

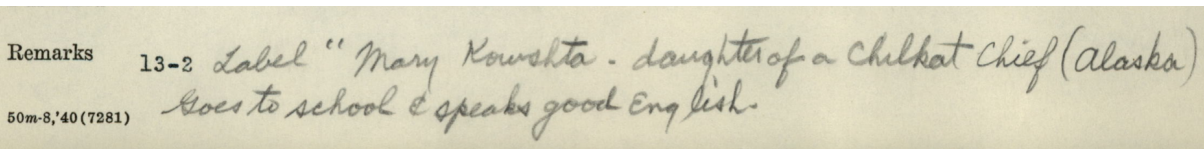
Collecting and the Hearst's Sense of Self

History of Art 192CU: Social Justice and Museum Studies, Spring 2021

Since its inception in 1901, how has the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology conceived of itself? Self-described as a museum where “cultures connect,” the Hearst currently holds nearly 4 million objects. Over the past 100+ years, museum staff, university faculty, and collectors have written innumerable articles, exhibition catalogues, collection entries, website texts, and more to describe and identify this museum.

It is imperative to examine how this museum has regarded itself since the beginning of the 20th century, how this has changed, and perhaps how this has stayed the same. We are asking you, the viewer, to draw conclusions about [the Hearst Museum’s current mission](#) “to steward a vast collection of objects spanning the infinite breadth of human cultures for the advancement of knowledge and understanding” in conjunction with the objects compiled below. What language legitimizes the Hearst as a steward?

In this mini-exhibit, we assemble a clipping file from the Hearst to ask the question: to what extent is the distinction between collection and collector mutable? What does it mean when the words used to describe a museum and its collection become part of that collection? *What does it mean to be an object?*



Mary Goes to School and Speaks Good English

Berkeley, CA, United States

1902

Graphite on paper, in Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology Online Portal

[Source](#)

“like all savage men they simply go wild over jazz music...they do no work and eat nothing but blood and milk”

Hoefler's Observations

Paul Hoefler

1928/29, in Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology Online Portal

Unknown

[Source](#)

“These women look like nothing on earth and are repulsive to say the least, but it is only when the disks are removed that the real savagery of the thing is apparent, for once the lips are exposed to view they are most disgusting. Some of the disks are a good eight inches across.”

More Hoefler

Paul Hoefler

1928/29

Unknown, in Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology Online Portal

[Source](#)

The Museum of Anthropology, devoted to the "History of Man and his Works," an integral part of the University of California, was founded by Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst, organized in 1901, and opened to public exhibition in its present temporary quarters at Second and Parnassus Avenues, San Francisco, in 1911.

This guide has accordingly

been prepared for the accommodation of visitors whose time is limited and who prefer to examine a small number of selected objects of unusual interest rather than to search these out among the thousands of other specimens.

LIST OF OBJECTS

IN FRONT OF BUILDING

1. Forty-three foot Haida totem pole—a coat of arms revealing the descent of a chief and his wife.

PHILIPPINE EXHIBIT: MAIN VESTIBULE

2. Kris and barong, the fighting weapons of the warlike Moros.
3. Wavy kris, the most terrible of swords.
4. Beheading knife, part of the outfit of a chief's retinue.
5. Igorot head-hunter's shield—for defense, tripping, and decapitation.
6. Native brass helmet, a picturesque modern survival of sixteenth century Spanish armorial style.
7. Moro armor—a medley of primitive buffalo horn plates with civilized brass links.
8. Moro chief's gaudy and symbolic battle flags. (On upper landing.)
9. Filipino head-gear—a different hat for every tribe and station in life. (On upper landing.)

MAIN VESTIBULE

10. Verestchagin's famous "Blowing from the Guns" in the Sepoy Rebellion, an unforgettable painting of one of the most dramatic incidents in history.

SHELLMOUND COLLECTION: UPPER LANDING

133. What the shellmound women sewed clothing and worked baskets with: bone awls.
134. Pipes—the medicine-man's badge.
135. Skulls, showing the fairly large brain case of the shellmound race.
136. How the inside of a shellmound looks—typical samples of different layers.
137. Two shellmound burials from near San Francisco—the skeletons in characteristic bent position.

Objects of Unusual Interest and Alfred Kroeber's Method of Characterizing these Objects

Alfred Kroeber

1920

Printed in University of California Museum of Anthropology Guide

[Source](#)

Moreover, there would be the possibility of using some part of the museum as to acquire African art from other areas. I should point out that there is no museum west of the Mississippi which has a collection of African art worthy of the name, but the Lowie Museum of Anthropology now has the beginnings of a small collection, acquired through the field collections made by students and colleagues and through donations by friends of the Museum.

materials for a museum to support a department of Anthropology. Hearst hoped that the Anthropology program at the University of California, the first Anthropology department and museum established west of the Mississippi, would become a center for the discipline.

West of the Mississippi

William Bascom and Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology Collections Management Policy Authors

1962 and 2018

Printed in a personal letter and published on Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology website

[Source](#); [Source](#)

ligion at the Louvre. The Museum, on the other hand, has a large collection of African art, and the pieces are readily available. For \$137 I bought for the Museum six pieces which have been evaluated at \$1,725, and had the Museum had more money, and had I had more time I could have done much better. I believe I could have bought a collection worth \$20,000, conservatively, for \$2,000, and perhaps one worth \$30,000 for \$3,000.

Bascom the Bargain Hunter

William Bascom

1962

Printed in a personal letter

[Source](#)

Because of their pronounced stylization, African arts were not appreciated outside Africa—except by a very few explorers, anthropologists, and museum employees—until early in this century; for the departure from the realistic portrayal of nature, which is taken so much for granted today, was in direct opposition to the Western aesthetic canons of the nineteenth century. Yet it was this very departure from naturalism that appealed to the artists of Europe, who were already seeking to escape from the stereotyped standards of the naturalism of the Academy of France.

Ling Roth.² In fact, the Benin bronzes and ivories were the first African sculptures to gain public recognition as art. Brought back by members of the British military expedition which sacked the city of Benin in 1897 in reprisal for murder, they found their way into British private collections and museums, German museums which had agents buying for them at the docks of Liverpool, and eventually many other collections. The Field

Not all of the arts of Africa are great art; and certainly not all are beautiful in the sense of being pretty.

There are some who bemoan the fact that African arts have not been left in their original setting—"where they belong." This attitude is wholly unrealistic, in view of the rapid changes which have been taking place in Africa itself. Had they not been collected and preserved in museums and private collections, many more African masterpieces would have been destroyed by the ravages of time and termites, or by converts to Christianity, Islam, or the new nativistic cults. Fortunately, Africa's new nations are establishing their own museums. Besides collecting locally, Nigeria, for one, has been buying back its art from Europe. In many cases this would have been impossible if the pieces had not been collected and preserved outside Africa, and the establishment of museums would have been unlikely had it not been for the recognition which African arts had won in Europe and America. Indeed, if it had not been for the non-African collectors, the very magnitude of Africa's contribution to the world's cultural heritage through its sculpture would have been considerably diminished.

Bascom's Thoughts on African Art

William Bascom

1967

Printed in catalogue for Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology exhibition, *African Arts*

[Source](#)

Many of the pieces properly distinguished as *treasures* of the Lowie Museum have already been on public display or included as illustrations in scholarly books or journals. In the current exhibition are brought together for the first time valued objects in this relatively well-known group and others which have not previously been displayed or published. The choice of treasured pieces from the Museum's extensive collections depended ultimately upon the tastes and opinions of many individuals. Not all pieces were chosen because of their artistic merit, rarity, or monetary value; some, like Ishi's arrowheads of bottle glass, were included because of their association with the history of the Museum and others for their broader historical significance; in addition some attempt has been made to indicate the wide range of the Museum's holdings. The present selection was made by the Director, William R. Bascom, and his staff, with the particular assistance of curators from the several departments associated with the Museum.

The establishment of the Department and the Museum of Anthropology at Berkeley in 1901 thus gave an early start in the field, not far behind similar beginnings at institutions in the major population centers of the eastern seaboard. A selective view of the Lowie Museum's collections and reflections upon their use in teaching and research, therefore, may provide a good index of the course of growth of modern anthropology, as well as of its meaning to a wider public in California, since the turn of the century.

It is in large part due to Mrs. Hearst that the Lowie Museum today is truly a museum of man, and not simply a museum of "primitive" man, with collections from Europe, Asia, and the Ancient Mediterranean World. Even though anthropologists today are turning from the study of nonliterate societies to the study of those with written histories, it should be observed that both fields have been represented in the Lowie Museum from its very early days. This is the reason why the Museum lists among its Curators members of the Departments of Art, Classics, Design, and Near Eastern Languages, and why faculty and students from these and a half-dozen other Departments make use of the collections and the exhibitions of the Lowie Museum in research and in course work.

It was during this time, after 1911, that Ishi, the last of the California Indians not directly subdued by white settlers, came to San Francisco. He spent the last five years of his life at the Museum and there became well known to visitors to the exhibition galleries. Judging from the public response to displays in the Lowie Museum following publication of Theodora Kroeber's books about Ishi after 1961, the tangible remains of his life, a small array of implements, still represent one of the more attractive holdings of the Museum.

However welcome new buildings with modern commodious facilities are, it remains true that preoccupation with the collections, whether of distinguished works of art, homely stone tools, or of human skeletal remains, is the truly important work of the Museum. These are what give stability, and the mark of the stability of the Lowie Museum may be seen below in the listing of the comparatively small number of appointed persons who have been chiefly responsible for its growth during the past sixty-seven years.

When the University of California was founded in 1868 anthropology was hardly known as a formal academic subject hence was not part of the curriculum. One cannot ordinarily be precise in determining the time when states of maturity or coherency have properly been reached in human affairs, but it seems safe to say that by the latter part of the nineteenth century anthropology could lay claim to having achieved both of these conditions. In these early years museums were an integral and significant part of the discipline, and this was the period when museums intended partly or wholly to serve anthropology were being designed, among them the Peabody Museum at Harvard (1872), The American Museum of Natural History (1874), and the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania (1899).

Despite changes in emphasis in cultural anthropology through the years, from studies of comparatively untouched, exotic peoples to those dealing with rural groups influenced from modern industrial centers or even with large urban societies themselves, museums seem to have retained a more traditional flavor in the corresponding time span. This is not to say, however, that museums have remained static, for the rapid expansion of European or American commerce throughout the world even in the twentieth century has resulted in the modification of viewpoints of scholars toward specimens collected only one or two generations ago. Objects of any description from functioning nonliterate cultures, usually called ethnographic specimens though they were sometimes collected by travellers or explorers as curiosities, have in many cases survived as an invaluable, unique historical record of groups now virtually or in fact extinct.

Attitudes toward the visual arts of literate societies in such *non-Western* regions as China, Japan, or India have been altered so that special treatment today is almost universally accorded them, on the ground that they are not in the same category as ethnographic art created by nonliterate peoples, but rather are assuredly "fine" arts. On the other hand, the connotations of terms like *primitive* or *nonliterate* in reference to art are likewise undergoing changes. Thus *primitive art*, a proper subject for study by anthropologists, has to many scholars become a misnomer. The kind of pictorial or plastic art formerly so designated is now frequently seen as an appreciable influence on modern Western art. It can therefore suitably be included in museums which ordinarily have chosen to accentuate the fine arts both of the West and the Orient.

*Elsasser's Introduction to the
Treasures of the Hearst*

Albert Elsasser

1968

Printed in catalogue for Phoebe
A. Hearst Museum of
Anthropology exhibition,
*Treasures of the Lowie
Museum*
[Source](#)

It is hoped that in years to come the collections now in the University Archives will be utilized to their capacity, as fresh field sources and opportunities for research on traditional cultures of North American Indian societies are swiftly drying up, and the domain of historical Indian civilizations is slipping into the realm of paleoanthropology, and the traditional American Indian is disappearing. As this phenomenon increasingly becomes the general rule, scholars will turn ever increasingly in kind to library and archival sources for new insight and data, and such collections as those in the Archives will gain new and deeper significance.

"The Traditional American Indian is Disappearing"

Dale Valory

1971

Printed in the *Guide to Ethnological Documents (1-203) of the Department and Museum of Anthropology*

[Source](#)

A great deal of staff time was devoted to the removal to Kroeber Hall of specimens from the basement of Hearst Gymnasium where they were endangered by chlorine gas, high humidity, and termites, and from Richmond where they were endangered by high humidity and salt. The periodic flooding in Kroeber Hall, hopefully, will be remedied in the coming fiscal year.

As noted last year, the study-collection areas in Kroeber Hall are almost completely full, and those at other locations are unsuitable for a great many specimens. A second pressing problem is that a major safety hazard is caused by the worn condition of the power tools in the Museum shop; these need to be replaced before a serious injury occurs.

Annual Reports from the Hearst, Steward of the Past

William Bascom

1973

Printed in Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology *Annual Report 1972/3*

[Source](#)

The Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology, a unit of the University of California at Berkeley, has as its mission:

- (1) to present to its audiences the processes and findings of anthropological interpretations of its collections;
- (2) to illuminate the diversity and particularity of ways of being human, both past and present;
- (3) to explore how different ways of being human are made possible by the creation, modification, and use of material objects.

To accomplish its mission, the museum:

- ... seeks to preserve its collections and improve their documentation and accessibility;
- ... sponsors research on its collections by members of the University community, and by researchers from anthropology and related disciplines from outside the University;
- ... and presents research relevant to its collections and mission in the form of publications, programs and exhibitions.



Indeed, given the great size of the collections, our existing gallery space is extraordinarily small. A rough estimate suggests we would need about 350 years to exhibit all of the collection. One of the most common metaphors members and friends use in talking about this issue is that they see only the tip of the iceberg. And perhaps the most common suggested solution is that the museum needs a building of its own, with expanded public program space.

The museum recognizes a number of specific audiences toward which it has responsibilities. As a research unit of the University of California at Berkeley, the museum has as one audience the faculty, staff, and students of the campus. As a major resource in Berkeley for considering the diversity and particularity of human traditions, the museum has as another audience the multi-ethnic communities of its city and region. As a state-sponsored unit, the museum has a broader audience throughout the State of California, with a special responsibility as a repository of the material cultures produced by the

And as one of the pioneering university museums of anthropology, the Hearst recognizes an international audience of scholars in anthropology and related disciplines.

Members' Newsletters and The Hearst's Values in the '90s

Rosemary Joyce

1990s

Printed in Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology newsletter

[Source](#)

The Governor of California
President pro Tempore of the Senate
Speaker of the Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor and Legislative Leaders:

As required by Health and Safety Code section 8028, my office conducted an audit of the University of California's (university) compliance with the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) and its 2001 California counterpart, CalNAGPRA. These acts establish requirements for the repatriation, or return, of Native American human remains and cultural objects (remains and artifacts) to tribes by government agencies and museums—which include the university's campuses—that maintain collections of remains and artifacts. This report concludes that the university's inadequate policies and oversight have resulted in inconsistent practices for returning Native American remains and artifacts among the university campuses we reviewed at Berkeley, Davis, and Los Angeles.

Different approaches employed at the campuses have likely contributed to the fact that Los Angeles has repatriated nearly all of the remains and artifacts from its collection, while Berkeley has returned only about 20 percent. The university's Office of the President (Office of the President) allowed these inconsistencies to persist by failing to provide adequate guidance to the campuses and oversight of their practices and decision-making. In fact, a 2018 amendment to CalNAGPRA required the university to create a policy for repatriation and establish systemwide and campus committees to review repatriation activity. However, the university failed to adequately incorporate tribal perspectives during the policy's initial development, and the Office of the President had to extend its timeline to finalize the policy to obtain these perspectives. Nevertheless, the draft policy we reviewed does not create the consistency across the campuses required by CalNAGPRA.

We also found that the campus and systemwide committees do not have the tribal representation that state law requires to ensure balance between university and tribal representatives. According to the campuses and the Office of the President, they have not revised their committees' membership to comply with state law because they are waiting for finalization of the university's policy. However, until campuses and the Office of the President revise the membership of the committees, the university will fail to comply with CalNAGPRA.

Finally, the intent of CalNAGPRA was to allow more California tribes to pursue repatriation, but a 2015 change in federal regulations has sharply reduced the number of California tribes permitted to make repatriation claims. As a result, in order to fulfill CalNAGPRA's original intent, the Legislature will have to amend requirements for tribes to qualify to make repatriation claims.

Respectfully submitted,

ELAINE M. HOWLE, CPA
California State Auditor

Only 20%

Elaine M. Howle

2020

Published on Auditor of the State of CA website

[Source](#)

From 1903 to 1931, the Museum was physically housed in San Francisco's Parnassus Heights, where exhibits opened to the public in October 1911. A key figure during these years was Ishi, a Yahi Indian who lived at the Museum from 1911 until his death in 1916 and who worked with Museum Staff to document the ways of his society.

A Key Figure

Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology Collections Management Policy Authors

2018

Published on Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology website

[Source](#)



Phoebe Hearst and her entourage touring the Giza pyramids in Egypt

OUR HISTORY

Phoebe A. Hearst had a passion for travel and discovery. The expeditions she funded along the coast of Florida, Egypt and Peru in the late 1890s resulted in a well-documented collection of 60,000 objects. In 1901, she donated a portion of her collection and founded the University of California Museum of Anthropology. Her vision then was for the Museum to become a “great educator” dedicated to “the dissemination of knowledge among the many, giving the people of California every educational advantage.”

In 1931, the Museum moved from San Francisco to the UC Berkeley campus, but it was not until 1959 that the necessary space was constructed to turn Mrs. Hearst’s vision into a reality. First named after Robert H. Lowie to honor another pioneer in Berkeley’s Anthropology Department, we officially became the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology in 1991. Our curators, staff, and students spent much of the twentieth century building on Mrs. Hearst’s founding collection. As a result, our collections grew in size and quality to span two million years of human history covering all six inhabited continents. These collections are not only studied by researchers, but also shared with people through exhibitions and publications.

About, As of Now

Unknown

2021

Published on Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology website

[Source](#)

BRINGING OUR VISION TO LIFE

With over 3.8 million objects in the collection today, we have grown to become a respected research institution that supports scholars and community members alike. We connect diverse audiences, with exhibitions, educational experiences and cultural programs.

Today, our vision is to build a fuller understanding of all cultures based on respect, interest, and empathy. By coming together, we can tackle the global challenges that touch our lives and those of generations to come, from climate change and gender inequality to conflicts involving power and oppression. The need to make cultural connections—and for constructing shared vocabularies with which to deepen or debate those connections—is greater than ever. The Hearst Museum is dedicated to offering ways for us to challenge our assumptions, whet the appetite for debate and help each other engage richly.



The Hearst Museum at Kroeber Hall, circa 1959