists, and activists to follow the tenuous threads of thought until they become more taut, if more convoluted.

Researching the archives requires patience and caution. Getting lost is an integral part of the archival process, and it is also part of the fun of conducting fieldwork in the archives. Finding one’s way out of the sea of documents with an intact vision of the collection and its value to the discipline, the community, the individual, and beyond entails a methodical approach and a persistent nature. I and a dozen other researchers could spend the next five years with the collection and produce vastly different monographs focusing on different themes and using different genres of writing—that is how rich and valuable this collection is to the world outside. What is more, there are other collections like it that need to be studied individually and as part of a grander whole. A more integrated approach to archival research is ideal, one that seeks a composite, vivid view of living history.

LaPena’s archive tells us many stories; stories of activism, identity, power, art, tradition, and humanity. These are stories that LaPena chose to tell; some of the stories are conventional and have been told many times before, but not the way LaPena tells them, and that is what makes his archives personal, special, and unique. This tells us something about LaPena, about his agency as an artist, activist, writer, elder, educator, and collector, and about how his stories fit into the larger histories of Indian culture, activism, and art. LaPena’s life story is connected to those who came before him, those who inspired and educated him and equipped him with the perspicacity to influence others. His archive presents stories of survival and hope; these tell of a world beset by iniquity and indifference, and how people work together to defy the mechanisms and conditions of oppression. His life story is political in its intent and poetic in its emotional reach and expression. It has the power to contribute to personal and cultural transformations. It is my intention not to rewrite Frank LaPena’s life or to add something that was not there before; my
role is as a listener and an interpreter, not an originator. But it is my hope that this thesis provides a valuable entrée into this collection, into LaPena’s life and work, and that others will follow me into the archives and find the stories hidden there and share them with others.
APPENDIX A

BIOGRAPHICAL WORKS BY FRANK LAPEÑA AND OTHERS

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1978

1977

1976
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1997
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Achebe, Chinua

Agar, Michael

Ames, Michael

Appadurai, Arjun


Aristotle

Arndt, Grant

Asad, Talal, ed.

Atalay, Sonya

Bahri, Deepika

Barnhardt, Ray and Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley
Barth, Fredrik

Barthes, Roland

Bellardo, Lewis J. and Lynn Lady Bellardo, eds.

Berman, Tressa

Bernstein, Bruce

Biddle, Jennifer

Biolsi, Thomas

Bishop, Katherine

Blouin Jr., Francis X. and William G. Rosenberg


Blount, Ben G. and Kathi R. Kitner
Boellstorff, Tom

Bolton, Lissant

Bouchard, Marie

Bourdieu, Pierre

Brockmeier, Jens

Bruner, Jerome

Buckley, Liam

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Clifford, James  


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Cook, Terry  
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Cook-Lynn, Elizabeth  
Cooper, Frederick

Costabile, Dominick

Crum, Steve


de Certeau, Michel

de la Cadena, Marisol and Orin Starn

Deloria, Jr., Vine


Deloria, Jr., Vine and Clifford M. Lytle

Department of Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA)


Derrida, Jacques

Dirks, Nicholas B.


Dobkins, Rebecca J.


Dominguez, Virginia R.

Du Bois, Cora

Dubois, Laurent

Eastlake, John

Edwards, Elizabeth


Eiss, Paul K.
Erikson, Patricia Pierce, with Helma Ward and Kirk Wachendorf

Fanon, Frantz

Farge, Arlette

Fienup-Riordan, Ann

Fixico, Donald L.

Foucault, Michel


Frank, Gelya

Friedman, Jonathan

Garroutte, Eva Marie

Geertz, Clifford


Gell, Alfred

Georgakopoulou, Alexandra


Glass, Aaron

Golla, Victor

Goulet, Jean-Guy A.

Graf, Christoph

Gross, Lawrence W.

Hale, Charles
Handler, Richard and Eric Gable

Haraway, Donna

Harris, Verne


Heidegger, Martin

Heizer, Robert F. and Theodora Kroeber, eds.

Henare, Amiria J.

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Johnstone, Barbara

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Latour, Bruno

Lavine, Steven D. and Ivan Karp

Leaf, Murray

Levy, Neil

Lonetree, Amy

Lonetree, Amy and Amanda J. Cobb, eds.

Luthin, Herbert W. and Leanne Hinton

MacDonald, Sharon J.

Marcus, George E. and Michael M. J. Fischer

McBeth, Sally
McCaffrey, Moira T.

McChesney, Lea S.

McDonald, Robert A. J. and Christopher Hives

McKemmish, Sue

McMaster, Gerald, ed.

Medicine, Beatrice

Memmi, Albert

Mihesuah, Devon A.


Mihesuah, Devon A. and Angela Cavender Wilson

Miller, Daniel

Mithlo, Nancy Marie


Myers, Fred

Nabokov, Peter

Nagel, Joane

Narayan, Kirin

Niezen, Ronald

Ochs, Elinor and Lisa Capps


Ortner, Sherry B.

Palmer, Carolyn Butler

p’Bitek, Okot
Peers, Laura and Alison K. Brown, eds.  

Peers, Laura and Alison K. Brown  

Pels, Peter  

Pels, Peter and Oscar Salemink  


Phillips, Ruth B.  

Polkinghorne, Donald E.  

Pollard, Riva A.  

Pratt, Mary Louise  


Price, Sally  

Rabinow, Paul  

Ramirez, Renya K.  
Rickard, Jolene

Roe, Kathleen

Rosaldo, Renato

Rosoff, Nancy B.

Said, Edward

Sarris, Greg

Schwartz, Joan M. and Terry Cook

Scott, Rebecca J.

Shippeck, Florence Connelly, ed.

Shoup, Lawrence and Randall Miliken
Simpson, Moira G.

Smart, Pamela G.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai

Society of American Archivists

Soza War Soldier, Rose Delia

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty

Starr, Paul

Steedman, Carolyn

Stocking, George W.


Stoler, Ann Laura
Stoler, Ann Laura and Frederick Cooper

Sturm, Circe


Tolley, Sara-Larus
2006 Quest for Tribal Acknowledgement: California’s Honey Lake Maidus. Norman: University of Oklahoma.

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Trouillot, Michel-Rolph

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Weaver, Hilary N.

Wilkins, David

Williams, Brian and William K. Wallach

Williams, Jr., Robert A.
Wilson, Ian E.

Wilson, Waziyatawin Angela and Michael Yellow Bird

Wolfe, Patrick

Yellow Bird, Michael