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(Im)material Encounters: Ghosts and Objects at the Bancroft Ranch House Museum

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Art History Theory, and Criticism with a Concentration in Art Practice

by

Katrin Pesch

Committee in charge:

University of California, San Diego

Professor Lesley Stern, Co-Chair
Professor John Welchman, Co-Chair
Professor Norman Bryson,
Professor Brian Cross
Professor Amelia Glaser

2016

The Dissertation of Katrin Pesch is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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University of California, San Diego

2016

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank Jim van Meter for sharing his stories with me. This project would not exist if I hadn't met Jim, the director, caretaker and raconteur of the Bancroft Ranch House Museum in Spring Valley, California.

Next, I would like to thank Lesley Stern who suggested I write about my film project on museum. Without her guidance, generous feedback, and support this text would be nothing like it is. I would like to thank John Welchman whose guidance and feedback during my tenure at UCSD has been invaluable. Many thanks go out to Norman Bryson for countless inspiring comments and conversations. Thank you also to Brian Cross and Amelia Glaser for their helpful feedback and suggestions during my defense.

I would like to thank my peers whose company has made graduate school an amazing experience. Thank you for all the discussions, feedback, and support to Tim Ridlen, Alex Kershaw, Orianna Cacchione, Edward Sterrett, Drew Snyder, Sara Mameni, Paloma Checa-Gismero, and Catherine Czacki.

Many thanks also to Tim Ridlen, Elizabeth D. Miller, Sascha Crasnow, Melinda Guillen, and Alex Kershaw for their help in copyediting this dissertation.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Kate Edwards and Asia Marks for helping me navigate the administrative jungle of UCSD.

The chapter "Dictionary Hill," in full, is a reprint of the material as it appears in *Sunshine/Noir II – Writings From San Diego and Tijuana*, edited by Kelly Mayhew and Jim Miller (San Diego City Works Press, 2015): 183-189. The dissertation/thesis author was the primary investigator and author of this paper.

VITA

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"Dictionary Hill." *In Sunshine/Noir II – Writings From San Diego and Tijuana*, edited by Kelly Mayhew and Jim Miller (San Diego City Works Press, 2015): 183-189.

"Stealth Killers: Rethinking the Notion of Environment in Claire Denis's I Can't Sleep (1994)." In *Unweave #4 Spheres of Glass*, co-edited by Katrin Pesch and Tim Ridlen with Elizabeth D. Miller, Melinda Guillen, and Mariana Botey, Discursive and Curatorial Productions Initiative (UC San Diego, Spring 2014): 61-69.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

(Im)material Encounters: Ghosts and Objects at the Bancroft Ranch House Museum

by

Katrin Pesch

Doctor of Philosophy in Art History, Theory and Criticism
with a Concentration in Art Practice

University of California, San Diego, 2016

Professor Lesley Stern, Co-Chair

Professor John Welchman, Co-Chair

This project aims to bring artistic methods of inquiry to bear on current debates about the ontological distinction between persons and things that have emerged in the face of ecological crises. My dissertation presents an experimental ethnography that traces material and immaterial encounters around the Bancroft Ranch House Museum in East County San Diego. An obscure national and state historical landmark, the small museum is housed in an adobe that was built by white settlers on former Kumeyaay land and then bought by the historian Hubert Howe Bancroft in the late 19th century. A historically contested site, the museum also acts as

a social hub and market place for a medley of things ranging from artifacts to discarded goods. My work takes its cue from the museum's unorthodox archive—where the historical and the personal gather in relics as much as in refuse—to revisit matters that have shaped California's social landscape, such as first contact, missionization, colonial settlement, water rights, and urban development. By following the daily routines of the site's caretaker, I unravel how eccentric practices and unruly objects destabilize the official settler narrative. At the same time, the site becomes a probing ground to assess current discourses about object agency flourishing within the humanities, social sciences, and science studies. While it is important to reconsider who or what participates in the assembly of a social collective, as scholars such as Bruno Latour or Jane Bennett ask us to do, my fieldwork suggests that decentering the privileged space of the human subject cannot be at the expense of attending to repressed histories and social inequalities that remain unsolved.

Finding Things

This text is a supplement to a film that doesn't want to be a film. It's a text about a script that doesn't want to be a script. But it may become a small book, a minor history, my two cents about a place. Maybe two cents won't do it and it will take the whole glass of pennies and change collected over a period of time. This is how it goes: When the glass is full, you can take it to the supermarket and feed the pennies down a funnel into a machine that swiftly turns them into a piece of paper with a number on it, a receipt that signifies a specific value, maybe $8.74 or $13.42, depending on how long you saved. Research is not a savings account, but an option on a future. Thus the bits and pieces I collected for this project may still be an investment that pays off. This is a book about images and sounds, histories and voices that resist coming together as a film.

This is a book about a place. It's not a place, strictly speaking, because places are different depending on how you look at them, and who looks at them and why. It's about the idea of environment that doesn't exist as one thing but as something different for all those who perceive it. This is a book that is an essay, because I suspect that the place it is about affords an essay. An essay is an environment too, because depending on who describes it the essay is different things as well. A meeting between fiction and documentary; a string of opinions, not facts, articulated with a self-reflexive stance; an engagement with history, as stories about different times, places, people, and things. A coming together of knowledges, past and present, that inform and form it and the spaces in-between that may be vacant and unexplored,

or both. I suspect that the place I want to talk about affords an essay, but it's been suggested to me that the way in which I want to talk about it may not afford a film but a book. Shifting formations of objects in this book shape a temporal landscape that reaches back into history and projects into the future. Located 12 miles east of San Diego, the Bancroft Ranch House Museum, a small museum in Spring Valley, California provides a fixed point within networks of different actors—people, places, animals, and things—that may change, wander out of sight, and meet in different constellations and locations. Like the rocks with engraved plant labels that are scattered across the museum yard, specific terminologies dot the pages of this book. The words and ideas scattered across this text, though, may not be references but actors themselves. The pattern they leave dates the writing but also connects it to others currently engaging with the fate of objects.

This book begins with the question in mind: what's at stake when the hierarchies of things that grasp one's attention and demand care are up for constant negotiation? Within the environment of this small museum, the figure of the caretaker thus takes on an important role. Leaves have to be gathered, ground squirrels kept in check, and cracks in the wall filled; mannequins need to be washed, redressed and, at times, disguised; display cases have to be curated, exhibits dusted, and plastic utensils accommodated in the cabinet. Clippings seek to be archived, the microwave deserves a new home, and historic flags and antique women's shoes require a place on the shelf. An excess of hoover belts finds its place in a box next to a videocassette of *Queer as Folk*—aptly titled *Queer Ass Folk*—and a roll of 8mm film labeled *Keep our Shores Clean*. An assortment of shoes, a decorative wooden trash bin, glasses,

wrist watch bands, a bright orange Halloween devil's hand and an oversized metal outdoor candle holder need to be sorted, priced, and stored. A fan and a work lamp with adjustable arm and head wait in the wheelbarrow until further notice. What to do with a box full of piano hammers, dampers, felt, cloth, and leather parts without a piano or technician to go with it? Things so small, outdated, or broken that they cease to function, lack names, and even seem to defy description. Squeezed between crusty and half-empty paint cans, archaeological finds such as potsherds, glass pearls, and stone flakes sit in the sifting screens first used to separate them from the dirt. A piece of two-by-four secures a stack of branches on a weathered stacking banquet chair. It's a kind of display case, I realize much later, for a hawk's nest.

Compelling Repulsion

I arrived at the museum by chance, and what I found there was not exactly what I was looking for. In 2009, I had moved to San Diego to start grad school at the University of California San Diego. I was working on a film project about a young man in his mid-thirties, who finds himself caught up in the sinister doings of a secret society pulling the strings of business, finance, and politics. He is urged to leave the city in order to find a missing friend, who has the key to the secret society's powers. When the school year was over, I managed to escape the grip of that strange secret society called UCSD, whose campus spreads out on top of the cliffs in La Jolla not far from the ocean, more often than not covered in thick fog. And so I set out in order to find out more about the city I had moved to and to scout shooting locations for my film. I was looking for a place where the city meets the country. Spring Valley caught my eye on the map and, like my main character, I thought that the historical society would be a good place to find out about things.

I also arrived at the museum at a time when objects got a lot of philosophical attention. In this discourse, objects move to the fore and, so the polemic goes, are thought to have no different ontological status than those who think about them. It happens to be a time when the world of things around us shakes up conceptions of the natural and takes center stage. The social realm becomes an arena where objects, such as polar vortexes and earthquakes, clash with other objects, such as cities and nuclear power stations. Alternatively called things, objects, or matters of concern, they converge to demand attention and care. Entities such as global warming,

radioactivity, or the Internet, whose spatio-temporal dimensions go beyond the scope hitherto afforded to things, find their conceptual shapes in slightly different iterations as world objects, quasi-objects, or hyper-objects.[1] Scores of objects withdrawn, alien, or democratic are conjured up in the blogosphere, for this debate is spearheaded by a particularly forthcoming group of young philosophers.[2] Their constant posts in the virtual realm carry a flurry of worldly objects in their wake, namely articles, interviews, symposia, conferences, reading groups, special journal issues, books, and lecture tours. Not to mention airplane tickets, hotel rooms, dinners, and discussions. "Last night's crowd in Vancouver was large and lively," one object proponent commented proudly online this morning. "That was the 18th and last lecture of this 20-day trip."[3] In fact, not too long ago, the world itself became an object as well, its thingness epitomized in the image of the blue marble. But at the same time, in an artful subterfuge in cahoots with tigers, rain forests, air, and water, it has become a legal subject too.[4] While some scholars seek to render thought itself ecological, in the writing of others, Earth reappears as its own self-regulating life-form, Gaia.[5] In some of its moldings this new philosophy then takes the shape of cosmology.

Located at the end of a dead-end street hidden under false pepper trees, at first sight the Bancroft Ranch House seems to have little cosmological impact. A microcosm at the margins that constantly oversteps its boundaries, it may be an unlikely probing-ground for philosophical inquiries or ecological trials. One thing that makes the place stand out for me is the ubiquity of objects around here—artifacts and peculiar collections; more or less historical documents; various accessions in a perpetual state of having yet to be accessioned; rummage and curiosities; equipment

and broken tools; and junk. Plenty of invisible objects make their mark too—conflicts and intrigues, legendary or lapidary, imaginary objects and projects yet to come. And then there is the level of attention the caretaker grants all kinds of stuff that most widely would be regarded as mere debris, hardly footnotes of history. For something to matter may just be to be there.

Like the caretaker, I want to take on things that matter.

"There's three things you have going for yourself," one of my professors, a filmmaker simultaneously intrigued and at odds with my film project, says: "the derelict-ness of the place, the verve of the caretaker, and people bringing things." It's a place as derelict as it is picturesque, where nothing ever happens but stuff goes on all the time. One task of the film becomes to activate the space so as to make visceral things gathering dust or leaves and register those transient objects that come and go each year. One thing I don't have to work on activating is the caretaker. Talking incessantly and at times volunteering more information than I prefer, he is also the one who choreographs the entirety of the place, who moves things he is moved by, in some way or other.

Just like the caretaker, I'm stubborn enough to want to do everything by myself. It's not that I don't want any help, but I don't want to give up control either. And so, as my own one-man-band, I'm stuck with a limited amount of both equipment and expertise. There's only so much you can do, but that's actually a lot, and that seems to be a motto of the caretaker, too. Another one is "first things first," although the parameters for what comes first are constantly shifting. The caretaker lays out things in the open—the lid of a shoebox filled with a collection of fingers

broken off from the hands of fiberglass mannequins; a growing heap of cleared brush; boxes of rummages stored intermediately on the restroom porch; or reams of paper and manila folders to paste clippings of old news—so as not to forget the task they come with and keep up with things. And there they stay put, depending on the urgency they express, for a couple of hours, days, months, sometimes years.

On the documenting front, I struggle to follow the practiced path of the caretaker. Constantly readjusting my tripod, uneasily balancing a shoulder rig, time and again forgetting to switch on the sound device, I'm painfully aware of the cinematographic mess this will create, let alone the amount of sound design required to fix my mistakes. Here's a perfect shot of the caretaker and a visitor on the adobe's porch, were it not for Petey, the caretaker's dog, bundled up in the foreground licking his butt. It's not so much the camera's optical unconscious that's at work here. Rather, it's the place itself that's resisting my clumsy advances. But yet, and although I cannot claim to have made this choice intentionally, in the end this haphazard aesthetic might be an adequate response to the casual mix of vernacular, bric-à-brac, and refuse at play at the museum. Strictly speaking, there should be a shot of Petey in every scene—dozing, scratching his ears, or rubbing his bald, white belly in the dirt, legs flipped backward and pressed down for maximum exposure to the dusty ground.

To be truly invested in a project is exciting and rewarding, but it's also revolting. The footage that's gathering on my hard drive, just like the rummage piling up in the yard and new items landing on the big table in the archive room, produces a physical reaction. I can sense that the caretaker's tasks weigh more heavily than he'd admit and I wonder if he sometimes feels this aversion towards the stuff. And while I

try hard to make the things themselves visceral on the screen, they don't have to do much to provoke a visceral reaction against the making of the film. Already the thought of looking at the footage is nauseating. Repulsion is a force through which objects move away from each other, and what's supposedly accessible at the tip of my finger seems remote and forever unapproachable.

Filming at the museum sets off its own regimen of tasks. Loading the car, setting up the camera, checking the sound. Record. Back home, I download the clips and convert the footage while the batteries are charging for the next visit. There's no better way to handle depression than an unfailing routine. At school, I transfer the converted footage to the main hard drive and the original files to the back up drive. And that's that. Trap shut, monkey dead. End of story. Only it's not. It's not even the beginning of the story that's still waiting to be pieced together. Nor is the monkey dead, who keeps nagging in my head. Days, weeks, or months go by before I muster up the courage to face the things lurking somewhere in the shallow depths of the storage device.

Sunlight and Extension Cords

The open door leads my gaze to the left side of the room. A small-scale model of the adobe sits on the mantelpiece, next to a plaque twice its size leaning against the wall. The hearth is laid out with small cobblestones. Black coal and ashes left an imprint of flames in the fireplace and a band of fine black dust coats the mantle above. Not too long ago, one can imagine, someone drew a chair to hearth, a steaming cup on the big table in the middle of the room, and watched the flicker of the fire. But now they have left. The chair has been moved to the corner, a black jacket on a clothes hanger left on the backrest. What animates the picture now are the different shades of white and the broken squares of light the sun projects through the tree outside the window onto the white-washed walls.[6]

I recognize the plaque in the black and white photograph. It won its permanent place on a fairly monumental block built from mud bricks in front of the adobe's porch. *Bancroft Ranch House • has been dedicated as a registered National Historic landmark • Under the Historic Sites Act of August 25, 1935 this site holds exceptional value in commemorating and illustrating the history of the United Sates • U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service • 1964.* Stern embossed letters stand somber; the brushed matte finish numbs the afternoon light. The valuable history, man-made and hand-written, is spelled out on the Veterans Memorial in front of the museum in the factual poetics peculiar to memorial plaques. *Adobe built about 1863 by A. S. Ensworth. Home of Capt. Rufus K. Porter and family. Curved timbers brought from the Clarissa Andrews, famed coaling hulk formerly of the Pacific Mail*

Steamship Co. Historian Hubert Howe Bancroft later owned this estate and here wrote a part of his monumental History of California.

"Water made Spring Valley famous," a display in the museum annex boldly exclaims, but to me it's the light that gives the place its magic quality. "Something caught my attention," the caretaker who has been guarding the adobe for 38 years says, and I imagine the allure of the modest building, small between palms and pepper trees, bathing in Southern California's fabled sun. The dazzle of an object glistening in the light at the other end of the museum yard catches my eye. An iridescent roll of cellophane leans against a metal box behind the picket fence, suggesting a recent visit of the Victorian Ladies, a group of women donning historic costumes who sometimes descend onto the museum site. The dark, rusty box provides a perfect ground for the sparkling thing, which turns out to be a short stack of plastic cups still in their original wrapping. A small disk of light on the bottom of the cups and the slight movement of reflections on the box instill the picture my camera frames with life. A week or so later, I encounter the cups again, now stuck on a nail on one of the pepper trees as a reminder to put them, at some point, in the place they belong. It's the allure of unassuming objects like these and the stories they conjure that caught my attention and has brought me back to the museum again and again during the past six years. A call emanates from the adobe and all the objects around it, summoning a response.

"That place is trashed!" one of my professors exclaims when I show her some of the footage I shot. At first sight, it does look a bit run down, but that also gives the place its charm. Upon closer look it appears that the premises are cared for

deliberately, keeping a tight balance between what needs to be done and what can be done with the means available. But still. Why, one might ask, should an adobe built by white settlers on Native American land, dedicated to an entrepreneur dealing in history, deserve all this attention? Is it a story worth telling? I'm not sure about my own place in this either, as an artist and researcher who arrived here by accident, a San Diego resident and resident-alien—yet another European exploring "native" terrain. And then there's the museum's community, which is a radically heterogeneous assemblage itself, comprising members, curators, archaeologists, veterans, neighbors, visitors, squatters, squirrels, chickens and dogs, among others.

In the imaginary of this book, the adobe is not a solitary thing, a historic homestead, or story, for that matter. It's not an object of study, but a hub of activities and conversations and a turntable for the elements. And things. Stuck in the dust of San Diego's urban periphery, where the city meets the country, the sleepy small town museum relays stories that shape the Southern California landscape. They may be tangential, entangled in local conflicts and trivialities. These stories are rather convoluted in parts and full of digressions. They are full of omissions too, talking their way around past atrocities. Hushed at times, silenced, or bursting with chatter at others, people and things around the adobe converse, literally turn about with, throughout the passage of time.

The anthropologist Tim Ingold writes about the temporality of landscape. For him, both terms hinge on the question of perception. Landscape is not a quantifiable or conceptual abstraction, such as land, nature, or space. Similarly, temporality doesn't unfold in units of time or series of events transcribed in chronology or

history. One cannot stand outside of the landscape and observe the passage of time or movements in space from a disembodied perspective. More than just telling the story by recording the movement of material objects in space, the landscape itself *is* the story. A landscape shaped by continuous activities of past generations becomes the living embodiment of what Ingold calls taskscape. "Reaching out into the taskscape, I perceive, at this moment, a particular vista of past and future," he writes. "Thus, the present is not *marked off* from the past that it has replaced or a future that will, in return, replace it; it rather gathers the past and the future into itself, like refractions in a crystal ball."[7]

The Bancroft Ranch House Museum is run by the Spring Valley Historical Society, an association with dwindling membership. The names attached to bricks in the geranium-lined memorial garden speak to that, as do the open officer's posts listed in the bi-monthly newsletter. Nevertheless, the present is stubbornly hanging out here, conjuring up, say, swarms of Victorian Ladies fervently wrapping gift baskets in cellophane for their summer tea, or boxes full of outmoded toys, electronics, and clothes for the annual rummage sale. Multiple generations of chickens roost in a tree, more recently ground squirrels are squatting, and Victor occasionally crashes in the visitor parking lot in his inconspicuous dark green SUV, powered by an extension cord from an outlet in the caretaker's yard.

Victor is not the only one to borrow energy from the museum. Tim often leaves his cellphone to charge in front of the caretaker's house. It's a good outlet to leave a phone unattended for some time, close to the ground and hidden behind a fledging bird of paradise. Tim is losing his eyesight and it takes him a long time of

feeling around to retrieve his phone. The first time I saw him, he literally walked into my frame and snatched two plastic roses from a stack of boxes with left-overs from the museum's annual rummage sale. He was talking on the phone, holding the roses to his nose, slowly turning around in a circle, oblivious to the concerted packing efforts around him.

Maureen tells me another story about a satellite lodger making do. The caretaker didn't know of the secretive tenant at first. But one night he noticed the cable extending from the visitor restrooms, across the fence through the grass, all the way through the big lot to the sad palm trees gathered in the dark. It led to a microwave wedged between the tree trunks in the damp grass by the old spring. The door was popped open, leaking pale white light. Nobody home.

An SUV, a cellphone, a microwave: three objects masquerading as makeshift mobile homes. Exposed and interim, extension cords back up the cause, and the museum, appropriate to its role as hub, serves as outlet adapter. Electric currents travel through extension cords like sentences. Writing their way through the museum, they generate magnetic fields created by the pulse of quotidian tales.

Then there's the woman with a modish knee-long skirt and a handbag in a white crinkled landscape. She walks on a path flattened by an iron that is plugged, via extension cord, directly into the sun. A man propped up on a cushion in the silky sky is watching from overhead. "That's John, the gardener. He used to be one of Ethel's models," the caretaker offers as introduction, but presently John's eyes are fixed on a stack of DVDs. Pragmatic, frugal, and not particularly unnerved by technical details, artist Ethel Greene gets power straight from the source. A concave ray of light, the

cord becomes a line graph projecting solar energy transmissions, thus keeping the surreal real. Painted in 1976, Greene's *White Path (Path for Trixie)* brings to mind the 83 photovoltaic power systems installed by NASA around the globe in the same year.[8] They yield energy for things such as vaccine refrigeration, lightings, telecommunications, water pumping, and classroom television. Add to that appliances such as flattening irons diverting power from California's fabled sun.

Thinking Through Things

My map of things is full of holes. And it doesn't start with things, it begins with ghosts. "Are you interested in ghosts?" the caretaker asked me when I first arrived at the museum. I am. I was, anyway. But what caught my attention at the museum, in step with the spirit of the time, were objects, not ghosts.

My map of things has two entry points: The first path trails the widespread interest in ghosts that swept through academia in the 1990s, haunting scholars in literary and media departments as well as the fields of postcolonial, queer, and gender studies. Even earlier than that Avital Ronell had channeled Goethe in her *Dictations: On Haunted Writing* (1986). Then there is, most famously maybe, Derrida's invocation of *Specters of Marx*, including both those that Marx sought to expel by way of explication and those looming in his wake. Around the same time, Terry Castle traces the invention of the uncanny through 18th century phantasmagorias in *The Female Thermometer* (1995), Antony Vidler investigates haunted, unhomely houses in *The Architectural Uncanny* (1992), while Avery Gordon takes on *Ghostly Matters* (1997) creeping through social institutions and imaginaries. With new other worlds such as virtual reality and cyber space on the horizon, Jeffery Sconce's *Haunted Media* (2000) looks back and chronicles the living presence of electronic telecommunication technology. Gothic literature and Victorian ghost stories, too, but also canonic 19th century literature more broadly, had been pulled from the shelves. Toni Morrison calls for a reexamination of America's founding literature to reveal "Unspeakable Things Unspoken" (1988), disturbances caused by the Afro-American

presence, a ghost that drives the machine of American letters. Lynette Carpenter and Wendy K. Kalmare's *Haunting the House of Fiction* (1991) reframes Women's ghost stories as a platform to address oppression and a vehicle to disseminate feminist ideas. In *The National Uncanny* (2000), Renée L. Bergland traces how Indian ghosts have been mobilized within America's national consciousness, in an artful maneuver that aims to relocate Indians' physical removal from the American landscape into the discursive realm of literary imagination. Even spiritualism, that strange amalgam of popular science and religion once dismissed as superstition, gets due process in literary studies, for instance in Helen Sword's *Ghostwriting Modernism* (2002), while Ann Braude's *Radical Spirits* (1989) reveals female mediums' frequent links to abolitionism and the early women's rights movement. Molly McGarry's *Ghosts of Futures Past* (2008) picks up where Braude left off to dig deeper into the cultural and sexual politics of spiritualism still deeply buried under the blanket of secularism.

This list makes no claim to completeness. Others have provided more comprehensive overviews, most recently in the anthology *The Spectralities Reader: Ghosts and Hauntings in Contemporary Cultural Theory* (2013), edited by María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren. But these are some of the books I came across through seminars and friends or sought out later once the parade of ghosts entered the art world in the early 2000s and phantoms and specters frequently appeared in exhibitions, films, and art publications, including my own work.[9]

Historically, at least in the West, ghosts are often seen as unexpected visitors who return from the dead. While they may be part of the living for those who believe, they are also figures giving shape to matters that persist yet have been repressed. In

the same vein, ghosts entered theoretical and artistic discourses as conceptual metaphors in order to attend to horrors of the past and (inaccessible) memories haunting the present. In my perception, ghosts were enlisted to perform a type of critique that doesn't end with spelling out the social constructions of race, class, and gender. Rather, these revenants channel unresolved histories and deliver invitations to visit their haunts. At the same time, ghosts function as mediums to address the social unease propelled by the kind of experience within capitalist society that is highly mediated through technologies of communication itself.

There is disagreement if ghosts should be laid to rest or raised to life. According to Derrida, Marx sought to drive out ghosts by coaxing them into presence. In contrast, Derrida announces that his aim is "to learn to live with ghosts."[10] For him, haunting already exists before any ghostly apparition enters the stage. "That is what we would be calling here a hauntology," he writes. "Ontology opposes it only in a movement of exorcism. Ontology is a conjuration."[11] Derrida plays on the dual meaning of conjuration as both incantation and conspiracy and associates exorcism with mourning. By conspiring to conjure lost objects into being, mourning seeks to expel the past rather than acknowledging it as an inheritance that can't be accessed or redeemed. But mourning can't get rid of the past, nor can the past be grasped. It eclipses the present because "the 'object' mourned for always exceeds the mourner(s)."[12]

By summoning specters, Derrida might have inadvertently set in motion the very movement of exorcism he set out to deconstruct. If not a conspiracy, *The Specters of Marx* has been said to have "spawned a minor academic industry," and for

a while incantations of ghosts, phantoms, and specters were chanted everywhere.[13] But once they are localized and dragged to the spotlight, ghosts cease to be ghosts. Now hidden in plain sight, they are solidified into objects. The spectral takes an ontological turn: Viewed from today, hauntology seems but a ghostly apparition; ontology, undaunted, takes center stage again.

Most recently, objects have taken over ghostly haunts. The very texts that scholars of modernity had found haunted by specters not too long ago are now populated with objects and animated by "living things," for instance, in Dorothee Kimmich's *Lebendige Dinge der Moderne*.[14] Indeed, animate objects are ubiquitous in modernity, and the famous table that jumps on its head, which provided the textual spring board for Derrida's reading of Marx's specters, offers a perfect example of the degree to which haunted objects and ghostly things are intertwined. But the incantation of ghosts so loud in the late 1990s and early 2000s gave way to an intoxication with objects. I'm not suggesting a tidy periodization in which a discourse on ghosts is followed by one on objects. On the contrary, the two strands of theory run parallel.

As early as 1986, Arjun Appadurai writes the biography of cultural objects and commodities in *The Social Life of Things*. Bruno Latour's *We Have Never Been Modern* (1993) has become a touchstone for the debate on how objects figure within nature and culture, and in *Politics of Nature* (1999) he advocates for a parliament of things. Graham Harman's *Tool-Being* (2002) tackles ontology head-on and argues for a metaphysics of autonomous objects beyond theories of access: objects withdraw from humans but also from each other. Like Harman, Bill Brown borrows from

Heidegger, although Brown's *Thing Theory* (2001) seeks to distinguish objects and things. In *The Tears of Things* (2006) Peter Schwenger takes a psychoanalytical approach to unravel the indifference that seems to issue from objects preserved in art and collections. Lorraine Daston's *Things that Talk* (2008) gathers object lessons that resist the bifurcation of art and science by meshing matter and meaning. Similarly, Karen Barad examines quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning, atoms and authors, in *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (2007). Following close on Latour's heels, Jane Bennett's *Vibrant Matter* (2010) considers the agential force of non-human actors as crucial for a responsible ecological politics. Although they acknowledge their lingering suspicion of ontology and potential danger of objectivism, Friedrich Balke, Maria Muhle, and Antonia von Schöning assess the return of things and the potential of object agency for cultural studies, epistemology, and media aesthetics (*Die Wiederkehr der Dinge*, 2011). Meanwhile, Levi R. Bryant's *The Democracy of Objects* (2011) builds on Manuel DeLanda's flat ontology, where every thing exists on the same footing. In this political arena, humans are not at the center but merely one type of object or being among others. In *Alien Phenomenology or What it is Like to be a Thing* (2012), Ian Bogost combines phenomenological inquiry with material explorations that seek to unravel how things create their world. Informed by postcolonial and feminist studies, Rosi Braidotti's *The Post Human* (2013) analyzes the leveling of categorical distinctions between humans and others in view of planetary sustainability.

Occasionally, the spectral and the material meet. While Barad has been firmly situated among new materialists, her thinking about matter is inevitably diffracted

through ghostly matters—material obligations inherited from the past. In formulating an ethics deeply indebted to Derrida, Barad also turns the poststructuralist thinker on his head when she declares that recent findings in quantum physics provide "*empirical evidence for a hauntology*!"[15] Anthropologist Yael Navaro-Yashin, another scholar forging a connection between the material and the spectral, treads grounds somewhat closer to my terrain. She traces the affective properties of post-war environments in which the ghostly becomes tangible in material objects and environments, and the ghosts emerging from her ethnographic fieldwork in Northern Cyprus are not representations but things.[16] But what happens when the melancholic force of objects and landscapes charged with the absence of a displaced people have become naturalized over the course of centuries, as is the case in what is today California? What happens when their cultural and physical remains are displayed in museums or analyzed in laboratories, when the living places of whole communities have disappeared under forts, missions, and cities or are made "historic sites," more often than not dedicated to those who saw to their demise? What happens, to borrow Morrison's words, to the unspeakable things unspoken? And how, beyond the force they exert on texts, do they materialize in the land?

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"Another sunny & sinister 75 degrees in LA." Set in black capital letters in sans serif font against white background, the sentence occasionally gapes at me from my Facebook stream. I have no idea what Mark thinks of when he posts these eerie weather reports. To me, the ghostly image captures something of the menacing undercurrent left in the aftermath of destruction that lingers on, however subdued, not

only in Los Angeles, but in all of California, a region commonly associated with a fair climate rather than a horrific past.

But it's not a secret either. I learned about the spectral presence of the native population that haunts California before I moved to Los Angeles myself, when a friend gave me a copy of Carey McWilliams' *Southern California: An Island on the Land* for the road. Pre-contact, the land that today is called California was home to a large indigenous population, and, given the size of the region, with much higher density than in the rest of the United States.[17] Numbers vary, but in any case they can't grasp the enormity of the elimination of California Indians that successively took place under Spanish, Mexican, and American rule between 1769 and 1880. In a strange way, reading McWilliams' book made me very attuned to the sinister side of the Californian landscape, but looking back I also think it made me too easily accept this fact as a given. To know of something doesn't mean to understand it and sometimes specters have to be summoned, rather than just acknowledged. There's a fine line between being implicit about the silencing of California's native population and becoming complicit in the silence that persists.

Both ghosts and objects can be seen as emissaries. They each exist in a field of tension between the past and the present. But in the dominant narratives of their theoretical application in Western discourse, ghosts most commonly bear messages from the past, while objects are often tasked to herald the future. The concerns driving the debate have shifted and so has the language, although for some more than others. Conceptually, ghosts are tied up within the social construction of race, class, and gender; objects are caught within the dichotomy of nature and culture. One way

to frame the story could be like this: Ghosts stand in for the plight humans inflicted upon other humans. From this perspective, the ghosts haunting the present appear as inherently anthropocentric. Objects have the capacity to haunt as well, but they often step into view as reminders of the mess humans inflicted on their environment. Here, objects are called upon to decenter the subject or even conjure worlds beyond humans.

"Are you interested in ghosts?" the caretaker asked me when I first arrived at the museum. I am. I was, anyway, and a house museum on Native American ground certainly ranks high among haunted places. But objects are on my mind, and writing about stories—including ghost stories—and objects around the museum is also a way of thinking through things. The museum becomes a probing ground to assess the current discourse around them. What caused the shift in which ghosts recede behind objects that are packed with agency, yet seem to lack a past?

Between Spirits and Things

"Each stone he finds, each flower he picks, and each butterfly he catches is already the start of a collection," Walter Benjamin writes in 1927 of the "untidy child," "and every single thing he owns makes up one great collection. In him this passion shows its true face, the stern Indian expression that lingers on, but with a dimmed and manic glow, in antiquarians, researchers, bibliomaniacs. Scarcely has he entered life than he is a hunter. He hunts the spirits whose trace he scents in things; between spirits and things, years pass in which his field of vision remains free of peoples."[18]

Collecting, spirits, and things converge in this section from *One-Way Street* and Benjamin's figure of the child mingles with that of the collector. At the time Benjamin wrote, questions of matter and technology, animate objects and haunted things became the focus of critical attention, which—much like today—was embraced by some and condemned by others. Theodor Adorno, for instance, the luminary of negative dialectics, was not having any of it. "The poet of modernity," he writes, "lets himself be overwhelmed by the power of things like an outsider by a cartel." He's referring to Stefan George but "commemorating" Benjamin, when he cautions the modern writer not to eliminate the role of the critical subject by allowing himself "to become the mouthpiece of things."[19]

Today, too, critics of object-oriented philosophy or the ontological turn in the social sciences see criticality buried under mountains of quacking things and perceive the call to de-center the subject as a move to eschew critical engagement.[20] A

frequent objection to object-oriented approaches is that focusing on the roles that human and non-human actors play for the planet's future glosses over the impact that neoliberal structures and postcolonial legacies have on its present. By contrast, earlier meditations on the potency of objects by cultural theorists such as Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, or Georg Lukács were intimately concerned with a critical investigation of how historical narratives dominant at the onset of capitalist modernity come to bear on the technologies that shaped their present moment. In this regard, Benjamin emerges as a natural ally for my study. His theorization of material and cultural history not only creates a field of tension between ghosts and things, but also surfaces through descriptions of objects and experiences that include his own.

"Today, Benjamin's ghosts are legion." So German Studies scholar Gerhard Richter opens the anthology *Benjamin's Ghosts,* published in 2002. "Things are a theme that could frame all other themes in Benjamin's work," literary scholar Dorothee Kimmich counters in an essay published two years later.[21] Benjamin has received a lot of critical attention recently. Indeed, Richter points out, Benjamin scholarship is constantly expanding. There's a distinctly material aspect to the growing weight attached to Benjamin's thought across disciplines, which can be measured in the weight of actual things, or, more specifically, pages, whether their volume is counted in pounds or megabytes. Some of this renewed interest in and writing on Benjamin might be due to new English translations of his works published between 1996 and 2003, including the first complete translation of the *Arcades Project*, as well as the increasing availability of his texts in various online archives.

While things crowd Benjamin's writings, his textual ghosts are—fittingly—more evasive. His writings are enigmatic. They have often been appropriated and yet they resist assimilation, and this is precisely where Richter locates the ghostliness of Benjamin's texts.[22] Richter invokes Benjamin's friend Gershom Scholem who recalls that already the young Benjamin sought "to formulate the law of the ghostly," in order to distinguish the spectral from the demonic.[23] This concern for spectrality is also framed by the actual ghosts and phantoms that appear or hide in Benjamin's writings, and ultimately, Richter concludes, "his unfinished magnum opus, the *Arcades Project*, is in many ways a ghost book."[24]

In "Convolute L [Dream, House, Museum, Spa]" of *The Arcades Project,* Benjamin describes a ghost encountered in a dream, which has since found its way into many texts (before haunting Richter's). The ghost accompanied Benjamin through the interior of a house, not leaving his side, all the while keeping its distance by walking through walls. "The stroll we take through the arcades [Passagen] is basically, too, such a ghostly path [Gespensterweg] in which the doors give way and the walls move," he writes. What Benjamin charts here as the ghostly dimension of the arcades, Richter sees as the ghostly dimension not only of *The Arcades Project,* but of Benjamin's writing in general. And yet, Benjamin's thought doesn't provide a framework for textual analysis or a critical apparatus that can be mobilized for cultural or historical interpretation. Embarking on a ghostly path becomes a predisposition for reading cultural texts, a necessity to unhinge culture from the seemingly "transparent narrative of cultural history."[25]

In "Convolute A [Arcades, Magasines de Nouveautés, Sales Clerks]," Benjamin cross-references the ghost encountered in his dream with two sentences. The first is "The street that runs through houses." The second one reads: "Track of a ghost through the walls of houses."[26] The two paths are not the same. To think with ghosts, or rather, as Benjamin does in his dream, to walk with a ghost, means to respect them at a distance. Walking with ghosts is not a move to unravel the secret of a text or epoch. The task of a cultural critic is not to follow ghosts in their footsteps; the task of a historian, as Benjamin writes, is not to pick up the pieces that then can be strung up as a series of historic events "like the beads of a rosary."[27] Instead, Benjamin invites us to be aware of the ghosts that accompany us, to be cognizant of the ghostly dimension inherent in historical research. Rather than following ghosts, the task is learning to walk with them.

In another fragment from *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin evokes an image of the historian as someone who, perceiving himself at the center of the horizon, understands himself to be situated "in the center of history" as well.[28] From this place in the sun, the historian conducts his business with the past "over a ghostly meal," inviting, as Benjamin puts it, "the emaciated spirits of the past to dine at his table." As patron of the past, the historian "summons the departed to this banquet of spirits" in order to put some meat on their bones and cocker them up to nourish his version of history. In Benjamin's fragment, the historian is as ghostly as the spirits he entertains. The figure of the historian is haunting Benjamin's writing, not just the spirits he summons.

The same is true for this project. For this book might be called a banquet of spirits, but among the spirits summoned here are both the living and the dead. And there's a history for that. In fact, Bancroft himself, the historian to whom the museum is dedicated, cajoled the very subjects of his *History of California* into sharing their stories with whiskey and cigars when he recorded their recollections in the 1870s. The ghostly meals Bancroft presides over these days, are mostly potlucks organized by members of the historical society—one, for example, featuring a slideshow through his family photo album on the occasion of his birthday, complete with a big cake reading "Still looking good at 181, HH!" Bancroft is the guest of honor; the caretaker is the master of ceremonies. Along with the child that hunts spirits from "One Way Street," both Bancroft and the caretaker share a passion for collecting. Their devotion to things motivates the research for this book. Collecting, spirits, and things converge: even the stern Indian expression that Benjamin conjured up hasn't lost its purchase yet . . . and still lingers on.

Sketch #1 Sheet of Water

It turns out to be more difficult than I thought to create space in a film. Especially if the task is to create a filmic environment that activates space but also gives an idea about the actual landscape in which the film takes place. How many establishing shots can I possibly use without boring the audience to death? Besides, I can't seem to edit out all the shots that I add in my mind to fill in the spaces in-between. Like the words you skip when you think or whole scenes that slip away in dreams. Unnerved, I give up, and scribble a sketch for my friend who can't figure out the layout of the site in the sequence we are looking at. "Why don't you do that," he suggests, "why don't you use sketches as a structuring device to introduce the places in the film? You got so excited as you drew, it makes a lot more sense now." Maybe it's not the actual places that capture the viewers' attention but the excitement required to piece them together for the screen. Or to fit them on a sheet of paper, for that matter. So I draw some sketches. There should be no more than four, I decide, to keep the expanse of space reasonable within the film's time constraints.

It also turns out to be more difficult than I thought to draw the wetness of water out of the dryness of a page. Especially if the task is to write about a place where water was said to be abundant but that now is dry—where water drained and lost its wetness, leaving but a parched stretch of land. Wrung out, like the moisture pressed out of wet pulp to make the flat sheet of paper that provides the ground for this map: 30% post-consumer recycled, multipurpose, high-speed printer and copier

guaranteed. The more technical the writing on the package, the more presumptuous the claim: 20 lbs, 92 brightness, righteous read.

I figure legal size lends my map-making endeavor an authoritative air. At 8.5 by 14 the paper size roughly compares to the aspect ratio of my footage at 1080 by 1920 pixels. Shot, however, with both feet on the ground rather than floating, bird's-eye view from above. Boxes and circles and occasionally a curved line. Center stage: one rectangle for the adobe (1863) mirrored by the annex (1946) behind. Eastwards, to the left a smaller square for archive and restrooms (199?) and then an even smaller one for the fall out shelter (1943) and shed (19??). A fine line follows the chain-link fence enclosing the buildings and museum yard. Dotted lines for the picket fence around the picnic area in front of the adobe and the memorial garden on the south side of the yard. Attached bottom right, pointing west, a fine rectangle for the junkyard ending in a thicker square for the small wooden building that is the caretaker's residence (1951), 9050 Memory Lane, Spring Valley, California.

From San Diego, take the I-805 south. Take the CA-94 East /Martin Luther King Jr Fwy exit. Then take the Bancroft Drive exit and turn right onto Bancroft Drive, the third left takes you onto Memory Lane, and your destination will be on the right. A snake-like purple line indicates the route on the map: 11.7 miles, 18 minutes in current traffic. The museum itself is at the end of Memory Lane, behind the Veterans Memorial (1946) across from the caretaker's house, its flagpole but a dot in a circle on my map. I close my eyes and imagine the short walk through the museum yard, not more than 100 steps, to the chain-link fence where the caretaker ends his tour for visitors, an occasional but familiar scene. "There used to be a gate!" a small

boy exclaims. “Good memory,” the caretaker compliments him. Climbing rampant up the closed wire mesh, passion fruit vines screen the property line that divides the historical site.

I walk through the fence, into the map, and back in time towards the edge of the water, my pen inching closer to the spring that gave Spring Valley its name. But first the fence takes me to another place, another page, in a book thinking about material culture as metaphor. “The limits of a name,” it reads, “serve, as a verbal fence, to enclose an individual place as a spatial self.”[29] To name something means to claim it with the intent to state ownership, cultural dominance or affiliation. It turns out to be more difficult than I thought to find the right words to talk about a place that has had different names and boundaries at different times, claimed by people with different ideas about what it means to own or inhabit a place. There is not one spatial self enclosing this individual place but different spatial selves inhabiting sites of conflict and contestation.

What lies behind the fence, though, seems to be drained of selfhood and name, and rather looks like a vacant lot. Below grass that is dry and withered, trapdoor spiders wait for prey under hinged flat doors tied shut over their burrows. At least that’s what I’ve been told. Further down, the ground is swampy and moist. Hidden from view under palm trees, vagrants allegedly find shelter here and kids from the projects nearby are among those haunting the site. Come dusk, the rats climb the palm trees to eat the dates, while the owls keep night’s watch to catch the rats. Slightly elevated above the dirt road on the other side of the fenced-in lot, there is another historic structure. The small stone building is propped up amid large boulders and

prickly pear, enclosed by a heavy black steel fence with a sliding entrance gate. The structure is newly renovated, up to the neat row of green metal stars topping the fence and so designed to match the Rock House's star-shaped ridge.

Stuck between the Adobe and the Rock House and stripped of its former uses, the lot is a strange in-between space. The spring has dried up; the waterhole of the Kumeyaay village Meti (2023 BP) has been reduced to mud. Depending on the sources, Meti is also called Neti. The Spanish missionaries named the spring Las Fuentes de San Jorge. According to the mission's baptismal records, the same name was also given to the head of the village himself: "adult man baptized Jorge (captain of the ranchería)."[30] One month after the baptism, and six years after the founding of the Mission San Diego de Alcala (1769), the Kumeyaay of Meti joined other villages in an orchestrated attack against the pious Spanish invaders. Although a Spanish padre is killed, the rebellion doesn't succeed in driving the missionaries away, let alone their forced religion and labor, or the flocks of cattle and sheep competing for the villagers' main staple.[31] Meti becomes mission land in a territory now called Alta California; the Kumeyaay become Mission Indians. After the secularization of the Missions (1846) under Mexican rule, the village is deserted. The land becomes property of the Mexican government and continues to be used as grazing land, watched by "an old Mexican camping out there with his family."[32] I come across the old Mexican with his family in various sources. Is it a Mexican family? I wonder. Are they really camping out?

After the mission broke
up, it was better to lie
like a dog about blood,
say you are Mexican

Mexican Mexican Mexican,

Miranda Deborah writes in her poem "Lies My Ancestors Told For Me,"

tell it to the census takers
tell it to the self-appointed
bounty hunters who appear
at your door looking for
Indians Indians Indians
and when you tell that lie
tell it in Spanish.[33]

In 1848, Alta California is ceded to the United States, and ceases to exist when the State of California is created in 1850. Judge A. E. Ensworth becomes the first white settler and private owner of the land around the spring in the valley still known as San Jorge. His preemption claim of 1863 reads: "Commencing in said valley at a stake about 4 inches square standing about 200 yards North East of the Head of the Spring of the water hole known as 'San Jorge Water Hole," thereby referring to land that is regarded as federal property under the new government, "thence West one half mile to the stake, thence South one half Mile to the stake, thence East one half mile to the stake, thence North to the place of beginning, containing one hundred and sixty acres of land…"[34] Ensworth uses Kumeyaay labor to build a two-room adobe brick house and to bank up the lower side of the water hole with a thirty-foot dam.

"The whole of the sunken ground now joining the ponds of water," Captain Rufus Porter, the second American owner, reminisces years later, "was once in time of the missions a sheet of water almost inexhaustible and was made use of by the padres and their peons to irrigate corn, beans and other necessities of life which were generally planted on the West side of the adobe house."[35] The sight of an "acequia, or

irrigation ditch," leading from the pond to the adobe lets Porter resurrect the Mission's agricultural legacy to plant vegetables right on his doorstep.[36] In his book, the Kumeyaay who have tended for this land for centuries are not villagers but peons, unskilled farm workers. And thus history takes its course, churning up the ground of the spring, stirring up some histories while sending others to the bottom.

Ensworth had placed a fence with a turnstile around the pond. Below, the sheet of water pushed against the dam's cemented stone wall, like a blank sheet of paper waiting to be filled. Or a sheet of paper filed away in a binder, like the "list of property real and personal of R. K. Porter subject to taxation in the county of San Diego, State of California."[37] In 1865 and 1866, the name of his property is listed as San George. In 1867, the name has changed to Spring Valley at the urging of Rufus Porter's daughter, appropriately called Rufina. All that's Indian or Spanish has fallen off the page. As "father of Spring Valley," the name becomes Captain Porter's legacy.

"The place I called the Helix Farms, and entered in my book of life to spend my latter days there," Hubert Howe Bancroft writes in his memoir *Literary Industries* upon purchasing Porter's Spring Valley Ranch in 1885, "I then returned north."[38] To San Francisco that is, the seat of his bookstore and publishing house. In 1859, Bancroft had set out to collect all print matter concerned with California history. The recollections of California's early settlers he commissioned in the 1870s were recorded by his assistants. These dictations—"personal reminiscence of 160 old residents" in Bancroft's words, including Native inhabitants, colonial settlers, and foreign pioneers from California's Spanish and Mexican period—were collected as

part of the research on the history of California and, together with the private archives of prominent Californian families, became part of his ever-growing manuscript collection on California and the Pacific Northwest.[39] Without prior academic training, Bancroft didn't read his sources against the grain; instead, his History Company compiled material from the many sources he collected. His writings—allegedly counting 12,000,000 words on 30,000 pages—are as lengthy as the list of his 600 assistants. Correcting the abstracts and statements they prepared, Bancroft's role can been described as editor rather than author, compiler rather than historian.[40]

Although Bancroft turns his retirement property and summer residence into a fully functioning citrus and olive farm, it had the air of an English landscape garden with architectural follies conjuring faraway places. But at Helix Farm the exotic is derived from local custom, materials, and history. Up the hill behind the adobe, Cactus cottage, the family's living quarters is nestled between prickly pears; just below is the Olla, a water reservoir, maybe 12-feet high and shaped like an Indian clay vessel; at the base of the hill near the spring stands the Rock House, which was built by two German masons reusing rocks from a stone corral constructed by Porter. Four metates, grinding stones used by the Kumeyaay as a base for crushing acorn, are partially sunk into the corners of the small one-room building. Found on the ground at the spring, they create wall niches that are waist high. Two lancet windows create a sacral atmosphere and make the metates look like stouts or holy water stones placed at the entrance of churches and private homes. Much has been said about the adaptation of Christian beliefs into Native ceremonial practices, but the Rock House adds to the small area of study concerned with the adaptability of Indian tools for

Christian liturgy. In Europe, stone masonry workshops were often entrusted to the maintenance of local cathedrals and the Hincks brothers may have recognized a familiar form in the smooth depressions of the metate stones. In their intuitive use of Kumeyaay technology, the brothers render the cooked raw thereby reconciling Levi-Strauss' dichotomy between the savage 'bricoleur' or tinkerer who puts to use found materials and the proto-scientific engineer who imposes order on things.[41]

An architectural gem made of raw and cut stone, the Rock House has many projected uses. Services held for ranch hands and Indian day laborers are not confirmed, but a foreman from the 1920s remembers the floors covered with hay to accommodate wrestling matches of Japanese olive pickers dramatically lit by candles placed in the four niches.[42] The Rock House has been described as a guesthouse, as a school room for Bancroft's children, and as a fire-proof storage for manuscripts, the latter idea sparked by the 1860 fire that destroyed Bancroft's book store. Listed as a County of San Diego Historic Landmark and currently in the running for State designation, it may well go down in California history as yet another private study where Bancroft wrote volumes of his monumental history. At least one of his many assistants must have sat in the cool, dark room. Looking up from his sheet of paper, he gazes through the arched window over the pristine surface of the pond. "Below the springs," he writes, echoing Porter's words, "was a large sheet of never-failing water, to the borders of which resorted from every quarter thirsty men and beasts."[43] A large sheet of water that gathers the past and the future into itself, like the refractions in Ingold's crystal ball.

Sketch #2 Sunken Ground

Bancroft House Archaeological Investigation Laboratory. Large bold letters fill the page. Much smaller, below: *Spring Valley Hist. Soc. - San Diego State. Established 1969.* The edges of the pages are torn decoratively, and pasted onto a piece of hardwood. Hand-carved ornamental edging further adds rustic appeal. The dark wood shines tawny under varnish that has yellowed with time, the only sign of wear. Three wooden boards leaning against a shelf in the archive room map the archeological endeavors that took place here in the 1970s. Machine screws are fastened to each panel, their exposed heads muted with black paint. Long threaded pins pierce the air in sad evidence of bygone days of public display and make storage cumbersome. Someone has put a lot of effort into making these panels and they have stood the test of time. The pasted sheets of paper marked with symbols and letters that are hand-drawn or typed are coated in resin and perfectly preserved. And hard, like fossils enclosed in amber.

The map on the middle panel resembles my sketch of the museum premises but inserts it into the neighborhood. Here, the Bancroft Ranch House, the Rock House, and the "Spring of St. Georg" are bordered by Bancroft Drive, Kenwood Drive, and Helix Street. Cactus Cottage and the Olla are in the top left corner, off of Helix Street. A large L-shape shows the excavation area, a dark field of ink stretching across the yard to where the memorial garden and the junkyard are. *January 1973. 1" = 20',* the third panel tells me, *x you are here,* and I can approximate the location somewhere along the fence by the picnic area. *N25 E120 is typical of all the pits*

under excavation at this site. The Site is grided (sic) into five by five foot squares each square representing a pit that will eventually be excavated. This pit is being dug in arbitrary three inch levels and is yielding such items as pottery, glass, shell, bone, charcoal and projectile points.

Such items were unearthed from the Cultural and Historic Resource Conservation Area, RCA 19, W-389, Historic Village of Meti/Bancroft Ranch House. The oblique stroke puts the historic in chronological order; capital letters and numbers facilitate the cataloging of artifacts produced from the site. Paleo Indian groups are thought to have lived in the region over 10,000 years ago. Late prehistoric cultures arrived around 2000 years before present.[44] Under the name W-389, the dried-up spring of Meti, or Neti, now disgorges assemblages of artifacts. An archaeological report from 1977 lists 34 items recovered at the site.[45] The prehistoric yield counts 17 flakes, 16 made of basalt and one of andesite. The 17 historic artifacts don't come in flakes but fragments, pieces of glass, plastic and ceramic cups. The ceramic cups bring to mind the only artifact found in which the two historic eras coincide, tellingly an arrow made of ceramic. According to the report, the items unearthed here are "in reversal from normal artifact distribution," indicating "the disturbed nature of the area immediately surrounding the spring," a fact attributed to the large pond that used to be there in the late 1880s, which turned the chronological layers of artifacts upside down.[46]

The report was handed to me at the San Diego Archaeological Society, accompanied by a box labeled W-389 stuffed with uncatalogued artifacts wrapped in little plastic bags. The flakes and fishbones inside don't match the ones in the report.

It's an orphan box, I am told, found somewhere and placed under the care of the archaeological society. It turns out that the artifact about which I learn most in this visit is the fence around the vacant lot. Commissioned by the county's park development division, who had recently bought part of the archaeological site around the spring, the report mentions the construction of a chain link fence around the 0.92 acres of land to be developed as a park. On the official regional map the planned park already colors green the lot's burned grass. Incidentally, it also covers a good chunk of the museum yard, which is owned by the Spring Valley Historical Society. Dry and withered though it may be, the vacant lot is not nameless after all. "Bancroft County Park," the map asserts, a verbal fence put in place by the county's Department of Parks and Recreation.

N25 E120 is typical of all the pits under excavation at this site, an eager archaeology student wrote 40 years ago. *The Site is grided (sic) into five by five foot squares each square representing a pit that will eventually be excavated.* In a sense, my project is a continuation of the archaeological investigations at the Bancroft House. For under layers of dust at the margins of the city, each pit bears stories waiting to be unearthed. Piles of things circulating past and present knowledges make digging this stuff up worthwhile. Organic matter, artifacts, and everyday objects move the community through ripples of water, affecting personal stories and political landscapes alike. One might not see it at first or choose not to at all, but for me it's a perfect site for an archaeology of the present, a contemporary environment to test future possibilities through the lens of the past.

At the Bancroft Ranch Archaeological Investigation Laboratory, on less lofty grounds, excavations are eventually put on hold by generational conflicts that are fueled by a steep decline of professional interest and property value in the area. Archaeology students are replaced by high school kids and girl scout troops. A succession of outlaw motorcycle clubs, namely the Iron Horse Men, the X-Men, and the Mongols, make the Rock House their haunt.[47] Digging in bathing suits in temperatures admittedly reaching up to 110 degrees, young female archeologists ignite the anger of the historical society's elders, while posing the danger of luring the bikers from the stony cool of their clubhouse into the bright of day to enjoy the view. The whole scenario faintly echoes the patronizing sentiment against the natives expressed by the Spanish padre Junípero Serra about 200 years earlier, captured in another poem by Deborah Miranda: "More naked people than these cannot be found in the whole world."[48]

The final push to kick the archeology group out was not spurred by moral concerns induced by lack of clothing but due to indignation caused by missing paper. Sheets of paper on a roll flushed down a hole in the ground with a bucket. Sheets of paper that disappeared, like the sheet of water that once was where there is now but sunken ground. For not only did the young students take off their clothes, they also took the toilet paper that the members of the historical society had brought for their own use. "And when they would come there wouldn't be any and they'd say who used it all … The students did," the caretaker remembers the end of the museum's archaeological chapter, "I'm laughing about it … I mean, here's a buck, go get a roll and shut up."

Sketch #3 Dictionary Hill

A gravity hill is an anomaly. It's a place where the law of gravity doesn't apply. Objects can be seen to roll uphill. Water flows uphill too, and cars, when put in neutral, magically ascend slight slopes as if pulled by invisible strings. It's not gravity that is suspended, but rather perception that is being tricked into believing that what's actually downhill is uphill. This optical illusion occurs if the horizon line is hidden and the relative incline of a slant or slope is thus obscured. There used to be a gravity hill in Spring Valley, on La Presa just off of Birch Street. People from as far as LA drove here to experience the sensation of defying gravity.[49] So I make the trip too. But gravity seems to be firmly in place again, thanks to the construction of houses that drew the horizontal back into the landscape. No sensation of rolling uphill, just amazement about the sheer steepness of the terrain. At the end of La Presa, a Thomas the Train ride-on toy lies shattered next to the interlocking concrete barriers that separate the cul-de-sac from the rugged hill. It may be that Thomas' breakdown was caused by exertion from rolling uphill in the heat, but really the collapsed toy looks as beat-up as the area around it run-down. Or maybe he is just stored by the driveway, waiting to be assembled by the kid who lives there for another fun ride.

The hill that once defied gravity carries many names. Some are known, others forgotten. The Porters had dubbed the hill south of their ranch Lookout Mountain. Today the little mountain goes by Dictionary Hill. In 1910, a development company had bought 480 acres of federal land and established a subdivision called San Diego Villa Heights. The subdivision was created for promotional use for a San Francisco-

based publishing company. Small building lots were given as premiums with a $109 subscription to a 25-volume encyclopedia, *The Library of Universal History and Popular Science*, bound in half leather. Upon full payment of the installments, the owner was to receive a deed for the complimentary lot at no further cost.[50] "It is guaranteed," the order form reads, "that these lots are high and dry, free from swamp and damp, wet land."[51] Located on the southern side of the hill, the lots were indeed free of swamp. But the surveyor, who had laid a perfect grid over the land, didn't account for the topography. At 50x120 feet, many of the narrow plots were crammed onto ridges and steep slopes and proved unsuitable for building construction. Almost none of the subscribers took ownership of their lots, nor did the developer take steps to provide the necessary infrastructure. Literally and figuratively, the few new owners who arrived on the hill were left high and dry.

Downloaded from the Internet, Volume 1 of *The Library of Universal History and Popular Science* comes as a digital scroll of 435 pages, made from pixels instead of parchment paper.[52] I skip over the nondescript cover, but before I get to the title page I linger over the two pages of marbled endpaper. Paper made from colors floating on water, pulled into ornamental shapes with fine tools like hair or fiber. Colors absorbed by a sheet of paper leaving a watery design on the surface: a perfect way to fix the wetness of water onto the dryness of a page. Less than marble, the shades of earthy brown and light red of the endpaper remind me of the red volcanic rock that forms Dictionary Hill, a toxic fluid dried into stone. It seems as if a piece of the terrain's rocky surface has been mapped onto the endpaper, a secret trace of the complimentary plots of land that were given away with the encyclopedia. The

repeating undulations of the pattern look not unlike the contour lines that project Dictionary Hill on the topographical map of the US Geological Survey, compiled much later in the 1950s. On the map, the winding brown lines show the hill's elevation, superimposed with straight white lines for the street grid of the original surveyor. Over the course of the century a neighborhood did develop here, and the red coloring on the map marks not rocks, but the built up area that covers them.

After a six-page stretch through a desert of empty, yellowing pages, I arrive at another rock formation, a photograph of a monumental sculpture of Ramses II carved into a hillside in Ipsambul in Egypt, foreshadowing the specific historical and geographic focus of the encyclopedia's first volume. The introduction to *The Library of Universal History and Popular Science*, it turns out, is written by none other than Hubert Howe Bancroft. "The Educational Value of the Study of History" reveals Bancroft as a compelling writer. [53] He situates all things known as equal members in a vast confederation that he calls the republic of science, in which each member depends on the others.[54] There's the parliament of things, the democracy of objects so frequently evoked today, *avant la lettre* in a place where one would least expect it! But Bancroft soon takes a different path when he describes the task of history to discriminate from the vast amount of facts about the past the ones charged with historical valence. "It can hardly be wise to make the memory serve the purpose of an old-fashioned garret in a country house,— a receptacle for all sorts of odds and ends of property, precious and worthless. Surely, such indiscriminate memorizing must be a waste of energy, and the perversion of a noble faculty."[55]

Surely. I cannot help but take this as a crushing critique of this very project, concerned with all sorts of odds and ends stored away in an old adobe that takes the detritus of history more seriously than the bigwigs who left this mess behind. Bancroft associates the study of history with the approximate and probable, compared to science's claim to absoluteness and exactitude. Learning to discern the truth and gain understanding of the causal relation between pertinent historical facts is the very training that the study of history may provide. More than merely expanding his mental horizon, it will make man more modest and more temperate. And tolerant, too. What separates the writing of history from contemporary commentary is the advantage of the retrospect and the allegiance to unbiased and non-partial presentation, "with respect to all subjects whatsoever."[56] In short, the study of history—just as much as the writing of it—is nothing less than what makes man a complete human being. Or at least some of them. As Bancroft lays out his understanding of history, he also reveals himself as a man of his class, time and social horizon. "We commonly think of American History," he writes, "as beginning with the year 1492."[57] But patriotism, he goes on, should not fall into the trap of narrow-minded provincialism. It is therefore important to look to the European forefathers and their ancient predecessors in order to achieve full self-understanding. The more strongly he argues for a universal approach, the more he qualifies as to whom this universalism applies. For "(a) nation emerging from savagism, until it has a written record makes little advancement."[58] Bancroft's words adumbrate what the series editor spells out a few pages later in language plain and unmistakable: "The only race

which has figured in history is the Caucasian. The history of the civilized world is the history of the Caucasian race."[59]

Bancroft evokes a beautiful image of history as a bow of light: "it flashes its rays far back over those rough waters through which our ship has been ploughing, and it throws at least some illumination forward upon the deeps of time toward we are about to sail."[60] This is not the light caught in Ingold's crystal ball that gathers the past and future from the everyday activities within particular temporal landscape. For Bancroft, time is a universal category. What, then, is cast in the shadow of his universal bow of light traveling through the New World?

One can imagine how the original inhabitants, their willow bows shouldered in skeptical anticipation, stood atop the hill and watched the ships of Juan Cabrillo arrive at the bay in 1542. The Portuguese explorer sailing under the Spanish flag was the first European to voyage the coast of present-day California. While Cabrillo's ships were sailing into the unknown, the Kumeyaay had learned about the arrival of white men already through messages passed on from tribes in the interior and related the news to Cabrillo's crew. "And in another day following in the morning came to the ship three Indians large," the expedition's log states, "and by signs told us that walked by the inland inside men like us bearded and dressed, and armed like the ones on the ships, and they showed that they had ballistas and swords, and they made gestures with their right arm as if they were spearing, and they went running as if they were on a horse, and that they killed many Indians of the native, and for that reason they were afraid; these people were well proportioned and large."[61] Three layers of mimetic action are compressed into these lines. There is the double description of a

testimonial that is first acted out and then written down; the third step is performed much later in the verbatim translation of the log from Spanish to English. Along the way, the actions of victims and aggressors become eerily conflated into a string of past events: they showed, they made gestures, they went running, they killed, they were afraid. The Kumeyaay's gestures capture a past event; Cabrillo's log keeper describes the Kumeyaay's gestures. Unspoken, both reports spell out the atrocities committed by the men-at-arms traveling with conquistador Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, en route through the New World earlier the same year.

The Kumeyaay's social structure entailed an extended system of lookouts and runners.[62] Although they operated on a much smaller scale, the Porters aimed high when they dubbed the hill south of their ranch Lookout Mountain. According to local lore, Rufina would ride up there in the evenings to figure out the whereabouts of the cattle she had to bring home for the night, and Porter himself would check if the steamer with the mail had come in, before making the 12-mile trip to the harbor.[63] The name Dictionary Hill came later, a twisted residue of the encyclopedia that some of the new settlers stacked on their shelves. A lookout becomes Lookout Mountain; Lookout Mountain becomes Dictionary Hill. The small hill's change of name relates to a larger shift in the way historical knowledge is captured and produced. In terms of local history, it marks the shift from looking to reading; from *looking at* something to *looking up* something. In terms of historiography, it parallels the movement from oral testimony to written account; from local to global; and from particular to universal. Historical events cease to be embodied knowledge; at the same time the writing of history is written out of history.

Wind hits the microphone and transforms into roaring thunder. The audio drags the image with it, turning the sunny hill into a high desert plain. Vibrant reds fade and subtle shades of green are muted by noise. The open space mocks my normal-range lens and recedes behind a screen of dust. It all looked different when I hauled my equipment up the hill. The wind brushed lightly over the costal sage and caressed my bare arms getting heavy with the weight of the tripod. I stop to rest a couple of times and look towards the ocean, my eyes squinting in the sun. The higher I get, the more familiar features appear. There are the high rises downtown that make up San Diego's teething skyline and the elevated curve of the Coronado bridge soaring across the bay, 200ft high and tall enough to allow passage for the ships of Pacific Fleet stationed at the naval base nearby. Twelve miles east and 1000 feet above sea level, I climb the final stretches to the peak. A flurry of butterflies breezes by. These are the visitors who truly defy gravity, floating swiftly on wind currents and thermal uplifts to save energy for future engagements. Atop the hill males compete for the best spots to impress the arriving females. First documented in the 1960s, the "hill-topping" mating behavior of insects on Dictionary Hill has since been threatened by others competing for prime real estate with a view.[64] A string of developers has proposed building projects crowning the peak. The last such plan sought to raze 35 feet off the top of the hill in order to build a subdivision of 211 homes. The planned gated community would have cut across the open space, turning the last wildlife and plant habitat that remains in densely populated Spring Valley into a landscape shaped by concrete trenches and retaining walls: Welcome to Highland Ranch. The development fell flat in 2010, thanks to the efforts of the Dictionary Hill

Open Space Advocates (DHOSA), a community group that called attention to the project's massive environmental impact.[65]

Stamped out of the ground as the promotional gimmick of a publishing company, the Dictionary Hill neighborhood was ill conceived from the very beginning. But rock is more enduring than paper. And more valuable, for that matter. While the "Library of Universal History and Popular science" is long outdated and spends its digital afterlife in the public domain, most of Dictionary Hill is still parceled into lots that are privately owned, though hoping to thrive, one day, as a public space.

This chapter, in full, is a reprint of the material as it appears in *Sunshine/Noir II – Writings From San Diego and Tijuana*, edited by Kelly Mayhew and Jim Miller (San Diego City Works Press, 2015): 183-189. The dissertation/thesis author was the primary investigator and author of this paper.

Sketch #4 Water Tower

Orange light seeps through blue-grey clouds. Everything is rendered flat in the early morning light. Everything but the reflection of the sky in the windshields of parked cars. The arched opening of the front porch casually frames the view northeast of my house. Across the street, two large trees mirror the arch and direct the eye over rows of houses. Telephone poles and palm trees interrupt the horizon line. A little further back, a water tower marks the vanishing point. The pale coloring gives away the distance, the solid shape its size. Barely visible in the misty sky, the outline of a mountain redraws the tower's shallow cap.

Two lines, one light and one dark, cut a triangle across the grey fields. A dirt road and a ditch converge at the horizon next to a large standpipe. Up front, thick-walled pieces of pipe point toward the one in the background standing upright and tall. The road connects San Diego's "streetcar" suburbs to the ranchos in East County; the pipeline brings water from the country to the city. Built in 1910, the standpipe precedes the water tower, which was built 14 years later to accommodate the city's increasing demand for water. The historic photograph dates back exactly 100 years. It serves as additional documentation in an application to add the University Heights Water Storage and Pumping Station Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places.[66]

Just like the water tower about a mile away, the house I live in stands on the very top of the mesa south of the San Diego River. Looking east across the traffic on El Cajon Blvd, the tower sits over rooftops and strip malls, now clearly cast against

the blue sky. The best view of the tower from my side of the neighborhood is one block over, at the end of Howard Street. Here's where you get a straight shot. Brown pointed cap, pale green body, the dark rounded bottom lowered between stilts, an immobile rocket putting gravity's pull to work.

A little further down on Howard Street, the tower is nowhere in sight. Change of scenery. The traffic noise ebbs away, loud disco music fills the street in front of a bright yellow building with a flimsy classic facade. Set back behind an asphalt parking strip, the Suzie Suites stand out between residential bungalows with front yards. A massive staircase between butterfly palms hides the entrance that leads to the hotel pool. Seen through the gate, the walkway becomes a picture frame: a row of plants, a glimpse of water, the DJ's legs moving to the sound.

Back outside on the concrete pavement, the shadows of two palm trees point the way and indicate the time. It's getting late. As I keep walking east on Howard, geological elevation thwarts the landmark perspective. The tower gradually falls in and out of sight, bobbing up and down between the hills, like a buoy floating in the waves shot in slow-motion.

At the tower, a cat sleeps in the rectangle of shade under a picnic table, indifferent to the noise from the clubhouse and the playing field. Above, diagonal lines reach upward, changing width and color as they recede into space. Squinted eyes flatten the tank's rounded bottom. "Touted as 'The World's Tallest' at the time of its 1924 completion, it is the only surviving example of an early riveted steel plate-constructed conical-capped elevated full hemispherical bottom municipal water storage tank with Z-laced girder leg supports constructed in San Diego County."[67]

Lacking one million gallons of water, it's a tank by name only, a massive relic of hydro engineering and private and public water appropriation. The almost five million gallon reservoir at the foot of the tower has retained its original function and gained another one. Ten feet above the ground, turf furnishes two soccer fields on the roof of the reservoir. The goals serve as windows into the enclosed space: girls in neon tricots follow the ball, fabric netting keeps it in the ring. On Google's satellite view the tower casts abstract graphic inscriptions. On the ground the shade provides temporary relief from the sun.

Reaching for the future, "the World's tallest" bolstered builder's pride. Today, the historical value of "the only surviving example" fosters local identity.[68] Daily duties won its caretaker a giant silent companion. Thousands of gallons of paint required to give it a new coat of paint surely make the task a burden. Relative to distance, it might obstruct the view or accentuate it. In the neighborhood, the empty water tower serves as a point of orientation. Its image graces the chalk board at the local Trader Joe's, where it tellingly advertises bottled water. Seen from my front porch, it is framed by the faint shape of San Miguel Mountain. For the purpose of this book, the tower provides a marker between University Heights and Spring Valley, a community that lies at the foot of the mountain. But no matter how or from where you look at it, in California water always implies politics.

A Dance Around Things

I've driven past the pawnshop on El Cajon Blvd, just down the street from the water tower, many times on my way to the museum. But today I walk inside and ask the man behind the counter if I can take a picture of the statue guarding the entrance. "My Chief? Of course, be my guest. Thanks for asking."

The Chief's body is strangely flat, a composite of postures and insignia. He wears a full headdress of feathers, an animal skin around his shoulders, a beige skirt, blue army trousers, and a sash with stars and stripes draped over his bare chest. Even the white feathers tucked in the belt have a red and blue drawing. Left foot raised on a block, left hand shielding the eyes, the body draws a line that tilts forwards. In front view, shoulders and hips are in perfect parallel; no weight shift is helping the statue balance. Left foot raised on the curb, I try to copy the pose. I lean forward, flexing muscles in my legs and buttocks, but almost topple over. The Chief watches me in silence. A wooden body and a piece of rope tied around his arm and fastened to the door prevent him from the same fate.

A long crack bulges open his chest. There's an odd violence to his warped body. A bunch of stereotypes in 3D, all carved out of one log. The stoic face, the face paint, the perfect scout. Forced into a costume and chiseled into a pose. But there's also violence in the disjunctions, there are ways in which the different features don't add up. Standing face to face, the angular presence of the Chief's profile is gone; eyes set too narrow distort his face.

My Chief, the sound stays in my ears. Why *my* Chief and not *the* Chief? I wonder if the pawnbroker refers to other items in the store as his as well. My golden watch, my Asahi neon sign, my base guitar, my engraved cufflinks, not to forget my shelf full of DVDs, two dollars apiece. The Chief is not for sale. In fact, standing at the door is his job, it's exactly what he was made for. What looks like a bundle of books in his right hand is actually a roll of cigars. He's standing in front of the wrong store. It's a Cigar Store Indian promoting a pawnshop.

Statue, Chief, Cigar Store Indian. I browse newspaper clippings, and it only goes down from here: wooden Indian, oaken tribesman, ligneous savages. The history of these "ligneous savages" goes back to 17th century England, when tobacco was first brought from the New World.[69] Like other stores addressing a largely illiterate public, tobacconists searched for a recognizable emblem to advertise their goods.[70] For Europeans, tobacco was associated with American Indians, and these early shop signs caught the public's imagination gone wild: crowned, black figures wearing nothing but tobacco leaves. By the time the "Virginian" made it back to the States in the Mid 19th century, he'd changed crown for feathers and the occasional tomahawk, so as to live up to the American imagination of the American Indian.[71]

Equipped with camera and tripod in front of the pawnshop, I'm less concerned with the racist history that brought the statue into being for the moment. Instead, my main objective is to produce a steady panning shot that tracks the body from the feet upward to slowly reveal the Chief's identity. I move the camera up and down a couple of times, trying to keep the speed as even as I can, until I finally settle on the upper body and face. Only now I look at the images on the LCD screen and realize

that the camera is recording an entirely different scene. Behind the statue, in the reflection of the shop window a man jumps up and down. It's a sign spinner, trying to lure customers into the thrift shop next door. I look up and watch the Chief observing his human colleague. Impenetrable, his face is a ready surface for projection; he is in the know, it seems to me. Stepping in place, jerking his knees up and down, the man's rhythmic movement uncannily resembles the stereotypical image of Native American tribal dance. Embarrassed at the thought, I switch the camera off.

Human billboards are not a novelty. Reportedly first spotted in England in the 1830s, they have been around for almost two centuries. Today, heightened competition to catch consumers' attention forces commodities' agents to be on their toes. Incessantly jumping and moving in the relentless sun, they become emblems of capitalist exploitation, ritualistic expressions to ensure the circulation of things. Buy and sell. A dance around things. Things like silver coins and DVDs, shiny, flat, thin, round objects, endowed with power over bodies.

Things like silver coins and DVDs, mass-produced to store value, moving from hand to hand, each encountering its story along the way. Like the pawnshop, the Bancroft Ranch House Museum acts as a depository for unwanted things, a temporary store house for the debris created by mass production. But it runs on a different economy. Here, boxes full of discarded things arrive as donations. Each year in May, the objects are fed back into the community in an annual rummage sale. Because the neighborhood is poor, items go for cheap, at 25 cents or $1 apiece, maybe $5 at best. The rummage sale report in the museum's newsletter from Summer 2010 states that

even though “a big pile of stuff went unsold,” this year’s net sale yielded $988.38, which will be used for museum programming.[72]

Donate. Shop. Reuse. Repeat.

Gusts of wind hit the mic and swell into a choppy drumroll. Jen and her husband appear on the right, slowly dragging a blue tarp behind them like a bizarre royal train. Their procession is cut short by a wall of cardboard boxes, stuffed trash bags, and random stuff stacked along the fence. The anticipated action is suspended and the tarp meant to cover the rummage is dropped. Jen peeks into a box, compelled to poke around. For a brief moment, the things nobody wanted gain currency again—last chance to check for keepers in the leftovers from the rummage sale now destined for pick-up by St. Vincent de Paul. A pair of skis, a broken record player—bronze plastic with a red velvety turn table—and a folding steel bedside commode. More boxes and bags.

For the most part, the Bancroft Ranch House is a donation-based museum. When the adobe was first opened to the public, the collection was as sparse as could be: a few pieces of old furniture; a jacket on a wire coat hanger dangling from a chair; a wooden spinning wheel; a glass vitrine with Native American artifacts donated by members of the Historical Society. Today one room is dedicated to California history, the other one to Native American history; the annex in the back has documentation about the adobe itself, its builder and owners, and the surrounding area. Mannequins in historic dress preside over each room: there's an Indian statue in the Native American room; three mannequins in more or less Victorian outfits are tasked to embody California history. High-heel slippers clash with petticoats, painted faces give away their provenance: three display dummies the caretaker scored from a local

beauty salon going out of business masquerading as Victorian ladies. Downcast eyes, coy expressions, humble gestures. Full of grace.

Year after year, legions of outdated things arrive here. There are things that abide, frozen in time, on display: an arrangement of objects for public viewing. Others crowd the archive room. Some shelves are reserved for storing artifacts, the ones waiting to be processed hold out on the table, maybe forever. The caretaker's archive attends to those footnotes of local history that in one way or another have to do with Spring Valley. People are constantly bringing things, but many are neither historic artifacts nor have anything to do with Spring Valley—they are merely old. "But I can't put them with the rummage," the caretaker says, "people would be offended." So they stay on the desk.

Year after year, legions of outdated things arrive here. Once they pass through the gate, they change. Spoken for different destinations, they each take on a new role. There are museum objects and things that go in the archive, and then there's stuff that will be sold at the annual rummage sale. How they end up in these categories is not always clear. But every object that's put on display in the adobe or kept in the archive has a counterpart, a thing that assures its place here. For the majority of objects come in only to leave again, like vouchers that have been cashed in, crediting the Historical Society's income account with 25 cents or a dollar apiece. Next to the archive, behind the fallout shelter, hides a shed that is reserved only for rummage. Over the course of the year, it fills to the brim. In May, everything is put up for sale in the museum yard. Donate. Shop. Reuse. The place runs on its own currency of castoffs. Other than that

it's all a labor of love, subsidized by a meager community grant. That is, if someone remembered to put in the annual application.

In fact, for the last 70 years the adobe itself was maintained with funds raised at yard sales. In 1940, the Spring Valley Chamber of Commerce bought the adobe from its last private owner, and held a county fair on the grounds to finance cleanup and repairs. The adobe became a popular meeting place for poker nights and the like; the county fair became a recurring event. In 1946, the chamber had raised enough cash to add a larger community center in the back—today's museum annex. It is said to be built of bananas, for a significant part of the funds came from a carload of the then exotic fruit auctioned off at one of the fairs. In 1948, one room of the adobe was refashioned as an economy shop, the first thrift store for the benefit of local charities supporting Spring Valley's needy. Donate. Shop. Reuse. Repeat.

In 1964, a lumber company down the street donated a small house that opened as a thrift shop to the Chamber of Commerce. Donate. Shop. "Wait. What?" I interrupt the caretaker. "It was moved. It was pulled with a 53 Chevy pick-up and a team of mules. They looked like horses. And they drug it down Memory Lane on a sled and some wood. And then they built the foundation out of concrete blocks, and pulled it on top of it, with a rope and tackles. The mules made it look real old. And the thrift store was open one day a week." Reuse. Repeat. It's the caretaker's house today.

In the mid sixties, the Chamber of Commerce was forced to sell the adobe because of financial trouble. It was decided to give back to the community "what it has donated over the past twenty years in the way of material and time."[73] Bit by bit

the Historical Society scratched up the dough: $1, plus $2000 in escrow and title fees. And so, in 1967, the adobe itself was purchased with proceeds from donated goods. Most notably, Ethel Koonce contributed $428 she'd made from selling stuff out of her garage. She has a street named after her today, although there are other reasons for that.

Few collector's items, if any, are on the table in this constant reiteration of sales and fairs. Come the day of the rummage sale, everything is set up by helping hands who these days are recruited with some difficulty on optimistically long sign-up sheets. The medley of things is unboxed, price-tagged, and ordered into categories—electronics, board games, utensils, glassware, metal boxes—that constantly break down in meetings of, say, cracked-eggshell-and-chick string lights and baseball caps or ceramic garlic bulbs, a fish-shaped oven mitten and a rechargeable battery charger. The metal skeleton of a perforated ironing board, upright, shining bright green against the low wooden fence. Polished mahogany, ceramic glaze, embossed leather, plush, plastic, and ruffled glass entice touch and gaudy worlds populated by house-shaped tea pots and wooden fish, candle holders and small vessels of any kind appear before the glancing eye. The cruelty of cuteness manifests in a stuffed panda, with child, pierced through the head by a brass lamp stand, no shade. The strange air of these things takes hold of me, but I can't run with it. Even though the comparison is tempting, they don't invoke surrealist dream worlds conjured around objects pulled out of their familiar context, or Walter Benjamin's pondering about the outdated and what he called "the 'atmosphere' concealed in these things."[74] What's for sale here seems neither destined for the playful pastime of

literary rebellion, nor old enough to be truly evocative of past times. No "profane illumination," as Benjamin would have it in his exploration of surrealist activity, that unleashes the energies of things in a dialectic of the spiritual and the everyday.[75]

At odds with the Surrealists' move to transfigure material things into ideal images, George Bataille reckoned that materialism, in fact, was always in the fangs of idealism, as its other, forever caught in a binary scheme. Base materialism, on the other hand, exists where the metaphysical certainties of high and low, mind and matter, or, in Bataille's words, the "metaphysical scaffolding," of idealism is unhinged.[76] It's not a reversal that elevates the low to the high. Rather, as its foundation, the low forever changes the make-up of what's high. Rummage is something one may pick up and keep; like base matter it is neither just material, nor ideal.

Bataille is certainly not thinking of worn-out commodities and consumer goods, when he writes of base matter. For him, things are bodily things: excretions, perversions, or relics of sacrifice. And although some of the stuff for sale here is pretty ratty, it doesn't quite fit with Bataille's notion of base matter. What's abject stays safely in the realm of minor disgust so effectively nursed by consumer society and reserved for those who can afford it—say, used nail clippers, a brush full of human hairs, or a blender coated with the familiar brownish patina of grease and food remains.

For even at rock bottom prices, the things are upheld by their status as commodities. For the most part, this is run-of-the-mill, ordinary stuff, hopefully in working condition. "What's the point in donating broken vacuum cleaners and used

tires?" The caretaker is vexed. "Now I have to get rid of them." What stays are cheap goods ready to be gleaned for another round of service. Prices are not determined by resale value but by the buying power of the local community.

And if not destitution, low income certainly contributes to the steady flow of patrons looking for a bargain. What's outmoded is hardly a find imbued with "revolutionary energies," and the lack of means that brings people here has yet to spur rebellion.[77] In lieu of the surrealist revolutionary imaginaries Benjamin invoked, there is also little that signals the transgressing of moral and social norms Bataille aimed for. The rummage does find a collective expression, but it's not in the interest of tearing down human values and institutions. On the contrary, the Historical Society's adobe is held together by refuse, discarded things converted into capital for community funds. And where objects on display are caught in deep slumber, rummage steps up. Or, speaking with Bataille, the rummage is the toe that holds up the museum's head.[78]

For sure, all kinds of "ignoble" matter take part in keeping the adobe erect, and not just in spirit.[79] As much as the structure's basic support may theoretically proceed from rummage, the cracks in the adobe's wall require actual material attention. Ranging from a hair's breadth to a pencil's width, the cracks inch across the walls, transforming unnoticeably from an impending to an acute problem along the way. Once acute turns into precarious, the caretaker removes the plaster to fill in the gaps that widen every year. In step with research on adobe restoration, the filler has changed over time. A mixture of donkey manure, lemon juice, and shavings of the green part of the agave plant approximates the original building materials. Behind the scaffolding of rummage, manure.

The rasping sound of the wind flares up; the blue tarp swells. Its corners are fastened to the fence and the tarp billows over the rummage. Blue plastic surges and falls like water in a giant puppet theater, glistening in the sun. No rope handy, as men on both sides struggle to hold it in place. It's John the gardener who eventually weighs it down with saggy rocks, plastic bags full of old clothes pulled from under the tarp. Incidentally, my camera is not the only one recording the blue tarp. There are several more looking from the other side of the fence. The complementary image is captured by Google Street View in a near-HD panoramic view stitched together from nine camera angles. Hovering over boxes of refuse slowly slumping down the ladder of charitable donations, the tarp will have its online presence until a new generation of cameras renders the images obsolete as well.

Some Folkore, Some Data, and Some Unexplainable Things

Thick long black hair falls over the shoulders framing brown features and black eyes. It belongs to the Indian statue, outfitted with knee-high moccasins and a breechcloth held by a gun belt. All covered under a thick coat of paint. One arm touches the side of the body, the other one extends outward resting on a rifle that is not there any more. The statue stands in the back corner of the small room looking wearily towards the opposite side, eyes slightly downcast as if to avoid the gaze of the visitors. Searching inward, his watch turned wake in a vigil that never ends. Just shy of human size the figure looks dwarfed behind a set of large glass vitrines flanking the sides of the room. Clay pots and water jugs, stone tools and arrowheads, woven baskets and gourd rattles bedded on burlap among labels with funerary borders. Another vitrine holds a small papier-mâché panorama that shows how some local teachers imagined native life. Most of the artifacts in the room were excavated here or donated from the local tribe.

Not so the Indian statue. “It has nothing so do with the Kumeyaay,” the caretaker points out. “But it has something to do with a woman artist.” The name of this sculptor who once lived in San Diego may have been Evelyn Wolf and she is said to have been a student at Katherine Tingley’s theosophical society in Lomaland, sometime at the beginning of the 20th century. Later she moved up north and from working with plaster to marble and granite. The statue quite accurately depicts an Apache scout up to the signature red headband used by the US Army to distinguish the scouts from their hostile tribe members. (One yard of red flannel purchased from

Civil War sutlers was given to each scout I read somewhere, but I'm not sure if that's true.) One can sense the work of an artist in the realistic depiction of the scout's toned upper body and contrapposto pose. I wonder if she looked at "Portrait of Fel-Ay-Tay, Yuma Scout for the San Carlos Apache, In Native Dress with Gunbelt and Gun, 1881" for inspiration, for the statue bears some semblance to the slender young man posing in the photograph I found in the Smithsonian collection while searching for Apaches online.[80]

This Apache scout is one of eleven (or twelve) statues cast for the Panama-California Exposition that took place in San Diego between 1915 and 1917. Like most of the things here, it ended up at the museum after a couple of detours and somewhat cloudy circumstances. It was put in the back of this guy Ed's father's pick-up truck when he helped clear out the basement of a museum in Balboa Park sometime in the 1930s. Ed put the statue in his entry way, gave it a new coat of paint once in a while, and hauled the thing with him each time he moved. But at one point he needed to get rid of it and called up the museum: "Hey, do you want my Indian statue?" and, disregarding the caretaker's evasive answer, dropped it off at the gate early the next morning. "I'm so glad it's finally gone," Ed's wife told the caretaker later. Only it wasn't. Since it had nothing to do with the Kumeyaay, the statue was relegated to the fallout shelter for a while. Eventually, generalization won over historical accuracy and the Indian statue now resides in the Adobe's Native American room. That the scout doesn't quite belong here is well understood. For a memorial ceremony held by Kumeyaay descendants at the museum, he was dressed up as a

Mexican woman, complete with dress and shawl and a basket dangling from the empty extended arm, so as not to offend the tribal members.

I'm not exactly sure what I'm looking for. I think I would like to know more about the artist who made the statue and whose initials are scratched into the base. I ask the caretaker and we lower the heavy thing on its side. Fray pieces of sisal breaking through the unfinished bottom lose touch with the ground. Underneath, a handful of dead spiders, folded into translucent stars. There is an imprint of letters at the edge of the base, encircled to look like a seal, but parts of it have crumbled away and what's left is caked over with paint. According to the caretaker and depending of the day of the tour he gives to occasional visitors, of the eleven (or twelve) statues, six (or nine) are left. Some of them found their way to Old Town, the little State Park below the Presidio that commemorates San Diego's founding settlement built on the site of the Kumeyaay village Cosoy. Chosen by military eyes in the interest of surveillance, the Presidio overlooks the natural harbor and the bay that forms at the mouth of the San Diego River, ignorant of the native crop it destroyed.[81] Today the old garrison is a museum and presides over the intersection of north-south Interstate 5 and Interstate 8. Called Kumeyaay highway in parts of San Diego County, the I-8 extends east along ancient routes through Yuma and the Sonora Desert into Arizona.[82]

Old Town smells of lavender soap and licorice; the majority of more or less historic buildings have been turned into souvenir shops. The park ranger at the visitor center hasn't seen any of the statues I describe to him here, but he seems to know what I'm taking about. They were on display in an exhibition, he says, in the Museum

of Man in Balboa Park, sometime around the early 2000s. On my way to the parking lot I pass a Cigar Store Indian—fittingly, if inappropriately, placed in front of Old Town's cigar store. The caretaker had expected Ed's statue to be an old Cigar Store Indian, this having been a common sculptural representation of Indians placed at the threshold between private enterprise and the public sphere. Like the one in front of the pawnshop I pass on my way to the museum. When I first noticed it, I thought it might be one of the Apache Scout's fellow statues. Just like the representational regimes they have outlived, the Indian statues stick around, populating museums and sidewalks, entryways and basements. Silent by design, a dispersed army by nature of their pose.

Three of the statues are supposed to be at Mission San Diego de Alcalá, one where Father Louis Jayme's memorial is, and the others in the courtyard, depicting a mother and child, a Mexican woman and a little girl. Mission Valley is just a short drive from my house, down the road from the residential neighborhoods topping the mesa into the wide river valley that today mainly serves as a giant shopping mall traversed by arterial roads and flanked by condominiums on either side. There's Target, Ikea, and Nordstrom Rack for folks like me. And then there's Viva Civitas in skyLoft and socialGarden, living spaces so modern they deserve new words that are as unimaginative as the places they represent. Life in Mission Valley isn't just about great shopping, dining and entertainment, the website says, though the options *do* seem limitless.[83] Dubbed San Diego's biggest urban planning mistake, Mission Valley forever inundates the river's flood plain with asphalt and concrete. One might come upon the river unexpectedly, say at the edges of Bloomingdale's parking lot.

Here are the inner outskirts of the city, where the homeless live and the river is channeled between the concrete piers of state route 163. Or Cabrillo Freeway, as it is also called. “All along the riverbed there are poplar, willow and alder trees,” one of the first missionaries observes on a scouting trip into the valley in May 1769, and I can sense the river under the lush green of the trees next to the road.[84] Driving between the river and the highway, I leave the big box stores behind and enter the mirrored glass architecture world of second-tier technology firms and business centers.

The mission used to be right next to the Presidio, but in 1774 the padres asked for permission to move further inland in search of a better water supply and, so it says, in an attempt to protect the Indian women coming to the mission from the abuse of the soldiers. While the first request is stated clearly, the second one can only be read between the lines. Describing the conditions in California in a letter to viceroy Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa in 1773, Padre Junípero Serra asks that soldiers lacking self-restraint be removed from the presidio. “And even if the author does not specify the sin of the soldier, his request for removal should always be heeded, since, in certain cases, it is not advisable to give the reason, either to prevent making public a hidden sin, or for reasons that can easily be imagined.”[85] The soldiers may not have moved, but the mission did. Putting distance between soldiers and Indians, commanders and padres, military and mission, Friars Road follows the river six miles east to the mission’s present location on the site of the native village Nípaguay. After moving, the mission is referred to as San Diego de Nípaguay for a while, instead of the earlier—and present—Alcalá, which means citadel or fortification.[86]

In the center of the driveway next to the parking lot, visitors are greeted by Padre Serra, the Franciscan monk who founded this first mission in Alta California and 9 of the 21 that were to follow. Made from clay and larger than life, his body is set off against the white façade of the bell tower. One enters through the gift shop stuffed with devotional objects and is led by little arrows on a brochure to the padres' quarters. The friars' grey habit with coil hangs behind glass, losing agency in a niche in the wall. In the garden behind the church, I encounter Padre Serra again, this time rendered in bronze, and St. Joseph and St. Francis of Assisi, both plaster. Stuck in a corner, there is a statue the size of the Apache scout. But it turns out to be St. Antonino who, for some reason, is wrapped tightly in green bubble wrap. Shining bright white from his spot in a blue-tiled niche outside of the sanctuary, the mission's namesake St. Didactus is made from plaster, too. Across the courtyard, there is indeed a statue of mother and child, but not the one described by the caretaker that I am looking for. Made from bronze in somber shades of brown, the Pietà is the biggest statue in the ensemble. Bare skin gleams polished against the green patina of molded fabric folds, as Mary holds the limp body of Jesus. A little bit further down, there's another pitiful scene: a small scorched plot of land with a skeletal eewa, an adobe oven, or horno, and a selection of stone metates covered in fine dust. It's not exactly deserted, for nobody has lived there and no Indian statues are part of the display.

One thing that does remind me of the Bancroft Ranch House Museum are the larger pepper trees gracing the courtyard, a sight once foreign that's now familiar—to California in general and myself in particular. Since the early 16th century, to bid someone good riddance in German is to wish them to where the pepper grows: "Geh

doch wohin der Pfeffer wächst!" To the Indies, that is, or any far-off exotic land found in place of the Indies. "Guess where I am now," I tell my mom over the phone, after I first noticed the red pepper trees when I moved to California. She chuckles, and the sound that may well be a sigh blends with the whispering of the leaves outside my window. Some 6000 miles away, she might be thinking of her sister too, who used to say: "I won't go to Heaven, I'll just go to where the pepper grows." The white cross that commemorates Father Jayme stands under a pepper tree, just outside the courtyard, but the padre died long before the pepper grew. There's another memorial down the street, where his naked body was found in a ditch after the mission rebellion. In his letters Jayme comes across as the least patronizing and the most respectful of the Indians whose salvation he sees as his mission. The Kumeyaay call out the violence inherent in the civilizing project. The scale of mutual misunderstanding was written all over Jayme's body, mutilated at the hands of the natives in an act that stands in stark contrast to their ritual practices and traditions of war.[87]

Lore has it that the Franciscan monks brought the pepper plants from the Peruvian Andes in need of trees that provide shade and resist drought.[88] The *schinus molle*, also called false pepper tree, bears small pink berries but no relation to true pepper, which is black and grows on trees native to south India. The first documented pepper tree in California was planted in the 1830s at Mission San Luis Rey, but allegedly the rose-berried tree with drooping branches full of fine-feathered leaves arrived here by mistake.[89] It grew out of seeds thought to be from chili peppers that the padres had acquired from sailors coming from Peru. I'm not sure when the pepper

trees in the courtyard were planted. They are not visible in the early photographs of the mission dating back as far as 1865, although a visitor in 1882 described a few date palms, olive, pear and fig trees remaining from the orchards planted by the fathers. But full grown trees, pepper or not, frame the mission's ruins in photographs of the late 1920s taken just prior to its full restoration in 1931. They might have been planted in course of the landmark preservation efforts that began in the late 1890s, spearheaded by wealthy San Diegans and Californian citizens such as the philantrophist W. George Marston and the journalist and historic preservation activist Charles Fletcher Lummis, both of whom were also involved in the organization of the Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park.

The light red berries have a flaky shell; thin layers cradle a single seed inside. In fall and winter, they tinge the ground pink below the trees that today are known as Californian pepper. Clusters of dry peppercorn on tiny twigs are stuck between the planks of the wooden picnic tables in the museum yard. The berries are shriveled and brown. I pick them out while chatting with the caretaker in the shade of the trees. Afternoon light sieves through filigreed foliage and swims on the adobe wall. I couldn't find any Indian statues at the mission, I report, crushing peppercorns between thumb and index finger, one by one. "Yeah, they took the one from the garden away because it was rusting," he says, "Looks like I got the last one." I did find a mention of the statues though, thumbing through yellowed pages of the Panama-California Exposition catalogues pulled from the archive and carefully placed onto foam wedges at UCSD's rare book collection. "The exhibits are representative of Indians of the Southwest," the entry on the Indian Arts Building

reads, “Most interesting among these are groups (life-size models) showing the natives in various occupations. The Pueblos, Mohaves, Navahoes and Pawnees are prominently shown. A few ‘live Indians’ are in attendances. The mural paintings upon the walls showing scenery of the Southwest are wonderfully beautiful, interesting and instructive.”[90]

In the 1920s, the exhibits from the Indian Arts Building move a couple doors down to the California Quadrangle and became part of the ethnographic collection of the San Diego Art Association, which later became the Museum of Man. It takes me a while to find the right person, but finally I track down the curator in charge. It also takes a while for her to understand what I’m talking about, for the statues are actually not statues but mannequins. They had been on loan from the Smithsonian Institute for the Panama-California Exposition. They went back to the Smithsonian after the show, but it turns out that they had just been shipped back for a show planned for the exposition’s centennial in 2015. When I go to meet her, none other than Padre Serra watches over me as I walk up the steps to the Museum of Man. Sculpted from clay and plaster, he’s perched on the upper tier of the building’s eclectic Spanish-colonial façade. Further down, I find two more familiar faces among the men gracing the building, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo and Father Luis Jayme. Inside the museum, the curator leads me to a cramped storage room behind one of the exhibition spaces. In the very back, there are mannequins wrapped in foil and stuffed into the corner and on large shelves. I can already tell from the size of the large cumbersome bundles that they are not from the same series as the Apache Scout. But the curator is curious now and rips open the plastic cover of one of them with a vehemence that verges on

recklessness given its age. Stiff hands protrude from under the folds, then knees, until the front side of the thing is peeled open revealing the mannequin's head. The squatting figure lies on its back. The gaze is directed upwards, staring at crumbling plaster and peels of paint hanging from the ceiling.

Neither of us knows what to say and we just stand there for a moment. Sounds from a group of visitors wafts in from the adjacent space, as if an everyday ambient track had been laid over a bizarre film scene. "I have to go to a meeting but you are welcome to stay," the curator turns to me abruptly and points to my camera, but I gladly take the opportunity to leave as well. Back in the car, I turn on the radio and catch the end of a feature on Junípero Serra. I've heard the broadcast before. Padre Serra has been in the news a lot lately since the proposal to make him a saint has been taken up again. Its revival is due to Pope Francis' upcoming visit to the States. The controversial proposal has been around since Serra was beatified in the eighties, but regardless of the protests it looks like it will happen this time.[91] Junípero Serra was in fact canonized during Pope Francis' visit in September 2015, a decision that was welcomed by many Catholics but met with outrage from the Native American community and others. I didn't follow up on the Museum of Man's planned exhibition, but my guess is that the mannequins have been kept out of sight and remain in the museum's storage space.

"There's so much folklore, and then there is some data, and then there are some unexplainable things, like ghosts and spirits," the caretaker says, standing next to the Apache scout during one of his tours of the adobe. "This is a pot that a student found and had a lab put back together. That was a water storage container … It was a

water carrying jug brought from the Colorado river area and it was buried here. And inside there were bones. Female. And that's one of the ghost stories. But the best story is that the student who was failing her archaeology field class took the broken pieces and had a laboratory put it back together to use as an extra credit project and she went from a D to a C+." He laughs. "So what happened to the bones?" the visitor asks. "They burned them. They do a carbon-14 dating. Carbon-14 is in everything that's organic. Now carbon being a big thing," the caretaker adds, trailing off again, "my carbon footprint, your carbon footprint." "So how old was it then?" the visitor insists. "120-150 years ago and this was 1970. But they burned all the evidence. I mean, they could have saved a few bones."

Mannequin Hands

"Those are some hands," the caretaker says, "and we had some tours during the holidays."

And then there's a handful of single fingers. Stumps, really, slender bent shapes. Fleshy taupes and tans; the kind of color inconsiderate retailers of women's underwear call nude. Taupes and tans muted under a fine film of grayish dirt. Some have red dots for fingernails. A handful of single fingers lying in the lid of a shoebox. And some hands.

"Those are mannequin hands," the caretaker says. "From the mannequins in the adobe, they break and I fix them. It's ... I don't know what happened. I wasn't in the room when it happened. And I found a finger on the ground, and put it back on the mannequin and then I thought, oh well. I didn't do a holiday this year, as they say, I just stayed home and worked and tried not to get all, ... any weirder than I am."

The finger that broke off is waiting to get glued back on. But there are five more hands, and all in all four fingers are missing. One by one, I pick up the single fingers from the shoebox trying to match them with the missing ones, yearning in anticipation of that brief moment of pleasure when the plastic slides into place, the hole gets closed, and the hand will be in one piece again.

Sorting, I think of my friend Diego's collection of lost dog notes, hand-written or printed pieces of paper reporting dogs that had gone missing in the city. He'd rip them off store windows and lampposts and put them in a box, a big stack of weathered paper that was always growing. Most of them were in the lost category, but

some were founds too. Once the stack was big enough, he wanted to print them like a telephone book. The Yellow Pages of hope and despair. One night, he showed them to a girl who came over. She got really upset. She spread them out all over the floor trying to find matching pairs, someone's lost dogs that had been found by someone else. There were so many, they covered the whole apartment floor. But none of them matched.

None of the fingers match either. "See, some are hollow, some are solid, well, maybe there's a finger somewhere possible," the caretaker says, and, answering in the same breath, "No. And over the years I collected them. Did we try this one? This one sits on a socket," ready to be attached to a limb, "And that I found at the swap meet."

I've seen the swap meet before. From the top of Dictionary Hill, it's but a small vessel of tents drowning in a sea of parked cars glistening in the sun, a flickering surface that competes with the silver plane of Sweetwater Reservoir. Water made Spring Valley famous, and when I went to see the reservoir's historic masonry arch dam, I took a wrong turn on Quarry Road and got swallowed by the cars in line for the swap meet, the second wave of buyers flush with one dollar bills, long after the sellers arrived and the early birds had left. "It's kind of cultural," the caretaker says. Established over 30 years ago, it's certainly an institution, and one of regional outreach for that matter. People come down south from Oceanside, Poway, and Escondido, and up north from Bonita, Chula Vista, and even Mexico, perusing, looking for car parts and stuff, loading and unloading junk. I didn't go in this time, but when I came back later I realized the understatement. Spring Valley Swap Meet is not a flea market, it's the poor man's Mission Valley.

The terrain is uneven. At the very edge of one of the parking lots I find a spot shaded by reed grass. Flagmen signal, cars surge up and down and into place, and a throng of people indicates where the entry is. An ant trail of successful shoppers hauling dressers, paintings, and stuffed baby strollers traverses the street and disperses into the parking lot. At Spring Valley Swap Meet you can buy anything, from machinery, washing machines, and dining table sets, to clothes, birds cages, and beauty supplies. Such motley assortment of things demands a clear plan—I'm not just out for a stroll—so I take my cue from the sun and decide to buy a straw hat. I don't settle on the first one I like. I don't have to. There are many options of more or less the same hat, for more or less the same price. Between the stall Airplants & Orchids and a family selling first-time tattoo starter kits, I find the one I liked before again. Light color, medium brim, a nondescript mixture between a gardener and a cowboy hat. Cinco dolares. The stalls and tents occupy prime real estate but then the lot slopes into open space where heaps of stuff are sold from blankets and tables and off the backs of trucks. The less infrastructure there is, the more people there are, and having made my purchase, I'm ready to leave. It doesn't take much of a breeze to figure out that the hat is too big, but I don't bother going back because no se pueden cambiar los sombreros. Fair enough. So I chase my hat across the lot back to the car. At home, I spend the rest of the afternoon fashioning a chin cord.

Back in the archive the parade of hats goes on. "I got some weird hats. Women's hats. I'm not into women's hats, but I know the labels. One of them is from an old store. It might even go back to pre-World War II. Bullock's on Wilshire. No Bullock's no more." There's a fur beret but no need to throw red paint, "It's a faux.

Faux fur. This is a Gene Doris. This was the style." The little Dutch hat is a knock-off. "It can't be too old, because: Made in China." The long slim piece of fur has no clasp, it might be a sew-on collar for ladies' cardigans. "I don't know what this is. I'm afraid to think that it's a baby seal clubbed over the head." Next is a Russian trapper hat with ear flaps, too small for the caretaker's head, too warm for the climate anyway.

"This one here caught my eye. I was at a garage sale in Temple City and I went 'Hmmm.' And when I turned it over I noticed that it was Bullock's on Wilshire Blvd. Cause my Mum used to like to buy stuff at Bullocks. And every Bullock's had a cafeteria. And that was very trendy in the 60s to say, well we gonna meet and have lunch at Bullock's Wilshire." With that the hats find their way back into a box balancing on a stack of papers. "Do you want a calendar? This is from Doctor Hostetler's Charitable Trust and every year he gives everyone in the apartments one of these and a pen. And I have a bunch of extra ones. If you need one, you are welcome to take one. This is a landmark photograph…"

I don't want a calendar. Bullock's Wilshire is what I take home that day. I love these mini lessons in Californiana, things mentioned in passing, little pieces of the puzzle that add to my map. And what first seems disjunct, were it not for an old woman's hat, resonates with stories of cars and commodities. An upscale department store, Bullock's opened its doors in 1929 on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles in a then-residential neighborhood growing west of downtown.[92] The Art Deco building has beige colored tiles with tarnished green copper cornices, and a large tower that's sheathed in copper as well. Big display windows face the sidewalk, but they were

decorated to catch the eye of motorists. Catering to the burgeoning car culture was Bullock's innovation and its main entrance was in the rear, where patrons left their cars in the care of valets. Many Hollywood stars are said to have shopped at Bullock's, and some had jobbed there before too.[93] Towering behind a smooth plane of orderly parked cars, Bullock's is the majestic luxury liner to the swap meet's windswept raft. During the 1980s, high-end boutiques moved further west on Wilshire Boulevard and slowly brought about Bullock's decline. The store was rattled by the 1993 LA riots, but it was stripped down less by looters than by its final owner, Macy's, who slowly moved, piece by piece, historic artifacts, fixtures, and decor to other stores.[94] No Bullock's no more. But the elegant building keeps attracting passersby in their cars. It was bought by its long-time neighbor, Southwestern Law School, who restored its historical features for adaptive reuse.

"Yeah, we have to take these out of here anyway. Ok, so this is '56. And here we have another one from '56." It's a Friday afternoon in November 2010, and the fluorescent lamp absorbs the last of bit of daylight in the yard. "Let's start by clearing the worktables in the center of the room," I'd suggested. I had started to volunteer in the museum's archive, presumably to help the caretaker bring order to the stuff piling up in the small room. All kinds of stuff that has to do with Spring Valley. One table is covered with papers: newsletters from other historical societies, handwritten notes, half-filled accession forms, photographs, and mostly, newspaper clippings awaiting admittance into stuffed filing cabinets. "So, way down here is 1972. Ah, I remember this one, March '84. The lady said I was in love with this museum. You have to be careful when they write about you.... 'Cause, it comes back sometimes. Not many

people are in love with a building." At least not many people bestow the building they love with an archive about everything that has to do with the place around it.

But some do. "I hesitate to use the word 'love' when speaking of this factory," Russian filmmaker Dziga Vertov said about a giant plant featured in his 1928 film *The Eleventh Year*. "And yet, I do really feel as though I want to press myself against it and caress those giant smokestacks and black gas tanks…"[95] He unabashedly embraces the erotics that make the caretaker uneasy. Vertov's film about the Ukraine, electrification, and workers and peasants could be described as an archive in its own right, a collection of historical documents or records providing information about a place, institution, or group of people.

Of course, as a film comprising 50 minutes of densely layered images, Vertov's archive of modern hydroelectric stations, anthropomorphic rock formations, and two-thousand-year-old Scythian skeletons performs a synthesis of the ancient and the modern that the caretaker's archive will never achieve. The more diverse, the more successfully the archive resists synthesis, a fact that's equal parts affliction and advantage. Looking at Vertov's archive of moving images and thinking about the living archive at the museum brings back the idea that the site of the Bancroft Ranch House Museum affords an essay film. It's not an essay waiting to be made though, but one that's constantly rewritten. Just as Vertov continually reuses footage from his different film projects, the caretaker retells the same stories again and again, fragments of reality habitually repeated with mimetic precision. Some of them I've heard so many times I can replay them in my head and record them on paper without looking at footage or transcripts. Meanwhile, the scenery changes, objects move

around the yard, leaves fall and grow back, all changing, to use Vertov's words, "in a continuous process of editing and production."[96]

Clearly, a place is not a film. Film editor and writer Dai Vaughan captured it best when he said, "Film is about something, whereas reality is not."[97] It's not a musical piece or theater play either. Nor is it a TV show, although the recurring cast embroiled in low-intensity dramas around higher-order concerns may suggest otherwise, and weekly opening hours give it a serial nature. But still, in describing the premises of the museum under the caretaker's wings, verbs that come to mind are orchestrated, choreographed, or directed. Not so much curated, even though it's printed on plastic parking signage, painted in black lettering on white wooden boards, and spelled out with clip-on letters in the info display that this is the Bancroft Ranch House Museum. But the heart of the site is not the museum. At the heart of the site are the adobe, the building that the caretaker loves, and the archive he dedicated to it. And even though the archive is as real as it is about something—a place, in fact—it resists the coherence that shapes fragments of reality into a film, regardless of how chaotic its form and semantic its construction.

The Punch Bowl

The heavy glass bowl sits upside down on a piece of newspaper in a produce carton that balances precariously on a stack of books. It's a crystal punch bowl from the 1890s, the woman who had left the bowl with the caretaker, along with the request to repair it, had said. But the four seams that run along the bowl's outer side tell otherwise. There's no need to hold it against the light to check its refractive qualities. Cloudy and opaque, the thick glass gives the impression it never had the brilliant property of throwing light across the dinner table. While the bowl is made of pressed glass and not crystal, it may well be from the 1890s. The production of Early American Pressed Glass, the first mass-produced glassware that flooded households between 1850 and 1910 had peaked in the 1880s.[98] Marked as crystal's economic alternative, pressed glass targeted everyday housewives. Indeed, the bowl's presumed date also coincides with the publication of *Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) by Thorstein Veblen, who wrote that by the end of the 19th century wives had "become the ceremonial consumer[s] of goods," and, thus, the chief buyers of punch bowls.[99]

But the thing sitting upside down in the archive is not a bowl anymore. It's just two large pieces of glass, so carefully placed together they give the impression of a whole. I never even noticed that the bowl was broken, even though it must have been sitting there for a couple of years now. Leaning on one another, the pieces so snuggly fit together that they stabilize themselves and hide the sharp edges of the fracture that split the body apart. She inherited it from her mother who emigrated from Eastern Europe, the woman had said, although, so much is clear for both the

caretaker and I, she must have bought the bowl after arriving here. And yet, by turning the mass-produced product into a cherished family heirloom—by declaring it something worth keeping rather than throwing it out—the woman rejects her predetermined role as a consumer. And the caretaker, by accepting the bowl, or what's left of it, and storing it in the archive, plays along. At least for now.

A crystal object and pieces of broken glass, or rather the thingness that sets them apart, kicks off Bill Brown's meditation on the difference between objects and things in "The Secret Life of Things."[100] Jean Baudriallard's crystal object, advanced to take revenge against the supremacy of the subject, is dismissed as fast as the seams on the bowl discredit its claim to crystal properties: Why counter the sovereign subject, Brown asks, with an auratic object that outshines the ones around it and whose blinding sparkle only induces a loss of specificity.[101] Why not drop the crystal, he proposes instead, and "glance at the bits of glass that, though they are nothing but glass, captivate our attention?" Why not "deauraticize *the* object" and look at the excess that animates it to become different from itself.[102] Why not look at things?

According to Brown, things are trafficked outside the "generalizable circuits of exchange and consumption" reserved for objects.[103] Things are produced just like objects. But thingness occurs when these value systems and methods of objectification are out of whack, when norms are disregarded and desire turns into fetishism, when objects are overvalued or misappropriated, in other words, when they cease to be what they usually are. "Thingness," Brown writes, "is precipitated as a kind of misuse value," in that the sensuous, aesthetic, and semiotic attributes of an object come to the fore in precisely the moment it is used for a purpose it was not

intended for.[104] Or—in the event that's often credited for turning an object into a thing—when it breaks and fails to function, when its thingness and materiality become graspable. "When," for instance, as Brown puts it, "[w]ithin the shimmering splinters of glass, glass can become something else."[105]

Under the flat neon light in the archive no splinters shimmer. Despite the industrial-size lamps, the light always feels dim, especially in the winter months. But what little light is caught on the fractured surface messes with the regularity of the raised pattern, a slim geometric border of interlocking curved lines that runs around the shallow part of the fluted bowl. Given the dire state it is in, the bowl is quite successful in keeping up appearances. On first glance, the only thing that could give it away is that it's been turned upside down. It's not misuse value that's being negotiated here. Rather what seems to be at stake is its impending status as refuse, defined as something to be thrown away or rejected as worthless. The broken bowl refuses to perform the action required from it; the woman refuses to accept it as refuse. But by dumping it on the caretaker, she also refuses to take responsibility for the bowl.

And so, albeit reluctantly, the caretaker took it on as one of his "projects." First he thought he might be able to run lead across the fracture and solder it together, "you know, like they do in stained glass windows." He also schlepped the thing to a craft fair, but no good advice could be had to solve the structural problem that the weight of the pieces would drive the seam apart as soon as the bowl is turned upright again. "You'd need some major epoxying to hold it," the caretaker thinks out loud, "or wrap wire around it, or duct tape it or something to give it some structure." The

bowl looks more broken every minute. “Honestly—I’d rather throw it in the dumpster,” the caretaker adds, somewhat to my surprise. But he doesn’t. At least not yet.

For now, the project is on hold. Half sunken in its box, the bowl is in limbo, waiting to be fixed, even though it’s so clearly beyond repair. It becomes part of the slowly shifting landscape that animates the space. A translucent bowl-shaped peak that swallows colors and blends with its environs. There is something menacing about its indifference that adds to the slight terror of things that always lingers in the archive.

More Stuff, Less People

An archive is a place where records are kept.

Bancroft was one of the first historians to see the importance of newspaper articles for the writing of history, and made them part of his California collection.[106] Judging from the *Spring Valley Bulletins* bound in large volumes and clippings from the *Californian* and the *San Diego Union*, the caretaker has inherited this conviction. It's another afternoon in the archive, another afternoon of sorting through all kinds of stuff that has to do with Spring Valley. There's a flurry of articles on local luminaries—or builders, as Bancroft would call them—and events, often by writers and historians from the area. Irene J. Cormack on the Rock House; a portrait of the opera singer Madame Schuman-Heink; a feature on Dr. Reuben, California psychiatrist and author of *Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Sex (But Were Afraid to Ask)*. "This goes under People R," the caretaker laughs: "I'd like to get one of those paperbacks, just as a collector, because he was from Spring Valley. Just to have Dr. Reuben's book."

I paste clippings and listen to unfamiliar names of people and places that I can't connect as I try to keep up with the caretaker's digressions. I listen, but I don't hear what he says. The things we sort through prompt explanations that mix bits of information with personal recollections. The caretaker's speech follows an interior logic, but it is hard to make sense of it. At least for the outside ear, someone like me who hardly knows him. Before I started filming at the museum, I bought a dictaphone to record this endless stream of words meandering around a plethora of things. Words

that stopped only when I took off, the caretaker himself had to leave, or somebody else arrived to divert his attention. Running about, the caretaker's discourse befits the etymological sense of the word. Along the way, he picks up on details and frequently steps away from the path. Words spill as the caretaker seems to narrate his own stream-of-consciousness. Thoughts swerve; topics change in the same breath as they are uttered. Unexpectedly, his speech launches into long silences, pauses filled with words unsaid. In the recordings, the quiet sound of shuffling carries on and brings to mind dry images of hands and papers. The surface of the table covered in fake leather that slightly gives under my fingers.

Suspecting that his way of talking provides a key to his archive, I listen to the recordings again and again, and transcribe them word for word. It's only when I reread the transcripts much later that I understand what he was taking about.

Title: JvM10121203 Sweetwater Dam Date: November 21, 2010 6:11 PM Tags: Transcripts

"This I picked up because we have an English version of it. It was at the yard sale and I was surprised to see that this was in old German." "This" is a newspaper page with a lithograph print of Sweetwater Dam, the caretaker pulled out especially for me. I can remember the pleasure of recognizing the historic structure I had just spotted on one of my jaunts through the area. Today the massive dam lends its name to a newly opened regional park, although its former grandness is eclipsed by the elevated structure of Highway 125. Two freestanding lanes float high above the park

and turn the landscape into a gigantic shadow play. The lithograph was published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrierte Zeitung,* a German-American weekly set in Fraktur typeface, dated 1888 in pencil. Time has passed. I can't remember what the image looks like, but in my mind I immediately fill in a version of it. It extends into a full panorama really, a composite of photographs and illustrations that I've seen of the dam. Intricate lines render the perfect curve that spans the excavated gorge of Sweetwater River and disappears into the southern wall. A little further down, the broken surface of the quarry that supplied the granite riprap, large pieces of rock that lie stacked behind the concrete shell of the masonry arched dam. The tallest of its kind upon completion in 1888, facts echo in my head, and features: a marvel of modern civil engineering, a tourist attraction, a national historic landmark since 2007.[107] And an early example of the settlers' ongoing efforts to get the upper hand on the semiarid climate that makes this region so prone to drought.[108]

There's a short essay recording thoughts on the experience of collecting, the act of handling and holding of things, that also begins with an image of a dam. Well, almost. "I am unpacking my library."[109] So Walter Benjamin opens his text, and the crates which had temporarily sheltered his book collection. "Yes, I am." But what he's unpacking are not so much books as the collector's relationship with his possessions. His essay is an exploration of "collecting rather than a collection" by way of retelling how he acquired some of his books.[110] "This or any other procedure," he writes, "is merely a dam against the spring tide of memories which surges toward any collector as he contemplates his possessions."[111]

Indulging the lithograph brings up other ones. “I have a book on the civil war where this guy did these lithographs,” the caretaker says, but as usual, the actual thing gets lost in the story of how the piece ended up here: “I got ‘em out of the trash. I’m a dumpster diver at heart. I like to find treasures. I like to find things that are broken and fix them, that’s my favorite hobby.” A true collector, the caretaker doesn’t buy to sell; a veteran dumpster diver, he doesn’t invest, he scores. “Oh well.” No luck finding the English version of the print. But even here some things do find their place eventually, and when I asked about the lithographs last weekend, the caretaker pulls them out of the flat files, not without delayed gratification. They look different now. The English one is in color. The page contains two views of the dam and two other illustrations of stately mansions in the newly built towns of National City and Chula Vista. One might be the home of Frank Kimball, one of the area’s boosters and builders, and alleged mastermind of Sweetwater Dam. Boasting a bathtub and hot running water, his house is said to be the first modern home built in the country.[112] I wonder if the two mansions were among the houses washed away when the dam gave in to the great flood that swept San Diego County in 1916. The flood may or may not have been caused by Charles Hatfield, a rainmaker enlisted to end the severe drought preceding it.[113] But that is another story.

The old newspaper pages still have their draw. But the lithographs don’t live up to ones conjured before my mind’s eye. On second sight they seem ingenuous; the many visitors populating the vistas reveal the promotional purpose of the illustrations. Although the German version invites travel elsewhere. Here, modern views furnish memories of old times. The images still have their original captions, but now they

accompany a boy's holiday adventures in the German countryside back home. How the page first made it into the archive is now a different story as well. Its entry in the "magic encyclopedia" that, according to Benjamin, a true collector compiles from each object's backstory, has been magically revised.[114] A man named Ron Stahl found the German page in his father's belongings and brought it here, unaware that it would complement the English one that had long been part of the museum's collection. Long enough, that is, to have acquired index number and stamp, relics of archival procedures from the days when shelves were thinly stacked, allowing order to be kept in their ranks. He hasn't been around much, Ron Stahl, after he borrowed some money from the caretaker. "I got more stuff in my life now. Cars and houses. Stuff. And Doc even went, he has a book …," the caretaker's voice ebbs away, embarking on other people's memories. Doc's character appears again, although at some distance, traveling in Bavaria accompanied by his partner, Richard, to visit the Oktoberfest and the passion play, "some religious stuff … the Easter thing." Tales of debauchery, and back in the archive Doc's Lederhosen, somewhere up there.

"Casa Hardware?" My voice on the tape breaks the caretaker's ramble and jolts me out of my captivation. "There's a nuclear physicist who bought up Ace Hardware store." Words stream on in steady succession. Buzz Buck, former navy officer, who built reactors on submarines and taught safety at San Onofre power plant. "But they closed down, he had a heart attack and… No Ace Hardware no more. You have to go to Dixieline, which got purchased by a company called ProBuild. He had a house on Lake Marina that he wanted me to remodel. But the septic system up there, the fluid was coming up to the ground. It wasn't good. So he couldn't have any

more square footage." Safety lessons and septic tanks. People's lives and houses. "Time's flying by," the caretaker says, "Here it is … B for Buck. Next week is Turkey Day."

But for now that's just another thing from the past that won't be what it used to anymore. Somewhere between speaking about the five turkeys he cooked for his mother last year—"Not all at once. But through the holidays, she kept saying your turkey and your dressing and my linguini"—the families' recipe for a sauce with less butter and beer, countless drives to LA, caregivers and care supplies, cardiovascular problems, and eating late at night, the caretaker announces: "I'm taking the holidays off this year."

"Unincorporated Areas, Spring Valley?" I ask, holding on to a script that has long been rewritten: "That's under Development?" "Oh, that's …'80, '89. That would go under … Planning." There's a sister in Pasadena, he is trying to … avoid? I volunteer … inviting him to join festivities at a friend's house. "No, I won't go. I'll go up and sit in the house there. Reminisce of Thanksgivings past and some more work, like I did yesterday." Thanksgivings past were spent downtown, at the Grand Hotel's holiday buffet complete with carved ice structures, piano, cello and violin. No dishes to do, and Martini for rocket fuel. "And then she'd wanna go out: 'Let's go to the Casino!'" Which brings us to gambling and further back in time and up to Los Angeles again, where his folks liked betting on horses at the racetrack in San Anita Park. Built in the 1930s, during the depression; beautiful, with the mountains in the back. "Last night it was so clear you could see Catalina Island. I'd take my car up to this spot at the foot of the mountain looking at the sunset." Summoning his thoughts

to San Diego, the caretaker's voice is doused in disbelief: "Down here I got a place to see sunsets. Doc's house is on Sunset Cliffs … Here we have '91, '86 going backwards … '94, '86, '91, '92, '94."

An archive is a place where records are kept. Buried under words and documents are the dead. Buried in the chaos, there's a chronology of dates and things that occurred sometime somewhere to someone in Spring Valley. But more than that, the archive is the caretaker's refuge, a mental space, a place from where to look at one thing and think about another. "Every passion borders on the chaotic," Benjamin writes, "but the collector's passion borders on the chaos of memories."[115] There's more stuff but less people in the caretaker's life. From the debris of random things stored in the archive emerge two houses left by two loved ones, a family member and a friend, who died just before I met the caretaker. Other than his trapper hat and Lederhosen, calendars, souvenirs, and memories, Doctor Hostetler also left his house by the ocean on Sunset Cliffs. But it's a gift also in the sense of poison, both a present and a curse, yet another thing that needs to be taken care of. For with the house the caretaker also inherited the young man that was Doc's last lover, who, sans the love, is but another tenant who pays no rent. From his mother, he inherited another house full of things and memories demanding attention and weekly trips to LA.

The records the caretaker keeps in the museum's archive are infused with his memories and mixed with his private collections and things: women's hats, bird's-nests, old dairy bottles. A ceramic Suribachi grinder found its place in the archive too, salvaged from one of the rummage sales, in appreciation of the delicate grooves combed into the interior surface. "This lady told me: 'It's for ginger.'" The caretaker

runs his fingers over the rough surface, "I wonder if you can use it for garlic too." But it lives in the archive now, so I doubt he'll bother finding out.

There are many traits the caretaker shares with Benjamin's collector. His relationship to the objects in the archive resembles the peculiar relationship Benjamin finds between a collector and his collection. What draws the caretaker to things goes beyond an item's function and usefulness, just like the collector he "studies and loves them as the scene, the stage, of their fate."[116] His archive is not characterized by distance, but cared for with the passion of the collector. But what drives the caretaker goes beyond his passion for things and the desire to know them: he guards them precisely to set the scene for their future fate. For even beyond utility, the objects in the archive are not without purpose. Rather, it's their being here that becomes their purpose, and their being recognized as something worth keeping. So that, as the caretaker says, when somebody finds all this, they might not throw it away. The caretaker's personal investment in a more or less public archive challenges Benjamin's assertion, that "objects get their due" only in a private collection.[117] In short, it's the figure of the caretaker that's at stake here, and not, as for Benjamin, that of the collector. The caretaker wears many hats. Maintaining collections is but one of his passions, only one facet among the many others that make up the caretaker's task.

Almost four years after I made the recordings of our archiving sessions, the piles on the table have grown substantially. I still offer my help occasionally, but these days the caretaker has other things on his mind. So do I. Looking at one thing while thinking about another, I sort through the bulk of my research. Growing

continuously in all kinds of unsuspected directions, it seems as disjunct and helplessly personal as the caretaker's archive.

A Path Through a Wilderness of Knowledge to the Desired Facts

Ghosts of the past linger in the marble hall. Or rather, from that period of the past that has been captured in photographs. A cheerful blond woman in old-fashioned working clothes and what looks like a welding mask flipped back on her head hangs out in the foyer. Upright, a bundle of wood tied on her back, an Indian woman with the familiar stern expression and floor-length skirt leads the way up the stairs. Two women watch visitors emerging from the stairs. One looks seemly and stiff in her Victorian Dress, the other one radiates confidence, sporting boots, rolled-up pants, and a 1940s bob.

Selected from the Bancroft picture collection, the women are guarding the threshold from the bustle of the University of California Berkeley's campus to the quietude of the Bancroft Library. Placed here in a double effort of getting history out of its archival box and presenting women as historical agents, they accompany patrons on this short passage from a place committed to the future to one dedicated to the past. But in addition to their official role of welcoming guests, the women are performing another task: they represent. Everybody has a place, they silently assure visitors walking by; we are all in this together. Embodied in the life-size cardboard cutouts of women from all walks of life are the pitfalls of trying to display diversity.

A young African-American woman in running shorts races through the reference room that doubles as entry to the library, forever frozen in her sprint. I think of the frozen gestures of the mannequins in the museum, as I wrestle my driver's license, student ID and credit card from the zip lock bag handed to me downstairs.

This is a different kind of archive. Gaining entry requires two forms of ID. Once you obtain a daily reading card, you may take a notebook without pockets and no more than three loose sheets of paper. Pencils only, portable computers are allowed too. Photo privileges cost $10 per day, although for private use only to assist research. Multiple forms to sign and voices kept low. The procedure instills respect, and rightly so: The Bancroft Library is considered one of the largest and most frequently consulted special collections library in the United States, especially its holdings on Mexico and Central America.

In 1905, albeit after some 20 years of initial hesitation—for Bancroft's reputation in the world of academia was not the best and the price, although reasonable, was high—the University of California Berkeley acquired his extensive collection of books and manuscripts. The comparative completeness that was attributed to his collection and of which Bancroft was convinced, contradicts the necessary incompleteness that Benjamin associates with the private collection.[118] Although it began as a private enterprise, Bancroft's library seemed destined from the start to find its place in a public institution. Bancroft himself acknowledges as much, when he admits the scope of his collection to be well beyond one man's lifetime to read, let alone process.[119] Bancroft had started collecting books on the Pacific West Coast in 1860. A decade and 16,000 volumes later, his collection encompassed materials reaching from Alaska in the North and the Rocky Mountains in the East to Mexico and Central America in the South, spanning the time periods from native cultures to colonial rule.[120] Or, put in a different way, Bancroft's collection covers

roughly the territory of Meso- and North America ravaged by the Spanish and Portuguese Conquest.[121]

As for Bancroft, his appetite didn't stop with books, historical manuscripts, and maps. His key to success lies both in his voraciousness and his ability to see history in the very stuff immediately surrounding him, collecting everything from advertisements, newspapers, and periodicals to pamphlets, almanacs, and directories. "The most worthless trash may prove some fact wherein the best book is deficient, and this makes the trash valuable," said Bancroft, quoted in the afterword to an abridged, recently published edition of his autobiographical volume *Literary Industries*; indeed, it is the Bancroft Library, current director Charles B. Faulhaber notes, that is seen as Bancroft's greatest achievement today, not the 39-volume *Works* it served to produce.[122]

Correspondence with original owners of coveted manuscripts reveals Bancroft's canny tactics in acquiring existing collections: flattery to assure delivery paired with evasiveness to prevent return, all buttressed by a hefty dose of entitlement.[123] Former head librarian Henry L. Oak rejects allegations that documents became part of the library against their owner's will, although he admits lacking definitive information on the subject.[124] At any rate, to use a phrase that frequently appears in the *Works*, history writing is his frontier, and Bancroft deems himself on the side of progress. Thus characterized by a movement of devouring and appropriation, his venture is driven by a colonizing spirit. Run, as he says, with a mind for business and profitability in order to achieve maximum productivity, the History Company takes its cue from the business methods of early industrial

capitalism, a fact that the title of Bancroft's *Literary Industries* readily confirms. He owned quite a bit of real estate, much of it in San Diego, and his production facilities, of course. But the bulk of Bancroft's property is made of ink on paper.

Bancroft comes to history-writing as a businessman and as a collector, through "desperate attempts at great things," and, importantly, with a clear mission.[125] Business interests aside, the goal that fuels his passion is to ensure the Pacific West Coast the principal position on the historical map of the United States he thought it righteously deserved. "All writings are a description of something," he states with unusual brevity, "either real or imaginary."[126] Indeed, Bancroft's *Works*—that is the totality of the writing produced in his History Company—combine the two dominant approaches of 19th century historiography: on the one hand, history as romantic art, which seeks to provide a dramatic narrative account of events connected through the author's historical imagination, and on the other, history as science, which sets out to recover the objective truth from the wealth of historical facts.

As an autodidact, Bancroft was not affiliated with any specific school of history. He sought to compensate for his lack of academic training with an abundance of footnotes to provide proof not only for his archival sources but also for his knowledge of the "authorities." In the context of 19th century historiography, he follows in the footsteps of Leopold von Ranke, the German historian commonly credited as the founder of modern scientific history. Ranke's idea of history as an objective account of facts discerned through archival research and the critical study of historical sources aimed to show the past "the way it really was."[127] The excruciating amount of information presented in detailed accounts gathered from original

documents and scholarly writing that convolute the nearly 30,000 pages of the *Works* attests to Bancroft's commitment to show the past "the way it really was." Much later, Ranke's motto became notorious through Benjamin's comment that "the history that showed things 'as they really were,' was the strongest narcotic of the century."[128] His fidelity to the objective treatment of facts notwithstanding, Ranke also espoused Romanticism's investment in individual human experience and was deeply embroiled in its entanglement with nationalism.[129] In the same vein, Bancroft saw the shaping of historical facts to fit a larger teleological goal not in contradiction but in necessary relation to a scientific methodology, for, as he put it, "all seem to agree that an unseen mysterious force has some direction of human affairs, and rules them by intelligent laws for man's advancement. It matters little for the purposes of history what this subtle force is called, whether free-will, necessity, progress or providence."[130] As for Bancroft himself, the mysterious force that fueled his enterprise was his aspiration to prove the historical significance, if not superiority, of the only recently established Western American states. Oregon and California, or Mexico, for that matter, may not have had the same "influence upon the destinies of man" as have had Greece, Rome, or England, he admits, "but we cannot tell … When the Pacific slope shall have had centuries of national life, her annals may tell of more benefits to the race than those of Egypt can now boast."[131] World history, for Bancroft, culminates in the Pacific West and, as becomes clear through the chronology constructed within the body of his *Works,* finds its highest expression in the Western American states.[132] And it is California, the place that first gave the inspiration for his historical enterprise that emerges as the seat of this burgeoning American identity.

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An occasional archival sneeze can be heard across the room, but it seems that any dust escaping from the pages immediately dissipates into the temperature-controlled environment of the reading room. Tiny cameras, tastefully hidden in small white tubes, point at patrons from all sides, and I can sense the undergraduate student at the reception one floor down watching my every move.

Working in the archive inevitably sets in motion a parade of paper. Just as in the museum, I find myself drawn to ephemera at the fringes of the collection: folders containing miscellaneous clippings, receipts, and stationary; countless scrap books filled with newspaper articles; and folders upon folders with Bancroft's reference notes. I am not exactly looking for information about places or historical events when I order several cartons of the reference notes from the stacks. I just want to see the actual material of the mammoth historiographical undertaking Bancroft so vividly describes in *Literary Industries*. "On my shelves were tons of unwinnowed material for histories unwritten and sciences undeveloped," he recalls, "In the present shape it was of little use to me or to the world. Facts were too scattered; indeed, mingled and hidden as they were in huge masses of *débris,* the more one had of them the worse one was off."[133] In preparing to write the histories that comprise the two main sections of his *Works*, the six-volume *The Native Races* and the 27-volume *History of the Pacific States,* Bancroft's History Company develops a complex method of extracting information from the library's ever expanding holdings. Or rather, the company re-invents the long-standing practice of excerpting—the paraphrasing, copying, or cutting of texts—which according to historian Anke te Hessen flourished

among scholars from the 16th to 18th century. She describes "this culture of the excerpt" as a form of "scholarly accounting" that was first developed as an attempt to master a growing amount of literature.[134] This *methodus excerpendi,* te Hessen notes, is the step that bridges the gap between reading and writing.

For Bancroft, the genius of his system of gathering and arranging material on specific topics lies "in the application of business methods and the division of labor to those ends."[135] He lays out his method of breaking up the work process into specialized, limited tasks in detail: indexers are provided with all print matter and manuscripts that contain information on a general subject, say the history of British Columbia, and prepare an index for a topic, say the peoples of New Caledonia. Then, note-takers produce bibliographical references by providing the work's title and the kind of facts it contains, and later write notes with excerpts of the most relevant information. These notes containing references and excerpts are then organized by specific topics and collected in grocery bags. Lastly, qualified assistants refine these collections by putting them in subdivisions, organizing them chronologically and by territory, separating primary and secondary sources, eliminating any duplicates and unnecessary materials, and highlighting contradictory accounts. In Bancroft's book, the indexers, note-takers, and assistants are all pegs in the cog of his history machine, each providing a separate part of the final product he alone writes.[136] In a way, the horde of assistants he employed to procure, index, and annotate his holdings—many of whom are co-authors of the *Works*—anticipated the many librarians and scholars who expand, process, and make use of the library today.[137]

This is the process Bancroft devised in order to "find a path through a wilderness of knowledge to the desired facts."[138] Or, according to Oak, this is how he imagines it. No such elaborate preparatory system at the service of one single author, Oak claims, ever existed, at least none that can be applied to the *Works* as a whole. Bancroft's overstatement in his claim to authorship has long since been acknowledged across the board, and many volumes of the *Works* have been attributed to his assistants in retrospect.[139] Oak's description of the system is much simpler and straightforward: books are read; excerpts are made and separated by topic and then stored in ordinary grocery bags. And here the preliminary process ends. The notes and references "all served merely as guides to the study of the sources" and were used to assist the various authors in their own research and writing process.[140] No hierarchical division of labor features in Oak's account. Instead, note-takers double as authors, engaged in a fine-tuned interplay between collaborative and individual achievements.

Much more mundane, the use of grocery bags to store reference notes is the invention Oak was most proud of. Reading about the process that Oak pragmatically refers to as "indexing proper to historical purpose" and Bancroft enthusiastically calls "refinement" and "condensation" is quite different than actually seeing the fruits of this labor achieved over so many years and by so many hands.[141] The reference notes for the *History of California* alone*,* transferred from their original grocery bags into countless manila folders stored in 22 cartons and 4 boxes measuring a total of 30 linear feet are far from providing easy access to "desired facts." A wilderness of facts scribbled on slips of paper spills out of each folder and the sheer number of notes is

daunting. And even when they are organized in manuscript binders neatly arranged into pages separated by vellum paper, it's still a long way to go from notes to *History*.

The paper on which the notes are written looks surprisingly modern to me. Contemporary, that is. Except that it's thicker and a bit more coarse, it looks just like the kind of notebook paper widely sold today: ruled with fine blue horizontal lines, a margin on the left separated by a red down line. Dates and topics are recorded on the margin, references or notes written in the body, and titles of books and manuscripts listed at the bottom of each page. Looking at the paper, one gets the impression that no one other than Bancroft himself developed it. It fits his purpose perfectly. The ruled paper was not made to capture thoughts or ideas. Developed from ledgers and papers designed to record legal proceedings, its function is to organize facts and classify information. The reference notes are written on half sheets of legal paper, Bancroft and Oak explain, and Reuben G. Thwaites, who took stock of the Bancroft Library before its sale, further specifies: strips of foolscap of varying length.[142]

I've never heard of foolscap, nor of its German counterpart, *Kanzleipapier*, or registry paper. In *White Magic: The Age of Paper* Lothar Müller gives a brief history of foolscap, which turns out to be a lot older than one might imagine. Owing its name to the medieval watermark of a fool's cap, foolscap predates industrial paper production. Following its paper trail from Charles Dickens' *Bleak House*, where it famously furnishes lawyer's offices, Müller traces foolscap through the stories of American writers such as Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allen Poe, and eventually to Herman Melville's "The Paradise of Bachelors and The Tartarus of Maids," written in 1852. [143] The short story takes place in Berkshire County, Massachusetts,

the then center of American paper production. For Melville, the foolscap produced there—pale white and ruled, like forms' specters—is imbued with the bureaucratic coldness of modern business efficiency. In sad mimicry, the pallid faces of the workers, unmarried girls and women, speak of the exploitation that undergirds such industrial productivity. "At rows of blank-looking counters sat rows of blank-looking girls, with blank, white folders in their blank hands, all blankly folding blank paper."[144] Two girls are working at a machine stringed with rows of thread. Blank paper fed into the machine on one side comes out ruled on the other. In Melville's story, the lines are imprinted on the girls' faces too, which turn "ruled and wrinkled" in the process.[145] Bought by the ream and industrially produced, the paper used by the History Company turns out to be modern indeed. With Melville—and with Marx, for that matter, who analyzed the production process of paper mills extensively—one could go even further and say by the mid-19th century foolscap had become a symbol of industrial modernity.[146]

The darkest allegory of white paper in 19th century literature, as Müller puts it, "The Paradise of Bachelors and The Tartarus of Maids" is structured like a diptych.[147] A lavish dinner in the company of London bachelors precedes the sobering encounter of the story's narrator with Berkshire Mill maids across the Atlantic. But the tradesmen "with ledger-lines ruled along their brows" he notices on the way to his evening entertainment already foreshadow the ruled foolscap and faces coming to haunt him later.[148] The carefree bachelors and maiden workers themselves are connected through celibacy. For the men celibacy assures personal freedom and independence; in the case of the maids it is supposed to guarantee their availability.

Deliberately hiring unmarried women is pure calculation on part of their employer so as to avoid losing work time on pregnancies. And, with some stretch of imagination, bachelors and maids might be connected through the rags that provide the raw material for the paper. Rags being in short supply locally, the narrator learns, they are imported from cities overseas, such as London. Might there not, then, he muses, "among these heaps of rags" that are bleached, stripped of seams, and scythed into lint in the Tartarus of Maids, "be some old shirts, gathered from the dormitories of the Paradise of Bachelors."[149]

The well-to-do bachelors in Melville's story were not literary men, but lawyers. To say that the men employed in the History Company were bachelors—although this happens to be the case for Oak—would be mere speculation. And in contrast to Melville's fictional paper mill, the production of virginal paper was not a task reserved for virgins but for low-paid workers of all kinds. The connection between the workers in Bancroft's literary workshop and the factory supplying it, is nothing more than the foolscap. In this imaginary production line, sheets of foolscap move from the hands of the workers who make it to those who write on it.[150] Thus, systematically, line after line, page after page, countless blank sheets of foolscap are filled with dates and titles, references and notes to produce, in the most time- and cost-efficient way, histories of peoples, conquests, and territories. Business as usual in which the violence of the past is translated into stories of progress.

Another diptych that allegorizes life in times of industrialization falls into my hands, fished from the miscellanea among *Hubert Howe Bancroft Papers: Additions.*[151] It's a newspaper clipping, folded tightly into a small strip of paper. It

unfolds into the full upper half of a page from *Sunday World*, an Irish newspaper published at the end of the 19th century. The featured article is titled *Most Extraordinary Book in the World*, one of the many reviews Bancroft collected of his publications. A facsimile of the book's title is printed on the page. *Achievements of Civilization: THE BOOK OF WEALTH: WEALTH IN RELATION TO MATERIAL and Intellectual Progress and Achievement Being An Inquiry Into the Nature and Distribution of the World's Resources and Riches and a History of the Origin and Influence of Property, its Possession, Accumulation and Disposition in all Ages and Among all Nations as a Factor in Human Accomplishment, and Agency of Human Refinement, and the Evolution of Civilization from the Earliest to the Present Era* by Hubert Howe Bancroft, New York, The Bancroft Company Publishers, 1896.[152]

According to the article, 400 editions of the book were printed, the "cygne noir," a gold-clothed luxury edition with original water colors of 150 for $2,500, and a standard edition of 250 for $1000. Adjusting for inflation, today this would amount to roughly $89,000 and $33,000 per set respectively. A book about wealth and, due to its price, available only to the wealthy. Grandly over-sized, with an abundance of images veneering the scarcity of text, *The Book of Wealth* is essentially Bancroft's luxury version of a coffee table book. Following his later and highly profitable subscription projects, such as the "vanity biography" of *Chronicle of the Builders* or *The Book of the Fair*, *The Book of Wealth* was published in ten volumes between 1896 and 1908.[153] "The set of volumes begins with tangible relics of wealth and power of the Egyptian dynasties," Harry Clark notes in *A Venture in History*, "while

later volumes are devoted to mines, factories, and houses of American millionaires."[154]

I flatten the page with my hands but it asserts its thingness and immediately shrugs back into the uneven grit that the fold impressed over time. The creases tilt the paper up and down at slight angles and lift the obverse off the dark slate surface of the library table. I pick it up and turn it around.

As it so happens, the factories of an American millionaire set the stage for the article on the other side, random information that just happens to be there, without having been collected itself. Just like *The Book of Wealth,* it has an exceptionally long title: *ANKLE DEEP IN WATER Women and Girls Toil in Health-Destroying Atmosphere in Barbour Flax Mill's Paterson—New Jersey's WHITE GIRL SLAVES Children, Too, in Violation of the Child Labor Law, Work at a Body and Brain Stunting Task, forced to BREATH STIFLING DUST.*[155] Irish textile magnates, the Barbours expanded their enterprise to America in the 1860s. The majority of workers in their flax mill were Irish immigrant women and children, whose yearly wage ranged from approximately $150 to $300. Already in 1887, Knights of Labor investigator Leonora Barry reported on the abuse and insufferable working and living conditions in the Barbours' linen-thread industry.[156] She had been sent to the Paterson factory on the occasion of a strike by doffers—small girls employed to exchange bobbins full of spun fiber for empty ones—who had demanded a raise but were brutally struck down.

The House of Barbour is not represented in Bancroft's *Book of Wealth*. But a sentence is devoted to Paterson, the silk city of America, where after the Civil War

"50 silk factories arose."[157] Just like that. Though it may not be silk, the Barbour flax mills produced quality yarn nonetheless. Separating the fibers and spinning fine threads into proverbial gold, a drawing of women workers graces the sides of the article, framing a sinister portrait of the mill's owner William L. Barbour. The women are engulfed in steam or poisonous dust; Barbour is showered in dollar bills. A meditation on wealth in relation to materials in its own right, the article tells a different story about the nature and distribution of the world's resources and riches than the *Book of Wealth*. It also brings to mind Melville's description of the material and inhumane flip side of industrialization in his tale about the production of paper. The Maiden workers he conjures in his paper mill endure the same dismal working conditions, perform the same repetitive tasks, and breathe the same poisonous dust as the female workers depicted in the article on the Paterson mills.

According to a survey on *Commerce and Industries on the Pacific Coast*, published by Bancroft in 1882, writing paper was not produced in California but imported from the East Coast during the time his literary workshop churned out the *History on the Pacific Coast.*[158] 15 years later, the *Book of Wealth* was printed in Chicago on glossy, high quality paper. The gold-rimmed pages are so thick that I constantly find myself thumbing the edges, trying to separate a single page into several ones. Seeking only the best of the best, Bancroft's publishers may have special ordered the heavy golden silk used for binding the books from Paterson, the city of silk. Might there not be, then, I wonder, woven into the decorative fabric lining the luxury editions of the *Book of Wealth*, some of the fine threads spun by the women and children slaving away in the Paterson mills?

“Cowboys and …”

In the foreground, to the left, we can see the front wall of a house with a little bench. There are a few other houses further down, or huts rather, sparsely scattered along the grassy lane that seems to be the main drag of this small settlement. A young chap is standing in front of the house, his hat and bandana signal ‘cowboy’ and situate this scene in the West. It’s a lively little place that offers perspective, both spatially and socially. Other cowboys stroll up the road for a chat. A cowgirl appears, her slender body all curves. Swirling her handbag, swinging her hips, she’s claiming space as she walks down the lane. Meanwhile, an Indian village nearby. The triangular shape of the tepee fills most of the picture frame. A family of four huddles in the foreground; long thick black wigs brand them Indian. Here, the space is collapsed, constricted, and one can barely make out an old mare grazing behind the tent. But the faint outline of San Miguel Mountain in the back transports the scene into familiar land.

Moving back and forth between Western town and Indian village, this one-reeler compacts violation and rejection, failed revenge and displacement in a story of American/Indian relations, in which the settlers consume the Indians. The cowboy, Dick Wren, takes the Indian maiden to his house but soon rejects her. A “Hoppe Indian Brave” takes after Wren who is skipping town with the cowgirl, Madge Blaine. The cowboys gang up. An unequal fight leaves the Indian dead. His devastated elder attacks only to share the same fate. “Only women,” the last title card

reads, and the last shot shows them running uphill, fleeing into the landscape: *The Vanishing Race*.[159]

From 1911 to 1912 the American Film Manufacturing Company's Western production unit, nicknamed Flying A, was based in La Mesa, a neighboring town of Spring Valley. Drawing inspiration from the scenery, Flying A produced an average of two films per week. Plots were contrived from features in the landscape en route to the shooting location of the day. "I'd pile everyone into two buckboards," director Allan Dwan remembers, "a ranch wagon for our equipment, the cowboys on their horses—and the actors too if they were riding in the picture—and off we went into the countryside to make a picture."[160]

According to my notes, the narrative unfolds in only five alternating camera set-ups. Filmic space is created most economically, a signature trait of Dwan. A wall placed at the edge of the frame becomes a house, a piece of cloth hanging from a tree, a tent. Wild grassland breezes over the space in-between. The sea of grass churns complicit as Wren drags the Indian Maiden behind him. Surging chest high, it creates intimacy between Dick and Madge plotting their flight. Long leaves part and swallow the escaping Indian women: *The Vanishing Race*.

Although they have access to houses and horses, women and names, the cowboys in *The Vanishing Race* circulate outside of economic realities. And while Dick and Madge live in the world of film, the Indians are stuck in a limbo—placeless, nameless and without destination. Far from being noble savages, they are here shown as lumpen-proletariat. The myth of the noble savages' vanishing race is exemplified in the early 20th century photographs of the ethnologist Edward S. Curtis.[161] In the

spirit of salvage anthropology, his camera sought to capture native culture static and timeless. Stripped of cotton shirts, jeans, and hats or any other item linking them to contemporary American life, Curtis' North American Indians are forced to perform a double negation.

"Should not the Indians of to-day be real?" the film index and exhibition guide *Moving Picture World* asks in 1911.[162] "The 'Make-Believe' Indian" describes Indians protesting the unreal and often unfair representation of themselves and their presumed habits. But the article sticks to the script of the vanishing race urging to document this "noble race of people," while "we still have the real Indians with us." Another article writes about a group of Indians assembling in Washington, D.C.. They are discussing whether to demand congressional action against the custom of using costumed white men to depict Indians. These popular representations of Indians, the delegation states, create an image that is "in fact grossly libelous."[163] Titled "Indian War on Film," the article unwittingly proves their statement true.

"'American Indians' cannot have a Sidney Poitier or Harry Belafonte, much less an Eddie Murphy," artist and American Indian Movement activist Jimmie Durham writes in "Cowboys and …" roughly 80 years later. "We still cannot be trusted to portray ourselves."[164] But the 'make-believe' Indian cannot be countered with 'Indian-ness,' or 'American Indians' for that matter. Durham evokes Confucius' call for the need to "rectify names" in order to make language true to things.[165] As European imports tied to the idea of progress, he argues, terms like 'tribe' and 'chief' reek of enclosure and concealment, forever hinging on negation. The narrative is set and poses a dilemma: "We, then, are left somewhere else, (no-where else). By the

very act of speaking we contribute to the silence, the nullification, laid upon us."[166] In "Cowboys and …," Durham presents this negation as the "outrageous idea that the profound division in the Americas is between 'Indians' and settlers."[167]

First Contact and Clothing

The story begins at nightfall, with the arrival of a woman who wears many dresses. There used to be a mock-up Kumeyaay hut, an *ewaa*, in the corner of the museum yard, right about where the remnants of the native plant garden are. Back in the seventies, the archaeology students would hang out here for drinks or a smoke after the dig. The story begins with a woman who wears many dresses, one on top of the other. She's not a woman but an apparition. For at night, she wanders alone by the old spring. She was real enough to scare the shit out of the archaeology students who all dropped the class and never came back. Instead of jumping ship, let's follow the woman who wears many dresses and embark on a journey to explore the dress code of first contact.

Let's go back to 1542, onboard one of the ships navigating the uncharted coast north of New Spain. According to the summary log of the Cabrillo expedition, the first longer interaction with indigenous inhabitants occurred on the peninsula the Spaniards called California. The encounter happened three days after the captain "went on land and took possession" of a port he named Posesion on behalf of the Spanish crown and the Viceroy of New Spain, Antonio de Mendoza. "They appeared to be Indians with reasoning powers," the log states, "and they indicated that they had seen other men like them who had beards, and brought dogs, ballistas and swords."[168]

But the native's mimetic play encompasses more than signs and hand gestures alone.

What strikes me is that they inscribed an image of the foreigners' clothes directly onto their bodies by cutting lines into white paint with which they had covered themselves, "so that they appeared men in pantaloons and short jackets made from cuts."[169] This enactment and visualization is described in detail and introduces the Spanish presence in the interior, a fact well known to the expeditionaries and natives alike.

The encounter with the Kumeyaay in San Miguel (later renamed San Diego de Alcalá by explorer Sebastian Vizcaíno) occurs roughly a month later. Here, the log records the violent actions committed by men who looked like them. On its way up the coast Cabrillo's expedition continues to come across native inhabitants who mimic the Spaniards. Over the course of the journey, the entries become shorter and cease to document the actual gestures, keeping a record of their repetition instead: "men like the Spaniards dressed and bearded … there walk men like us … Spaniards like them … they also gave us news of people bearded and dressed."[170]

And cut, change of scene. Now watch the sails coming in and look at the gestures made by the bearded men disembarking the ships. For the motions and signs repeated by Cabrillo himself are omitted from the log. The encounters with the natives are preceded by an act so central to the nature of the expedition it becomes a mere formality of which few words and no explanation are deemed necessary. "Here they took possession," the log frequently notes, or "they took possession of it," with a casualness that betrays the violence implicated in the undertaking.[171] What, then, are the gestures bracketed between "here" and "it" that are left out of the account? In *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640*,

Patricia Seed points out the improvised nature of Spanish ceremonies. Instructions given by Viceroy de Mendoza to Francisco Vasquez de Coronado's 1539 expedition to Tierra Nueva simply read: "You will make the signs and ceremonies that may seem to you required in such a case."[172] If there were no people in sight, this could mean to make a small pile of rocks near the ocean or carve a cross on a tree or other vegetation adequate for inscription, say a fleshy nopal cactus such as the prickly pear. The presence of native inhabitants, on the other hand, called for a ritual speech, the reading of a document called the *Requerimento*. "You will make the natives of the land aware that there is one God in heaven and the emperor who is on Earth in order to command and govern it. Everyone must be his subject and serve him."[173] But the summary offered in the instructions only refers to the first part of the text; failure to recognize and obey said Church and Crown, so the Requirement goes on, shall be punished with war. "But if you do not do it … with the help of god, I will enter forcefully against you, and I will make war everywhere and however I can."[174] Acts of war are rendered just according to Christian faith; conquest becomes a holy enterprise.

Within the colonial mindset of discovery since the late 15th century, the meeting between natives and Europeans has been framed as one between primitive and civilized cultures. Gestures and objects exchanged and observed have been described in explorer's journals and expedition narratives and then hatched with thousands of fine lines in engraving and prints. The image thus produced is etched into history as the meeting between savage and civilized man. Within the past three decades, in the interest of post-colonial correction, the exchange of gestures, objects,

and images that were exchanged, traded, and copied have been under review. Here is a snapshot of this debate.

In *Marvelous Possessions*, a book about the mimetic circulation at play in first contact between European explorers and indigenous people, Stephen Greenblatt writes that communicating by gestures and signs in lieu of a shared written or spoken language still depends on the assumption of common gestures and signs. Sailing "unknown routes" in search of "the *known* world," the narratives of early explorers such as Christopher Columbus draw on Europe's accumulated mimetic capital as a vast amount of cultural images at their disposal to generate new representations.[175] Columbus, in other words, "finds what he expected to find," when he followed the plain descriptions of a gesture in his diary with interpretations based on preconceptions.[176] Greenblatt takes a leaf out of Tzvetan Todorov's book, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, which claims that Columbus sees the Indians through the lens of earlier explorers such as Marco Polo. His goal is to find the Great Khan so arrestingly described by Marco Polo as well as the gold said to be abundant in the Indies, and Columbus' journal is speckled with signs of both. "I was attentive," he says of his encounter with the natives of Guanahani, "and took trouble to ascertain if there was gold … and by signs was able to make out that to the south, or going to the island to the south, there was a King who had great cups full, and who possessed great quantity."[177] For Todorov it reads like this: "He knows in advance what he will find, the concrete experience is there to illustrate a truth already possessed, not to be interrogated according to preestablished rules in order to seek the truth."[178] So far, so true. But Columbus' account goes on, admitting that "I tried to get

them to go there, but afterwards I saw that they had no inclination." On the contrary, he deplores, "they take what they can get, and presently swim away."[179]

José Piedra rejects the dialectic of self and other at play in Todorov's account. In *The Game of Critical Arrival*, a review of *The Conquest of America,* Piedra points out that Todorov unwillingly follows Columbus footsteps. His reading of Columbus' writing uncritically assumes the perspective of the colonizer: an authoritative voice speaking for others, unaware of his own presence in the world of the text. But just like the explorer, Piedra contends, the literary critic too embarks on a voyage of discovery, setting out to conquer not *worlds* but *words*. And, just as Todorov said of Columbus, the critic "has the capacity to see things as it suits him" in order to find what he set out to find.[180] Piedra re-imagines the scene of arrival as a transcultural encounter between two parties each staking out their own critical currency. "The inventive relationship that ensues becomes part of the game of arrival," he writes, "It obliges both sides to begin to see themselves in each other's critical eyes from the perspective of a scene of arrival. We could consider this meeting point to be emblematic of an unavoidable amalgamation and creolization."[181] But whether it results from "discovery," "first contact," or "encounter," hybridization in the Americas is predetermined by genocide.[182]

One could argue that the writer of Cabrillo's log, too, only finds what he already expected. Here, knowledge of Coronado's bloody, albeit unsuccessful, attempt to conquer Tierra Nueva, today's Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, provide interpretative guidance. What is different, though, is that the gestures are not interpreted as general truths about the land, its people and their habits, but read within

the context of a particular recent event. The log contains laconic description of land and vegetation, the indigenous population, their clothes, canoes and dwelling, producing exactly the kind of bureaucratic survey requested by the viceroy. It doesn't share the inventive enthusiasm of early discoverers who paint the new world in the image of paradise, but sticks to the plain palette Michel de Montaigne heralds in *Of Cannibal*s as the more likely to tell the truth of distant worlds and unknown cultures.[183] Critics such as Greenblatt or anthropologist Roger Bartra call on Montaigne because his essay not only follows this lead, but also turns the spotlight on his own folks and locates savagery among European ranks.[184]

In the log of Cabrillo's voyage explanation is reduced to a minimum and interpretation of the native's signs occurs mainly in places where they concern the doings of the explorers. The Kumeyaay's gestures are not interpreted as native customs but described as representations of non-native practices. By referring to the Indians' gestural lexicon of Spanish actions and comportment, explanatory power and definition are essentially relinquished to the natives. As a result, the log registers a restrained form of self-reflection. Presented with a negative imprint of themselves on the bodies of the natives, Cabrillo and his men are faced with their own mirror image. In whitening their bodies to draw onto themselves an image of the Spanish soldiers' dress, the natives of California parody a common tendency of European explorers that Greenblatt identifies, namely to perceive Indians simultaneously as "virtual blanks" without culture and history and as "virtual doubles" intuiting European culture.[185] By bringing news of distant places to the recent arrivals, the natives' mimetic doubling of the invaders renders the Europeans as other instead.

For Piedra, the game of critical arrival calls for "an anthropoetical effort: to define the subversive participation of native 'finds' and of the native critical 'I' in the elusive symbolic linkage and material exchange within the colonial text."[186] The exchange of things is an important informal aspect of the Spanish possession rituals. For the most part, the log remains elusive about the kind of objects that are changing hands, naming "certain articles of barter" or "some barter goods."[187] If we want to follow the traces of material exchange buried in colonial texts, as Piedra suggests, clothing offers itself as one of the items singled out in Cabrillo's log. It is present in its absence in many encounters with the natives: "they came naked," it says, or "they walk naked."[188] But there are also descriptions of fur coats, clothing made from animal skin and bark, and intricate head dresses. Clothes are not exchanged, though, but move in one direction only and by way of routine: Indians are taken to the ship, kept for a night or two, and then sent back with "shirts" or "clothing," regardless of their own dress.[189] The tenor of this narrative permeates the imaginary of the New World, where nakedness is inscribed on the native body. In the mind of European explorers to be without clothes is the same as being without culture. The native's naked body becomes an object of both desire and abomination, and a target for assaults. By way of writing, the opposing poles of naked versus dressed enter the colonial text and re-emerge sanitized as the persistent binary of primitive versus civilized.

In her journey of discovery through the thicket of historical documents and scholarly texts, the critic acts like an explorer. And, just like the explorer, the critic has the capacity to see things as they suit her. Guided by knowledge of dominant

narratives just as much as their critical reconstruction, descriptions are followed by interpretative leaps to establish their meaning. One morning in October 1542, three indigenous men tell the alien captain and his crew by signs of men in the interior, "bearded and dressed, and armed like the ones on the ships."[190] They must be Spaniards, the log concludes, en route with those exploring the lands to the north of New Spain, scholars infer. But who are these men who "killed many Indians of the native" thus mimicked by the Kumeyaay when "they made gestures with their right arm as if they were spearing, and … went running as if they were on a horse."[191] And, what's more, whom did they meet?

So I set out to the follow the native dispatch, scouring colonial reports in search of verbal traces of clothes and weapons, to join the game of critical arrival. I had read in local accounts of Cabrillo's legacy that the Kumeyaay may have heard about the arrival of the Spanish through the neighboring Yuman people, with whom they maintained an expansive communication network.[192] The meetings between the Yuman and the Spanish are detailed in *Documents of the Coronado Expedition, 1939-1542:"They Were Not Familiar with His Majesty, nor Did They Wish to be His Subjects,"* a 700-page, annotated volume providing new translations of original documents. The Yuman people witnessed Fernando de Alarćon's ships sailing up the Colorado River in a failed attempt to deliver supplies to a dispatch of the main expedition. According to the narrative of Alarćon's voyage, the natives relay the news of the expedition's recent arrival to the mythical city of Cíbola, probably the Zuni settlement Háwikku located about 350 miles northwest of Yuma.[193]

The most extensive account of the Coronado expedition itself is composed 20 years after it ended, by Pedro de Castañeda Nájera, a horseman and one of the expeditionaries. Castañeda writes his retrospective *Report on the Expedition to Cíbola* with the reader in mind. The narrative unfolds in chapters with a cast of recurring characters. Each chapter is devoted to specific events introduced by descriptive headings reminiscent of those in chivalric romances of the day. Devoid of romance, Castañeda's account contains many violent episodes. Of the seizure of Cíbola, an event he did not witness himself, he writes, "Because in response to the *requerimentos* which [the Spaniards] made them through interpreters they refused to come to peace, but instead showed themselves angry, [the general] gave order to attack them.… But because there is no way to resist the utmost fury of the Spaniards, in less then an hour the pueblo was entered and taken."[194] Castañeda also reports on the Tiguex War between 1540-1541, the first named war between Native Americans and Europeans. Now a cluster of ruins in a pre-historic site in the vicinity of Albuquerque, New Mexico, Tiguex was once a close-nit community of 12 or more villages inhabited by the Tiwa people.

The story of the Tiguex war begins in winter, with the arrival of a Spanish general who demands clothes for his men-at-arms. He summons a principal from one of the pueblos of whom he requests "three hundred pieces of clothing or more."[195] The principal tries to divide the burden among the pueblos, but the general rushes the collection. "In this situation," Castañeda explains, "they had no more time than to take off their outer furs robes and hand them over until the number they were asked for was reached. The collectors gave mantas and robes to some of the men-at-arms …

who, if [the clothes] were not just so and they saw an Indian with another, better one, they exchanged with him without having greater respect and without ascertaining the rank of the [man] they were despoiling. So that [the Indians]," Castañeda concludes with polite understatement, "were not a little angry over this."[196] But soon their anger rose and the Tiwa up in arms, when one of the conquistadors, after "seeing a beautiful woman" from the pueblo, tricks her husband, rapes her, and gets away without punishment (the husband can not recognize him, it says, because the attacker has changed his clothes).[197] The Tiwa retaliate by killing some of the Spaniards horses and then fortify themselves in their houses against the Spanish attackers. After two and a half days of fighting both parties agree to suspend the hostilities. But the ceasefire is immediately breached by the Spanish captain in charge, who claimed that the Indians brought to the camp were prisoners. Citing orders from the general, he commands "that two hundred posts be planted in the ground right away in order to burn the Indians alive."[198] The Tiwa still left in the captain's quarters, about one hundred men, tried to defend themselves with any means possible. "Our footmen attacked the tent from all sides," Castañeda writes. "Sword thrusts forced them [the Indians] to abandon the tent. Then the horsemen attacked them. Because the land was flat no man remained alive, except some who had remained hidden in the pueblo and fled that night. They spread the word throughout the land that [the Spaniards] did not keep the promise of peace that had been given to them."[199]

Here we have a short story, a chapter covering not more than two pages, in which the colonial transfer of clothes changes direction. It begins with a Spanish general demanding of the Tiwa people three hundred or more pieces of clothing, the

rape of a beautiful woman becomes the inciting incident leading to battle, and it ends with hundred or more Tiwa dead. Writing in a different place and time, Castañeda's description of footmen thrusting swords and horsemen attacking explains the Kumeyaay's silent gestures in a voice that is at once literal and removed.

Beautiful women, whether clad lightly in beads and bark or in elaborate outfits made from cotton, hides and fur, are thought to populate the New World, ready to serve at the pleasure of European men. California received its name with one such woman in mind, "a queen in the flower of her youth" called Qalafía.[200] A fictional character wearing nothing but gold and precious stones, Qalafía reigns over "an Island called California, which was very close to the region of the Earthly Paradise. The island was inhabited by black women, and there were no males among them at all, for their life style was similar to that of the Amazons."[201] Grand as this might sound, it turns out that the queen is but a sidekick to prince Esplandián, a pious Christian knight who successfully fights his evil pagan enemies, the Turks, in Constantinople. Although Qalafía with her fleet of female warriors and their man-devouring Griffins comes to the rescue of the latter, she falls for the handsome knight and becomes "a double prisoner of both her body and her heart."[202]

Garci Roderíguez de Montalvo's *The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandián* has been described as the quintessential chivalric novel of its time. Montalvo grasps the contemporaneous Spanish mindset both in view of its recent past, the fanatical re-christianizing of the Iberian Peninsula during the Reconquista, and in regard to the equally zealous conquest and future missionization of New Spain, the thought-to-be virgin lands of the New World.[203] Written sometime between 1492

and 1502, the epic romance is also inspired by the fantastical reports of the early explorers that spur the public imagination and interweaves real places and events with exotic worlds and creatures.

Qalafia's pagan lineage is written into her name, which derives from the Arabic *khalifa*, or caliph, a title designating Muslim state leaders as political successors of the prophet Muhammad. In search of the origins of the name California and how it became a real place, historians have tracked both the Terrestial Paradise as well as the age-old myth of the Amazons across centuries of European texts. Almost verbatim descriptions move from the writings of Mandeville, the travel narrative of Marco Polo, and the cosmography of Pierre d'Ailly through the journals of Columbus and Antonio Pigafetta; they leave their mark in Montalvo's romance, appear in Peter Martyr's decades, and find their way into the letters of conquistadors, such as Nuño de Guzman and Hernan Cortés. Columbus mentions an island he calls Matininó, modern day Martinique, "peopled entirely by women without men," and, echoing Marco Polo, he writes, "if they gave birth to a boy they sent him to the men's island and if to a girl they let her stay with them.''[204] More recently, in the spirit of critical arrival, anthropologists such as Astrid Steverlynck have connected Columbus account to a Taíno creation myth told by the people of Hispaniola. Whereas in the European myths Amazons signify a cultural other in a place far away, the Taíno creation story concerns negotiations between female and male ancestors. Here, the exchange of cultural objects becomes a foundational element upon which society is built. From this perspective, the native discourse on amazon-like women has been interpreted as a gesture of dialogue and possible future exchange.[205]

On the other side of the ocean, there is little concern for cultural amalgamation but a keen sense for riches. Montalvo names his island California and gives the women golden armor studded with precious stones, which were found there "as abundantly as rocks in the field."[206] He also adds drama to the story. "If they bore a female, they kept her, but if they bore a male, he was immediately killed," saving just enough to assure the continuation of their race.[207] Published in 1510, *The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandián* was widely read among explorers. Hernán Cortés, who led the conquest of the Aztec empire that paved the way for Spanish colonization, was one of them. In a letter to the Spanish Crown, Cortés reframes Montalvo's story as a report of actual events. Writing in search for financial backing for future expeditions, he also adds an economic incentive: "This island is ten days' journey from the province, and many of [the men] went thither and saw it, and told me also that it is very rich in pearls and gold."[208]

When Cortés and his men approach the tip of a peninsula a decade later, they find what they expected to find—an island rich in natural resources. "Perlas," pearls, a map of Cortés' 1535 exhibition indicates next to the curvy line striving to approximate the contour of the new-found coast. When exactly the island is first referred to as California in colonial reports is unknown. The name may have resulted from the scornful realization that fiction remains fiction in a place where pearls are few, droughts are common, and native women fearful, to say the least. By the time of Cabrillo's voyage, the misconception of California being an island had been corrected. But not everybody got the memo, and the island of California can be found on European maps far into the 18th century.[209]

In the early seventeen-hundreds it's not pearls but metal treasures that galvanize the search troupes of the Spanish Crown California's western shore, such as the Vizcaino Expedition in 1602. "The Indians paint themselves white, and black and dark London blue," Fray Ascensión describes the native inhabitants of San Diego in his report on the expedition. "This color comes from certain very hard blue stones, which they grind very fine, and, dissolving the powder in water, make a stain, with which they daub the faces and make on it lines which glisten like silver. These stones seemed to be of rich silver ore, and the Indians told us by signs that from similar stones a people living inland, of form and figure like our Spaniards, bearded and wearing collars and breeches, and other fine garments like ours, secured silver in abundance, and that they had a name for it in their own language."[210] Spanish ecclesiastic Juan de Torquemada attaches the fine products won from "pieces of metallic stone" directly to the Spaniards' dress. "They said by means of signs that from these stones a people in the interior who wore beards and were clothed like the Spaniards, extracted it and made fine ribbons, that were like the laces the soldiers had on their leather jackets and like the kind the general wore on his hose of violet velvet; and that those men wore just such fine uniforms as our Spaniards."[211] Presented with plates of silver, the natives were pleased with appearance and sound, and confirmed "that it was the same as that possessed and valued highly by the people of whom they had told us."[212] Sounds of silver that summon up the image of fine ribbons and lace bridge the mythical island of California and the metal-rich mainland along the way. The pigment used by the Kumeyaay might have been made of magnetite, a blue-back iron oxide, while the people in the interior probably belonged to the 1601 expedition

of conquistador Juan de Oñate.[213] The son of a silver baron, Oñate was a prominent figure of New Spain's quest for ore. And so it comes that lines glistening like silver extend from the Kumeyaay's facial decoration to the accoutrements worn by Oñate's men.

The invention of California complicates Greenblatt's analysis of the circulation of mimetic capital within the discourse of European discovery. But it also gives it further momentum. Greenblatt separates the "imagination at work" in historical accounts of European encounter with the New World from the "imagination at play" in literature, but he suggests the tools of literary criticism might help to elucidate the writings of the explorers and their chroniclers as much as their doings, "texts and actions that register not the pleasures of the fictive but the compelling powers of the real."[214] Texts, one might say, that can never fully register the reality of the horrendous actions they describe. In the becoming-real of California, the imagination at play works its way through historical accounts, mythology, creation stories and literature. A mimetic circulation ensues, in the course of which events and stories of real places in the Americas are re-imagined in a work of early modern European fiction and then shipped back to the New World, where California first becomes a place on the map, and, eventually, an actual place.

But what's at stake is not the circulation of words or signs across continents. Landscape doesn't tell the story, Ingold claims, but it *is* the story. Yet the violence that makes the Californian landscape is buried under fiction. It is hidden in landmarks, woven into historic costumes, and silenced under building foundations. It's a landscape that is not only scorched by California's fabled sun but also harrowed

by death. And death, in early California, is clothed in grey habits and leather *cueras*––the customary garments of wool and linen worn by the missionaries and the protective leather jackets made from antelope hide of the soldiers who accompanied them.

Upon her defeat, Queen Qalafía is placed under the care of the infanta Leonorina, Esplandián's future wife. Producing a royal outfit from her mother's wardrobe, the infanta asks the queen to take off her armor and dresses her in a magnificent headdress and robe. "I want, if you please, to take another husband," Qalafía informs the Esplandián, "and I will become a Christian. I do this because I have seen that your law is very orderly and well organized, whereas the others suffer great disorder. Therefore, it is clear that the law you observe is the truth, while ours is a false lie."[215] The conversion of Qalifía and the women of her fleet follows promptly, as does the marriage of the queen. In Montalvo's world everybody wears their heart on their sleeves and enemies become friends faster than they can change armor for evening attire. For readers unaccustomed to the discursive etiquette of chivalry, the ease with which Qalafía slips off her convictions like a dirtied dress seems ironic at best.

California promises to be a lucrative land, populated with beautiful women who don't think twice about converting to Christianity in order to marry European men. *The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandián* spurred the conquistador's imagination and put the wind in their sails, but it doesn't take long until the faithful knight's quest of the New World comes to an end. In 1531, the shipment of Montalvo's chivalric novels and other tall tales of its kind were banned by a decree of

the Spanish Queen Isabella, "since this is bad practice for the Indians."[216] In fact, any works of fiction or secular matter are prohibited from entering the New World; the only books permitted are those pertaining to Christian dogma. Fearing that the Spanish Crown's new subjects may not be able to navigate the fine line between fact and fabrication, Viceroy Mendoza follows the royal proscription of literary works to assure "the Indians who know how to read may not surrender themselves to them and thus neglect works of sound and healthy doctrine."[217]

As is well known, Montalvo's cheerful literary myth is far from the historic reality of Nueva España. In their promulgation of Christian faith, the Spanish padres and their military cohort—the last conquistadors—wreck havoc across California, leaving missions and grief in their wake. And clothes.

29 pieces of *manta poblana* (domestic cloth from Puebla), 488 yards striped sackcloth, 389 yards blue baize (coarse woolen cloth), and ten pounds of blue maguey, fabric made from agave fibers, for instance, are contained in "5 packages of cloths for Indians" that the missions of Alta California obtained from the viceroy to be distributed as *limosna*, alms, among the native population, enough "to suffice for 5 years."[218] Padre Junípero Serra asks his superiors in Mexico City to also send "plenty of woolens, cloth and flannel stuff to cover in some sort this multitude of poor naked people who here are so docile and tractable."[219] Padre Luis Jayme of Mission San Diego de Alcalá portrays the Indians not as submissive and compliant but as easy prey for the soldiers at the presidio. "As for the example to be set by the soldiers," he writes in a letter to the viceroy of New Spain, "no doubt some of them are good examples and deserve to be treated accordingly, but very many of them deserve to be

hanged on account of the continuous outrage which they are committing in seizing and raping the women."[220] He describes two such incidents reported to him by native women in detail and complains about the negligence of California's high officials, notably commander Pedro Fages, to attend to this matter. The soldiers Hernandez, Julián Murillo, Casteló, Juan María Ruiz, and Bravo committed the crimes; the identity of the victims is not revealed. It is likely that Jayme did not know their names. Clothes are not mentioned in his letter. Instead there are glimpses of the red ribbons the soldiers gave to the women they raped in order to mask their savage assault as economic exchange.

I find more ribbon and lists of clothes in the accounts of the Anza expedition from the desert provinces in Northern New Spain to Alta California in 1775. Poor families of mixed Spanish, Indian, and African descent—categorized within different *castas* under New Spain's sumptuary laws—were paid with livestock, food and clothes to take on the year-long journey. Six *varas*, or yards, of ribbon were given as an incentive to the women who set out for Monterey and San Francisco, together with:

3 shirts
3 pairs of white Puebla petticoats
2 pairs of petticoats, some of silk serge, others of thick flannel, and an underskirt
2 *varas* of linen stuff for two linings
2 pairs of Brussels stockings
2 pairs of hose
2 pairs of shoes
2 women's shawls
1 hat[221]

More clothing items are listed as "other expenses," for instance, gifts for the Indians: "1 sleeveless cloak of blue cloth lined with gold", a gift for Chief Palma to

secure safe passage through Yuma territory.[222] The meticulousness with which colonial agencies record the distribution of clothing items is impressive. But that is not the only thing remarkable about this list. According to the regulations put in place by the colonial castes system, *mullatos* and other *castas* with African ancestry—which constituted about 20 percent of the recruited families—for instance, were prohibited from wearing luxury textiles such as silk. The wholesale allocation of clothing for the Anza expedition thus suspends the strict dress codes meant to help identify the different *castas*. Archeologist Barbara L. Voss sees a pattern in this silken deviance and argues that the flattening out of clothing hierarchies among these early settlers can be seen as a founding feature of the Californio identity that develops in the early 18th century.[223] Early colonial settlers may have subverted the *casta* system, but they firmly reestablished racial discrimination on another front. For the Californio's perceived homogeneity congealed in distinction from its "other," the native population, and thus increasingly led to the suppression of the indigenous and African heritage of some of the settlers.[224]

In California's capital of Monterey, in 1784, more clothes and ribbon are said to change hands, this time made of the finest fabrics and after the latest European fashion. They belong to Eulalia Callis, the first noble woman of Spanish decent to arrive in Alta California. "It is related," Bancroft's *History of California* duly notes, "that on arrival she was shocked, and at the same time touched with pity, at the sight of so many naked Indians, and forthwith began to distribute with free hand her own garments and those of her husband. She was induced to suspend temporarily her benevolence in this direction by a warning that she might have to go naked herself

since ladies' clothing could not be obtained in the country."[225] Histories on early Californian costume written in the early 20th century still credit Callis for both her compassionate nature and the capricious fancy compelling her to give away her luxurious wardrobe, piece by piece, to the hapless Indians idling naked around her house and the San Carlos mission.[226] Delicate muslin bodices embellished with frills of lace and ribbons now shine through silvery burned chaparral; layers of brocaded silk petticoats rustle over abalone and acorn shells; and voluminous taffeta skirts rhyme with dome-shaped houses made from tule reeds. Or maybe not. Feminist scholars in the beginning of the 21st century, such as Barbara Reyes, see Eulalia Callis' legacy not in her improvident charitable inclinations but in her public challenging of the colonial sexual order. Callis was married to Pedro Fages, by then governor of California and well known for the mistreatment and abuse of indigenous women prevalent among his troops. Callis had asked to be released from her marriage and be allowed to return to Mexico City, after she found her husband "physically on top of one of his servants," a 12-year-old Yuman girl.[227] To prevent public disorder the governor's wife is incarcerated at the mission where she is tied with ropes instead of ribbons and threatened by exchanging silk shoes for shackles. In 1785, while still in detention, Callis sends a letter to the commandant general of the interior provinces, in which she presents her case and asks for protection against the wrongdoing committed by her husband and the ill treatment she subsequently suffered at the hands of the priests.

Regardless of their social position, historian Bárbara L. Reyes argues, the role of women in the Californias was determined by Spanish patriarchical values.

Subordinate to their husbands, women were to uphold the honor of the family and to bear children, restrained within a domestic regime maintained with unapologetic brutality.[228] Callis knows that it is within her legal rights to demand the dissolution of her marriage on account of her husband's adultery. "I humbly beg you to agree to this petition in the form that it is presented. Justice will grant me a pardon," she writes, switching cannily between obedience and assertion, "I swear to accept what I am given. The law that protects me will save me from poverty. I will not give up my rights during the course of the proceedings of my case."[229] Ultimately, Callis withdraws her case under pressure from both civilian and religious authorities. After returning to her husband, Eulalia Callis kept writing letters. She petitions local authorities to relieve her husband from his duties in California. Eventually, she persuades Fages to request his transferral to Mexico City and they move back to the capital in 1791.

* * *

The story begins at nightfall, with the arrival of a woman who wears many dresses. She is said to be Chatarina, the caretaker tells me, the wife of Meti's chief Jorge, listed #418 in the First Book of Baptism.[230] Maybe the dresses were given to her out of moral concerns or in exchange for services rendered at the mission. Maybe they were charitable gifts or protection to avert the sexual assaults of the Spanish soldiers. The violence they try to cover is woven into each dress. "They didn't have anywhere to store them," the caretaker says, "so they wore all the dresses at the same time." Just like Eulalia, Chatarina wrote a letter too. She asked the padres that a petition be sent to the Spanish authorities. She is not complaining about adultery, or

rape, for that matter. She inquires when her husband, the chief of the ranchería will come back. He disappeared after the San Diego Mission revolt in 1775, the native population's unsuccessful attempt to get rid of the Spanish invaders, during which Father Jayme is killed. According to the caretaker, anthropologist Richard Carrico, one of the former archaeology students who now teaches American Indian Studies at San Diego State University, found Chatarina's letter in a Spanish archive. But his research burned in the Cedar fire that ravaged San Diego County in 2003. Maybe it's a story that's not meant to be told.

Unexpectedly, I encounter a delegation of women with the type of dress that I imagine on Chatarina. Gathered at the waist, their skirts fall in bulky pleats down to the ankle, casting uneven shapes on the dusty ground that hide the women's bare feet. Most of them don a *rebozo* over their long-sleeve blouses, a wide Spanish shawl thrown over the left shoulder, wrapped around the waist and fastened in the front. These women are very old. Their clothes are shapeless from age and wear, colors and patterns faded by the sun. Standing as straight as their arched backs allow, they look at the camera stoically and offer the customary stern Indian expression, white lines painted on cheeks and chins. I hadn't noticed the photograph of the women before, but they may have seen me all along, walking down the stairs straight towards them on my way to return DVDs at the media desk at Geisel Library. I realize that they must have been there the whole time I've been working on this text. I remember reading the UC email announcement for the California Native American Day in September 2014, around the same time that I started writing about the Kumeyaay's gestures described in Cabrillo's log.

The photograph of the women was taken in September 1892 on the occasion of San Diego's first Cabrillo Day celebration, 350 years after the native inhabitants watched Cabrillo's ship enter the bay. San Diego had gone through a period of boom and bust in the past decades, and in order to stimulate tourism and economic revival the city's elite sought to capitalize on the fact that San Diego is the oldest white settlement in California. Kumeyaay and Payómkawichum people of San Diego County were brought to live in an encampment downtown—or "invited" as the photograph's caption euphemistically states—to showcase native ways of living and perform tribal dances as part of the festivities. The sad huts behind the row of women—the "oldest Indians in San Diego Co." according to the caption—fool no one of being more than a mere backdrop to the human parade. And here they are, on display again, 130 years later. Seven eerie ladies leaning against the wall in a cheap glass frame. The photograph has since been enlarged, professionally framed, and given a permanent home in a photographic exhibition on Kumeyaay heritage that is installed in the foyer of Peterson hall at UCSD. At 128, the oldest woman was born in 1764 and could have been Chatarina's daughter, a little girl baptized Clara in 1775. But that's quite unlikely given the large number of Native Americans that used to live here before European and later Anglo-American settlers took the land and the lives of their people.

In the game of critical arrival we are left with the image of a woman who wears many dresses, one on top of the other.

Salvage Archaeology

The bag is torn around the edges, but wear has smoothed the fibers and made the paper pliable. It looks soft. The reference notes it once contained have been filed away and the grocery bag has long been emptied and filed alongside its former contents. Flat-pressed like a flower, it is now a specimen, kept in a manila folder as an example of its type: *Paper Bag File*.[231] This one was used for notes on *The Commerce and Industries of the Pacific Coast of North America* written for Bancroft's publishing house by John S. Hittell. The inscription on the bag bears witness to the Bancrofts' ambition of covering everything: "Rubber, Hose and Belting. This subject is written up as far as Hose + Belting is concerned in leather. No rubber is manufactured on this coast of that class - Scraps + Waste notes are in 'Harness + Saddles' - if these in the bag are not …" I can't make out the rest of the sentence, but a different pen assures: "Finished."

Rummaging through my footage, I come across the same kind of grocery bags. Same zig-zag cut at the top edge, a hand-written description on the outside. The paper is worn soft too, but these bags are still bulging with stuff. Inside the bag are more bags. The history that spills out on the table is not yet written, although someone took the time and effort to wash off the dirt, weigh it, sort it by kind, and tag it with small, neatly written labels. "This is salvage archaeology," the caretaker says to the camera, as he empties bag after bag on one of the picnic tables in the museum yard. It's not salvage archaeology exactly, if one were to quibble, but what's found in the process: objects salvaged or rescued from the ground exposed during building

construction. Passed in 1974, the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act requires professional archaeology to assure "the preservation of historical and archeological data (including relics and specimens) which might otherwise be irreparably lost or destroyed" as the result of land-altering projects caused by Federal or federally licensed construction activity or programs.[232]

Commonly called Cultural Resource Management today, salvage archaeology in the U. S. dates back to the Flood Control Act of 1944, a legislation authorizing construction projects on river basins across the country, including dams, hydroelectric power, and navigation improvement, most prominently on the Missouri River. The act led to large-scale and high-speed archeological excavations funded by the National Park Service and administered by the Smithsonian Institution to salvage pre-contact and contact-era artifacts threatened by construction. In the process, archaeology becomes inclusive of 19th and 20th century stuff, gathering everything from medicine bottles, shoes, and porcelain shards, to buttons, marbles, and rusty forks. The small heap of bags stuffed with artifacts dates back to 1979, four years after the Archeological and Historic Preservation Act was passed, which took place after the house of a long-deceased local celebrity, the opera singer Madame Camille, was demolished to make room for the warehouse next to the caretaker's house. "See, here," the caretaker picks up a yellow shaving brush from the artifacts spilled out on the picnic table, " this was found underneath the house. If it's plastic it can't be that old. And it says 'Sterilized, Made in USA' and it shows no signs of it being Ivory. The only way to find out is to take a knife at it. But when we found this I thought: I wonder if Bancroft used this." The brush is shiny on one half and crusted with dirt on

the other. “See, this was above,” the caretaker runs his finger along the side of the brush, “and you can see how this was protected by being buried, but here it has some kind of patina from being above ground.”

Stuffed in grocery bags and stashed away behind the display cases in the Native American room, the brush and its fellow shards, marbles and door knobs share the fate of many boxes filled with professionally salvaged artifacts molding away in storage facilities or basements across the country.

Bancroft Scraps

A stream of white whizzes across the screen, like a snowy landscape seen through the window of a train. Dragging the cursor, I slow the speed of the film reel. An open book slides through frame hovering over flat black. Fine-grained, in documentary black and white, the image of the book appears hyperreal and ghostly at the same time. A scrapbook captured on film: *Bancroft Scraps, California Indians, Volume 36*.[233] Page after page filled with pieces cut from newspapers. Most of the clippings have been rearranged neatly into a three-column text, separated by header rows, scribbled dates and provenance: "Sac Union, May 10, 1962; March 20, 1968, SF Alta." Once warped from the meeting of paste and paper, layers of pages have been pressed flat again by the weight of other volumes. Only the edges curl and wave and bend, so haptic their semblance that one imagines the slightest touch could release the rustle of pages silenced by the film.

Volume 36 covers the period from 1850 to 1879. The first entries are longer reports. Some are cut from books Bancroft published himself. Alexander Smith Taylor's "Precis India Californicus," for instance, provides ethnographic descriptions of Native peoples, customs, and languages while a section from Franklin Tuthill's *The History of California* pragmatically outlines the politics of the so-called Indian Wars after California's admission to the Union in 1850.[234]

Following these introductory pages, most clippings are devoted to the relationship between settlers and Indians across the state. "There is no better historic evidence," Bancroft comments in Literary Industries, "than several files of

contemporaneous newspapers, bitterly opposing each other as is commonly the case."[235] Quite a few of the voices in the news items gathered here side with the Indians, but the majority claim that massacres, murder, outrage, hostilities, killings, disturbances, difficulties, and butchery are carried out *by* Indians, not *against* them. The spectrum is mirrored in the voices of editors, concerned citizens, or prickly officials that make up a substantial portion of the scrapbook. Now the tone switches to bold opinion pieces expressing, for example, a change of heart from pity for the maltreated 'savages' to utter hatred because of indigenous retaliations against forced eviction and displacement, or, alternatively, decrying the establishment of Indian reservations as a new system of slavery. On the whole, the clippings frame a paradox. Somewhere buried under racist slurs speaking of "diggers," "savages," and "poor wretches" there exists a widespread acknowledgement of the abuse the Native population collectively suffers, both at the hands of settlers and through government policies.

So vivid a public debate, carried out in a new media with increasing mass circulation, makes the lack of better treatment of Indians seem almost surprising. Given the outrage expressed in many of the clippings, the general compliance with the disastrous federal handling of 'Indian affairs' de facto renders California's concerned citizen just as docile and submissive as they describe their disenfranchised Indian contemporaries. If not aggressors, settlers and city dwellers take on the convenient role of bystanders.

A spot-on commentary regarding the treatment of the native population, titled, simply, "The Indian Reservations," had already been written in 1860/61, and found

its way into the scrapbook.[236] J. Ross Browne—traveler and artist, man of letters and government agent, inspiration to writers such as Melville and Mark Twain—was commissioned to report on Indian affairs in California. His report for *Harpers Magazine* summarizes federal politics and local sentiments concerning the establishment of Indian reservations. Listing the injustices inflicted upon California's native population line-by-line, instance-by-instance, his voice flips from plain description into biting satire. "If ever an Indian was fully and honestly paid for his labor by a white settler, it was not my luck to hear of it," Browne states early on. "Strange as it may appear," he goes on to say a few paragraphs later, "[The idea] never occurred to them that they were suffering for the great cause of civilization, which, in the natural course of things, must exterminate Indians."[237]

Spanning the years from the so-called Indian Wars to the development of Indian Reservations—spiked by California's Gold Rush and financed with government funds— Browne's account provides a sort of reading guide for the scrapbook, offering background and context to decipher the many opinions voiced on laws passed, monies spent, and violence endured. Beginning with settlers freely taking land and labor from the native population without recompense, Browne traces how the government—"as is usual in cases where the lives of valuable voters are at stake"—intervenes in the ensuing conflicts by further forcing Indians off their land.[238] A system of Indian Reservations in California, loosely based on the example of the Spanish Missions, was legislated in 1853 and supported by federal funds, most of which ended up in the hands of adjoining settlers and appointed supervisors. "So the end is," Browne concludes, "that the reservations are practically abandoned—the

remainder of the Indians are being exterminated everyday and the Spanish mission system has signally failed."[239]

Judging from the footnotes, scrapbook 36 was not consulted for the chapters of Bancroft's *History* dedicated to the present condition of California Indians. The division of labor presumably practiced in Bancroft's History Company—the discrete processing and organizing of historical material into specialized subjects—corresponds to the division of historical facts into separate categories in each of the *History's* volumes. The chapter "Military 1848-1888" in *History of California, Volume 7*, unapologetically outlines the organization, funding, and execution of state-run militias and federal campaigns against the native population.[240] In the previous *Volume 6*, the chapter "Finances 1849-1864" already details specific expenses and improper use of resources, war debts accrued, and eventual reimbursement by means government appropriations.[241] But there is no synthesis between the two. Similarly, the impact of the discovery of gold and subsequent mining operations on the native population is omitted in the several chapters on mining, where "tame Indians" helping farmers-turned-miners or "happy aboriginals, arrayed in civilization's cotton shirts" are depicted as merely part of the scenery.[242] The racial violence against Indians and other members of California's growing non-white population that was unleashed at the mines was not lost on Bancroft. But rather than marring the *History of California*, Bancroft deemed the subject better suited for *California Inter Pocula,* one of the five supplemental volumes containing social commentary and other topics that couldn't fit elsewhere in the main part of the *Works* dedicated to the history of the Pacific States.[243]

Aptly titled "Extermination of the Indians 1849-1887," the only chapter on California Indians is placed between the chapters "Military" and "Inception of Railway Routes."[244] It takes up 20 pages in the 800-page *Volume 7*, the last in the series of *History of California,* which was published in 1890. Tuthill's voice is certainly noticeable. Browne's more critical version of the extermination is not. Browne introduces the term as unthinkable and concludes his account with "extermination" as a devastating result. In Bancroft's chapter the term is featured at the very beginning to introduce an undertaking that is presented laconically as unfortunate but inevitable. After bemoaning the miners and settlers' assault on "the savages" as "the basest and most brutal" in human civilization, their demise is promptly attributed to the low intelligence and lack of strength and sophistication of "the poor natives of California."[245] More than just detached assessment, the common notion of inevitability becomes doctrine and tool in the extermination of California's native population.

The notion of an unfortunate but inevitable disappearance also reverberates in Bancroft's writing on the Californios, California's other 'native' inhabitants, who saw themselves as *hijos* and *hijas del pais*, native sons and daughters of the land. Within the imperialist mindset of his time, the demise of Californio culture represents but another unpleasant by-product of 'necessary' progress. After California came under Mexican rule in 1822, the Spanish missions are secularized. Other than originally planned, the Mexican government does not return the mission land to its original owners. Instead, individual tracts are made available to Californios and Mexican settlers through land grants. Few Indians become landowners in this new regime, and

most of them lose their land to wealthy rancheros to pay off debt.[246] The Californios carry on the destruction of Indian culture and livelihood that the mission system had successfully executed until Anglo-American settlers join forces with them. But after California's annexation to the States in 1846, Californio cultural heritage suffered the same fate as that of the Indians from which they had fiercely sought to distinguish themselves, although, unlike the majority of the native population, Californios didn't have to pay with their lives.

The Californios Bancroft courted to share their first-hand knowledge of California history were aware that they were held responsible for the ongoing exploitation and ill treatment of Indians on whose labor they depended to operate their ranchos and run their households.[247] At the same time, they felt pressed to correct the prevailing image of them as "an idle, thriftless people," which had originated in the narratives of Anglo-American and European travelers who described them as a lazy, horse-crazed bunch, colorfully-attired, prone to drink but resistant to work and unable to the make productive use of the land.[248] In fact, being allowed to make productive use of their land became the Californios' most difficult struggle and is well documented in the dictations recorded by Bancroft's agents. Individual and property rights that had been granted to Mexican citizens in the Guadalupe-Hidalgo treaty in 1846 were impeded through subsequent laws passed by the US congress, such as the Land Act of 1851, which stipulated that all land claims had to be ratified in court or by specially appointed land commissions. In the process, most Californios lost their land, like the Indians had before them, either in court or, even if they had

won their claims, to moneylenders and mortgage companies to whom they had become indebted to cover the high legal costs.[249]

The ghostly presence of both Californios and the indigenous inhabitants is imbued in the Californian landscape. "The Indian of Southern California has left a greater imprint on the land than is generally known," historian Owen H. O'Neill writes in 1909. "He located all of the Spanish Missions of California.… Most of the cities of the coastal region are built squarely upon Indian village sites."[250] Unknown native tounges ring in well-known names such as Azuza, Cahuenga, Jamul, Malibu, or Sespe. Many of them capture both the nature of a place and its adaptation over time. The place "where the sun breaks through the mist" that the Luiseños called Temecunga, for instance, became Temecula under the Californios. And while the term Californio itself might be unfamiliar for many California residents today, their names are not. The cities of Vallejo and Benicia are named after General Vallejo and his wife Francisca Benicia Carrillo; communities such as Rancho Bernadino or Rancho Peñasquito developed on the sites of former Mexican land grants. On the street level, there are Alvarado Boulevard, Figueroa Street, and Castro Street, to name just a few.

Bancroft's writing on the Californios in the *Works* follows the same divisional logic as his treatment of California Indians. Many crucial aspects of Californio history are not included in the *History of California* but are relegated to *California Pastoral,* another of the supplemental volumes. Focusing on the period from 1769-1846, *California Pastoral* conveniently ends before the dispossession of the Californios through Anglo-American land seizure; conversely, while the chapter on

"Mexican Land Titles" in the *History of California* clearly condemns the "wrongdoing" and "evil effects" that the decade-long court proceedings had on Californio claimants who lost their lands, it fails to acknowledge the lasting impact on their social standing and livelihood.[251] "The spoliations of grant-holders was … but a small part of the injury done to Californian interest by the measure in questions," the chapter concludes. In Bancroft's book, the truly negative effect of the Land Act of 1851 was its obstruction of "prompt settlement." [252]

It is unlikely that Bancroft engaged socially with the California Indians that populate his research notes and make sporadic guest appearances in the *History of California*. But he did occasionally entertain select members of the former Californio elite at his home in San Francisco—especially those he had relieved of their personal archives and memories. Bancroft's conviction that history is on his side, coupled with his patronizing demeanor is epitomized in an anecdote of one such get-together he shares in *Literary Industries.* He recalls the deep impression an article on "The Manifest Destiny of California" he published in a local newspaper had made on his friends, general Mariano Vallejo and former California governor Juan Alvarado, who agree to have "fallen into good hands," although he admits that "this was while their hearts were still warm from champagne."[253] For Bancroft, the men sitting in front of him are not his contemporaries let alone his equals, although he knows that his venture in history depends on their contributions. "Those ancient children," as he calls them, "my Hispano-Californian allies, who constantly come to grief" belong to a by-gone past, to the golden age of California's pastoral days, a limbo space "half-way between savagism and civilization."[254] Half man, half beast, the Californios are

history in the flesh. "If I was the writer of history," Bancroft says about his relationship to general Vallejo, "he was the embodiment of history."[255] Regardless of his five-volume *Historia de California*, which is frequently quoted in the *Works,* Vallejo simply remains "California on legs" and cannot be a historian in his own right.[256]

While *California Pastoral* is among the last volumes in Bancroft's *Works*, the California Indians were actually one of the first subjects he treated—by necessity rather than choice. According to plan, the first volume was reserved for the Spanish conquest of the Americas, tracing the routes of Columbus and Vasco Núñez del Balboa along the central shores, following Rodrigo de Batista to the Isthmus of Panama, and then venturing on with the Pizarro expedition from Panama to Peru. Bancroft hadn't considered the native peoples of the Americas as a force to be reckoned with. But they proved him wrong. "Wherever I touched the continent with my Spaniards they were there, a dusky, disgusting subject," he comes to realize. "The savages were there, and there was no help for me; I must write them up to get rid of them."[257] To compensate for this lack of passion, Bancroft's industrial working method proved extremely efficient. In record time, the native peoples are classified and categorized, written up and dealt with. Contemporary Indian culture has no place in these volumes. The *Native Races* follows 19th century ethnographers' script of *The Vanishing Race*. These are books filled with "antiquities," "relics," and "remains." In *The Native Races*, California Indians make up one of seven groups of natives of the Pacific West and are further sub-divided into four families, the Southern, Central, and Northern Californians and the Shoshones. Lacking stone monuments and written

histories, California Indians are absent from *Volume 2*, "Civilizations," but descriptions of their cultural history are scattered across the other four volumes, detailing manners and customs; location, divisions, and tribal boundaries; physique; dress; dwelling; weapons and war; implements and manufactures; boats and properties; government and slavery; women and marriage; amusement; medicine; burial; character; myth; and language.[258]

Beyond the thousands of pages of the *Native Races* and the *History of the Pacific States,* there are countless reference notes and clippings in grocery bags and scrapbooks. *Bancroft Scraps, California Indians, Volume 36* is one such document that testifies to the fact that Bancroft's legacy lies in his collection not in his *Works.* In addition to providing a glimpse of the public debate about California Indians, the clippings in the scrapbook also tell something about themselves, about how they were collected and organized. *Volume 36* zigzags across the state, zooming in, from time to time, "on the southern portions" with dispatches from the *Los Angeles Star*, the *San Bernardino Bulletin*, or the *San Diego Union*, but for the most part they center on Northern California all the way up to Oregon and the newly established settlements in Humboldt Bay. Many of the clippings are marked "S. F. Alta," short for the daily *San Francisco Alta California*, reflecting both the History Company's seat and wider access to local newspapers, which were supplied by San Francisco's public libraries and advertising agencies. "No little care was required to keep in order the files of newspapers," Bancroft writes in *Literary Industries*. "They amounted to several wagon-loads annually," thus causing the need for "another wagon-load of chairs and tables" to seat the laborers sorting them.[259] 114 of these scrapbooks classified by

subject are held in the Bancroft Library today. The remainder of the thousands of newspapers that were bundled in shelves or piled on the floor when the library was appraised in 1905 most likely became part of UC Berkeley's newspaper collection.

The first part of *Volume 36* runs from sometime in the 1860 through August 2, 1878. After a few pages with undated clippings, it jumps back to November 1, 1850 and then goes all the way to October 11, 1880, a total of 170 pages. Sometimes skipping years at a time, the number of clippings is high in some years and stretched thin in others and may provide more information about the availability of printed matter and men to cut and paste the stuff than the actual number of events.

I think about the generations of volunteers, including myself, who have left their mark in the archive of the Bancroft Ranch House Museum. More and more I come to see the small, stuffed, and chaotic archive room as a miniature version of Bancroft's library. Here, the idiosyncrasies of collecting, the attempts at and failure of completeness are driven to an extreme. They may not be comparable in volume (seven stuffed filing cabinets containing folders with both pasted sheets and loose clippings compared to 113 scrapbooks) and it would be too much to say that the collected files of the Spring Valley Historical Society offer a local version of the Bancroft's scrapbooks about California.

But there are striking similarities.

Browsing through files in the museum archive, I come across several folders with the heading "Planning" and it takes me a while to recognize my own handwriting on one of them. The relative arbitrariness and frequent repetitions that exist among the Bancroft Scraps explode in the museum's files. In the scrapbooks,

"California history," for some reason is condensed to the years "1856-1857," in contrast to the files, where a slim folder on "Real Estate" comprises the period from "1885-present." The uneven distribution of dates in the scrapbooks, where clippings seem to focus on the 1860s, is echoed in the museum's clipping collection, which clearly peaks in the years from 1993 to 1996. Gaps in the chronology are compensated for by duplicates, which abound in both collections.

Bancroft's laborers were not alone in going after the news with scissors, paper, and paste. Readers have collected—and organized—clippings as long as newspapers have been around. The professional collection of newspaper clippings develops in tandem with the industrialization of newspaper publishing and mass circulation. In the late 19th century, clipping agencies that supplied customers with cutout news reports on topics of their choice became increasingly popular. The first such agency, Argus de la Press, opened in Paris in 1879.[260] "The search terms listed in the customer ledger of the Paris office," Anke te Heesen writes in *The Newspaper Clipping: A Modern Paper Object*, "read like a condensed description of the age."[261] Similarly, the subject headings used by Bancroft's History Company and the Spring Valley Historical Society offer a sketch of the social groups, institutions, resources and matters of concern at state and community level. A number of headings are the same. Both the Bancroft scraps and the museum files include *Agriculture*, *Crime*, *Churches*, *Education*, *Earthquakes*, *Indians*, *Military*, *Pioneers*, and *Water Supply*. Others reveal slight variations among corresponding pairs: *Local Option* versus *Incorporation, Lands* versus *Real Estate, Hunting & Fishing* versus *Parks and Recreation.* And then there are those specific to their age: *Silver Question, Pacific*

Mail Steamship Company, and *Rogue River Indian War* versus *Dictionary Hill Shooting, Revitalization, and Scouts (Boys and Girls).* As such, the scrapbooks or file folders offer a collection of data attuned to their respective present. The file on *Indians* at the museum picks up the thread from Bancroft's scrapbook on *California Indians*. Or rather, in view of their near extermination, the scraps of what's left behind. Enveloped between reports on Native art and culture, pow wows and local anthropologists, the question of land rights and tribal sovereignty is still at the center.

In one of the articles on file at the museum, Anthony R. Pico, Chairman of the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, addresses the importance that the state of California recognizes Kumeyaay Indian governments and adheres to federal regulations regarding tribal nations. Written on the occasion of California's 2003 gubernatorial recall election, Pico's article presents the establishment of reservations as a protective measure by the government and spells out in plain words what Bancroft's whole chapter—and Ross' report for that matter—fail to mention. "Extermination," he writes, "was the official policy of the state's first governor and Legislature." Chairman Pico refers to California Governor Peter H. Burnett who proclaimed before the state legislature in January 1851: "A war of extermination will continue to be waged between the two races until the Indian race becomes extinct."[262] An article from Bancroft's scrapbook, published in 1853 presents the matter as one of extermination versus domestication: "It has become a question, whether these unfortunate people shall be exterminated as soon as possible, or remain in their present degraded, defenseless, and hopeless condition, or become the subject of

judicious and just care on the part of the General Government, and be elevated in the scale of humanity to the position of a civilized and self-dependent people."[263]

In the more recent past, tribal sovereignty has been under attack again by a state governor. In order to prevent casino-style gambling on Indian land, governor Pete Wilson had sought to reduce the legal status of tribes to quasi municipalities. After a decade-long battle, California voters approved by landslide Proposition 1A "Gambling on Tribal Lands," a bill that sanctions high-stakes gambling based on tribal-state compact agreement.[264] At present, many Indian tribes in California run more or less successful casinos as government businesses in order to provide employment; finance infrastructure, social services, and education; and distribute per capita dividends. The debate about Indian gambling has garnered much public attention since the 1980s, and numerous articles in the Spring Valley files document the fight of the local Barona, Sycuan, and Viejas bands of Mission and Kumeyaay Indians to maintain and expand their casinos. But it is two short pieces concerning the Campo Band of Mission Indians, whose reservation is less known and far off the beaten track, that get at the heart of the continuing struggle for Indian self-determination.

Today another war is waged. This war is not fought with guns but with lawsuits. And it's not about gold but about garbage. "Decision on Campo Landfill Postponed" the heading of another article from the museum files announces, and at first sight the 1993 article suggests that the surrounding communities are still encroaching on Indian land.[265] But the story turns out to be slightly different. Rocky terrain and little water don't afford farming, and its remote location makes the Campo

reservation ill-suited for a casino. Operating a landfill on their grounds, tribal representatives claim, is the "only path to economic development."[266] Opposition, they have long known, is inexorable.

The so-called "Campo Indian Landfill War" is a contemporary and twisted variation of the so-called "California Indian Wars" of the mid-19th century. In lieu of white man's thirst for gold and silver, environmental concerns are thwarting Indian sustenance today. It's not the native population who fights displacement caused by white settlements and mining operations but the reservation's neighboring communities who attack the Indian enterprise they believe will destroy their quality of life. Neighborhood activists have replaced local militias and federal environmental officials stand in for Indian agents. Although, as one grassroots organizer says, "This is still the Wild West," and gun violence is not a stranger in backcountry.[267]

In *Campo Indian Landfill War - The Fight for Gold in California's Garbage*, Dan McGovern, a former chief official of the United States Environmental Protection Agency responsible, among other states, for California, lays out the case in detail and introduces its major players. The story first caught his attention because the Campo's foray into waste management presents a strange reversal of environmental racism. Roughly speaking, environmental racism, describes the process of placing hazardous facilities and toxic waste in close proximity to low-income or minority communities. In the case of the planned Campo landfill, however, trash is not dumped on a minority community but actively sought by it. The reservation's neighbors, on the other hand, fear that toxic leakage from the landfill will poison the aquifer that supplies the whole community with water. A grassroots group, Backcountry Against Dumps, or BAD,

formed to protect their lives and homes and its members fight the landfill tooth and nail.

Due to growing awareness of the health risk they present, finding sites for landfills has become increasingly difficult. In the 1980s, waste management companies started courting tribal governments, and in contrast to other minority communities who don't have a share in the profit, operating a landfill can be lucrative for a tribe. Even though some companies feign humanitarian intentions—the conditions on reservations being dire and Native Americans poor—regulatory gaps and the "allure of bypassing city, county and state regulation" are often the main incentives.[268] In contrast to hazardous waste, municipal solid waste, or what's commonly called garbage, is not regulated by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) but by states. Tribal nations are overseen by the federal government and not by states, McGovern summarizes, and thus exist in a grey zone without set environmental standards.

While the question of tribal sovereignty versus state and federal oversight might be similar to the debates about Indian gaming, the landfill controversy crystallizes the ongoing racism and paternalism Native Americans continue to face. In contrast to casino-style gambling, which is not permitted in the state of California, landfills—albeit subject to close monitoring and state regulation—fall into the category of regular business operations. "The county has refused to send its trash to the landfill if it is built," East County Supervisor Dianne Jacob is quoted in the article I found in the museum's files. The county lacks control "over how the landfill is run," Jacob goes on, "because it sits on Indian land and is controlled by the tribe. The tribe

could decide to accept hazardous waste, weaken the landfills lining to save money or skirt some air and water quality regulations to save money."[269] Campo chairmen and head of the reservation's Environmental Protection Agency (CEPA) Mike Connolly's rebuttal is quoted in McGovern's account. Environmental concerns notwithstanding, the picture painted by state officials like Jacob remains abstract, Connolly claims. It doesn't acknowledge the Campos's commitment and capacity to regulate their proposed landfill.[270]

McGovern's book retraces every step of the process. Bankrolled by the landfill's developer, the company Mid-American, CEPA hired experts to draft environmental codes and a regulatory enforcement program. The regulations CEPA came up with met, if not exceeded, both federal and California state standards. According the Secretary James M. Strock, the head of California's Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA), CEPA's program for designing, constructing, and operating the proposed facility is "at least as protective, and in some cases more so, than those in effect throughout California."[271] Jacob's statement also disregards the 1992 cooperative agreement reached between Cal/EPA and CEPA under statute AB 240, which grants California's EPA permission to monitor disposal facilities on Native American lands. Furthermore, the final Environmental Impact Study found the Campo landfill's design superior and significantly safer than those adhering to federal design criteria. "At 100 years after startup," the EIS concludes, "the proposed Campo landfill design is expected to be 99.8 percent reliable, compared to 78 percent for a federally compliant design."[272]

On the other hand, as *Campo Indian Landfill War* shows, opposition was by no means exclusive to non-Indians, but also came from Indians and various Native American organizations that accuse the Campos of violating Indians' bond with nature and selling out. Presumed loss of authenticity aside, concerns are certainly justified on environmental grounds alone. The Environmental Impact Study indicates that the chosen location might be unsuitable for a landfill altogether because the site sits on unweathered bedrock. In this type of stone, groundwater passes through an intricate system of fractures, which heightens the risk of contamination and makes the monitoring required to assure water quality very difficult. Besides, critics claim, the regulatory program is compromised to begin with, because the CEPA is funded by the very entity it seeks to regulate.

What do you expect, Connolly counters: Given the constant opposition to any economical development on their reservations by their non-Indian neighbors—who have filed claims against everything ranging from small-scale bee production to proposed cement plants and existing sand mines—the tribal government has to resort to investors with deep pockets and "thick skin."[273] Indeed, business partners have to be unfazed by adverse public reaction and equipped to survive long hauls of "protracted litigation."[274] Possible exploitation is an issue the Campos are not indifferent to. But undergirding the concerns voiced by the landfill's opponents, Connolly and other tribal members argue, are assumptions that essentially are racist, paternalistic, and based on stereotypes about Indians: that they are not properly trained, ill-equipped to run a project of such dimensions, and unable to protect

themselves against the developer's commercial interest, in short, that "the Indians are not able do it" whether it's safe or not.[275]

In this light, McGovern concludes, the Campos's fight for a landfill is not fueled by economic necessity alone but fought on principle: "They defend their decision—more fundamentally, their right to make the decision—with the determination of a people pushed to the brink of extermination."[276] Comanche activist and president of Americans for Indian Opportunity La Donna Harris goes even further. "[To] deny the Campo Tribe their right to decide what to do on their own lands is an insult to all Native peoples," she writes. "We consider this a form of genocide equal to that of the California's slaughter of Indians in the 1800s."[277] But quoting Harris' statement here, or in McGovern's book, is not enough. In the epilogue to *Campo Indian Landfill War*, Connolly questions McGovern for choosing to remain objective and present both sides of the story, the Campos and BADs. "Where others see black and white," McGovern defends his position, "I often discern only shades of grey."[278]

Another war has been fought, another war waged not *by* the Indians but *against* them. The Campo Kumeyaay Nation lost the battle over the landfill. But their environmental expertise grew in the process. In addition to a casino and Campo Materials, a concrete and plaster company, the reservation houses a wetlands restoration project and a wind farm today.[279] To say they have not been defeated would be utter mockery. It's not the garbage that makes this story stink; it's not hazardous leakage that makes it toxic. It's an environment seeped in racism that poisons it.

Texts are not written in the archive. Increasingly, the documents themselves are not even read there but duplicated and taken away. At the Bancroft library, I spent hours scanning the microfilm of the scrapbook. They are saved as JPEG files onto my thumb drive, which seems appropriately old-fashioned in the age of cloud computing. The paper files in the museum archive I "scan" too, pretty rushed one late Sunday afternoon before the caretaker closes up, with my smartphone, which conveniently saves the digital files as PDFs and sends them to me directly via email. Whereas the microfilm preserved some of the tactility of the scrapbook's paper, the scan software reads mainly black and white. The cellphone scan hardly processes grey scale at all, and the people in the articles' photographs are hollowed out and turned into ghostly silhouettes. Each in their own way, the images I take away from the archives are as flat and compressed as the information presented in this text.

The Birds of Bancroft

Written on the spot as reflections or reports of recent events, newspaper articles can be seen as snapshots of the present. Preserved in clippings, they become "materialized time."[280] Gathered in scrapbooks or clipping collections these heterogeneous snapshots form "a 'picture' to be viewed at a remove … or a 'whole' taken in from bird's-eye view," two frequently used metaphors in early newspaper studies te Hessen evokes in *The Newspaper Clipping: A Modern Paper Object.*[281] But yet, she writes, the distancing gaze of the scholar or historian, who retrospectively culls from "the direct experience of the newspaper … its full socio-historical significance," is blocked by the hands-on reality that comes with ever-growing stacks of newspapers.[282] Even selections of clippings cut to size and pasted on sheets soon grow too large to handle as well: "While the clipping made it possible for every moment to be separately documented, the sheer number of these documents meant that the final longed-for accounting of these moments would never take place."[283]

Amassing his collection some 150 years earlier, Bancroft is unfettered. "History will be written," he is certain, "and men will rise to write it," minor or major organizational problems not withstanding.[284] Like early newspaper scholars in the beginning of the 20th century, Bancroft imagines his collection of clippings and notes to provide an "image" that can be viewed at a remove. This is exactly what the extracting of historical information, the refining process, practiced in the History Company facilitates. His excerpts and notes were spread out on a large revolving table while Bancroft wrote on a stationary standing desk attached to this turntable of

history, pushing and pulling his evidence in and out of view at his convenience. “By this means,” he explains, “I obtained a sort of bird’s-eye view of all evidence on the topics for my history, as I took them up one after the other in accordance with my own order and plan of writing.”[285] For Bancroft, the historian does not just look from a distance but also imposes order from above. In the grand scheme of things, though, he’s not the only one with an order and a plan. “Nature reports her own progress,” Bancroft admits, “reports in the sandstones, the coal and peat beds, in mountains, rivers, and seas.”[286] Nature, one might say, is one of the few co-authors he publicly credits.

As a docent, the caretaker is one of Bancroft’s most dedicated proponents. But in practice, he may well be his biggest antagonist. The caretaker doesn’t dwell on the majesty of nature. His vantage point is much closer to the ground. He doesn’t take up topics but collects what others leave on the ground. In his book, history is local and can be read from the entanglement of things. Not only men rise to write it but creatures, too.

“They collected all that.” The caretaker’s eyes are fixed on a bird’s nest we found under the olive tree in the museum yard. “They built it out of the stuff that’s around here, plants and stuff. This is the part about them being little contractors and architects. They pick a piece out and bring it home—that’s too big—that’s too small—where did you get that at?—put it over here … How do they know—mother nature in training—to do this?” In his notes on collecting, Benjamin thinks about bird’s nests as well. “The physiological side of collecting is important,” he writes. “In the analysis of this behavior, it should not be overlooked that, with the nest-building

of birds, collecting acquires a clear biological function."[287] Collecting, then, means home making. "I collected bird's nests for a long time, the birds of Bancroft," the caretaker still examines the nest in his hands, "until this lady, a friend of mine who is an archeologist and a psychologist, analyzed me and said, the reason why you like bird's nests is because you don't have a nest…"

I'm not sure I buy this though. A trained draftsman and aspiring architect himself, the caretaker clearly identifies with the building aspect of nest-making. And he shares the birds' knack for repurposing stuff. "This nest came out of the palm tree, see it's all palm, sisal, and inside it has cotton for insulation, found somewhere around the museum. In some of the bird nests, I find hair, human hair, and I think wow, that must be some of mine or one of my dogs." One by one, the caretaker unpacks his collections of nests in the archive and explains. Here he reveals himself to be a genuine collector in Benjamin's sense: in speaking about his collection he speaks only about himself. "And then this one, the architect and the builder, here he collected some string. Or she. And here is something out of a shredder. These are just nests I found on the ground. Interesting how the birds pick what they pick when they make the nest."

Unlike Bancroft's revolving table, the desk in the center of the archive room doesn't facilitate any easy overview. Instead it contains a world in itself with paper plains, mountains of books, and floods of bric-a-brac. Flags drape over paper canyons, the broken crystal bowl magnifies the newspaper it's parked on, and dead carpenter bees live in an ashtray. Squeezed in the very corner of the table, the bird's nests temporarily populate this volatile landscape as well and scatter the newsletters

they landed on with dried particles and insects of various kinds. Bancroft obtains a bird's-eye view of history; the caretaker grasps history from bird's nests.

However enticing I find the caretaker's relationship to things from a theoretical point of view, as a filmmaker it leaves me in a bit of a fix. How can I get an audience invested in a protagonist whose his head is constantly bent down, holding up some thing or another, hands close to his body, a denim apron for a head. More often than not, things themselves don't necessarily look that great on film either. How can I show heaps of dirt left in the wake of a squirrel attack? Here's a shot of the caretaker's hands thumbing through his documentation of the squirrels' foray into the adobe. Four photographs of dirt in the dark corner of a house built of clay. The hammer might be there to give a sense of scale or stand in for the squirrel, or both. Here's an owl pellet of regurgitated bones and feathers slid in front of the camera in a cardboard box, while the caretaker, on hands and knees, goes on to introduce his collection of arrow heads, stones, and flakes. Here's the small round lid that used to cover a trapdoor spider's burrow. It has the color of earth and now lays flat on the back of the caretaker's smudgy hand.

I set out to capture objects, but I end up filming how they are handled. In more clips than I'll ever need, objects are turned and lifted and moved and felt. Fingers prod and trace invisible paths on textured surfaces. Hands cast shadows onto broken letters and spines of books stuffed face down in a box. The caretaker gathers collections of things; my camera captures the caretaker's gestures.

Administering Memories

"It looks shitty," the caretaker says, "Memory Lane." He's skimming an old article about the adobe. "They should do something about the entryway here," he adds, switching into planning mode. "If they go about developing it, they have to put curb, gutter, and sidewalk, and there's supposed to be a 5ft landscape strip." Whatever the future might bring for Memory Lane, right now it doesn't quite match the image of quaint contemplation it suggests. An office trailer, wire mesh fences, and the windowless wall of a two-story warehouse frame the entrance into the short wide street. There's no sidewalk let alone landscaping; the cracked asphalt of the road merges with the parking spaces along the buildings. A few hundred yards in, a fire hydrant rests between four slanted poles. Weighed down by dirty yellow paint, the ensemble remains in a state of inertia on a sunken slab of concrete half covered with dirt. The asphalt around it has been removed haphazardly and now bulges in protest. Small crevices along the edges are filled with bits of paper, cigarette butts, and leaves. Follow the cracks, past the dirt, an auto body shop, and a lumberyard, and the dead-end street opens onto a circle to reveal the memorial that gave it its name. A dedication plaque, a flagpole, a juniper tree. Some plants hemmed by small rocks that have been painted white: the smallest Veterans Memorial in California.

The yellow fire hydrant down the road acts as a reminder for the one that is missing here and as an announcement for the one that may be here someday. A fire hydrant, even an imaginary one, is not much of a dream object but a wrought iron construction that controls the flow of water. Here, it is an object channeling past

events in view of future concern. Fire itself is absent from the fire hydrant, but this practical invention tenaciously attests to the possibility of fire as a visceral, elemental urgency. Absent are also the controversies it witnessed. Once installed—if installed—nothing will tell about the role it played in the conflict between the Spring Valley Historical Society and San Diego County. Two governing bodies, one private one regional, operating two buildings that used to be part of the same estate. The county seeks to link them again via an interpretative path along the old spring. For the sake of gaining access to the historical society's visitor restrooms the county offered to install a fire hydrant to support its bid. But the historical society remains wary. At least the caretaker does. Underlying the quibbling over material infrastructures, easements, and access roads lurks the question of how to deal with history. So far, the county couldn't land the bid and the Bancroft Regional Park remains a paper object barely held in place by a plastic rock with information about *The Spring*.

The fire hydrant is still at stake, but for the time being, it's also just mere paper object. The caretaker had opposed the county's involvement most strongly; now he feels that he owes the museum a fire hydrant. Building a fire hydrant is a considerable financial undertaking. An $11,000 bond has been issued—by an anonymous donor, the caretaker tells me—as the first monetary commitment to the project. After Doc's death, around the time the deal with the county fell through, the caretaker had become trust fund manager for Dr. Hostetler's Charitable Trust. By investing the compensation he receives as a trustee, the caretaker makes the museum an indirect beneficiary of Doc's trust.

One of the challenges of handling someone's estate is to determine where it begins and ends. A trustee holds property, authority, or a position of trust or responsibility for the benefit of another. In addition to legal obligations, part of the caretaker's responsibilities as a trustee turn into administering memories, as the late Dr. Hostetler is absent as well. Ever since Doc died, a pair of faded blue boxer shorts neatly stitched at the crotch is on display in the backyard as an object lesson of Doc's thriftiness. Then there's a yellow placemat with images of postcards from Switzerland in the caretaker's office, a souvenir Dr. Hostetler brought from his travel. Doc's memories get mixed up with the caretaker's in a little framed photograph of Dr. Hostetler's mountain lodge in Cuyamaca. It's built in the style of a Swiss chalet, with a large pine tree at the entrance to the driveway. Tucked away in an envelope are pictures that show the property empty. The pine tree has been uprooted and two posts that framed the driveway are everything that's left. "I was supposed to rebuild it," the caretaker remembers, "I'd drawn all the plans, but Doc could never agree on a price with the contractor."

We had come into the office to look at his plans for the fire hydrant, but instead I learn about a wildfire. Doc's cabin was consumed in the Cedar fire of 2003, the largest wildfire in California's recorded history. It burned 280,278 acres including 2,820 buildings in the course of seven days. Periodic but unpredictable visitants, uncontrollable fires destroy and ravage the land. These fires have long been in the making through modern fire prevention practices that inhibit brush and dry wood clearance with smaller fires. The name Cuyamaca derives from Diegueño, 'ekwiiyemak, "behind the clouds," or, with different spelling and translation, Ah-ha-

Kwe-ah-mac, meaning "the place where it rains" or "rain yonder."[288] But rain is scarce and the landscape rattled by droughts, which in turn makes the forest more vulnerable to parasite infestation. "The Cuyamaca forest 'wanted,'—indeed needed—to burn," a hiking guide informs park visitors, "and it did so in the last stages of the Cedar fire."[289] Over 10 years later, it's still a ghostly landscape. A place with fewer clouds where silver-black tree skeletons overlook new growth. Living in Southern California today, the image of wildfire is a threatening one. Until the mid-19th century, the land was burned purposefully in regular intervals; slopes set ablaze were among the first things European explorers noticed as they sailed by the coast. Today the application of fire is recognized as one of the most effective practices of Native American land tenure and prescribed burning is slowly reintroduced into contemporary fire management.[290]

For some time, orange spray paint marks around the Veterans Memorial indicated possible places for the fire hydrant. In August 2012, the imaginary object was scheduled to become reality. The marks have since faded away, while the fire hydrant has yet to materialize. One of the things standing in its way are possible remains of the Native Americans who—just like their fire practices in Cuyamaca—have long been absent from the museum site. A building permit for the fire hydrant will only be issued under the condition that an environmental service agency performs an archeological examination of the earth excavated during construction. That's expensive and time consuming. Besides, the caretaker has other irons in the fire. While the fire hydrant project is on the back burner, memories smolder on.

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Knox. The name doesn't ring a bell. It's printed on a little cardboard package, another thing with German writing the caretaker pulls out to show me. The little cone he produces from the flat box does look familiar. It's Christmas incense from the Ore Mountains. Another souvenir from Dr. Hostetler the caretaker found among Doc's private stuff. Stashed away for years, the incense cones have retained their form but lost their scent. They also seem to have lost their *Räuchermännchen,* the little wooden figurine that's supposed to hold the burning cone, built in such a manner that the smoke wallows from his mouth. When I leave that day, the caretaker gives me a copy of *Literary Industries: Chasing a Vanishing West*, the abridged edition published by Bancroft's great-great-grand daughter Kim Bancroft who traded teaching and urban life for writing and a cabin in the woods.[291] In making Bancroft's lengthy prose palatable for the modern reader, Kim Bancroft is administering memories in her own way. She'd come down to the museum a while ago to promote her book, and the caretaker picked up some extra copies and new energy. "This makes me want to finish the things I started here," he says as he hands me the book. "You know? It makes me want to get back on the fire hydrant project."

The Collector and the Caretaker

The coins land on stray keys and paper clips in the suribachi grinder and make a soft metallic noise. I'd nicked them over the years to fasten my camera to the tripod when I set up in the archive for the day's shoot and now it's time to put them back. I run my finger along the edge of a small glass dish with marbles and they start singing in a strange tone that's high-pitched and subdued at the same time. The sound became part of my archive of the museum as well, when I came here last week to record sounds with the musicians who work on the score for the film. We didn't get to collect the tone of the broken glass bowl; it was gone. A clock with raw turquoise stones circling around the image of a dancing Indian that for the longest time I'd chosen to ignore suddenly begs for attention. I keep pestering Sindhu and Ishan to use the gentle ticking in the film score, but they are not thrilled about this rhythmic imposition.

Outside, in the yard, a friend of the caretaker wheels in huge boxes filled with hardly-used kitchenware, donations for the upcoming rummages sale, and unloads them on the porch. I can hear the caretaker silently calculating how much space they will take up in the shed and how much time it will take to get them in there. Billy works for an RV-Travel company and each rental party gets a complementary kitchen set for their trip: pots and pans, mugs and bowls, plastic glasses, utensils, a water kettle, a toaster, and stainless steel mixing bowls. People leave them behind when they return the RVs and they are not being reused, so it's all up for the taking. The owner keeps the good stuff though, Billy tells me, things that vacationers bought

themselves and can't take home on the plane, "you know, like play stations and surf boards."

"Made in China," the caretaker says to the mug he picked from one of the boxes, and then, to me: "Billy has a tattoo on his neck that says 'Made in Japan,' he got sick being asked if he's from Mexico.… This is the kind of… I'd say white people don't like to buy this, but here, we sell it cheap, some of it will go. It's all about volume." I'm tempted for a moment but then decide against taking a mixing bowl. It would have added to the list of things that I've taken home from the museum over the years: a car repair manual the caretaker picked out for me that's still flying around somewhere; a set of pretty bad speakers that took up space in the closet before I returned them to the next rummage sale; a guava tree that is doing quite well, probably thanks to the bag of chicken manure that came with it; and my biggest score—a silk vintage Brooks Brothers polo shirt in apricot that I wore to the bitter end.

"Bleak House." The caretaker has moved to another box and unpacks a batch of books wrapped in tissue paper: "*Oliver Swift*. *A Christmas Carol*, and here … *David Copperfied*. It's a whole Dickens series. See, bound in leather, but the spines are all broken. Could be a first edition… My father used to collect things. I never thought it mattered. I have one of his bookshelves in there," he adds, pointing to the archive. When I pick up my equipment before I leave, the books are neatly wrapped again and stacked into a small tower that's perched on the archive table. I'm not sure what led the caretaker to keep them here. Maybe they belonged to someone from Spring Valley. Maybe they are just too precious to go for a dime.

In his relationship to things, the caretaker rubs shoulders with Benjamin's collector. What characterizes the collector, but also the child, the flaneur, and the poet, is that they can relate to things beyond their use-value. Benjamin thought about these figures as emblems of the early modern era that brought the advent of mass production and commodity culture. He saw the collector as a vanishing figure of high capitalism. "Only in extinction," he writes in 1931, "the collector is comprehended."[292] To a certain extent, the caretaker can be described as a vanishing figure as well. Even at the museum he always has one foot out of the door, in an attempt to escape the responsibility to take care of everything all the time, but he can't let go. It's a collector's passion that keeps him at the museum—and his love for the adobe.

But he is part of a different regime of objects than the collector, a different capitalist formation than the one Benjamin thought about in the early 20th century. The caretaker exists in a society that has been termed affluent, where not everybody is affluent.[293] In an economy where commodities are increasingly manifold, overproduced, and meant to be short-lived, he repairs the very things that are not made for repair. And while the collector's passion goes beyond an object's use value, the caretaker's care in fact redeems it. At the same time, even though the caretaker is a self-described dumpster diver, he is not—in keeping with Benjamin's historical figures—a rag picker either. Ultimately, the caretaker's task of administering memories and objects concerns the future.

Endnotes

Compelling Repulsion

[1] See Michel Serres, *The Natural Contract* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995); Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology After the End of the World* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).
[2] See https://doctorzamalek2.wordpress.com by Graham Harman, http://bogost.com by Ian Bogost, and https://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com by Levi R. Bryant.
[3] Graham Harman, "That's all for now," Feburary 28, 2014, https://doctorzamalek2.wordpress.com/?s=vancouver.
[4] See Serres, *The Natural Contract, 38*.
[5] See Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2010); and James E. Lovelock and Lynn Margulis, "Atmospheric Homeostasis by and for the Biosphere: The Gaia Hypothesis," *Tellus,* Series A (Stockholm: International Meteorological Institute) 26:1–2 (1974): 2–10.

Sunlight and Extension Cords

[6] H. G. Hanekamp, "*HABS CAL, 37-SPRIV 4*, West Room (Northwest Corner) Bancroft House, 9050 Memory Lane, Spring Valley, San Diego County, CA, Historic American Buildings Survey, 1964," Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/ca0617.photos.01588.p
[7] Tim Ingold, "The Temporality of Landscape," *World Archaeology* 25:2 (1993), 152-74, 159.
[8] See Ethel Greene, *Ethel Greene: Surrealist Painter* (Oceanside, California: Oceanside Museum of Art, 2002); "The History of Solar," US Department of Energy, n.d., http://www1.eere.energy.gov/solar/pdfs/solar_timeline.pdf.

Thinking Through Things

[9] For exhibitions taking up the notion of ghosts see, for instance, *The Perfect Medium: Photography and the Occult* (2004-2005) curated by Pierre Apraxine, Denis Canguilhem, Clément Chéroux, Andreas Fischer, and Sophie Schmit, Maison Européenne del la Photographie, Paris and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; *No Matter How Bright the Light, The Crossing Occurs at Night* (2006), a collaborative research and exhibition project by artists Natascha Sadr Haghighian, Judith Hopf, Ines Schaber and curator Anselm Franke, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; or the ongoing visual art and creative research project GHost (2008 to present), initiated by Sarah Sparkes and Ricarda Vidal and currently led by Sparkes, London, as well as the exhibition project *New Ghost Entertainment Entitled* (2006-2007), Or Gallery Vancouver and Kunsthaus Dresden, which I curated myself.
[10] Jacques Derrida, "Exordium," in *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International* (New York: Routledge, 1994), xviii.
[11] Ibid., 161.

[12] Matthias Fritsch, "Derrida's Reading of Marx," in *The Promise of Memory: History and Politics in Marx, Benjamin, and Derrida* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 93.
[13] Colin Davis, *Haunted Subjects: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis and the Return of the Dead* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 10.
[14] Dorothee Kimmich, *Lebendige Dinge der Moderne* (Konstanz: Konstanz University Press, 2011). This trend is reflected in the art world as well and especially visible in Europe. See for instance exhibition projects such as *Iconoclash* (2002) and *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy* (2005), curated by Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel at ZKM, Center for Art and Media, Kassel; *Animism: Modernity Through the Looking Glass* (2010 – 2012), curated by Anselm Franke; *The Anthropocene Project* (2013 - 2014), curated by Detlef Diederichsen, Silvia Fehrmann, Anselm Franke, Katrin Klingan, Bernd M. Scherer, Holger Schulze, House of World Culture, Berlin; and *Nature after Nature (2014)*, curated by Susanne Pfeffer, Museum Friedericianum, Kassel; or events such as *Late at Tate: The Real Thing* (2010) organized in context of *The Speculative Tate* research series is a collaboration between Tate Britain and Speculative Aesthetics Research Project at the Tate, London.
[15] Karen Barad, "Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come," *Derrida Today* 3:2 (2010): 240–268, 260. Italics and underlining in the original.
[16] Yael Navaro-Yashin, *The Make-Believe Space: Affective Geography in a Post-War Polity* (Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2012). For a recent study analyzing the affective power of geographic space and debrís left in the aftermath of the Spanish conquest, see Gastón R. Gordillo *Rubble: The Afterlife of Destruction* (Durham: Duke University Press).
[17] Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land* (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith Books, 1973), 21-48. McWilliams' account draws from Sherburne F. Cook, whose work on the number of California's pre-contact indigenous population is largely accepted as the most precise. See Sherburne F. Cook*, The Population of the California Indians, 1769-1970* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 1-43.

Between Sprits and Things

[18] Walter Benjamin, "One-Way Street," in *Selected Writings, Volume 1, 1923-1926*, ed. Marcus Paul and Michael J. Jennings Bullock (Cambridge, Mass.; London, England: Belknap Press, 1996), 465.
[19] Theodor W. Adorno, "George und Hofmannsthal: Zum Briefwechsel, 1891- 1906," [1942], quoted in Susan Buck-Moors, *The Origin of Negative Dialectics* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 174. Adorno's essay was written for an issue of the *Journal for Social Research* commemorating Benjamin, which also contains Benjamin's theses "On the Concept of History."
[20] For critiques of object-oriented philosophy and speculative realism, see Alexander Galloway, "The Poverty of Philosophy: Realism and Post-Fordism," *Critical Inquiry* 39:22 (Winter 2013): 347-366; and Nathan Brown, "The Nadir of OOO: From Graham Harman's *Tool Being* to Timothy Morton's *Realist Magic: Objects, Ontology, Causality* (Open Humanities Press, 2013)," *Parrhesia* 17 (2013): 62-71. For critiques of the ontological turn in anthropology see Haidy Geismar, "Material Culture Studies and other Ways to Theorize

Objects: A Primer to a Regional Debate," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 53:1 (2011): 210–218; and Lucas Bessire and David Bond, "Ontological Anthropology and the Deferral of Critique," *American Ethnologist* 41:3 (2014): 440-456.
[21] Gerhard Richter, *Benjamin's Ghosts: Interventions in Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002); Dorothee Kimmich, "'Nur was uns anschaut sehen wir' Benjamin und die Welt der Dinge," in *Schrift, Bilder, Denken: Walter Benjamin und die Künste* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2004), 155-167. See also Dorothee Kimmich, *Lebendige Dinge der Moderne* (Konstanz: Konstanz University Press, 2011).
[22] Richter, *Benjamin's Ghosts*, 3.
[23] Ibid., 4.
[24] Ibid., 5.
[25] Ibid., 6.
[26] Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 827.
[27] Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History" in *Selected Writings, Volume 4, 1839-1940*, ed. Howard and Michael W. Jennings Eiland (Cambridge, Mass.; London, England: Belknap Press, 2003), 397.
[28] Walter Benjamin, "No. 18, Materials for the Exposé of 1935," in *Arcades Project*, 912.

Sketch #1 Sheet of Water

[29] Charles Frake, "Pleasant Places, Past Times, and Sheltered Identity in Rural East Anglia," in *Metaphor and Material Culture*, ed. Christopher Tilley (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1999), 178.
[30] Karna Webster, *The Hidden Heart: A History of Spring Valley and the Bancroft House*, self-published manuscript (Spring Valley, 1980), 10.
[31] See Richard Carrico, *Strangers in a Stolen Land: American Indians in San Diego, 1850-1880* (Sacramento, CA: Sierra Oaks Pub. Co., 1987), 27.
[32] Anonymous, "Historical Sketch of Las Fuentes de San Jorge or The Famous Springs of Spring Valley Near San Diego, California," ca. 1890, quoted in Webster, *Hidden Heart*, 12.
[33] Deborah A. Miranda, "Lies My Ancestors Told For Me," in *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir* (Berkeley: Heyday, 2013), 38.
[34] Thomas Joseph Adema, *Our Hills and Valleys: A History of the Helix-Spring Valley Region* (San Diego: San Diego Historical Society, 1993), 17.
[35] Anonymous (Rufus K. Porter). "History of Spring Valley Part I," n.d, 6, quoted in Webster, *Hidden Heart*, 31.
[36] Rufus K. Porter, quoted in Anonymous, "Historical Sketch of Las Fuentes de San Jorge," 3.
[37] Webster, *Hidden Heart*, 33.
[38] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *Literary Industries: A Memoir* (San Francisco: History Company, 1891), 771.
[39] For a detailed analysis of these dictations see Rosaura Sánchez, *Telling Identities: The Californio Testimonios* (London and Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).
[40] Harry Clark, *A Venture in History: The Production, Publication, and Sale of the Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1973), 20.
[41] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).
[42] Webster, Hidden Heart, 48.
[43] Anonymous, "Historical Sketch of Las Fuentes de San Jorge," 1.

Sketch #2 Sunken Ground

[44] Gary R. Fink, "Test Excavation for the Bancroft Fence Line, Spring Valley California (Kenwood #3) Project No: UH7730," (County of San Diego Community Services Agency Department of Transportation, 1977), 2.
[45] Ibid., 6.
[46] Ibid., 7.
[47] See Chambers Group Inc., "The Bancroft Rock House County of San Diego Historic Landmark Historic Structure Report and Rehabilitation Plan," (Irvine, CA, 2008).
[48] Miranda, "Fischer of Men," in *Bad Indians*, 4.

Sketch #3 Dictionary Hill

[49] "Spring Valley's Historical Landmarks (And Other Interesting Places)," self-published leaflet (Spring Valley Historical Society, n.d.).
[50] See Adema, *Our Hills and Valleys*, 117-118.
[51] Photocopy of the original order form, Spring Valley Historical Society.
[52] Israel Smith Clare, *Library of Universal History and Popular Science, Volume 1* (New York: Bancroft Society, 1910), Hathi Trust Digital Library, http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc2.ark:/13960/t0wp9vx70.
[53] Hubert Howe Bancroft, "The Educational Value of the Study of History," in *Library of Universal History, Volume 1*, v-xiv.
[54] Ibid., v.
[55] Ibid., vi.
[56] Ibid., ix.
[57] Ibid., xiv.
[58] Ibid., xi.
[59] Clare Israel Smith, introduction to *Library of Universal History*, 25.
[60] Bancroft, "Educational Value of History," xii.
[61] J. R. Moriarty and M. Keistman, *A New Translation of the Summary Log of the Cabrillo Voyage in 1542* (San Diego Science Foundation, La Jolla, California, 1963), 22.
[62] Florence C. Shipek, "Kumeyaay Socio-Political Structure," *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* 4:2 (1982): 296-303, 299.
[63] Webster, *Hidden Heart*, 34.
[64] "What Are the 'Unique' Plants, Animals and Habitat that DHOSA Wants to Preserve?" Dictionary Hill Open Space Advocates. http://www.dictionaryhill.info/Q5-Unique.pdf
[65] "Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report SPA 02-002, TM 5299RPL6, P02-023, LOG NO. 02-19-021, SCH NO. 2004081079; HIGHLANDS RANCH," Dictionary Hill Open Space Advocates. http://www.dictionaryhill.info/Documents.html

Sketch #4 Water Tower

[66] Photograph #15992, El Cajon Boulevard near Louisiana Street, Looking West at University Heights Water Standpipe (Arrow), 1913, Union-Tribune Photograph Collection, San Diego History Center, printed in "University Heights Water Storage and Pumping Station Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, prepared by Alexander D. Bevil, North Park Historical Society, 29 July 2012.

[67] Ibid., 5-6.
[68] Ibid., 18.

A Dance Around Things

[69] John Edwards Hicks, "Blackamoor Was Symbol of Young Tabacco Trade 300 Years Ago in England," *The Milwaukee Journal*, December 11, 1948, Accessible online: Google news, accessed April 5, 2016, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1499&dat=19481211&id=Y04aAAAAIBAJ&sjid=xiMEAAAAIBAJ&pg=4490,114583&hl=en.
[70] "London Placard Carriers and 'Sandwich Men,' 1820 – 1840," Urban75, January, 31, 2010, accessed April 5, 2016, http://www.urban75.org/london/billboards.html.
[71] The Kovells, "Cigar Store Indian Was Early Advertising Sign." The Free Lance-Starr, September 11, 1982, Google News, accessed April 5, 2016, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1298&dat=19820911&id=kgdfAAAAIBAJ&sjid=FYwDAAAAIBAJ&pg=5512,1776316&hl=en.

Donate. Shop. Reuse. Repeat.

[72] "Rummage Sale Report," *Bancroft Bulletin*, 11:6 (June-July, 2010), 3.
[73] Webster, *Hidden Heart*, 162.
[74] Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia," in *Selected Writings, Volume 2, Part 1, 1927-1930*, ed. Michael William Jennings, Howard Eiland and Gary Smith (Cambridge, Mass.; London, England: Belknap Press, 1999), 210.
[75] Ibid., 209.
[76] Georges Bataille, "Base Materialism and Gnocticism," in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings 1927-1939*, ed. Allan Stoekl (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985): 45.
[77] Ibid., 210.
[78] See Bataille, "The Big Toe" in *Visions of Excess*, 20-23.
[79] Ibid., 22.

Some Folklore, Same Data, and Some Unexplainable Things

[80] SPC Sw Apache NAA 4877 Baker & Johnston 02027400, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, http://siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?&profile=all&source=~!siarchives&uri=full=3100001~!335700~!0#focus
[81] Florence C. Shipek, "California Indian Reactions to the Franciscans," *The Americas* 41:4 (1985), 480-92, 482.
[82] "2014 Named Freeways, Highways, Structures and Other Appurtenances in California," prepared by
California Department of Transportation, California State Transportation Agency CalSTA, 2014 http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tsip/hseb/products/Named_Freeways_Final.pdf.
[83] "Mission Valley Life," Civita, http://www.civitalife.com.

[84] Letter by Fr. Juan Crespi to Fr. Guardian of San Fernando College, Mexico, June 22, 1769, in Fr. Zephyrin Engelhardt, *San Diego Mission* (San Francisco: James H. Barry Company, 1920), 16.
[85] Junípero Serra, *Writings of Junípero Serra, Volume 1*, ed. Antionine Tibesar (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1955), 305.
[86] Engelhardt, *San Diego Missio*n, 56, 142.
[87] Shipek, "California Indian Reactions to the Franciscans," 484.
[88] See for instance, Maureen Gilmer, "California Peppered with Drought-Resistant Tree," *The Desert Sun*, August 8, 2014, http://www.desertsun.com/story/life/home-garden/maureen-gilmer/2014/08/09/california-peppered-drought-resistant-trees/13819103/
[89] San Luis Rey Mission Church, Oceanside, California, http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/american_latino_heritage/San_Luis_Rey_Mission_Church.html.
[90] *The Exposition Beautiful - Over 100 Views of the Panama-California Exposition: the Panama-California Exposition and San Diego, the Exposition City* (San Diego: Pictorial Publishing Company, 1915), n.p.
[91] For national media response, see Laura M. Holson, "Sainthood of Junípero Serra Reopens Wounds of Colonialism in California," *The New York Times*, September, 29, 2015. Accessible online http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/30/us/attack-on-statue-of-new-saint-junipero-serra-digs-up-old-conflicts.html?_r=0. For local media response, see Tatiana Sanchez, "Junipero Serra Canonization Draws Protests," *The San Diego Union-Tribute*, Sept. 23, 2015. http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/2015/sep/23/Junipero-Serra-canonization-protests-opposition/.

Mannequin Hands

[92] Margaret Leslie Davis, *Bullocks Wilshire* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 7.
[93] Ibid., 72, 78.
[94] Ibid., 101, 106.
[95] Dziga Vertov, quoted in Fore, Devin. "The Metabiotic State: Dziga Vertov's *The Eleventh Year*." *October* 145 (Summer 2014): 3-37, 31.
[96] Dziga Vertov, quoted in Fore, "Metabiotic State," 13.
[97] Dai Vaughan, "The Space Between Shots," in *For Documentary: Twelve Essays* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1999): 21.

The Punch Bowl

[98] Early American Pattern Glass Society, "Shared Glass Knowledge," 2015, http://www.eapgs.org/shared-glass-knowledge. See also, Alice Hulett Metz, *Early American Pattern Glass* (Newark, OH: Spencer Walker P, 1965).
[99] Quoted in P. Bradley Nutting, "Selling Elegant Glassware During the Great Depression: A.H. Heisey & Company and the New Deal," *Business History Review* 77 (Autumn 2003): 447-78.
[100] Bill Brown, "The Secret Life of Things (Virginia Woolf and the Matter of Modernism)," *Modernism/Modernity* 6:2 (1999): 1-28.

[101] Ibid., 1. Brown refers to Jean Baudrillard, *Fatal Strategies,* trans. Phillip Beitchman and W. G. J. Niesluchowski (New York: Semiotext[e], 1990). See also Jean Baudrillard, Paul Foss, and Julian Pefanis, *The Revenge of the Crystal: Selected Writings on the Modern Object and Its Destiny, 1968-1983* (London; Concord, Mass.: Pluto Press in association with the Power Institute of Fine Arts, University of Sydney, 1990).
[102] Ibid., 1.
[103] Ibid., 2. For Brown, the "things" discussed, for instance, in Appadurai's *The Social Life of Things* or Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough's *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective,* haven't yet earned the status of things, "[f]or the degree to which the essays trace generalizable circuits of exchange and consumption is the degree to which they can address *no thing at all*, but only objects." In this sense, the analysis of economic and cultural systems of value production becomes a means of objectification in itself. Indeed, one can imaging the punch bowl and its attendant histories of economic exchange, material form, and gendered consumer practices infused with personal meaning and desires comfortably finding a place in *The Sex of Things*, just another object posing as a thing.
[104] Ibid., 2.
[105] Ibid., 3.

More Stuff, Less People

[106] John Walton Caughey, "Hubert Howe Bancroft: Historian of Western America," *The American Historical Review* 50:3 (April 1945): 461-470, 463.
[107] Carly Bartkiewicz, "Watershed Moment: 118-Year-Old Sweetwater Dam to Be National Landmark," *UT San Diego*, April 17, 2006, http://www.utsandiego.com/uniontrib/20060407/news_7m7dam.html.
[108] Joseph Hill, "Dry Rivers, Dammed Rivers and Floods: An Early History of the Struggle Between Droughts and Floods in San Diego," *Journal of San Diego History* 48:1 (Winter 2002), http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/2002-1/hill.htm.
[109] Walter Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library," in *Selected Writings, Volume 2, Part 2*, *1931-1934*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith (Cambridge, Mass.; London, England: Belknap Press, 2003), 486-493, 486.
[110] Ibid., 486.
[111] Ibid., 486.
[112] Irene Phillips, "National City in Review," *Journal of San Diego History* 8:2 (July 1962), http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/62july/national.html.
[113] Adema, *Our Hills and Valleys*, 123.
[114] Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library," 487.
[115] Ibid., 486.
[116] Ibid., 487.
[117] Ibid., 491.

A Path Through a Wilderness of Knowledge to the Desired Facts

[118] Reuben G. Thwaites, "Report on the Bancroft Library," submitted to the President and the Regents of the University of California, October 14, 1905, University of California Chronicle, VIII (1905-1906).

[119] Bancroft, *Literary Industries,* 304.
[120] For a description of Bancroft's collection see John Walton Caughey, *Hubert Howe Bancroft: Historian of the West* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1946), 67-85 and Thwaites, "Report on the Bancroft Library."
[121] In a promotional pamphlet the History Company literally projects Bancroft's manuscript holdings in square feet, or, rather, miles. "The field thus covered [by Bancroft's collection] is equal in area to on twelfth of the earth's surface." Quoted in Marissa K. Lopez, "*Mexicanidad* at Home: Mariano Vallejo's Chicano Historiography," in *Chicano Nations: The Hemispheric Origins of Mexican American Literature* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2011): 61-89, 70.
[122] Charles B. Faulhaber, afterword to *Literary Industries: Chasing a Vanishing West: An Abridged Version by Kim Bancroft* (Berkeley, California: Heyday, 2014): 223-227, 223. As Faulhaber and other scholars have pointed out, the wealth of sources provided in the *Works* still make them valuable reference books today. See also, Sánchez, *Telling Identities,*18.
[123] See Clark, *Venture in History*, 16.
[124] Henry L. Oak, *"Literary Industries" in a New Light: A Statement on the Authorship of Bancroft's Native Races and History of the Pacific States, with Comments on Those Works and the System by Which They Were Written; The Library; and the Labors of Assistants. The Whole Being a Reply to Statements and Claims in the Literary Industries* (San Francisco: Bacon Printing, 1893), 15.
[125] Bancroft, *Literary Industries*, 218.
[126] Ibid., 611.
[127] The full quote reads: "To history has been given the function of judging the past, of instructing the men for the profit of future years. The present attempt does not aspire to such a lofty undertaking; it merely wants to show [what actually happened]." The original reads "wie es eigentlich gewesen ist." See Leopold von Ranke, "Preface to The First Edition of Histories of the Latin and Germanic Nations" in *Leopold von Ranke: The Theory And Practice Of History*, ed. Georg G. Iggers and Konrad von Moltke (London: Rutledge, 2010), 137.
[128] Walter Benjamin, "Convolute N," [N3,4], in *Arcades Project*, 463. Benjamin also references Ranke's statement in "On the Concept of History" as an example of the fallacies of historicism. See Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," in *Selected Writings, Volume 4*, 391. For an in-depth reading of Benjamin's critique of historicism and Ranke in particular, see Amy Kapczynski, "Historicism, Progress, and the Redemptive Constitution," *Cardozo Law Review* 26:3 (2005): 1041-1117.
[129] Eileen K. Cheng, *Historiography: An Introductory Guide* (London; New York: Continuum, 2012), 75.
[130] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *Essays and Miscellany* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1890), 90.
[131] Ibid., 96.
[132] In her work on Bancroft's *Popular Tribunals*, two volumes of the *Works* dedicated to American vigilantism, Lisa Arellano argues that Bancroft's goal was to produce a theory of national citizenship in conjunction with the history of the Pacific region. See Lisa Arellano, "John/the Victim/the Heathen: Hubert Howe Bancroft and the Making of Western History," in *Vigilantes and Lynch Mobs: Narratives of Community and Nation* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012): 79-109.
[133] Bancroft, *Literary Industries,* 231.
[134] Anke te Heesen, *The Newspaper Clipping: A Modern Paper Object* (Manchester and New

York: Manchester University Press, 2014), 16.
[135] Bancroft, *Literary Industries,* 593.
[136] Bancroft describes this production process in detail in the chapter "A Literary Workshop" and "My Method of Writing History." See Bancroft, *Literary Industries,* 230-244 and 592-617.
[137] The same is true for Bancroft's own time. As D. D. Van Tassel has pointed out in view of the frequent critiques of Bancroft's production methods, which began in response to his earliest publications, Bancroft's history workshop in fact resembled similar "literary factories" developing at the same time at Eastern universities, which were, in turn, modeled after the working method of Ranke "who made use of the effort of generations of graduate students in the writing of his universal history." D. D. Van Tassel, *Recording America's Past: An Interpretation of the Development of Historical Studies in America, 1607-1884* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960): 168, quoted in James J. Barnes, "Review Essay: *A Venture in History*" *History and Theory* 15:2 (May 1976): 212-225, 129. In fact, Bancroft himself mentions the graduate students working for German history professors in order to justify his own use of assistants. See Bancroft, *Literary Industries,* 167.
[138] Ibid.*, 232.*
[139] Bancroft's biographer John Walton Caughey outlines the authorship of each volume of the *Works* based on the combined assessments of Henry Oaks, William Nemos, Thomas Savage, and Frances Fuller Victor, who each wrote several volumes. Of the 39 volumes that were published between 1874-1890 under his name, only five are attributed to Bancroft today. See Caughey, *Hubert Howe Bancroft*, 262–263.
[140] Oak, *"Literary Industries" in a New Light,* 33-34.
[141] Ibid., 27.
[142] Thwaites, "Report on the Bancroft Library," 16.
[143] Lothar Müller, *White Magic: The Age of Paper Age* (Cambridge; Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2014): 173.
[144] Herman Melville, "The Paradise of Bachelors and The Tartarus of Maids." In: *Herman Melville, Billy Budd, Sailor, and Selected Tales*, ed. Robert Milder (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 74-96, 88.
[145] Ibid., 88.
[146] See Müller, 178. For Marx' analysis of paper production, see Karl Marx *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, Volume 1,* ed. Friedrich Engels (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1909), 272-298, 363-382, 413-416.
[147] Müller, *White Magic*, 171.
[148] Melville, "Paradise of Bachelors," 74.
[149] Ibid., 90.
[150] Thomas G. Andrews has traced the paper trail of Bancroft's *Works* and also the commingling of natural and human resources that their production depended on. His analysis of the environmental impact of large-scale printing endeavors in the late 19th century uses Bancroft's *Works* as a case study. See Thomas G. Andrews, "Toward an Environmental History of the Book: The Nature of Hubert Howe Bancroft's *Works*," *Southern California Quarterly* 93:1 (Spring 2011): 33-68.
[151] Hubert Howe Bancroft papers: additions, [ca. 1896-1918], BANC MSS 73/37, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[152] Jeannette L. Gilder, "The Most Extraordinary Book in the World," *The World*, Sunday, February 14, 1897.
[153] On the subscription politics of Bancroft's *Works* and his subsequent subscription-financed publishing projects, see Clark, *Venture in History*, 121-142, 121.

[154] Ibid., 151.
[155] "Ankle Deep in Water … White Girl Slaves … Breathe Stifling Dust" *The World*, Sunday, February 14, 1897.
[156] Leonora Barry, "Report to the Knights of Labor, 1887," in *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor and Industries of New Jersey* (Somerville, 1888), 202-204.
[157] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Book of Wealth,* Section 10 (New York: Bancroft Co., 1900), 923.
[158] John S. Hittell, *Commerce and Industries on the Pacific Coast* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft and Co., 1882): 325. According to Clark, Bancroft acquired all his paper "in the East." See Clark, *Venture in History*, 58. According to Andrews, the exact location of Bancroft's production facilities in the East and the provenance of his imported materials remain unknown.

"Cowboys and …"

[159] *The Vanishing Race*, dir. Allan Dwan, perf. Jessalyn Van Trump, Jack Richardson, George Periolat, Jack Kerrigan, Pauline Bush, and Louise Lester. Flying A Studio, 35mm, black & white, 1912.
[160] Peter Bogdanovich, *Allan Dwan: The Last Pioneer* (New York: Praeger, 1971), 19.
[161] Edward S. Curtis, *The North American Indian,* twenty volumes published between 1907 and 1930, reprinted as *The North American Indian: The Complete Portfolios* (Taschen, Bibliotheka Universalis, 2015).
[162] "The 'Make Believe' Indian," *Moving Picture World*, 8:9, 1911, quoted in Alison Griffiths, *Wondrous Difference: Cinema, Anthropology and Turn of the Century Visual Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 245.
[163] "Indian War on Film," *Moving Picture World*, 8:11, 1911. See Griffiths, *Wondrous Difference*, 245.
[164] Jimmie Durham, "Cowboys and …," in *A Certain Lack of Coherence: Writings on Art and Cultural Politics* (London: Kala Press, 1993), 170-186, 177.
[165] Ibid., 178.
[166] Ibid., 182.
[167] Ibid., 181.

First Contact and Clothing

[168] Moriarty and Keistman, *New Translation of the Summary*, 19-20
[169] Ibid., 20.
[170] Ibid. 22.
[171] Ibid., 19, 22, 23.
[172] Richard Flint and Shirley Cushing Flint, eds, *Documents of the Coronado Expedition, 1539-1542: "They Were Not Familiar with His Majesty, nor Did They Wish to Be His Subjects,"* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 66.
[173] Ibid., 66.
[174] Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 68-69.
[175] Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions* (Chicago: Oxford University Press, 1991), 88.
[176] Ibid., 88.

[177] Christopher Columbus, *The Journal of Christopher Columbus: (During his First Voyage, 1492-93), and Documents Relating to the Voyages of John Cabot and Gaspar Corte Real* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), 39.
[178] Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* (New York: Harper&Row, 1984), 17.
[179] Columbus, *Journal, 39.*
[180] Todorov, *Conquest of America*, 44, quoted in José Piedra, "The Game of Critical Arrival," review of *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* by Tzvetan Todorov; Richard Howard; *The Enigma of Arrival* by V. S. Naipau, *Diacritics*, 19:1 (Spring, 1989), 33-61, 41.
[181] Ibid., 38.
[182] See, for instance, Eduardo Subirats, *El Continente Vacío: La Conquista del Nuevo Mundo y la Conciencia Moderna* (México, D.F.: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1994). On the detrimental impact of missionization and settler colonialism on California's native population, see McWilliams, *Southern California,* 21-48; Daniel Fogel, *Junípero Serra, the Vatican and Enslavement Theory* (San Fransisco: Ism Press, 1988); and more recently, Brendan C. Lindsay, *Murder State: California's Native American Genocide* (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 2012).
[183] Michel de Montaigne, "Of cannibals," in *The Complete Essays of Montaigne,* trans. Donald Frame (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957). Quoted in Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions,* 147.
[184] Montaigne's writing about his encounter with the Tupinambá is filtered through his own experiences of the gruesome atrocities in the French civil wars. See also, Sarah Blakewell, *How to Live or A Life of Montaigne* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2010): 183-194.
[185] Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions, 95*.
[186]José Piedra, "Game of Critical Arrival," 50. A similar narrative strategy that merges an "intellectual "I" with a collective voice is used by Garcilaso de la Vega in *Comentarios Reales* (1976)*,* which retells the "stories" of Inca civilization as an amalgam of fact and fiction. See Eduardo Subirats, "Three Visions of America," in *A Twice-Told Tale: Reinventing the Encounter in Iberian/Iberian American Literature and Film*, ed. Santiago Juan-Navarro and Theodore Robert Young (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2001), 34-35.
[187] Moriarty and Keistman, *Summary Log of the Cabrillo Voyage,* 19, 23.
[188] Ibid., 21
[189] Ibid., 19, 22.
[190] Ibid., 22
[191] Ibid,. 22.
[192] Roy Cook, "Kumeyaay at Point Loma: Cabrillo Day 2009," accessed October, 9, 2013. http://americanindiansource.com/kumeyaayptloma.html.
[193] Richard Flint and Shirley Cushing Flint, eds, *Documents of the Coronado Expedition, 1539-1542: "They Were Not Familiar with His Majesty, Nor Did They Wish to Be His Subjects"* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).
[194] "The Relación de la Jornada de Cíbola, Pedro de Castañeda's Narrative," (copy, 1560s) in *Documents of the Coronado Expedition*, 393.
[195] Ibid., 402.
[196] Ibid., 402
[197] Ibid., 402.
[198] Ibid., 403.
[199] Ibid., 403.
[200] Garci Roderíquez de Montalvo, *The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandián*

(Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1992), 459.
[201] Ibid., 456-457
[202] Ibid., 492.
[203] Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz, eds, "The Invention of 'California' - Garci Roderíquez de Montalvo," in *Lands of Promise and Despair: Chronicles of Early California, 1535-1846* (Santa Clara, CA: Santa Clara University; Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books, 2001). See also, Edward Everett Hale, *The Queen of California: The Origin of the Name of California with a Translation from the Sergas of Esplandián* [1862] (San Francisco: Colt Press, 1945); and Ruth Putnam, "California: The Name" *University of California Publications in History* 4:4 (1917): 561-79.
[204] Columbus, *Journal of Christopher Columbus,* 434.
[205] See Astrid Steverlynck, "To What Extent Were Amazon Women Facts, Real or Imagined, of Native Americans?" *Ethnohistory* 52:4 (2005): 659-726.
[206] de Montalvo, *Esplandían,* 461.
[207] Ibid., 458.
[208] Hernán Cortés, "*The Fourth Letter, October 15, 1524*," in Dora Polk, *The Island of California: A History of the Myth* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 90.
[209] *A Brief Report of the Discoveries in the South Sea, by Fray Antonio de la Ascensión, 1603-1604* is credited with bringing the mythical island back into circulation. See Glen McLauglin and Nancy H. Mayo, *The Mapping of California as an Island - An Illustrated Checklist* (Saratoga, CA: California Map Society, 1995).
[210] "California: Vizcaino Expedition *de la Ascension, a Religious of the Discalced Order of Carmelites, who took part in it and as Cosmographer made a map of it*," in Herbert Eugene Bolton, *Spanish Exploration in the Southwest, 1542-1706* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1916), 117.
[211] Juan de Torquemada, quoted in Engelhardt, *San Diego Mission*, 7.
[212] Bolton, *Spanish Exploration,* 117.
[213] See Paul Douglas Cambell, *Earth Pigments and Paint of the California Indians - Meaning and Technology* (San Diego: Sunbelt Publications, 2007); Bolton, *Spanish Exploration,* 197-211.
[214] Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, 23.
[215] de Montalvo, *Esplandían,* 503.
[216] Quoted in Irving A. Leonard, *Romances of Chivalry in the Spanish Indies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1933), 219.
[217] Ibid., 4.
[218] Fransisco Palóu, *Noticias de la Nueva California, Tome 3* (San Francisco: Impr. de Edouardo Bosqui y Cia, 1874), 603-605, quoted in Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California, Volume 1* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Company, 1884), 219.
[219] Serra, *Writings of Junípero Serra*, 171.
[220] Letter of Luis Jayme, O.F.M., San Diego, October 17, 1772, trans. and ed. Maynard Geiger, O.F.M. (Published for The San Diego Public Library by Dawson's Book Shop, Los Angeles, 1970), 38.
[221] Charles Edward Chapman, *The Founding of Spanish California: The Northwestward Expansion of New Spain, 1687-1783* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1916), 462.
[222] Ibid., 466.
[223] See Barbara L. Voss, "'Poor People in Silk Shirts': Dress and Ethnogenesis in Spanish-colonial San Francisco," *Journal of Social Archaeology* 8:3 (2008): 404–432.

[224] See Barbara L. Voss, "From Casta to Californio: Social Identities in Late Spanish and Mexican-Era Alta California," in *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis: Race and Sexuality in Colonial San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 100-116.
[225] Bancroft, *History of California Vol. 1*, 390. The account is based on Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo's *History of California*, one of the dictations recorded by Bancroft's agents. Vallejo was an influential Californio general and politician. Comprising a 5-volume history, Vallejo's testimonial is the most extensive and probably the one most frequently referenced in Bancroft's *Works*.
[226] See Margaret Gilbert Mackey and Louis Pickney Sooy, *Early California Costumes 1769 –1846* (Stanford: Stanford University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1932), 34-35.
[227] "Petition by Doña Callis, the Wife of Don Pedro Fages, Govenor of the Californias, That Her Case May Be Heard and That She Be Freed From The Oppression From Which She Is Suffering," in Beebe and Senkewicz, *Land of Promise and Despair*, 237.
[228] Bárbara O. Reyes, *Private Women, Public Lives: Gender and the Missions of California* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 98-110.
[229] "Petition by Doña Callis", 238.
[230] *Book of Baptisms, San Diego Mission, 1769 – 1799*, San Diego History Center, Record group PRM2.765.

Salvage Archaeology

[231] Commerce and Industries of the Pacific Coast, Carton 2:57, Paper bag file, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[232] National Center for Cultural Resources, National Park Service, Department of the Interior. "Archeological and Historic Preservation Act: As Amended," in *Federal Historic Preservation Laws, Fourth Edition, 2006.* Accessible online: http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/FHPL_ArchHistPres.pdf

Bancroft Scraps

[233] Bancroft Scraps, Volume 36, California Indians, Microfilm F851.7.B2, Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley.
[234] Alexander Smith Taylor, "Precis India Californicus," in *Handbook Almanac for the Pacific States*
(San Francisco: H.H. Bancroft & Company, 1864); Franklin Tuthill, *The History of California* (San Francisco: H. H. Bancroft & Company, 1866), clippings included in *Bancroft Scraps, Volume 36*.
[235] Bancroft, *Literary Industries,* 575.
[236] John Ross Browne, "The Indian Reservations," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 23 (1864): 306 – 316, clipping included in *Bancroft Scraps*, *Volume 36*, 18-22.
[237] Ibid., 19.
[238] Ibid., 19.
[239] Ibid., 22.
[240] Bancroft, "Military 1848-1888," in *History of California, Volume 7* (San Francisco: H. H. Bancroft & Company, 1868): 445-471.
[241] Bancroft, "Finances 1849-1869," in *History of California*, *Volume 6* (San Francisco: H. H. Bancroft & Company, 1868): 604-642.

[242] Bancroft, "At the Mines," in *History of California*, *Volume 6,* 82-109, 82 and 95.
[243] On the internal organization of the *Works*, see Bancroft, *Literary Industries*, 650-51. On violence committed against native Indians, see Hubert Howe Bancroft, *California Inter Pocula* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888): 235-236.
[244] Bancroft, "Extermination of the Indians 1849-1887," *History of California*, *Volume 7*, 474-494.
[245] Ibid., 474.
[246] For a detailed account of land ownership and production relations between Californio landowners and Indian peons (or, in many cases, de facto slaves) after the mission secularization, see Sanchez, *Telling Identities*, 142-187 and Carrico, *Strangers in a Stolen Land*, 41.
[247] Sanchez, *Telling Identities,* 184.
[248] See for instance, Richard Henry Dana (1840), in *Contending Voices, Volume 1,* ed. John Erwin Hollitz (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth; Andover: Cengage Learning, 2010): 183.
[249] Sanchez, *Telling Identities*, 274-277.
[250] See McWilliams, *Southern California*, 22-23
[251] Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. 5, 577.
[252] Ibid., 581.
[253] Bancroft, *Literary Industries*, 422.
[254] Bancroft, *Literary Industries*, 398, and Hubert Howe Bancroft, *California Pastoral* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), 180. Bancroft's *History of California* and *California Pastoral* are often regarded as the primary sources for paternalistic and stereotypical representations of Californios. Also see Voss, "From Casta to Californio," 104.
[255] Bancroft, *Literary Industries*, 394.
[256] Ibid., 382.
[257] Ibid., 295.
[258] See Hubert Howe Bancroft, index for *The Native Races, Volume 1-5* (San Francisco, A. L. Bancroft & Company, 1875), 651-652.
[259] Bancroft, *Literary Industries*, 575.
[260] te Hessen, *Newspaper Clipping,* 57.
[261] Ibid*.,* 64.
[262] Anthony R. Pico, "Tribal Governments and the Recall," *San Diego Union Tribune*, October 3, 2003.
[263] "Indian Affairs–The Arrival of Mr. Beale–His Talk with the Indians," *Alta California*, San Francisco, September 22, 1853, clipping included in *Bancroft Scraps*, *Volume 36*, 83.
[264] Proposition 1A, "Gambling on Tribal Lands," accessible online: http://www.lao.ca.gov/ballot/2000/1A_03_2000.html.
[265] Marietta Melson, "Decision on Campo Landfill Postponed," *Daily Californian*, March 3, 1993.
[266] Ibid., n.p.
[267] Dan McGovern, *The Campo Indian Landfill War: The Fight for Gold in California's Garbage* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995): 20.
[268] Cecil Scott, business manager of the Kaibab-Paiutes, quoted in McGovern, *Campo Indian Landfill War*, 29.
[269] Melson, "Decision on Campo Landfill."
[270] McGovern*, Campo Indian Landfill War*, 34.
[271] Ibid., 162.
[272] Ibid., 184.

[273] Ibid., 112.
[274] Ibid., 111.
[275] Ibid., 18.
[276] Ibid., 54.
[277] Ibid., 151.
[278] Ibid., 263.
[279] See the Campo Kumeyaay Nation web page. Accessible online: http://www.campo-nsn.gov

The Birds of Bancroft

[280] te Hessen, *Newspaper Clipping, 87.*
[281] Ibid., 99.
[282] Ibid., 89.
[283] Ibid., 100.
[284] Bancroft, *Literary Industries,* 610.
[285] Bancroft, *Literary Industries*, 568.
[286] Ibid., 610.
[287] Walter Benjamin, "Convolute H The Collector [H4,1]" in *Arcades Project*, 210.

Administering Memories

[288] Jerry Schad, *Afoot and Afield in San Diego County: A Comprehensive Hiking Guide* (Berkeley California: Wilderness Press, 2007): 221.
[289] Ibid., 223.
[290] See, for instance, M. Kat Anderson, *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources* (Berkeley: California University Press, 2013).
[291] Bancroft, *Literary Industries: Chasing a Vanishing West*, 2014. For Kim Bancroft's blog, see http://urbanwomanbacktoland.blogspot.com.

The Collector and the Caretaker

[292] See Benjamin, "Unpacking my Library," and "Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian," in *Selected Writings, Volume 3, 1935-1938*, ed. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, Mass.; London, England: Belknap Press, 1996), 260-302.
[293] John K. Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1958).

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