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## Ethnography and the NPS: A Growing Partnership Muriel Crespi, Ph.D.

This issue of the **CRM Bulletin** introduces cultural anthropology, or ethnography, a relative newcomer to the National Park Service CRM family. A social science and—along with archeology, biological anthropology and linguistics—a major subfield of anthropology, ethnography is a natural ally of NPS programs. Its specialties offer information on the broad spectrum of human activities, from the culturally defined ways human communities identify and manage natural resources to the cultural meanings given the structures and other tangible resources they produce. In these respects, ethnography provides descriptive and analytic windows on the natural and cultural resources under NPS management, yielding information for culturally-appropriate public involvement, interpretation, management and planning programs.

A word about the term "ethnography." Cultural anthropology's classic approach to collecting and describing information about a people's lifeways is known as ethnography, an approach requiring a local group's close collaboration for successful outcomes. In selecting a term that best suits its established Servicewide responsibilities for programs and policies that affect Native Americans, and its more recent emphasis on cultural anthropology itself, and all park-associated ethnic communities, the Anthropology Division in the Washington Office selected ethnography as the most appropriate term. It is a traditional label, thus consistent with the NPS role in preserving features of long-standing significance, yet also forward-looking in its description of a newly adopted perspective. Using "ethnography" rather than "cultural anthropology" also reduces ambiguities that come from some agencies' tendency to equate the term anthropology with archeology, whereas others associate it with cultural anthropology.

### Cultural Meaning

Its dual role as a land-managing conservation and preservation agency often makes the NPS the custodian of natural resources, and of the sites, structures, and objects—or cultural resources—that Native American and other ethnic communities once created and used, and may still require for continued cultural identity and survival. In the Service's new Regional Cultural Resources Summary and Action Program, these natural and cultural features are viewed categorically as ethnographic resources; that is, park resources with traditional subsistence, sacred ceremonial or religious, residential, or other cultural meaning for members of *contemporary* park-associated ethnic groups, including Native Americans. Such resources include natural environmental features such as Native American subsistence grounds in Alaskan units, buildings such as the churches at San Antonio Missions which still serve religious purposes; cultural landscapes as represented by the Timbisha "Village" at Death Valley, the cityscapes of Martin Luther King Jr. NHS; numerous archeological and natural features important in Native American religious culture, and museum objects borrowed or lent by contemporary groups.

Ethnography shows, for example, that from the contemporary Native Americans' perspective, prehistoric and historic sites or objects are not just, or perhaps even, archeological and historic materials with scientific or aesthetic values. Rather, they might be valued principally as reference points, anchors so to speak, in religious dogma, legend, and

ceremonials required for effectively instructing children about the spiritual basis of socially approved behavior. There are cases in which architecturally ordinary buildings stimulate the strongest sense of community identity, partly because they provide contemporary meeting places where kin and friends renew long-standing ties and also because they are closely associated with local culture heroes. Where natural resources are concerned, the ethnography of natural resource use, an approach generally called ecological anthropology, yields insights into the ecosystem dynamics in which human populations participate and into resource use patterns evolved by local residents often after generations-long experience with the habitat. Such an ethnography teaches us, for example, about local culturally-defined resource conservation approaches that include religious beliefs for regulating use by prohibiting harvesting in certain fragile areas, defined as sacred, and favoring it elsewhere. This data benefits management and interpretation in new NPS areas such as in Alaska, where subsistence use continues. It also benefits the units designated as Biosphere Reserves, and any other units concerned about the role of consumptive use in stabilizing or disturbing local habitats, or about the sacred meaning of certain natural features. Understanding the cultural meaning and uses of resources, natural and cultural, will facilitate assessment of NPS effects on traditional use patterns, and effects of those same patterns on the NPS resources.

## **Dimensions**

This issue of the **CRM Bulletin** introduces readers to the language, objectives, methods, specialties and products—the culture so to speak— of ethnography, especially its applied or project-oriented dimensions. Several articles discuss the sort of family and community level data needed for planning when agency actions might affect customary resource users. Using Native American cases, Liebow demonstrates the benefits of ethnography's localized, collaborative, and holistic approach for researching impacts on culturally distinctive communities. Ethnography, as a component of Social Impact Assessments (SIA)—the major assessment method and process—yields data on otherwise undetectable community perceptions and dynamics that can block, rather than support, the best intentioned plans. By also revealing the rational basis for community responses, ethnography produces data needed for correcting plans so they are more culturally appropriate, and locally acceptable. Mitchell's case study informs us about the NPS planning process and ethnography's pragmatic contributions to what is probably one of the Service's most exciting recent undertakings, the Canyon de Chelly Joint Management Plan. The plan involves the cooperation of three major institutions—the Service, the Navajo Tribe and the BIA—each with its own culture. Aware of the need to negotiate relationships on this inter-cultural team, and work effectively with the tribe and its several chapters, the Southwestern Regional Office uses its own cultural specialists, and consults with the Navajo and with ethnographers experienced in the area, to everyone's benefit.

Not only in parks associated with Native American communities, but planning, interpretation, and management—where any community is involved—benefits from systematic data on local lifeways. This is illustrated by Howell's work on the Appalachian culture of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. The ethnographer's knowledge both of folkways and individuals at all hierarchical levels, and relative independence of, but familiarity with, the agency also enabled her to play an informed and detached liaison or "broker" role between the local community and the agency. An additional benefit was that ethnographic oral histories addressing culture change or stability helped provide a data base for orienting park employees to the local culture. Speaking from a manager's perspective about another community and park situation, Wolf points out the value of ethnographic data on informal neighborhood associations, dynamics and resources. Local definitions of what these included helped in assessing community impacts of planning alternatives and the development of mitigation steps that were appropriate locally. Important, too, is that management arrangements with the Anthropology

Department at Georgia State University offer a model for acquiring affordable outside expertise.

A crucial dimension of historic preservation, ethnographically viewed, is its cultural appropriateness, or the close fit of public involvement procedures, interpretive approaches, treatment, and agency actions in general to community goals, value systems, religious practices, and other lifeways. To a great extent, "appropriateness" requires the accurate reading of the cultural landscape or cultural resources in general. As Low tells us, landscapes or other resources encode local values and perspectives that must be understood for the best identification, evaluation and interpretation. Applied ethnographic techniques such as cultural constituency analysis and the ethnographer's brokering role in mediating between communities and agencies offer tools for appropriately incorporating community values. Parker's Micronesian cases reveal the problems, perhaps even the futility, of taking culturally informed preservation actions without ethnographically understanding local values and historical perspectives. Indeed, without knowing traditional history—or even that a body of local knowledge exists and differs importantly from history as outsiders perceive it—and without understanding local values, cultural outsiders risk inadvertently destroying significant local properties and offending religious beliefs. Sometimes we, the park managers, planners, and even cultural resource specialists, are just such cultural outsiders whose oversights might create management problems that take years to resolve.

Working with objects in the Southwest leads Brugge to stress the need to ethnographically approach the symbolic and practical meaning of objects, whether prehistoric, historic, or contemporary. In seeking meanings from the Native American communities, we must recall that they, like other communities, differ internally in values and expertise, and certain members are more apt consultants on, say, religious objects, women's objects, elite or everyday objects. Finding the most knowledgeable religious consultants is especially crucial to determining the meaning and culturally appropriate form, if any, of managing and publicly interpreting materials to which contemporary peoples feel strongly linked. Work at the Maggie Walker site in Richmond involved Marlowe and Boyd in researching the cultural meanings ascribed to an individual. Approaching the task ethnographically led them to apply ethnohistoric analysis to printed and verbal materials, and to work with community consultants whose perspective on local community relationships and Black roles revealed crucial interpretive information about the cultural meaning of Maggie Walker that would not otherwise be forthcoming.

Bean and Vane untangle differences among ethnohistory, ethnography, and history fields before introducing what they perceive as a timely model program of national park ethnography. The authors suggest that such a program is imperative now because Native Americans are more than ever prepared to work with ethnographers to develop the information base needed to correct misinformation, because foreign as well as U.S. visitors to parks bring high interest but misconceptions about Native Americans, and because NPS personnel want to learn more about the cultures and people they are interpreting. Professional level ethnographic work should be assigned, not to interested nonspecialists, but to cultural anthropologists specialized in working in tandem with park-associated American Indians, and experienced in ethnographic oral history interviews, fieldwork and document analysis. Such anthropologists are available and interested in assisting the NPS.

### **NPS Program**

Indeed, the time is ripe for a professional NPS ethnography program, and modest beginnings are being made. Individual parks such as Santa Monica and Jean LaFitte, in addition to others discussed here, and at the Denver Service Center, have hired ethnographers and incorporated their perspectives, and for the past several years legislative and other needs have been generating ethnographic resource studies in Alaska more than in any other NPS region. While my brief review of Alaskan programs in this issue cannot do justice to their efforts, it highlights undertakings that are meeting Service needs for cultural

data on contemporary human demography, subsistence religious practices as they affect NPS resource interests.

Recognizing the equally pressing need for ethnographic data and perspectives throughout the Service, and responding to certain Native American program concerns, the Service began to institutionalize ethnography in 1978 when it created the first Chief Anthropologist's position and established Anthropology Division in the Washington Office.

Currently, programs are being defined, and policies and guidelines refined. One aspect of this program the Native American Relationships Policy which addresses the role of ethnographic oral history, and consultative and other relationships between NPS units and traditionally associated Native Americans, which was published in the **Federal Register** on January 22, 1987. The role of the NPS Anthropology Division in Native American issues reflects the Service's management responsibilities, as Scovill's article points out, for preserving and conserving resources that remain essential to the cultural survival of contemporary Native Americans, and for interpreting Native American cultures to the visiting public. To facilitate the planning and management of culturally sensitive resources, and as an aspect of a more complex drive to identify Service materials, an inventory of ethnographic resources is planned for Service resources valued by contemporary Native American and other ethnic groups. Greater protection for the resources that underwrite cultural diversity will be one result. The stage is set for ethnographic actions. We appreciate the ideas shared by this issue's authors, and we look forward to a continuing dialogue with them and others about ethnography and the NPS.

The author is an Applied Cultural Anthropologist in the Anthropology Division of the National Park Service, Washington Office. She has worked in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the U.S. on issues of ethnicity and cultural ecology

# In Creating Relationships

**William Penn Mott**  
**Director, National Park Service**

I know you will join me in welcoming Ethnography or Cultural Anthropology to the National Park Service. Ethnography's concern for the lifeways of the contemporary Native American and other ethnic communities associated with our parks make it invaluable to meeting the challenge of my 12-point plan. Ethnographic analysis of local lifeways, for example, will facilitate our understanding of culturally diverse publics, especially the present day peoples whose ancestral sites we protect and those who are legally entitled to use many of the natural and cultural resources we manage. Insights into the cultural meanings that communities customarily give these resources also help the Service create relationships that benefit park neighbors as well as park programs and policies. One such policy is the Service's draft Native American Relationships Policy which, I am pleased to say, was recently published in the Federal Register. I look forward to its speedy adoption and implementation, and to further strengthening the long-standing tradition of cooperation between the Service and Native American communities. In a more general vein, I look forward to the expanded understanding of the lifeways of all park neighbors that ethnography can facilitate.

# In Managing Cultural Resources

**Jerry L. Rogers**

Associate Director for Cultural  
Resources National Park Service

The National Park Service's continuing efforts to identify strategies for preserving the Nation's heritage has made the value of cultural anthropology and its ethnographic approaches evident. By focusing on the lifeways of Native American or other ethnic communities and the natural and cultural resources associated with them, both within and adjacent to park boundaries, ethnographers help identify the larger system in which NPS resources exist and are managed. Resources become viewed, not as isolated features that end at park boundaries or as strictly material or natural features, but as part of complex regional systems that include neighboring communities and their values. This approach helps managers in several ways, I believe. For one, they can better assess the effects of NPS programs on local lifeways, and the effects of local activities on NPS goals and resources. For another, increased knowledge of community dynamics and the cultural meanings of local resources facilitates the development of mutually beneficial partnerships. The Service's land protection and other planning efforts gain from community allies who support the NPS conservation and preservation goals while communities gain opportunities to express their own cultural values. Exploring ethnographic contributions in these regards promises to lead us along some innovative and productive paths.

# Cultural Diversity and Native Peoples

**Douglas H. Scovill**

At a recent National Park Service managers meeting in Washington, Director William Penn Mott, Jr. asked us to look ahead 25 years or more and think seriously about the social responsibilities of the NPS as a Federal institution. He noted such trends as the graying of our population, the inexorable urbanization of rural lands on the periphery of our cities and the changing character of the family and asked what other responsibilities we might have. In the discussion that followed I suggested to Director Mott that I felt the Service has a strong social responsibility to Native Americans and their goals of self-determination and the maintenance of their cultural identity on their terms. I pointed out that there are three fundamental reasons why the service has a responsibility to Native Americans.

First, we exercise control over large areas of land that contain natural resources and significant places that are culturally essential to the maintenance and survival of Native American lifeways.

Second, we preserve in our extensive archeological and ethnographic collections items of material culture so important to contemporary Native Americans who want and need to understand how their present links to their past.

Third, we interpret the archeological and historical past of Native Americans and their ethnographic present to millions of Americans annually. What we say about them and the accuracy and validity of what we tell the public is critical because, in many cases, this will be the public's primary source of information about them.

Former Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Forrest J. Gerard, a Blackfeet Indian, in a 1979 speech in Washington, DC, provided a perspective about Native Americans that will serve us well to remember:

"Indian tribes and their citizenry occupy a unique status in American society. This status may seem to be an anomaly until one remembers that it is as old as the Nation itself, and though frequently overlooked, is part of the fabric of American government in society. The rights which have been accorded the Native people to a continuing political existence, to land and natural resources, and to cultural distinctness are special, inherent, and unique rights, to which they adhere with the determination that accounts for their remarkable survival in the face of the pressures through history. Looked at from the perspective of the world's relations among nations, the continuing recognition of these rights by the United States constitutes a voluntary limitation of sovereignty by a powerful nation, which has few precedents in the history of the race. "

A most insightful look into the future of what our responsibilities ought to be to Native Americans was noted by former NPS Director Russell E. Dickenson in his keynote address to the First World Conference on Cultural Parks held at Mesa Verde National Park in September, 1984:

"...it occurs that we are at a remarkable point in time, a time when it behooves responsible parties to recognize and to act on what I might call a historic juncture of interests.

"Modernization often finds the resources of small native communities being absorbed by government agencies and private interest groups. In the process, native peoples relinquish exclusive control over resources that support their lifeways and also contain ancestral sites invested with deep religious meaning. As we know, a people's lifeways or cultures depend for survival on intimate relationships with these resources. Often, too, the scientific, preservation and conservation communities prize those same resources for their historic and environmental values.

"To further national conservation and preservation goals that affect native resources, then, it seems to me that we must seek innovative forms of rapprochement among native communities, government land managing agencies and groups who share that concern.

This clearly would require: First, recognizing and respecting the unique qualities of native cultures and the directions that native people wish their cultures should take. Developing permanent working partnerships with native communities to effectively incorporate them as allies and partners in planning a future that will significantly affect the lives of their children and their children's children. Third, it is time for those of us concerned with cultural resources to recognize the value of cultural differences and different cultures in ensuring the growth and development of the world's heritage. The natural sciences have long recognized the role of biological diversity in ensuring the survival of living forms, and we know that diversity leads to a rich genetic pool from which new life forms develop. It follows, then, that differences in lifeways offer the raw materials to fashion tomorrow's communities with their religious practices, their family arrangements, and their artists and artisans. As cultural resource professionals, we must seek to preserve for today's people and for future generations the lifeways by which ethnic and national groups wish to be distinguished. Fourth, we must recognize that the concept of culture means much more than simply objects or structures. Material things are the result of a people's lifeways or cultures; that is, historic structures come from a people's way of organizing themselves into family groups. The temples we carefully preserve represent the labor of hundreds of people and the power of a small number of elite who could command that workforce and a belief system that could integrate them all. So our appreciation of objects must necessarily include appreciation for the cultural context that gave them meaning. Finally, land managers and professionals must acknowledge their roles in a world system that includes native and other localized groups, each of whom depends upon the others to create and protect resources that all value, each in their own way."

We would do well to chart a path to achieve these goals.

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# Maggie L. Walker

Gertrude W. Marlowe, Ph.D.  
and Kim Q. Boyd

In an article that has become a classic, Bernard Cohn, an anthropologist and prime mover in the anthropological history field, applied his often devastating wit to a description of Anthropologyland and Historyland, that is, "how particular forms of knowledge are created, written, and spoken about" (1980: 198). His analysis of the customs, values, and symbolic systems of the natives of both lands led into the contribution Anthropologyland could best make to the production of historical knowledge.

In the same spirit, we would like to share our trips between the familiar territory of cultural anthropology or Ethnographyland, and CRMLand. Our knowledge of CRMLand comes from the experiences of an interdisciplinary Howard University team working for two years on a biography of Maggie L. Walker, a Black entrepreneur and community organizer who lived in Richmond, Virginia, from 1867 to 1934.<sup>1</sup> Her home is a national historic site opened to the public on July 14, 1985, and our work is contributing to the interpretive materials for the site.

The CRM concept of interpretation differs radically from the way the word is used in history, where it refers to an author's selection, ordering, and endowment of data with meaning, coming close to the concept of theory in Ethnologyland. In CRMLand interpretation means all the explanatory material which the exhibiting agency provides to the public in whatever medium— pamphlets, lectures, exhibits, guided tours, or answers to questions. Accuracy is the highest value governing interpretation. Painstakingly detailed authenticity in restoration and documentation of all facts should underlie communication, ease of understanding, liveliness, and the like. Dark stories of people who have made mistakes about the selection of light fixtures and disappeared forever emphasize the concern. As in history, anything which cannot be documented by a paper trail is "tradition," and this is viewed with suspicion, although it may be accorded importance in its own right.

The ethnographer's highest value is meaning; but what sets of symbols organize these facts and objects, and how were they managed and by whom, to maximize what? We do not suggest that CRMLand is indifferent to meaning, any more than ethnography is indifferent to accurate facts, but rather that the ethnographer's emphasis is different, as the following example illustrates.

## **Bank President**

Maggie Walker is most frequently described as the first woman bank president in the United States. Shortly after she became secretary of a fraternal organization, the Independent Order of St. Luke, the Order founded the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank in 1903 and named her president. However, describing her solely through her position as the first bank president leads us to believe that this was Mrs. Walker's most important accomplishment. Rather, it is actually the one most easily communicated to people who do not know much Afro-American history. In keeping with U.S. culture, which emphasizes the Guinness Book of World Records' view of worth, the initial effort was to determine the truth of the claim that she indeed was first to hold such a position. This quickly involved us in defining what a bank is, in pondering over other claimants, and in wondering who the *Newport News* meant when it said in its December 24, 1903 issue, "Richmond now has one of the two women bank presidents in the United States." In Ethnographyland, we have little interest in further pursuing the accuracy of this claim because its importance lies in the strength and uses of the status marker, "woman bank president," both in her time and ours.

## **Race Woman**

The ethnographic approach reveals another Maggie Walker. Early in our work, we heard a role description which we had seen mentioned in the literature. It was noted with great pride by every older person to whom we talked: "You see, Maggie Walker was what was called then a race woman." This was clearly an important cultural label. The search for what a race woman was and how a person got to be one has provided us with a unified framework within which to view Mrs. Walker's qualities, achievements, associates, community, and times. We can only sketch some of them here.

For most of Maggie Walker's adult life, the word race was used in Black newspapers along with terms like Afro-American, colored, and, less often, Negro as a descriptor. In this usage, the headline, "Race Woman Hit By Car," carried no suggestion that the woman was prominent. Another usage occurred in the context of struggles between those who believed that Black self-determination was the prime value and those who thought cooperation with whites was necessary to the survival of Black educational and religious institutions. In at least one such fight, the latter called their opponents race men and women.

As the label is applied to Maggie Walker retroactively and contemporaneously, race woman meant a woman leader whose energies were invested in many activities, projects, and organizations focused on what was then called the "uplift" of the race. Each urban community had several such women who were part of a statewide and national network (Giddings, 1984). The first generation that grew up after the Civil War in Richmond produced a galaxy of leaders whose energy fueled a period of intensive community building.<sup>2</sup> Besides creating and nurturing a variety of organizations that ordered the community and provided some ways to deal with social and economic problems, a race woman consciously engaged in the effort to construct a culture based on race pride reinforced by public ritual.

## **Fraternal Order**

Maggie Walker used a fraternal organization, one of many in Richmond at the time, as her primary vehicle. After the family, church, and school, fraternal organizations were the primary social institution in the community, serving as a place to learn organizational skills, to enact meaningful rituals of group solidarity, and to socialize. Each fraternal order had special interests. Maggie Walker and her associates were passionately concerned with women, particularly with expanding their economic opportunities beyond the usual one of domestic service. Along with others, she saw business as the only way that Afro-Americans could prosper. She urged women to open businesses and constantly pleaded with both men and women to patronize race enterprises.

As the St. Luke Order grew locally and nationally under her guidance, the organization was able to branch out from the insurance business which was a feature of all fraternal orders to buy property and build a substantial headquarters, publish a newspaper and have a printing company. It also established a bank, ran a regalia store, and opened a department store on Richmond's main street. The store was Maggie Walker's only business failure.

All these ventures had prototypes in the extremely fertile Richmond fraternal and business world which provided the first Black bank and the first Black insurance company in the country. However, Mrs. Walker was distinctive in her emphasis on having strong participation by women as employees and on executive boards, in the continued success of her bank, in the amount of work and time she poured into developing St. Luke, and in her easy ability to function in what was considered then and still largely is a man's world of finance.

In accumulating her broad power base, Maggie Walker had the help of several other attributes the Black community demanded of (and provided to) its leaders (see Franklin, 1984). Hers was a classic rags-to-riches story that made her success, and her view of the

road that led there, a model for all. It was expected that prosperity would be displayed so that community members could participate in the prestige. You can't argue with a pair of coal black horses pulling a coach driven by a liveried coachman (a present from the Order the year the bank opened) or later a chauffeur-driven car. Buildings functioned in the same way for organization members. Standards of dress and grooming for the elite were strict, one of the primary ways to show respect to yourself and others.

Another necessary leadership quality was eloquence. The importance of the oral tradition and public ritual, especially the model of the preacher and church service, made the ability to master a characteristic style of public speaking close to obligatory for a leader. Maggie Walker was, by all accounts, an electric orator in that tradition, with pronounced persuasive abilities.

Like all race women, Maggie Walker was fascinated by the history of her people and their cultural achievements, and, through the church missions, knew something of West Africa, especially Liberia. Her library contains almost all the Afro-American classics, as well as bound volumes of the *Journal of Negro History*, and the walls are lined with photographs of other race leaders of her time, who were her friends.

These are a few connotations of the concept race woman. Space constraints prevent exploring here the use Mrs. Walker made of the role in her distinguished public service career in Richmond, in Virginia, and on the national scene. The role was as appropriate in the interracial world as it was to the Black community, since she had little opportunity to deal with any matters that did not call upon her to advance the interests of Afro-Americans. Nor is there space to discuss the serious challenges to her leadership status that came up from time to time. However, we hope we have presented enough to support our argument that the concept race woman provides a better key to Maggie Walker's house, world, and significance than the concept first woman bank president.

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## Footnotes

1The Maggie L. Walker Biography Project is funded under NPS Cooperative Agreement number CA-4000-4-0015. The material in this paper reflects the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service.

2Dr. Elsa Barkley Brown of Emory University, a community historian whose specialty is the Richmond Black community from 1890 to 1930, will be publishing this story. She has contributed a great deal to our thinking. ~

Gertrude Marlowe is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Howard University. Kim Boyd is a doctoral student in Sociology who functions as an ethnographer from time to time. Project staff members Gail Bowman, Mark Mack, Dr. Lillian Williams, and Dr. Beverlee Bruce have all contributed to the development of this paper. Our cordial reception by the NPS and by Richmond residents is gratefully acknowledged.

# Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Janet C. Wolf

Creating a park in the middle of an existing and vibrant community was a challenge recognized even during the new area study stage for the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District. The question was how to incorporate a national park into a community without displacing the residents or otherwise seriously disrupting their lifestyles and community patterns. Because the Congressional committees involved recognized this issue, they blended into the establishing legislation some unique provisions that have made it easier to manage the park and to develop a general management plan. Without legislative tools such as rent control, the impact on the entire historic community would have been far more disruptive.

## Data Collection

The early research associated with preparation of the park's general management plan and cultural resources study quickly identified

the sense of community as an important historical and interpretive resource. Thus, early on, the park management planning teams recognized a need for more information about the community. Dr. Muriel Crespi, Cultural Anthropologist in WASO, helped define what information was needed. With the support of the staff, Dr. Crespi called in Dr. William Partridge, Chairman of the Anthropology Department at Georgia State University, to help with the project and develop a strategy for gathering the data. For a period of six months, two GSU graduate students, Susan Hamilton and Susan Belcher, worked at the park through the Georgia Governor's Intern Program. Ms. Hamilton focused on patterns of use and interaction in the residential area and the probable effect of the park on the immediate community. This, combined with general statistical information developed by the City's Planning Board for the Park's Advisory Commission, helped paint a picture of the community's profile and needs. It enabled park management and the planners to include specific mitigating measures as they developed plans to implement the park concept. For example, in the park's Land Protection Plan, temporary relocation of area residents while their homes were being restored took into account the residents' definition of their community as well as the importance of access to public transportation links and neighborhood grocery stores. At the same time, it provided insights into the forces which helped shape Dr. King, Jr. and the reasons the Sweet Auburn community played such an important role in 20th-century Black history.

Meanwhile, Ms. Belcher studied relationships in the business community as well as networks of communication and community leadership. The information, insights and recommendations of Mses. Hamilton and Belcher, prepared under the direction of Drs. Crespi and Partridge, were extremely helpful in park operations and planning. It proved particularly valuable in assessing the impacts on the community of the four general management plan alternatives.

For example, we discovered that some information about the community was withheld because we represented the Federal Government. However, the same people who withheld data were willing to share information with nongovernment professionals. It was from these academic, but applied, anthropologists that we obtained otherwise unavailable information that helped us understand the dynamics of those opposing as well as those supporting the park. By pinpointing the different factions, how they felt about each other, and what their goals and motivations were, we were able to decide which community groups were most important to cultivate, and which had the most chance of success. It also helped us to avoid getting caught in issues arising from community factionalism.

## Expert Assistance

Community involvement began through the city's planning units. This proved to be ineffective, however. After we understood some of the community's dynamics, we forged working relationships with the actual power groups and community leaders, enabling us to develop a plan that responded to community concerns while meeting park objectives. For example, we discovered the central role of the churches in the community and determined which churches represented current versus past community residents.

Recently at Morristown National Historical Park, I used the services of similar professionals who have helped me understand the dynamics of the local community. In the past, involvement of face-to-face confrontations between park and community had only identified areas of conflict. With the involvement of scholarly outsiders, an assessment was made that identified potential areas for compromise as well as effective mitigating measures.

Of course, the cost of this type of assistance is a critical park management concern. In the case of Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS, research was funded almost entirely by the State through the governor's intern program. In other instances, it has been undertaken through cooperative study units associated with nearby universities or, in the case of the cultural resources study at the King site, through the use of temporary appointments. Such an approach enabled us to hire graduate and undergraduate students and college faculty from the surrounding community at the GS-5, 7, 9, and 11 levels. Frequently their work for us fulfilled college research and thesis requirements that yielded additional benefits.

These experiences demonstrate that managers and planners as well as applied anthropologists mutually profit from long-term partnerships. Whether partnerships are concerned with identifying potentially affected publics and effects of park programs on them, identifying areas for compromise or mitigating measures to park actions, or describing traditional lifeways of communities associated with parks, the anthropological method and perspective can prove to be invaluable.

The author, trained as a historian, was Superintendent of Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site in Atlanta from 1980 to 1984, and subsequently became Superintendent at Morristown National Historical Park.

# Cultural Use and Meaning of Artifacts

David M. Brugge

Material objects may have two basic roles in a society—practical and symbolic. Some serve both ends, while others are limited to only one. Knowledge of a culture implies familiarity with the artifacts it produces, or produced, as well as with the customs and beliefs that shape the lives of its people. Inevitably, tangible and intangible aspects of a culture interrelate. In some cases the relationship is direct and obvious, as between an ax and the knowledge and skill necessary to utilize it for felling a tree for firewood. In other cases the connection is indirect or obscure. A cultural restriction on the kinds of trees that are cut would be a far from obvious fact when considering the use of an ax, but one that would have an indirect bearing on the role of axes in that culture. If axes were valued as one type of gift a young man should make to the parents of his future bride, the relationship is direct, but still not apparent without access to information not inherent in the ax itself.

An archeologist is at a disadvantage in the study of a prehistoric society in that such variables as religious beliefs and social relationships are not readily accessible. Changes in material culture are the basic facts from which most conclusions must be drawn. A recent study of the historic archeology of a modern tribe, the Navajo, prompted the observation that several significant events, well known in the historical documentation of the tribe's history, had no discernible effect on the styles of Navajo dwellings. These included such catastrophic events as the four-year exile of the tribe following their defeat by Kit Carson in 1864, the flu epidemic of 1918, and the Federal stock reduction program of the 1930s and 1940s. Other kinds of analysis do reflect the effects of these events, but none have produced data that would really identify the causes of variation for an archeologist lacking prior knowledge.

Even in historic contexts, archeological inferences are uncertain. It has long been held that the decline in the quality of decoration on Rio Grande glaze-paint pottery following the Spanish conquest was an indication of the disruption of the native cultures. On the other hand, the decorative treatment of mattepaint wares such as those made by the Tewas north of Santa Fe and the Tompiros in the Salinas area reached a climax in complexity and sophistication. The development of a market for these wares among the Spanish colonists would appear a likely cause of this florescence in matte-paint wares. A recent suggestion that the Spaniards appropriated the lead sources used by the Indians for their glaze-paint because of a need for bullets may account for the opposite trend in the glaze-paint wares. Cause and effect are very elusive matters in archeological research.

## Correlation Seen

As in historic archeology, ethnographic study permits the correlation of technological and stylistic variation with the role of an artifact in a culture, and changes in the attributes of an object through time may be correlated with changes in other aspects of culture. Even these studies may not fully reveal the meaning of an object for the people themselves. A particular artifact may become symbolic of the group's ethnicity, of ideals held, of goals valued. It may perform this function for the entire society or for only certain of its members. Determining these roles will require ethnographic interviewing.

In museum collections we tend to give special attention to specimens that have artistic distinction. Pueblo pottery, Navajo textiles, Pomo baskets, Sioux buckskin clothing and Kwakiutl woodwork are found in quantity in museums. In most cases, the specimens included those with interesting decoration—painted pots, multicolored blankets and rugs, beaded moccasins and dresses, elaborately carved containers and masks. Private collectors—those who originally purchased many of the items now found in museums—have favored artifacts of this sort. As a result of a market based more on aesthetic qualities

than on function, many craft products have evolved into art objects only superficially identified with their prototypes.

### **Shift to Fine Arts**

This shift to a fine arts orientation can be seen in the products of many tribes. Pueblo pottery has achieved such perfection of technique that to some aficionados of Indian crafts it no longer has a sufficiently rustic look. As a result, the less finished Navajo and Tarahumara ceramics, long neglected in the non-native arts and crafts market, are increasingly in demand. Thus, for a while, until Navajo and Tarahumara potters develop the awareness of European artistic judgments and of the prices that pots conforming to these standards can bring, and they cultivate the skills needed to produce such pots, collectors will acquire ceramics from these two tribes that more reflect native views. Already evident is a trend in Navajo ceramics toward innovations made in response to the new sales opportunities. The ethnographic study of such developments holds potential for a better understanding of the dynamics of intercultural relationships.

Unfortunately, most ethnographic collections are weak in materials that derive from everyday activities. Ordinary cooking pots used to prepare most meals, implements used to grind the foods that made up a large part of the diet, simpler tools used to prepare raw materials for the manufacture of more elaborate objects—all are under-represented. These make up the bulk of archeological collections and a better understanding of them in living cultures, or at least those that were well documented historically could aid us in extending our knowledge of human cultures into the remote past.

The more showy artifacts that have attracted non-native buyers, when not produced in order to appeal to the Euro-American and European art market, were usually intended for special purposes: markers of social or political rank, in ceremonial and ritual events, or for display in war to intimidate the enemy. All such objects have meanings that are not explicit in the nature of the objects. Even observations of their use seldom provide an adequate basis for full comprehension of their significance to the people who use them. A conscientious ethnographer tries to make observations of use, however, for this will make possible a more complete and accurate knowledge of the object and its place in the culture.

For some meanings, only people raised in the culture can provide authoritative explanations. Even within the same society, people in different roles have different levels of knowledge, and even very different views regarding the importance of an object. A religious leader who has received special instruction in the tenets of a tribal faith will have deeper insights than other members of the society. A chief will see things in a different light from an ordinary farmer, and a woman's views are likely to diverge markedly from those held by a man. In addition, thorough discussion of the subject with knowledgeable native experts is often revealing for both the native and the ethnographer. Subsequent analysis of all the data gathered in the field and in study of the object may produce inferences that go beyond what the people have explained. While these may be founded, remember that conclusions based on such methods are derived indirectly.

Inferences constitute a kind of secondary source that should be used with some restraint. They may even be found offensive by the people whose culture is the subject of study. While this does not necessarily indicate that the inferences are incorrect, it does place certain limitations on how they may be used in interpretation for the general public.

### **Religious Objects**

Most sensitive in terms of public interpretive use are objects of religious significance. Attitudes vary considerably regarding such objects, both from one cultural group to another and among individuals in any given society. Most have religious significance. In some cases, those who believe in the religion are concerned with the lack of respect indicated by outsiders' treatment of artifacts symbolic of their faith or intimately involved in its practice.

In other cases, they hold the objects themselves sacred and feel that improper use violates their holy nature. Certain objects may be viewed as the repositories of strong spiritual power, making their misuse dangerous for anybody even remotely involved. Display of such objects may cause the faithful to fear to visit a museum or to forbid their children's exposure to the risks that such exhibits entail.

Exhibition is not the only cause of offense. Proper care in storage may be a very real concern. Navajo singers maintain that *jish* (a kind of medicine bundle and certain other classes of ritual items) should be blessed periodically even when not in use. Some objects are held to be so holy that they should not be in the possession of non-believers. Zuni contentions regarding the war god images they place on certain shrines are instructive. The images are the property of the corporate group and no Zuni has the right to sell them. Therefore, legal title cannot be transferred to individuals or to museums and other institutions.

Other objects are intended to disintegrate and "return to the earth." Final disposition is not only prescribed in specific ways in many religions, but is the intended fate of some objects, their mere preservation being contrary to the people's beliefs. This, of course, conflicts with the aims of museum professionals. What is needed, then, is an effort to resolve differences between the professional ethics of curators and the rights of minority peoples to religious freedom.

There is a continuing need for museums to reassess their purposes in acquiring collections and to revise curatorial procedures to fit changing circumstances. This need remains as great with regard to ethnological collections as for any others, and is perhaps more urgent since the passage of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. In addition to preservation, research and exhibition, we need to add "respect for human rights" to our purposes.

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# Lessons From Micronesia

**Patricia L. Parker, Ph.D.**

Until recently, most of the islands that make up the area known to geographers as Micronesia—the small islands of the western Pacific—have comprised the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, administered since World War II by the United States under a United Nations trusteeship agreement. They are now organized into the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. Other Micronesian political entities include Guam, a U.S. territory, and the independent nations of Nauru and Kiribati.

In 1974, Congress extended the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) to the Trust Territory; a Territory-wide historic preservation program was organized by 1977, and since then most of the island governments have enacted their own historic preservation legislation.

For a preservationist and ethnographer in Micronesia, there are many lessons to be learned about how to make historic preservation meaningful to small, traditional societies. These lessons are potentially applicable to work done with other such societies—not only on islands, but in areas like the western U.S. and Alaska, both within and outside the context of national parks.

## **Focus of Preservation**

Micronesia has a wealth of historic properties: ancient archeological sites, impressive ruins and earthworks, structures remaining from the Spanish, German, and Japanese colonial administrations, and the remains of World War II. It is a safe generalization, however, to say that Micronesians as a whole are less interested in their historic properties than in preserving the integrity of their traditional cultural systems. To the extent that historic properties are important to these systems, they are important to Micronesians. Those that do not figure in their traditional systems are not likely to be of great concern, however interesting they may be to archeologists and other scholars from outside the islands.

For example, the great ruined city of Nan Madol on Pohnpei in the Federated States is of great interest to archeologists as a place to study the formation of complex social systems in the Pacific. It is a unique example of Micronesian architectural and engineering prowess, and it has great potential for public interpretation. To many Pohnpeians, however, its significance lies first and foremost in the fact that it is a central place in much of the island's traditional history. Folktales are told about almost every one of its structures, and an elaborate oral history recounts how the city was ruled and eventually conquered. The site itself is important, but the stories are central to the experience of being Pohnpeian. Pohnpeians are often much more concerned about preserving the stories, the way in which they are appropriately transmitted, the lessons they teach, and the system of order they embody, than they are about preserving the site of Nan Madol itself. To build a preservation program that is meaningful to Micronesians, it is necessary to be at least as attentive to the intangible aspects of tradition and social organization as to tangible historic properties themselves.

## **What is Historic?**

Traditional history in Micronesia ascribes value to things that might not normally be recognized by Euro-Americans as historic properties. In 1978, for example, a preservation conflict arose on Pohnpei when crews constructing a road moved a boulder that stood in

the midst of a stream. Traditional cultural authorities on the island were deeply upset because, to them, the boulder was an important historical person who had been magically transformed to stone while bathing. To western eyes the boulder was a boulder; to the eyes of the traditional people it was an individual, and the locus of considerable supernatural power. Parts of the road were re-engineered to put the boulder back close to its original location; later, portions of the same road were designed to avoid damage to other culturally important rock outcrops, landforms, and even groves of palm trees.

On the island of Moen in Truk, Mt. Tonaachaw (listed on the National Register of Historic Places) is regarded as significant because in traditional history, the culture-bearer *Sowukachaw* established his meetinghouse there and brought law and social organization to the people of the islands. The significance of the mountain is not limited to the mountain itself, however. The mountain is viewed as a supernatural octopus, *kuus*, whose tentacles stretch out across Truk Lagoon to the outer islands. Landmarks on the slopes of the mountain, on the fringing reef, and even on other islands, lying along the metaphorical tentacles, are viewed as important, and as being related to the mountain peak itself. It is probable that the octopus metaphor is associated with the transmission of sailing directions that in prehistoric times helped navigators find their way around the Lagoon and across the open sea. Some of the landmarks on Tonaachaw's flanks are literally invisible to the unknowing eye. One location, for example, called *Neepisaram* or "saffron island place," is a sloping piece of ground, covered with high, yellowish grass, on the high ridge of the mountain.

It is vital that properties like the rocks and groves on Pohnpei and the body parts of *kuus* in Truk be recognized in any Micronesian historic preservation program. To do otherwise is to risk creating a program of marginal relevance to the people of Micronesia that will be viewed by them as an unwelcome Euro-American imposition.

Knowledge of traditional history is a source of power in Micronesia. Holders of traditional knowledge are sometimes viewed as having supernatural power, and it is said that if one transmits one's knowledge to another inappropriately, the result may be death. Traditional history has more pragmatic value, as well. Micronesia contains only about 700 square miles of land, so rights to land are of great importance. Land and land-use rights are transmitted along complicated lines of kinship and status, and the person with the most extensive knowledge of kinship and status relationships, embodied in oral tradition, is in the best position to manipulate rights to land and its resources in his or her favor, or in favor of a given set of relatives.

## **Confidentiality**

Knowledge of traditional history, then, is held and transmitted with great care, and historical information is not often readily volunteered. In fact, it is a safe assumption that if someone does readily volunteer such information, it is probably common knowledge already, or it is inaccurate, or the individual volunteering it has some kind of ulterior motive—or all three. Conversely, if one readily volunteers information on the historical importance of a property, this does not provide evidence against the property's historical importance. When the Corps of Engineers held public hearings during the planning of an airport expansion project at the foot of Mt. Tonaachaw, many people in the villages around the mountain were literally unable to speak because people of higher status from other villages were present. This created the impression among Corps officials that they were not very concerned about such effects. However, in private, they expressed great distress at the effect the airport expansion could have on the cultural significance of the mountain.

## **Land, History, Registration**

Since historic properties always occupy space, they are almost always on someone's land. Because land is of such great importance, both economically and in terms of social

status, landowners tend to guard their land rights jealously. Rights to land are complicated. A family residing on a parcel of land in Truk may hold only provisional title to it, while another family holds residual title that can be invoked, causing the land to return to the original owners, under a range of prescribed circumstances. Still another group or individual may have title to particular trees on the land, or limited rights to farm or to harvest breadfruit.

Since the days of the German administration in the late-19th century, colonial administrators have tried to establish clear title to bounded parcels of land. Efforts to register title have usually failed, however, and have always generated bitterness and resentment. Those Micronesians who have been best able to get along with the administration, most fluent in the administration's language, and most willing to adopt its ways, have been able to manipulate the land registration system in their favor, at the expense of others. As a result, landowners are deeply suspicious of any effort to register any piece of land for any reason whatsoever. This resentment impeded the Trust Territory's historic preservation program for some years, and was overcome only by deliberately giving very low priority to the placement of properties on the National Register. Even so, great care must be taken when recording historic places, when planning surveys, and generally when seeking access to land. Extensive consultation with a large number of people may be needed, involving contacts with village chiefs and councils and the heads of multiple families that may have different (sometimes conflicting) rights to the parcel one wishes to enter.

### **Ethnographer's Role**

As a result of these factors, ethnographers have many important functions in Micronesian historic preservation programs. Training for anyone serving as a preservation official in a place like Micronesia should include training in ethnography and other aspects of cultural anthropology. It is vital that ethnographers be involved in the conduct of field surveys and other historic preservation activities in the field, to help identify properties of cultural importance, to elicit what may not readily be volunteered, to help negotiate access to land, and to help avoid inadvertently giving offense to landowners and holders of traditional knowledge.

Ideally, the ethnographer works for a considerable period of time, usually months or years, in a local area. He or she becomes fluent in the local language, resides with the local people, and seeks to learn their ways of life, customs and beliefs in detail. The process of ethnographic research gives great emphasis to building a relationship of trust between the anthropologist and the local people with whom he or she consults. It is on the basis of such trust that a solid historic preservation program can be built, in a manner consistent with the cultural values and interests of the people who must support it, if it is to survive.

The author is a cultural anthropologist who has conducted ethnographic and archeological fieldwork on the U.S. mainland, and historic preservation projects in Truk. She is currently on the staff of the Interagency Resources Division, NPS.

# Folklife in Planning

**Benita J. Howell, Ph.D.**

From the beginnings of the National Park System, history and archeology have played important roles in resource management and interpretation. However, people residing in or near our parks have received little attention until recently. The Big South Fork folklife survey represented a pioneering attempt to employ ethnographic research in national park planning and resource management. The results of that project suggest the need for more ethnographic work throughout our national parks. The Service gained information needed for management decisions, interpretive programs, and staff orientation, while the community found effective ways to contribute to park development.

In 1974 Congress authorized the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, located on the Cumberland Plateau in Kentucky and Tennessee. This new national area was created with the dual purpose of resource conservation and outdoor recreation; a third goal, linked to both of the others, was interpretation of natural and cultural resources. The Big South Fork project was a joint venture between the Nashville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (charged with planning, land acquisition, and construction of facilities) and the National Park Service (charged with managing the area).

The NPS Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC) conducted the initial survey of archeological resources to fulfill Federal requirements for assessing environmental impacts of the Big South Fork development project. Although such research often is labeled "cultural resource management" (CRM), in fact it is usually limited to archeological, historical, and architectural resources. The focus of interest has been conserving artifacts rather than understanding their intangible cultural context—the ideas and behaviors associated with their manufacture and use.

## **The Beginning**

CRM efforts for the Big South Fork project began with the customary archeological survey. In the course of conducting that fieldwork, however, SEAC field director Robert Wilson met many of the region's old timers. He was fascinated by their stories of pioneer days, subsistence farming, and the recent industrial past, and he noted that the natives of the Big South Fork region had preserved many traditional Appalachian lifeways into the 1970s. Wilson felt that these intangible cultural resources held as much significance as the material resources located within the national area boundaries. Further, he recognized that construction of recreation and tourist facilities in this relatively remote section of the Cumberland Plateau would likely accelerate the pace of culture change. The Big South Fork project threatened a way of life as well as artifacts from the past; Wilson hoped that the area's distinctive traditional culture would be recorded before time and the forces of change obliterated it.

Wilson voiced these concerns to Big South Fork project planners in the Nashville District office of the Corps of Engineers (COE). Because the Big South Fork enabling legislation specifically called for interpretation of cultural resources, historical as well as archeological, there was solid justification for a truly comprehensive cultural resources management program. Thus, Wilson was able to convince the Corps to divert a small portion (\$50,000) of the Big South Fork project's CRM budget from archeology to research on local history and folkways. Wilson prepared a scope of work for a Big South Fork folklife survey, and in 1979 the University of Kentucky Anthropology Department contracted with SEAC to carry out this project.

With the assistance of two graduate students, I conducted eight months of fieldwork between July 1979 and March 1980, using ethnographic methods, including oral history interviewing and photography to document a broad range of topics: vernacular architecture,

cemeteries, foodways, folk medicine, subsistence farming practices, handcrafts and occupational skills, industrial development and its impact on the local economy and community life, social customs, religion, folklore, and music. Research methods, findings, and recommendations are presented in detail in the 431-page project technical report, published in 1981 as part of the University of Tennessee Anthropology Department monograph series. Now that five years have passed since NPS and Corps personnel received that report, some assessment of the folklife study is in order.

### **Folklife Survey**

The primary intent of the folklife survey was to preserve a record of traditional lifeways and folk history. While standard historical documents and old photographs were used when available, participant observation, scores of informal interviews, and over 70 hours of tape-recorded oral history were primary sources for the historical and ethnographic descriptions presented in the technical report. Limited funds and time for fieldwork precluded detailed study of the many topics surveyed. The technical report nevertheless provides a systematic overview of local culture and history; it points to themes and topics that should be treated interpretively, explains their significance, and identifies resources available for developing their interpretation.

Information contained in the folklife survey report has provided background for subsequent detailed projects. For example, interpretation of coal company operations and life in the coal camps is currently being prepared for the Blue Heron development area, site of a coal-processing tipple and mine camp operated by the Stearns Coal and Lumber Company, the primary industrialists operating in the Big South Fork area between 1900 and the 1970s. While it is sometimes possible to use the oral history tapes recorded during the folklife survey to identify experts who might contribute their information to specific interpretive projects, one-third to one-half of the elderly people who received priority treatment during the survey have since died or become too infirm to be interviewed again. As the only source of information from these individuals, most of whom were considered by their peers to be the most knowledgeable about local traditions, the oral history archive created during the folklife survey becomes more valuable each year. It includes contributions from several persons who were 90 or older when recorded, whose memories stretched back to the turn of the century.

The Big South Fork case strongly suggests that folklife surveys are good investments for interpretation, because they are useful planning tools and because they conserve essential information that may no longer be available if documentation efforts are postponed. Identifying resources for interpretation and providing documentation were the primary purposes of the Big South Fork folklife survey. By all accounts, NPS and COE personnel have been pleased with the survey results in this respect.

A central element in ethnographic fieldwork is extensive personal contact and rapport. Fieldwork involves extended and frequent visits with local people: poor as well as wealthy and influential, ordinary folk as well as local officials and business leaders, tenants as well as landowners. Thus, ethnographers are in an excellent position to become liaisons between the public and resource managers—in the case of Big South Fork, COE planners and NPS management personnel. While resource managers in the field are often in close contact with local people and can to some extent communicate local sentiment back to headquarters, they may be perceived as "the enemy" in confrontational situations; people may talk more frankly with independent contractors. Contractors, in turn, will feel a responsibility to help the agencies which employ them to publicize and explain their policies; but they will also be able to report, and feel obligated to report, local reactions, concerns and complaints. Thus, the fieldwork aspect of doing ethnography can create opportunities for improved communication between policy-makers and the public.

In the case of the Big South Fork folklife survey, field workers pointed out local concerns on issues ranging from COE land acquisition and relocation programs to

complaints that the recreational activities planned for Big South Fork (camping, canoeing and rafting, hiking and horseback riding) would do little to improve the depressed local economy. We learned why a sizable contingent of local people felt the NPS would "lock up" the recreation area, why they resented restrictions placed on hunting and use of off-road vehicles.

### **Local Opinion**

The ability to gauge and interpret local opinion also had a positive impact on interpretive program planning, the central concern of the folklife survey. The technical report carried a strong recommendation favoring the kind of museum complex now taking shape at the Blue Heron site. To be sure, this recommendation was based on the significance of coal mining in Big South Fork economic and cultural history, and on the wealth of interpretive resources available; however, it also took into account local desires for an attraction that would draw tourists and tourist dollars, and the good will that would result from honoring local people and their history in this fashion. In contrast to preparation of the Big South Fork Master Plan, which took shape from the top down, planning for the Blue Heron complex has involved local citizen groups from the beginning. They have contributed ideas, information, and artifacts rather than simply being given an opportunity to comment on a "draft" planning document so polished that it discourages suggestions for change. I believe the dialogue between COE planners and local people fostered by the folklife survey helped to bring about this greater public participation in planning for Blue Heron.

Finally, the folklife survey report has filled a need in the NPS management program at Big South Fork because it organizes a great deal of background information on local history and local customs in one place. Realizing that the report would have historical and ethnographic value beyond its immediate applications in planning, I made every effort to produce a readable document, and I followed the usual ethnographic practice of showing the "logic" of a particular culture and its values. While my intent was to create a written record that local people as well as planners could read and value, the resulting book has been adopted as orientation reading for new NPS personnel, whether career people transferring to Big South Fork from other assignments or temporary summer employees. The folklife report prepares personnel to answer many of the factual questions visitors might have about the area, but it also offers some insight into values and attitudes. People along the Big South Fork value open, cordial personal relationships; they tend to judge bureaucracies according to their interactions with individuals. To the extent that reading the folklife report sensitizes new NPS employees to local styles of interaction, it contributes importantly to smoother management of the recreation area and greater local support for the Service and its policies.

The Big South Fork folklife survey happened almost by accident. Because it was one of the first such studies in a unit of the NPS and an afterthought to archeology, its original goals were rather narrowly defined. But the results of this project suggest that there are many applications for ethnography in the National Park System, managerial as well as interpretive. The Big South Fork folklife survey paid unanticipated dividends; it was well worth its cost.

The author is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Tennessee who has specialized in field studies of American cultures, especially Appalachian folk cultures. She has conducted academic and project-oriented research, including the study of Big South Fork.

# Social Impact Assessment

**Edward Liebow, Ph.D.**

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) provides the documentation for predicting significant consequences of major public projects, programs, and policies. Most often, it focuses its predictions on likely project-related changes in community and regional material resources, subsistence base, social organization, and the personal well-being of community members. Ethnographic research provides a systematic account of historical and contemporary forces that shape distinctive communities, especially their natural and material resources, social organization and patterned beliefs, sentiments, and values.

There is a match here. It makes sense to ask how well suited and under what circumstances ethnographic research is of value to SIA.

No single way of conducting a SIA is best; the abundance of prescriptive guides available to the field's practitioners bears witness to that. When the affected communities have recognizably distinctive cultural traditions, ethnographic research is important for two reasons. First, it provides decision-makers with information needed to evaluate the significance of likely community changes within a broader context. And second, as decision-makers will acknowledge, the *process* by which impact assessments are undertaken greatly affects the agency's credibility. The process of doing ethnographic research can contribute an element of credibility to agency decisionmaking that may be otherwise difficult to establish with many culturally distinctive communities.

The term "ethnographic research" encompasses a repertory of data collection and analytical techniques, all of which depend on the investigator's meticulously self-conscious participation in and observation of community events and activities that form the objects of study. From the participant-to-observer's vantage point (accompanied, of course, by the use of historical and ethnohistorical documentation), one can construct regional models of community stability and change. Such models are needed to properly attribute a project's effects on communities and to distinguish these effects from ongoing processes of change. Just as geologists need to model regional changes over time to estimate the significance of changes in a localized formation, so do social scientists need to place community changes in a regional context.

My own work has been concerned primarily with Native American communities. Although the specific cases reviewed here each concern Native American communities and ways in which impact predictions and agency decisions have benefited from ethnographic information, I believe one can generalize from these cases to include *any* community with distinctive cultural traditions.

Tribes and public agencies, of course, often have different needs that they expect an impact assessment to fulfill. Agency personnel expect to have documented the impacts that are likely to occur, so that a balance of all conflicting interests can be achieved, and an informed decision can be made about whether, and how best, to proceed with a policy, program, or project. From the agency's view, the impact assessment process contributes to, but is not identical with, the decision-making process. Tribes, on the other hand, may expect the impact assessment process to provide the forum in which to make their interests known, and in which decisions affecting tribal resources and cultural traditions will be directly made (e.g., Stoffle and Dobyns 1983).

With these differences in expectations, conflicts may occur between agencies and affected communities. If not eliminated altogether, these conflicts may be reduced by using an ethnographic approach to a SIA, a process generally characterized as having the following attributes: (1) localized—giving explicit attention to specific, local concerns; (2) collaborative—taking great care to acknowledge community residents as local experts, whose collaboration is therefore essential to the research enterprise; (3) holistic—addressing historical and contemporary issues of a material, legal, and spiritual nature; and

(4) proceeding with a presumption that the tribe has maintained its cultural integrity, unless persuasive evidence to the contrary is available.

### **The Navajo**

Mark Schoepfle's work on the eastern portion of the Navajo reservation (e.g., Schoepfle *et al.* 1984, Schoepfle 1979) is a model of collaboration between social scientists and Native American community members. The findings also benefit from the project's localized and holistic design. This work explores the despair, frustration, and frequent hostility felt and expressed by Navajo people in the Shiprock region of western New Mexico toward existing and proposed energy developments. Before this project was conducted, no direct contact had been made by researchers with the Shiprock area Navajo. No empirical data had been collected concerning what people believed, how they derived their opinions, their use and knowledge of the habitat, how they used their native language to express their feelings and attitudes, and what their concerns were when confronted with the possibility that mining operations and electrical power plants would be established near their homes.

This project's researchers employed a participant-observation technique for data gathering, and used the Navajo language to explore the relationships among Navajo customs, beliefs, and linguistic categories. In a part of the reservation where English is spoken only haltingly, native language use by the researchers was essential to understanding Navajo points of view and to gaining an appreciation of the uncertainties that often accompany change.

Area residents feared the loss of economic and emotional support of their extended family and kinship group; loss of livestock and land; loss of self-sufficiency and security that livestock make possible; and an end to the activities that support the transmission to children of traditional values like the importance of sharing and mutual support among extended family members.

This study's findings had direct application in mitigation planning. In addition, the Navajo Community College provided training to area residents as part of the project, which has equipped them to respond in a more sophisticated manner to development proposals. As Robbins has pointed out in a similar context (1979), local participation in the impact assessment process also exposes participants to different points of view, increasing in some cases their appreciation for the difficulties that implementing agencies face in balancing conflicting interests.

### **The Papago**

A case from the Papago reservation (Bahr and Garrett 1979) presents an example of the benefits stemming from investigators assuming that tribes have maintained their cultural integrity unless strong evidence is available to the contrary. This case also illustrates the advantages of a localized, collaborative effort. It concerns the installation of a photovoltaic electrical generating facility in the remote Papago reservation village of Schuchulik in southern Arizona (Bahr and Garrett 1979). NASA and DOE sponsored this experimental installation to test the technology and its social acceptance by traditional peoples located in remote settlements. The power plant was designed to supply enough electricity for a refrigerator and one or two 40-watt light bulbs in each of 15 homes, and a central village laundry room with a washer, dryer, and sewing machine as well.

Much of the report discussed the ethnohistory of western district Papago settlements, reviewing three centuries of encountering and accommodating new technology: from flood-irrigated agriculture to animal husbandry to Anglo missionaries, wage labor, and yes, electricity. The Papagos' world view was demonstrated to be flexible, incorporative, and intrinsically resource-conserving. The residents of Schuchulik regarded the NASA solar project as resource-wasting.



The assessment team predicted that the electricity itself would not introduce any major changes to the community. The community had several gasoline-powered generators used to operate power tools, electrically amplified musical instruments, and a car battery charger. Most of the residents stored their food in ice chests, which they kept cool with ice purchased in a town some 35 miles away. The investigators found that the women in the community prefer to hang their wash out on lines for the rest of the community to see how industrious they are as homemakers, and the baseline report predicted that the central laundry facility would not be used. The report also suggested that the refrigerators not be installed either, but a central ice-maker could be hooked up instead. In fact, the predicted source of greatest impact was the steady stream of visitors that NASA could be expected to bring to inspect the demonstration project.

The investigators felt it necessary to offer the extended ethnohistorical discussion because of agency (and popular) preconceptions about how a "primitive, unelectrified" settlement would benefit from refrigerators and light bulbs. Looking at the desert surrounding the settlement, outsiders would see burned-out hulks of abandoned cars, scrawny cattle foraging freely on the open range, and crude out-buildings and shade structures made of saguaro ribs strapped together with baling wire and agave fiber. This didn't look "Indian." It looked like unshiny, run-down poverty.

The impact assessment report was instructive because of its efforts, ultimately unsuccessful, to dispel these preconceptions in terms that Papagos and non-Papago students of the culture would use. These were not the same terms that agency officials were accustomed to hearing, and they tended to discount the report's value. Despite the crossed signals between impact assessment practitioners and agency officials, however, the case of Schuchulik points out that the investigation serves little purpose if the context in which it is to be used is not well understood by all parties involved.

## **The Northern Cheyenne**

Some valuable experiences are to be gained as well from the Northern Cheyenne Tribe's involvement with the Bureau of Land Management's Powder River Regional Coal Team (Feeney *et al.* 1986). An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was to be prepared addressing both site-specific and cumulative impacts of proposed coal lease sales in the Powder River basin of northeastern Wyoming and southeastern Montana. With a proposed coal development of this magnitude, detailed plans for preparing the EIS were undertaken beginning in 1979, with a Draft EIS issued for public comment in June 1981. A Final EIS was issued in December of that year, and plans to proceed with lease sales scheduled the first sale to be held near the end of April 1982. In March and April 1982, however, attorneys for the Northern Cheyenne Tribe discussed with Interior Department officials their concern that the document had failed to address impacts of the proposed sale on the Tribe, even though the sale would result in dramatic escalation of coal development close to the reservation.

The Tribe ultimately sought and won injunctive relief, prohibiting the lease sale on the grounds that the EIS had not adequately examined social, cultural, and economic effects of the proposed action on the Tribe.

It is not simply good social science practice to accord special treatment to culturally and institutionally distinctive entities. Out of the special trustee relationship that exists between the U.S. Government and the Northern Cheyenne Tribe there grows an obligation to: "carefully disclose and consider significant impacts of the proposed coal development on the tribe.... The trust responsibility applies not only to on-reservation dealings with tribal property and funds, but also extends to other federal action outside the reservation which impacts a tribe" (*Northern Cheyenne Tribe v. Hodel et al.*, cited in Indian Law Reporter 1985: 12 ILR 3070).

This special trust relationship between the Federal Government and the nation's tribes carries with it, then, the obligation for Federal agencies to consider the impacts of a

proposed action on potentially affected tribes, and to consider and implement appropriate mitigation measures if significant adverse impacts are predicted.

In the wake of the court decision, a more detailed impact investigation was undertaken (Feeney *et al.* 1986). The study focused on socio-cultural and economic effects of coal development near the Northern Cheyenne reservation between 1970 and 1985. In addition to examining changes in the reservation's demographic, economic, and facilities and services characteristics, more subtle changes were detected in the level of concern about cultural continuity and protections for traditional cultural practices. A better understanding of traditional and contemporary social and political organization is translated directly into a clearer picture of who stands to benefit the most and who stands to lose the most from development proposals. Information of this nature is directly applicable in proposing measures to mitigate or lessen the severity of the most significant adverse consequences stemming from development.

Taken together, these cases illustrate the importance of research designs that are localized, collaborative, and holistic. Distinctive cultural communities are likely to have distinctive responses to proposals for change. Without local collaboration, one is less likely to discover what consequences are considered to be adverse, which are considered to be beneficial, and how much community consensus exists concerning these evaluations. In addition, it must be acknowledged that the nature of community responses is often shaped to a large extent by how the proposal for change is presented to them, and whether they feel their expressions of interest and concern are being properly taken into account. Agencies responsible for implementing changes, for their part, must make difficult decisions that reflect a balancing of interest among a number of groups—each of which naturally feels that its interests should be accorded the greatest weight in this process of balancing.

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# Planning at Canyon de Chelly National Monument

**Joan Mitchell**

Nostalgia for the good old days, when planning requirements were less complex, is understandable in the light of the time, expense, and professional expertise needed to produce effective plans in today's more complex world. Location of visitor facilities is now only one aspect of a planning task that today integrates all the many aspects of park management—from acquisition of land and resource management, to visitor use, interpretation, and facility development. Planning is changing in the National Park Service—as are most NPS management functions—changing in ways that provide cultural anthropologists with opportunities to make significant contributions.

One reason for the increased complexity in planning is the need to comply with recent legislation protecting cultural and natural resources, legislation such as that involving historic preservation or endangered species. Of these compliance needs, the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) has had the greatest effect because it requires documentation of, and public involvement in, the decisionmaking process. It also stresses the need for thorough analysis of the impacts of planning implementation on the environment, which includes the socioeconomic impacts on people living within or near the park.

Another cause of the increased complexity of planning involves the ways in which land is now obtained. At one time, a park could be carved out of the public domain or the land acquired in fee and controlled solely by the National Park Service. In recent years, with rising land costs and with pressure placed on lands as the population grows and advances, the National Park Service finds itself cooperating daily or even "sharing the turf" with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, modern Indian nations, and the private sector. Increasingly, planners and managers must reach decisions in collaboration with people of very different value systems and cultural backgrounds. It is in this context that cultural anthropologists can provide much needed support. A planning project currently underway at Canyon de Chelly National Monument exemplifies the complexity of NPS planning and management. It also indicates the role cultural anthropology can, and should, play.

## **Background**

Canyon de Chelly National Monument is on the Navajo reservation in northeastern Arizona. The three major canyons within the monument—Canyon de Chelly, Canyon del Muetro, and Monument Canyon—have long been the homes of Navajo people. In addition to providing rich farming and grazing lands, the canyons have played an important role in Navajo history. There are numerous sacred places within the canyons, and some of the most important Navajo ceremonies refer to these canyons. They also are known for the scenic beauty of their colorful, intricately carved, and nearly vertical sandstone walls as well as the wide vistas from the rims.

The national monument, authorized by Congress in the Act of February 14, 1931, with the approval of the Navajo Tribal Council, was created primarily to protect highly significant archeological sites of the earlier Anasazi occupation. The National Park Service was given only limited rights at Canyon de Chelly: preservation and protection of "prehistoric ruins or other features of scientific or historical interest," provision of facilities for visitors, and administration of the monument. Except for those rights granted the NPS, the Navajo Nation retained title and rights to the surface and the subsurface, with agriculture, grazing, and mineral development specifically mentioned. This placed the NPS in the position of managing a national monument without control over land use. A further complication emerged from the fact that the canyons are on tribal land held in trust for the

Navajos by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Past NPS managers have at times handled this situation with skill and tact; at other times serious conflicts have arisen.

Over the years, the monument became more and more of a pressure cooker: visitor use by nonresident Navajos and non-Navajos has increased drastically, creating not only the typical management problems faced wherever parks experience visitor use pressure, but also affecting the approximately 80 families living within the monument. The town of Chinle just east of the monument is a rapidly growing area, and the population is spreading eastward into the canyon area. Residential development, primarily house trailers, has been increasing on the canyon rims, and commercial development will not be far behind. Likewise, pressures exist on grazing lands and forests, increasing threats to cultural resources and severe erosion problems in the canyons. Furthermore, the Navajo tribal government has grown in political strength and influence. It expresses strong desires to control its own lands and solve its own problems, including the serious concerns of unemployment and poverty.

### **Management Plan**

The situation at Canyon de Chelly National Monument is now the focus of an extended cooperative planning effort, the Canyon de Chelly Joint Management Plan, among the National Park Service, the Navajo Nation, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The planning team has produced a "statement for management," which defines the major issues. It was reviewed by the public and published in final form. Also, the team has been developing alternatives to address the major issues, and a team draft of the plan is being written.

Sensitivity to the cross-cultural aspects of the plan has been a concern from the beginning. The NPS has addressed this situation by (1) depending primarily on Navajo planning team members for insight into Navajo lifeways and advice on communications with canyon residents; (2) consulting with NPS employees who have had long experience working with the Navajo and/or backgrounds in cultural anthropology, including anthropologists David Brugge in the Southwest Regional Office and Dr. Muriel Crespi, in the Washington Office; and (3) consulting professional anthropologists outside the NPS. After public review of the Statement for Management, Dr. G. Mark Schoepfle, an anthropologist experienced in working with the Navajo, guided the planning team on the major issues identified in that document. The team was also fortunate that Dr. Tracy Andrews, who wrote her dissertation on Navajo land tenure patterns in the monument, volunteered her advice and expertise. The NPS also took an important step toward positive relationships with the Navajo when Herbert Yazhe, an experienced manager in the tribal government and fluent in Navajo, was selected as Superintendent of Canyon de Chelly.

Cross cultural concerns affect the planning process in two basic ways: (1) relationships among team members and with the public and, (2) effects of planning decisions on canyon residents and their way of life. The planning team consists of a core team and a consultant group. The core team includes representatives of the NPS Southwest Regional Office and Canyon de Chelly National Monument, the local BIA, the Navajo Tribe's Division of Resources, and two local chapters (a chapter is a unit of local Navajo government). The team is predominantly Navajo. The consultant group is a mixture of technical specialists, agency and tribal managers, and political figures including some tribal council delegates.

### **Communication**

More important than the logistics of team organization is how people on the team communicate with one another as individuals and how the decision-making process works. Fortunately, all of the current core team members have significant experience in cross-cultural communications. The Navajo team members in particular have shown an ability to

live gracefully with one foot in each world and have carried much of the burden of establishing workable communications. Significant communication problems can occur between older and younger generations, men and women, New Yorkers and Midwesterners, because of different communication styles, including gestures, tone and volume of voice, eye contact, and timing of responses. When very different cultural values are added, it is necessary to proceed with patience and sensitivity and to avoid making quick judgments. Requiring NPS personnel working in cross-cultural situations to have the necessary awareness and skills would help to avoid mistakes and misunderstandings. Cross-cultural communication is an important part of the NPS training course, "NPS Relationships with Native Americans," and is included to some extent in some management and supervisory training. More such training is needed, and this is certainly an area where anthropologists can make substantial contributions. Sensitivity, time, and effort are also needed during the public involvement phase of planning. At Canyon de Chelly, the public consists largely of traditional Navajo whose lives are directly affected by planning decisions. Informing people about meetings, determining time and place, presenting ideas and concepts, and dealing with translation problems were issues discussed among the team and with consultants prior to public meetings.

As the team continues to develop alternatives, its members will depend on consultants, including anthropologists, for an effective assessment of the impacts of the alternatives. An interesting, if extreme, example of the cultural effects of a government program, which has relevance to the current Canyon de Chelly project, is the issue of grazing, which is covered in Schoepfle's report. Park Service policies generally disallow grazing unless it is authorized by law or "desirable to perpetuate and interpret the historic scene." In the case of Canyon de Chelly, the authorizing legislation specifically reserves grazing rights to the Navajo Tribe. Overgrazing, however, within and outside the monument is generally recognized as a serious problem, because it decreases range quality, makes reforestation of commercial forest lands nearly impossible, and contributes to erosion in canyons. To understand why neither tribal nor BIA officials will take action to enforce carrying capacities, and why the NPS should tread lightly when approaching the issue, requires an understanding of the cultural importance of grazing and the history of past attempts at grazing regulation, notably the drastic and culturally disruptive measures taken by the BIA in the 1930s to reduce livestock throughout the reservation by 50 percent and the subsequent range management program.

Schoepfle points out that in addition to a diminishing subsistence base and frequent dependence on Federal assistance, Navajos also sent more children to school "simply to be fed, and to get the education needed to obtain wage work...Ceremonial life, which at first increased rapidly to deal with symptoms of depression and other distress, then eroded rapidly as livestock were no longer available to support medicine men and the attendant ceremonies. Kinship relations similarly became attenuated as the means of reciprocal exchange ordinarily afforded by livestock decreased." The establishment of grazing districts forced changes in traditional grazing practices too. Moving livestock long distances seasonally not only had helped preserve the range but also had been important to maintaining kinship relations. Furthermore, the transmission of culture became difficult. "Navajos...teach their children the many values and elements of character needed to function in Navajo society through the practicum of raising livestock. Children learn of thrift, generosity, responsibility, trustworthiness as well as the capacity for clear thought, planning and foresight through raising livestock...Many of the religious and legendary aspects which go with these attributes can also be taught." Information of this type early in the planning process can help sensitize planners and managers to the cross-cultural aspects of planning. It can help them perceive systemic relationships among land use, ritual, and other cultural features, and the serious effects their decisions can have on traditional ways.

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# A Cultural Landscapes Mandate for Action

**Setha M. Low, Ph.D.**

Ethnography, properly defined, is the description of another culture, a text that documents the social structure, social organization, values, beliefs and world view of a group of people. Ethnography as a concept, however, often refers to a methodology for the study of culture, i.e., the ethnographic method, or an approach to the study of culture—the ethnographic perspective. In this discussion I refer to ethnography in the broadest sense of the term, as an approach, method, and written document which produces a cultural anthropological portrait and culturally sensitive understanding of a society, neighborhood, or local community. This understanding includes a coherent explanation of the lifeways of a group of people and an exploration of the meaning and significance of their lives from their own point of view. A complete ethnography requires making sense of daily living patterns and modes of social action within a historical context as well as decoding symbols, values, beliefs and behaviors in order to produce an accurate interpretation of the local meaning system and world view.

Ethnography and the ethnographic perspective provide a "human technology" for understanding the cultural landscape that includes both its historical and contemporary meaning and function. Ethnographic techniques such as participant observation, key informant interviewing and behavioral mapping provide a methodological bridge between the historian's description of life as it was and the cultural anthropologist's description of life as it is. But ethnography also can clarify who the significant groups of people are, and identify conflicting interests in regard to a landscape, which complements the visual and geomorphological aspects of cultural landscape analysis. The "human technologies" traditionally include informational and archival strategies, but should now emphasize the social, cultural and psychological understandings of human behavior in a more effective effort to preserve our cultural heritage and conserve rare and endangered cultural landscapes created by earlier lifestyles and cultural patterns.

The following sections present a brief overview of some of the ways in which ethnography can help identify, evaluate and assess, interpret, conserve, and preserve and maintain cultural landscapes. I address the general concerns of the cultural resource manager who is interested in applying this new human technology at the community and site-specific level.

## **Identification**

One of the difficulties associated with identifying significant cultural landscapes is the lack of knowledge concerning the difference between "professional" and "popular" conceptions of that landscape. Part of the mandate of preserving cultural resources is based on the notion that these landscapes are valued and encode important elements of our biophysical, social, and cultural history. In a culturally and socially diverse country such as the United States, the determination of what is valuable is complex and often unclear. Further, the professional community of planners, designers, historians, and social scientists who provide the knowledge base for landscape identification do not necessarily value the same landscapes as the local or "popular" community. Identification of landscapes and sites thus becomes a process which includes discovery, designation and determination of historical, social, or cultural value to both the professional and local participants.

Techniques of identification should include methods for integrating local and professional meanings of the landscape. The ethnographer working with the community can identify local values and valued sites through interviewing, ethnosemantic analysis, observation, and a variety of projective "mental map" techniques, and then communicate or, better still, synthesize the local preferences with the professional preferences, plans and

designs. For example, in Oley, Pennsylvania, the National Trust for Historic Preservation was concerned that the architectural survey of the historic area did not capture the local conceptions of "Oleyness." A method was developed which integrated local notions and architectural details through a series of drawings and ranked responses (Low and Ryan 1985). These ranked responses could guide architects and planners in the development of design guidelines for new housing and factory buildings that were appropriate to the cultural area and fit the expectations of local residents. The ethnosemantic analysis of Oley suggests that stone buildings with local details such as tile roofs or shuttered windows would be perceived by the residents as part of the historical and cultural landscape and therefore were more acceptable than other proposed building types.

### **Evaluation and Assessment**

Techniques for the evaluation and assessment of cultural landscapes have been inadequate in that landscapes have been selectively preserved and elements of a landscape have been destroyed only to find out 20 years later that the structure or cultural component of that landscape is of public or academic interest. For instance, "wilderness" or "natural" park once signified an area without human habitation. Therefore, after a piece of land under such a designation was acquired, the long-term residents were moved out, and old settlers' homesteads often removed except for their foundations. "Nature" healed these human remains so that the visitor was presented with a "natural" landscape. Today, park management finds the interaction of nature and human settlement interesting, and visitors want to see how the early settlers lived and worked. Throughout the park system, restorations of the original cabins and homesteads have been started, and university students have been hired to act as settlers. Local residents return to give talks and demonstrations about local folklore.

The evaluation and assessment of landscapes tends to be a political and ideological process which reflects contemporary ideas and values. We need an assessment system that will broaden our understanding of the site elements to be preserved and that will not overlook important human settlements or materials because of current thought or prejudice. It is imperative that we also improve techniques for recording those elements that are destroyed. Ethnographic studies of the local population that focus on the meaning of cultural materials would inform decision-makers of the importance of the human and cultural materials in the interpretation, maintenance, and future significance of the site. For example, the preservation of the Amish cultural landscape would be meaningless without the extensive ethnographic documentation and living history of the Amish community.

### **Interpretation**

Ethnographic techniques of interpretation focus on the contextual and experiential methodologies of social science which encourage the visitor to perceive his or her relation to the cultural landscape as a dynamic and personal interaction. These techniques emphasize film and video as an interpretive medium, process-oriented exhibits which require visitor participation and outdoor facilities which present the cultural landscape as a challenge or as a dramatic change.

These new strategies provide the public with a better understanding of their own cultural landscape, but the ethnographic data base necessary to create these interpretations often is missing. Most cultural landscapes are identified solely in terms of their historical, rather than their contemporary importance to the community. To involve the public in a meaningful way, we need to understand the contemporary population's relationship to the site, their reactions and feelings about it and we need to learn what parts of those responses can be used to capture their interest to learn more, and to help us conserve and preserve those sites.

## **Conservation**

One of the most critical needs relative to the conservation of cultural landscapes through site documentation is the lack of interest and absence of data on the ethnohistory and ecological reconstruction of cultural landscapes. This absence applies to both historically important architectural sites where the excavation was not extended to include the surrounding cultural landscape context and to vernacular landscapes. Documentation of contemporary cultural landscapes is possible through increased funding, better archival materials, better dissemination, and more scholarly interest. Because ethnographic research is time consuming and in some cases quite specialized, it needs to be encouraged at the Federal as well as at the State and local level. Ethnographic research, however, is necessary to generate a broader knowledge base for cultural and historical landscape reconstruction and interpretation.

## **Preservation and Maintenance**

Applied ethnographic techniques, such as participatory design and maintenance programs where local people participate in the planning or design of a site or in its cleaning and maintenance, or cultural constituency analysis which identifies users on site by their values orientation (Low 1985), provide an approach to the preservation of landscapes which integrates the community, visitors, maintenance team and agency personnel. These new techniques have been used in the French "ethnographic" historical parks where cultural anthropologists, landscape architects, archeologists and community organizers have worked together to produce preservation and maintenance plans. In Canada, similar programs have been employed for the evaluation of proposed changes in the landscape where members of the community, government agencies and private sector developers are included as part of the decisionmaking team. This approach assumes that a majority of the preservation problems, especially vandalism, over or under utilization, and neglect, are caused by a lack of dialogue between the community and the governmental agency.

The ethnographic approach encourages this dialogue by providing a "cultural brokering role" that translates the needs and desires of the community to the agency, and by bringing the agency into direct contact with the value system and concerns of the local community. The cultural broker function of ethnography provides a bridge between the two communities by encouraging learning to understand one another. This learning process solves many of the preservation and maintenance problems that emerge when there is a lack of interest and limited communication between the cultural resource manager or the park agency and the local community.

## **The Mandate**

Ethnography provides a method, an approach and a strategy for dealing with the local community in relation to cultural landscapes. As a method, ethnography generates an accurate, qualitative description of local folkways and lifestyles of the community that lives on or near the site, and produces a contextual framework that enables the historian and the archeologist to interpret their data. As an approach, ethnography emphasizes the importance of both professional and popular knowledge about a cultural landscape, and clarifies how value is attributed to the cultural landscape based on this knowledge. As a strategy, ethnography aids the cultural resource manager to set up a dialogue between the agency and the local community based on mutual understanding and respect for the identified differences in values and meanings. The ethnography of a cultural landscape increases our understanding of that landscape and suggests ways in which that landscape can be interpreted, preserved and maintained.

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# The Ethnography of Alaska Resource Use

**Muriel Crespi, Ph.D.**

Understanding the rich array of indigenous Alaskan peoples and lifeways now associated with National Park Service units is a herculean task. It is also crucial to ensuring good working relationships between indigenous communities and managers of units that support native subsistence. There are numerous other benefits.

Native knowledge of customary habitats together with their flora and fauna coupled with data on native patterns of resource use, for example, teaches us about local ethnobotany, native harvest and conservation techniques, the potential for long-term yields, and appropriate means of monitoring changes in the habitat. Knowing about family networks—and the exchanges of food, clothing or services that move through such networks—tells us about the potential impacts of park plans on family ties and the informal food exchanges through which families share relatively surplus harvests in times of abundance and receive support in times of need. Systematic studies about religious views and practices and their associations with use of certain resources will facilitate the identification and culturally appropriate management of sensitive areas, structures, or objects. Interpretation and public education programs also gain a needed data base. In addition, such studies satisfy not only NPS policies regarding native peoples and resource management, but also comply with the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act which, in Title VIII, Subsistence Management and Use, for example, mandates that subsistence use be researched with local residents' assistance.

## **Data Collection**

Substantial progress on data collection and analysis is being made as a result of partnerships among park management, the Cultural Resources staff in the Alaska Regional Office, professional ethnographers, and park-associated native communities. The most recent collaboration involves the ongoing study of the native communities and resource use associated with Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. Superintendent Paul Haertel's professionalism and appreciation for park data needs led him to hire Dr. Linda J. Ellanna, a cultural anthropologist, initially on a 130-day faculty appointment and more recently as an "individual expert consultant." Dr. Ellanna is a specialist in systems of Alaskan native demography and subsistence. Working closely with her is Andrew Belluta, a native member of a local Dena'ina village and an Athabaskan speaker hired by Lake Clark as a park ranger and natural resource specialist. While Superintendent Haertel supervises research activities on a day-to-day basis, the regional archeologist and other CRM staff provide technical oversight for the project.

The study of Lake Clark's Dena'ina people is a complex multi-year undertaking focusing on ethnohistory, history, ethnography and systems analyses of the area's native and non-native cultures. It involves consideration of past and contemporary Dena'ina cultural systems, including Dena'ina contacts with other native peoples as well as with Russian and American immigrants and system responses to new economies and other externally introduced features. Using a research perspective based on a human ecological model, Dr. Ellanna is particularly interested in past and present interrelationships among patterns of land tenure, settlement types, land use, territoriality, population dynamics, and socio-cultural features of household, family, and community life. A basic assumption here is that cultures are systemic that is, different aspects of a culture, such as kinship, economy, religion, and technology, are interconnected, and cannot be simply described or studied in isolation. A related assumption is that such cultural, or socio-cultural, systems are best understood as human responses or adaptations to their natural environment and to a cultural one that consists of external economic demands and other human-made conditions.

Data collection techniques include the review and analysis of historical documents, including translated Russian church materials and early explorer accounts. Oral histories and ethnographic field interviews are producing family residence histories along with data on the locale and use of camp sites. Genealogies are being developed to map family ties throughout the area. Old photographs are being analyzed for their cultural content and census materials are under review. Videotaping of certain subsistence activities is underway. Linguists at the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, are translating and transcribing Dena'ina tapes, and a historian has been reviewing historical materials on the study area.

### **Studies Produced**

Even the project's first phase is yielding important results. Principal among them are an ethnobotanical study by Priscilla Kari detailing the native use and taxonomy of local flora and fauna, and a land use map for the entire Lake Clark area showing subsistence, religious and other forms of land use as well as the species harvested. The genealogy demonstrates linkages among families and relationships to land starting with the last quarter of the 19th century. Finally, it should be emphasized that the reports are being written in a format and style that will meet the information needs of the professional as well as the non-specialist. As a consequence, the findings will be accessible to park managers, interpreters, the native communities themselves, and, when appropriate, the general public. This well-executed and ambitious undertaking provides one model for ethnographies of other Service units.

Other important Alaskan ethnographic studies have been briefer, necessarily narrower, and engaged other sets of partners. Dr. George Gmelch's 1982 work on resource use at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, for example, to gather data for the unit's General Management Plan, involved collaboration with the Division of Subsistence of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, as well as with the superintendent and staff of Glacier Bay and the regional office staff. Gmelch worked closely with natives and non-natives involved with the Dry Bay fishing industry and with Yakutat residents.

Gmelch's goals included a resource ethnography to determine forms of resource harvesting (especially commercial fishing) in the preserve, identification and mapping of resource areas, population characteristics of the resource users and changes in time of the resource use and users. Data gathering techniques, in addition to literature reviews, relied heavily on formal and informal ethnographic interviewing, mapping techniques, inventorying and oral histories collected in the field at fish camps and while residing at the Dry Bay fish processor. The resulting study yielded previously unknown information about local resource use that contributed importantly to planning documents and Service insights into the subsistence concerns of park neighbors. An earlier important study of traditional Eskimo life, Kuuvaumiit Subsistence, conducted for the Service in 1975 by Anderson, Bane, Nelson, Anderson and Sheldon, contributed needed information on peoples and lifeways of the Kobuk River Valley.

To pursue its program of resource ethnography, the region is seeking funding for a major study of the Northwest areas, Cape Krusenstern, Noatak, and Kobuk. This work will expand an ethnographic data bank that is already proving instructive whether the questions raised deal with the protection of identified sacred or subsistence resources, cultural landscapes defined from the native perspective, or ecosystem dynamics. We need to watch, and learn from, the evolution of the region's ethnographic program which clearly stands among its pioneering undertakings.

# Ethnography and the NPS: Opportunities and Obligations

**Lowell John Bean, Ph.D.**  
**Sylvia Brakke Vane**

Without exception, lands owned, controlled, and managed by the National Park Service provide extraordinary opportunities to acquire and analyze new data, not only to enrich our scientific and scholarly data banks, but also to give the public at large a more accurate understanding of the anthropology of these rich public resources. Still, the field of anthropology, a discipline that has many subdivisions, including archeology, ethnography, ethnology, and ethnohistory, has failed to deal adequately with the research potential of NPS areas. Although laws and regulations mandating the management of cultural resources have, it is true, increased the amount of research, it has tended to be piecemeal, and to stress archeology and history. Serious research in ethnography and ethnohistory has been largely neglected, partly because of some confusion about what ethnography and ethnohistory are and partly because archeologists and historians have presented a case for their disciplines more energetically than ethnographers and ethnohistorians.

What are ethnography and ethnohistory? Both are subfields of cultural anthropology. Ethnography is a term which anthropologists apply to the study of a particular culture holistically and in depth. Ethnographers ask why particular ways of doing things occur—ways of thinking (philosophy) and ways of organizing a group politically, religiously, and economically. They are concerned with where people live, how they make their living, and how their historical, environmental, and ecological situations are related to the various institutions within that culture. They study the biotic resources of the community, and the geographical factors that provide a basis for the culture. Ethnographers are interested in kinship systems, social structure, ritual and religion, and in the values and attitudes that cause people to behave in ways adaptively successful. They also analyze a people's oral or written literature. They put this information together, using a theoretical framework, to explain how a culture has developed, and why it developed in a particular way. A related approach, ethnology, which deals with cross-cultural analysis, compares and contrasts a number of cultures in order to understand why peoples are similar or dissimilar in particular circumstances.

Ethnohistory differs from ethnography in that it considers the experiences of an ethnic group over time, rather than at one "slice of time." It differs from history proper in that it focuses on a specific cultural group. History proper is apt to focus on political and economic processes in the dominant society, and thus on the majority ethnic group, while ethnohistory tends to focus on minority groups.

## **Native Americans and Parks**

The Native American community throughout the United States has recently been expressing and will continue to express a vigorous politically and scientifically informed interest in NPS management. Native American concerns are of special value to both managers and scholars because of their potential for providing a new impetus for research and interpretation that is significantly more positive than it has ever been in the past.

Because Native American concerns are deep and real regarding the presentation of their history and culture, they are, in 1987, providing more information and assistance to government officials and scholars than we have ever known. It can be argued that in the past much of the information available within the Native American community about national park ethnography and ethnohistory has been at best available to only a limited degree because of problems that Native Americans have faced with the general American

public and with various government officials. For a long time, many groups were unwilling to provide information because it might be used badly or incorrectly. Now the situation is quite different. Many Native Americans are working closely with cultural anthropologists to correct misinformation, to correct bias, and to mitigate prejudice that they have felt keenly for so long. They now want to control their history and its presentation, not to have it screened through others.

Native American resources are of inestimable value to the NPS personnel. The data stored in the memory of Native American elders, extraordinary in quantity and quality, can only be acquired by setting up intimate and equitable working relationships with them. The information they have is necessary for appropriate archeological interpretations of a park area, for understanding park history, and for understanding relationships between various ethnic groups that have used and appreciated Service resources. Such information has extraordinary value not only to American society at large but also to the parks' many foreign visitors who are particularly fascinated with American Indian cultures. Much of the foreign visitors' image of the United States derives from the ways in which American Indians and their contemporary and historic culture is presented to the public. This is where a considerably enhanced image of American culture can be generated by NPS programs.

## **Guidelines**

It would be advisable for each national park to develop a long term ethnographic and ethnohistoric plan that includes the collection of data, its analysis, and its use for improving public presentations. Ethnographers and Native American advisors should be consulted regularly as the plan develops. The authors' own research in Native American communities, experience in cultural resource studies for the US Forest Service, and studies among park-associated Native Americans suggest that park programs, and ultimately, the public, would gain by having the Service develop guidelines for ethnographic research and interpretation along the following lines: (1) Ethnographers should identify the published and unpublished literature pertaining to park-associated Native American groups, collect and summarize their contents. Copies of out-of-print publications should be acquired. The best publications should be made available to the visiting public, if necessary by republishing; (2) Copies of file materials should be acquired. Some of these are reports by early explorers and leaders of expeditions. Some consist of the correspondence files of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the United States Army, the 19th-century Geological and Geographical Survey, or the Department of Agriculture, and are stored in the National Archives. The notes and files left by early ethnographers who have worked in these areas, the source of particularly important data, should be located. They may be stored at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, which sent staff members in the late-19th and early-20th centuries to interview Native Americans who remembered how they lived before the white man came. There are the notes of individuals such as C. Hart Merriam, a biologist with ethnographic interests whose journals are at the Library of Congress. The Field Museum in Chicago, the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, and the Heye Foundation in New York have collections of such documents. Papers can also be found in university and other archives across the country. Wills, land records, and other documents in county court houses, and censuses can be examined at Federal Record Centers of major libraries. These often contain extraordinary materials on Indians and Indian/ non-Indian relations that are important to ethnographers/ethnohistorians trained to place them in a meaningful perspective. It should be added that the first place to look is the park archives themselves. Yosemite National Park, for example, has an excellent research library which contains both published and unpublished materials. (3) The materials collected should be filed and analyzed. Upon discovering what kinds of information are lacking, ethnographers should design research schedules and plans for acquiring new information. It is the synthesizing of information from many places that adds up to a valuable contribution to knowledge. A great deal has been written, for example, about Yosemite National Park and

its Native American inhabitants. The most valuable contribution made to scholarship by a recent ethnographic/ethnohistoric overview, undertaken at the behest of the park's Native American community (Bean and Vance 1984), was the juxtaposition of accounts written by many different authors in one monograph, which greatly expanded the data base available. (4) It is urgent that advantage be taken of the present opportunity to gather information in the Native American community. Our Native American elders, those people who were brought up with an oral tradition that demanded that individuals memorize and have within their mental data bank enormous amounts of information, are rapidly passing away.

Native American elders who are interested in working with NPS personnel should be contacted immediately, worked with extensively and seriously, and their information integrated with already available material. It should be pointed out that the information that such persons have cannot be easily elicited. It is not a task for non-specialists, although they have contributed in this regard. To develop a relationship where information can be well received requires a long time, a working out of a very special relationship with Native Americans within a community, and the development of a relationship of trust. It requires time to analyze the existing information so that the proper questions are defined and properly asked in order to elicit valuable information. It also requires a great deal of time to analyze and prepare the materials so that they are understandable to outsiders. For example, Native American perceptions of their own history are usually encoded in oral literature and need to be expertly elicited and analyzed. The task should not be assigned willy-nilly because someone has an interest in it. This is why the ethnography program should be designed and planned at the uppermost levels of the NPS to ensure consistency throughout the Service, with clearly set guidelines for data retrieval, analysis and presentation.

Persons involved in this activity should be well trained and have long-range, strong commitments to the profession and to the data base in which they are to become specialists. Other people in the community—local historians, collectors of artifacts, librarians, and old-timers—should also be interviewed, for their contributions add depth and balance to the overall picture. The results of such research should be made available to the public in a variety of ways. At one level, a scholarly resource base should be organized for future researchers who may develop new questions to ask of the data. At a second level, the most significant results should be published in ways that reach other scholars—archeologists, historians, the Native American community, and the general public. Most importantly, a program should be devised to bring the study results to the NPS staff. This could be accomplished by setting up a workshop for Service personnel, to train them in Native American history, values, and the contributions of Native Americans to American history. In such a workshop, Native Americans should be intimately involved with ethnographer/ethnohistorians. The workshop should be attended not just by Service interpreters, but by other scientists and Service personnel as well.

## **Goals**

It is important that all Service staff understand the long range goals for ethnographic/ethnohistoric preservation and interpretation because they will often have access to information, the value of which might be unknown to them without being made aware of these goals. They can be made aware that not only archeological sites and rock art, but also certain flora and fauna are of special concern to Native Americans. Acquiring this kind of information can set up mutual feedback systems of value throughout the Service. For example, park biologists who understand Native American uses and knowledge of flora and fauna can add significantly to their interpretive programs and ethnographers/ethnohistorians can learn more about the man/land relationship by appropriate instruction in park natural history.

Service personnel should be advised of the political and economic systems characteristic of local peoples, the complexity of the relationship of the group to the ecosystem of the area, and the social structure within the area so they can see how kinship

systems, settlement patterns, political systems, and status and role systems were integrally balanced with the ecosystem; that cultures are adaptive systems fulfilling the needs of the groups within a given environmental context.

Religion and philosophy of Native American groups are rarely addressed in interpretation; yet these are critical in understanding Native Americans. It can be argued that without understanding the philosophical assumptions of particular Native American cultures one doesn't understand the cultures at all. To almost exclusively emphasize basic technological systems for acquiring subsistence— hunting and gathering—is apt to increase stereotypic attitudes about Native Americans instead of enhancing the public view of what American Indians are about. Addressing the cultures in a holistic sense, beginning with understanding the cosmology and value systems in conjunction with the complexity of rituals in a society— what rituals are all about, how they function to buttress the philosophical system and support the social structure and political systems—is absolutely necessary for understanding Native Americans. Added to this should be analyses of settlement patterns; that is, where people are in time and space with explanations of why variations in settlement patterns occur. Even such esoteric matters as kinship systems can be easily understood and explained to the public.

### **Complexities**

A major risk in interpretive programs is the description of complex and sophisticated cultural systems as simple. This lends credence to negative stereotypes about Native Americans. It is important for interpretive programs to recognize that Native American cultures were and are complex and sophisticated. Whatever aspects of the culture are addressed should be described from a holistic point of view that acknowledges the complexity. Not to do this furthers the negative stereotypes.

Employing Native Americans to interpret and demonstrate significant aspects of their culture is likewise important, and already occurs in some parks. Care should be taken to choose individuals from the group indigenous to the area. This use of Native Americans can be effective, however, only in conjunction with a scholarly research program. The Native American has a body of data that is often quite separate and distinct from that which the ethnographer and ethnohistorian may present; hence, it is necessary for investigators and Native Americans to work in tandem. Native Americans are particularly effective in providing sensitivity training and a sense of cultural reality while investigators can provide hard data and scientific interpretations, and place the information in a larger context.

It is important to remember that every American citizen, and persons carrying other cultures as well, comes to the park areas laden with an implicit set of ideas and concepts about the Native American and the place of the Native American in history that has, as a rule, only the slightest basis in fact. These preconceptions may be negative or positive with regard to Native Americans; also negative or positive with regard to American culture and its relationship to the Indian. The ways in which stereotypic images about Native Americans are passed from generation to generation is a matter that should be brought to the attention of all interpretation programs. The article, "The Language of Stereotype" (1969), among others, should be made available for persons writing and presenting interpretation text, to counteract the culturally engrained mystique so common to all of us with regard to the Native American Indian.

The National Park Service can be commended for dealing with material culture—the things Indians used, how and why they used them, but they need to also address the matters discussed above.

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