

Weaving *pikyav* (to-fix-it):
Karuk Basket Weaving in-Relation-with the Everyday World

By

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Abstract

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This dissertation research addresses the question of how basketry is a vital, living part of Karuk culture. Basketry is intertwined with nearly every aspect of everyday life, including Karuk onto-epistemology, traditional ecological knowledge, Karuk language, familial and community relationships, identity, and social memory. This research looks toward practices of weaving, allowing for understandings of baskets in broader social and historical contexts. Underscoring the vitality of basket weaving to everyday life, this research promotes the Karuk ontological view that baskets are living beings.

Tracing the history of the Karuk Tribe through multiple lenses, I investigate the ways in which Karuk peoples adapted to the devastating consequences of contact with non-Indians in 1850. This history highlights the genocide of the Karuk peoples and the laws set in place that were designed to eradicate Native peoples, who were considered to impede the development of the rich resources of the Klamath River region. Differences in worldviews underscored the battleground over natural resources. However, according to Karuk onto-epistemology, these natural resources, as well as objects such as basketry, are a part of a complex network of social beings, *ikxaréyavsa*, who inhabited the world before humans. Evidenced in myths, stories, and the Karuk language, basketry is made for specific purposes and peoples, and are members—agents—of Karuk communities, who are born, participate in social life and mediate the moral relationships between people and objects.

A mere forty years after contact with non-Indian settlers, the national craze for handcrafted goods fueled a burgeoning tourist trade. Karuk women wove baskets by the thousands to satisfy the demands of collectors and connoisseurs, while at the same time anthropologists amassed well-worn examples of basketry to grow their museum research collections. Through sale, theft, coercion, and bartering, both new and old baskets left the Klamath River.

Many of the baskets sold during the height of the Arts and Crafts movement made their way into museum collections. The documentation of one such collection

at the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History provides a unique understanding of the everyday negotiations weavers took in order to provide for their families. In her discourse about this collection, Phoebe Maddux (Karuk) expressed evocative details about the baskets from her perspective, resisting a classificatory approach to understanding the meaning of these baskets. Instead, her notions reinforce Karuk ways of knowing about basketry.

After the amplification of basket weaving for the Arts and Crafts market, buyers, collectors and museums lost interest in collecting Native American works. For this reason and others, fewer and fewer Karuk peoples wove. The racism that had endured since the gold rush era made weavers conceal their weaving. The impact of boarding school inculcation meant that few girls picked up weaving when they returned to Karuk homelands. The impact of land restrictions and fire suppression meant that weavers had little access to weaving materials. Additionally, the impact of the sale, theft, gift, and barter of baskets meant that there were scarcer representations of basket designs and styles available to weavers from which they could garner inspiration. But despite these negative consequences on Karuk basket weaving, it did not become a “lost culture.” A small number of weavers nurtured basket weaving, sharing their knowledge with others and continuing to maintain the understanding that baskets are relations-alive.

By the 1960s, weavers who had cultivated Karuk basket weaving knowledge through creative undertakings simultaneously taught classes, opened stores to sell their work, participated in weaving demonstrations at different events, and developed relationships with the US Forest Service to bring back the practice of prescribed burning. In the 1980s, Northwestern California Indian weavers were interviewed by Coleen Kelley Marks, who asked them to reflect on different aspect of basket weaving, from teaching and selling baskets to gathering and weaving techniques. Focusing on teaching and gathering, weavers revealed their frustrations and concerns about their ability to weave and pass the knowledge to the next generation. Weavers who shared their knowledge of the weaving culture with students felt deeply the responsibility as Karuk peoples to pass basket weaving to the next generation, thereby perpetuating the practice.

Contemporary Karuk weavers, though few, are persisting despite the lack of social and economic support, as well as the limited natural resources available to them. Combined with interviews with weavers from the 1980s, I discuss how today’s weavers embolden their relations with the natural resources they rely on for weaving materials; with the ancestors to carry forward the tradition of weaving to the next generation; and with the world to assist with reaffirming their Karuk identity through the principles of *pikyav* (to-fix-it).

This work is dedicated to Karuk basket weavers
—past, present, and future—

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Chapter I Introduction

Karuk baskets cry out from the museum shelves. They want to be a part of the world—to take part in the social life that they have so long been missing. When I visited the storage area, where there are baskets lined up from floor to ceiling, I felt it. Every time I go into collections areas, I feel that I should say something to the baskets. To acknowledge their lives, to say that there is a Karuk person here that knows them and that desires for them to be back with their peoples. But I am always at a loss for words. I feel like I should have a prayer in the Karuk language, which I do not know well enough to formulate the sentiments that I want to share. But when I visited the collection the feeling was so very strong.

I began to sing to them.

I could not stop myself.

I have never done that before and I am not sure even what I sang.

It is a song that I won't be able to repeat again, but I sang.

I walked up and down the rows of baskets and sang the song that welled up from deep inside me.

And the baskets responded.

I had an intense feeling come over me. I felt that there was a strong pull to keep singing. That I needed to sing more. Feelings of happiness and sadness washed over me. Feelings of longing and exhaustion crowded my mind and body.

And the hairs on the back of my neck and on my arms stood up.

They were crying out. And I was crying with them.

(From the author's museum field notes, 2015)

Karuk basket weaving is a way of life and a way of knowing about the world. Baskets are not just containers, nor are they static objects. Baskets carry the weight of history, vitality, loss, and the spiritual connection to the land from which the Karuk *áraaras* (peoples) came into being. Baskets hold the knowledge about the world, how to live right within the world, and how to steward the world of which they and their weavers are a part. Baskets are made with intention, and through the intention of the weaver, baskets emerge transformed from the aliveness of the materials with which they are made to the animacy of living beings who need to

participate in the world. Baskets are members of Karuk communities, who are born, participate in social life and mediate the moral relationships between people and objects (Field 2008, Lang 1994, Margolin 1981).

Karuk peoples are informed about these transformations through the myths and stories that describe the world before the time of human beings, but even more so they are “are the gifts of the *Ikxaréeyavsa*, or Spirit beings, who lived on this earth during the Myth Period, all of whom labored to understand and perfect a way of life on Earth” (Lang 1991:19). Through their own engagement in Karuk basket weaving, weavers are enveloped not in a distinct art form, nor in a passive craft, but in a basket weaving *culture*. The term *culture* as it refers to Karuk basket weaving in this work is not based on anthropological engagement with the concept, although it could be considered akin to Bourdieu’s (1977) concept of *habitus*. What basket weaving culture means to Karuk peoples rises up from a discussion with Wilverna “Verna” Reece (Karuk), who is a master basket weaver. Ms. Reece describes weaving as a culture—a way of living in the world—which will be discussed further in “Chapter VI: Contemporary Karuk Basket Weaving.”

This dissertation is predicated on engaging with Karuk onto-epistemology to understand the aliveness and animacy of baskets, through reconfiguring how baskets are referred to as *belongings* and by tracing their circulation through time, place and space through their *itineraries*. I engage with the term *onto-epistemology*, not as an erasure of ontology or cosmology, but in recognition that they work in relation with one another, co-constituting how we know and what we know. Describing the premise of onto-epistemology, Barad (2003) states, “We do not obtain knowledge by standing outside of the world; we know because ‘we’ are of the world” (2003:829; 2007). Thinking of baskets as belongings is a way to understand how they embody the “continuity of intangible forms of knowledge” (Muntien 2015:360). It is not in the sense of a possession, like belonging *to* somebody. Instead, they are belonging *with* their people, their history, their land, their ceremony, and their everyday world. By tracing Karuk baskets’ itineraries, there is a sense of being able to grasp the belongings’ engagements in the world beyond their home and the means by which they are moved, following where they went and where they are going, and also the purposes of their travels.

Centering a discussion of basket weaving on Karuk knowledge is one way to disrupt the dominant narratives about Karuk basket weaving and Karuk weavers that have circulated since the late 1800s. Anthropologists, art historians, and others have described Karuk baskets in terms of their form and function, symbolism or lack thereof, artistic merits, and economic value, yet little has been written about baskets’ ties to community, land, and identity as Karuk beings in their own right. By centering baskets within the social contexts in which they have journeyed, or circulated, the practice of basket weaving reveals itself to be fully integrated in the Karuk identification as “fix-the-world” peoples. Fixing the world is ever-emergent, a way of continually bringing balance to the world and the peoples who live in relation with the world (Buckley 2002; Lang 2012). From gathering plant materials to weaving and to releasing the basket into the world, Karuk basket weaving is a part of bringing balance back to the *áraaras* and to the world.

The knowledge of basket weaving was passed down to the Karuk peoples by the *ikxaréeyavsa* (the spirit beings who inhabited the earth before the time of humans). During the time of transition from the *pikváhahirak* (mythic time of the *ikxaréeyavsa*) to the time of Karuk *áraaras*, the *ikxaréeyavsa* gifted Karuk peoples not only the knowledge of weaving, but also their own bodies through their own transformation into basket weaving plants. The implications of this transformation include the understanding that Karuk baskets are alive and imbued with the life of *ikxaréeyavsa*; Karuk baskets are a connection to the past and each weaver provides a conduit to that past through their own practice of weaving; and Karuk baskets are imbued with the memories of that past that reverberate in each basket that has been and will be brought into being. As such, there is a deeply held responsibility amongst Karuk weavers to perpetuate the culture of basket weaving so that the links to the past will not be forgotten and that future generations are able to carry basket weaving into the future.

This is not to say that basket weaving is a static tradition, unchanging. Karuk basket weaving has always been a vibrant practice, with a multitude of baskets made for everyday life and for ceremonies. Weavers made baskets to aid them in gathering, cooking, and storing food. Weavers made baskets as gifts, they made them to wear and they made them for dance leaders and doctors to make medicine. Baskets carried and protected Karuk children, who were swaddled in them as they watched and learned Karuk ways of life. Baskets could be plain or fancy, miniature to over three feet tall. Indeed, baskets were present and active in all aspects of Karuk life: birth, marriage, ceremony, death and everything in between.

The intrusion in Karuk Aboriginal Territories by miners in the mid-1800s, and the subsequent displacement of Karuk peoples from tribal lands, as well as the takeover of territories by the US Forest Service in 1905, had devastating consequences for Karuk peoples and the practice of basket weaving. The new settlements and the US Forest Service cut off access to gathering, hunting and fishing areas, leading to dislocation and mass starvation. Hydrologic mining was practiced on the Klamath River, which eroded the great swaths of land along the river, altering the landscape dramatically, and devastating the sensitive ecological balance of plants, people, and animals. Many young Karuk children were sent to boarding schools, disrupting the flow of Karuk knowledge from one generation to the next. Violence, government policies, and boarding school education have had lasting impacts on all facets of Karuk life and weaving was no exception.

By the late 1800s, a solely subsistence lifeway was no longer a viable means of sustaining Karuk families, and taking care of the basic needs of self and family became the responsibilities of everyday life. Weavers and their families began to sell off and trade their collections of baskets and other belongings to anthropologists, collectors, settlers, and tourists. A punctuated increase in basket weaving occurred during the late 1800s to the early 1900s as a means for women to enter the market economy, and was fueled by the Arts and Crafts market-driven desire for American Indian made handcrafted works. In part meeting the demands from the market for specific styles of baskets, weavers produced innovative styles and designs, letting creativity flourish. Creating baskets for sale was one key way for Karuk women to provide for their families, while at the same time protecting tribal knowledge.

Through sale, theft, coercion, gift and bartering, both new and old baskets left the Klamath River. For some Karuk peoples, baskets were revalued as commodities.

During this era of the Arts and Crafts market, the Klamath River region was teeming with researchers who were trying to record narratives of precontact life, focusing on languages, cultures, ceremonies and practices. From general surveys of California Indians (e.g. Curtis 2015 [1924]; Kroeber 1976 [1925]; Powers and Heizer 1976 [1877]) to specific studies on areas of Karuk life (e.g. Bright 1957; Harrington 1932; Kroeber and Gifford 1949; O'Neale 1995 [1932]; Roberts 1932) much has been written about the Karuk Tribe. But, within the anthropological literature, Karuk voices have often been silenced, in order for researchers to advance their positions or areas of interest.

Reevaluating the field notes of both Lila O'Neale and J. P. Harrington, there emerges fragments of everyday occurrences that show the consequences of rapid social change on Karuk basket weaving practices. In particular, the remembrances of Phoebe Maddux (Karuk), who shared with Harrington her memories and thoughts about a collection of baskets held at the Smithsonian Institution, reveal broader notions of connections to place, relationships among family and community members, and the social changes in Northwest California Indian societies. Mrs. Maddux's recollections about the baskets speak to the turbulence of the social and economic context in which these belongings were being turned over to, sold to, or taken by outsiders, illustrating that they were caught in the wake of unstable forces and pressure within the community. Mrs. Maddux's testimony shows how the baskets indexed not only her ties to community, but also the very nature of social agency the baskets themselves have. Her perspective is also invaluable for understanding that baskets used in everyday life were connected so deeply to places, families, and events.

After the amplification of basket weaving for the Arts and Crafts market, buyers, collectors and museums lost interest in collecting Native American works. For this reason and others, fewer and fewer Karuk peoples wove. The racism that had endured since the gold rush era made weavers conceal their weaving. The impact of boarding school inculcation meant that few girls picked up weaving when they returned to Karuk homelands. The impact of land restrictions and fire suppression meant that weavers had little access to weaving materials. And the impact of the sale, theft, gift, and barter of baskets meant that there were scarcer representations of basket designs and styles for weavers to engage with for inspiration. But despite these negative consequences on Karuk basket weaving, it did not become a lost culture. A small number of weavers nurtured basket weaving, sharing their knowledge with others and continuing to maintain the understanding that baskets are relations-alive.

By the 1960s, weavers who had cultivated Karuk basket weaving knowledge through creative undertakings simultaneously taught classes, opened stores to sell their work, participated in weaving demonstrations at different events, and developed relationships with the United States Forest Service (USFS) to bring back the practice of prescribed burning. In the 1980s, Northwestern California Indian weavers were interviewed by Coleen Kelley Marks, who asked them to reflect on different aspects of basket weaving, from teaching and selling baskets to gathering

and weaving techniques. Focusing on teaching and gathering, weavers revealed their frustrations and concerns about their ability to weave and pass the knowledge to the next generation. Weavers who shared their knowledge of the weaving culture with students felt deeply the responsibility as Karuk peoples to pass basket weaving to the next generation, thereby perpetuating the practice.

While the classes were aimed at Karuk community members, many of the students were USFS personnel, as well as other non-native peoples. Many of the weavers were glad to be sharing this knowledge, yet at the same time, were disheartened that many of their students were not willing to invest the vast amount of time needed to gather their own materials. But those students who did learn to gather and weave enveloped the basket weaving culture in their everyday life. Weaving became, to these students, an important part of their identification as Karuk peoples. The younger generation of basket weavers understood that it was not a practice to be carried on just by whim, but it was an everyday life practice that was to be undertaken. Embedded within this, was the need to address the health and vitality of the places where they gathered.

Rising up from the first engagements with USFS personnel, basket weavers began to take action to ensure that gathering areas were safe and that they had unfettered access to them. Weavers and Klamath River community members were negatively impacted by the application of pesticides and herbicides in logging areas, many of which are prime gathering sites. They also shared concerns about the poor quality of materials that they were able to gather because these materials, particularly *panyúrar* (beargrass) and *súrip* (hazel bushes), needed to be burned every year or two in order for them to be pliable, straight, and bug-free. Weavers in the 1980s observed that the negative impacts to the environment from the late-19th century mining industry, along with the mid-20th century floods resounded in the present, hampering weavers' efforts to continue to gather materials. They also expressed their deep frustrations with working with government agencies in an effort to apply traditional ecological knowledge to the management of plants used for basketry, opening the door for organized political action among the part of California basket weavers in the 1990s.

Two very important movements were generated from weavers' first collaborations with USFS and other government agencies. The first is the California Indian Basketweavers Association (CIBA), which began as a statewide movement that organized weavers to work with government agencies to reduce or stop the use of pesticides in gathering areas and to create a community in which weavers from across the state are supported in their efforts to preserve and perpetuate the weaving culture. More locally, the USFS Passport In Time grant-funded program, *Following the Smoke*, allowed Karuk weavers the opportunity to show first hand the importance of traditional ecological knowledge in the stewardship of basketry plants. This program was developed to bring together basketweavers and teachers from across the United States, as well as federal and state agency staff to foster mutual understanding and collaboration on issues that Karuk basket weavers faced when gathering plant materials. Education was the key to *Following the Smoke*, with weavers focusing their attention on practice, having the volunteers shadow the weavers in various activities. Through their individual actions, and through CIBA

and *Following the Smoke*, weavers articulated their needs for proper and culturally appropriate land management policies that would assist their efforts in carrying on their cultural responsibilities for caring for the earth.

The responsibility of stewarding the land for the healthy and sustainable harvest of basket plants, and the responsibility to pass the basket weaving culture to the next generation are important to weavers today. Examining basket weaving from more intimate everyday experiences reveals more of the impetus for weaving and how basket weaving is deeply entwined with weavers' communities, with their families and ancestors, with the earth and with the future generations. These experiences are enmeshed in everyday, social and private life. And these experiences are rooted in emotion, experiential learning and practice.

The aliveness of Karuk baskets is carried through from weavers' experiences of gathering in specific areas, channeled through weavers into the basket. The practice of weaving is experiential and relational because the weaver is *doing-in-relation-with* the environmental factors (weather patterns, ground disturbances, fire, floods); the botanical sources (growth patterns of plants, pruning, anthropogenic burning practices); the interactions with harvested materials (peeling bark, crushing stems, boiling roots); the consideration of what type of basket to weave while preparing materials (scraping roots, determining what materials to use, sorting sticks); and the act of weaving (selecting, adding, and subtracting weavers and body sticks, applying overlay materials, improvising styles, designs, techniques as needed). All of these factors, choices, and processes that come before and during basket weaving are where we can see the basket infused with animacy and aliveness.

To understand gathering and weaving, these stories can really only be told through doing. Articulating one's own thoughts, feelings, emotions, and embodiment is difficult because gathering and weaving are not direct processes. They are instead relational, sensuous, and cyclical. Weaving brings together all these activities, thoughts, prayers, and emotions and the finished basket expresses these experiences of a particular way of knowing about the world. The finished basket is a culmination of these experiences and when the basket is done, it is released to the world to fulfill its own purpose.

When weavers view these baskets on museum shelves there is a sense of ambivalence. On one hand, the baskets, if accessible, are teachers. Weavers can learn a lot about technique, designs, and materials from observing and handling baskets. With so few basket weaving teachers today, the baskets themselves are going to be the ones who instruct future generations. But on the other hand, knowing that baskets are sitting on shelves in museums, behind locked doors is upsetting to many Karuk peoples. It is difficult for many people to witness baskets and regalia, which are living entities, just sitting on shelves, not fulfilling their purpose.

Karuk peoples have the responsibility to care for the land, the plants, the animals, and the waterways because they understand that they are *in-relation-with* the world. Karuk peoples understand that basketry is interwoven with their responsibility to the world; therefore, supporting the practice of weaving is a part of that responsibility. Actively caring for self, communities, ecosystems, and really the whole world, is the underlying principle of *pikyav* (to-fix-it). Karuk peoples are "fix

the world” peoples, and what this means is that they have a deeply rooted responsibility to repair and restore social, cultural, and ecological relationships.¹ Through basket weaving, weavers are participating in a practice that has been established since time immemorial. Through basket weaving, weavers engage in a lifelong commitment of learning, weaving and teaching to ensure that the legacy is carried forward to the future generations. Additionally, through basket weaving, weavers are working in-relation-with the world.

Previous Research on Karuk Baskets and Basket Weaving

Descriptions of Northwestern California Indian baskets were made available to the general public in the late 19th century by journalist Stephen Powers, who wrote extensively for the *Overland Monthly*. He wrote one of the first accounts of Karuk basketry in his book, *The Tribes of California* (1877). In the early 20th century, during the height of the Arts and Crafts movement, American Indian basketry was a central theme for many popular books and articles. These works survey the field of American Indian basket weaving from the point of view of the collector, configuring basketry to be the craft of “primitive” peoples. Most notably, George Wharton James’ *Indian Basketry* (1909) instructs the discriminating collector about the aesthetics, designs, techniques, and forms of basketry made predominantly in the Southwest, Pacific coast, and Alaska. James wrote other texts that romanticized basketry as a primitive technology (James 1903); and detailed accounts on how to weave different styles and types of baskets (James 1904).

California Indian basketry has been a central part of anthropological studies, yet the focus of many of the studies concern the form and function of basketry, with particular concern about basketry’s place in pre-contact life. Kroeber’s (1905a) article on Northwestern California Indian basketry designs and their cultural significance was the most thoroughly researched article on Karuk basketry until Lila O’Neale’s monograph was published in 1932. Several anthropological studies of Karuk basketry were included in larger surveys of California Indian basketry and other cross cultural studies (Dixon 1902; Kroeber 1904, 1976 [1925]; Mason .1902; Weltfish 1930). Barnett (1940) described the effects of contact with miners and settlers and culture change among the Karuk, Yurok, and Hupa, with a reference to changes in basket weaving culture. More recently, Washburn explored the use of quantitative methods to examine Karuk, Yurok, and Hupa baskets concerning the correlation between design symmetry and baskets made for the Arts and Crafts market (Washburn 1986); symmetry and trade networks (Washburn 1987); and symmetry and culture patterns (Washburn and Crowe 2006).

Many regional works on California Indian baskets offer descriptions of forms and functions of baskets in pre-contact contexts (Bibby 1996, 2004; Dalrymple 2000; Dean 2004; Lopez and Moser 1981; Polanich 1979; Porter 1990; Shanks and Shanks 2006, 2010, 2015; Washburn 1994). Shanks and Shanks (2006, 2010, 2015) analyze the technical features, materials, usages, and designs of basketry from

¹ Practicing Pikyav. Electronic document. <https://nature.berkeley.edu/karuk-collaborative/>, accessed October 5, 2016.

numerous Native Californian tribes, primarily situating weaving practices in the past. Bibby's (2004) catalog that accompanied the commission of several basket cradles by Native California weavers relays both the formal features of baskets and how they were positioned in the childrearing practices of many Native Californian tribes. Fulkerson et al. (1995) discusses Great Basin basketry as a practice fixed in the past in which current basket makers are weaving either "traditional" or "nontraditional" forms.

Few monographs pertain specifically to Karuk basket weaving. Of note is Lila O'Neale's (1995 [1932]) pioneering approach in her study of ethnoaesthetics. In this work O'Neale elicited aesthetic evaluations from Karuk, Yurok and Hupa weavers on their own work, documenting indigenous perspectives on not only the formal features of basketry, but also the social changes that were affecting basket weaving practices in the 1920s as evidenced by the production of new styles made for the curio market. In his book on Karuk tobacco practices, J. P. Harrington (1932) detailed the weaving process of Phoebe Maddux, from the selection of sticks to the weaving and completion of an *uhsípnuk* (tobacco basket). Virginia Fields (1985) wrote extensively about the history of the Hover Collection of Karuk baskets, which was updated recently to reflect weaver attributions by Johnson et al. (2015). In 1981, while NAA archivists were in the midst of sorting Harrington's immense collection of field notes, photographs, and sound recordings, a graduate student from George Washington University, Linda Lichliter Eisenhart, mined the Johnson Collection and the attendant notes, to write her masters thesis, *Karok Basketry: Mrs. Phoebe Maddux and the Johnson Collection*. Basing her thesis on Harrington's Karuk field notes and the basket tags from the Karuk belongings in the Johnson collection, Eisenhart focused on the linguistic terminology associated with the baskets to ultimately show Phoebe Maddux's typological categories of baskets. Finally, Marvin Cohodas (1997) focused on the patron relationship between two Wiyot/Karuk weavers and their sponsor, Grace Nicholson. Analyzing Nicholson's ledger books and accompanying documentation, Cohodas asserts that baskets made by Elizabeth and Louise Hickox (Wiyot/Karuk) were not inherently meaningful, but instead served as vehicles for the elevation of social and economic status of these weavers.

Catalogs based on exhibits of Northwestern California Indian baskets weaving were generated from a series of exhibits carried out by Ron Johnson, professor emeritus in the Department of Art History at Humboldt State University. His works often focused on bringing together baskets and the voices of their makers and their family members. *From Women's Hands: Lena Reed McCovey (1898-1985), Ethel Jones Williams (1900-1979)* focused on the weaving practices of two weavers who perpetuated the basket weaving culture during the early to mid-20th century (Johnson et al. 1992). *Her Mind Made Up: Weaving Caps the Indian Way* was based on an exhibit of *ápxaan* (basket caps) made by Northern California Indian weavers and included over 100 pages of interview transcripts from weavers discussing the process of weaving *ápxaan* (Johnson et al. 1997). *The Betty Peugh Sweaney Collection* featured detailed descriptions of this collector's baskets that were made for everyday use, ceremony, and for sale (Johnson et al. 2010). *Made for the Trade: Native American Baskets of Northwest California* discussed in detail baskets that were made specifically for sale in the early 20th century (Johnson et al. 2012). *Nettie*

Ruben, describes the life and works of a Karuk weaver who made some of the finest baskets during the early 20th century (Johnson et al. 2014). Most recently, *Quillwork in Native American Baskets from Northwest California*, focuses on the use of dyed porcupine quills used in baskets made by weavers from the Karuk, Yurok, and Wiyot tribes (Johnson and Marks 2016).

Methods

I have used multiple research methods in order to trace the circulation of Karuk baskets from the nineteenth century to today. Through the methods of archival and museum collection research, as well as interviews and autoethnography, I was able to explore the perspectives of basket makers, collectors, and anthropologists and to reunite data from documents with the baskets to which they refer. Ethnographic research was particularly important to ensure that the study does not reproduce a false image of basketry as a part of the past, and to show how basketry and the social relations around it continue to emerge through practice in everyday life.

In the summer of 2011, I conducted research on the Johnson Collection of Klamath River baskets and regalia as part of the Smithsonian Institution's Summer Institute in Museum Anthropology at the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH). The collection of baskets that became known as the Johnson Collection was accessioned (#288476) into the NMNH in April of 1970. When Harrington had purchased this collection in 1928, he had it shipped directly to his office at the Bureau of American Ethnology (BAE) in Washington, D. C. It was housed for decades in the north tower in the original Smithsonian building. Originally in the possession of the BAE Archives, the collection was transferred to the US National Museum in 1964 after a communication from Frank H. H. Roberts to Harrington's daughter, Awona Harrington, in 1963. The original gift included 408 objects, with an additional twenty-two objects donated in 1971 and 1975.

This collection formed the basis of my investigation of alternative ways of knowing about the itineraries of baskets both in the Klamath River region among community members, as well as the itineraries of baskets that travelled to shops, private homes, and museums. The Johnson Collection at the NMNH is unique because, unlike many collections accessioned into museums in the early 20th century, there is a rich archive of information about the baskets and regalia that was gathered by Lucretia Monroe, and E. G. Johnson, and documented by Johnson, J. P. Harrington, and Phoebe Maddux. Of particular import, Harrington's records of Mrs. Maddux's memories explained the complex history of the circulation of baskets inside the community. Because of the separation between object and paper archive, the links between Mrs. Maddux's recollections and the baskets with which they are associated are broken, which has decontextualized the baskets from a pivotal aspect of their itineraries. As a consequence, research included spending time with Karuk baskets and photographing them from multiple angles in order to gather detailed information about the designs and techniques employed to make them. At the same time, I researched the accession documents to gather information about how the collection came to the NMNH.

Following my “object-based” research, I created a photographic record of the corresponding papers and letters associated with the Johnson Collection at the National Anthropological Archives (NAA), which I later entered into a database. Out of the 430 belongings in this collection, more than half (241) are known to be Karuk in origin. Also represented in this collection are 138 Yurok belongings, twenty-one Wiyot, nine Tolowa, and six Hupa. The remaining fifteen are from either Northwest Coast or Southwest tribes. Typically, Northwest California Indian baskets would be identified as belonging to more than one tribe because Hupa, Yurok, and Karuk basketry is very similar in technique, materials, and styles, and often the tribal affiliation was not recorded. However, because of the detailed notes by Monroe, Johnson, and Harrington, each belonging has been labeled with its tribal affiliation.

As I was going through the records, I was fortunate to have writing samples from Monroe, Johnson and Harrington to determine the source of the information. When the collection came to the Smithsonian, each belonging had a tag attached on which was handwritten at least the following information: the heading “Johnson collection”; the “Original catalog no. xxx”; and “Catalog no. yyy.” The handwritten text, with the exception of the numeric of the “catalog no.,” appeared to be in Johnson’s handwriting.

Additional information was also encoded on the tags, including linguistic and ethnographic data, written in either Johnson’s hand or in Harrington’s hand. If the data that Harrington collected from Phoebe Maddux were particularly detailed, he continued writing on an additional sheet of typing paper. There are also a handful of tags that are typewritten, the source(s) of which were undetermined. When the collection was accessioned into the NMNH, the tags and additional sheets were removed and archived at the NAA. When researching the collection at the NAA, I found that some tags were missing, although at the time the NMNH catalog cards were being created, some of the information from the missing tags was transferred onto the new catalog cards.

Research on primary and secondary sources related to the history of the Karuk Tribe and on specific people associated with the Johnson Collection was performed at various libraries and historical societies. I surveyed the Special Collections at the Humboldt State University Library, which has primary sources on the histories of different stakeholders along the Klamath River region beginning in the early 1800s through today. Of particular import to my chapter on the history of the Karuk peoples, the HSUSC’s Susie Baker Fountain Papers provided quotidian news regarding the history of the settlement of Karuk Aboriginal Territories by gold miners and others. While in Eureka, CA, I spent time at the Humboldt County Historical Society tracing resources related to the local peoples referenced in the NAA papers associated with the Johnson Collection, particularly Lucretia Monroe and E. G. Johnson. Extensive archival research was also conducted at the Bancroft Library, which holds the Lila O’Neale field notes. The 1929 field notes of Lila O’Neale highlighted the changes in the basket weaving tradition following the height of the Arts and Crafts movement. O’Neale’s unique ethnoaesthetics study of Karuk basket weaving shows not only her particular standpoint trained as an anthropologist but also a willingness to cross cultural boundaries to reveal Karuk understandings of basketry as part of the social world.

At the Clarke Historical Museum (CHM) in Eureka, CA, I had the opportunity to conduct a cursory survey only of the Hover Collection of baskets. It is an important collection of Northwestern California baskets because a Karuk woman, who felt the need to preserve her own history for future generations, assembled it over the course of many decades. However, access was limited given the time constraints of the director of the museum. Nonetheless, I was able to access and copy a series of interviews that were conducted for the CHM in the 1980s when the Hover Collection was accessioned. Then-Director of the CHM, Coleen Kelley Marks, led an oral history project to document the knowledge of Northwest California basket weavers. Over the course of a year, she and her assistants interviewed seventeen basket weavers, both men and women, ranging in age from 26 to 94. Ms. Kelley Marks' interviews were focused on gathering information about how weavers learned their practice; what materials they used; how to prepare materials; and what types of baskets the weavers made. She also asked each one of the weavers to share a piece of advice for future weavers. Exploring these interviews, an intimate portrait appeared that conveyed more than the information Ms. Kelley Marks' questions requested. Weavers shared stories about their own personal experiences with learning, teaching, and gathering. Beyond the narratives laid a tension between the younger and elder generations of weavers, particularly with regard to the passing down of knowledge and societal pressures that kept younger weavers from devoting the time needed in the practice. Weavers also expressed their connections to their culture and self-identification, as well as their concerns with being able to tend to the basketry plants in both practical and culturally responsible ways. In 2014, I received verbal permission from Ben Brown, current Director of the Clarke Historical Museum, to research the printed transcripts of these interviews for my dissertation.

I lived in Happy Camp for over 10 months, where I had participated in community life, attending basket weaving classes and gatherings, as well as going out to gather materials with other basket weavers. During this time, my relationships with the weavers with whom I spent time developed, where they became my "basket family," a concept that I discuss in Chapter VII. I was invited to apply for a position in the People's Center, where I worked on community issues for seven months, from January 2015 to July 2015. During this time, I was seeking permission from the Karuk Tribe to conduct formal interviews. However, for a number of confidential reasons, I only obtained permission to conduct interviews from the Karuk Tribe at the very end of my stay in Karuk country. As such, two formal interviews were conducted, along with one informal series of dialogs with an elder weaver.

Because of my experiences in Happy Camp, ultimately the delay in gaining permission from the Karuk Tribe to interview was very beneficial. It gave me time to shift the focus in these interviews, from a structured set of questions to conversations that sparked discussions about more personal connections to weaving. I was deeply concerned about how my research would affect the weavers with whom I studied, given that they placed their trust in me. They shared very personal stories with me that would not have been raised in other contexts. Who would benefit from such research? I shared the concerns that Margery Wolf (1992)

and others (e.g., Kovach 2009; Smith 1999) have raised about ethnographic research, including whether my research was exploitative and whether I was imposing my own value system on the words that women shared with me. To that end, I talked with the weavers, sharing the interviews that I recorded and had transcribed, so that they had the opportunity to edit or remove statements that they did not want shared. As I was writing, I described to them what I was working on. And when it came to writing the chapter in which their interviews were featured (Chapter VI: Contemporary Karuk Basket Weaving) I travelled back to the Klamath River to share with them a draft of what I had written, particularly the quotes that I had chosen. The narrative for this chapter was formed through their words, their ideas and experiences, and I wanted to ensure that I was not misrepresenting them in any way. Talking through the chapter with them was as important as the conversations we had the year previous. While I am writing this work to elucidate and to foreground Karuk knowledge about basket weaving, I am self-consciously writing this work, knowing that they and other Karuk peoples will be reading it.

My own practice of basket weaving comes through these pages via participation in basket weaving gatherings, classes, plant gathering trips and weaving. On the surface, participating in basket weaving helped me build an understanding of the tremendous amount of cultural and ecological knowledge needed to weave baskets. But that knowledge is not all there is to know about weaving. Through my own practice, I have begun to learn an intimate knowledge of my own connections to community, place, peoples and belongings. And through my own fledgling identification as a basket weaver, which I have developed over the course of this research, I have come to a place where I can start to understand firsthand the animacy and aliveness of Karuk baskets.

Finally, Chapter VII, which focuses on the itineraries of baskets, was informed by not only the interviews that I did conduct, but also by two separate events. In 2014, a team of Karuk peoples travelled to the Autry Museum in southern California for a consultation visit under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). Their visit was documented in the video, *koovúr úumkun kunpikshipvunaatih: They All Have Spirits*. Using this documentary, I have explored the animacy of belongings in museums from Karuk perspectives. Additional discussion about the treatment of baskets in museums was spurred by an event held at the Karuk Tribe Peoples Center in 2015. In connection with an official NAGPRA repatriation, two scientists from San Francisco State University came to the Peoples Center to test repatriated baskets and belongings for pesticides and heavy metals.

Key Frameworks

In formulating, researching and writing this work on the aliveness and animacy of Karuk baskets and basket weaving, I have focused on three distinct frameworks: *indigenous methodologies*, *new museum anthropology*, and *materiality*. Indigenous methodologies take into account the colonial legacy of extractive research in indigenous communities and works to decolonize research methods and methodologies to promote social justice and the self-determination of indigenous

peoples. New museum anthropology delves deeper into the colonial history of collection, representation, and dissemination of knowledge about indigenous peoples and their belongings, considering new ways to engage with indigenous peoples within the context of museums. And research on materiality addresses two distinct points with which I think with throughout the course of this work: *belongings* and *itineraries*. Rethinking the ways in which we talk about works created by indigenous peoples, I propose using the term belongings to address the social relations and contexts of them within their cultures. And to trace the movements of belongings through time, space, and place, I engage with Joyce and Gillespie's (2015) proposition of itineraries.

Indigenous Methodologies

The research that I have undertaken concerning the aliveness and animacy of Karuk baskets and basket weaving culture engages with indigenous methodologies. Engaging with indigenous methodologies is a way to address the tensions within anthropological inquiry, "redefining relationships of power within the study community and between community members and the larger world" (Cervone 2007:101). Fundamental to indigenous methodologies is the need for researchers not only to recognize the colonial legacies that have permeated anthropological research, but also actively work to decolonize research paradigms; to ethically conduct inquiries that are not extractive; and to be accountable to communities, both respecting and protecting their cosmologies, epistemologies, rights to privacy, intellectual property rights, and tribal sovereignty (Cervone 2007; Chilisa 2012; Cochran et. al 2008; Fine-Dare and Rubenstein 2009; Kovach 2009; Martin and Mirraoopa 2003; Rigney 1999; Smith 1999). The process of research is both transparent and co-produced, demystifying knowledge and information for the benefit of the community. Also important to this endeavor is to produce works that are mutually beneficial both to the academy and to the communities (Kovach 2009).

Indigenous methodologies seek to decolonize research in communities that have long been the object of inquiry of anthropologists and others. Western research practices have exploited communities, claiming ownership of indigenous ways of knowing and then "simultaneously rejecting the people who created and developed those ideas and seeking to deny them further opportunities to be creators of their own culture and own nations" (Smith 1999:1). Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Porou) asserts there is power in research endeavors:

[Researchers] have the power to distort, to make invisible, to overlook, to exaggerate and to draw conclusions, based not on factual data, but on assumptions, hidden value judgments, and often downright misunderstandings. They have the potential to extend knowledge or to perpetuate ignorance (Smith 1999:176).

This power has often benefitted the researchers and not the communities from which knowledges are extracted. Smith (1999:118) states that even if academic disciplines have codes of ethics to guide their research, it has been often taken for granted that indigenous peoples are the 'natural objects' of research. The legacy of

colonialism and colonial research still lingers in indigenous communities, “It is part of our story, our version of modernity,” and resonates in the lived experience of indigenous peoples (Smith 1999:19). For example, Fixico (1998:86) states that historians of American history have turned a blind eye to the darker episodes of destruction of American Indian cultures and genocide of American Indian peoples, which has effectively denied that these events ever happened.

Decolonizing research projects rebut this colonial legacy and instead promote indigenous peoples’ right to self-determination in the research endeavor, from political and economic standpoints (Kovach 2009; Smith 1999). Positioning research within a decolonizing framework promotes indigenous sovereignty and authority, by claiming indigenous ways of knowing and doing research as valid and legitimate (Stewart-Harawira 2013:39). Researchers are challenged to find research methodological approaches that are not extractive and are accountable to community standards that honor tribal worldviews (Kovach 2009:29).

Ways of Knowing

Indigenous methodologies engage directly with cosmologies and epistemologies of Indigenous peoples. Vine Deloria, Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux) describes ways of knowing as a “realization that the world, and all its possible experiences, constituted a social reality, a fabric of life in which everything had the possibility of intimate knowing relationships because, ultimately, everything was related” (Deloria 2001:2). Knowledge is derived from everyday, lived experiences, individually and communally; through the observation and experience with the environment, and through intuition (Cajete 2004; Deloria 1999, 2006; Deloria and Wildcat 2001; Kovach 2009; Stewart-Harawira 2013; Weber-Pillwax 2001). Indigenous epistemologies trace the ways in which learning and teaching developed in indigenous communities, which is a cultural and life-sustaining process that unfolds among peoples and the natural and spiritual worlds. Experiences and learning are tied to place, environmentally, socially, and spiritually, and are interwoven in the fabric of daily life (Cajete 2005:71). Through these experiences, it is a way of seeing and living *self-in-relation* with the world (Graveline 1998).

Deloria (2001) explains that indigenous knowledge is relational, connecting to experiences and knowledges of humans and other-than-humans. He cautions researchers to keep this in mind, since “the reduction of knowledge of phenomena to a sterile, abstract concept, much is lost that cannot be retrieved” (2001:6). As an example, Donald Fixico (Shawnee, Sac & Fox, Muscogee Creek and Seminole) warned researchers about the dangers of erasing environment from American Indian historical research. “To ignore the historical variable of environment is to view history only from a human perspective, disallowing a broader research focus that includes all factors influencing the facts as they fit together” (Fixico 1998:90). People are as much of the environment as the environment is as much of a part of people. There is a constant interaction with the environment, and a deeply held responsibility to the environment as stewards and beings in the world. Ignoring the topic is to replicate Eurocentric research on American Indian history without recognizing the interconnectedness of it.

Indigenous cosmologies are interwoven ways of knowing about the world. The understanding of lived experience reaches back into the very beginnings of the world itself—since time immemorial—and is rooted in an intimate relationship with the natural world (Battiste and Henderson 2000; Deloria 1973, 2001; Tayac 2004). Cajete (2005:54) explains that cosmology is connected to the ways in which humans came into the world and is associated with migrations across the landscape, notions of space and time, astronomy, art, myth, and ritual, and is reflected in ceremonial cycles, stories, core values and society. The origin stories of Indigenous peoples situate and integrate peoples within all aspects of the world (Cajete 2005). Deloria (1999) recognizes that western philosophies also have origin stories that have humans emerging after the world was created, yet he remarks that indigenous origin stories do not make people “the crown of creation” (see also Cohen 2001). Like many indigenous origin stories and myths, Karuk origin stories of the *ikxaréeyavsa* inform peoples about the right way of living in the world in ways that are respectful, moral, and relational (Lang 1994; see also Grincheva 2013; Kovach 2009; McMaster and Trafzer 2004; Mohawk 2004; Tayac 2004).

Indigenous methodologies are holistic, inseparable from history, from all of creation (Archibald 2008; Battiste and Henderson 2000; Berkes and Berkes 2009; Deloria 1999; Stewart-Harawira 2013; Wilson 2001). Research in indigenous communities takes into account indigenous languages, places, values, and relationships; relational knowing of physical and interior worlds; and embodied engagement with materiality, spirituality, and metaphysical realms (Dei 2011; Kovach 2009; McMaster and Trafzer 2004). Indigenous research methodologies forge questions based on relations; “You are not answering questions of validity or reliability or making judgments of better or worse. Instead you should be fulfilling your relationships with the world around you” (Wilson 2001:177). Indeed, Indigenous methodologies consider ways of knowing as inherently relational; they are interconnected and intertwined and cannot be simply parsed out into discrete elements, as western ways of knowing are (Cannon 2011; Dei 2011). Archibald (2008) speaks directly to the consideration of holism in research in indigenous communities. The research endeavor does not belong solely to the researcher, extending beyond the individual and mutually influenced by family, community, tribe and nation (Archibald 2008:11). It encompasses relations with humans and nonhumans, revealing *self-in-relation* with the world (Archibald 2008; see also Kovach 2009). She states that by recognizing the interconnectedness of indigenous knowledge, research is conducted “respectfully, responsibly, and accurately” (Archibald 2008:13).

Research Ethics

Ethical and moral considerations are at the heart of indigenous methodologies and many tribes, nations, and communities have research protocols to help guide both indigenous and non-indigenous research (Smith 1999). Indigenous researchers work to decolonize investigations in ways that hold the researcher accountable for both their actions and their outputs; forefront the needs of tribal communities in the questions that are explored; and respect the cultural protocols, principles, relationships, and practices of the indigenous communities

with whom they work (Bishop and Glynn 1999; Kovach 2009; Smith 2005; Stewart-Harawira 2013; Weber-Pillwax 2001). Smith (1999:119) reminds us that discussions regarding the cultural and intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples started gaining traction with regard to bioprospecting and biopiracy, rampant in pharmaceutical fields. It is the responsibility of the researcher to protect and assert the personal and tribal rights, cultural and intellectual property rights as tied to all forms of indigenous knowledge (Smith 1999).

Being mindful of who benefits from research being performed in indigenous communities is an important ethical consideration for researchers in formulating research projects and protocols, carrying out research and determining research outputs. "At the heart of Indigenous research lie issues of who benefits, how, and to what purpose" (Stewart-Hawawira 2013:44). For Kaupapa Maori research, it is presumed that community members will be involved in the process and the research will provide a positive difference for those participating in the study (Smith 1999:191). For the Karuk Tribe, community members are research partners and researchers choosing to do work within the tribe are required to work with several tribal individuals who will both assist and oversee the research that is being conducted.² Ultimately, researchers need to share the control over the process and products of research endeavors (Smith 1999).

The personal integrity of the researcher speaks to the way one contextualizes oneself within communities, the world and all living beings, human and nonhuman, making transparent the soundness of motives and intentions of the researcher and their products (Kovach 2009; Stewart-Harawira 2013; Weber-Pillwax 2001). Wilson frames the responsibility that researchers have with the communities that they are working in as *relational accountability*: "you are answering to all your relations when you are doing research" (Wilson 2001:177). How researchers conduct themselves in the initiation of research projects with the Karuk Tribe is an important consideration for those who govern and approve research projects. In the evaluation of proposed research projects, "the Tribe will determine whether researchers/project leads have exhibited the right intent and appropriate conduct in their project approach and their preliminary interactions with tribal members."³

Researchers entering Indigenous communities are responsible for working with communities to limit release of sensitive information to the public (Fixico 1998). Devon Mihesuah (Choctaw) expands on the ethical consideration of maintaining the privacy for American Indian interlocutors:

Researchers who are privy to intimate details of tribal life must use discretion when writing so they do not reveal information the tribe deems private or sacred. Serious consequences can befall transgressors, both non-Indians who use sensitive data and Indian informants who are expected by

² Practicing Pikyav. Electronic document. <https://nature.berkeley.edu/karuk-collaborative/>, accessed October 5, 2016.

³ Practicing Pikyav. Electronic document. <https://nature.berkeley.edu/karuk-collaborative/>, accessed October 5, 2016.

their tribes not to divulge tribal religious and cultural information.
(Mihesuah 1998:4)

Community members put their trust in researchers not to reveal sensitive information or to misrepresent them, so “the researcher must have a deep sense of responsibility to uphold that trust in every way” (Weber-Pillwax 2001:170). While the dissemination of confidential and sacred knowledge was the norm in research about indigenous peoples, Sarris (1993) states that such disrespectful representations open up opportunities for these knowledges to be exploited and appropriated (see also Archibald 2008; Kovach 2009; Smith 1999). The responsibility to respect and protect indigenous knowledges also extends to the mistakes researchers may make, making an effort to mitigate them, but also owning up to them (Archibald 2008:24).

Multivocality and the understanding that there are multiple ways to view historical and contemporary circumstances is an underlying ethical consideration for those who conduct research in indigenous communities (Atalay 2008; Côté 2010; Nabokov 2002; Sarris 1993; see also Behar and Gordon 1996; Clifford 1988; Clifford and Marcus 2010 [1986]). “[A] single Indian voice is impractical. Just as one cannot say that there is one European view, neither can one say that there is only one Indian view of history” (Fixico 1998:94). Grincheva (2013:52) reminds us that indigenous knowledges “celebrate the pluralism in ‘truth’, because it is dependent upon individual experiences and relationships with living and non-living beings and entities.” For example, to mitigate the ahistorical voice in which many historical anthropological texts about Native peoples were written, Côté (2010) forefronts Native voices by conducting many interviews, engaging with oral traditions, and reading texts written about Nuu-chah-nulth and Makah whaling practices through a Tsechaht and Nuu-chah-nulth lens. By doing so, she ensures that multiple Native peoples and understandings are guiding the narrative.

Research Models Employing Indigenous Methodologies

Indigenous methodologies refer to the theories that encompass the ways in which research is understood and then carried out. Methodologies provide the scaffold for the questions that are being asked and how they are going to be carried out (Smith 1999). Multiple methods to actually carry out the work can be employed and are, in fact, beneficial to be able to provide a more holistic understanding of the research questions proposed (Kovach 2009). Standard methods of qualitative research, such as surveys, interviews, and participant observation, can be combined with indigenous ways of learning, such as autoethnography and storytelling (Smith 1999; see also Archibald 2008; Kovach 2009). Frameworks for indigenous research methodologies also work to decenter western knowledge by promoting social justice and self-determination (Smith 1999).

Key to engaging in research with indigenous communities is to establish lasting relationships with community members. Wilson (2001:177) asserts that indigenous knowledge will no longer be objectified when researchers fulfill their roles within relationships with the communities that they study. Developing partnerships with communities helps not only to define research questions, but also

to carry out research within an ethical and sensitive way that is beneficial to the community (Kovach 2009; Weber-Pillwax 2001). Consent to conduct research in indigenous communities and consent to participate in research agendas only happens in a trusting space cultivated by researchers and community members (Stewart-Harawira 2013).

No longer can researchers in indigenous communities remove their perspectives, their ideologies, and their participation in communities from research outputs. Autoethnography is a method that reveals self-in-relation with indigenous communities and lived experience (Boylorn et al. 2013). It connects autobiographical and personal stories to the cultural, social, and political issues that stem from research in indigenous communities (Boylorn et al. 2013). By including personal stories, researchers' experiences are interwoven and their own histories, understandings, and personal integrity are implicated in the research (Archibald 2008; Weber Pillwax 2001). Berryman et al. (2013:5) state that both community members and researchers "are encouraged to bring their identities and ideologies to the research table so that these authentic selves inform the co-creation of new knowledge in a third space" (for "third space" see Bhabha 1994; Soja 1996; Shor 2009). This space bridges the gap between "self" and "other," and reframes the researcher's stance from "expert" to "learner" (Berryman et al. 2013; see also Freire 1998). Weber-Pillwax states that her integrity is contextualized within her community, family, and the world and without contextualization, she would be an outsider; "If I am outside the system, I don't survive. I destroy myself. I am isolated" (Weber-Pillwax 2001:168). Writing in ways that are self-reflective within indigenous research honors the multiple ways of knowing about the world (Graveline 1998; Kovach 2009). However, Kovach (2009:28) cautions that researchers should take care that their own biases and interpretations are not substituted for understandings of knowledges shared by indigenous peoples.

Storytelling and the inclusion of stories within indigenous research assists readers to personalize and internalize the events that are being discussed, making them "feel like a part of the story" (Archibald 2008:21). Important metaphors and concepts can be known through the stories that rise up from indigenous peoples during the course of research (Cohen 2001:142). Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo) states that these stories are alive:

The old folks said the stories themselves had the power to protect us and even to heal us because the stories are alive; the stories are our ancestors. In the very telling of the stories, the spirits of our beloved ancestors and family become present with us. The ancestors love us and care for us though we may not know this. (Marmon Silko 1996:152)

Archibald (2008) states that since the stories that are shared are alive, making the past present, there is a shared responsibility between communities and researchers to respect the power of these stories and protect the trust in which the stories were told. Indeed, engaging with stories as a way of knowing requires the principles of respect, responsibility, reciprocity, reverence, holism, interrelatedness and synergy (Archibald 2008:33). Connected to storytelling in research is the ethical principle of

ensuring the stories that are told remain the property of the tellers, who can determine how their stories are used and in what context (Archibald 2008).

Smith (1999) describes research agendas as focused on frameworks that decolonize indigenous research protocols and outputs and promote self-determination, locally, regionally, and globally. These include cultural survival, self-determination, healing, restoration, and social justice, and they intersect in various ways (Smith 1999:142). Of the twenty-five different projects Smith explores, several are central to the research agenda that I have carried out: storytelling, celebrating survival, remembering, and reframing (1999:144-160). Each of these frameworks in my own research situate Karuk basket weaving within the larger contexts of resilience and self-determination.

Storytelling as method contributes to passing down knowledge of Karuk basket weaving for future generations to learn from and honors the lived experiences of Karuk weavers. *Celebrating survival* nests within storytelling as a way to accentuate the resilience of weavers who persevered, promoted, and shared the basket weaving culture, despite the pervasive barriers working against them. The *memories* that Karuk weavers shared and continue to share about their histories and their families' experiences counter the static, disconnected vision of basket weaving in prior research by academics and others. These remembrances can offer a place of shared connection and open up the potential for healing of past and current traumas. *Reframing* offers a way for Karuk weavers to voice their beliefs and experiences about basket weaving that counters narratives of weaving as merely "art" or "craft," creating a space in which the redefinition of "culture" is portrayed on their terms to describe weaving as a way of knowing and living in the world. By reframing weaving as a holistic culture, basket weavers are resisting the devaluation of weaving as a "traditional," as opposed to "contemporary" practice and asserting the legitimacy of their concerns in the larger discussions of ecological restoration and repatriation.

New Museum Anthropology

There has been a great deal of research on the circulation of indigenous art and the implications of its circulation for forming social networks, both within the community and between community members and outsiders (Clifford 1988, 1997; Leuthold 1998; Marcus and Myers 1995; Myers 2001, 2002; Phillips and Steiner 1999). Central to much of this work is the critique of foundational museum anthropology, which asserted that there was a meaningful division between the circulation of things that were considered "authentic" and others that were intended for collectors and tourists (Bendix 1997; Errington 1998; Graburn 1976; Price 2001). Clifford (2004:16) states, to look at an object solely from the view of these former practices "would privilege the authenticity of objects over the social processes of transmitting and transforming knowledges and relationships." Going beyond the critique of authenticity that are infused in the works of early anthropologists such as Kroeber, Mason, and Sapir, who derided commercialized indigenous crafts as inauthentic and inferior, many scholars turned towards the practices of collecting (Berlo 1992; Cole 1985; Dubin 2001; Fane et. al 1991; Jacknis 2002; Krech and Hail 1999; O'Hanlon and Welsch 2000) and the processes of

exchange (Malinowski 1922; Mauss 1990 [1954]; Strathern 1990; Thomas 1991; Weiner 1992) or commoditization (Appadurai 1986; Myers 2001) as ways to engage with craftworks that were circulated both in and beyond the communities from which they were produced.

Collecting

The beginning of anthropology is rooted in the collection of the material culture of indigenous peoples, with objects ranging from weapons to textiles and pottery. Objects of “primitive” cultures, transferred to museums, became the basis of collections utilized for building a systematized, objective knowledge about the origins of civilization through classification, preservation and exhibition (Collier and Tschopik 1954:769, 772; Kennedy 2006 [1996]). As Boas stated in 1907, “We collect these because they are the foundation of scientific study” (Boas 1907:930). What were once curiosities gathered by colonizers were now subject to scientific inquiry and were classified in ways that made universal claims about the nature of man (Ames 1992). Those universal, scientific claims were rooted in social evolutionary theories like those of both EB Tylor and LH Morgan, who espoused that the historical trajectory of mankind rose from savage roots, passing through barbarism, and achieving the pinnacle, which was (western) civilization (Stocking 1982:73; see also Clifford 1988). Anthropologists, through this lens, objectified objects and their makers, recontextualizing the works of indigenous people to support the aims of anthropology (Clifford 1988; see also Stocking 1982).

Objects made by indigenous peoples and then housed in anthropological museums were assembled not only by anthropologists but also by military personnel, missionaries, elites, and others, including a few notable Native Americans, like George Hunt, who collected for Franz Boas, and Mungo Martin, who made objects for the University of British Columbia’s Museum of Anthropology (Glass 2006; Jacknis 2002a; McMullen 2009). The collections were often procured through sale, gift, theft or pillage, at a time when indigenous peoples were overwhelmed by the enormous social disruptions of subjugation, assimilation, disease, and warfare (Stocking 1985:5; see also Merrill and Ahlborn 1997; Simpson 2001; Welsh 2005). Objects flooded out of indigenous communities and into museums at such rapid rates that the act of collection accelerated assimilation and the destruction of indigenous cultures, leaving little behind for communities to support religious practices and beliefs (Kreps 2003; Simpson 2001). Collection practices at this time illustrate the economic disparity between the collector and indigenous peoples (McMullen 2009; Stocking 1985). These collections, assembled in anthropological museums, reflect the unequal power relations between the collectors and indigenous peoples from whom their objects were taken (Keurs 2007; Welsh 2005).

Some of the justifications anthropologists gave, and sometimes still give, for collecting works from indigenous cultures included the belief that objects needed to be collected because the culture was rapidly disappearing; that these materials were scientifically valuable and were “necessary for the advancement of knowledge of non-western cultures and humankind in general”; that the preservation of objects from indigenous peoples would foster an increased cross-cultural understanding

and awareness; and, that certain objects deserved to be preserved and treasured because of their aesthetic qualities (Kreps 2003:79; see also Clifford 1988). However, as Clifford (1988:202) points out, these acts of salvage perpetuated the notion of death and redemption, which solidified the dichotomous opposition of traditional and modern, savagery and civilization, progress and stagnation (see also Stocking 1982).

Authenticity

Because the belief was that Native peoples were “doomed to imminent disappearance,” and in order to preserve their “vanishing” cultures, anthropologists argued that it was necessary to collect the oldest and most authentic works. By the 19th century, authenticity was thought to be scientifically verifiable and objectifiable (Bendix 1997). Science was the place to impose a sense of order on authentic phenomena—a place to classify them and explain them (Bendix 1997:97). Scholars defining discrete, authentic objects of study were able to assert their authority to exclude others from the making of an “authentic” object, and at the same time to exclude amateurs from being legitimate researchers (Bendix 1997:100). The focus on authenticity was informed by a perspective that said that works only held value for museums if they were representative of a pristine past, unsullied by contact with European works and ideals. Authentic objects are not inherently endowed with specific qualities, but instead objects are impressed with this value (Kidd 2011:23; see also Simms 2005).

A quest for an authentic national past ensued, illustrated in the detailed collections of data on Native American cultures that included research on the psychological, cultural and linguistic characteristics of the tribes and their materiality, which were then constructed as a counter-narrative to civilized, progressive Western society (Bendix 1997:120; also Shuman 1993).

The act of authentication involved in collecting was not a singular event, but was instead part of a chain of events, leading from producers of knowledge to the consumers. Authentication carries the weight of expert statements, in which the discourses themselves are implicated in the circulation of knowledge (Irvine 1989:258). Bendix (1997) states, “Understanding authenticity means understanding the ideological fluctuations of language use and the changing goals of such language use over time and across contexts” (1997:15). Through the declaration of an authentic object, there is the implication that it can no longer change and still maintain its authenticity (Mithlo 2004). Because of this, authentication is a powerful means to appropriate, define and represent an object, particularly in a museological context (Mithlo 2004). Objects, once they achieve the status of something of the past and cease to have “practical application,” assume the role of mere signification of time. The act of collecting these historical things evokes “a nostalgia for origins and the obsession with authenticity” (Baudrillard 2009 [1996]:43). Objects that are not in current usage are inscribed with meaning and symbolism through their representation of a closed circle of “perfect time,” which provide a way to escape the everyday and retreat to an “elsewhere” time of perfection (Baudrillard 2009 [1996]:46).

The act of collecting is never neutral, always political and is a tangible expression of the unequal power relations between institutions and indigenous peoples (Jacknis 2002a; Kreps 2003). The collectors, whether institutional, professional, or private, always have their own set of ideals for what creates an assemblage of objects, ideals filtered through their own particular inclinations situated in time and space (Crew and Sims 1991; Vogel 1991). Earlier Western collection practices have been characterized as flawed because of the assumption that objects, collected as an assemblage, could be enshrined as “canonical objects that tell the ‘truth’ about a culture” (Berlo and Phillips 1992:40). As multiple authors note, these collections are fragmentary and speak more of the collector, who chose certain items over others to preserve, value, and exchange, than they do as representations of a particular cultural group (Baxandall 1991; Clifford 1985; Crew and Sims 1991). An understanding that museums should be reflexive and transparent about the nature of the objects that they house in their collections has been growing since the 1980s. Objects cannot be treated as the “cultural signs and artistic icons” of old, but as assemblages that speak of the history of who they were collected from, how they were collected and why they were collected, revealing the complex and often unequal power relations among collectors, indigenous peoples, and the museum (Clifford 1985:245).

Representation

Representations of indigenous peoples in museums have often been criticized for failing to portray their dynamic, living cultures because of both the exhibition method—erasing western influence and representing the most authentic forms—and the objects themselves, which were normally collected more than 100 years ago (Simpson 2001:35). By failing to address the contemporary conditions of these communities, museums often have replicated the notion of a static timeless past. Kreps (2003) argues that museums have the responsibility to confront their historical colonial roots, which have long marred their relationships with indigenous peoples, and work towards new relationships that not only respect, but also counter the salvage anthropology legacy; “no museum...can claim any longer to tell the whole story or essential story” about the cultures that they represent (Clifford 1991:215).

The ways in which objects are displayed in exhibits have often presented the values of the curator, and not those of the makers or their communities of practice (Vogel 1991:192). Objects, isolated from their cultural contexts, appropriated and recontextualized by the institution can have meanings attributed that are “overwhelmingly Western” (Vogel 1991:192; see also Alpers 1991; Berman 1997). Vogel (1991) argues that museum professionals are often too distanced from source communities and too partial to their own cultural perspectives to be able to understand and sensitively represent the cultures of another. Baxandall (1991) goes further and states that curators both appropriate and construct knowledge about the objects that are selected, interpreted, and put on display. Additionally, Mithlo (2004:242) points out that relying only on one particular constructed representation, which is “inextricably bound in individualistic, competitive, and

legalistic frameworks that inhibit accurate cultural understanding,” obscures questions of authorship, ownership, and control.

Kreps (2003:147) speaks of the notion of liberating culture as a means to address the Eurocentric representations of indigenous peoples and objects in museological practices. Her main tenets are restoring communities’ rights to manage and control their own cultural heritage; making space to go beyond western notions of preservation of cultural heritage and recognizing other ways to engage with museological principles; and opening up the field of museums to include multiple perspectives, voices, and methods. The presentation of multiple perspectives serves to offer the viewer a chance to be exposed to and reflect upon alternate ways of knowing, as well as creating opportunities for those who have a stake in self-representation to be “consulted as part of the interpretive process” (Simpson 2001:264). Notably, these perspectives acknowledge that included in the audience for museum exhibits are those who are makers and descendants of people who were the original “objects” of ethnographic exhibits, people who have been asserting their rights to regulate the ways in which their lives are portrayed in the museum (Berlo and Phillips 1992; Clifford 1988; Jacknis 2002a; Jonaitis 1991). There are many different factors that have contributed to this change in perspective, some of which include increased global discussion in human rights discourses; social movements, which began in the 1960s, that have magnified the voices of marginalized peoples; interest in and awareness of multiculturalism and diversity; and an increased demand for accountability, which obliges “publically funded institutions to demonstrate their value to society” (Sandell 2007:6).

In order for the representations of indigenous materiality and ways of life to be meaningful to contemporary community members, many have argued that there needs to be a shift in the power structure of the museum itself. In 1985, Ames already suggested that there needed to be a “democratization” of the museum to make collections more accessible to source communities (Ames 1985). Since then, he and other scholars have spoken of the need to radically change the power dynamics of the museum in order to make a more meaningful change in ways to include descendant communities in decisions on collection, access, education and dissemination of knowledge (for example: Ames 2005; Berlo and Phillips 1992; Clifford 1988, 1997; Gulliford 2000; Isaac 2005; Mithlo 2004; Phillips 2007).

In the call for more collaboration with source communities, the matter of representation is one of the more public of debates about control over collections and knowledge. Indigenous peoples have demanded a greater voice over how their lives, objects and cultures have been portrayed within museums (Clifford 1988; Kreps 2003:2; Simpson 2001:51). While time-consuming and requiring energy and commitment from both sets of collaborators, many see collaboration as necessary, both morally and ethically (Atalay 2006; Karp 1992; Simpson 2001). One question that is often asked in the face of the multiplicity of standpoints within a community is how do museums respond to each member, how do they decide who is heard? As many authors note, the collaborative process is inherently complex and always political, as well as slow and oftentimes controversial (Atalay 2006; Clifford 1997; Isaac 2005; Karp 1992a; Lonetree 2006).

One way in which to conceptualize the politics of collaboration is through what Pratt and Clifford call contact zones. The concept of contact zones describes the historical, political, power-laden relationships that are embedded in the museum as an institution (Clifford 1997). The relationships that museums-as-collectors and museums-as-presenters of cultural patrimony have with the multiplicity of stakeholders is described as one of center and periphery, along with one of reciprocity, exploitation, and contestation (Clifford 1997). Within this complex space the processes of representation and interpretation are negotiated. While many see consultation and acknowledgement of tensions that come from contact zones as a means to ameliorate the extreme injustices of the past, Boast (2011) and others (Bennett 1998; Lonetree 2006; Mithlo 2004; Phillips 2007) take a critical stance against those who describe awareness of the contact situation as something that will go far in ameliorating the problems of museums' colonial legacies. Lonetree (2006) suggests that the collaborations that rise from these contact zones still mask the underlying asymmetrical power relationships, biases, and appropriations of knowledge and culture. When representations are based on appropriation, the process of representation robs indigenous peoples of their own stories, closing off alternate ways of knowing, rather than opening up new paths to understanding (Shuman 2005). This is not to say, however, that every conjunction of objects, museums, and stakeholders can come under the rubric of a contact zone. While there are points of contention, points where there is unequal power at play, at the same time, we must remember that peoples' experiences are multiple and that the contact experience neither determines nor defines their histories (Clifford 1997).

Museums' Engagements with Native Americans

Punctuated by the 1960s civil rights movement and the passage of NAGPRA in 1990, there has been an increase of inclusion of American Indian perspectives within western museology. For the most part, museums dealing with the legacy of their colonial histories have changed their relationships with objects and human remains, with indigenous peoples, and with knowledge production (Fine-Dare 2002:47). Working to move beyond the acrimony of past relationships with indigenous communities, many museums are engaging in partnerships with community members for "knowledge sharing, capacity building, co-curation, and co-management of collections" (Gabriel 2008:13; also Simpson 2008). Central to these relationships is an uneasy tension over who has the rights of ownership of the collections, of knowledge, and of identity; specifically, when museums are opened to indigenous peoples, it calls into question the power museum professionals have over the collections (Kreps 2003; Lippert 2006). But, in order to build collaborative partnerships, collaborators on both sides first need to deconstruct preconceived notions in order to build a space in which to acknowledge common goals (Martinez 2006).

Since the 1980s, museums have begun to look into alternative ways of engaging with communities (McMullen 2008; see also Karp and Levine 1991; Perin 1997). In the wake of civil rights movements and the rise of multiculturalism of the 1960s and 1970s, many museums found it untenable to represent indigenous

people without consultation (McMullen 2008). During these first years of consultation, McMullen (2008) notes that Native peoples were more often hired by museums as craft demonstrators, rather than taking on roles that affected the exhibitions. However, by the late 1980s, museums invited active participation of indigenous people in educational and exhibition roles by engaging “individual Native advisors, advisory committees, and guest curators” (McMullen 2008:55; see also Jones 1993; National Museum of the American Indian 2000; Peers and Brown 2003).

While McMullen states that by the late 1990s active participation in museums by indigenous people was relatively commonplace, others express concern that exhibitions still did not necessarily capture the complexities of audience members’ knowledge, beliefs and experiences, including the kinds of indigenous epistemologies discussed above (Truettner 1997). Lubar (1997) discusses the need for audience member input when exhibiting something that is part of their history and memory. Seeing one’s own history on display leaves people to reminisce, react to, and feel for the works that were exhibited, and he advocates for a space to allow people to share their voice and experiences (Lubar 1997). Perin (1992:190) considers the communicative circle as a means to explore the museum-audience relationship with the ideal goal of achieving mutual understanding, which does not necessarily mean mutual agreement. Advocating for a dialogic approach to bridge the gap between museums and audiences, she explores the visitors’ role in the museum experience by taking into account their frames of reference for making sense of the world (Perin 1992). Lonetree (2012) asserts that both tribal and western museums have the responsibility to address the colonial histories and the historical trauma of Native peoples within exhibits in order to educate and provide space for healing.

Clifford (1997) argues for a deeper relationship beyond consultation with source communities in order to highlight and ameliorate the problems of the uneven power differentials between community members and the museum. Unless museums include source communities in the planning stages of exhibitions, museums “will be perceived as merely paternalistic by people whose contact history with museums has been one of exclusion and condescension” (Clifford 1997:207-208). The flow of knowledge about indigenous objects and cultures represented in museums has usually been formulated from a “top-down” approach. To genuinely engage with other ways of knowing, to conceive of different ways in which people think of their own works, and to acknowledge the complex webs of relations that they are a part of, it is necessary to take “bottom-up,” participatory approaches (Kreps 2003:9). There is a need to pay great attention to the power of representation of other people’s cultures and material because this power influences who and what has value, and has the power to shape memory and to define what has meaning and significance (Yeingst and Bunch 1997). Exhibits can speak about another’s culture, but not speak for another. Consequently, it is necessary that museum practices of representation be critically reviewed, to ensure there is a multiplicity of voices being portrayed in catalogs, exhibitions, and educational programs (Ames 1992; Karp 1992b).

Repatriation

The multiplicity of histories that led to the institution of NAGPRA, and its precursor, the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) Act of 1989, are too complex to offer an in-depth discussion here. What follows is a brief account of some salient impacts these laws have had on museum practices, engagements with communities, and the ways in which indigenous peoples have responded to the return of their ancestors and sacred objects.

The establishment of laws that require federally funded institutions to repatriate human remains and cultural patrimony was the culmination of engagements, struggles, and demands for the reclamation of indigenous cultural property from museums and other institutions by Native Americans, who asserted their rights to claim ownership and stewardship over their own histories, and was also supported by anthropologists and archaeologists who saw the need for moral and ethically appropriate practices of scholarship (Crowther 2000; Fine-Dare 2002, 2007; Pensley 2005; Shown Harjo 2011). NAGPRA requires federally funded institutions and agencies to make an account for federally recognized tribes and lineal descendants of their collections from these groups or lineal ancestors (Graham and Murphy 2010). NAGPRA allows for the repatriation of five different types of items: “human remains, associated and unassociated funerary objects, cultural patrimony, and sacred items” (Graham and Murphy 2010:106). Under this law, objects and human remains excavated from federal or tribal lands are protected. In addition, museums are required to consult with tribal representatives about the collections, working together to identify items subject to repatriation (Graham and Murphy 2010). In this way, federally funded institutions are held accountable for the stewardship of human remains and certain kinds of objects for Native peoples until they are returned (Johnson 2002).

While NAGPRA goes far to redress the devastating relationships between Native Americans, academics and museums, there are critics: some who see it as too restrictive to research and some who assert that the law is fixed in western, not indigenous, ways of knowing. There remains a contingent of academics who oppose the restrictions on research caused by repatriation because the law limits their ability to pursue unencumbered their research agendas. There have been many contentious and controversial claims against repatriation, in the name of science and knowledge, particularly regarding the repatriation of human remains (Brown 2003; Bruning 2006; Mihesuah 2000; Platzman 1992; Powell et al. 1993; Thomas 2001). But as Joyce (2002:102) and others (Harding 1999; Mihesuah 2000; Watkins 2008) point out, research is not a right, but a privilege. Researchers have the responsibility to mitigate any harm that could be done to peoples in their quest for scholarship.

Pensley (2005) argues that NAGPRA, which is based in a western legal framework, fails to take into account Native voices and experiences. Pensley sees NAGPRA as contributing to the suppression of the devastating history of the ways human remains and objects were collected for museums. Pensley (2005:54) further suggests that the standpoint incorporated in this law is that indigenous peoples are static and vanishing, that it presents an artificial dichotomy between sacred and

everyday, and privileges scientific explanations over the narratives and ontologies of indigenous peoples.

For museums, dealing with the legacy of their colonial histories has changed their relationships with objects and human remains, with indigenous peoples, and with knowledge production (Fine-Dare 2002:47). Working to move beyond the acrimony of past relationships with indigenous communities, many museums are engaging in partnerships with community members for “knowledge sharing, capacity building, co-curation, and co-management of collections” (Gabriel 2008:13; see also Simpson 2008). For indigenous peoples, repatriation calls into question identity, particularly in relation to human remains. Whereas many tribes trust oral history—their self-determination—to describe who they are, many museums rely on written records of anthropologists to create the boundaries of what remains are or are not culturally affiliated, thus available to repatriate (Hemenway 2010). Repatriation of ancestors and sacred objects enables indigenous peoples to bring them back to where they belong, all the while asserting their rights to self-determination and self-representation, as well as to begin healing deep wounds from the injustices of the past (Chari 2010; Graham and Murphy 2010; Johnson 2005). The impetus to repatriate is not necessarily the singular goal for everyone. Indeed, there are many who claim that they do not wish to reburial their ancestors and would instead preserve them for future generations (Fforde et al. 2002:10). Others are willing to have remains studied so long as the methods are nondestructive (Weaver 1997:21).

While the ultimate repatriation of cultural patrimony is the result of a long and, sometimes, tumultuous process, the remains and objects that are brought home mark the beginning of emergent narratives of cultural renewal (Simpson 2008:64). However, to bring home their remains and objects is a daunting, if not impossible, task for many tribes. It takes significant financial resources to be able to engage in consultations and the ultimate return of cultural patrimony. While there are grants to reduce some of the cost, only half of the applicants are funded (Chari 2010; Simpson 2008). In addition there is a need in communities for knowledgeable people who can navigate the legal and institutional procedures, as well as those who can ensure the objects are safe on their journey home (Graham and Murphy 2010; Hemenway 2010; Nash and Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2010; Simms 2005; Simpson 2008). Also, new ways of incorporating repatriated objects and human remains back into the community need to be devised because there simply is no ceremony or ritual in place to deal with the return (Hemenway 2010).

While there are laws, such as NAGPRA and the NMAI Act, that provide for the preservation and repatriation of tangible material, access to intangible property and the ability to control it from within source communities is a difficult proposition under current US laws. There is no equivalent in US law for indigenous concepts of ownership; indeed, it is difficult to translate indigenous ways of knowing into the language of US law (Tsosie 1997:5). The concept of indigenous intellectual property runs counter to individual property rights because in many indigenous knowledge systems, property, knowledge and nature are inseparable from the world (Grad 2003:204). Both the tangible and intangible are alive and emergent in the world, and one person cannot own them in a western sense. Often property does not

belong to an individual, but to a network of kin, sacred society members, or perhaps the whole group. Codifying this into a unitary set of laws forces indigenous peoples to again have to accommodate western practices, especially considering the ill-fit between intellectual property and copyright law (Tsosie 1997). The core of copyright law—individual authorship, originality, public domain, duration, fixation, and fair use—runs counter to indigenous ontologies, illustrating that this body of law is insufficient to address the cultural concerns of indigenous peoples (Grad 2003:204, 230).

Materiality: Itineraries and Aliveness of Belongings

To think of the objects in museums solely as isolated things fails to recognize the materiality of the object and the social relations and contexts in which the object resides in time, place, and space (Byrne et al. 2011). The objects that make up the collections in museums can be thought of in myriad ways. To “unpack” ways of knowing about these requires not only looking at their biographies, but to also understand their materiality (Appadurai 1986; Karp 1992a; Merrill and Ahlborn 1997; Philips and Steiner 1999). The same object in different places and time can mean different things, shifted from a context “in situ,” decontextualized as it moves through place and time, and recontextualized to serve the aims of its current holders (Ames 1992; Clifford 1985; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991; Kreps 2003). As with the act of collecting, the recontextualization of objects in museums is never neutral. The act of assigning or appropriating meaning reveals the power, authority and values of the possessors and the institution, particularly through western subjectivities (Ames 1991; Baxandall 1991; Berlo and Philips 1992; Clifford 1985; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991).

Circulation of Objects

Many scholars have configured theories of materiality through the lens of economy, dividing ways in which peoples invest value in their works, either through gifting or commodification. Both Malinowski (1922) and Mauss (1990 [1954]) saw that the action of gifting stands for and is embedded in social relations, which is a thread that carries through today. Gifts, according to Mauss, form a “moral bond,” forging links between people, and mediating social relationships. The act of giving is laden with power relations. It embodies a multiplicity of relationships: social, kin, economic, legal, religious, and magical among others. In other words it is a “total prestation”: the person gives a part of himself as the gift is given, creating a social bond and an obligation to reciprocate (Mauss 1990 [1954]).

Rethinking gifting as an individual encounter of connecting oneself to others, Strathern (1990) argues that the western construct of “individual” is troubling because this concept does not encompass the forms of identity of those with whom she worked. In Melanesia, she argues, persons are better conceived of as *dividuals*—a composite of the social relationships encompassed in the multifaceted identifications of a person (Strathern 1990:13). Whereas commodity exchange creates relationships through the object, gift exchange is not about the medium of exchange. It is instead about the personal relationships that are created through the

act; gifts “circulate as parts of persons,” making people beholden in relations with others (Strathern 1990:178, 161).

Weiner (1992:4) further distances herself from western ideological perspectives and frames her discussion of certain objects as inalienable possessions: such possessions “are given, yet not given” and may be maintained by families for generations. The automatic sequence gift/receive/counter gift espoused by Mauss is more complex, she argues, because the realms of social life cannot be broken down to bounded entities—political, social, kin, cosmological—simply as ideologies of social production, and they are not outside of the production of material resources; indeed, they transcend social action (Weiner 1992). Rather than being a means to solidify relationships in a timeless sense, inalienable possessions are representations of social identities “reconstituted through time” (Weiner 1992:11). There is power in inalienable possessions, as well as a responsibility of guardianship (Weiner 1992:150).

Entangled objects illustrate the notion that objects are enmeshed in peoples’ life histories (Thomas 1991). The intrinsic and attributed properties of entangled objects have a real impact on their exchangeability; instead of spheres of exchange, which only describe the transfer of objects, Thomas (1991) argues that the properties of entangled objects stem from their cultural constructions. Like Weiner, Thomas asserts that we must account for history and place, but added to his thesis is an understanding of the asymmetrical relationships that are fomented through the exchange of objects between indigenous peoples and western colonizers. He argues that it is not enough to consider the object in relation to social phenomena; instead, there must be an account of the political and cultural constructions of agency, where peoples are in uneven, yet dependent, relations. It is in this space that value is formulated (Thomas 1991:22).

Focusing on the negotiation of personal relationships (re)created through gifting, Appadurai (1986) argues that meaning is ascribed to objects through the circulation of forms, uses and trajectories. In order to move beyond the tendency to see objects as mute, inert, and only animated by persons and words, it is necessary to see how through circulation, values are ascribed to them. There is no simple one-to-one exchange of commodities. Rather we should turn our attention to “zones of activities” surrounding the exchanges (Appadurai 1986). With regard to the objects of “others,” commoditization occurs with the decontextualization from their place of use to that of markets. The meanings of objects are inscribed on them in relation to the new paths and contexts in which they circulate. As commodities travel further distances, knowledge about them becomes partial, contradictory, and differentiated. Like Mauss, Appadurai separates the exchanges that occur through commoditization of objects, which are considered to be object-centered and impersonal, from those of gift exchanges, which are socially-oriented and link things to people. He argues, however, that the dichotomy between commodities and gifts is not so clear; following Latour (1993), he notes that this division is embedded in yet another dichotomy, modern/primitive, which artificially reduces human diversity (Appadurai 1986:13). To this argument Kopytoff (1986:64) adds the need to give attention to place and time in the circulation of commodities; objects may be

considered commodities at one period of time and not others, and some people may see a commodity, whereas others may see an object as something other.

Rethinking the circulation of objects, Joyce and Gillespie (2015) propose that *itineraries* would better represent the ways that objects move in time, place and space, without having to rely on an artificial metaphor of the human life cycle ascribed to objects as they circulate. Itineraries are markers of the stops in space and time that belongings make along the way. Many Karuk baskets, for example, moved from their home, to collectors' glass cases, to museums, and sometimes, home once again through repatriation. Itineraries encompass the social contexts and relationships in which belongings are enmeshed. By engaging with itineraries, rather than biographies that Appadurai (1986) and Kopytoff (1986) propose, it becomes possible to trace where objects went and where they are going, and also the purposes of their travels. There are stops along the way, providing the objects periods of movement and stillness, and the disruptions to their sense of attachments to home. As Joyce and Gillespie (2015:3) note, itineraries "have no real beginning other than where we enter them and no end since things and their extensions continue to move."

Materiality and Animacy

Theories of materiality provide a broader context for understanding the issues brought about through practices of collecting. They address questions about the relationships between peoples and things (Brown 2001; Gell 1998; Ingold 2005; Knappett 2005; Latour 1993; Miller 2005; Tilley 2004). Studies of materiality overall elucidate the core epistemology of those who speak of human lives and objects. Understanding materiality requires an examination of how one frames the world, whether through dichotomies of mind-body/interior-exterior worlds or as animate beings emergent in the world (Graves-Brown 2000; Ingold 2007b). Baudrillard states that objects are tangible things of "our" passion for private property and the quest to collect objects is a reflection of who we are, external to our bodies, which ground our personhood within the world (2009 [1996]:48, 59). Contra this perspective on the ownership of objects, many believe that objects are not merely tangible things that people exert their desires upon, but are instead living entities "with names, personalities, lineages, and spirits" that are bound to people in relationships (Kreps 2003:71; see also Lang 1994; Margolin 1993). The core question is whether objects do possess some sort of agency, whether they can act in the world or are mediums for human action.

Bourdieu, Gell, and Latour offer differing ways to think of people and things in relation to the world. Bourdieu (1977) offers the example of the Kabyle house as a means to think about the complex connections between people and the materiality in which they interact on a daily basis. The house, as a world within a world, is a space that organizes relationships, where social rules are learned through embodied action and the objectified meanings of things are learned only through practice within this structured space (Bourdieu 1977:282). Both the embodiment of practices and of practical sense are grounded in the world, connected to the past, and transcending the present (Bourdieu 1977:72). The body, rooted spatially and temporally in social fields, is the medium where practices are realized (Bourdieu

1977:71). For Gell (1998:20), however, the scaffolding of social relationships that is initiated by objects is a mental phenomenon that is then achieved through actions in the world. While the object has real and physical consequences in the world, it is the agents, whether person or object, which initiate these sets of relations through “acts of mind, will or intention” (Gell 1998:16). The actions of objects, however, are merely contextual: objects-as-secondary-agents can have some agency within particular social processes, but these are dependent on the mental operations of the intentional person (Gell 1998:19). Latour (2000:10,11), however, argues that because the division between mind and matter, subject and object, remains insidious in studies of material culture, most scholars cannot apprehend the positionality of things in relation to people; instead, they can only see a collection of practices, the “chains of associations of which the artifacts are only a link.” Objects act as mediators, but their roles as “mediator, social actor, agent, active being” are, as Latour (2000:20) asserts, different in their fragility, in the sense that humans can act upon them, exerting their own will. Materials can have consequences for people that are not of human making, particularly if they “modify a state of affairs by making a difference” (Latour 2005:71). Through networks of agents, both human and non-human, objects are *actants*, mediating both the roles and participants in a course of action (Latour 2005:71).

Some scholars critique “object” as a concept, raising the question of its separation from the rest of the world and proposing that *thing* may better illustrate relations in the world. For example, Brown (2001) proposes to reconsider the subject/object divide by focusing not on the subject or object, but on things. By apprehending the thing itself, not its objectifications, we are freed to explore how things engage with and transform human lives, “how inanimate objects constitute human subjects, how they move them, facilitate or threaten their relation to other subjects” (Brown 2001:7). By looking at things instead of objects, the narrative becomes less about the subject or object, but instead one of a particular subject-object relation (Brown 2001:4). Similarly, Gosden (2005:193) advocates for an object-centered, not people-centered, approach to materiality, which looks towards an understanding of how the forms of objects, histories, and sources have social effects on people, how they shape people, and how they place obligations on people. Objects are not passive entities, but rather they are socially efficacious, are imbued with their own social power, and they construct the ground for people to understand them.

Stressing the sociality of objects in relation to the world, Tilley and Knappett emphasize the embodied performance of social interactions as extensions of sensuous, material experiences. Tilley (2004) argues that “social relations are simultaneously relations between material forms” and as such, any division between them is necessarily artificial. The context in which people interact with things is an embodied performative space, where material forms are sensuous metaphors of identity and a connection through which people actively construct their worlds (Tilley 2004:217). Knappett (2005:220) sees the division as artificial as well and states that mind and matter are co-dependent through bodily actions and that “through our senses the body extends into the world.” He asserts that objects are hybrid forms, bound to human lives as “bio-psycho-social totalities”

(Knappett 2005:169). The experience of the world is embodied and sensuous, not an inner world: a “structure of lived material experiences, where things and places are active agents of identity” (Knappett 2005:221).

To speak of the co-creation of persons and objects emerging in the world is one means of blurring the dividing line between subject and object and illustrating the world in a constant state of (re)making. Developing such a perspective, Ingold (2007b) argues against the notion of materiality because it is a means to maintain the dichotomy of mind and matter, which flows from the internal to the external world. Materials are impermanent, part of the process of making and remaking in the world, not something that has a common “essence” or a particular materiality; instead, materials are “active constituents of a world-in-formation” (Ingold 2007b:11). Rather than looking at a world in which the form of the object is what gives it substance, Ingold (2009) proposes that we look at the world of substance itself, how it presents itself to the maker, and how it is transformed in the dynamic act of creation. He argues that the form of an object is not transformed from one thing to another, but is instead built through a dynamic process between the maker and the materials—emerging, coming into existence, and changing both the maker and the materials (Ingold 2009).

Drawing on the works of scholars and philosophers regarding human interactions with materials, Bennett (2009:x) proposes *vital matter* as a way to go beyond considerations of the animacy of objects as tied to the dichotomous barriers of life-matter, human-animal, will-determination, and organic-inorganic. By considering vital matter, Bennett (2009:x) states that scholars can instead have ways to think on the “aesthetic-affective openness to material vitality.” By *vitality*, she means the capacity of objects and phenomena to tread on human designs and will and act as “quasi agents or forces” in their own right (Bennett 2009:viii). Bennett argues against a configuration agency that lends objects biologically human qualities of intention, affect, and causality, which is a “conceit” of humans as the sole “wellspring of agency” (Bennett 2009:30). Instead, she advocates for an understanding of agency that decenters the subject, showing that humans and nonhumans are enmeshed, stating that, “There was never a time when human agency was anything other than an interfolding network of humanity and nonhumanity; today this mingling has become harder to ignore” (Bennett 2009:31). Bennett further considers the animacy of objects as a way to discuss the power of “bodies-in-encounter, ” which have the capacity to affect and be affective (Bennett 2015:95). Animacy for Bennett is a way to consider the vitality of material things from “several different aspects, elements, or registers of liveliness” (Bennett 2015:98).

Chen (2012) frames the discussion of the animacy of objects by extending the theory of animacy hierarchies in linguistics beyond its original capacity of considering the capability of nouns to function as agents in a sentence, describing this as “ontology of affect.” Specifically, animacy hierarchies are “precisely about which things can or cannot affect—or be affected by—which other things within a specific scheme of possible action” (Chen 2012:30). She works to shift the notion of animacy hierarchies to consider how objects can be the loci of affect. Thinking and feeling critically about animacy as affective allows for an alternative means to

identify affiliations, or affinities, among diverse bodies, human and nonhuman, encouraging an “opening to the senses of the world, receptivity, vulnerability” (Chen 2012:236, 237).

While theories of materiality and the animacy of objects are valuable, they tend not to engage with Indigenous ways of knowing about the relationships among people, matter and the world. Specifically, when we consider indigenous knowledge, there is an understanding of a connection to each aspect of the world: that people are a part of the natural world and the natural world is a part of people (Mankiller 2004:43; see also Ames 1994; Williams et al. 2005). This is why thinking with the term “belongings,” in place of object or thing, resonates. I borrow the term belongings from an exhibit that was at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. This exhibit was based on an ancient Musqueam village and cemetery. The exhibit designers collaborated with the Musqueam Indian Band to highlight the ancient belongings, describing how they are tied to “the more modern histories of colonialism, heritage politics, and cultural resilience” (Muntean et al. 2015:360). The Musqueam collaborators spoke of belongings through the processes in which they were created and how they still belong with the people.

Thinking of baskets as belongings is a way to understand how they embody the “continuity of intangible forms of knowledge” (Muntien 2015 et al.:360). It is not in the sense of a possession, like belonging to somebody. Instead, they are belonging with their people, their history, their land, their ceremony, and their everyday world. It is to be in relation with others. Belongings hold the knowledge from their makers, family members, communities, and environments. This knowledge manifests itself in the form of stories, events, gatherings, ceremonies, language, and everyday life. This knowledge also transcends time, reaching back to time immemorial, through to the present, and into the future, by connecting contemporary people with the belongings of their families and ancestors through the teachings of their culture today. More succinctly, Wilson affirms that the term belongings expresses the ways in which they are a part of the social world:

The use of the term emphasizes the contemporary Musqueam connection to the tangible things themselves, but it also conveys that Musqueam have always been the carriers of these belongings’ intangible qualities, including knowledge about the power they continue to hold, how they should be cared for, what should be said about them, how they should be presented (if at all), and how they fit into our ways of seeing the world. (Wilson 2016:3)

Referring to Karuk baskets as belongings, instead of objects or things, reaffirms that they are a part of Karuk peoples’ way of living, knowing, and being in the world. In connection with the Musqueam exhibit, Wilson (2016) states that using the word “object” to refer to belongings “severs the connection the community has to places and things.” He goes further to explain that using belongings is a way to reestablish the connection to the Musqueam people and places, and asserts the Musqueam peoples are the “present-day rightful owners of these cultural items” (Wilson 2016:3). This sense of ownership conveys that the community holds a powerful responsibility to steward the belongings in culturally appropriate ways.

Even though they may reside far from their communities, belongings are still very much a part of the past, present and future of the peoples and communities from which they come.

Creating Belongings

When considering the artworks that Indigenous peoples make, often the attention is paid to the finished product, but not the processes from which belongings grow. There is a vast amount of anthropological research on the categorization of Indigenous belongings as art objects (Clifford 1988; Errington 1994; Graburn 1976; Leuthold 1998; Marcus and Meyers 1995; Phillips and Steiner 1999; Price 1989). Yet the makers themselves have often described the belongings that they create as a part of them, their communities, and the world. Leatrice Mikkelsen (Diné/Wyandotte) exemplifies this in her statement about the paintings that she created:

In the language of the Dineh there is no word for art. When I learned this, I laughed. I was so relieved. This word, and all that it drags with it, was not necessary...What is art? People made beauty in objects, songs, movements. This was done day and night, moment to moment. They never created the issue of 'ART.' That is whole life. (Mikkelsen, as quoted by Mithlo 2008:56).

Belongings are not merely tangible items, but instead are “living entities, with names, personalities, lineages, and spirits. They are living things and are treated like people” and are enmeshed in relationships that embody the spiritual links to identity (Kreps 2003:71; see also Sandell 2007:28). It is not enough to say that objects are alive simply through the act of creation. Instead, there are engagements between the maker and world that are imbued in the form, but the form is not alive until it has been brought into relation with people, ceremonies, and rituals (Field 2008:123). Bradley Marshall (Hupa), quoted by Field (2008:123), states,

So I can create a necklace, and it's just a necklace. Or I can create a quiver, and it's just a quiver. But as soon as that piece is used within any of the ceremonies that it's meant to be used in, then it gains a spirit. Or you could say that the spirits that were in the animals that I used come back into it and form a new life.

Once the object is with spirit, it cannot be owned; the possessor is a “holder” or steward for the piece and is responsible to ensure that the spirit gets to where it needs to go (Field, quoting Marshall 1993:124). Susan Billy (Pomo) urges people to recognize that belongings, such as the baskets that she weaves, are still alive and have “energy” in them, carrying what they need to be present in the world (NMAI 1994:206).

Not only are these belongings alive, but they are social as well; they need social interaction in order to survive (Field 2008). Julia Parker (Coast Miwok-Kashaya Pomo) emphasizes that respect and prayer for the natural world are

intertwined in the baskets that she makes: “You take from the earth and say please, and you give back to the earth and say thank you. You feel the spirits all around you, you just feel good, and then you say a prayer” (Bernstein and NMAI 2003:27). All of the world is alive, is conscious and has feelings: “Our sense is that all of nature grows from the Earth as strands of long hair connecting the present with the beginning of time and original knowledge” (Lang 1994:23).

There is a profound connection between the artists and the works that they create, in the lived, everyday world. Lloyd Kiva New (Cherokee) states that the process of creating belongings is affective, delving into the emotions that people feel about themselves and the world, both past and present (NMAI 1994:42). Potter Rina Swentzell (Tewa-Santa Clara Pueblo) expresses that the pottery she makes comes from a “deeper source,” but the process of making is also integrated in everyday life—“let’s put on the beans and get the clay out” (NMAI 1994:29). Swentzell further explains that the spiritual and emotional weight of the works she creates stay with her, no matter where the pots she made may be. Yatika Starr Fields (Cherokee/Creek/Osage), who describes his painting process as swift and intuitive, uncovers narratives of life in his work through “integrating the physical environment around me with its unseen emotional life.”⁴ And Earl Nyholm (Ojibwe) acknowledges the two way process that occurs in the making “...you put yourself into it, and it becomes a part of you. (NMAI 1994:55).

Because many of the belongings made by Indigenous peoples are associated with ritual and ceremony, the process of creation is often as important or more important than the object itself (West, Jr. 1994:ix). For Makah and Nuuchahnulth peoples how to create belongings is learned in the present, but the ability to do so is rooted in cosmology, stemming from the spirit world or inherited from ancestors (Coté 2010:104). The exceptional work of the maker speaks to the spiritual power that is garnered through the process, and the resultant belonging is representative of important social practices, affiliations, and identity (Coté 2010). Belongings are complementary to other tangible and intangible social relations, rooted both in history and living today, preserving and reinforcing cultural traditions (Coté 2010:114).

The process of creation is also a way for artists to heal from the traumas, historical and present-day, that they and their families have experienced. Painter Shonto Begay (Diné) states,

I survived boarding school partly because of my spiritual strength and retreat into my drawings. I was always drawing. ‘Arts Save Lives’ has been my mantra ever since. Some people did not survive like me. They are walking traumas of my generation.⁵

⁴ Amerind, Inc. Yakita Starr Fields. Electronic document. <http://www.amerinda.org/naar/fields/painter/painter.htm>, accessed October 1, 2016.

⁵ Shonto Begay (Diné), Biography. Electronic document. <http://www.shontosacredmountaingallery.com/>, accessed October 1, 2016.

Patty Courtney Gold (Wasco Nation of the Warm Springs Confederacy) says that the process of weaving is one of regaining tribal knowledge and sovereignty, but also one that is a reminder of historical trauma; “Our people were moved from a traditional place to reservations, and during that move, we lost a lot of our culture. We lost variation, skills, especially in basketry and it took a hundred years to get them back. So there is some pain there for us.” (Bernstein and NMAI 2003:25)

Engaging in the Native American art market, Indigenous artists and scholars have grappled directly with the implications of foregrounding creative processes within a system that can objectify Native identity. However, many artists assert that indigenous belongings have never been static and unchanging. Works of art change; makers are adaptive to new materials and new technologies; works embody and reflect interactions with colonizers; and yet the thread of cultural continuity winds through history (Williams et. al 2005). Sonya Kelliher-Combs (Iñupiaq/Athabaskan) states that her artworks document the struggle for Indigenous self-determination and self-identification, moving beyond the oppositions of “Western/Native culture, self/other and man/nature.”⁶ Belongings are products of makers engaged in a creative process that embodies ritual, encompassing not only in social relationships amongst peoples, but with the totality of the world (Hill 1994:xv; also Williams et al. 2005). As Kanahale (1994:46) says “We live simultaneously in the world of our forefathers and in the world as it exists today.” In the act of creating, remembrances come to the fore, tacking back and forth through time (LaPena 1994:59). The process of making is in a sense a form of communication, describing to the world beginnings and changing ways of thinking (Namingha 1994:96). The act of making is an important addition to the creation of life (Williams et al. 2005:13).

Chapter Descriptions

Chapter II: Histories of the Karuk Tribe discusses the ways in which Karuk basketry has been caught in the wake of larger histories of colonization, economy, politics, and research. Looking at basket weaving through the lens of these histories shows a reflection of a variety of outside influences, adjusting to changes in the environment, varying with subsistence patterns, and failing to flourish if not continually maintained. Providing histories of the Karuk Tribe from multiple positions is a way to describe the social and historical context in which the Karuk basket weaving tradition has been both affected and defined in written form. Perspectives include an epistemological understanding of Karuk tribal history; anthropological understandings of the pre-contact era of the Tribe; newspaper accountings of the history of contact; and a grounding in the environmental and political contexts that Karuk Tribe basketweavers have had to negotiate since contact in 1850. In this vein, the continuance of basket weaving is situated within the larger events and discourses that occurred and that affected the ways in which

⁶ Sonya Kelliher-Combs, Artist Statement. Electronic document. http://www.sonyakellihercombs.com/about_statement.html, accessed October 1, 2016.

basket weavers developed specific tactics to both practice and preserve Karuk weaving culture.

Chapter III: Basket Weaving in the Early Twentieth Century considers the way in which the stories and narratives relayed by Phoebe Maddux to J. P. Harrington in the late 1920s can provide a means to understand Karuk peoples everyday experiences in the first decades of the 20th century with regard to the circulation of baskets. Mrs. Maddux's stories illuminate how memory, community, and place are significant to Karuk basket weaving. Through her discussions of people, places, and exchanges of belongings go far to explain the social turbulence of contact with settlers and how relationships with people, places, and belongings changed.

As way of introduction, I discuss two important works from the early 20th century that configure Karuk basketry in a more typological framework, removing basketry from its social and spiritual contexts, to greater and lesser degrees. The first work that I discuss was produced by Alfred Kroeber, whose 1905 paper on Northwestern California basket designs was one of the first descriptive publications that discussed Karuk basketry. The second work that I discuss is Lila O'Neale's 1929 research with Karuk, Yurok, and Hupa basket weavers. She, like Kroeber, created a typological study of basket weaving, but she explored the topic much further. Focusing not just on the techniques, styles, and designs of basketry, she interviewed many weavers about their own thoughts and impressions on the basket weaving process, from gathering materials to weaving, as well as their own evaluations of well-crafted and poorly-made baskets. Weavers' responses about the changes that were occurring with the basket weaving practice, such as lack of time to weave and restricted access to materials, as well as fewer young people picking up the practice, were more nuanced than what she had published. And within these nuances, the threads of both loss and resilience that the weavers had articulated carry through to today.

Through the evaluation of Kroeber's, O'Neale's, and Harrington's research, along with the dealers and collectors of the Johnson collection, I show that the positionality of each party affected the discourse about Karuk baskets, Karuk ways of knowing, and Karuk peoples. I also show how Phoebe Maddux expressed what was most evocative about the baskets in her perspective, resisting a classificatory approach to understanding the meaning of these belongings. And through tracing the baskets' itineraries, I show how these belongings participated in everyday and ceremonial life.

Chapter IV: Basket Weaving in the Late Twentieth Century discusses the ways in which Karuk basket weaving changed with the social circumstances of the 1930s-1980s. a moment in time in which basket weavers persisted despite the lack of social and economic support, as well as the diminishing natural resources available to weavers. By way of introduction to understanding the social contexts in which Karuk and other Northwestern California basket weavers began to breathe life into the practice, I rely on publications that describe the Karuk, Hupa, and Yurok basket weaving revival in the 1950s-1970s. Further delving into the revitalization of the practice, I analyze a set of interviews with Northwestern California basket weavers that were conducted in 1982 by Coleen Kelley Marks, then director of the Clarke Historical Museum (CHM). I discuss the experiences of elder and younger weavers,

which illustrate some of the motivations for the continuance of their basket weaving practice.

Chapter V: Karuk Responses to Challenges to Basket Weaving introduces and discusses the environmental factors that impede contemporary basket weavers in their struggle to have continued reliable and safe access to basket weaving materials. And, I bring in information about two important outcomes that came from weavers' involvement with improving access to weaving materials and building a larger community with weavers across the state. In the 1982 CHS interviews, weavers talked about the environmental degradation caused by the dams along the Klamath River and the subsequent massive flooding that occurred in 1955 and 1964. Weavers and Klamath River community members were negatively impacted by the application of herbicides in logging areas, many of which are prime gathering sites. Woven throughout these discussions about hindrances to gathering were the weavers' relationships with government agencies, particularly the USFS, which continues to control over 95% of Karuk aboriginal territories. These narratives expressed the deep frustrations of working with government agencies in an effort to apply traditional ecological knowledge to the management of plants used for basketry, opening the door for organized political action among the part of California basket weavers in the 1990s.

Chapter VI: Contemporary Karuk Basket Weaving emphasizes the aliveness and animacy of baskets through myths and narratives of gathering and weaving. To introduce the animacy of Karuk baskets, I refer to a myth that weaves its roots through to contemporary practice, through its description of the time before humans. From this starting point, I then delve into the importance of gathering from three different standpoints: beginning weaver (the author), advanced weaver (Brittany Souza), and master weaver (Verna Reece). Each of these discussions of gathering brings forward significant aspects of the interrelatedness of basket weaving, social ties, and land. From these three different perspectives—beginner, advanced, and master weaver—I discuss the significance of the baskets that weavers bring to life with regard to the connections to family and community.

Chapter VII: Conclusion: Contemporary Itineraries of Baskets explores the way that they have moved in place, space, and time. I describe how contemporary weavers view the collections that are held in museums. I explore the notion of "bringing baskets back home," through exhibitions and repatriation. This illustrates how baskets are considered social beings—belongings—that "cry out" to be back where they came from so that they can be with the Karuk peoples, hearing the songs and stories and participating in ceremonies. Finally, I describe what it means to weave *pikyav*, through self and tribal identification, through self-determination, and through healing both self and the world.

Chapter II

Histories of the Karuk Tribe

Introduction

The purpose for this chapter is to discuss the ways in which Karuk basketry has been caught in the wake of larger narratives of colonization, economy, politics, and research. Certainly, baskets have always been central to the Karuk culture. They have been used for gathering, cooking, storing, gift giving, wearing and making medicine. Baskets could be plain or fancy; miniature to over three feet tall. They were used for all aspects of life: birth, marriage, ceremony, death and everything in between. But, Karuk basket weaving practices have changed, influenced by the changes in economy, society, and environment. Looking at basketry and weaving practices through the lens of history shows a reflection of a variety of outside influences, adjusting to changes in the environment, varying with subsistence patterns, and failing to flourish if not continually maintained.

What follows is an accounting of histories of the Karuk Tribe, from multiple positions, in order to describe the social and historical context in which the Karuk basket weaving tradition has been both affected and described in written form. This includes an ontological understanding from the perspective of the Karuk Tribe; anthropological understandings of the pre-contact era of the Tribe; newspaper accountings of the history of contact; and a grounding in the environmental and political contexts that Karuk Tribe basketweavers have had to negotiate since contact in 1850. In this vein, the continuance of basket weaving is situated within the larger events and discourses that occurred and that affected the ways in which basket weavers developed specific tactics to both practice and preserve weaving.

This chapter is infused with narratives about the time from contact in 1850 through the 1930s; it offers fragmented accounts of everyday occurrences, as recorded by news reporters, settlers, as well as Native peoples who lived along the Klamath River. The importance of these narratives cannot be overstated. They are there to remind us that life is filled with moments of great joy, as well as tragedy, of happiness, as well as sadness. The narratives serve as a reminder of the interactions between peoples from disparate backgrounds and how small actions shaped the landscape, shaped the lives of people and set up ways, both small and large, in which people are living today.

The reliance on newspaper or journal accounts is not without its own attendant problems. The biases of the accounts tend to vacillate from the bloodthirsty and out-for-vengeance style of justice to the victimization of natives, the romanticization of death and destruction. Newspaper writers certainly did not capture every account of bloodshed of Native Americans. There are gaps that are never to be filled in. I engage with these accounts of bloodshed, not to objectify the historical circumstances of Karuk history, but to reveal the prevailing attitudes toward Karuk peoples during the gold rush.

Karuk Tribe Onto-epistemology

The Karuk are fix-the-world people. From time immemorial, the land from which the *áraaras* (the people) emerged has been central to their lives. They live, take care of, and fix the world. Before the mass invasion of miners and settlers in 1849, the *áraaras* lived along the middle courses of the Klamath River in northwestern California, situating their homes on flats and meadows at the confluences of many creeks and the river. The river and the land, the plants and the animals, sustained life and livelihood.

The *ikxaréeyavsa*, the spirit beings, lived in the world before the *áraaras* emerged. The *ikxaréeyavsa* had a hand in aiding the *áraaras* to emerge. As Julian Lang states, the *ikxaréeyavsa* were “purely creative”; from their existence, the world emerged (Lang 1994:23). All aspects of the natural world, from the insects to the trees, from the deer to the bear, from the people to the plants, were once *ikxaréeyavs*. These acts of creation and transformation are told in the stories, in the myths and in song. You can see the *ikxaréeyavsa* in everything.

We have deified everything in the natural world. We consider all of nature to be alive, possessing both feelings and a consciousness. Hence the *natural world* is capable of seeing and hearing us, “blessing” us, and taking pity on us. The Earth is a physical manifestation of God’s creative spirit, and we, Human Beings, are recognized by the Earth **as a part of** the natural world.
(Lang 1994:22)

Phoebe Maddux, a Karuk medicine woman and basket weaver, told J. P. Harrington, Bureau of American Ethnology linguist, about the *ikxaréeyavsa* in 1928. She said that they were the first people, first in the sense that they preceded us, and in the sense that no people of any other kind preceded them. They left because they had to go; they had to give things for us. “The Indians followed their customs because the old people constantly had them in mind and told of what the *ikxaréeyavsa* had done” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:124). According to Mrs. Maddux, all of the animals used to be *ikxaréeyavs* as well (Harrington and Ferrara:127).

Karuk stories are important to the people. They educate children about natural resources, teach people how the world began, and impress upon the people Karuk morals and values. Many of the stories are about the *ikxaréeyavsa* who are the beings who inhabited the world before humans.

Natural resources come from the *ikxaréeyavs* who turned into the animals, plants, waterways and landscapes. As such, the world is still populated by these beings, and as Karuk people, they are responsible for caring for it in the ways that these beings directed Karuk people to do. “Our ancestral landscapes overflow with stories and expressions from the past which remind us of who we are...” (Karuk Tribe 2009:7). Along with the plants, animals, water and air, fire is a gift from the *ikxaréeyavsa*.

Fire “is believed to be a healing agent capable of producing change to restore balance when respected, understood, and utilized in an appropriate natural/cultural

context” (Karuk Tribe 2009:5). As one elder states, “ at our ceremonial dances...when you first start out, you pray to the higher up or God to borrow the fire. You don’t own the fire. You borrow it. And while the dances are going on. And then you pray for everything you do at those dances” (Lake 2008:572).

Because basketry materials are gathered from these sources, baskets are also considered to be social beings, living and possessing a spirit. Their aliveness creates a complex interrelationship between people and objects. Baskets are members of Karuk communities, who are born, participate in social life and mediate the moral relationships between people and objects (Field 2008, Lang 1994, Margolin 1981).

In the Karuk language, *pikyáv* means “to fix it.” *Pikyávish* is the Karuk world renewal ceremonies. These ceremonies, with the prayers and dances, repair and restore complex socio-cultural and ecological relations that have been injured throughout the year. Karuk people pray for the health and renewed vitality of the land and the plants, for the river and the people. Baskets woven specifically for the *pikyávish* complex of ceremonies are essential to making the medicine needed to make the world right again, to bring it into balance and accord (Lang 1994:225).

The Karuk peoples did not have a central government. While William Bright (1978) compared the political structure to “ideal anarchy,” Jack Norton (1979:7) states that the primary organizational structure was “supported by an emphasis on reciprocal personal integrity in relationship to the society, as well as to the natural and cosmological world.” Rather than an established government, Kroeber (1976 [1925]) claimed that Northwestern California Indians, focused on economic interests. Karuk peoples, along with Yurok and Hupa peoples, were characterized by Alfred Kroeber and later by Bright (1978) to be especially concerned with monetary wealth, in the form of dentalium shells. While it is true that a person could be considered rich by possessing regalia and strands of dentalium, these objects of exchange did not belong to the few. By assuming the wealth of responsibility for the community through the stewarding of dentalium, by developing personal integrity, by practicing good judgment, and by maintaining a dedication to community and social mores, Karuk peoples gained respect from their communities, and were held in high esteem (Norton 1979:7).

In the spirit of *pikyávish*, the responsibility to maintain balanced relationships among themselves and their neighboring peoples was imperative. Karuk peoples had close relations with Yurok and Hupa peoples, despite their differences in language. Karuk, Yurok and Hupa peoples traded goods with each other; they attended each others’ ceremonies; and visited with one another (Nelson and Bayer 1978:23, 25). While there were different tribes along the Klamath, Nelson and Bayer (1978) said that there was little reason to fight, as each respective place had abundant resources for which they were responsible. There were a handful of skirmishes, however; but the important point here was that restitution was needed in order to restore balance to the world, a fundamental principle of *pikyáv*.

Ceremonies occurring from spring to fall are constant reminders to Karuk peoples of the appropriate way to live and the need to create ecological balance within the Karuk world (Lang 2012). The ceremonies within the *pikyávish* complex restore relationships between people in order to put the world back into balance. This continual restoration is sought year after year, generation after generation, to

maintain the harmonious relationships among people, land, water, and all living things within it. As Lang (2012) states:

It is believed that the ceremony creates ecological balance within the Karuk world. It rids the earth of ill health, suffering (the chronic pain of elders was specifically prayed for), drought and famine. Thus the waters of the “world” are cleansed, the all important Spring and Fall salmon runs are beckoned forth as is the equally important acorn harvest. It assures a plentitude of plant and animal foods. It is also the time when the People convene to reconnect with the Earth, and recommit to ancestral knowledge, original purpose, and to social harmony (Lang 2012:8).

While the ceremonies were and remain important events within Karuk life, where relationships with people and the earth are galvanized, practices in everyday life were suffused with prayer. Each trip, each meal, each shot of an arrow, each clip of a willow stick was filled with prayer and song.

The Karuk Tribe has been federally recognized since 1979 and is the second largest tribe in California, with over 3000 members and 4000 descendants. Situated over the middle course of the Klamath River and along the Salmon River in Northern California, Karuk Aboriginal Territories cover nearly 1.4 million acres. While these lands and waterways are still used for hunting, fishing, and gathering by Karuk peoples, over 95% of the Aboriginal Territories are within the jurisdiction of the USFS. The Karuk trust lands are composed of individual and Tribal Trust properties scattered along the Klamath River between Yreka and Orleans, California, with Tribal centers and administrative facilities located in Happy Camp, Orleans, Somes Bar, and Yreka (Karuk Tribe 2009:1). The mission of the Karuk Tribe is:

to promote the general welfare of all Karuk People, to establish equality and justice for our Tribe, to restore and preserve Tribal traditions, customs, language and ancestral rights, and to secure to ourselves and our descendants the power to exercise the inherent rights of self governance (Karuk Tribe 2009:2).

Within this mission, the Karuk Tribe seeks to promote the wellbeing of Karuk peoples through initiatives concerning health, justice, economic security, education, housing, self governance, and cultural and natural resources that are in and adjacent to Karuk Aboriginal Territories (Wheeler, Brown, and Frost 2016:3).

The Karuk Tribe established the People’s Center in 2002 in order to preserve, promote and celebrate Karuk history, culture, language, and living traditions. Along with a museum, which houses a collection of over 400 belongings, the People’s Center serves as the hub of activity for language and cultural classes, the annual Basket Weavers Gathering, book readings, and other events in Happy Camp, CA. The People’s Center also serves as an archive of language materials, book manuscripts, and other documents about Karuk peoples. It is also a living museum. The belongings held in the museum collections are cared for through the understanding

that belongings, particularly baskets, are living beings. Because they are living beings, certain belongings are lent out for ceremonies so that they can participate.

The Karuk Tribe also established the Karuk Department of Natural Resources (KDNR) to protect, enhance and restore the landscape and waterways upon which Karuk people depend. The KDNR has worked to develop partnerships with agencies which have a stake in the Karuk Aboriginal Territories to revitalize cultural management practices, with the resilience of the ecosystems within and adjacent to the territories protected for future generations. Foundational to their work, KDNR has developed the 2009 draft *Eco-Cultural Resources Management Plan* that addresses the concerns about the health of Klamath River watershed. The *Eco-Cultural Resources Management Plan* seeks to integrate traditional ecological knowledge with western science to implement responsible and ethical stewardship practices. Of the many goals and objectives contained within this plan, for basket weavers one particularly stands out. That is the reintroduction of prescribed burning for the health and vitality of important basket weaving plants.

Karuk Testimonies of Contact

First Sightings and Interactions

Ned Rasper (Karuk), known as Indian Ned and Old Ned, lived to be over 120 years old. His name was splashed across newspapers at the time of his death in the 1940s. He was born near Clear Creek, along the courses of the Klamath River. In many newspaper and anthropological interviews he participated in, he recounted a memory of the first white men who worked their way up to Karuk territory, in 1843. “The white men, three in number, made signs they were hungry and were given dried venison and salmon. The men were afterwards identified as shipwrecked sailors who had made their way up the Klamath River from the ocean” (Fairchild 1947:7). The men gave Mr. Rasper a gun and showed him how to use it. Seven years later, the gold prospectors came. Mr. Rasper recounted that the gold miners stole women, mistreated Karuk people, and set fire to their settlements, killing several Karuk people (Merrill 1972:32). Survivors were forced to seek shelter in the nearby mountains; Mr. Rasper said that he stayed in the mountains for five days after. Their food stores were destroyed, which caused people to starve during the harsh winter. Fairchild (1947) quoted Mr. Rasper stating, “The white man stole, lied, murdered, raped, and without reason or consideration” (1947:8).

Ruffy was a Karuk man, originally from Somes Bar, who lived in the Scott Valley town of Etna. Over 100 years old in 1947, he was interviewed for the Siskiyou Pioneer, a local historical society journal. He described the first time he saw a white man in the Scott River Valley, tens of miles east of Happy Camp. In the 1830s, Ruffy saw trappers come into the Scott River watershed to capture beavers. “With a great deal of concern and growing anxiety, the Indians watched the trappers come and go each year taking with them the furs which were so essential to the Indian mode of life. Yet they did not molest the white man, although, as Ruffy said, they never paid the Indians a cent for the furs” (Campbell 1947:25). In the mid-1830s, the trappers came back and began to build cabins along the Scott River. In

retaliation for cutting off access to their homelands, Native peoples attacked the trappers and drove them from the valley. Ruffy stated that in return the trappers came back and built a “long log house, which had little round holes in each side. The white men put their guns through these holes and killed the Indians, but they never came out of their house until they were sure the Indians had all gone away” (Campbell 1947:25). Ruffy then said that the “Big Man” gathered men on horses and killed many Indians across the valley; “White man no good—he take all the land, kill all the deer, catch all the fish. Indian no got anything anymore” (Campbell 1947:26). Ruffy eventually made his living by carrying mail and then when he felt he was too old for that, he cut firewood with his sons (Campbell 1947:26).

Clara Gray, who passed away in Orleans, CA in 1920, remembered the coming of the first prospectors. She was swimming in the Klamath River when she saw bright flares of light. These flares were the sun’s reflections of the shovels and pans of the miners.⁷ Bessie Tripp’s grandfather remembered that he assisted a group of miners in 1849 or 1850, who were starving to death during a particularly harsh winter; “The newcomers had eaten their seven mules and were rapidly starving to death when her grandfather had young men build them a Karuk style dwelling from his stock of sugar pine planks and supplied them with salmon, acorns as well as the knowledge necessary to preparing these staples” (Salter 2003:7).

Phoebe Maddux’s mother first found out that there were new settlers on the Klamath when she was out gathering pine nuts:

While she was there three boys (her cousins) were along with her and a Yreka man came from Yreka on a horse, saying that Whites were coming and the Modoc Indians were going to make war on Salmon River Indians. She said she could not get her eyes away from that horse. She left there in a great hurry for fear there was going to be a war among the Indians and that the three boys might get killed. (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:228)

Mrs. Maddux also shared that her mother said that when the white people came, all the animals, particularly the grizzly bears and panthers, fled to the mountains because they heard all the shooting; “they went up into the high mountains...and these last were never seen anymore” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:124).

Violent Clashes with Newcomers

In 1926, Fritz Hansen described the treatment of Karuk people, the kidnapping of women, and savagery of the settlers who set fire to whole villages.

Whites used to treat the Indians here like nothing. Would come to a house and take Indian women out. And there were some Indian men who were mean and did not like it and killed two or more white men. The settlers made a big circle around [a community] (both sides of the river) and many of

⁷ Susie Baker Fountain Papers. Humboldt State University, Special Collections, Volume 105, Happy Camp, Pages 1-357.

the Indians escaped, but those that did not the whites closed in on [and] killed. [There] were whites here at [a community], at [a community] and [a community]. And the whites fired [burned] the houses, and the whites were all together there in one bunch...Some of the Indian houses were not wholly burnt down. (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:27)

The capacity for violence was also in the hands of Karuk people, who sought redress for the violence perpetrated on them.

An Indian killed a white boy, stole bread and his shirt. The Indians all piled on him because they did not want any way...The whites finally hung him at [a community]. (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:226)

Sandy Bar Bob, who was a medicine man, recalled in 1926 that a mining company “came in and mined off the grounds where they used to [perform certain tasks for ceremony]” and divided the village site near where it was established, forcing Karuk people to move elsewhere (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:55). The sweathouse remained there, but Sandy Bar Bob thought that the mining company would soon destroy it. While the sweathouse was not destroyed, Sandy Bar Bob was shot in the hip by a miner in the area, just barely surviving his injury (Lake 2008:656).

Mavis McCovey shared a family remembrance about her grandfather. In the early 1870s, when he was young, he and his brother went down to a boat landing on the Klamath. Her grandfather stood watching as the miners were burning down a village, with little children still inside the houses. She said that her grandfather saw that there were only elders and children in the village and that he didn't know what to do. Mavis stated, “And he said that's when they burned out the [village] because the miners wanted to mine there. They wanted to mine on that river bar” (Lake 2008:552).

“When the world comes to an end”

Shortly after gold miners took over Karuk country, Karuk people were faced with the ensuing violence on their people, the forced evictions from their homes and the theft of lands for which they had taken care of since time immemorial. Sacred sites were desecrated; settlements and gathering areas were washed away by hydraulic mining practices; and many people were forced to flee their homes.

In the 1920s, Tintin recalled that his wife was horrified that a miner named Langford blasted a hole in a particular sacred site (Harrington and Ferrara 2003:78). He recounted a myth in which the *ikxaréeyav* who made the world also made this sacred site. Tintin said that when this sacred site fell, people would quit living, “when the world comes to an end” (Harrington and Ferrara 2003:79).

Also in the 1920s, Mrs. Maddux shared with J. P. Harrington her rage and fear about the miners. She called the whites *kêemishas* (something supernaturally dangerous, a devil, a monster; poison; a wild animal; deceased person) and said that the world was coming to an end, that the whites were spoiling the world.

(Harrington and Ferrara 2004:171). She also remembered when collectors began purchasing ceremonial belongings. She said,

“There *used to be* lots of Indian money. When [Karuk men] gambled, the Indians had piles of dentalia ten inches high. Old John Daggett was the first man in California to buy Indian things. He had a whole box... full of Indian money that he had bought at five dollars a bunch. He went around the Indian houses asking for *ishpuk* [money] (he used Indian words in buying the things). (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:143)

Mrs. Maddux stated ruefully that her mother was upset that she was forced to live in a modern home, rather than the carefully crafted plank houses that she had always known. Mrs. Maddux’s mother told her, “Whiteman houses are so cold and so thin. So warm in the Indian houses.” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:98). When Mrs. Maddux’s mother knew that she was dying, she told Mrs. Maddux that she didn’t want to be buried near her granddaughter’s home. She said, “Don’t bury me here, white men might hook me, the flat might get mined off. Bury me by my husband at [a village site]” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:83). Mrs. Maddux was angry and confused that only a few decades after contact the traditional semi-subterranean Karuk plank houses were being dismantled for firewood (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:244).

Mary Ike, who worked with anthropologist E. W. Gifford in the early 20th century, providing information about the *pikyávis* ceremonies, said that because of fire suppression, certain ceremonial practices had to be changed. Kroeber and Gifford offered this account in their publication, *World Renewal, a Cult System of Native Northwest California* (1949):

Now, because of the white man's regulations, the fire cannot be kindled.... This annual burning was said not to cause forest fires, because it burnt only undergrowth. The extensive brush areas on [a sacred site] are due to this annual burning at the *pikyávis*, Mary said; all the small fir trees were killed....Now that the Indians no longer burn fires [at a sacred site] and no longer perform [a ceremonial dance], food is scarce and they are dying off, Mary said. (Kroeber and Gifford 1949:21)

Beverly Ortiz interviewed basket weaver Vivian Hailstone (Karuk/Yurok/Hupa) in 1990 about her experiences in the early half of the 20th century. Mrs. Hailstone expressed, like many others at the time, that she rejected identifying as Native because of belief that Indians were savages. This racism and discrimination was internalized by her and so many others:

Before it was so bad to be Indian that you were ashamed, or you had to be somebody else. Many of the people would say I'm Filipino, or I'm from Canada. I'm from the dark French or whatever. They'd be anything except Indian. At one time, being Indian was so bad, if you got an education, it didn't do any good anyway. They wouldn't hire you.... You think anybody would go

to a doctor [of American Indian descent]? The banks wouldn't hire you. Nobody would hire you because you were an Indian. And so in our minds being Indian was so bad, and we didn't really know why. Why was it so bad to be an Indian? But it's because of what they did to us. They portrayed us as the savages. We were this and we were that. And we thought maybe we were. (Ortiz 2008:36-37)

Mrs. Maddux noted that there were many people suffering from syphilis when she was growing up. "Many Indian women had their necks all swollen and rosy with syphilis, and the none of them got well. There was one woman...a good-looking Indian woman. But white men, some trash men, came to see her—some men just take their chances" (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:107). Other diseases, such as smallpox, were evident on the Klamath as well. Mrs. Maddux observed,

The blood of many newcomers was rotten and the Indians did not know it. Many women, for a dress or some money, contracted diseases. Many Indians were rotten in the houses—the houses stank. Phoebe's mother said that the Indians could not cure these sicknesses, with sores all over. (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:187).

When big measles came, and when the small pox came, the mother would get the disease. And they were afraid the child or children would catch it and they just packed the children out and left them thus to die. Only at the time of an epidemic or hunger did they do thus (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:227).

[A Karuk person] had the rotten disease...and after that [their] body was scarred all over with scars, where [they] said they had broken open (just like they had been cut with a knife). Especially [their] neck showed it...[Their] eyes were always sort of rolled up, showing the whites of his eyes. (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:106).

An Uneasy Peace

Mary Ike, who lived to be 101, observed the signing of the peace treaty between Karuk peoples and the whites at "Mac-A-Yarms" on October 6, 1851 (Anonymous 1971:31). Her husband was Little Ike, a sometimes informant of Kroeber's and Harrington's. "In an interview some time ago, she recalled the historic snows and floods of 1890 which threatened starvation to the whites around Sawyers Bar and caused them to migrate to the lower country. Nearly one hundred of them were on the trail when they reached the lodges of [Little Ike and his father] on the Klamath River. There, the whites were fed acorn soup, deer meat, and dried salmon, and given food that enabled them to reach Orleans" (Anonymous 1971:31).

Nettie Ruben shared this story with William Bright, who was at the time a University of California, Berkeley linguistics graduate student:

When the white men finished fighting, then they were friendly to the Indians. They got together with them. (But) the fact was, the Indians were still afraid.

They were told that the white men were devils. Then (the whites) gave them money (i.e., coins). (The Indians) thought they were rocks. So they went down to the river bank. And they skipped them on the water. The white men were camped. And they told (the Indians) to come there. So they came. And (the whites) gave them flour. It was (in) little sacks. Then the Indians went back home. And when they got home, then they poured out the flour. And they kept only the cloth. They made Indian treasure of it. Then in addition they gave them handkerchiefs. Then (the Indians) made the world-renewal ceremony, they put (the handkerchiefs) on. Then people thought they were rich. They put on the handkerchiefs across their chests. The handkerchiefs were red. And when they did the deerskin dance, when they carried the obsidian blades, they wore the flour bags around their waist, they put them on that way, as dresses. (Bright 1957:278-279)

Research in Karuk Country

In 1928, J. P. Harrington explained to Mrs. Maddux what archaeologists studied. While there is no recorded text of what Harrington shared with Mrs. Maddux, this was her response:

It is rich man's doing. They could do it only after all the Indians are gone. They will do it at [a Karuk village site] sometimes. Or if there are still Indians left, they must pay them a lot of money. Otherwise one would look on it that one is taking something for which he has not been paid or from dead people, which is worse. The Indians would have medicine to use before one handled bones or made such study. (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:177).

Emily Donahue shared her story about when E. W. Gifford visited Karuk country in the 1930s:

Mr. Gifford went first to Katimin. He hired a woman there. Then they came here. Then my mother was hired for story-telling. And then for medicine too. And she named all kinds of plants. And then they went up on the mountain. They were looking for plants. Then the woman (from Katimin) quit. Then I myself went with him. We went upriver to Ferry Point. And the women there and I told stories. Then we came back here again. And we told stories again. Then we went to Crescent City. We went gathering olivella shells. Then we came back. (Bright 1957:302-303)

The Reverberations of Settlement

The Karuk Tribe was one of the last tribes in the United States to be contacted by non-indigenous peoples. The Karuk Tribe was devastated by the Gold Rush during the mid-nineteenth century. The new settlements and the US Forest Service cut off access to gathering, hunting and fishing areas, leading to dislocation and mass starvation. Hydrologic mining was practiced on the Klamath River, which eroded the great swaths of land along the river, altering the landscape dramatically,

and devastating the sensitive ecological balance, of plants, people, and animals. Miners, cattle ranchers, and other settlers brought with them diseases like cholera, smallpox, and tuberculosis.

Additionally, state sanctioned militias were authorized to both enslave and kill Native peoples (Heizer 1993 [1974]). In 1851, in his State of the State Address, California Governor Peter Burnett declared,

That a war of extermination will continue to be waged between the races until the Indian race becomes extinct must be expected. While we cannot anticipate this result but with painful regret, the inevitable destiny of the race is beyond the power or wisdom of man to avert.⁸

Public sentiment was similar. In 1853, a Northern California newspaper announced, "It is a mercy to the red devils to exterminate them, and a saving of many white lives. Treaties are played out—there is only one kind of treaty that is effective—cold lead."⁹ From violence and disease, Karuk people had suffered. Prior to contact in 1850, the population of the Karuk Tribe was estimated to be around 2700 people (1956:98). By 1900, the Karuk population was close to 650 people (Lang 1994:10). And by 1948, less than two-dozen full-blood Karuk people were identified (Bright 1978:189).

Mining, Timber, and Agriculture-1850s-1900s

With the discovery of gold in 1848 along the American River in Coloma, Eldorado County, the rush to California was on. Hundreds of thousands of prospective miners flooded the state, in search of their dreams of gold and riches. "Miners had slight sympathy for Indian life and little need of their labor. Some newcomers clamored for wars of extermination and the new state government tried to accommodate them" (Hurtado 1993 [1974]:vi). Hostilities between California Indians and miners were ever present, as the miners saw California Indians in the way of their progress. "The whites believed that the Indians were indeed primitive and therefore that they were all the more repulsive and expendable." (Rawls 1986:xiv). The devastating effects of the settlers' quest for land and prosperity in the Klamath River region are still felt today.

Since the 1850s, Karuk peoples were caught in the wake of the gold mining industry, along with the secondary industries of forestry, farming, merchants, and packers. In the late spring to early summer in 1851, roughly thirty miners worked their way up the Klamath River sand bars, steadily moving toward *athithúfvuunupma* (present day Happy Camp, literally "Indian Creek flows away downriverward to") (Toleman 1966:9). By 1852, at the confluence of the Klamath and Salmon Rivers, there were from 500 to 1000 transitory miners, who worked

⁸ http://governors.library.ca.gov/addresses/s_01-Burnett2.html, accessed April 8, 2016

⁹ The Gold Rush: California Transformed. http://www.csun.edu/~sg4002/courses/417/readings/gold_rush.pdf, Electronic Resource, accessed January 18, 2016.

claims and then moved on to other strikes (Toleman 1966:3). Only a handful stayed and settled into their mining claims and raised cabins in the area, since the surface gold was mined out (Peters, Ortiz, and Beck 2011).

By 1863, many of the miners who were working claims near Happy Camp moved on, since the easiest gold was picked over (Toleman 1966:11). Some worked upriver toward Yreka, and others moved north along Indian Creek, establishing Indian Town, just south of the Oregon border. The 1880 census showed that there were a total of 597 people living in Happy Camp: 97 Karuk, 250 Chinese, and 250 white. By 1893, there were over 1,500 men mining, individually or with larger organizations, along the Klamath River. Two years later, the numbers increased to nearly 2,000. The dollar amount of gold pulled from the riverbeds and veins in 1894 was \$740,000; in 1895 it was \$950,000; and in 1896 it was over \$1,000,000 (Wilson 1897:199).

The environmental effects from the use of hydraulic mining altered the banks of the Klamath River, causing widespread erosion and the denuding of surrounding vegetation. It also affected the ecosystems for animals and fish, polluting the water, and destroying food sources. In 1897, it was observed that the Klamath River was “filled with the detritus from the denudations of the mountains, and the gravels resulting from the vast erosions contain immense values of the precious metals” (Wilson 1897:194). Hydraulic mining caused changes in the runoff patterns, causing more erosion, and altering the surrounding vegetation (Committee on Hydrology, Ecology, and Fishes of the Klamath River et al. 2008:44:41). In addition to the erosion caused by hydraulic mining, dredging and placer mining also polluted the river and creeks emptying into the Klamath. “Dredging and processing of the placer deposits would have released fine sediments into the water column, potentially damaging aquatic habitat” (Committee on Hydrology, Ecology, and Fishes of the Klamath River et al. 2008:44). The construction of wing dams diverted water from the rivers and creeks, giving miners beds to excavate, removing rocks and gravel that were then piled on the banks (Nixon 1897). Furthermore, the use of mercury and cyanide in mining practices polluted the Klamath River and creeks in the surrounding areas (Alpers et al. 2005).

The large-scale mining operations by settlers in the Karuk territories effectively destroyed and cut off access to important fishing areas, and gathering places for food, medicines and basketry plants. Houses, villages, and cemeteries near the banks of the Klamath River and along the many creeks in Karuk territories were damaged or washed away (Karuk Tribe 2009). There is a direct connection between these large scale mining practices and the deleterious effects on the vitality of salmon, which was (and continues to be) a mainstay of Karuk diet. A 1931 report offers this statement:

In 1850 in this River during the running season, salmon were so plentiful, according to reports of the early settlers, that in fording the stream it was with difficulty that they could induce their horses to make the attempt, on the account of the River being alive with the finny tribe. At present time the main run, which were the spring salmon, is practically extinct, not being enough taken to warrant the prosecution of business. (Snyder 1931:19)

Newspaper accounts of the booming gold rush in Northwestern California urged more and more people to travel to this “undiscovered” country and make their riches. One such account was published in 1852, just one year after the discovery of gold on the Klamath:

Sunday, March 7, 1852

THE KLAMATH MINES. MESSRS. EDITORS: Owing to the fact that heretofore there has been an imperfect communication between this city and Humboldt Bay, the vast majority of the citizens of this State are scarcely aware that such a region as ours exists. And they are still less acquainted with the incontrovertible truth, that in agricultural resources and mineral wealth it surpasses any other part of California. Especially is this true with reference to its mineral resources. There is but a small portion of our population aware of this, or there would not be so many idle persons in our great cities, or so many at work in places where they are scarcely making their bread.

The mines of which I speak are the Klamath, New River, Trinity, &c. &c. Some of these localities have been worked for the last two years, and miners are now and have been realizing during the last summer over six dollars per day, and boarded in the bargain.

I might speak of instances where twenty, thirty and fifty dollars have been made per day, but I wish to state merely what may be depended on by every industrious man. As to the Klamath, it has been heretofore worked but little, on account of the previous hostility of the Indians; but at present there is no difficulty, peace having been affected last fall by the commendable efforts of Col. R. McKee, one of the U. S. Commissioners. The Indians are quite friendly and miners are now profitably employed at about ten dollars per day everywhere on this, the largest river in California on which gold has been found. (Boggs 1942:118)

Karuk men also prospected for gold. However, these men would sometimes be swindled from their earnings through dealings with storeowners and others. In his interview with Fritz Hansen and Sylvester Donahue, Harrington wrote, “The Indians had seen gold but didn’t know what it was, but after they saw mining here, the Indians started to bring gold at various places all of their own accord and earned \$10.00 a day or \$15.00 per day” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:26). Mr. Hansen and Mr. Donahue also told Harrington that they would try to use their earnings for goods that they wanted. They would “go to a white-man and see something they wanted, for example, a hatchet, and ask him how much, and he would say \$50.00 or \$75.00, and they would pay \$75.00 for a hatchet” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:24). In 1911, Daggett (1966 [1911]) observed that Karuk peoples were friendly enough and able enough to work for large mining operations. He felt that this was important to the continued occupation of the Klamath River region because the results of their hard work meant that the number of full-blood peoples decreased, since “the

younger element almost entirely refrained from marriage thereafter, and made no homes among their own" (1966 [1911]:57).

Mining for gold decreased in only a few decades after contact; however there was an increase in both the agricultural and forest timber industries (McDonald and Klamath National Forest (Agency: U.S.) 1979). In 1897, Wilson wrote that there was about ten billion feet of timber in the Klamath River region. He stated that logs would easily be drifted down river to the sea, providing an easy route for lumber to be transported by the Southern Pacific Railroad. While large-scale timber harvesting did not start until World War II, the local industry was large enough for settlers and Karuk peoples to participate in (Wells 1881). Wells stated that a great deal of lumber was needed for the mining industry and by 1852 several mills were built. By 1860, there were thirty mills in Siskiyou County alone (Wells 1881:24). In addition, Wilson stated that there were a number of local lumber mills cropping up along the Klamath (1897:214).

Numerous large and small farms were being established near the mines (Wilson 1897). "The principal farming interest of Siskiyou is coming to be its stock-raising, which has largely increased in the last few years...Alfalfa is very productive. Three and often four crops in a year are obtained and that without irrigation" (Wilson 1897:209). Wilson indicated that the settlers along the Klamath were establishing roots to the land, isolating themselves within their own industries and protecting fiercely their claims to the land: "they seek to bring to their borders no throng of Eastern tourists, no flow of foreign capital. They can take care of themselves, and welcome among them only such as they, people who will make homes, develop the country, and become, more even than its millions in gold, the wealth of Siskiyou" (1897:221).

In addition to mining, farming, and timber, the merchant and packing trades brought more people and more money to the region (Nixon 1897:93). Numerous companies set up pack trains for the already established miners who needed equipment, as well as all the newcomers lured by articles and advertisements for wealth of gold that could be found on the Klamath. These businesses and pack trains also supported the other industries of timber and farming (Nixon 1897). Merchants established small businesses dotting the Klamath to provide supplies to the settlers and, in small part, to the Karuk people. One of the more successful businessmen was Alexander Brizard, who in the late 1800s, opened a chain of stores in Blue Lake, Salona (Bald Mountain), Willow Creek, Hoopa, Weitchpec, Orleans Bar, and Somes Bar.¹⁰ In order to supply his stores, he had a large pack train consisting, at one time, of ninety mules, which he used up until 1919. In the mid-1870s, he also operated the ferry at Orleans Bar.

Women traded baskets for food and other supplies at these stores, a topic that will be discussed later in another chapter. However, it is important to note that Karuk peoples had precarious relations with the stores and managers along the Klamath. "Many Indians, having no appreciation for the obligations that credit imposed, had charged large amounts with no ability to pay. It was [the manager of

¹⁰ Susie Baker Fountain Papers. Humboldt State University, Special Collections. Volume 105, Happy Camp.

the Brizard store at Orleans Bar in the 1920s] task to stop the credit and collect what he could of the debts. Warned that his life might be in danger, the company issued him a pistol and told him to always pull the window shades and never sit with his back to the door” (Neasham 1996:34).

Public Opinion-1850s-1900s

In the public eye, Native Californians were viewed as dangerous and ignorant, lazy, treacherous, and doomed to extinction. With the exception of some people who were moved by the violence perpetrated on Native Californians and the conditions in which they lived, the public view of Native Californians was one of animosity. “Californian whites acted as though their survival depended upon the total removal of the ‘Indian menace’” (Heizer 1993 [1974]:xv). Karuk peoples were also viewed with animosity, but also as friendly, yet primitive. As one settler mentioned in 1851, Karuk peoples were “much neater in their appearance than the Indians at Trinidad, and have a much more intelligent look. Captain Tompkins, the proprietor, of the ferry, informed me that they were very friendly, and seemed disposed to remain on good terms with the whites” (Boggs 1942:86).

Bernice Fehely Alten, a white woman who worked with her family, mining the Klamath River in the early 1900s, described Karuk peoples with whom she came in contact (Fehely Alten 1972). She noted that there were very few white people living between Happy Camp and Orleans, and up the Salmon River to Sawyer’s Bar. Karuk people were “mostly living like they did before the whites came” (Fehely Alten 1974:7). John Southard, stated that in 1897 “Down at Somes Bar was quite a stir. Bennett owned a store there and there was quite a good number of Indians there around what they called “Quartermain” [Katimin] between the mouth of the Salmon River and the Ishi Pishi Falls which means in Indian “the end of the road or navigation”” (Southard and Davis 1972:10).

Wright, who was a descendant of a white miner, recounted her great-grandfather’s understanding of Karuk peoples, stating,

The Karoks, for the most part, were peaceful. Young men wished to get rid of the new strangers to their lands, but legend had it that light skinned people would come, and rule, and that it was unwise to make trouble—thus counseled the elders. If the Indians could have been left alone, things might have been well, but ceremonial grounds were violated, young women were not safe, and enmity grew. Gold continued to beckon. Eventually a confrontation took place and the Indian men were driven into the mountains while the women were herded together and the miners chose among them taking those they wished to have for their own. Among these women was Kate (I do not know her Indian name) Skotsin. She was the daughter of the medicine man and already becoming a respected peace-maker, acting as a go-between among nearby tribes and among her own people. Today she would likely bear the title of ombudsman (Wright 1972:26).

In 1851, one miner stated that after destruction of village sites that many of the Native peoples living on the Klamath River fled to the mountains and those that

remained were friendlier to white people and “take particular pains to impress the whites that they wish to remain so” (Anonymous 1972:68). Although he found the peoples affable, he was still very suspicious of them. This miner stated,

During my residence in the section of the state, I have been a great deal amongst the Indians, and have had a good opportunity of judging their character and I find that, no matter how kind your treatment may be toward them, you cannot place the slightest confidence in their professions of friendship. It is their nature to steal; and if they are slightly punished for this offence, they are certain to take revenge out of you the first opportunity they get. That is the reason why so many small parties have been cut off and killed by these wretches, on their way to and from the mines. (Anonymous 1972:68)

Genocide, Disease, Warfare

Despite the friendliness for which some settlers commended the Karuk peoples, there was still a concerted effort to remove them from the newly settled lands. Northern California Indigenous peoples were subject to unlicensed violence and outright genocide, as well as starvation since subsistence practices were severely curtailed (Thorton 2004:28).

The most prevalent diseases among Karuk peoples after contact were consumption (tuberculosis) and syphilis. While reports of deaths from disease were not frequent, it was noted that in 1858 a young Karuk boy from Orleans Bar died from consumption. A white family was the guardian of this child, which is the reason why this account made it into the news.¹¹ Stephen Powers noted that syphilis was rampant among Karuk people in the late 1800s and reasoned that the disease was so widespread because the Karuk believed that if they exposed themselves to it, they would be inoculated against the disease (Powers and Heizer 1976 [1877]).

Just downriver from the Karuk territories, in 1850, conflicts between the white settlers and Northwestern California Indians were on the rise. In August of that year, 50 or 60 Hupa peoples were killed and three villages were burnt down. According to one news report, the Indians were “hostile” and the settlers “found [it] necessary to administer to them the same rebuke we did to those on the coast...Since these measures were resorted to, the effect has been decidedly good; their thieving and other annoying propensities have sensibly decreased” (Boggs 1942:61).

Invasions of Karuk homelands from miners, farmers, foresters and others created a situation of escalating retaliation. If a Karuk person killed a white miner, in retaliation, a group of miners would find a village site where they believed the perpetrators lived and would kill everyone in the village. In 1851, after three explorers were killed by a Karuk man near the town of Happy Camp, settlers attacked a Karuk village site and “put a majority of them to death” (Madley 2016:197).

¹¹ Susie Baker Fountain Papers. Humboldt State University, Special Collections. Volume 105, Happy Camp.

The April 1852 edition of *Harper's Magazine*, quoted by Toleman, described a particular incident that shows the escalation of violence.

Further Indian difficulties have occurred on the Klamath River. An Indian was shot at Happy Camp for stealing a knife, and in revenge, a miner who was supposed to have killed him, was shot by the Indians. The whites soon after collected a large company, and on the 12th surrounded all the Indian lodges at the Indian Ferry and shot all the men, with several [Indian women], and destroyed the rancho. A similar scene occurred two miles above. About thirty or forty Indians were killed (Toleman 1966:10).

In another incident in 1859, a new merchant who had a store at Orleans Bar left the region because "hostile Indians" killed his neighbors and threatened his life.¹²

Yet another example of the escalation of violence was noted in the mid-1800s. Mr. Converse, a miner, was killed, presumably by Karuk men. In retaliation, a company of 80 men was sent out to find the perpetrators. In a short course of time, the company killed one Karuk man, one Karuk woman and two Karuk children. In addition, they "burnt all the rancherias they could find... as the white men commenced attacking the ranchos before daylight, it was impossible to distinguish a man from a woman" (Anonymous 1972:67). This mob was not able to locate the individuals responsible for killing Mr. Converse, but the citizens of the surrounding area placed a \$1,000 bounty on his head.

The callous and wanton killing of Karuk peoples and the raping of women and children¹³ were devastating to Karuk peoples, who sought restitution for the acts of violence. In that restitution, however, retaliatory violence was heaped on the Karuk people. In a recounting of some of the acts that were perpetrated on the people, one author noted that Indians were supposed to forgive and forget; that it was a flaw in character on the part of Indians that they could not just live with the violence (Bledsoe 1885). "If one of their warriors was killed, if one of their [women] was abused, if a rancheria was plundered, they never forgot or forgave" (Bledsoe 1885:157). In fact, Bledsoe noted that because of the monstrous acts of a few bad men, the "good" citizens were made to suffer as well. He stated, "That the Indians were imposed on and cheated and abused in many instances was no fault of the early settlers. In nearly every case the guilty white men were lawless outcasts, who had no homes to protect or character to lose" (Bledsoe 1885:158).

Treaties of 1851

¹² Susie Baker Fountain Papers. Humboldt State University, Special Collections. Volume 105, Happy Camp.

¹³ Acts of violence against women and girls were common. Phoebe Maddux noted that men would prowl about when Karuk women and girls would be out acorn gathering. The men would kidnap them and rape them (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:113). Gibbs noted that women were sometimes "taken away" (1920[1851]:162).

Word of the violence on the Klamath River reached the United States Congress, so in September 1850, it appointed three commissioners to carry out a survey of California for the purpose of creating peace between the settlers and Native Californians and establishing reservation treaties. Redick McKee was chosen to work with the Native Californians in Northern California. In July 1851, McKee, along with George Gibbs, who wrote of the journey, 70 other men and 300 animals set out for the Klamath, starting their journey in Sonoma, CA. By October, he made his way to the interior of the Klamath and Trinity Rivers, learning of the atrocities perpetrated upon the tribes in this region, noting that several of the village sites that he visited were destroyed and deserted. On October 6th, McKee convened the “chiefs, captains, and headmen” of the tribes along the Lower Klamath and Trinity Rivers to prepare and sign a treaty of “peace and friendship” (United States Congress House Committee on Indian Affairs 1920).¹⁴

This treaty¹⁵ stipulated that the Indians were under the jurisdiction, authority, and protection of the United States, and as such, were to cease hostilities toward the government, its citizens and fellow Indians. It further required tribal members to forgo retaliation against those who may commit crimes against them, but instead for tribal members to seek out the local Indian agent for resolution. In order to establish a reservation for the many tribes represented in this treaty, Article 3 of the treaty states that tribal members were required to “relinquish, cede, and forever quit claim to the United States, all their right, title, claim, or interest of any kind which they or either of them have to lands or soil in California” (United States Congress House Committee on Indian Affairs 1920:43). After settlement on the reservation, it was further required that the tribes be instructed on “the language arts and agriculture of the whites...in a situation as favorable for their improvement” (United States Congress House Committee on Indian Affairs 1920:43). Upon ratification of the treaty the US government was to supply the reservation with 500 blankets, 500 shirts, 500 cotton gowns, 3000 yards of calico, 5000 needles, 72 pairs of scissors, two gross thimbles, ten pounds of pins, 100 flat files, 420 butcher knives, ten mattocks, 100 garden hoes, 400 axes and 200 kettles (United States Congress House Committee on Indian Affairs 1920).

McKee’s next stop was to be Scott Valley, farther up the Klamath River, to meet with Karuk and Shasta peoples, establishing a treaty of peace and friendship with them as well. On October 14th, Gibbs wrote about the conditions of the Karuk peoples the party met along their way east to Mount Shasta, stating:

¹⁴ On October 12, 1851, McKee had travelled to the confluence of the Salmon and Klamath Rivers. Here, he wrote an addendum to the October 6th treaty to include Karuk peoples from Orleans, Forks of Salmon and Somes Bar (United States Congress House Committee on Indian Affairs 1920:48).

¹⁵ This treaty is formally known as Treaty Q: Treaty made and Concluded at Camp Klamath, at the Junction of Klamath and Trinity Rivers, State of California, October 6, 1851, Between Redick McKee, Indian Agent, on the Part of the United States, and the Chiefs, Captains, and Head Men of the Pohlik or Lower Klamath, &c., Tribes of Indians.

We passed several small villages during the march, the inhabitants of which were of the poorer class, and appeared sickly. They complained too of hunger, though they had the usual store of acorns, and said that they were too weak to obtain fish or game. The principal complaint seemed to be a disease of the lungs...It struck me that there was a general aspect of decay among the Indians of this part of the Klamath... (Gibbs 1969 [1851]:152)

Reaching Happy Camp, Gibbs found that there were few Karuk people living in what was once a quite populated area and speculated that the survivors left for valleys high in the mountains or to the Illinois River region.

Nearly a month later, McKee finally reached his destination of Scott Valley and set about to write a treaty to address the issues along this portion of the Scott and Klamath Rivers. Meeting with local settlers, as well as representatives from different villages, McKee found difficulty coming to an agreement with all parties about the location for a reserve because so many settlers had already laid claim to the arable lands in Scott Valley. But, compromise was made and a reservation treaty¹⁶ was signed on November 4th, which included Karuk peoples from the upper Klamath (eastward from Somes Bar), as well as Shasta and Scotts Bar tribes. This treaty was similar to that made with Indians from downriver; however, it was stipulated that mining activities were allowed to take place within the bound of the reservation for two years after the treaty was ratified. In addition to the goods that were promised to downriver peoples, the treaty promised to provide livestock and fences, so that the reservation could provide for its residents, thus curtailing hunting and fishing activities.

When the treaties came to Congress in 1852, much debate ensued. Despite the work that McKee and his party did to achieve some modicum of peace, the treaties were not ratified because of pressure from the governor of California, who asserted that the treaties conflicted with mining and agricultural industries (Brann 2003). Instead, in 1853, Congress set about creating four reservations to concentrate and isolate Native Californians from the rest of the state (Chandler 2003:232). The results of these reservations left many Native Californians, including Karuk people, without protection over their lands, and set up the conditions for the division of lands and private property. Despite efforts of bringing some sense of peace to the region, the expected results did not materialize.

Foreseeing the escalation of violence to an all out war against Karuk people, in 1851, Gibbs noted the miners felt that the only way that they could be safe would be to kill or drive off all the Indians in the region (Gibbs 1920 [1851]:162). The state of California was complicit in the extermination of Native peoples living in Northwestern California, spending nearly \$1 million dollars on the effort. In 1852, settlers in Karuk territories burned two villages, places where the *pikyávis* ceremonies were held (Salter 2003). Beginning in 1856, the state was paying \$.25

¹⁶ Treaty R: Treaty Made and Concluded at Camp, in Scott's Valley, Shashta County, State of California, October 6, 1851, Between Redick McKee, One of the Commissioners on the Part of the United States, and the Chiefs, Captains and Head Men of the Upper Klamath, Shasta, and Scott's River Tribes of Indians.

per scalp, increasing the amount to \$5.00 in 1860 (Norgaard, Reed, and Van Horn 2011:31). Many of those who survived this destruction fled to the mountains, while settlers built towns, mines and thoroughfares through their homelands. Nearly a year later, many Karuk peoples returned, living in an uneasy state of fragile peace with their new neighbors. Others were either rounded up or sent to the Klamath Reservation. Still others chose to settle in more remote areas, moving north to the Illinois River and Rogue River.

Leading up to the Red Cap War, discussed below, Karuk peoples were fearful of the frequency of violence near their homes. In April 1854, some Karuk peoples sent a messenger to Fort Jones, seeking a resolution and settlement, ending the violence on the Klamath. Indian Agent Rosborough, Lieutenant Bonnycastle, and others sought out the Karuk to speak with them. "A long talk was had, and the Indians expressed a strong desire for peace, and wished to be allowed to go to Fort Jones and remain there until the government fixes some permanent place for them" (Boggs 1942:194). It was then noted that Karuk peoples would be forced to relocate to Fort Jones soon.

Red Cap War (Klamath War)

Some Karuk people relocated to the Klamath Reservation as a result of horrifying violence in their homelands. Between 1855 and 1860, nearly 300 Northwestern California Indians, including Karuk, Hupa, and Yurok peoples died, many as a result of the Red Cap War, also known as the Klamath War. Given the conflict over the previous five years, in January 1855, miners on the Klamath and Salmon Rivers heard that there was to be an escalation of violence from Northwestern California Indians:

March 11, 1854, CAPT. JUDAH passed through this place a few days since, with about 75 soldiers, for Fort Jones, in Scott Valley. We presume they will not be permitted long to remain idle, after their arrival. We trust that Capt. Judah, with these additional troops, has been empowered to fight the Indians on the Klamath after his own fashion, free from all control on the part of any officer from Fort Lane. If he has been thus empowered, we may soon expect for once to hear, if the impending war does not break forth, of some good resulting from the interference of U. S. Troops in the difficulties existing between the citizens and Indians of that portion of the country. The citizens have the utmost confidence in his bravery and skill, and volunteers will take pride in placing themselves under his command. Those citizens who are the better acquainted with the Indian character, know from ample experience, that it is worse than suicidal, to attack a party of hostile Indians, and then leave them in quiet possession of the ground or stronghold from which they were sought to be routed; and they have the satisfaction of knowing that in this respect Capt. Judah agrees with them *in toto*. Hence the confidence of the citizens generally in Capt. Judah as a leader, should the threatened war be realized (Boggs 1942:191).

Miners congregated at various trading posts and determined that their best course

of action was to disarm Karuk peoples. It was reported that some Karuk peoples learned of the intentions of the miners, and made their way deeper into the mountains to avoid the violence. As a preventative measure, miners determined that anyone who was caught selling arms and ammunition to Karuk peoples was to be severely punished. Karuk men in the Orleans Bar village were told to relinquish their arms and if any person were caught carrying them, they would be killed. By mid-January, there were several tribesmen who decided not to part with their arms; men who became known as the Red Caps.

Taking matters into their own hands, miners raided a village, with two miners being killed in the skirmish. Because of this incident, several companies of miners and settlers were formed and began to unleash violence on the tribes along the Klamath. In turn, Karuk peoples were reported to have robbed houses of settlers and killed cattle (Bledsoe 1885). By the end of January, Captain Judah began negotiations for a peace settlement. "The miners at first would not listen to any peace proposal, propositions, assembling in large numbers, and announcing a determination to commence an indiscriminate massacre of all the Indians on the Klamath River and its tributaries" (Bledsoe 1885:166). The peace agreement did not hold and miners began to hunt Karuk peoples from the Klamath to the Salmon River. The violence ebbed momentarily, when there were disagreements among the miners about halting the bloodshed. But, by February 1855, companies of volunteer militia and companies of US Army soldiers began to seek out Native peoples, destroying villages and killing dozens of people at a time. By the time news of the war reached the town of Eureka on the coast, several merchants and packers began provisioning volunteers, sending supplies to the rivers, in order to vanquish the "savages" once and for all.

While there was a call to the US and California state governments for aid to assist the companies of volunteers, no aid came and by March of that year, the turmoil became anarchic (Bledsoe 1885). The disorganization of the volunteers, with no real central leader halted an organized search for the Red Caps. Instead, many of the volunteers either disbanded or remained in camp. Occasional flare-ups of violence occurred. By April 1855, Special Indian Agent for the Klamath and Humboldt counties, along with Captain Judah, were to assist in bringing peace to the Klamath and Salmon Rivers. Captain Judah dismissed the companies of volunteers and then set up a meeting for which both miners and Native peoples alike were to attend. Of this agreement, it was determined that the Red Caps, those who remained in warfare with the white settlers, were to either be killed or would need to surrender. No reprisals against the white miners were made. The Native peoples in this conflict were then rounded up and sent to a reservation that was established at the mouth of the Klamath River, a reservation known as the Klamath Indian Reservation (Bledsoe 1885:176).

Others chose to escape the conflicts on the Klamath, Scott, and Salmon Rivers by moving north to Southern Oregon. In 1868, the Billings family relocated to the Rogue River valley to escape the violence and starvation conditions. Adeline Billings, a Karuk woman who was raised in Happy Camp, married a miner, John Billings, and with their three children first moved to the Illinois River in Southern Oregon, then to the Rogue River valley to establish a homestead, using her land allotment

(Atwood et al. 1996). Catherine Foster, a Karuk woman, also settled in along the Rogue River. She married a miner, Charles Foster, who was veteran of the Indian Wars in 1855 (Anonymous 2011). Jim Fry and his wife, a Karuk woman named Eliza who was from Orleans Bar, also moved to the Rogue River valley. Along the way, the couple adopted a Karuk baby. The baby was found by the side of the road at Orleans Bar lying next to their dead mother (Atwood 1978:30).

Boarding Schools

Beginning in the late-nineteenth century and continuing through the first half of the twentieth, American policy makers deemed that government-run boarding schools were the best solution to the “Indian problem” (Adams 1993:110). Officials reasoned that if Native children were taken away from their families and communities and placed in American-run institutions, then they would be more easily assimilated into American society. In practice, the schools were designed to remove the ‘Indian’ from the human being, “culturally, artistically, spiritually and linguistically” (Archuleta et al. 2000:19, 21). Children were prohibited from speaking their language, singing their songs, praying, dancing or practicing cultural art forms. Additionally, Native Americans across the United States were “Christianized,” that is they were indoctrinated into the Christian faith as a replacement for their own sacred beliefs (Archuleta et al. 2000:35, Adams 1995:19). In 1915, Samuel Eliot reported that there were about 2800 Native children in Northern California (Eliot, United States, and Board of Indian Commissioners 1915). Of those children, 800 were in Indian boarding schools across the country, 1000 in local or district public schools and the remaining 1000 attending no school at all (Eliot, United States, and Board of Indian Commissioners 1915:27). Even though Native children were legally entitled to attend public schools, there was a strong outcry from the public regarding their attendance because the children were “dirty and diseased” (Eliot, United States, and Board of Indian Commissioners 1915:28). It was thought that even though Native Californians owned land, they were still wards of the state, and as such, their children were required to attend Indian boarding schools.

Many Karuk children were sent away to boarding schools, predominantly Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania (founded in 1879), Sherman Institute in Riverside, California (founded in 1901), and Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon (originally called Forest Grove Indian School, founded in 1880). Children were also sent to the Hoopa Valley Boarding School, then later transferred to other boarding schools, particularly Carlisle. Other children attended Chemawa when they were young, but were later transferred to Fort Lapwai Indian School and Sanatorium, in Idaho. Children who contracted tuberculosis and other diseases were sent to Fort Lapwai for treatment, and were either transferred home if they were too ill to cure, or moved back to the boarding school from which they came (Taylor 2010).

Native American children were taught a complete body of skills that were intended to help them be productive members of American society. But, because of the belief that Native Americans were unsuited for higher education, they received vocational training. At Sherman and Carlisle, students were trained in the

agricultural and industrial arts. Courses included blacksmithing, leatherwork, farming and animal husbandry for boys, and cooking, sewing, laundry, and housekeeping skills were taught to girls (United States Indian School Carlisle 1895). After establishing their baseline skills in industrial and home arts, students would be sent on “outings” in the summertime, which were offsite locations, often placed with families, to work in their selected trades (Trafzer, Sakiestewa Gilbert, and Sisquoc 2012). Often, students learned two or three trades, so that they would be well-equipped to take on work in a variety of markets, which was important to the mission of boarding schools. Providing students with the means to perform work, outside of traditional modes of subsistence living, was thought to make them productive American citizens. To this end, Brig. Gen. R.H. Pratt, superintendent of Carlisle Industrial School from 1879 to 1904, stated that American Indian students deserved “all the rights and privileges of educational, industrial and moral training and development needed to make them equal, and competitors for the benefits of our American life” (Pratt and Hamilton Library Association 1908:5).

The focus of educational, industrial, and moral training that Pratt extolled may have prepared students to become paid laborers, but this was at a great cost to Native communities. Many boarding students never returned to the homelands, seeking instead to build a life and family elsewhere. Other students who returned home found that locally available jobs within their newly learned skillset were few and far between. Opportunities for Karuk students to use their skills learned at boarding school were scarce in their homeland. Men who returned to the Klamath River often resumed mining for gold because there was little need for their trades and practicing a subsistence living was not a viable option. Girls, when they returned to the Klamath often became housekeepers or homemakers.

Coupled with the violence and theft of land and resources, one result of youth boarding school education for Karuk communities was the negative impact on passing down traditional culture from one generation to the next. The students had changed, educated to turn back on the beliefs and lesson they were taught before they went to school. The communities on the Klamath River had changed, since traditional practices were difficult, if not impossible to carry out. The disconnection between the younger and older generations was strongly felt by elders who saw that their children no longer had interest in the old ways. The sorrow that the elders felt, seeing their children return from schools and turn their back on the language, ceremonies, and cultural practices was noted by Harrington in the 1920s. Mrs. Maddux remarked that the World Renewal ceremonies were difficult to perform because they had a hard time getting girls to participate, so they had to get older girls who were already through school (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:195). Jenny Donahue’s children grew up speaking Karuk, but after they went to school, “they never talked it” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:67).

On a more subtle level, the continuations of cultural practices were in peril because of the psychological education Karuk youth received at boarding schools. There was an emphasis on making “good” American citizens at Indian boarding schools, at the cost of the students’ cultural identifications. In a special report to the US government about the conditions at Chemawa, Samuel Eliot stated,

It was gratifying to observe the unusual attention given at Chemawa to nourishing American patriotism and to instructing the children in principles of good citizenship. It also seemed to me that the methods of conducting moral and religious instruction were commendable. These are matters that are too often neglected or avoided, but such instruction is vital to the success of an Indian school and to the power of the Indians in later life to stand up against the temptations that constantly beset them. (Eliot, United States, and Board of Indian Commissioners 1915:23)

The moral education students received promoted Christian beliefs, supplanting Karuk beliefs and ways of knowing about the world. In the early 1920s one woman mourned the fate of Karuk ceremonial practices because the boarding schools were destroying them; children were neither learning the ceremonies, nor respecting them (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:21). Additionally, the nationalistic education students received from boarding schools persuaded students to shift their loyalties to their school and their focus on the progress of American society over those of their home communities. One Karuk person said in a letter to the superintendent of Carlisle in 1911 that they often thought of Carlisle and the “good it was doing for the Indian Race.” Another Karuk person said that they were sure that Carlisle was “accomplishing its aims to the extremes for the United States.”

In addition to the moral and nationalistic education, the focus on industrial education shifted the ways in which this younger generation engaged with their elders. Through the practices of everyday life, children would learn from their elders. Elders never forced children to learn, but instead believed that they would begin to do things as soon as they were able to (Nelson and Bayer 1978). Watching and listening were the ways in which children would learn from their elders the moral and ethical lessons that children would need throughout their lifetime. Because children were removed from the network of their Karuk teachers and placed into schools, which could be considered akin to orphanages, they became dependent on the school and their peers to guide them through their formative years (Marr et al. 2000). The relationships between the younger and older generations forever changed because of this. When many boarding school students returned home, Karuk cultural practices and beliefs had become unfamiliar to them, and had become a point of derision. Because they had fostered skills that would allow them to participate more fully within new economic and social realities, many boarding school students did not learn traditional practices, like basket weaving. This furthered the alienation of younger and older generations.

However, not all Karuk children were sent away to boarding schools. Some families hid children from agents who tried to take them away. Given that the Klamath River region is so remote, this was a viable action. There were also local schools established, since it was cost-prohibitive to send every child away. There was a school in Indian Town, a settlement near Happy Camp that was established in the early 1900s. Also in the 1900s, there was a school set up for local Karuk children to attend at Somes Bar. One teacher, Mrs. Eugenia Howells, who taught at the Somes Bar open-roofed school for seven years, shared her reminiscences of her time there. She stated,

I found the Indian children tractable, observant, and imitative. They were quite bright in reading, writing, drawing, painting, and music. Being truly children of nature, they like to draw and paint the wild flowers and ferns, study the habits of the birds, gray squirrels, fishes and many of the larger animals of the forests. We often went on jaunts for these nature lessons, when they grew tired of the school room and confinement (Howells 1971:27).

These children, along with those whose families hid from government agents, remained in their families' embraces. While it would be difficult to say for sure, these children would have been likely to learn from their elders Karuk traditions, and would have been more likely to be the ones to carry forward the threads of language, basket weaving, ceremonial practice, onto-epistemology, and other aspects of Karuk everyday life.

Environment, Policy, and the United States Forest Service

Lands that the Karuk had stewarded from time immemorial had been taken away from them through settlement, mining, agriculture and forestry. The results of these land grabs have reverberated to the present day. Village sites, where families had lived for generations, had been destroyed, and the lands were taken over by settlers (Gibbs 1920[1851]). Access to rivers and creeks became more restricted, and the pollution from mining and forestry depleted these waterways of life-sustaining fish and eels. The forests that Karuk people used to hunt and gather were increasingly difficult to access as well; private property restricted access to gathering areas and hunting grounds. In addition to the limited access to food and water sources, there was restriction of access to sacred places where medicine was made and ceremonies took place. Along with the restriction of movement across the territories there was also restriction on the ability to steward the land in ways that Karuk people had since the *ikxaréeyavsa* passed the knowledge down to them.

Despite the efforts of treaty making in 1851 and the relocation of many Karuk people after the Red Cap War, the violence along the Klamath River still continued. The Office of Indian Affairs declared that Karuk peoples were a danger to the frontier settlements because of their "nomadic habits." They asserted that new settlers on the Klamath River would be subject to hostilities because Karuk people still subsisted by hunting and fishing, and as such, would have had unrestricted movement across the landscape. (United States and Office of Indian Affairs 1867:II). In order to curtail the unfettered movements of Native peoples across the land, to further fracture tribal communities, and to promote assimilation into American society, the Dawes Act of 1887 was passed by Congress.

For Karuk peoples, the Dawes Act allotted small parcels of land to families, and "simultaneously gave the federal government power to evict Indians from their land" (Norgaard, Reed, and Van Horn 2011:32). The lands that were not allotted were then put up for sale as surplus to settlers. Shortly after the Dawes Act was instituted, the federal government passed the Forest Reserve Act of 1891, which allowed the President of the United States to set aside forest reserves from lands in

the public domain to be managed by the Department of the Interior. Karuk peoples now had to contend with the shift in management of their lands; “resources were diverted from Indian to non-Indian hands and land management practices shifted from activities geared toward food production to those that would achieve profits under capitalism (timber and farming)” (Norgaard, Reed, and Van Horn 2011:33).

In 1905, the US forest reserves became the responsibility of the Bureau of Forestry, which shortly thereafter converted to the present-day US Forest Service. In 1905, the Klamath National Forest and the Trinity National Forest were created and the following year (1906), the Siskiyou National Forest was established, which subsumed nearly all of the Karuk Aboriginal Territories (U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation 2011).¹⁷ The nationwide number one priority of this newly established agency region was the prevention and suppression of forest fires. Fire prevention was a way for the USFS to protect natural resources for present and future economic ventures (Lake 2008). Karuk peoples, who practiced yearly prescribed burning of the landscape as a way enhance food and cultural resources, were now forbidden to do so. The Weeks Act of 1911 further strengthened fire suppression policies by providing federal financial aid to agencies to fight wildfires. Karuk peoples who tried to set fires under the gaze of USFS personnel were punished if caught. Laverne Glaze’s father remembered that when he was young, there was a Karuk young man who would go out and set fires, and “he was so fast, he would be back home before [USFS rangers] detected the fire” (Lake 2008:437). Others were not so lucky. Grant Hillman recalled that there were two elder Karuk men who were preemptively incarcerated before the start of the fire season by the USFS because they were known to light fires (Lake 2008:493).

The ecosystem on which the Karuk peoples had relied since time immemorial became almost unrecognizable. In addition to the environmental degradation caused by the mining industry, the landscape was altered by fire suppression, logging activities, road building, fire salvage activities, and general public use (Karuk Tribe 2009:19). Non-native plants were introduced to the territories and began choking out important plants for food, medicine, and basket weaving materials (Lake 2008). Without fire to hold the invasive species back, along with the build up of underbrush and other undesired trees and plants that filled the landscape, what were once open spaces and prairies became nearly impassible (Lake 2008:540). The high fuel loads of the invasive species and underbrush were but one of many negative impacts of fire suppression; others include decreased habitat for game, reduction of quality and quantity of acorns, and the alteration of growth patterns for basketry material (Norgaard 2014:77). The exclusion of fire created a “situation of denied access to traditional foods and spiritual practices” for Karuk people, and made it difficult for those ceremonial leaders and medicine women to access traditional gathering areas and sacred sites (Norgaard 2014:77). In addition, catastrophic wildfires, mainly due to lightening strikes, occur on a regular basis.

¹⁷ In 1947, the Six Rivers National Forest was created. The Karuk Aboriginal Territories that are managed by the Six Rivers National Forest include many sacred sites, along with traditional villages, and hunting and gathering areas. The Karuk areas that are under the SRNF are present-day Orleans and Somes Bar.

Construction on six dams¹⁸ along the Klamath River began in 1903 and continued intermittently until 1966, when the last dam was put into place. The purposes of the dams on the Klamath were twofold: to provide irrigation sources for farms in the Upper Klamath River Basin and to provide hydroelectric power to those living along the Klamath River. The implementation of the dams was not without environmental cost and severely impacted the tribes along the Klamath. The construction of the dams has blocked salmon and other fish runs to the upper Klamath since their institution and they have had detrimental effects on the water quality and temperatures downriver (US Department of the Interior, US Department of Commerce, and National Marine Fisheries Service 2012). While before contact the Klamath was teeming with salmon, the species are now endangered. In summers of years with low precipitation, water temperatures and toxic algae blooms have caused major fish kills (US Department of the Interior, US Department of Commerce, and National Marine Fisheries Service 2012). Without healthy salmon runs, Karuk peoples were and continue to be denied major economic, subsistence and cultural resources (Tucker and Karuk Tribe 2005). Additionally, the toxic algae blooms are detrimental to the health of people and animals that interact with the river (Tucker and Karuk Tribe 2005).

Compounding the detrimental effects that mining, logging, agriculture, and the dams have had on the ecosystem of the Klamath River basin, flood events exacerbate the problems of the past, which has culminated in the alteration of tributaries (Karuk Tribe 2009). The 1955 and the 1964 floods, in particular, ravaged infrastructure and homes, not to mention the waterways and landscape. Describing the effects that floods have on the river and tributaries, Leaf Hillman stated,

In the 1700's floods that had water in much higher elevations than these recent floods did not have that effect. When the water receded the river went back to its channel. So you didn't have these catastrophic effects. Now if you have a flood, hell, the effects are catastrophic because of the way the river has been altered so dramatically (Salter 2003:55).

Anthropologists in Karuk Country

Since the 1870s, amateur and professional anthropologists alike have made Karuk peoples anthropological subjects of research. From general surveys of California Indians (e.g., Curtis 2015 [1924]; Kroeber 1976 [1925]; Powers and Heizer 1976 [1877]), to specific studies on areas of Karuk life (e.g., Bright 1957; Harrington 1932; Kroeber and Gifford 1949; O'Neale 1995 [1932]; Roberts 1932), much has been written about the Karuk Tribe. Within the anthropological literature, Karuk voices have effectively been erased, in order for researchers to advance their

¹⁸ Completion dates for dams along the Klamath River: Copco 1, 1918, Siskiyou County, CA; Copco 2, 1925, Siskiyou County, CA; Iron Gate, 1962, Siskiyou County, CA; JC Boyle, 1958, Klamath County, OR; Keno, 1966, Klamath County, OR; Link River, 1921, Klamath County, OR. Electronic resource. <http://www.klamathwaterquality.com/project.html>, Accessed April 29, 2016.

positions or areas of interest. What follows is a discussion of the reigning paradigm of anthropological research among American Indians in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Additionally, I have briefly discussed anthropological interventions during this time, noting the areas of research each investigator took on, as well as highlighting the attitudes in which each investigator showed toward their subjects. The purpose of such a recounting is to show the areas that were studied and also some of the inherent biases that were a part of their works.

In the United States, the quest for an authentic historical past laid in the detailed collections of data on Native American cultures that included “psychological, cultural and linguistic characteristics of the tribes as well as to furnish genuine artifacts” (Bendix 1997:120). Starting in the late 19th century and continuing through the early 20th century, the collection of cultural “artifacts” intensified because Native cultures were thought to be vanishing; “The thought was that those cultures had to be studied before they were lost forever, because their practices and beliefs might hold keys to the mysteries of the white civilization’s own past” (Bendix 1997:120). This period was considered to be the era of “salvage anthropology,” in which there was a feeling amongst scholars that they were racing against time to capture all that they could before it was gone forever. Key to this paradigm was the notion that scholars were preserving rituals, stories, and objects for the Western public through the collection and representation of these “vanishing” cultures. Within this process of preservation was the belief that if the object was lost, there would be a permanent break with the past: “the destruction of an irreplaceable source of learning” (Simms 2005:333).

Salvage Anthropology

Gruber (1969) regards two principal points as central to the undertaking of what is now known as salvage anthropology. The first point is that as anthropology developed into a scientific discipline, the collection of data became more important than speculation and guesswork. The purposes of data collection were rooted in the idea that comprehending the distinctiveness of different cultural groups and languages was more urgent and important than creating or refining laws. These data, a variety of different customs and languages, came to reflect different mental phenomena and by extension, added to the complexity of ‘the psychic unity of man.’

The second notion that was formative in the emergence of salvage ethnography was the rapidity of change that was occurring in 19th century societies (Gruber 1969; Lomawaima 2000). While previous anthropological studies emphasized the norms of stasis in cultural practices of primitive peoples, the rapid changes occurring during the Industrial Revolution signaled a progressive expansion. This progress brought on the destruction of organic landscape. As Gruber states, “Though the acceptance of extinction was part of the new world view that the century early came to accept, man’s own role in the disappearance of nature’s products came as some surprise, a surprise overlaid with guilt, which continuing attempts at conservation could hardly expiate” (1969:1291). Although there was the recognition of the destructive effects the expansion of civilization had on Native peoples, particularly the effects of disease, forced relocation, and genocide, in some sense, the general sentiment was that progress was inevitable and

necessary. As with the intensification of collection of natural science collection, so too was the collection of Native peoples' customs, languages, and physical and mental characteristics: the scientists "must collect and preserve the information and the products of human activity and genius so rapidly being destroyed" (Gruber 1969:1291). In order to be able to reconstruct human history, the need for data intensified.

Institutional controls placed on anthropologists from their employers also played a part in the salvage anthropology efforts. It is within these efforts that anthropology became complicit in the formation of Indian policy, whether the anthropologists were in government institutions or in universities. The Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology (BAE) had a hand in defining Indian identities in the US (Field 2003; Hinsley 1979, 1981). Prior to the formation of university anthropology programs, the BAE was central to 19th century knowledge of Native American tribes and people. Hinsley (1979) notes that the anthropological research underwritten by the BAE offered the tools to promote processes of civilizing Native peoples; indeed, the BAE was central to supporting the reservation system.

Anthropological research of Native Californians started in earnest in 1903 and was carried out through the 1940s, particularly with the founding of the anthropology department and museum at the University of California in Berkeley, CA (Arnold and Walsh 2010). Covering topics such as language, material culture, political structure, ritual practices, and culture area, studies of Native Californians were fueled by the desire amongst the first Americanist anthropologists to salvage as much as possible the pre-contact lifeways of indigenous peoples before they disappeared (Lightfoot 2005). Employing "memory culture" methodology, early ethnographers of Native California constructed a vision of "pure" precontact life from interviews with elders, from whom they urged to speak about their childhood memories; share stories that were handed down from previous generations; recall myths, legends, and historical events; and provide detailed information about their native languages (Lightfoot 2005:32). While many anthropologists were driven to collect copious amounts of material before their research subjects disappeared, often this material was "undigested," where theoretical interventions were not the ends of study (Bean and Blackburn 1976).

Because the rapidity and urgency of data collection that was oriented toward reconstructing a prehistoric, unchanging past, the data was infused with a sense of discontinuity, stressing fragmentary notions of communities and pathology of cultural loss, therefore justifying the use of the "ethnographic present" in any publication of data (Gruber 1969). Anthropologists would conflate the people that they studied with the "essence" of the object, which were to provide an ideal, objectified type: a map, a culture, a set of rules, or social norms (Pels 1997). Focusing on the ethnographic present and "pure" type precluded any discussion or acknowledgement of culture change (Lightfoot 2005). Disappearing cultural practices, intermarriage, language assimilation, among other things, provided enough evidence for these first anthropologists to declare that California Indians were extinct, and those still living were merely descendants and could no longer be

the research object that could provide ideal types.¹⁹ Native Californians were considered non-existent, who were always on the verge of death, and were thought to have completely vanished even as late as the 1980s: “The old tribes are gone, but some of their descendants still live, preserve the tribal name, and often regulate their affairs through a tribal council on a reservation” (Heizer and Elsasser 1980:7).

While the ethnographic studies of the past contain factual data that is important to understanding historical aspects of California Indians, they are not without troubling problems. The concentration on recording precontact histories from tribal members has affected how tribes are considered in the social imagination: existing only in the past, neglecting the existence of present day Native peoples. The partial information collected by these early anthropologists, which was informed by their own scholarly boundaries, illustrates the gaps in knowledge about certain tribal practices and the depth of understanding of cultural practices within broader contexts. By focusing on the discrete aspects of culture, these ethnographic studies fail to capture the dynamic nature of living and changing peoples. Anthropologists of this era sought to define and construct an image of Karuk culture that made sense to their worldview; while at the same time distorted and discounted Karuk social and cultural life (Stewart-Harawira 2013). And, a particularly troubling problem with many ethnographic accounts of Native peoples is the public display of information that is considered sacred, private, or invasive. Sacred sites, gathering sites, and village sites so clearly mapped out have led to disturbances, looting, and theft by treasure hunters. Details about sacred ceremonies that were only to be known by a few are now within the public domain. And medicine formulas and stories, which are the responsibility and property of a few are now circulating beyond the cultural protocols that sought to limit them to a few.

Authenticity and Salvage Anthropology

Backed by the legitimacy and authority of government institutions, museums, and universities, ethnographers were sent to reservations, often spending years embedded in tribal life. The collections that grew out of anthropological work were assigned value through its authentication by legitimized researchers, both through scientific ideologies as well as moral and aesthetic appreciation (Bendix 1997:133). Indeed, Edward Sapir, whose main body of work concerned Native American languages and cultural practices, focused on the importance of spirituality as the essence of an authentic culture, stating that culture was wholly spiritual where no action was meaningless, and participation in the system was a “harmonious synthesis” of practices (Sapir 1924:410). He went further to state that it is the American Indian who lives a life imbued with spirituality through every realm—economic, social, religious, and aesthetic (Sapir 1924:414). This belief was set against Sapir’s view of modern American life, in which he asserted, “Part of the time we are dray horses; the rest of the time we are listless consumers of goods

¹⁹ Those that adhered closer to the anthropological construct of “California Indian” were better received by the US government, especially when it came to regaining federal recognition (Lightfoot 2004:31).

which have received no least impress of our personality. In other words, our spiritual selves go hungry, for the most part, pretty much all of the time” (Sapir 1924:417). Indeed, Amy Shuman (1993) argues that the invention of “authentic traditional cultures” is constructed as an opposition to Western society. She mentions that “essentialist categories [were] set up an opposition between the constructed and the natural, the contaminated and the pure, the fake and the authentic” (Shuman 1993:346).

Sapir contrasted this view of American life to that of Native peoples, arguing that if they were to retain even a modicum of traditional culture, they should not enter into mainstream, modern America. He noted that the problem American Indians faced when they were in contact with ‘whites’ was that of “bewildered vacuity,” in which they are no longer able to reach into their past for coherent whole sets of cultural practices (1924:414). One specific point of contention for Sapir concerned the Native person who entered into the “economic sphere,” maintaining that the value of culture resided in non-economic, non-utilitarian realms (1924:415). To exemplify this notion of the grave importance for Native peoples to retain their authentic culture, he stated, “What is sad about the passing of the Indian is not the depletion of his numbers by disease nor even the contempt that is too often meted out to him in his life on the reservation, it is the fading away of genuine cultures, built though they were out of the materials of a low order of sophistication” (Sapir 1924:414). Without a doubt, Sapir’s belief in the significance of authentic cultures was so strong that he implied that it was better for people to die than to be polluted by modern life (Tallbear, personal communication, May 5, 2011).

There are lingering effects of salvage anthropology and the pursuit of authenticity for Native peoples today. Narratives about Karuk people generated during the salvage era research still circulate. Contemporary researchers have relied on these narratives in order to define the Karuk Tribe, as a way of providing a background to their particular inquiries. But the difficulty with relying solely on the anthropological narratives of the past is that it perpetuates the same decontextualized, and sometimes mistaken, information about the Karuk. Turney (1999:434) states that “by exoticizing Native peoples with reference to an essentialized, historicized notion of authenticity, they are reduced to silence, denied a future and relegated to the past.” As such, without space to include Karuk voices in these narratives, the larger historical and social issues that Karuk peoples have faced become erased. The reliance on anthropological testimony, which also includes the gaps in information that researchers did not record, could have damaging consequences when it comes to claims to land and natural resource stewardship, as well as the inalienability of cultural patrimony.

George Gibbs

George Gibbs, working for Redick McKee as an interpreter and cartographer in 1851, was one of the first researchers to explore Karuk territories. In addition to the journal he wrote that chronicled McKee’s expedition, he recorded ethnographic notes in his small notebook, which contains the Karuk names for village sites. His were the first notations of the Karuk language and he made the

following observation: "Savages seem rarely to possess words embracing classes of objects as for instance 'trees,' 'birds' etc., each specific object having its name. It is therefore necessary to observe this as accounting in part for the different replies given to apparently the same question."²⁰ He went on to state that there was no central tribal government, that Karuk peoples were known by the names of their villages, and that each ranch, or village, had its own territory, distinctly set off and "jealously guarded from infringement," although fishing territories were shared. Among his word lists, he also collected a list of phrases, which, in a way, indicated his experiences working with Karuk peoples. Phrases include: "What do you want"; "I don't understand"; "let me see it"; "I did not do it"; "Where are you going"; and "Let us go."²¹ He noted that the only evidence of agriculture was the carefully tended tobacco plants that surrounded people's houses.

Stephen Powers

During the summers of 1871 and 1872 Stephen Powers traveled from the Klamath River Basin, through the San Francisco Bay area, and into the Sacramento Valley, studying and observing numerous Native California tribes (Powers and Heizer 1976 [1877]). He published a series of articles in the *Overland Monthly* from 1872 through 1875 from his material, on subjects ranging from physical appearance, material culture, customs, religion, songs, language, and folklore. Powers often recognized the extreme disparities between Native Californians and the broader society, but often "commented unfavorably on the character of the people themselves," rather than helping to ameliorate the disparities he observed (Heizer 1976:4). Detailed in sections by tribe, his observations encompass romantic notions of primitive peoples, often portraying Native Californians as objects of pity because of their devastating losses to white civilization, but all the while making disparaging remarks that suggest they are uncivilized savages (Powers and Heizer 1976 [1877]). However barbaric Powers' "general facts" of Native Californians were, Heizer (1976) notes that this work did offer one of the first understandings of the linguistic diversity across the state and was one of the first detailed mappings of the tribal boundaries across the northern and central areas of the state.

Of the Karuk peoples, Powers stated that they were "probably the finest tribe of California...they have well-sized bodies, erect and strongly knit together, of an almost feminine roundness and smoothness, the legs better developed than the arms; and when a Karok has the weapon to which he is accustomed—a sharp stone gripped in the hand—he will face a white man and give him a handsome fight, though when armed only with a snickernee or a revolver, in the use of which he does not feel confidence, he flees before them" (Powers and Heizer 1976 [1877]:19). Of Karuk women, Powers notes that they have "large, voluptuous eyes," that suggest

²⁰ Pehtsik Klamath or Arra-Arra dictionary and ethnographic notes 1852-1852. George Gibbs. Manuscript 846, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

²¹ Pehtsik Klamath or Arra-Arra dictionary and ethnographic notes 1852-1852. George Gibbs. Manuscript 846, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

a seductive quality and he offers, "It is little wonder that so many pioneers...have taken them to wives" (Powers and Heizer 1976 [1877]:20). Powers went on to describe the marriage customs, systems of money, housing, division of labor, ceremony and belief, and a handful of stories. The quotes above show the tenor of his ethnographic reporting: at once romanticizing and infantilizing Karuk peoples.

Alfred Kroeber

Starting in 1900 and continuing throughout his career, Kroeber repeatedly made research trips to the Klamath River, studying the language and ethnology of Karuk and Yurok peoples. Trained under Franz Boas at Columbia University at the turn of the 20th century, Kroeber's 1901 dissertation on the decorative symbolism of Arapahoe cultural artifacts went far to discount the focus on cultural phenomena origins by social evolutionists (Jacknis 2002b). At the same time, Kroeber was also developing his own perspectives on the problems of culture and anthropology, namely his *superorganic* theory of culture, in which he notes that each culture is a unique phenomenon, where the individuals of a society do not actually make the society; instead, a society is "an entity beyond them" (Buckley 1996; Jacknis 2002b; Kroeber 1917). To this point Kroeber states, "The fundamental error of the common anthropological method of investigating origins is that it isolates phenomena and seeks isolated specific causes for them. In reality, ethnic phenomena do not exist separately: they have their being only in a culture" (Kroeber 1901:335; Jacknis 2002b). Of this conception of culture, Kroeber emphasized creativity as "the engine of cultural growth and civilization's progress," focusing on expressive culture to show both the style of creativity and the overarching "psychic nature" of people (Buckley 1996:262; Kroeber 1902).

Kroeber's theory of culture history is a process of linear growth; through an accumulation of cultural elements,, cultures progressed in increasing complexity (Buckley 1996:266). Discussing the historical reconstruction project of anthropology and to legitimize his theory of cultural progress, Kroeber delineates ten comparisons to biological science, including the notions that cultural "elements," or "traits" are the smallest units of material that anthropologists study; culture traits can be stationary or rapidly diffusing to other cultures; geographical continuity strengthens the argument for relationships between cultural traits of different groups; and the totality of the structure of particular cultures comes from culture trait complexes, where variations of kind matter little compared to the whole of the structure (Kroeber 1952). Cultures could be ranked hierarchically, based on the notion that human creativity fueled history and progress (Buckley 1996). However, as Jacknis notes, "Kroeber's goal was the reconstruction of pre-contact culture, and he often neglected the on-going culture around him, especially when it involved artifacts" (1994:4).

Of his hundreds of publications, Kroeber's works, *Karok Myths* and *The Handbook of the Indians of California*, more intensely describe his reconstruction of Karuk peoples as they were before contact. In the *Handbook*, Kroeber dedicated merely ten pages to the Karuk Tribe because he stated that they were virtually "indistinguishable in appearance and customs, except for certain minutiae" from the downriver Yurok Tribe (Kroeber 1976 [1925]:98). Kroeber described Karuk contact

with miners in 1850 and 1851 as “the usual friction,” commenting that there were thefts, ambushing and slaughters in areas (Kroeber 1976 [1925]:98). He then goes on to describe the village settlements, boundary lines, and population of the Karuk tribe, noting that the population losses for the Karuk between 1850 and 1905, was “relatively mild,” not exceeding one half of the lives lost by Karuk peoples since contact (Kroeber 1976 [1925]:99). Kroeber furthers his short survey of Karuk peoples by describing in depth the ceremonies and religious rites of the tribe and naming conventions. He concludes by recapitulating his initial statement: “Data are scarcely available for a fuller sketch of Karok culture. Nor is such an account necessary in the present connection,” since they are nearly identical to the Yurok (Kroeber 1976 [1925]:108).

In addition to the works cited above, Kroeber carried out a detailed work on Northwestern California basket designs. While Kroeber considered the use-function of Karuk, Yurok, Hupa, and Tolowa baskets, he considered them as static objects, made by industrious weavers who have an eye for abstract design that has no other significance. In his 1905 paper, “Basket Designs of the Indians of Northwestern California,” Kroeber devoted a vast amount of attention to the design names on the baskets, trying to find some type of linguistic commonality among the similar patterns shared by different tribes. After his very lengthy treatment, where he carefully listed and charted basket names with patterns, he concluded that there was “no deep or inherent relationship between the designs of California basketry and their names”; therefore, the names and designs were merely conventional choices (Kroeber 1905:160, 161). From this deduction, he made the link between conventionality and symbolism by stating, “Symbolism, in the usual and historic sense of the word, does not therefore exist in California basketry... [therefore], symbolic expression in actions or ritual is almost equally absent” (Kroeber 1905:161). Kroeber, authenticating his object of inquiry through his declaration of authority, made the assumption that because there was no linguistic agreement on design names, there could not be any symbolism embodied in a basket and, by extension, there was no symbolic expression within any area of cultural expression.

C. Hart Merriam

In 1918 and 1921, C. Hart Merriam visited Karuk country, transcribing word lists and snippets of stories told by Karuk peoples. He also photographed a handful of people and places. His research was privately funded by the Harriman Trust, and from 1900 on he devoted his time studying the ethnology of California Indians, proposing that he could apply his knowledge of zoology to the study of ethnology, perhaps producing better results (Osgood and Grinnell 1945:22). “The collection, consisting mostly of prints, is primarily photographs taken during Merriam’s work documenting the languages of California Indian tribes. The photographs are mostly of the people and places Merriam encountered in his work” (Boom and Belcher 1997:3).²² As with other early anthropologists, Merriam’s work is a smattering of language terms interspersed with cursory ethnographic data regarding boundaries,

²² Robert Heizer compiled and published Merriam’s field notes in 1967 through the University of California Archaeological Research Facility.

village sites, ethnozoology, plants, house structures, material culture, spiritual beliefs, monetary systems, and care for the dead.

Edward Curtis

In 1923, famed photographer Edward Curtis visited Karuk country, photographing basket collections, people, and places. In addition, he recorded an ethnographic account of Karuk peoples. First describing the boundaries of Karuk territories, he then talked about the language, drawing on Gibbs' and Kroeber's descriptions. He was one of the first researchers to talk about the issues that Karuk peoples had with the settlers on the Klamath.

In the summer of 1852, there was trouble between white settlers and the Indians about [a community]. Some cattle were found dead, and the former blamed the Indians, who insisted that the cattle had eaten poisonous weeds. There was an attempt to deprive the Indians of guns that had been sold to them at very high prices. Some gave them up, others refused, and the result was fighting in which both sides suffered losses. The white men burned most of the villages from [a community] to [a community], and the Indians fled to the hills. After a time they returned to find that their villages were no more; the sites were occupied by white men's houses and farms. Some of the refugees were given permission to build houses in unoccupied places near the farms. And thus began their unattached existence, which in most cases has continued to the present day. No reservation has ever been established for the Karok and the survivors live in small groups near their old homes. They numbered 775 in 1910. (Curtis 2015 [1924]:58-59)

Curtis then described the restitution process the Karuk had in the cases of damaged properties and bodily injury, elaborating on a long ago war between the Karuk and the Tolowa. As with Powers, Curtis elaborated on the marriage customs, monetary system, burial processes, ceremonies, and a very brief description of Karuk myths.

John Peabody Harrington

J. P. Harrington travelled to the Klamath River and worked with Karuk Peoples intermittently between 1925 and 1929, documenting the Karuk language and the cultivation of tobacco. He recorded many stories, narratives, and myths, in addition to creating hundreds of pages of word lists and definitions. In addition to the fieldwork he carried out on the Klamath River, he brought Phoebe Maddux, a Karuk medicine woman and basket weaver, to Washington, D. C., for several months. Mrs. Maddux and Harrington worked in collaboration to document his collection of basketry; to document stories about Karuk life; to review texts by Kroeber written about Karuk basket weaving; and to review Karuk sound recordings in New York with Franz Boas. Harrington was territorial and protective of what he considered his research area and tried to persuade other ethnographers and linguists away from working with "his" people (Hinton 1994). J. P. Harrington's work will be examined later in this study.

Helen H. Roberts

In the spring of 1926 ethnomusicologist Helen H. Roberts, in collaboration with J. P. Harrington, recorded approximately nine hours of Karuk songs at Orleans and Somes Bar. In addition, she interviewed two elder Karuk women, who described in detail, as much as they could or would recount, the First Salmon Ceremony, which is part of the *pikyávis* ceremonial complex. Roberts compared the two accounts in her 1932 publication, *The First Salmon Ceremony of the Karuk Indians*. Concerned with the veracity of the recountings of the ceremony, Roberts performed these two interviews to ensure that she got an accurate account. Her justifications for recording two interviews were: 1) her first interviewee was likable and pleasant, but “but the Karuk mercenary instinct was strong in her and for various reasons it was felt desirable to have confirmation of her tale”; and 2) the first interviewee was lacking detail in her recounting, which the second woman provided (Roberts 1932:426, 427). In her narrative, Roberts noted that Karuk peoples could not tell a story from beginning to end, rather the retelling from both women were circuitous and from different points of view. She stated that the first interviewee gave more “magical” evidence for the activities and motivations for aspects of the ceremony, while the second interviewee recounted more “commonsense” explanations.

Jaime de Angulo

Despite fierce objections raised by Harrington, Jaime de Angulo, a University of California-trained linguist, recorded Karuk language and narratives during the summer of 1927 (Leeds-Hurwitz 1985). Funded by the Committee on Research in Native American Languages, de Angulo and his wife and co-author, LS Freeland, published this work in 1931. De Angulo wrote one of the first formal accounts of the Karuk language and grammatical structures. In addition he added to the corpus of Karuk stories that were told about the *ikxaréyavsa*, events about the times before the arrival of humans (de Angulo and Freeland 1931). Additionally he detailed three narratives from Karuk people about the everyday aspects of hunting and mining.

Lila O’Neale

In the summer of 1929, Lila O’Neale tacked up and down the Klamath River, interviewing nearly fifty Karuk, Yurok, and Hupa basket weavers for her doctoral research at the University of California. As one of the pioneers of ethnoaesthetics, O’Neale spent time with basket weavers, eliciting responses from the photographs of baskets she brought with her and talking with them individually about their craft, in order to learn about their own understandings of the aesthetic qualities of basketry. She stated that she attempted to see every woman who had or has at some point in her life made baskets. Overarching her research was the goal to study the relationship that Yurok, Hupa, and Karuk women had to their craft (O’Neale 1995 [1932]:5). Enfolded in this study were analyses of design conventions, evaluations of excellence, learning processes for gathering materials and weaving baskets, environmental concerns regarding basket weaving materials, weaving techniques, and commercial aspects of basketry. She expressed the desire to represent the attitudes of the weavers regarding their own practice. Lila O’Neale’s

work will be examined later in this study.

Isabel Kelly

Published in 1930 by the *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Isabel Kelly researched the carving technology of Northern California Indians. Using only museum collections, Kelly described elk horn and wooden spoons, mush paddles, elk horn purses, and other materials that were carved or incised, focusing on the formal features like designs and measurements. Before this time, little attention had been paid to the artistic excellence of men's carvings (Jacknis 1995; Kelly 1930).

Philip Drucker

Philip Drucker published a comparative study of the *pikyávis* ceremonial complex in 1936. Drucker used Kroeber's accounts of the ceremony that were gathered from Ned Rasper, as well as previous studies by J. P. Harrington and Helen H. Roberts (Drucker 1936). He interviewed Louis Johnny and Peter Tom regarding their recollections of the ceremonial complex, which at this telling had not been performed in over three decades. The processes and movements of the ceremonial leader and others were recorded in detail, as were the locations of each movement on the landscape.

Cora DuBois

In 1939, Cora DuBois published a manuscript through the University of California on the Ghost Dance of 1870. Citing works by Powers (1976 [1877]), G. A. Chambers (1989 [1906]), and Kroeber (1905b), as well as conducting her own field work, she described the conditions in which the Ghost Dance travelled to Karuk country, as well as what the circumstances that led up to the performance of this ceremony were (DuBois and Buckley 2007 [1939]). In 1906, Chambers gave evidence as to why the Ghost Dance was performed in Happy Camp:

During the Modoc War [1872–1873] many Indians from the rancherias along the Klamath River were gathered at [a community].... The Indians averred that the bringing to life of the dead and the destruction of the whites would be accomplished only by their dancing, and not by violence. (Chambers and California Indian Library Collections Project 1989 [1906]:141)

DuBois noted that the account that Chambers gave showed how the Ghost Dance was adapted to the historical circumstances for Karuk peoples (DuBois and Buckley 2007 [1939]). She offered detailed first-person narratives to show how the ghost dance was performed.

Alfred Kroeber and Edward Winslow Gifford

A study jointly published by Kroeber and Gifford in 1949 detailed the World Renewal ceremonies of the Karuk, Hupa, and Yurok tribes. Gifford recorded his information from numerous Karuk and Hupa interlocutors from 1939 to 1942, while Kroeber's information came mainly from his work with Yurok peoples from 1900 to

1907. This study included multiple first-person accounts of specific ceremonies that took place in the early 20th century. Kroeber and Gifford, describing the World Renewal complex of ceremonies as a closed-system cult/religion, meaning that although there are variations within the ceremonies themselves, the overall patterns are consistently identifiable as belonging to the Karuk, Hupa, and Yurok cultures (Kroeber and Gifford 1949). How they came to find the specific patterns was the assertion that ethnographic, rather than historical, analysis, was better equipped to provide “a synthetic perception, appraisal, or judgment, which is essentially intuitional,” that is, based on “organized apperception” (Kroeber and Gifford 1949:1).

Thomas Buckley critiques Kroeber’s and Gifford’s type of analysis by stating, “‘Apperception’ of such a system...demanded that the ethnologist disregard any disagreements among individuals on the creation of a normative, putatively consensual, homogeneous cultural whole” (Buckley 2002:266). In addition to providing a homogenous view of *pikyávis*, Kroeber and Gifford failed to see the interconnected relationships of the ceremonies connected to everyday life and connected to the devastating changes wrought by contact. Without taking these into perspective and evaluating ceremonial practices through a diachronic lens, but instead fashioning boundaries around such knowledge, Kroeber and Gifford produced a rigid system in which any sort of change is discounted because it was not the norm (as in the restriction of fire, noted by Mary Ike above) or it is generated through outside sources, rendering Karuk people without agency.

Karok Myths (1980), edited by Grace Buzaljko and authored by Kroeber and Gifford, is a compilation of myths, narratives, and medicine formulas that were the result of their long-ago fieldwork with Karuk peoples. The myths and medicine formulas relayed to Kroeber and Gifford were translated in the field either by their interpreters or by younger men and women who were bilingual (Kroeber and Gifford 1980). What stands in the book are Anglicized versions of narratives that would have been told to Karuk people in the wintertime—the time of storytelling. The medicine formulas would have been known by only a select few who had the right to sing and speak them and to pass them down or sell them.

Sara M. Schenck and Edward Winslow Gifford

Outside of Harrington’s 1932 work on Karuk tobacco cultivation, *Karok Ethnobotany* (1952), written by Gifford and Sara M. Schenck, was one of the first in-depth reports on the myriad plants that Karuk peoples have used for food, medicine, baskets, and other purposes. The research for this publication was carried out in 1939 by Schenck, who worked with Mary Ike and Mamie Offield, both of whom lived in Somes Bar. Georgia Orcutt, who had worked previously with Gifford, offered supplemental information. Schenck and Gifford listed over 200 plant species by identifying the scientific and common names, as well as the Karuk name for each plant. They also briefly described how the plant was used.

Alfred Kroeber and Samuel Barrett

Comprised of fieldwork that stretched back to Kroeber’s early days as a researcher in Karuk territories during the 1900s, to George Hewes’ 1940s research,

with contributions from Samuel Barrett and Gifford, *Fishing Among the Indians of Northwestern California* was published in 1960. Detailed and comparative, this work offered an in-depth look at the species, technology, and practices surrounding fishing by several tribes, including the Karuk. Included in the descriptions is a section that describes the various basketry traps that men would weave and employ in their practice.

William Bright

In 1949, William Bright, a linguist from the University of California, Berkeley, travelled to the Klamath River to study the Karuk language, despite being offered \$50.00 by J. P. Harrington to not work there (Hinton 1994). His linguistic work with the tribe over the course of nearly five decades earned him the first and only honorary membership to the Karuk Tribe in 2004. Later in this study, I will return to his numerous works on stories and language. For this particular account I will turn to his chapter in the Smithsonian Institution's *Handbook of North American Indians, California, Volume 8*, which is the first account that synthesizes previous research on Karuk peoples.

Anthropological Construction of History of Karuk Tribe

The article written by William Bright for the Smithsonian Institution's *Handbook of North American Indians, California, Volume 8*, has been the "go-to" reference for many contemporary researchers to offer a history of the Karuk Tribe. Given that the *Handbook* series is an encyclopedic reference work, the structure of Bright's chapter needed to maintain consistency with other works; therefore he did not have as much freedom to write about Karuk contemporary issues.

Bright began his discussion of the Karuk Tribe by detailing their language as belonging to the Hokan family. He stated that Karuk peoples and anthropologists define the tribe by its language because their culture differed little from the downriver Yurok and Hupa tribes. Of the ancestral territories of the Tribe, Bright stated that they "occupied" the middle courses of the Klamath River, pointing out the locations of village sites and linking these places to surrounding areas where the activities, such as fishing, hunting, and gathering, took place (1978:180).

Utilizing Mary Kennedy's 1949 unpublished manuscript about Karuk peoples, Bright (1978) described a system of values that could be read through a puritanical lens of beliefs about wealth: emphasis on the acquisition and possession of property; respect and prestige for wealthy people; restraint and thrift in daily life; industriousness; hunting and gambling magic; and generosity and modesty when it came to material possessions. He goes on to describe a reconstruction of Karuk life and livelihood, which he states is a period of time just prior to contact.

Karuk peoples were gatherers, fishers and hunters with salmon and acorns being important staples. Traditionally, families would set up temporary camps to collect stores of acorns from the tan oak (Bright 1978:182). The Karuk actively sculpted their landscape through the use of controlled burning, harrowing and conscious gathering during the seasonal round, with the only cultivated plant being tobacco (Bright 1978:181).

Karuk peoples used wood, stone, and plant fibers for their "artifacts," which

included wedges, mauls, adzes, wooden boxes, cooking paddles, spoons, seats, and boats. Obsidian blades were used, with the larger ones reserved for ceremonial purposes. Sinew-backed bows and arrows were made for hunting. Additionally, a whole host of baskets were made for everything from preparing and cooking food, storage and carrying, to ceremonial purposes. Bright also described the deerskin clothing and shell ornaments that women and men wore, down to the detail of hairstyles, piercings and tattoos.

While there were many taboos in place to maintain social order, individualism was encouraged. Transgressions of social norms were viewed in two distinct ways: supernatural transgressions would bring about bad luck and when there were transgressions against people or property, the wronged party could demand payment (Bright 1978:185). "Thus the basic principle of Karuk law was that everything had its price, including the human person": marriage was a financial transaction; the mothers of illegitimate children were to be compensated by the fathers; divorce required a repayment of monies to the wronged party; injury to another or murder required the aggressor to pay the person or their family; and the list goes on (Bright 1978:185-186). However, the possessions of the dead were not dispersed among family members, but were instead broken, burned or buried with the deceased.

Storytelling was an important form of recreation and education. Myths and stories were told during the winter and recounted the time before the creation of humans (Bright 1978:187). Some myths were medicine formulas that were considered to be personal property and used to bring love, luck, and wealth to the individual. Bright surmised that since there was no creation story per se collected from them, Karuk people were not interested in a world beyond their immediate surroundings. Instead, sacred places were in their immediate view.

Like researchers who came before Bright, information about Karuk life before contact relied on an ahistorical view. Also like others, Bright saw the basics of material culture and practices, but failed to link these with a whole system of belief and understanding of the world. Recounting Karuk myths and narratives in his previous works, he did not link these to a larger worldview in which myths were interconnected with subsistence practices, with material culture, and with morality and onto-epistemology. It is not that all of his writing on Karuk people is wrong, but isolating each individual piece fails to account for the rich, complex way of life.

Bright offered an account, however brief, on the effects of the gold rush and the ensuing violence and fracturing of Karuk communities. He stated that the impacts of invasion were worse for the Karuk, compared to the Yurok, because of the greater prospects available to miners (Bright 1978:188). He described some of the violence and displacement suffered by the Karuk, as well as the unscrupulous nature of settlers to the area. After the mining industry began to give out, Karuk peoples were "left more or less to their own devices" (1978:188).

Of the children who resulted from unions between white settlers and Karuk women, Bright quoted Mary Kennedy's unpublished paper at length. Kennedy said that the children, who were classified as bastards, "aped their white fathers in contempt and skepticism of the sanctions and taboos [of their Karuk mothers], and did not suffer thereby...This disaffected group ['bastard' children] presented a

continuing and finally disruptive attack on the elders and their prescriptions” (Bright quoting Kennedy 1978:188). From this sentiment, the blame for the fragmentation of Karuk culture as a whole rested on the shoulders of children who could not change their circumstances of their birth. Given that Kennedy wrote these words in 1949, her sentiment did not account for the racism that surrounded Karuk people on a daily basis by settlers, forest service personal, other government agents, and loggers. Also, it failed to address the acculturative education that children received at boarding schools.

Karuk Basket Weaving—Consequences

The historical legacy of colonization has had lasting consequences for the Karuk basket weaving tradition, as did many other aspects of Karuk culture, including language, ceremony, hunting, gathering, and fishing, songs, and stories. But it is important to remember that while the disruption from violence, government policies, and boarding school education have had lasting impacts on all facets of Karuk life, this is not to say that the threads of continuity of Karuk lifeways from the past do not extend forward. The Karuk Tribe was one of the last tribes in the United States to be contacted by non-indigenous peoples and was devastated by the Gold Rush during the mid-nineteenth century. The new settlements and the USFS cut off access to gathering, hunting and fishing areas, leading to dislocation and mass starvation. Hydrologic mining was practiced on the Klamath River, which eroded the great swaths of land along the river, altering the landscape dramatically, and devastating the sensitive ecological balance, of plants people and animals. But despite the changes, there remain the threads, the roots to be woven again.

The basket weaving tradition was irrevocably changed because of contact. Weavers could no longer tend to their basket weaving plants. Because of USFS policy, they could not set low burning fires to maintain their plots of hazel and beargrass, which are much needed materials for baskets. The discontinuation of prescribed burning to maintain the forests resulted in the decline of basket production because of the scarcity of materials that were supple, straight and free from bugs (Anderson 2005). The weavers that Lila O’Neale interviewed lamented “that fires cannot be set as they used to be by the old-time weavers, and by regret that accidental burnings occur so seldom in places where they do most basket makers any good”; additionally, her weavers noted that new growth of hazel was often destroyed by the settler’s cattle (1995 [1932]:15).

Weavers were also limited to where they could gather because of the new settlements. Unfettered and safe access to willow along the Klamath River was no longer a possibility because of the mining activity. Destruction of sand bars along the river depleted further the resources available to weavers to gather their plants. Later, in the 1940s, some weavers became afraid to process willow materials in their mouth because they did not know if the materials were poisoned from pollutants in the river (Salter 2003). With the dams in place, the high water from snow melt wouldn’t reach the sand bars on the lower Klamath River, washing out the debris from the previous years, which had a deleterious effect on the growth of willow used by basket weavers (Salter 2003:37). The willow used to grow like

bushes because of the pruning that weavers had performed for generations; but, without weavers' interventions, the willows began to take on their natural tree form (Salter 2003). And between the decreased access to willow and hazel, weavers turned to using different, not typically used, materials, like ceonothus (Salter 2003). As Heffner reports, the intensity, variety, and time devoted to gathering may have changed, but Karuk basket weavers have persisted in gathering materials, finding new places and making do with alternate materials (1984:6).

Karuk weavers slowed down their production of baskets for their own personal use, such as soup bowls, dippers and storage baskets, because of the availability of utilitarian goods brought in by white settlers; and hoppers, mortars and pestles were entirely replaced by mechanical grinding tools (O'Neale 1995 [1932]:147). Everyday basket caps fell out of fashion when there was readily available clothing to take its place. Additionally, since there was a disruption of *pikyávis* ceremonies, some ceremonial baskets, like the Jump Dance basket, nearly ceased to be made at all (O'Neale 1995 [1932]).

By the late 1800s, a solely subsistence lifeway was no longer a viable means of sustaining Karuk families, and taking care of the basic needs of self and family became the responsibilities of everyday life. Weavers and their families began to sell off and trade their collections of baskets and other belongings to anthropologists, collectors, settlers, and tourists. Basket weavers also ramped up their production, at times inventing new styles and techniques, to keep up with the demand of the tourist market. The next chapter will describe more fully the effects of collection for museums and tourist trade on Karuk basket weaving.

One of the more devastating consequences of contact for Karuk basket weavers was the forced relocation of young Karuk girls, who were sent to boarding schools. The lifelong learning of skills needed to weave was not being passed down, for the most part. Karuk girls used to grow up with baskets and weaving as daily activities, accompanying their mothers on seasonal gathering trips, playing with scraps of material until they were taught to weave, and using baskets for cooking. Basket weaving declined when girls were forced to take up sewing, crocheting and other domestic tasks (Johnson and Marks 1997:32). O'Neale noted that mothers were concerned that their girls were not carrying on the tradition of basket weaving; "they [the girls] leave for school at six years of age, just at the time when their mothers were imitating for them the grown women's work in discarded sticks and grass. Perhaps girls do crocheting or embroidery at school, but never basketry" (1995 [1932]:11-12). Children were isolated from their elders, had no access to their culture, and they became reluctant to even self-identify as Indian, instead proclaiming to be of another non-Native American ethnicity (2008, personal communication).

The Karuk suffered two generations of cultural loss through government boarding school policies (Stercho 2006:59). However, that the assimilation process was not necessarily as complete as the policy makers had conceived. Adams states:

Reformers could not anticipate that many students, caught between contesting claims of native and white outlooks, were not prepared to abandon one in the process of acquiring the other, that just as an

assimilationist education might win converts to white civilization, so it was just as likely to produce the bicultural personality (1995:301).

A few of the boarding school students returned to Karuk territory after leaving school, and resumed traditional practices, such as basket weaving, despite the unpopularity of expressing Karuk identity in any form and despite how ruptured the culture had become. But it is important to remember that not all Karuk children left. Because the Klamath River region is remote and mountainous, several families hid their children when government agents were in the region to take children to school. There were a number of children that were not exposed to the assimilation tactics of boarding schools and carried on Karuk traditions, stories that will be shared in chapter four.

Karuk basket weaving has continued despite assimilation policies, despite an outright message of extermination from the state government, despite the damage inflicted on the landscape and waterways, and despite fire suppression policies that kept weavers from stewarding and harvesting basket weaving plants. Weavers have adapted strategies to continue their practice, cultivating relationships with others who could assist them with the project of keeping basket weaving alive for future generations. These strategies include working in partnership with Native basket weavers from other parts of the state, museums who hold their collections, and with government agencies and NGOs. It is within the active and creative spaces sustained by basket weavers that the animacy and aliveness of basketry enters the conversation, a topic that will be addressed in a later chapter.

Chapter III

Basket Weaving in the Early Twentieth Century

Introduction

This chapter considers the way that 342 baskets now in the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) can inform us about Karuk experiences in the first decades of the 20th century. The collection itself resulted from complicated commercial transactions and the intentions of a Smithsonian-employed researcher who was passionate about indigenous languages. The knowledge that the Smithsonian researcher was able to generate was most dependent on his interactions with a Karuk woman, a basket maker who had learned doctoring from her mother. While previous researchers have treated these baskets primarily as evidence of types of manufacture, I show how they illuminate memory, community, and the significance of basket making.

As way of introduction, I discuss two important works from the early 20th century that configure Karuk basketry in a more typological framework, removing basketry from its social and spiritual contexts, to greater and lesser degrees. The first work that I discuss was produced by Alfred Kroeber, whose 1905 paper on Northwestern California basket designs was one of the first descriptive publications that discussed Karuk basketry. The second work that I discuss is Lila O'Neale's 1929 research with Karuk, Yurok, and Hupa basket weavers. She, like Kroeber, created a typological study of basket weaving, but she explored the topic through the lens of ethnoaesthetics (Schevill 1984). She interviewed many weavers about their own thoughts and impressions on the basket weaving process, from gathering materials to weaving, as well as their own evaluations of well-crafted and poorly-made baskets. While her dissertation and subsequent publication, based on her basketry research, collapsed the varied experiences of individual weavers into anonymous typologies of baskets and practices, her field notes reflected more individualized responses. These responses about the changes that were occurring with the basket weaving practice, such as lack of time to weave and restricted access to materials, as well as fewer young people picking up the practice, were more nuanced than what she had published. Within these nuances, the threads of both loss and resilience that the weavers had articulated carry through to today.

Through the evaluation of Kroeber's, O'Neale's, and Harrington's research, along with the dealers and collectors of the Johnson collection, I show that the positionality of each party affected the discourse about Karuk baskets, Karuk ways of knowing, and Karuk peoples. I also show how Phoebe Maddux expressed what was most evocative about the baskets in her perspective, resisting a classificatory approach to understanding the meaning of these belongings. I also show that Mrs. Maddux's memories reflect the changing values within Karuk communities, with regard to basket weaving. Additionally, through tracing the baskets' itineraries, I show how these belongings are members of everyday and ceremonial life.

Alfred L Kroeber

In 1902, Alfred Kroeber conducted fieldwork in Orleans, CA with Karuk basket weavers and ceremonial leaders. While he recorded the names of the ceremonial leaders who shared with him detailed information about the *pikyávis* ceremonial complex, the handful of weavers that he worked with went unnamed in his field notes. He collected over 50 Karuk baskets for the purpose of creating a collection of “authentic” objects that were evidence of pre-contact everyday life. Additionally, Kroeber focused on eliciting information about the design names in the Karuk language. His purpose for collecting these baskets and design names was to compare this information to his extensive body of work he previously collected from the Yurok.

In 1905, Kroeber published this comparative study of basket design names from tribes in Northwestern California (1905a). Kroeber’s research on the basket weaving traditions of California Indians provided a typological vision of the tradition, which illustrated that baskets were static objects that possessed certain properties: twined, never coiled; made from locally sourced materials; limited to a small set of shapes and colors; and decorated with a limited number of designs. Through this study of the techniques, types, and design names of Klamath region baskets, Kroeber produced a large body of research regarding the physical details of Karuk baskets, but did not include their significance to the Karuk peoples or the baskets own aliveness and animacy. As Jacknis pointed out:

They [Kroeber and his colleagues] got the “things,” but missed the life surrounding them, the contexts of their texts...Kroeber’s goal was the reconstruction of pre-contact culture, and he often neglected the on-going culture around him, especially when it involved artifacts (Jacknis 1994:4).

Through his systematic, typological approach, Kroeber collected a set of diagnostic traits to attempt to reveal a commonality of design names throughout Northwestern California. Finding little commonality as compared to his standardized set of Yurok terms, Kroeber declared that basketry names and basketry designs were merely convention (1905a:161).

Kroeber had anticipated that decorative techniques used in Northwestern California baskets were to have some religious or spiritual meaning, citing Navajo sand paintings, Plains shields, or Haida totem poles as examples (1905a:162). When he did not find those case studies applicable to Northwestern California baskets, he assumed that there was no inherent symbolic meaning to the designs or to basketry as a whole. In fact, Kroeber extended this point by saying that there was no connection between basketry and spirituality, simply because baskets lacked realistic or pictographic images:

Lack of connection between basket design names and religious thought can therefore be absolutely asserted for the greater part of California and can safely be accepted as extremely probable for all the remainder of the state. Certainly there is as yet no trustworthy evidence of anything to the contrary.

This condition is in entire accordance with the almost utter lack of pictographic or realistic representation in the art of these Indians. *Symbolic expression in actions or ritual is almost equally absent.* (1905a:161, emphasis added)

Kroeber's intense focus on the importance of design names of California baskets as representatives of religious or spiritual icons showed that he did make the connection between Karuk onto-epistemology and the practice of basket weaving, which is imbued with Karuk knowledge of creation and ways of knowing. Karuk weavers had no need to replicate a pictograph or realistic image as Kroeber had expected; in fact it was taboo to do so (O'Neale 1995 [1932]). Unlike his mentor, Franz Boas, who focused on the significance of the creative processes of Native American artists, Kroeber's focus on the connection of spiritual meaning and design did not show that designs were connected to the **process** of weaving. Specifically, Kroeber did not engage with the literal embodied practice that occurred through the rhythm of hands twining roots; the coordination of these movements with song and speech; and the memory and expression of a deep personal connection to the material and the culture. Prayers and songs that embodied Karuk onto-epistemology were expressed in the gathering process, and prayers and songs were reserved for specific baskets that were to be danced in ceremonies. Meaning and significance came from all of these practices, not only in the words that labeled the designs on a basket.

Kroeber's research on Northwestern California basket weavers is in contrast to Boas' research on indigenous art and art forms. Boas asserted that the artist's creativity developed within a cultural system, limiting what the artist could or could not do (Jonaitis 1995:20). However, the artist's imagination and creativity played a significant role in the creation of new art forms, as well as in the sheer pleasure felt by the artists in the production of works:

[I]t would seem that on the whole the pleasure given by much of the decorative work of primitive people must not be looked for in the beauty of the finished product, but rather in the enjoyment which the maker feels at his own cleverness in playing with the technical elements that he is using. In other words, one of the most important sources in the development of primitive decorative art is analogous to the pleasure that is given by the achievements of the virtuoso. (Boas 1908:340)

Boas focused on the creative genius, technical virtuosity, and expressive needs of indigenous artists, all of which emerged from a long and cumulative process (Jonaitis 1995:29). He asserted that indigenous artworks were contingent on multiple factors, from a societal level to the level of the individual artist, suggesting fluidity in the confines of culture (Boas 1955). Unlike Kroeber, Boas sought a connection between the development of technical skill and artistic activity, where the value of artworks resided in the technical perfection of the object form being made (Boas 1955:25).

The dynamic relationship between baskets, basketry materials, people, and the spiritual and social world could not be explained through Kroeber's research on the symbolism of decorative forms. By relegating baskets to their component parts, Kroeber could not see the animacy embodied in Karuk ways of knowing about the world. Because they are made of materials from the land, allowed to live life fully by dancing in ritual, and because they interact with people on a regular basis, baskets defy the limited categorizations imposed on them. The Karuk relate to baskets not as objects that have economic value, nor as objects that are static, but as entities of consequence—entities that have a life force, not just because they are made *by* people, but because they are made *of* people as well.

Lila O'Neale

In the summer of 1929, Lila O'Neale (1886-1948) travelled up and down the Klamath River, interviewing nearly fifty Karuk, Yurok, and Hupa basket weavers for her doctoral research at the University of California, under Kroeber's direction. While Kroeber did not encourage her to pursue the PhD in the Anthropology Department, O'Neale completed the two years of coursework needed for her degree and then embarked on her six-week field trip to the Klamath River. Kroeber was the one who encouraged her to study basket weaving, although he gave her only the "skimpiest instructions" for her excursion (Schevill 1984:131).

During her six-week visit to the Klamath River region, O'Neale attempted to see every woman who had at some point in her life made baskets. Her overarching research goal was to study the relationship that Yurok, Hupa, and Karuk women had to their craft, employing what is now known as ethnoaesthetics, which is a study of the knowledge, impressions, understandings, and criteria for excellence of craftworks from a maker's standpoint (Schevill 1984). Enfolded in her study were analyses of learning processes for gathering materials and weaving baskets, environmental concerns regarding basket weaving materials, basket types and their traditional features, design conventions, weaving techniques, evaluations of excellence and commercial aspects of basketry.

O'Neale's research practice was inspired by an article she reviewed for the *American Anthropologist* "Coiled Basketry in British Columbia and Surrounding Regions," by Herman K. Haeberlin, James A. Teit, and Helen A. Roberts, under the direction of Franz Boas (Jacknis 1992). Published in 1928, just months before she commenced her fieldwork, this study was one of the first to give attention to the individual artist's thoughts and actions related to their art (Jacknis 1992:134). O'Neale gravitated to the notion of acquiring an understanding of artworks from a "native" point of view. In her review of Haeberlin et al.'s study, she stated,

[They] have focused attention on an aspect of the craft entirely omitted so far from technical descriptions. Analysis of materials, preparation, and design fields are conventional enough. It is only when these are viewed from the standpoint of an avowed intention to investigate 'the attitude of the individual artist toward his work' that a new approach becomes definitive. (O'Neale 1930: 306).

While O'Neale was intrigued by the avowed focus on the artists' point of view, she found their study to be lacking, wishing that the authors had written more at length about the methods and analysis of the data that they acquired (O'Neale 1930:307).

Armed with this new approach to fieldwork, coupled with her two years of course work with Kroeber, O'Neale set out. Her inspiration to understand craftworks from an Indigenous standpoint was tempered by her training in salvage anthropology and a typologically oriented method of data collection. More noticeable in her early interviews with basket weavers, O'Neale focused on eliciting responses from her interlocutors to collect a standardized set of information about the aesthetic evaluations of basket weaving. Included in the questions O'Neale asked of each weaver were:

- Has she a form which she feels she can make better than any other?
- Has she any attitude toward duplicating her work on other baskets?
- Has she a preferred technique or design?
- Does she feel one way or another about a curiosity or a stunt basket?
- Does she make miniature baskets? If not, why not?
- Has she a tendency to create or evolve ornate patterns?
- Has she an inclination to vary popular designs?
- Does she sketch designs? From others baskets?
- Does she have any special mark to distinguish her work?²³

The focus on the standardized set of questions reveals the hegemonic power dynamic that served to undermine O'Neale's focus on ethnoaesthetics (Briggs 1986). Specifically, a fundamental quality of ethnoaesthetics is to understand how maker's evaluate their own works and through their own words. By focusing on the referential content that addressed her specific questions, O'Neale missed the opportunity to learn from weavers the broader contexts in which basket weaving was imbedded (Briggs 1984:117). However, when O'Neale used photo-elicitation techniques to engage weavers in dialog, her field notes began to reflect the changing nature of basket weaving practices.

After O'Neale's first few interviews, she relaxed her standard of inquiry and concentrated more on weavers' responses to the basketry photographs she brought along to elicit aesthetic evaluations. By her own admission, basketweavers were more interested in looking at the pictures of baskets and relating their own ideas about them, rather than answering her formal set of questions (O'Neale 1995 [1932]). Pleased with how successful the photos were for striking up conversations with weavers, she stated,

²³Lila O'Neale. N.d. Field notes on the Yurok, Karok and Hupa basketry of Northwestern California, Reel 1:3, Ethnological Documents of the Department and Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, BANC FILM 2216, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

With a basket print in her hand, the Indian woman became my superior in knowledge and correspondingly helpful. Several times a coolly appraising demeanor became speedily transformed at the disarming sight of objects familiar and yet fascinating...I found a few informants willing to go back to them again and again to clarify a statement or to add examples illustrating some important detail (O'Neale 1995 [1932]:8).

As was the convention of the time, O'Neale did not name her informants in her book, giving them code numbers instead. Because of her attempt to weave the personalities of the women through the text of her thesis, O'Neale also included biographical information in the appendix. Tribal affiliations, ages and familial relations are mentioned, along with their connections to basketry and their weaving prowess. She also included gossipy details that weavers revealed about one another. She utilized this information to show the influence excellent weavers had across a broad locality; to give a somewhat balanced impression of the individual skills of each weaver; and to compare their assessment of skills with that of her own.

Even though O'Neale was trying to record current basket weaving practices, she was also defining what were authentic traditional basketry practices as opposed to inauthentic works that were made for the tourist market, which she had labeled as "stunt," "curiosity," or "freak" baskets. For her, weavers who yielded to the demands of the tourist market created "aesthetic atrocities." At the same time, though, O'Neale believed that without the tourist market demands, weavers would continue making traditional designs:

...tourists became buyers to be depended upon and for the continuance of their custom, Indian women on the Klamath have perpetrated aesthetic atrocities. They are still willing to. Left to themselves weavers revert to old shapes and old patterns as the line of least resistance. (O'Neale 1995 [1932]:148)

O'Neale recognized, through her discussions with weavers, that the demand from the market helped perpetuate the basket weaving tradition. The economic pressure to sell baskets was one way in which women continued to weave, despite the low return on their work. But selling baskets, both new and old, was a double-edged sword.

While O'Neale's book focused on the influences of white buyers who demanded specific styles, colors, and designs, her field notes reflected some of the realities that women faced when selling their new and old baskets to white buyers. Nellie Ruben (Yurok) remarked that she sold many of her utilitarian baskets after she was married since .she could no longer use her cooking baskets to prepare the traditional foods that were not accessible.²⁴ Mrs. Sandybar Jim Roberts was more blunt in her reason why she sold her new and old baskets, saying "If [we] had money [we] would keep old baskets—never sell gifts."²⁵ Mrs. Frank Reece (Yurok) shared

²⁴ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:1.

²⁵ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:3.

that weavers never used to sell their baskets, but now that they did, they certainly did not get enough for the amount of work that they put in to making them. She added ruefully that no weavers really wanted to sell their baskets.²⁶ And Mary Ike (Karuk) was heartbroken, knowing that her family baskets were elsewhere; when she saw an old basket her grandmother made in a San Francisco museum, she became very upset.²⁷

When O'Neale brought her photographs out to elicit responses from the weavers about aesthetics and quality, many of them were just so happy to see the photos because the designs featured were ones that weavers had not seen for years. The old designs sparked memories of some who thought they would never see those patterns again. When O'Neale presented the photos to Annie (Frank) Roberts (Yurok), Annie took the photos from her and showed them to her son, explaining the pattern and telling him all about the old baskets.²⁸ Kitty George (Yurok) was really pleased to see the photos, saying that there were not very many old baskets around and she began to forget some of the designs that she used to make.²⁹ Melissa Myers (Yurok) asked O'Neale for copies of the pictures, as did many other weavers.³⁰ Mrs. Georgia Henry (Karuk) remarked that she had begun to use crochet patterns for inspiration to weave basket designs because so many of the old baskets, which weavers would use to copy from, were no longer in the community. But, Maggie Turk (Yurok) was creative in her way of preserving old time designs.³¹ Whereas other weavers were using crochet patterns as inspiration for new basket designs, Maggie crocheted old designs in blankets and other things to preserve them (O'Neale 1995 [1932]:80, fig.15).

Even though there was a great sense of loss over the older baskets that were sold, some weavers that O'Neale interviewed said that they were willing to make new designs and styles to sell because it was a means to support themselves and their families; it was literally a way for them to purchase or trade for food and clothing at the local mercantile. It was also a way for women to continue weaving because of the enjoyment of the process; "the craft must represent something more than a means of adding to the scanty resources" (O'Neale 1995 [1932]:148). Nellie Johnson (Karuk), Elsie McLaughlin (Karuk) and Mrs. Sandybar Jim Roberts (Yurok) all agreed that it was "pretty smart" to make baskets in unique styles because "lots of white people like it"; Mrs. Sandybar Jim Roberts commented that she had made sugar bowls, cups and saucers and fruit dishes that ended up in a local white woman's collection.³² O'Neale noted that when she showed Mrs. Frank Reece (Yurok) her stack of photographs of baskets, Mrs. Reece was eager to see if any of the photos were of her baskets that she had sold previously, "almost grabbing the

²⁶ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:1.

²⁷ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:3.

²⁸ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:1.

²⁹ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:1.

³⁰ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:1.

³¹ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:1.

³² O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:3.

next folder to look.”³³ Louise and Elizabeth Hickox (Wiyot/Karuk) saw weaving baskets for Grace Nicholson, a dealer from Pasadena, as a business, stating, “If Miss Nicholson or anybody else wanted it, I’d do it. Just like making a basket in whatever colors anybody wanted.”³⁴ And Fannie Smoker (Yurok) found it to be an exciting challenge to weave unusual baskets that were ordered from her, such as wastebaskets and suitcases, saying that she would sit down every day to work on them.³⁵

Whether intentional or not, O’Neale’s basketry research also captured a snapshot of some of the social changes that were occurring on the Klamath River which other researchers had ignored. While her dissertation and published book focused on an amalgamation of each basket weaver’s practice and a typology of the traditional and “freak” baskets that weavers made for use and for sale, her field notes reflected a more intimate knowledge about the decline of weaving due to external forces such as boarding schools, fire suppression, and subsequent changes in everyday practice and use of basketry. Less than 100 years after contact with miners and settlers, Yurok, Karuk, and Hupa peoples were still reeling from the enormous disruptions to their ways of life. Additionally, O’Neale’s work with women weavers exposed some of the problems for weavers that still resonate today.

O’Neale wrote that when girls were sent to boarding school their mothers were concerned that they would not carry on the tradition of basket weaving, stating “they [the girls] leave for school at six years of age, just at the time when their mothers were imitating for them the grown women’s work in discarded sticks and grass. Perhaps girls do crocheting or embroidery at school, but never basketry” (1995 [1932]:11-12). One sentiment that O’Neale recorded, but did not put into her published work, was the impression that basket weavers got from the younger generation as to why they did not pick up weaving. Elsie Young (Yurok) shared that she thought that Amy Smoker (Yurok) was the only young person who picked up weaving in her tribe. She said that girls who went to school were taught other crafts and found that basketry was too old-fashioned to be bothered with it. Elsie added that she thought the younger women were just relying on their husbands to support them, so they would not even have the desire to pick up weaving for money.³⁶ Mrs. Sandybar Jim Roberts thought that the younger generation did not care to weave because they did not know how to and could not be bothered to learn. She stated that by the time the young girls come back from school, “they have forgotten all they knew by watching their mothers and don’t think it’s smart to do.”³⁷ Sadder still, Amy Smoker, who was young herself, said that some girls were never interested in weaving at all, and that they were “just different than us.”

O’Neale also noticed the restriction of prescribed fires by federal and state agencies, even though these fires are necessary to rejuvenate basket materials, reporting the lament. “that fires cannot be set as they used to be by the old-time

³³ O’Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:1.

³⁴ O’Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:3.

³⁵ O’Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:1.

³⁶ O’Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:1.

³⁷ O’Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:3.

weavers, and by the regret that accidental burnings occur so seldom in places where they do most basket makers any good” (1995 [1932]:15). While many of the elders retained the knowledge of where and when to set fires for hazel and beargrass, they were restricted from doing so. Weavers ended up relying on naturally occurring wildfires to find weaving materials that had been burned, but as Melissa Meyers pointed out, fires were not always in areas that burned the materials that they needed.³⁸ Even when hazel and beargrass did burn in naturally occurring fires, Daisy Jones (Karuk) stressed that since there were so few areas that were available after the fires, everybody went to the same place. This would result in overharvesting the materials.³⁹

Finally, O’Neale documented that Klamath River weavers’ decreased production of baskets that were used in in the community and even those that were made for the tourist market. Baskets used for food gathering and preparation were not being made because of the availability of utilitarian goods brought in by white settlers (O’Neale 1995 [1932]:147). Everyday caps that both men and women wore were not made because they had fallen out of fashion. Although weavers made some basket caps for the market, few weavers made them for ceremonial purposes, since many ceremonies ceased to be performed. Other baskets that were central to the ceremonies, such as medicine baskets and jump dance baskets, were not being made with any regularity. Another important point was that the market for baskets, particularly for innovative designs and styles, was decreasing at the time when O’Neale was interviewing basket weavers. Several weavers commented that they used to make good money from their baskets, but they referred to those days as in the past. Sarah Davis (Hupa) did not make nearly as many baskets as she had used to because “baskets don't bring enough pay.”⁴⁰ She and her husband were ranchers and there was entirely too much work to do on their farm to have time to weave. Sarah stated that they lived like “white men,” and she spent most of her time drying fruit, threshing grain, shocking hay, and cooking for the workers. It was difficult for her to even gather materials to weave baskets, because her husband just did not have the time to take her to gathering areas, saying that the materials were far away and that her man needed to go, too, since they would have to camp out one to two nights. The gathering trips would take him away from his work, and he had stock to feed. The only time she had to weave was in the winter, when her farming duties did not call her away from weaving. Similarly, Lucinda Jack (Hupa/Yurok) complained that she did not get nearly enough money for her baskets and that she made more raising pigs and farming.⁴¹

Even though there were some weavers who gave up weaving consistently or altogether, many continued to weave for themselves and for their communities. Still others refused to sell their own baskets because they were spiritually important. Daisy Jones (Karuk) held onto the jump dance basket that was made by her great aunt. She said that she would never part with it, although she had made one like it

³⁸ O’Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:1.

³⁹ O’Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:3.

⁴⁰ O’Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:4.

⁴¹ O’Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:4.

for someone because they had requested it.⁴² O'Neale also offered to buy a soup bowl from Dora Davis (Karuk) but she refused O'Neale because her husband, Karuk medicine man Shan Davis, had eaten out of it. The basket was powerful, and Dora noted that "it would rain torrents if it were to be sold."⁴³ Mrs. Redwood Tom (Hupa) still made caps for ceremonies only and also refused to sell her old baskets to O'Neale, who had offered to buy them.⁴⁴ Mrs. Redwood Tom made sure that girls in her community had caps to wear for when they danced in ceremonies, since it was Indian law that baskets were "meant to be used when they were finished." Additionally, though it was taboo to do so, Josephine Campbell stated that she kept the baskets of her deceased relatives because there were so few baskets in her community.⁴⁵

J. P. Harrington and the Johnson Collection

While the previous two studies, focused, more or less, on typologies of various aspects of the basket weaving practice, looking at the ethnographic data associated with the Johnson Collection of belongings magnifies broader notions of connections to place, relationships among family and community members, and the social changes in Northwest California Indian societies. This collection speaks to the turbulence of the social and economic context in which these belongings were being turned over to, sold to, or taken by E. G. Johnson. Rather than concentrating solely on the physical properties of the objects—i.e., the size, materials, type—it is important to put them in context of the larger social field. Engaging with these "objects" as belongings—belonging *with* the community—shows that they were caught in the wake of unstable forces and pressure within the community.

The stories that come from the information on the tags associated with nearly every basket are generated both from Phoebe Maddux and from E. G. Johnson. Not including the Karuk language encoded on the tags, which describe the physical properties of the baskets, Mrs. Maddux focuses on the people and the places from which the baskets originated. Johnson also tells stories about the history of the baskets and/or the makers and places, but the information is presented in a way that reveals his positionality as a collector. In a handful of cases, there is information from both Mrs. Maddux and Johnson.

The stories that Mrs. Maddux shared about the belongings in this collection are as much about her own relationships with people, places, and belongings, as they are about where the baskets came from and how they made it into the collection. The circumstances of Mrs. Maddux's life—medicine woman, housekeeper, head of household, basket maker—who witnessed the rapid changes in her homeland wrought by the invasion of settlers in the Klamath River region, not to mention being held almost captive by Harrington in Washington, D. C., certainly influenced her discussion of the collection. Mrs. Maddux's relationships extended far over the

⁴² O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:3.

⁴³ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:3.

⁴⁴ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:4.

⁴⁵ O'Neale, BL, BANC FILM 2216: 1:4.

Klamath region and many of the baskets that she commented on were tied to a specific place, whether it was someone's home, a particular geographic region, or a sacred place. She spoke often of specific locations where she saw or interacted with people and baskets. The importance of place cannot be emphasized enough. By paying attention to the people and places that Mrs. Maddux implicates in her exploration of the collection, one can gain a sense of how these baskets indexed not only her social networks, but also the very nature of social agency the baskets themselves have. Her perspective is also invaluable for understanding that baskets used in everyday life were connected so deeply to places, families, and events.

Despite the passage of time since she last saw these baskets within her community, Mrs. Maddux talked about her memories tied to many of the baskets in this collection. She reminisced about seeing the basket used at someone's house, recalling humorous situations about the person who made the basket, and remembering how the basket moved from one weaver to the next, whether through gift, sale, or theft. Many of the baskets came from friends and relatives. She spoke about specific people who specialized in making particular baskets. She also talked about one of her acquaintances who would share the work of weaving large baskets with others to make the process go faster. Easily recognizing the work of many of her companions, Mrs. Maddux recounted stories about their lives together.

Linda Eisenhart (1981), who wrote a masters thesis about the Johnson collection, organized the Karuk portion of the collection by types of baskets, based on the categories identified by Mrs. Maddux. But there are other ways to assess this collection. These include how basketry is tied to place; the personal relationships in which baskets are enmeshed; the movements of baskets and how they shifted from place-to-place and person-to-person; and motivations for the sale/trade of the belongings in this collection. To understand the connections of place, relation, and motivation better, I will primarily be evaluating the subset of baskets in the Johnson Collection that came from a Karuk family. Then I will discuss individual baskets that bring these connections together. I will conclude this discussion with an overview of the social and historical contexts in which this collection occupies.

Phoebe Maddux

Phoebe Maddux (1866-1937) was a Karuk basket weaver and a third generation medicine woman, who practiced side by side with her mother since she was a young girl. When Mrs. Maddux was born, her mother had just come back from a hazel gathering trip. Recounting the story of Mrs. Maddux's birth, Harrington said, "[Mrs. Maddux's mother] came back with a big pack basket full of hazel sticks, and got sick, and gave birth to Phoebe" (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:232). After a period of time as a practicing medicine woman, she moved on to work in the homes of white settlers in the Klamath River region and raising children of her own. She was bilingual, speaking Karuk and English, which she had learned when she worked for white families as a housekeeper and cook (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:5).

When Mrs. Maddux was a young girl, she used to have many friends near Somes Bar, with whom she would spend most of her time (Harrington and Ferrara 2004). She also spent a lot of time with her mother, learning doctoring and learning to weave. When talking with Harrington, she spoke of loss—of all the people, young

and old, who passed before her. She also talked of her everyday life, eating two meals a day of salmon and acorn mush; only weaving in the mornings during the summer because the heat of the day would dry out her sticks; cracking acorns late into the night; and staying with her sister when she did not want to enter the marriage that had been arranged for her. Mrs. Maddux mentioned that she had once participated in a movie. When she wore her dentalium regalia, the movie producers called her “the Queen of California” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:171).

Mrs. Maddux’s mother shared with her stories that were often about the times before the settlers came to the Klamath and Salmon Rivers.

Phoebe’s mother told Phoebe that she first found out that the White people were coming when she was camping and gathering *axyúus* [nut of the gray pine or bull pine]...While she was there, three boys (her cousins) were along with her, and a Yreka Indian came from Yreka on a horse, saying that Whites were coming and that the Modoc Indians were going to make war on the Salmon River Indians. She said she could not get her eyes away from that horse. She left there in a great hurry for fear there was going to be a war among the Indians and that the three boys might get killed. (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:228)

Along with medicine formulas, Mrs. Maddux’s mother shared with her practical advice for everyday living, including this bit of information about weaving: “Phoebe’s mother used to say if you take care of your sticks and roots and things (caring and planning for them) it is just like earning money” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:80). Mrs. Maddux recounted some the moral lessons that her mother taught her with Harrington, saying that her mother taught never to make fun of anyone. “If you make fun of anybody’s shoes—for shoes have sense—and you will get the worst of it, for later you won’t have old shoes or won’t have no shoes [at all]” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:277). She also warned Mrs. Maddux to stick with the old ways. When she was dying, Mrs. Maddux’s mother told her, “Be good, be good to everybody and pick lots of acorns and make acorn soup. Do not throw away your money on white-man grub...You mustn’t cry for me, for I am getting old anyway; and you might get sick. I will cry for you—we have lived together a long time” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:77, 275).

Working with Harrington beginning in 1926, Mrs. Maddux not only provided Harrington with language terms in Karuk, she also spoke of her own experiences and knowledge about a wide range of topics. She discussed extensively about all aspects of the basket weaving process. She spent time reviewing ethnomusicologist H. H. Roberts’ recordings of over 300 Karuk songs, which Roberts had made with the assistance of Harrington (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:8). With Harrington, she reviewed Alfred Kroeber’s paper, *Basket Designs of the Indians of Northwestern California* (1905a), comparing his recorded details of names and kinds of basket designs to her own knowledge.

Mrs. Maddux was in her 60s when she spent over ten months with Harrington traveling to Washington, D. C., and working with his documentation projects. Harrington recorded fragments of Mrs. Maddux’s life in Karuk country

when they were there. She spoke of her experiences and day-to-day lives with others, relaying, among other things, place names, practices, stories, people, songs, beliefs, gossip, reminisces and anecdotes. Mrs. Maddux drew from her own experience, talking about what she had witnessed or had been told about by her mother. Indeed, Harrington often recorded, “Phoebe’s mother used to say...” Sharing what her mother used to say may have been Mrs. Maddux’s way of saying that what she thought did not necessarily represent other Karuk peoples’ lived experiences. She was emphatic on this point, telling Harrington:

vúr uum huuntáhich, koovúra uum uxxúti vúr uum íf pananíppiip, kúna vúra peethíttiimti pamúchuupha, vúr uum yíth

It is funny, each person thinks his version is the best, But when you compare the words, it don’t come out good, for each is different (Ferrara 2004:16).

Mrs. Maddux also knew that what she did with Harrington would likely not be circulated any further than the museum and would outlast her; “My work will stay here in the Nature Museum, but, poor me, I’ll be different road (dead)” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:73).

The Making of the Johnson Collection

Harrington purchased a collection of 430 baskets and other belongings in 1928 from a dealer named E. G. Johnson, who was a collector and dealer of baskets. Emil G Johnson, also known as Earl G. and E. G., worked as a piano salesman in Eureka, CA, in the 1910s, but through the help of his employer, opened up Johnson’s Bookstore.⁴⁶ Among the new and used books, sheet music, and pianos, Johnson began to sell baskets and other belongings from local tribes.⁴⁷ Native women would come into his store and sell or trade baskets to him. “He bought some baskets from [a Yurok woman], for a talking machine. Phoebe (Maddux) once sold a basket to him for two chairs and a bed” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:159).

In 1922, Johnson convinced Mrs. Lucretia Monroe, who was a prominent member of Eureka society, to put on consignment her basket collection in his store. Like many of her contemporaries, Mrs. Monroe collected baskets from local Indian tribes, particularly through her involvement with many charities in and around the Eureka area (Binkley 2002:194). Even though Mrs. Monroe was offered quite a bit of money for her collection by the Museum of the American Indian in New York (also known as the Heye Museum), Johnson stated that he could give her more than

⁴⁶ Eureka City Directory, 1910. N.d. Humboldt Historical Society, Eureka CA.; Eureka City Directory, 1915. N.d. Humboldt Historical Society, Eureka CA.; Eureka City Directory, 1919. N.d. Humboldt Historical Society, Eureka CA.; Johnson, Earl G. 1920 US Census, MooseRoots. <http://us-census.mooseroots.com/l/3437532/Earl-G-Johnson>, accessed November 13, 2015.

⁴⁷Eureka City Directory, 1920. N.d. Humboldt Historical Society, Eureka CA; Harrington and Ferrara 2004:159).

twice the price that the Museum offered her.⁴⁸ She took him up on his offer and handed over her collection of baskets, and then moved to San Francisco with her husband.

Mrs. Monroe had communicated over the period of 1922 through 1927 with Johnson regarding the state of her collection.⁴⁹ In 1926, she travelled to Eureka and revisited the collection for sale in Johnson's shop, seeing that it was safe. She continually sent him letters, but did not receive any communication in return. In 1927, she asked her friends to go check on the baskets, but to no avail. Mrs. Monroe was informed that Johnson had sold his shop and left Eureka, with no trace of the baskets.⁵⁰ In fact, Johnson had sold his Eureka store to Edmond D. Elliot sometime in 1928, although he apparently opened up another store in Southern California in 1927.⁵¹

Harrington contacted Johnson in late 1927 with regard to a request from the curator of the Southwest Museum.⁵² Johnson, in return, told Harrington of a collection that he had for sale, detailing the names of the makers or caretakers of each belonging. This collection included a gambling tray used by a Karuk ceremonial leader; another tray that came from Hoopa; other trays from Requa, Johnsons, and Weitchpec; a drum used by a Karuk medicine woman; a wand used in a ceremony; ceremonial acorn soup baskets used by a Karuk ceremonial leader; and many Hupa objects from different locations along the Klamath and Trinity Rivers.⁵³ Johnson invited Harrington to see his collection and offered to give him copies of the data he had on nearly every belonging. It was unusual for dealers in the 1920s to collect so much personal information about the baskets and other belongings, so perhaps this might have been the reason why Harrington was so interested in working with Johnson. Harrington met with Johnson in Oakland, CA in the spring of 1928 and purchased the collection for \$1800.00.⁵⁴

Very excited to have an authentic collection of baskets and other belongings from Karuk and Yurok and Wiyot tribes, Harrington shipped the collection directly to the Smithsonian. He wanted to photograph, study and write up this collection of baskets, so he could get "exhaustive information on their weaves and designs."⁵⁵ He

⁴⁸ Lucretia Monroe to Smithsonian Institution, February 3, 1930. Records of the Bureau of American Ethnology Series 1 Correspondence, letters Received 1909-1949. National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

⁴⁹ Lucretia Monroe to Smithsonian Institution, February 3, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁵⁰ Lucretia Monroe to Smithsonian Institution, February 3, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁵¹ Eureka City Directory, 1928. N.d. Humboldt Historical Society, Eureka CA

⁵² E. G. Johnson to J. P. Harrington, December 31, 1927. Northern and Central California: Karok/Shasta/Konomihu, John Peabody Harrington papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

⁵³ Johnson to Harrington, December 31, 1927. J. P. Harrington Papers, NAA..

⁵⁴ Johnson to Harrington, February 17, 1928. J. P. Harrington Papers, NAA.; Harrington to HW Dorsey, March 30, 1928. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁵⁵ Harrington to Dorsey, February 20, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA..

had anticipated publishing this information in a larger work on the ethnology of the Karuk People (Ferrara 2004). As Harrington evaluated the collection with Mrs. Maddux, he wrote down the Karuk names for the designs and types of baskets, some of which was included in his 1932 publication, *Tobacco among the Karuk Indians of California*.

Harrington was so impressed by Johnson that he offered to get in touch with his H. W. Dorsey, a clerk at the Smithsonian, recommending Johnson to be employed by the BAE.⁵⁶ Johnson was interested in being a professional collector for the Smithsonian and so Harrington urged Dorsey to give money to him so that he could purchase a collection of Hupa baskets.⁵⁷ Dorsey agreed and told Johnson that he would reimburse him for up to \$500.00 on a collection of baskets, stone implements, and other old objects, so long as it met with his approval and so long as Johnson provided documentation on each item.⁵⁸

During May 1928, Johnson repeatedly wrote to Harrington, describing specific belongings that he was acquiring to sell to the Smithsonian.⁵⁹ These belongings, which were purchased, or possibly taken from Yurok, Karuk, and Hupa territories, included belongings used in ceremony. For some of his purchases he did so on commission from the BAE, although his correspondence shows that payment from the BAE was delayed, which caused Johnson much consternation. Beyond collecting on commission, Johnson went so far as to propose acting as a research assistant for Harrington.⁶⁰

Johnson's pride in his association with the BAE was public knowledge, but in 1929, Johnson's ambitions of becoming a full-time collector for it quickly faded away. In August 1929, Mrs. Jennie May Higgins contacted Dorsey at the Smithsonian looking for Johnson.⁶¹ Johnson had a 99-year lease of a home that was owned by Mrs. Higgins, but had not paid his rent for a number of months, leaving Mrs. Higgins nearly destitute. She was checking to see if Dorsey could put her in touch with Johnson, so he could follow through on his payments.

The following year, Mrs. Monroe also contacted the Smithsonian looking for Johnson.⁶² Apparently, Johnson had not paid Mrs. Monroe what she was due for the sale of her collection. Mrs. Monroe contacted the Smithsonian Institution to find out if they had any current contact information for Johnson. She wrote, "In March 1929, [Johnson] wrote me an apologetic letter giving the excuse for not writing to me that nearly the entire collection was burned along with the store and his own treasures

⁵⁶ Harrington to Dorsey, March 19, 1928. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁵⁷ Harrington to Dorsey, March 19, 1928. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁵⁸ Dorsey to Harrington, March 20, 1928. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁵⁹ Johnson to Harrington, May 6, 1928. J. P. Harrington Papers, NAA.; Johnson to Harrington, May 25, 1928a. J. P. Harrington Papers, NAA.; Johnson to Harrington, May 25, 1928b. J. P. Harrington Papers, NAA.; Johnson to Harrington, May 30, 1928. J. P. Harrington Papers, NAA.

⁶⁰ Johnson to Harrington, May 25, 1928a. J. P. Harrington Papers, NAA.;

⁶¹ Mrs. Jennie Higgins to Smithsonian Institution, August 9, 1929. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁶² Monroe to Smithsonian Institution, February 3, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

and he hated to tell me of it.”⁶³ Through some investigative work on the part of her San Francisco attorney, Mrs. Monroe found out that there was, of course, no fire and Johnson “sold his shop and left Eureka.”⁶⁴

Shortly after receiving Mrs. Monroe’s letter, Dorsey contacted Harrington regarding the sale of the Monroe collection, concerned that Johnson’s nonpayment to Mrs. Monroe would reflect poorly on the reputation of the Smithsonian Institution.⁶⁵ He urged Harrington to find out what was going on and asked for his advice on how to respond to Mrs. Monroe.⁶⁶ Harrington did reply to Dorsey, stating that he had indeed purchased the collection from Johnson before the Heye Museum had the chance to purchase it.⁶⁷ He noted that the collection was in his office in Washington, D. C., and that he had spent many days going over the collection with Mrs. Maddux, “getting all sorts of splendid detailed information about the objects, of designs, materials used, etc.” Harrington also stated that Johnson “gave me detailed information of how he acquired almost every basket, and I have tags all written down and it checks exactly with information given by Phoebe and others on the river.”

Not knowing that either of these requests took place, in 1930 Johnson wrote to Matthew Stirling of the BAE, asking him if he would be interested in purchasing a collection of over 300 objects that were made by many different Northern California tribes.⁶⁸ He also reiterated his desire to conduct more fieldwork for the Smithsonian in the future. Stirling sent a curt reply to Johnson, stating that there was no need of any more Northern California objects for the Smithsonian collection, but no mention was made of the requests from Mrs. Higgins or Mrs. Monroe.⁶⁹ No further communication between Johnson and the Smithsonian Institution occurred.

Reviewing the correspondences among the different parties highlights the interests that each person—Mrs. Monroe, E. G. Johnson, and J. P. Harrington—had in the creation, and dispensation of the Karuk, Yurok, and Hupa belongings that now comprise the Johnson Collection held at the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of Natural History. Before these belongings became a museum “collection,” the individual baskets were created by Karuk weavers for a variety of purposes and were transferred between people by a variety of different means. Lucretia Monroe collected some of these baskets prior to 1922, during the so-called “Indian Craze”—a value-laden system of collecting and displaying Native American objects as a way to “reintroduce a sense of authenticity” into the lives of those suffering from the anomie of industrialization (Hutchinson 2009:23). Mrs. Monroe opted to sell her collection when she moved and so these baskets shifted hands to E. G. Johnson, who saw this collection as a commodity and a means to improve his social status. Indeed, when seeking a job from Dorsey at the Smithsonian, he touted his working

⁶³ Monroe to Smithsonian Institution, February 3, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁶⁴ Monroe to Smithsonian Institution, February 3, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁶⁵ Dorsey to Harrington, February 14, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁶⁶ Dorsey to Harrington, February 14, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁶⁷ Harrington to Dorsey, February 20, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁶⁸ Johnson to Matthew Stirling, February 4, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

⁶⁹ Stirling to Johnson, May 19, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

relationships with local tribes as a way to show that he could elevate his position from a second-hand seller to a legitimized collector.⁷⁰ Harrington's motives for purchasing the collection from Johnson was, in a sense, a triumph, since he had a working set of objects that could elicit more linguistic data from his interlocutor. In addition to the elicitation of Karuk language about the baskets, Harrington seemed to be very interested in verifying the work of other researchers, and having a set of baskets with which he could obtain Karuk design names, similar to Kroeber back in 1905, appeared to have been a major focus of the work that he and Mrs. Maddux did together.

Documenting the Collection

Johnson did not simply buy collections. Although there was evidence that Lucretia Monroe's collection was included in the larger Johnson collection that Harrington purchased, many of the ethnographic details on tags were written in Johnson's hand, and some of the notes referred to returning to the same location/person to purchase more. It is thus likely that many of the belongings were actually collected by Johnson himself. When discussing this collection with Phoebe Maddux, Harrington asked her about the information already present on the tags, which she, for the most part, validated.

In addition to the typological information Harrington gleaned from Mrs. Maddux through the examination of the Johnson collection, he amassed a great quantity of ethnographic field notes. While not complete narratives about Mrs. Maddux's life and her recollections of Karuk everyday and ceremonial life before the incursion of Karuk lands, there was enough to draw upon that illustrated some of the events that were important enough for her to mention and for Harrington to write down. Mrs. Maddux sometimes told Harrington long stories about the people she knew and interacted with, but did not write it down, saying in his notes that Mrs. Maddux knows "many details" (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:72).

An Alternative to Anthropological Typology

Narratives from the Johnson Collection

Johnson labeled 84 baskets in this collection as originating from a particular Karuk family. Of all the different groupings in the Johnson Collection, Mrs. Maddux commented more on these baskets. As with many other baskets, Mrs. Maddux spoke about the designs and types in the Karuk language, but most of all, she shared memories that were raised by looking at and handling the baskets in Harrington's office in Washington, D. C.. Mrs. Maddux recognized the makers of many of these baskets and was both shocked and dismayed that they had been sold to Johnson.

Phoebe Maddux's Recollections about the Baskets in the Johnson Collection

Mrs. Maddux said one Karuk weaver, whose basket was in the Johnson Collection, had never wove until she came to live in [a Karuk community] in her old

⁷⁰ Johnson to Stirling, February 4, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

age, and used “poor sticks” in the tobacco baskets she made for sale (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:81, 90). Mrs. Maddux said that this woman made lots of tobacco baskets, but never made covers for them, so Mrs. Maddux wove covers for the two baskets made by this weaver while she was in Washington, D. C., with Harrington (Plate 1).⁷¹ She stated that the baskets made by this weaver in the collection were among the first ones she had ever completed. Also, Mrs. Maddux stated that this weaver had accumulated a collection of baskets from a number of different Karuk families.

Upon identifying another Karuk weaver’s baskets, Mrs. Maddux shared with Harrington some of her memories about her. Mrs. Maddux said that “She was a happy old woman, laughing all the time,” who made many *múruks* (mealing trays)⁷² and big *sípnuuks* (storage baskets) (Plate. 2). Mrs. Maddux also remembered seeing a basket made by another friend of hers. She said that her friend used to make large baskets, mostly *ikráamnav* (hopper)⁷³ used for grinding acorns, although she would also make large *tínvaap* (flour sifter)⁷⁴ as well; “[She] used to make these big ones. She was the only one who made these large ones” (Plates 3 and 4).⁷⁵ Recognizing a different basket that her friend had made, Mrs. Maddux remarked that she used the *asipárax* (cooking basket)⁷⁶ at her friend’s home; “[Mrs. Maddux] used to make mush in it to feed all the [Karuk boys in the community]” (Plate 5).⁷⁷

Mrs. Maddux was close to a family, who lived in near to her, and she had a lot to share about them that was provoked by seeing their belongings that were in the Johnson Collection. There were, of course, the *pátarav* (soup bowls), which Johnson had referred to as a ceremonial leader’s festival bowls in his 1927 letter to Harrington, in the collection. Mrs. Maddux did not talk about the baskets themselves, other than to relay the design names to Harrington. But the baskets were ones that she had seen at the ceremonies that the ceremonial leader used to provide. Mrs. Maddux told Harrington:

For many years [the ceremonial leader] and his brother were the only ones who made the *pikyálish* at [a community]. They went alone up on the mountains. At last they got tired of it and asked each other why they should do all this for the other Indians when the other Indians were unwilling to help. They discontinued it. (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:153)

Mrs. Maddux’s friend, Jenny, used to make large *ikráamnav* (hoppers), which she admired because of the braiding technique that was used on the edging, a technique

⁷¹ “Tobacco Basket,” Cat. No. 411392 A&B, Acc. No. 288476, NMNH.

⁷² “Basketry Bowl,” Cat. No. 411504, Acc. No. 288476, NMNH

⁷³ “Hopper,” Cat. No. 411543, Acc. No. 288476, NMNH.

⁷⁴ “Basket Plate,” Cat. No. 411461, Acc. No. 288476, NMNH.

⁷⁵ Papers of John Peabody Harrington, N.d. Karuk and Yurok, Boxes 1279-1282. NAA.

⁷⁶ “Soup Bowl,” Cat. No. 411379, Acc. No. 288476, NMNH.

⁷⁷ Papers of John Peabody Harrington, N.d. Karuk and Yurok, Boxes 1279-1282. NAA.

that Mrs. Maddux had never learned to do. One *ikráamnav*⁷⁸ in particular sparked her love of weaving (Plate 6). Because this *Ikráamnav* was not complete, she described in detail the steps needed to finish the basket. She also recognized that this *Ikráamnav* was special, stating that it was one that was to be used in a ceremony.⁷⁹

Mrs. Maddux recognized the work of a few of her acquaintances, commenting on their quality of weaving technique. She remarked that a basket that was made by a Karuk woman showed the hand of at least two different weavers, saying “looks like a different hand... they often used to do this—a different woman would pick it up” (Plate 7).⁸⁰ Mrs. Maddux had a very old basket cap, given to her by this woman (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:150). Mrs. Maddux remembered this woman teaching her about weaving baskets: “Sing lots if you hain’t got no bones in you. If you don’t sing, you’re down, you’re just nothing” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:135). Another basket made Mrs. Maddux think of a friend of hers, who raised 11 children, wove many baskets and did a lot of quilt work (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:78). Mrs. Maddux said of the small, slanted basket, “This looks like [Mrs. Maddux’s friend’s] work. She did not have no eyes” (Plate 8).⁸¹ Even though this friend was blind, she could tell the difference between the different materials by touch and always made fairly tidy stitches (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:78).

Mrs. Maddux described how some baskets were taken by Karuk persons without expressed permission. She said that a Karuk person who was supposed to be holding onto an *asipárax* (cooking basket),⁸² which belonged to another family that was moving and had to sell everything that they had, somehow wound up in the Johnson collection (Plate 9).⁸³ As she continued to look through the collection, Mrs. Maddux found another basket that belonged to this family and said that she knew who stole these *múruks* (mealing trays).⁸⁴ Mrs. Maddux expressed her anger with another Karuk person, stating that the *múruks* (mealing trays) were taken from a friend of hers and were sold without her friend’s knowledge (Plate 10).⁸⁵

Mrs. Maddux was upset to see three particular baskets at the Smithsonian, since they were to have been given to her when a relative of hers had passed away. She stated very clearly that her relative had made an *átikiinva* (burden-basket)⁸⁶ that was supposed to be given to her son, Freddie Maddux, when it was completed (Plate 11).⁸⁷ But, when Mrs. Maddux’s relative passed away, all of her baskets went to another Karuk person. Mrs. Maddux noticed a *kaschiip’ ápxaan* (porcupine basket

⁷⁸ “Hopper,” Cat. No. 411544, Acc. No. 488476, NMNH.

⁷⁹Papers of John Peabody Harrington, N.d. Karuk and Yurok, Boxes 1279-1282. NAA.

⁸⁰Papers of John Peabody Harrington, N.d. Karuk and Yurok, Boxes 1279-1282. NAA.

⁸¹ “Basket Bowl,” Cat. No. 411389, Acc. No. 288476, NMNH.

⁸² “Cooking Basket,” Cat. No. 411388, Acc. No. 288476, NMNH.

⁸³Papers of John Peabody Harrington, N.d. Karuk and Yurok, Boxes 1279-1282. NAA.

⁸⁴ “Basket Tray,” Cat. No. 411517, Acc. No. 288476, NMNH.

⁸⁵Papers of John Peabody Harrington, N.d. Karuk and Yurok, Boxes 1279-1282. NAA.

⁸⁶ “Burden Basket,” Cat. No. 411546, Acc. 288476, NMNH

⁸⁷Papers of John Peabody Harrington, N.d. Karuk and Yurok, Boxes 1279-1282. NAA.

hat)⁸⁸ in the collection that had also been in this person's possession (Plate 12). Mrs. Maddux said that this *kaschiip' ápxaan* was used for weddings in her family. Seeing another one of her relative's baskets, a *sipnúk'anamahach*⁸⁹ (little trinket basket), Mrs. Maddux shared that her family used to tease this relative about using so many porcupine quills because they made for "ugly baskets" (Plate 13).

There were many small moments in which Mrs. Maddux would conjure up memories that the baskets brought about. Touching and interacting with the baskets, evaluating them for their designs and quality, Mrs. Maddux would remark about the makers, often quickly recalling their names and handiwork. Despite Mrs. Maddux not seeing these baskets for years, she remembered who made them, places where they interacted with them, and other memories that were jogged by them. She especially remembered the children whose baskets were represented in the collection Harrington showed her. For example, Mrs. Maddux seemed awestruck by the *sipnúk'anamahach* (little trinket basket)⁹⁰ that was made by a Karuk girl, who was only twelve years old when she made it, saying that she could not believe that someone so young could make such a fine basket (Plate 14).⁹¹ She also shared that another Karuk girl, ten years old, made the *tínihich* (flat woven mat for ornamental purposes) (Plate 15).⁹² Even though it was a style that Karuk weavers never used to make, Mrs. Maddux liked this little basket. She enjoyed seeing this 10-year old girl and her friends take the *páah* (canoe) to school, travelling three to four miles on the river every day (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:167).

Mrs. Maddux also recalled the name of a young 5-year old girl, wove two *tínihich* (flat woven mat for ornamental purposes).⁹³ This little girl was born to the sister of one of Mrs. Maddux's friends, but her friend ended up taking responsibility for the little girl and set about teaching her how to weave (Plate 16). Mrs. Maddux remembered her friend well, even though she had passed away ten years previous. When she saw one of her friend's *chaxtúyhiich* (toy baby cradle),⁹⁴ she cried (Plate 17). When Harrington had shown Mrs. Maddux the baby cradle, she was reminded of when her own baby son died. When her baby died, she took the baby basket and tore the top off of it. She then stuck it in a tree near *as'úchuuphitih* rock. "They told Pheobe never to look again towards where one leaves a baby cradle, for, if you do, you will feel bad about the loss of your baby, and then your living baby will get sick and die, because you get down that way." (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:229).

An acquaintance of Mrs. Maddux made a *sikihmáhyaanaram* (spoon basket)⁹⁵ that was in the Johnson Collection (Plate 18). This acquaintance, who had died 20 years previously, used to live near Mrs. Maddux and Mrs. Maddux used to visit her

⁸⁸ "Basket Cap," Cat. No. 411443, Acc. 288476, NMNH

⁸⁹ "Trinket Basket," Cat. No. 411427, Acc. 288476, NMNH

⁹⁰ "Miniature Basket," Cat. No. 411421, Acc. 288476, NMNH

⁹¹ Papers of John Peabody Harrington, N.d. Karuk and Yurok, Boxes 1279-1282. NAA.

⁹² "Basketry Plaque," Cat. No. 411679, Acc. 288476, NMNH

⁹³ "Basketry Plate" and "Basketry Bowl," Cat. Nos. 411496 and 411497, Acc. 288476, NMNH

⁹⁴ "Doll's Cradle," Cat. No. 411465, Acc. 288476, NMNH

⁹⁵ "Openwork Basket," Cat. No. 411447, Acc. 288476, NMNH

often. She praised her acquaintance for being a good housekeeper, even though she had been blind for a very long time. One time when Mrs. Maddux was with her, the woman told her about her marriage to a white man, saying “Long ago my father told me not to marry a whiteman. But I was young and I married one. By and by, he went away and he made one baby with another woman, another and another” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:168).

The *sipnúk' anamahach* (little trinket basket)⁹⁶ and the *átimnam* (pack basket)⁹⁷ that were made by another acquaintance and her mother, respectively, sparked Mrs. Maddux’s memories about their family. When she was a little girl, Mrs. Maddux witnessed women dancing in a ceremony, “tossing money in a big openwork tray over the fire” (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:84). One of the women was her acquaintance’s grandmother, and it was the only time that she saw women dancing in that ceremony. Like so many other times when she looked at the baskets made by people she knew, Mrs. Maddux saw a pack basket that was made by her acquaintance’s mother and it reminded Mrs. Maddux of the mother’s brother and uncle, who had both passed away (Plate 19). Mrs. Maddux also talked about how she used to weave with this woman in the summertime. Mrs. Maddux recalled how her acquaintance wove long into the day and would complain, “If they only knew how sore my hands are every day “ (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:80). She liked the little basket that this woman had made, and told Harrington that it was one that she had made as a wedding gift because she used Oregon grape root-dyed porcupine quills (Plate 20).

Social Contexts of Baskets Collected by E. G. Johnson

The unscrupulous nature in which E. G. Johnson conducted his business of buying/trading in Northwest California belongings stands out in narratives recorded for the collection. Johnson made an effort to record sensational stories about the baskets or their makers, capitalizing on local fame or notoriety, perhaps to add additional value his “product.”

According to Mrs. Maddux, one *átimnam* (pack basket, burden basket, literally to carry in a burden basket)⁹⁸ had been used to invert over a grave. Johnson wrote on the tag accompanying the basket that it “has a history.” He recounted a story about “Ruben,” who had killed a man who subsequently fell over the basket and died. Johnson went further, to state that “Ruben” had been acquitted of this murder, but was later convicted for a bank robbery. “Ruben’s attorney Ryan took all of his lands in payment for services. “Ruben” and his partner in crime were sent to San Quentin, and the partner was subsequently killed in a prison riot.

According to Walton (1988), “Ruben” was actually Marion Rube (Yurok), who was born in 1894 near Martin’s Ferry on the Hoopa Indian Reservation. In 1921, Rube killed an Indian policeman, Andrew McCardie. According to McCardie’s friends, Rube killed him for a bounty that was put on McCardie’s head by bootleggers. McCardie’s relatives demanded to be compensated for his death, in the

⁹⁶ “Pack Basket,” Cat. No. 411552, Acc. 288476, NMNH

⁹⁷ “Wedding Gift Basket,” Cat. No. 411426, Acc. 288476, NMNH

⁹⁸ “Grave Basket,” Cat. No. 411693, Acc. No. 288476. NMNH.

form of a cash settlement. It was believed by friends of Rube that he was prompted to rob the bank, in desperation for money to pay for his crime in the traditional way, otherwise he would have been killed to settle the debt. Rube was convicted of the bank robbery, along with his partner Lawrence Mahach, and sent to San Quentin for 25 years. In 1925, Rube took part in a prison uprising, and a fellow prisoner killed Mahach. Rube escaped confinement and was ultimately killed by police in December 1928.

Marion Rube's uncle's wife, who was from Martin's Ferry, sold 49 baskets to Johnson, although it is unclear how Johnson acquired the grave marker. With the exception of one basket, this collection is comprised of cooking and acorn soup baskets, and nearly all of the cooking baskets show signs of use, with scorch marks on the interiors of cooking bowls, where the hot rock used for making acorn soup rested too long. Of this collection, Johnson noted, "All this bunch came from Marion Rube's uncle, near Martin's Ferry. This uncle is a man to see again. He would not sell anything, but his wife did."⁹⁹

Lucy Thompson (Yurok) was well known in Northwestern California at the beginning of the 20th century. She wrote *To the American Indian* in 1916, which chronicled all of the changes she had seen since the gold rush. She introduced herself to her readers by stating:

As there is been so much said and written about the American Indians, with my tribe, the Klamath Indians, included, by the white people, which is guessed at and not fact, I deem it necessary to first tell you who I am, for which please of not criticize me for being egotistical. I am a pure, full-blooded Klamath River woman...and I wear the tattoos on my chin that have been the custom for our women for many generations. I was born at Pec-wan village, and of the highest birth or what we term under Talth. (Thompson 1991[1916]).

In her book, she further describes her experiences living on the Klamath River, the settlement of her homeland, the horrors of contact, and aspects of Yurok ceremonial life. Particularly important, she shared her wealth of knowledge about traditional Yurok life, including burial customs. Relevant to this collection, Lucy asserted that Yurok peoples,

always burn[ed] the basket material of the deceased, or any unfinished work that belongs to the one who just died... [and]... in [the] grave, things of little value are placed, things usually belonging to the deceased. When things of value are placed in the grave, it is broken up, which destroys the value of the article (1991 [1916]:103, 127).

Thirteen belongings in the Johnson Collection were recorded as being from Lucy Thompson's mother. Most were baskets, with a few mush paddles and other pieces as well. What is notable about these belongings is that they were all in the

⁹⁹Papers of John Peabody Harrington, N.d. Karuk and Yurok, Boxes 1279-1282. NAA.

process of being burned. Scorch marks are present on all of the baskets, with some more fire damaged than others. Mrs. Maddux and Harrington both commented on this group of belongings. Mrs. Maddux thought the *sikihmáhyaanaram* (spoon basket-literally spoon-putting-in-place)¹⁰⁰ looked like a basket that a friend of hers had made (Plate 21). She asserted that she knew when this basket was burnt, and that her friend did not sell it. On the tag for the *asipárax* (cooking basket)¹⁰¹ Harrington wrote, “Mrs. Lucy Thompson’s mother’s [baskets] were all being burned when she died, but were salvaged by the collector” (Plate 22); “the collector” referred to was E. G. Johnson. Confirming this, on the tag for another *asipárax*,¹⁰² Harrington noted that Johnson had told him that these baskets were indeed from Lucy Thompson’s mother’s home, and “They were going to burn them when she died” (Plate 23).

Johnson had collected another four baskets that had belonged to a Yurok woman. The story that Johnson had written down about this woman is heartbreaking and brings up questions about his opportunistic nature, as he seemed to capitalize on grieving families’ decisions to sell their belongings. It also brings up the question of whether he legitimately purchased the belongings or if he acquired them through illegal means.

The two *sipnúk’anamahach* (little trinket basket)¹⁰³ were made by this Yurok woman’s daughter, who was about 20 years old (Plates 24 and 25); one *sipnúkith* (money basket)¹⁰⁴ was made by the elder woman’s mother (Plate 26) and one *ápxaan* (basket hat)¹⁰⁵ was made by the woman herself (Plate 27). According to Johnson, the elder woman lived high on a hill and had become disabled.¹⁰⁶ The woman’s daughter came back from school to take care of her mother, planting a garden from which they could feed themselves. Unfortunately, Johnson mentioned, the daughter committed suicide. Why Johnson felt that this information was appropriate to include with the identification of the baskets is an unanswerable question. I include it here to speak to the grief that the baskets themselves are associated with and are burdened to carry.

A Sense of Place and Belonging

From these fragmentary notes emerge a picture of links between families at towns up and down the Klamath. Baskets were made by some women, bought and used by others, and promised to still others (if they were not intended to be burned when their owner died). The baskets that Mrs. Maddux interacted with in Washington, D. C., were ones that she came into contact with during everyday and ceremonial life. They provoked emotions in her that reflected the losses she

¹⁰⁰ “Spoon Basket,” Cat. No. 411643, Acc. No. 288476. NMNH.

¹⁰¹ “Cooking Basket,” Cat. No. 411644, Acc. No. 288476. NMNH.

¹⁰² “Cooking Basket,” Cat. No. 411646, Acc. No. 288476. NMNH.

¹⁰³ “Small Basket,” Cat. No. 411636 and Cat. No. 411637, Acc. No. 288476. NMNH.

¹⁰⁴ “Storage Basket,” Cat. No. 411688, Acc. No. 288476. NMNH.

¹⁰⁵ “Basket Cap,” Cat. No. 411638, Acc. No. 288476. NMNH.

¹⁰⁶ Papers of John Peabody Harrington, N.d. Karuk and Yurok, Boxes 1279-1282. NAA.

experienced over the course of her lifetime. The loss of her deceased relations and friends permeated her experiences with many of the baskets in the Johnson collection. But along with sadness came anger and outrage, seeing baskets that should have been burned or buried; finding baskets, which were supposed to be stewarded by a family, were sold instead; and realizing that an acquaintance of hers took baskets that were supposed to go to her son after her relative had died. The loss of community interrelationships weighed heavily on her as well. As a medicine woman, she was deeply affected by the strife over and the loss of ceremonies that were carried out by a family. While Harrington may have pressed her for details about ceremonies, it was not the mechanics of the ceremonies that she remarked on; instead it was the contexts in which they had changed. In a way of processing life before contact and the confusion, strife, and societal changes that occurred after, Mrs. Maddux marked these by invoking her mother. Bringing her mother's voice into the present seemed to be a way in which Mrs. Maddux could deal with the drastic shifts in resources, beliefs, and attitudes that had occurred during her lifetime.

Mrs. Maddux also keenly evaluated the baskets. Harrington elicited the design names and styles of baskets in the Karuk language, so Mrs. Maddux had to interact with the baskets on that typological level. But, her trained weaver's eye also evaluated other weavers' work. She remarked on the quality of materials that weavers had used in the making of their baskets and their weaving ability to use such materials. She also offered Harrington detailed instructions on how to fix or finish baskets that came into the museum in various states of disrepair. And it was her care about the baskets and it was her concern over her legacy of leaving her knowledge behind at the museum that prompted her to repair baskets. She fixed the baskets that she felt she should do, without repairing baskets that were grave markers or ones that were salvaged from funerary pyres. She wanted to leave the baskets there as fine examples of Karuk weaving and so she finished many of the ones that were partially completed, but did not touch the ones that were beyond her weaving ability.

It was in the intimate moments that Mrs. Maddux showed that baskets were more than just mnemonic devices or objects to behold. Mrs. Maddux made soup for boys in her community, using one of her friend's old cooking basket. This act tied the basket to her, to the boys, to her friend and her community. One basket prompted her memory of gathering beargrass with a woman, long since dead, reminding her of her connection to gathering sites in a place which she was not sure she would see again. Mrs. Maddux's mother told her when she was downhearted to sing and do something with her hands (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:223). Mrs. Maddux looked at her acquaintance's basket. Her acquaintance wished for someone to know how her hands ached everyday and Mrs. Maddux felt that same pain as she wove for Harrington in Washington, D. C. (Harrington and Ferrara 2004:80).

Discussion

These memories, embedded in the baskets, were embodied in the "actions and interactions with people and things in particular spatial settings" (Hendon 2010:4).

“Fixing social and individual histories in space,” landscapes provide “a focus by which people engage with the world, and create and sustain a sense of their social identity” (Knapp and Ashmore 1999:13,15). Through her interventions, Mrs. Maddux revealed the ways in which the meaning and value of the baskets were enmeshed with the people and places with whom she interacted, indexing not only her social networks, but also the very nature of social agency the baskets themselves possess (Gell 1998:19). Indeed, the dynamic relationships between baskets, basketry materials, people, and both the spiritual and social worlds, were interwoven in the everyday actions and practices of many Karuk people (Smith n.d.).

The Johnson Collection speaks to the broad movements of basketry across the landscape. Baskets can be parsed out to the specific locations from which they were gathered. On a large scale, these baskets moved from specific locations dotted up and down the Klamath River, from the mouth of the Klamath, north to Happy Camp. Johnson made forays into different regions to purchase these collections from individuals or their family members. Johnson took the remaining collections from his shop in Eureka to Oakland, where he sold over 400 belongings to Harrington, who, in turn, had them shipped to Washington, D. C.. Looking at certain sets of baskets that Johnson documented shows how intended movements were disrupted. Looking at the specific baskets that Mrs. Maddux commented on shows how the baskets moved within the community.

Each basket tells a story, more than its type, design and use, and Mrs. Maddux helped bring voice to these belongings by telling Harrington more than what he asked for. On nearly every tag that was attached to the baskets, Harrington noted the Karuk terms that he sought, and also the personal information that Mrs. Maddux recounted. Despite the passage of time since she last saw these baskets within her community, Mrs. Maddux talked about her memories tied to many of the baskets, which came from acquaintances, friends and family. She recalled admiring baskets her friends used. She recounted amusing stories about some of the people whose baskets are now at the Smithsonian. She recollected how some of the baskets moved from one weaver to the next, until they ultimately wound up in Harrington’s hands.

Mrs. Maddux’s memories reflect the changing tide of basket weaving. Tracing the baskets’ itineraries reveals how they were once members of everyday and ceremonial life. For Mrs. Maddux, a grouping of baskets from the Orcutt family, spoke of baskets being tied to a larger social community, through the painful stories of their acquisition and sale. Baskets became needed commodities to be traded, oftentimes through desperation and under duress. The baskets moved between community members, into the hands of a dealer. From there they moved again, across the country to a museum that never exhibited them. There, Mrs. Maddux, who was so far from home, remembered the community from which they came. And despite these belongings being far away from home, the reflections from one weaver breathed life into them, even though they remain immobile in their cabinets in DC.

While Harrington focused on eliciting data on the typologies of the objects in the collection Mrs. Maddux revealed a whole network of social relations that, as Clifford states, decenter the “physical objects in favor of narrative, history, and politics” (1997:191). Mrs. Maddux expressed what was most evocative about the baskets in her perspective, thus resisting a classificatory approach to understanding

the meaning of these belongings. By looking at the context in which the exchanges between Mrs. Maddux and Harrington took place, it is possible to consider their encounters as a contact zone—a site of “uneven reciprocity,” where the recontextualization of these baskets as a dynamic process, “a power-charged set of exchanges, of push and pull” (Clifford 1997:192). While Harrington regarded this collection as “solely for the good of the work,” so that he “could get exhaustive information on their weaves and designs,” she asserted her own position as his interlocutor and proffered information beyond Harrington’s categories.¹⁰⁷

The knowledge encoded on these tags offer glimpses of the many contexts in which the belongings in the collection were created and how they circulated spatially and temporally among many people, places, and institutions, even before they were accessed into the NMNH. At each moment the baskets changed hands, they were removed from previous contexts and were recontextualized, emerging as something changed—altering the meanings both as individual belongings and as an assemblage (Bauman and Briggs 1990:76). The process in which data were accumulated at each turn shaped the textual representations that were circulated, reformulating the discourse to fit within their particular ways of knowing that are set apart from the initial communications (Clifford 1988:39). From constructed narratives of rapidly vanishing peoples, languages, and practices to narratives that bespoke of social identity, memory, place, and human and non-human agents, there was at each stage a particular motive for reconfiguring the knowledge surrounding these baskets that tells of the person’s social, political, and economic positions and ideologies.

Mrs. Maddux’s commentaries complicate the dominant, salvage-era discourses that surround the collection, which have focused on the designs, functions, materials and styles of a so-called vanishing practice and people. Instead through Mrs. Maddux’s interventions, we can see how the practices of everyday life that involve the interrelationships of people, places, and material culture embody the social memories of and connections to Karuk communities.

Mrs. Maddux negotiated her own role in the creation of information recorded about these belongings: how her knowledge of the baskets reconfigures the prevailing narratives of the ethnographic present rooted in salvage anthropology; how her recollections can add to narratives of identity as they are implicated in places and in the individual and social meanings of baskets; and how she intervenes in discussions of particular histories, including disruptions, continuities and change (Clifford 1997:129).

¹⁰⁷ Harrington to Dorsey, February 20, 1930. BAE Correspondence, NAA.

Chapter IV

Northwestern California Indian Basket Weaving in the Late 20th Century

Introduction

While contemporary writings on Northwestern California basketry tend to focus on the heyday of the Arts and Crafts movement from the late 1800s to the 1920s, with baskets being traded by the thousands, there is a dearth of information about what happened after the market languished and weavers had access to fewer and fewer plant resources. This chapter first discusses a moment in time in which basket weavers persisted despite the lack of social and economic support, as well as the diminishing natural resources available to weavers. By way of introduction to understanding the social contexts in which Karuk and other Northwestern California basket weavers began to breathe life into the practice, I rely on publications that describe the Karuk, Hupa, and Yurok basket weaving revival in the 1950s-1970s. Further delving into the revitalization of the practice, I analyze a set of interviews with Northwestern California basket weavers that were conducted in 1982 by Coleen Kelley Marks, then director of the Clarke Historical Museum. I discuss the experiences of elder and younger weavers, which illustrate some of the motivations for the continuance of their basket weaving practice.

Basket Weaving from the 1940s to the 1970s

In the 1920s, Lila O'Neale reported that basketweavers lamented the loss of the next generation of weavers. Girls that were sent away to boarding schools were isolated from their elders while they were growing up, missing out on experiential learning about Karuk cultural practices, particularly basket weaving. Basket weaver Josephine Peters (Karuk/Shasta/Abenake) stated that when girls began coming home from schools, they had to learn Native ways of life all over again (Ortiz 2008:37). She also remarked that many girls were not interested at all in learning about culture and weaving and there was a genuine fear that basket weaving was dying out.

There was very little social and cultural support for weavers to make baskets during the 1940s-1950s. Weavers saw that the market for basketry that had flourished from the late 1800s and into the late-1920s dried up. Gathering materials was increasingly difficult because of the limited access to traditional gathering areas, which were now on private property, or USFS and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land. Additionally, the racism, which did not abate after the gold rush, was a reality that weavers faced on an everyday basis. The discrimination against Native peoples was so bad in the Klamath River region that weavers, were scared to go out gathering or trying to sell their work (Ortiz 2008:37). Instead, women turned to ceramics as a way to remember and record basket designs and styles.

Peters and Ortiz (2010) state that a resurgence of basket weaving occurred not through traditional plant materials, but in ceramics instead. In 1951, Laura Black, an Indian Service Field Nurse, introduced pottery as a means to reclaim traditional basket weaving designs so that they could be preserved for future generations, forming the Hoopa Pottery Guild. By 1953, Mrs. J. Peters created her first pinch pot, made with local clays and painted with basket weaving designs. Just over ten years later, she had won an award from the US Department of the Interior for her ceramic work at the 1967 Biennial Exhibition of American Indian Arts and Crafts. She was not alone in her efforts (Henderson 1967). Vivian Hailstone was also a member and was quoted in a 1967 newspaper article that Mrs. J. Peters shared with Ortiz:

The designs and shapes of the pottery blend themselves well with the nearly lost native Indian art of basket weaving...Clay for the pottery is relatively easy to obtain. It can be found almost anywhere locally, and requires very little preparation. It does give us an outlet for expression of our native arts. (Peters and Ortiz 2010:52)

Guild members became active in communities, participating in craft fairs, demonstrating basketry and pottery techniques, and hosting exhibits at the Guild studio. At these events, Guild members would bring out their basketry collections and would wear traditional regalia and basket caps. Their pottery became very well known, with many pieces sold in department stores and to museums (Peters and Ortiz 2010).

Through their participation with the Hoopa Pottery Guild, members would talk about their cultural traditions, working to reawaken the basket weaving tradition from its sleep. Reflecting back on this experience, Mrs. J. Peters shared her thoughts with Ortiz in 2001:

We tried to save the basket designs by putting it on pottery. And then finally the weavers started coming back. We taught it in school, we had evening gatherings, and we'd gather materials. I had people coming here to the house to sit down [and learn]... With the kids in school, we'd start out maybe with twenty to twenty-three students. When I ended up, I had two left, but the two that stuck with it, they're really good weavers today. Some of them would come back [to it] later. (Ortiz 2008:38).

By 1966, members of the Guild and others formed the Yurok-Karok-Hoopa Weavers of the Klamath-Trinity Arts and Crafts Association (Ortiz 2008). Both Ella Johnson and Josephine Peters were instructors of the classes. Receiving funding from various donors and agencies, the weavers taught the classes at their pottery studio. A press release about the newly created Association described the conditions in which basket weaving was almost lost, but there was a renewed interest in weaving. Asserting their own identification as Native women, the weavers assuredly promoted basket weaving as a means to remain true to oneself. In this press release

prepared by the Guild, Native Northwestern California potters explained their ceramic creations as a creative means to preserve their culture:

Time has wrought severe changes in this priceless art of basketry. Our people had to abandon their way of life, their former skills and become like Europeans. The passage of time continually brings changes in our ways and our thinking. However, we realize that although we must learn the white man's ways we still must be ourselves and preserve our songs, dances, art and skills that are representative of our heritage and culture. (Ortiz 2008:46)

Interest in basket weaving grew from the collective work that each member took on. At the 1967 inaugural California Indian Education Conference, Mrs. Hailstone reported that basket weaving was making a comeback, stating that through their work with the Hoopa Pottery Guild, they were able to retain basketry shapes and designs, since procuring weaving materials was nearly impossible (Forbes 1967). She went on to say that through their work and exposure, they gained the cooperation of the USFS, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and private property owners to begin to harvest basketry plants. In addition, Guild members began to teach classes in basket weaving. She stated that, "their classes have been so successful that a representative of the Department of Interior Arts and Crafts Board, Washington, D.C., visited them and offered to provide funds to help defray the cost" (Forbes 1967:50). The classes became so popular that Mrs. Hailstone and one other Hupa weaver then went on to teach classes to interested learners among the Klamath and Smith River tribes.

By 1971, Mrs. Hailstone noticed that potters and weavers were gaining more attention and the tribes themselves were gaining assistance from other Native peoples across the US, fostering movements towards self-governance and self-determination (Cooper 1971). Native peoples from Northwestern California were becoming more and more involved in the revitalization of basketry and other craftworks. She stated that instead of being ashamed to be Native, "We have created an atmosphere that is so great to be Indian, everybody wanted to do everything. You *want* to make baskets" (Cooper 1971:38, emphasis added). And she noted that girls, who were once ashamed and not at all interested in learning to weave, were now coming back to their culture and back to the basket weaving practice.

I know why they didn't want to have anything to do with it, because I went to boarding school there and I was learning to make baskets. I know how I felt when I had to hide these things when the white people came. We could only be Indian when we were by ourselves...In my time, I lived between two worlds, but now there are really great things happening in our area. Everybody wants to do arts and crafts. Everybody wants to do basketry. In fact we're doing basketry through the junior college and we're getting credit for it. (Cooper 1971:38)

In addition to the basketry classes and the energized efforts of tribal governments, tribal members who came from traditional dance families revitalized ceremonies that had not been performed in decades. With all of these efforts there

was a general shift from hiding one's Native identity to taking pride in it and asserting one's own tribal identification.

One important idea that Mrs. Hailstone expressed was that they were not recreating the past. Instead, she said, "We are trying to express ourselves in adapting the old to the new to show people that we are Indians of today, not two hundred years ago" (Cooper 1971:38). With respect to basketry, she stated that they were "doing the modern thing and yet we have the Indian designs and are using the Indian traditional materials from the things around us" (Cooper 1971:38).

These "modern things" included repurposing traditional materials typically found only on sacred regalia and using them in more portable and wearable, everyday designs, such as medallions and necklaces. Mrs. J. Peters and two other weavers began to develop the designs and shapes for small medallions that could be used for bolo ties, hair barrettes, and necklaces (Ortiz 2008:44). Similar to the stimulation of creativity brought by the Arts and Crafts market, weavers in the 1960s were inventive in their designs and styles. Weavers used beads, abalone, dentalia shells, and beargrass braids to create earrings; they also created smaller portable and useful basketry items such as baby rattles, cigarette lighter cases, and key chains (Ortiz 2008). Mrs. J. Peters stated that she was on the receiving end of quite a bit of criticism when she first started making everyday jewelry from grey pine beads that were traditionally found on women's ceremonial dresses:

At first they tried to stop me from making beads, but I didn't listen to them. I just went ahead. Pretty soon everybody was doing it. So many Indians here didn't have enough money, so I started making jewelry and pottery to show them that they could pick this up and do things to earn money. (Peters and Ortiz 2010:56).

Not only were weavers practicing their craft and teaching others (many of those early students went on to become master weavers), but a handful of them were also opening up small shops for work of theirs and others. Ortiz (2008) states that Vivian Hailstone opened a gift shop in 1959, called I-Ye-Quee (a phonetic spelling of the Yurok word, *'oyuuekwee'*, which means "hello"). There she sold not only her work, such as pottery, basketry, and jewelry, but also the work of her relatives and friends. Mrs. J. Peters opened her own establishment, Red Wing Handicrafts, with business partner Harvey Orcutt (Yurok), who set up the Rock Shop Museum in a trailer on Mrs. J. Peters' property (Ortiz 2008:306). In her store, Mrs. J. Peters sold the work of many Hupa and Yurok weavers, as well as Karuk weavers Grace Davis, Madeline Davis, Florence Harrie, and Sadie McAuley.

While the strength of this new market for baskets flagged by the 1980s, weavers were still able to sell their baskets to area stores, along with museums and other places. But the impetus to weave among new generations of weavers was not about financial gain. Women and men were drawn to weaving as a way to bring them back to a sense of community and identification as Native peoples. For some, it became an appealing way of life: from gathering to weaving, it was a practice that was a part of something larger.

Clarke Historical Museum Interviews

In 1982, seventeen basket weavers, men and women ranging in age from 26 to 94, were interviewed for the Clarke Historical Museum (CHM) in Eureka California. The interviews with these Karuk, Tolowa, and Yurok weavers were conducted by Coleen Kelley Marks, who is currently an independent American Indian art consultant and an expert of Northwestern California Indian basketry. She restores and appraises basketry, as well as offers consultations for exhibitions on American Indian baskets. She has worked as a curator for many museums in the Humboldt County region, including the CHM, the Trinidad Museum, and Trees of Mystery. Her publications, written with Ron Johnson, include *From Women's Hands* (1992), *Her Mind Made Up: Weaving Caps the Indian Way* (1997), *Made for the Trade* (2012), and *The Hover Collection* (2015).

At the time these interviews were conducted, Ms. Kelley Marks was the Director of the CHM. Shortly after the CHM acquired the Hover Collection, a formidable collection of Northwestern California baskets, she interviewed several weavers, young and old, to ask them about their own experiences throughout their lifetime about weaving baskets. Ms. Kelley Marks's interviews were focused on gathering information about how weavers learned their practice; what materials they used; how to prepare materials; and what types of baskets the weavers made. She also asked each one of the weavers to share a piece of advice for future weavers.

Exploring these interviews, the personal engagements with basketry that appeared were focused on weavers' stories about learning to weave; weavers' thoughts about selling and repairing baskets; weavers' imperative to teach, but also the disappointments that came along with teaching; and weavers' connections to their culture and self-identification. In addition to these connections, weavers expressed their concerns with being able to tend to the basketry plants in both practical and culturally responsible ways. In the following chapter, environmental and social issues regarding the sustainability basketry plant harvesting will be explored.

Learning

In general, the elder weavers learned the practice when they were young by watching what their mothers, aunts, or grandmothers did, experimenting with weaving. Often before they began to receive formal instruction, they would spend time playing with scrap materials and going out with their family members on gathering trips. Their relatives would not actually teach them formally unless they showed a sustained interest and desire to weave. For the most part, elders remembered being surrounded by basket weavers when they were young; however, for many of them learning to weave was a difficult prospect, since their family members did not encourage it. For the elders, they emulated what their mothers and grandmothers did, and it wasn't until they kept at it and showed a real interest in it that they would get any sort of formal instruction. The process of learning to weave was experiential in the ways that the elders watched, emulated, experimented, and practiced side-by-side with *their* elders. The elder weavers expressed that persistence to weave came from being close to the river, close to the land where

they could gather their plants. The key was that they wanted to learn and when their teachers thought that they had the will, intention, and desire to carry on the practice, formal instruction would begin.

The process of gathering was an activity that many of the elders learned through experience. They were expected to go out and gather with their families when they were young and assist with the gathering when they were old enough. Learning and practicing basket weaving was and continues to be a familial and community-building practice. The bonds that weavers established with their weaving relatives and their fellow practitioners were sustained. Even the bonds with their ancestral weavers were called to mind when they talked about weaving. The stories of learning that were shared with Ms. Kelley Marks were not about the individual, but the individual in relation with their families and communities.

Lena McCovey (Yurok) learned from her grandmother when she was eight years old.¹⁰⁸ Mrs. L. McCovey picked up scraps from her grandmother's left-over material and played with it, until her grandmother reluctantly showed her how to add rows to her basket. Mrs. L. McCovey said that her grandmother really did not want her to become a basket weaver, so she went to her aunt to learn even more about it. Although she was not encouraged by her mother or grandmother to weave, she used to help them to gather materials. Mrs. L. McCovey balanced her education at the Hoopa Valley Boarding School with her basketry practice by only weaving when she was at home on breaks.

Minnie Reed (Yurok), who learned to weave when she was a young girl, remembered that when she was growing up there were many weavers in her community.¹⁰⁹ Picking up the scrap materials from her mother, like Mrs. L. McCovey, Mrs. M. Reed emulated what she saw her mother and other women do until she was formally taught to weave. That was common. Josephine Peters recalled playing with her mother's scraps as a child, twisting grasses and sticks together, but did not actually take up the practice until she was in her 20s.¹¹⁰ It didn't interest her until then, nor was she necessarily encouraged to pick it up. She spent time with her great auntie, Mary Johnny, sitting on the porch watching her weave. Not receiving formal training, Mrs. J. Peters stated, "I think I was kind of more or less self-taught. Because you have to really sit down and try to figure it out on your own."¹¹¹

Sisters Grace and Madeline Davis (Karuk) learned from their mother, but had to use scraps until they learned to gather materials themselves.¹¹² Mrs. G. Davis and Mrs. M. Davis remembered that they were young girls when they started to weave. Mrs. G. Davis said, "we didn't have nowhere to go and nothin' else to see.

¹⁰⁸ Lena McCovey, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 12, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹⁰⁹ Minnie Reed and Pat Reed, interview by Coleen Kelley, July 22, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹¹⁰ Josephine Peters, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 31, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹¹¹ J. Peters, CHM, 1982.

¹¹² Grace and Madeline Davis, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 13, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

That's all we did." Mrs. M. Davis stated that they watched their mother, Maggie Charley, weave when they were young, but she wouldn't instruct the girls. "My mother didn't want me to use her stuff; she says I'd ruin it, so we had to get out ourselves to go find it, to get our basket material."

Although Daraxa Peters (Yurok/Karuk) was an elder at the time of this interview, she had only been weaving for two years.¹¹³ She took classes from Ella Johnson at Mrs. J. Peters's store. She stated that she did not really have an interest in weaving until the community classes with Mrs. J. Peters had started and it was at that time she wanted to join in. When she was growing up, she only saw her grandmother weave, but as an adult she had accompanied her mother-in-law on gathering trips.

Susan "Tweet" Burdick (Yurok/Karuk) learned to weave in her teens.¹¹⁴ She saw her relatives weave when she was young, but didn't have an interest in the practice until she started taking classes with Ella Johnson, during the 1960s. "I don't really know exactly what got me interested. It just seemed like that was just a natural thing to learn."¹¹⁵ Ms. Burdick mentioned during her interview that her mother used to weave, but since there were twelve children to raise, her mother stopped weaving for a long while—"She [Ms. Burdick's mother] had a lot of other things to do."¹¹⁶

Ms. Burdick expressed her fondness for her elders who taught her to weave and who would go out on gathering trips with her. Of the gathering trips, she said that they were so enjoyable and were filled with laughter. She shared this story about one trip in particular that she went out gathering with a group of elders:

They used to laugh because at that time my youngest son was still just a little toddler, you know, and I used to take a rope and tie it around his stomach, and tie him to a bush, and then I'd go and gather, be able to go and gather with them. (Laughs). It used to be kind of fun to take and see him all tied to a bush. But he was so close to the water, you know, the river—that we had to—that was the only way I could get my work done.¹¹⁷

Nancy Richardson (Karuk) learned her weaving practice from Ms. Burdick, who taught classes in McKinleyville, CA.¹¹⁸ When she had refined her weaving practice, she sought out the help of Grace and Madeline Davis in Happy Camp. She held Mrs. G. Davis and Mrs. M. Davis in high regard, treasuring their knowledge of basketry. Of Mrs. G. Davis and Mrs. M. Davis, Ms. Richardson said:

¹¹³ Daraxa Peters, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 31, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA

¹¹⁴ Susan Burdick, interview by Coleen Kelley, July 27, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹¹⁵ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

¹¹⁶ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

¹¹⁷ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

¹¹⁸ Nancy Richardson, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 3, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

They're the two main basket makers that are left now that know all the old and traditional ways. There are other basket makers that are pretty good, but they don't know all the fine details and the specialized techniques and they don't know the Indian stories and their collecting places and things that all go behind the philosophy of making baskets.¹¹⁹

Ms. Richardson knew that all of her relatives wove baskets, but she did not see them doing it when she was growing up. She stated that she always had felt a calling to basket weaving, but did not actually start until she was in her teens. She saw basket weaving as a way to spend time with her family and build relationships with others in the weaving community:

I had seen it done when I was young and watched it some at Happy Camp And then I decided to —at first I just wanted to get my mom and my sister and us together in the evening so we went together to a class....and all the other Indian women in the community, it was just a real nice gathering.¹²⁰

Before the time of contact, there were strict gender norms about the types of baskets that men and women wove. Men and boys did assist women with gathering materials (O'Neale 1995 [1932]). Because of taboos prior to contact, some of which remain today, menstruating women were not allowed to handle men's weapons, or any technology related to food procurement. Women were also not permitted to weave eel or fish traps because of menstrual taboos.¹²¹ Conversely, it was taboo for men to weave women's basketry, including ones related to food preparing and serving, as well as finely woven closed-twined baskets. One weaver mentioned to me that it was thought that men would be emasculated, if they wove women's baskets (personal communication, July 2008). Loren Bommelyn (Tolowa) stated that "man isn't supposed to make baskets and they told me that if man makes baskets he won't live very long."¹²² However, elder women weavers broke these taboos and began to teach boys and men, in the early 20th century, even though it was still considered unusual. These teachers were focused on passing the basket weaving practice to the next generation, whether or not their students conformed to the gender norms.

Bill VanPelt (Yurok) learned how to make baby baskets from his grandmother when he was a teenager.¹²³ It was unusual at the time for men to weave baskets that were traditionally known as women's work. While in the past men only made rough eel traps out of unpeeled willow roots, Mr. VanPelt's

¹¹⁹ Richardson, CHM, 1982.

¹²⁰ Richardson, CHM, 1982.

¹²¹ Craig Ervin, interview by Coleen Kelley, July 1, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹²² Loren Bommelyn, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 12, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹²³ Bill VanPelt, interview by Coleen Kelley, September 9, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

grandmother taught him how to make baby baskets. When asked why his grandmother taught him, Mr. VanPelt responded, "Well, for a particular reason, I had nothin' else to do in the wintertime when it was pourin' down rain and you're sitting around in the evening."¹²⁴

Craig Ervin (Yurok) was surrounded by basket weavers when he was growing up.¹²⁵ From a young child, Mr. Ervin appreciated the fine basketry he saw in his home, but did not have much of an interest learning to weave until his father shared with him stories about his Yurok ancestors. From those stories (which will be shared later in this chapter), Mr. Ervin wanted to renew the connections to his culture. He stated,

I began to notice baskets and I used to pick handfuls of grass or branches as I'd be walkin' through the trails or 'round the beach and I'd try to twist them into something, it was just kind of natural. And then I began to watch old people and watch, and then the basket making was really flourishing at that time... So, I used to go with them and gather materials and then I learned the seasons. I learned how to watch for these things, when they were ripe and when it was time to gather. Then they used to tease me, too, like I'm sittin' here making basket and they always kind a handled their baskets rough, and they'd throw it at me and say, "Now you work on it!" And so I picked it up and I'd maybe go a little bit then they would laugh because it'd be just some kind a funny lookin' way I was weaving, and then they would come over and they would help me... So, that's how I learned to make baskets was, because I guess it was my identity as being of Indian ancestry and I was proud of it and it just came to me and I used to ask questions and they were always teaching me, the old generation, about religion, and you know they would tell me that the spirits of all those people.¹²⁶

Mr. Ervin's weaving practice was inextricably tied to his identity. He was conscious of his practice being a way to preserve, protect, and revitalize the culture of his family and ancestors. He stated that that was why he learned, "because I guess it was my identity as being of Indian ancestry and I was proud of it and it just came to me."¹²⁷

Loren Bommelyn felt that he was called to weaving when he was twelve.¹²⁸ His mother supported his desire to learn because the practice was in danger of dying out, so Mr. Bommelyn felt compelled to keep it going. He was fascinated by an old stick plate his mother had in their home. He said that he would study it for hours, and so his mother felt it was time for him to learn. She knew how to gather materials because she used to go out gathering with *her* mother, so she brought Mr. Bommelyn to Weitchpec, CA to collect willow sticks. He sought the help of two

¹²⁴ VanPelt, CHM, 1982.

¹²⁵ Ervin, CHM, 1982.

¹²⁶ Ervin, CHM, 1982.

¹²⁷ Ervin, CHM, 1982.

¹²⁸ Bommelyn, CHM, 1982.

weavers, Minnie Strong (Silitz) and Laura Coleman (Tolowa) to teach him how to make a stick plate like his mother's.

When Mr. Bommelyn first started weaving, he did not talk much about his practice. When he was first learning to weave, he attempted to make a closed twined basket, with beargrass overlay—a type of basket that traditionally only women wove. He showed it to one of his female classmates, which resulted in shaming:

And she looked at me and she says—well, I just handed it to her. I didn't say nothing. I just let her look at it. And she goes, "Oh, who is she. She sure does good work." And I went home and threw it in the fire. I never did do that no more.¹²⁹

For a long while, Mr. Bommelyn did not attempt to make another closed-twined basket. However, he had the support of his relatives and other community members, including many master basket weavers. One weaver in particular, told him that he needed to learn all the different styles, and it was good for him to learn. He learned to do his work despite the sentiments of some community members who felt it wasn't his place to weave anything other than eel and fish baskets. He stated, "now I feel different about it...because I'm more mature now and I make my own decisions on that and I...don't see no taboos attached to it myself...[If] I wasn't doing it, nobody would be."¹³⁰

Selling

Selling baskets, including small pieces such as basketry medallions, cigarette lighter cases and necklaces was an important addition to weavers' income. All of the elders mentioned that they had sold their baskets when they were young, helping their families out or even just making a bit of pocket money. On more than one occasion, elders had mentioned that when they were young children, their mothers and grandmothers had to weave and sell their baskets because there were no welfare programs before 1935. If they did not make baskets for sale, they would have no income to support themselves or their family.

Craig Ervin began selling his baskets when he first got married. He said that neither he nor his wife, Carol, were educated and had few prospects for jobs. They had started a family right away. Refusing to go on welfare, he and his wife did everything they could to support themselves, including weaving baskets.

So, we started making baskets so you make baskets according to what will sell—and bottles, people like to buy. See, they had a lot of curio shops in those days, all up the North Coast Highway there was like Hollywood Heights at Trinidad and Trees Of Mystery, all those places bought baskets. I mean they ripped the Indians off all right and they sold 'em, ya know.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Bommelyn, CHM, 1982.

¹³⁰ Bommelyn, CHM, 1982.

¹³¹ Ervin, CHM, 1982.

He and Mrs. Ervin worked together on the baskets they made for sale: he would weave the button and she would turn up the sides, weave in the overlay designs, and finish the basket. Because they both did seasonal work, selling baskets helped them make enough money to buy groceries throughout the winter.

Lena McCovey sold many baskets throughout her lifetime, some of which had gone overseas. When she was in school in the 1910s, she would sell her baskets to get money for candy and cookies, as well as give money to her family for groceries. When Mrs. L. McCovey was attending the Hoopa Valley Boarding School, she still made baskets, some of which she sold to the school superintendent. Mrs. L. McCovey remembered that she sold her first basket, a basketry cap, for 75 cents, but her most recent cap sold for \$200.00.

Minnie Reed, who began weaving when she was a small girl, sold her first trinket basket for 25 cents, so that she could buy a basket from another weaver.¹³² While at the time of the interview she no longer wove, she stated that she had sold a lot of baskets in her heyday. She remembered when the buyers would come to her village to purchase baskets from the women there. One man would walk to the village, from where she did not know, and would take his time purchasing indiscriminately any baskets that he could. He would come every spring and pay cash for the baskets. Mrs. M. Reed said that much of the money she would make from the sale of her baskets would be put in the bank. With her basketry money, she purchased her own home.

Violet Moore (Yurok) also no longer made baskets, but like Mrs. M. Reed, she sold many over her lifetime.¹³³ Mrs. Moore learned a good luck song from her mother that was to help weavers sell their baskets and sung it for Ms. Kelley Marks. The money that Violet Moore sings of, the money that weavers are walking in the footsteps of, is dentalium, old time money. "The song, when sung, brings the weaver good luck in making a beautiful basket and, once it is finished, allows the weaver to "catch up" with the dentalia" (Mendelsohn 1983:61).

Grace and Madeline Davis' mother, Maggie Charley, who was a very famous basket weaver on the Klamath River, sold numerous baskets over her lifetime. Both Mrs. G. Davis and Mrs. M. Davis began selling their own baskets when they were young. Both weavers had lots of orders from both community members and museums, so many that it was difficult to keep up with them. Mrs. M. Davis said that she typically sold her baskets for one hundred dollars, while Mrs. G. Davis exclaimed that she sold them too cheaply, saying "my daughter from Crescent City says that all those women over there sell it for a hundred dollars and the baby basket for a hundred and fifty. I said, oh, I can't sell anything. I'll just keep my baskets!"¹³⁴

Susan Burdick sold her baskets during the 1960s through the 1980s as a way to help her family. She said that after a couple of years weaving, people wanted to buy them; people offered her money for her baskets. She said, "after that it was like

¹³² Minnie Reed and Pat Reed, interview by Coleen Kelley, July 22, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹³³ Violet Moore, interview by Coleen Kelley, December 10, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹³⁴ Davis, CHM, 1982.

an extra income coming in, and so I really got into where I was making a lot of baskets and selling them. My husband was working in the mill and I wasn't working at that time so it was a big help."¹³⁵ But even selling baskets, Ms. Burdick felt that she was giving a part of herself in each one and in a way, shifting the consumer's perspective about the diversity and identity of Native peoples.

Even if you have to sell a basket, or even if you do it to sell, it's kind of sharing part of yourself. I know when I sell baskets to the I-Ye-Quee Gift Shop, tourists would come and buy them. But in a sense it's a way of other people beginning to have a different outlook on Native American people. And not this Indian with an arrow or something firing at somebody like the TV is always trying to put across—us Indians as being warlike. To me, that's how I feel. It's making a basket, and you're sharing part of yourself.¹³⁶

Loren Bommelyn's work was becoming so popular that he could not keep up on the orders for baby baskets that he had coming in from tribal members. While there were many white people who approached him for special orders, he refused to sell to them because his first priority was to make baby baskets for tribal members. When Mr. Bommelyn started selling baby baskets, he would only charge \$45.00-\$50.00 for them, until he was summarily corrected by Lena McCovey.

Well, like I used to sell them for \$50.00 a piece. Or \$45. And so then I sold one to Lena's daughter, Venolla Doud, I sold it to her for her grandchild and she saw that basket and the next time she saw me she growled and she said "You don't ever sell your basket for less than \$100.00." ... Yeah, you know, so she growled at me and she says, "That's not right." She says, "Your work is too good." That's what she told me. So then I started, you know, chargin' that.¹³⁷

Mr. Bommelyn went on to explain why he charged so little for his baskets:

...when I first started it felt like a gift to me and I gave a lot of it away because I felt... that's just something I wanted to give to them. But, you know, so that's something I just had to kinda mature with, as the time has gone along, and I deal with every situation differently. Depend on the person, and, like I say then, if they got something they want to trade me, you know, something that they might have that I appreciate too, and they appreciate what I have then we can swap, or something like that. I feel good about that.¹³⁸

Nancy Richardson had no interest in selling her baskets. She said that she might make smaller items, like medallions and key chains, but her baskets were never going to be for sale. She explained that the baskets were a part of who she was

¹³⁵ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

¹³⁶ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

¹³⁷ Bommelyn, CHM, 1982.

¹³⁸ Bommelyn, CHM, 1982.

and could never put a price tag on them. Because she worked and went to school, her time to gather and weave was very little, so each basket was unique and precious. Ms. Richardson shared,

Because I put myself into my baskets and whoever it goes to has to be somebody—that's a special person to me... everything that I use in my basket is only the stuff that I do myself that I gather myself. And then I process it and do all that and then I get them ready and prepare 'em and pick 'em out and then I make it . And I'm not that fast at 'em, either. So I want to give 'em to somebody that maybe I'll see it again around...¹³⁹

By the late 1980s, there were fewer places for weavers to sell their work, but the demand for both new and old baskets didn't stop. Many of the elders had more orders for baskets than they couldn't keep up with. Some who had a surplus of baskets they had made went to arts and craft fairs to sell them. But more often, they would sell baskets out of their homes to community members, collectors, and museums. Smaller baskets, such as medallions, table mats, key chains and earrings were very popular and easy for weavers to make quickly. Baby baskets, however, seemed to be the most popular types of baskets that they made for family, friends, and tribal members.

Teaching and the Continuation of Basket Weaving

Many of the elders and proficient weavers taught classes that attracted quite a few people. The courses at community colleges drew large crowds of mostly non-Native peoples, whereas the courses at community and cultural centers drew smaller, and mostly native peoples. Teaching also took place individually, with younger weavers apprenticing with elders. Weaving classes also included, for the most part, going out to gather plant materials. While teaching weaving helped revitalize basket weaving, these weavers also identified many problems. Many weavers expressed their doubt about the continuation of the basket weaving tradition, despite their efforts to teach many, many students. They found that out of all their students, only a small handful would learn both the gathering and the weaving, as well as continually keep up the practice.

All of the weavers that were interviewed remarked that they saw members of their family weaving baskets as they were growing up. But, among their peers they remarked that few people wove. Daughters and granddaughters, sisters both young and old, picked up materials, helped gather at times, and perhaps wove a basket or two. Only three of the fifteen weavers interviewed noted that they had daughters that are actively weaving baskets. The common sentiment among them was that the younger generation just weren't interested, that they didn't have time or patience for it.

Grace Davis, who took on students in her home, enjoyed teaching. She said that her students were really good, but were dependent on her and not confident in their own skills. She noted while some students of hers really understood that

¹³⁹ Richardson., CHM, 1982.

basket weaving was both making baskets and gathering materials, she found that many of them liked only one part of the process. "They're learning, the ones that like to learn. Some of them don't care."¹⁴⁰ Her sister, Mrs. M. Davis, chimed in and explained further, stating, "Some of them like to learn but they just can't get at it...They're not interested to work on their basket material; that's what's kind of hard...Some of them like to make the basket material, but they can't work on the basket."¹⁴¹

Mrs. G. Davis had seven children and taught her daughters how to weave. She said that although her daughters knew how to weave, they did not—"they just don't want to."¹⁴² She also taught her granddaughters, but did not know if they still wove. Mrs. M. Davis, who had four children, also taught her daughters to weave. Both of her daughters at the time were still actively weaving; in fact one of her daughters also taught classes in Happy Camp and took over Mrs. M. Davis's Yreka class if she could not make the long drive there.

Mrs. G. Davis and Mrs. M. Davis also taught basket weaving in the local schools, in Happy Camp, McKinleyville, and in Yreka. They taught high school aged girls, although Mrs. M. Davis mentioned that she did not care to teach children. But along with their formal classes, Mrs. G. Davis and Mrs. M. Davis would travel around the country, invited by different museums to give basket weaving demonstrations. They were invited to participate at the California Indian Days event in Sacramento several years in a row. Also, Mrs. M. Davis travelled to Chicago, IL, to give basket weaving demonstrations at the Field Museum in the late 1970s.

Despite their best efforts in teaching the next generation of weavers, both Mrs. G. Davis and Mrs. M. Davis were fearful that the practice would die out, since very few of their students kept up their basket making. Mrs. G. Davis said that she would be glad to help anyone who wanted to learn to weave, but she did not want to "fool around with people that don't want to learn anything.... It's a waste of time."¹⁴³ Mrs. M. Davis was more pessimistic about the continuation of basket weaving. She was blunt in her response: "It's going to go...Very few of 'em like to learn."¹⁴⁴ Mrs. G. Davis was not quite as sure as her sister, but she did express her doubts, stating, "I don't know. Very few of them like to learn now and there just isn't the time that there used to be. People have a job and they have children and they have things they have to do and it just isn't the same."¹⁴⁵

In addition to teaching classes at her shop, Josephine Peters taught weaving in her home, with two to three students at a time, and taught at the College of the Redwoods. While she was eager to teach classes, she also found it to be frustrating because many of her students did not want to go gather materials.

¹⁴⁰ Davis, CHM, 1982.

¹⁴¹ Davis, CHM, 1982.

¹⁴² Davis, CHM, 1982.

¹⁴³ Davis, CHM, 1982.

¹⁴⁴ Davis, CHM, 1982.

¹⁴⁵ Davis, CHM, 1982.

The trouble was the younger ones that wanted to take basketry they didn't want to get out and get the materials. They didn't want to go gather it. But if we brought it in for them and they'd be willing to go ahead and make baskets then, but they didn't want to get out and get it.¹⁴⁶

In order for her to have enough materials for her students, Mrs. J. Peters was forced to buy materials from those, typically men, who gathered materials to sell so they could make a little extra money. When Lena McCovey taught weaving, she noticed that her students were not careful sorting out their materials, even though she told them that irregular materials would result in a lumpy basket. She said that some of her students did not make good baskets, but they did not care.¹⁴⁷ Even though she had taught her own children to weave, they were not currently because they just didn't have the time to, between working and raising their own families.

Susan Burdick felt compelled to teach weaving, as she became a better, more experienced weaver herself. She said that she saw a lot of Native girls and women who did not know how to weave and she wanted to teach them, so they could carry on the practice.¹⁴⁸ Like Mrs. J. Peters, she taught classes at the College of the Redwoods. But in addition to those courses, she held many other teaching jobs. When she first began teaching, she was offered a job by a tribal development council to teach weaving to girls ages eight to fifteen. Later, Ms. Burdick worked with a non-profit to teach classes on the Northwest California coast. At College of the Redwoods, she taught in the adult education program. On her first day of teaching at the college, over 60 students showed up for her course. She worked with the administration to split her one class into two, but despite this adjustment, some of her students dropped out because they got discouraged, since they could not receive one-on-one help. During the course of the semester, other people dropped out because they became disillusioned with weaving; it was more work than they thought it would be.

While Ms. Burdick supplied some of the materials for her students, she insisted that they go out and gather their own materials. She remembered one time that she took her students out to gather dyes. She felt disheartened after this trip because she found out that some of her students were there only to gain information about natural dyes and not weaving. She was sorry that she took them out, and even more so when she went back to the place where she took her students. The trees were stripped bare. She said that, "there was no respect for the trees, or anything...they weren't really there for the money or the basket, to make a basket, they were there for what they got, learning about dyes, natural dyes."¹⁴⁹

Out of all the students that Ms. Burdick taught, she found that some of her students at College of the Redwoods and many of the younger girls she worked continued to weave after they had attended her classes. From her standpoint, she was not concerned with the weaving tradition dying out. "I think that there's enough

¹⁴⁶ J. Peters, CHM, 1982.

¹⁴⁷ McCovey, CHM, 1982.

¹⁴⁸ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

¹⁴⁹ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

of us that are serious about making baskets and keeping it alive, I don't really feel that it will die out."¹⁵⁰ She went on to say that perseverance in the practice is what is needed to sustain a lifelong commitment to weaving; "Just keep trying. It gets easier, every basket that you make gets easier, and you feel better about yourself. And as a basket maker, just keep trying."¹⁵¹

While Ms. Richardson did not teach her own classes, she assisted her cousin, and Mrs. G. Davis and Mrs. M. Davis. She saw a real problem with the way classes were taught in colleges and schools. Ms. Richardson said that the students only learned to weave; they did not have to process their own materials.¹⁵² Because students didn't have to process their materials, they did not learn the cyclical nature of gathering and weaving, and they did not come to appreciate the length and depth of these processes. Without this knowledge, students saw the practice as a finite, goal-oriented event, rather than a life long learning experience. Explaining this, she stated,

The roots are all clean and perfect, the beargrass is all whitened, everything is all very nicely and then all they have to do is weave. And even that is hard—to get them to come to class. So that's not learning how to make baskets because that's only right now, today. You know, what one basket you're on and that's all it is and then it terminates right there. But if you know how to gather and process the material and all of that type of thing, then the basketry will go on.¹⁵³

Ella Johnson (Yurok/Hupa) was asked to teach a class at College of the Redwoods, but was very resistant to the idea because she had heard how large the classes were.¹⁵⁴ She felt that the instruction style, which relied on verbal description, was not the best way to teach weaving, stating "I don't like to teach this way...Yeah, I can't teach that way."¹⁵⁵ She said that she did not agree with just telling students what to do; instead, she insisted that it was important to help them and show them how to do it. Additionally, she felt that simply teaching weaving, without gathering materials, was not the way to get students to learn and appreciate the whole process. But, despite her felling about this, she taught "because I like to see somebody take up this weavin' so they can teach the younger generation...I look at the future, you know, I think you younger people should learn."¹⁵⁶

Violet Moore was concerned that the younger generation would not pick up basket weaving. She held hope for the continuation of weaving because she saw the younger ones take classes in Hoopa, Pecwan, and Johnsons, and some of them were

¹⁵⁰ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

¹⁵¹ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

¹⁵² Richardson, CHM, 1982.

¹⁵³ Richardson, CHM, 1982.

¹⁵⁴ Ella Johnson, interview by Coleen Kelley, December 14, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹⁵⁵ Johnson, CHM, 1982.

¹⁵⁶ Johnson, CHM, 1982.

beginning to teach as well. But, for her, it was not enough. She saw a number of girls drop out and move on to other things because they did not have the will or intention to continue. She stated, "[The] younger generation, they don't really care to sit down...sit too long. They last for a little while. It's different nowadays. They don't have the sense of doing something...they don't have much patience."¹⁵⁷

Minnie Reed had taught her daughter to weave when she was young, as well as her granddaughter. She knew her daughter could weave and was frustrated that she did not do it anymore. Mrs. M. Reed was sad that her granddaughter did not pick it up, saying that she wove one basket, but she did not care about it and did not continue. In general, Mrs. M. Reed felt pessimistic about the future of basket weaving, identifying the shifting priorities of the younger generation, as compared to the older. She stated, "yeah, I don't know how it's gonna keep it up. No one seems to care, makin' it...They make money, they work."¹⁵⁸ Bill VanPelt was almost disgusted by the younger generation, who could have been learning their culture, but instead were only interested in making money. He stated that they "couldn't care less" about gathering material to make and sell baskets; "They don't have time to be bothered with that stuff. 'We don't use it so why should we help ya?'"¹⁵⁹

But, for the younger generation of weavers, they remarked that they were never pushed into learning to weave or even when they did learn, continuing the practice. Some of the elders, like Mr. VanPelt, felt disrespected because they were never asked to teach basket weaving, and felt that they were shunned because the youth did not want to learn about the culture. But there were a few that carried on the tradition, knowing that their peers were not likely to come back to the cultural traditions. Mr. Bommelyn expressed it this way: "Now there's a lot of people drifting away they're more out in the world and they don't have time to take the patience and to appreciate it. And to carry that—you know, appreciation and respect that goes with it."¹⁶⁰

That was the main problem that younger weavers identified: the lack of time to invest in the practice of gathering and weaving. Balancing these with work, school and family obligations was difficult. For example, when Ms. Richardson was working on a Bachelors of Arts degree at Humboldt State University at the time of this interview, she said that it was hard for her to balance her other commitments with her basket weaving: "...it's real hard for me to make baskets at all if I'm working or going to school or not being able to have a lot of concentration...."¹⁶¹ While Ms. Burdick had been fortunate to gain financial success with her basket weaving, which helped supplement her income, teaching obligations lessened her time to concentrate on her own practice. Mr. Bommelyn, who had too many orders to fulfill in a timely manner, also taught Tolowa language and culture classes, as well as worked as a guidance councilor for grade school students. But as Mr. Bommelyn saw it, basket weaving was a part of Tolowa culture and he saw his work in other aspects

¹⁵⁷ Moore, CHM, 1982.

¹⁵⁸ Reed, CHM, 1982.

¹⁵⁹ VanPelt, CHM, 1982.

¹⁶⁰ Bommelyn, CHM, 1982.

¹⁶¹ Richardson, CHM, 1982.

of the culture as part of a continual process; one in which basketry was interconnected.

Cultural Identity

When Ms. Kelley Marks interviewed Josephine Peters, she made a statement about how the other elders she had interviewed felt that their children, who they tried to teach basket weaving and traditional culture, had no interest in the practice. In response, Mrs. J. Peters shared with her a memory of a time when she had to hide her work:

I know when we used to sit down here and make baskets, we had a tendency to hide it if someone came. Throw it back of a chair and throw a towel over it... it's just still in us. If somebody comes we're gonna hide it right now. It's just something that you are used to doing...Lot of old people that I worked around used to do that; they see somebody coming they'd put it away. ¹⁶²

Rather than directly provide reasons why the younger generation were not interested, Mrs. J. Peters implied that they were taking for granted the freedom to be a part of their heritage and practice basket weaving. Mrs. J. Peters felt the shame of identifying with her culture, which resonated through the present. Even though she was a master weaver and potter, and even though she built a community of weavers who helped revitalize the practice, she still felt the stigma of her own Native identity that was instilled in her since she was young and attending school.

Although Mrs. G. Davis and Mrs. M. Davis lived in the Klamath River region for their whole lives, when they were young, Mrs. M. Davis remembers asking her mother if she could go away for boarding school. Her mother refused her request and they both went to the local schools near Dillon Creek, Irving Creek, and one year at the Hoopa Valley Indian School. Reflecting back on their lives, both weavers were happy to have stayed in the Klamath. Mrs. G. Davis said, "I love the mountains, I love the brush and everything... I'd be lost without the brush and the mountains, the hills, the river, the creek."¹⁶³ Mrs. G. Davis's connection with her home expresses how much the land, water, and plants that surround her were very much a part of how she perceived herself. She and her sister maintained an inseparable relationship with the land from which they were raised and this land was very much a part of who they were.

Although their mothers knew how to weave, two of the younger weavers, Mr. Bommelyn and Ms. Richardson, mentioned that they were not encouraged to learn. But Mr. Bommelyn and Ms. Richardson wanted to learn; they felt that weaving baskets was tied to who they were, to their tribe, to their sense of place. Both noted a spirituality and connection with the practice of weaving and gathering. Also, they also were thirsty to learn more: to learn the songs associated with weaving, the words in their Native languages for the names and designs of baskets, and the traditional places where their families gathered basket material in the past.

¹⁶² J. Peters, CHM, 1982.

¹⁶³ Davis, CHM, 1982.

Mr. Bommelyn felt deeply about the work he did, weaving, gathering, and teaching. He held a strong and conscious desire for learning and revitalizing the old ways and wishing for the assistance of the elders to look at and critique his work. His deep respect for the elder culture bearers was reflected in the time invested in all of his different ventures. And yet at the same time, he was angry. He was angry because he felt robbed of his culture and he saw that anger in others as well.

I'm hostile because I was ripped off of my language, my culture, my history and I'm mad because I don't know it—and yet I don't want to admit I don't. I see a lotta people like that, too. And they're real hostile for that...[I know] that anger and hatred is only a stage. A stage within their own progress, that's how I see it. They may argue with me till they're blue in the face, but, I say it is a stage. It's something that they're going through, they've got to grow through that. I went through that. When I was in high school I refused to talk to anybody but Indians. Even when I got to college I was that way.¹⁶⁴

Mr. Bommelyn spent quite of bit of time isolating himself from non-Native people. But then he met his future wife, Lena Bommelyn, in college, who introduced him to her friends, many of whom were non-Native. He saw that he was limiting his own growth by not associating with non-Native people. Wanting to learn the traditions that he felt so strongly about, Mr. Bommelyn recognized that all of efforts in weaving and learning Tolowa language and traditions were ways that he could build a community, as well as honoring and respecting the elders that preserved the traditions.

Responsibility to Future Generations

Many of the elders learned to weave by watching *their* elders weave. They learned to gather because they were brought out by their parents and other relatives to gather. It was not necessarily a conscious choice for them to learn to weave. It was a part of their daily-lived experience. When they were young, they picked up the materials left over from their relatives' baskets, playing with the sticks and roots, and experimenting with ways of putting them together. It was only when they showed a real interest in weaving, when they continued to play with more and more intent and concentration—then they received formal instruction from their elders.

It was not a popular practice that they were learning, but they started as children and weaving was something that they nurtured as they were growing up. Even when they were going to school—when they came home, weaving was something that they picked up again, in the comfort of their home. At the time they were growing up, it was not popular to be an Indian. Having to hide their weaving—having to hide their identity—it was not easy for the elders to carry on their weaving practice. Especially given that the materials that they needed were not there for them. The beargrass was tough and unwieldy because it was not new

¹⁶⁴ Bommelyn, CHM, 1982.

growth from burned plants. The hazel was nearly impossible to get because it was not being burned.

Who was going to carry on basket weaving? How could it be carried on, if the basket weaving materials were simply out of reach? Although the weavers did not mention it explicitly, a larger question lingered. Given that there were fewer baskets on the Klamath River, how would all of the variations of basketry designs be remembered? Certainly at the time, weavers had little access to the museum collections that hold the baskets in their storage spaces. Weavers also lost their families' baskets in the floods of 1955 and 1964. How were the elder weavers going to preserve the designs and styles of basketry if they could not weave with the proper materials? How would they be able to pass this knowledge down to others?

Pottery, made with local clay, became a means for weavers to safeguard the knowledge of their elders. What started as an outward expression of their call to weave grew into a reawakening of not only basket weaving, but also an expression of their own Native identity. With the rising popularity of the pottery came an increasing awareness of the power of weaving. Weavers shared their gift, knowing that it was their responsibility to pass the knowledge along to the next generation. Despite the problems they had in conveying the importance of weaving to the many that they taught, there were a few who understood. The younger generation of basket weavers understood that it was not a practice to be carried on just by whim, but it was an everyday life that was to be undertaken. Embedded within this, was the need to address the health and vitality of the places where they gathered.

A frustration was palpable among the elder weavers. This frustration grew from the limited time and attention many of their students expressed either explicitly or implicitly. Time. Making time to weave. What the elders understood as a cyclical process of tending to basketry plants and gathering, along with the intense preparation of materials before setting out to weave a basket, was something that many of their students did not understand. The elders found that many of their students enjoyed and only wanted to carry out one part of the process—either weaving or gathering, but not both.

What was once a daily practice of weaving that encompassed all aspects of the process became one that was compartmentalized for many of the elders' students. Having to balance time between work, child rearing and other obligations, the younger weavers that stuck with it felt a sense of guilt about not having all of the time available to them to devote to the whole practice. There was a knowing expressed by the younger weavers that the process was one that required discipline, concentration, and most of all, time. This sentiment reflects not only societal changes and expectations placed on the shoulders of the younger weavers, but also the disconnection between the ways in which the elders and younger weavers learned.

Rather than being surrounded by weavers whose work was a daily practice, the younger weavers, who persisted with basket weaving, had to seek out teachers who would work with them. Several commented that basket weaving was something that they appreciated and always wanted to learn; it was "natural." As Nancy Richardson stated, to persist with basket weaving learners needed the mental attitude, a sense of dedication and discipline. Coupled with the mental attitude, Ms.

Richardson stated that in order to become a good basket weaver one needed to have respect for the materials.¹⁶⁵

The newer weavers expressed that basket weaving was not a leisure pursuit to them; it was instead—before those first moments in the classroom—a practice that was inextricably tied to who they were. They drew on the strength of their ancestors: their family members that came before them who were weavers. They also drew on the strength of their teachers, the elders who opened themselves up from the decades of hiding their practice of weaving in order to teach the cyclical practice. The young weavers also drew strength from themselves, finding weaving as one of the ways to deepen their relationship and bonds to their tribes. It was within these strengths that weavers embodied Native values, beliefs and, ultimately, a deeply rooted identification with their tribal ways of knowing.

The interviews from 1982 illustrate the resurgence of basket weaving by a handful of Karuk women and men. The practice of basket weaving, which includes stewarding and gathering basket plants, resonated with the younger weavers as a way to reconnect with their Karuk heritage. Carrying the threads of knowledge that were shared with them by their teachers and their elders, the younger weavers desired to establish the connections to their past and continue to carry it on into the future. These connections are not established with the end product of a basket in mind, but through the process—through traditional ecological knowledge, through stories, through language and through the work of weaving.

In 1982, Ms. Kelley Marks asked Ms. Richardson to give advice to Karuk peoples who wanted to carry on the tradition to the future. Ms. Richardson's remarks show the need for devotion and connection needed to carry the practice on into the future:

I would say that it's a lot of hard work, but then it's worth putting a lot of hard effort into it if you want to get some quality things. Because it feels a lot better when you look at your things and they're nice, then when they're not. And to finish them...But the main thing is to try to work hard at it and try to get a traditional leader to help you, like your grandmother or someone that makes them. And learn about gathering them. *The whole cycle*. If you look at the cycle like the weaving—it goes around in a circle and it keeps going around in a circle ...then...you look at your work as being cyclic of all the different seasons... You just make one basket, then you make another and you keep on...everything is like that...just like the weaving...[Then] you'll probably be a good basket maker. That's all.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ Richardson, CHM, 1982.

¹⁶⁶ Richardson, CHM, 1982.

Chapter V

Responses to the Challenges to Basket Weaving

Introduction

This chapter is a continuation of the analysis of the 1980s CHS interviews. From these interviews, I introduce and discuss the continued environmental issues that impede basket weavers in their struggle to have continued reliable and safe access to basket weaving materials. Additionally, I bring in information about two important outcomes that came from weavers' involvement with improving access to weaving materials and building a larger community with weavers across the state.

So integrated is the land and resources to the ways of knowing about the world to Karuk, Hupa, Tolowa, and Yurok peoples, that it is impossible to talk about baskets without talking about what they are made from. Weaving is intimately connected to the seasons and to nature. The sustainability of basket weaving relied on, and continues to rely on, unfettered access to gathering areas, and careful tending of basket weaving plants, which include burning, pruning, and coppicing.

For California Indians, natural resource management is not only about carefully cultivating the landscape for food and other necessities, but also is about the connection to, respect for, and stewardship of the landscapes so deeply intertwined with indigenous cultures. Traditional ecological knowledge is not just a means to acquire resources, but is deeply embedded in social, cultural, and spiritual practices (Anderson 2005; Berkes 2012; Lightfoot and Parrish 2009). The continuance of engaging with traditional ecological knowledge is a deeply felt necessity. "We gather not only because it is our right but because it is our responsibility, a responsibility that we have built through cultural and spiritual interaction with the land, and a responsibility that we must continue in order to maintain the bio-cultural sovereignty of our Indigenous spaces" (Risling Baldy 2013:9).

Environmental Factors

In the 1980s CHS interviews, weavers talked about the environmental degradation caused by the dams along the Klamath River and the subsequent massive flooding that occurred in 1955 and 1964. Weavers and Klamath River community members were negatively impacted by the application of herbicides in logging areas, many of which are prime gathering sites. Woven throughout these discussions about hindrances to gathering were the weavers' relationships with government agencies, particularly the United States Forest Service (USFS), which continues to control over 95% of Karuk aboriginal territories. These narratives expressed the deep frustrations of working with government agencies in an effort to apply traditional ecological knowledge to the management of plants used for basketry, opening the door for organized political action among the part of California basket weavers in the 1990s.

1955 and 1964 Floods

The flood in 1955 caused major damage along the Klamath River, but it was nothing compared to the 1964 flood, which caused widespread destruction of homes and whole communities. In December 1955, a warm winter storm raged from Washington State to Monterey, CA, melting the dense snowpack that had accumulated in the Cascade Mountains. The melted snow flooded into already swollen rivers, creeks and streams. By December 18, 1955, the heavy rains increased, finally subsiding four days later, with the flood cresting on the Klamath on December 22, 1955. “The Klamath River, draining 15,700 square miles, reached a gauge height of 49.7 feet near its mouth and a flow of 400,000 [per] second feet,” compared to the high water mark of 43.7 feet the previous year (Jackson and California Disaster Office 1956:31). According to one report, there were over 50,000 people left homeless and over 225 million dollars in property damage (Kroll 2012:2). Communities along the Eel, Russian, and Klamath Rivers were particularly hard hit, with five small towns being completely wiped out (Kroll 2012). Many people witnessed the “flooding, twisting, smashing or floating away [of] buildings that had stood for years in the ancient flood plains, and sometimes gouging out new channels to engulf sites that had appeared to be safe” (Jackson and California Disaster Office 1956:18). Slides, as well as bridge and road washouts, isolated the rural communities along the middle courses of the Klamath for several weeks—only radio communication possible (United States Geologic Survey 1963).

Almost nine years to the day, weather events in Northern California mirrored the 1955 flood, but to a much greater magnitude. In December 1964, heavy snowfall was seen to blanket the mountains in Northern California. On December 19, 1964, following this snowfall, were warm, torrential rains that rapidly melted the snow accumulation. Residents of all the communities on the Klamath, Eel, and Trinity Rivers had little time to evacuate.

The California Department of Parks and Recreation described the flood as the “greatest natural disaster’ ever experienced by the Pacific Northwest states. ... The Eel, Smith, Klamath, Trinity, Salmon and Mad rivers were all long past flood stage that day and the next. Northern California’s Humboldt, Del Norte, Mendocino, Siskiyou, Trinity and Sonoma counties experienced record water levels for the 20th century. ... Floodwaters, laden with jammed logs and houses ripped from their foundations, roared across at least 16 highway bridges, destroying them all and leaving residents isolated for months. (McGlaughlin 2014:4)

Many people lost everything they had. Twenty-four people died as a result of the flood, bridges and roads were destroyed, and rural communities along the Klamath River were again isolated—this time for months. Emergency supplies and food were airlifted to these communities and temporary footbridges across the roaring Klamath were the only means of travel from one side to the other (Barnes Moulton 2014). The flooding on the Klamath River far surpassed that of the 1955 flood. There was a maximum flow of 557,000 per second feet and by December 23, 1964, the gauge height reached 55.3 feet (United States Geologic Survey 2005). By January

1965, it was estimated that the December flood caused nearly \$175 million dollars in damage.

These floods delivered a serious blow to several of the elder weavers Ms. Kelley Marks had interviewed. Weavers whose homes were damaged or destroyed in the floods lost their stores of weaving materials, not to mention their collections of baskets. The floods washed away trees from the riverbanks and destroyed important gathering areas, and even 20 years later, weavers found it difficult to find willow shoots and roots along the river. Daraxa Peters¹⁶⁷ and Violet Moore¹⁶⁸ remarked that after the 1955 flood, the landscape along the River drastically changed; all of the large willow trees and alders were wiped out, leaving the banks of the river denuded, without any shade at all.

Lena McCovey, whose home was destroyed in the 1964 flood, lost all of her baskets and materials.¹⁶⁹ She only had time to save one pot, which her son dug out of the silt after the flood. She and her son roomed with a friend for several weeks until she received a trailer from FEMA in the Hoopa Valley. She remarked that when she lived on the Klamath River, she used to be able to gather weaving materials on her property, but since she was relocated elsewhere, she could not find ample materials to rebuild her stores. Forced to move from the Klamath River because of her limited income, she finally was able to make a permanent home in Crescent City several months later.

Bill VanPelt also lost his homes in the 1964 flood.¹⁷⁰ His entire collection of basket weaving materials had been lost. Additionally, the areas of which he relied to gather materials were severely damaged. These areas, he noted, were washed down to the bedrock, leaving no sand for the willows to root. He said that even in the 1980s, it was difficult to find willow root after the winter storms:

[Y]ou have to pick your roots and that, it's in the wintertime when the water washes the roots out from the trees and then when the river goes down you have to go down and scavenge around and see what roots you can find. Now they're even hard to find since the flood 'cause it washed all the willow trees out.¹⁷¹

Josephine Peters was building a home near Somes Bar when the 1955 flood raged.¹⁷² She said that the water levels came all the way up to her doors and

¹⁶⁷ Daraxa Peters, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 31, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹⁶⁸ Violet Moore, interview by Coleen Kelley, December 10, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹⁶⁹ Lena McCovey, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 12, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹⁷⁰ Bill VanPelt, interview by Coleen Kelley, September 9, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹⁷¹ VanPelt, CHM, 1982.

¹⁷² Josephine Peters, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 31, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

windows, but had spared her home. Unfortunately, the 1964 flood destroyed her home. She said that after the 1964 flood, a lot of people were either relocated or decided to leave. She stated that the landscape after the floods really changed.

Vera Ryerson (Yurok) grew up on the Klamath River near Bluff Creek and saw her whole community washed out in the floods.¹⁷³ Even twenty years after the 1964 flood, the damage was noticeable. She said,

Where you drive through now it's just — looks terrible. Before that the willow trees, the alder trees, were large and all along that creek clear down, because the creek now it's broke through about three miles from where the mouth was before. It's broke across the road. There's a high bridge through there. So all along where the creek was we had big alder trees and shade...¹⁷⁴

Grace Davis was heartbroken after the floods because she lost all of her personal belongings.¹⁷⁵ Her mother's and grandmother's baskets, which she had taken care of for decades, had washed away in the 1964 flood. She lost all of her weaving material as well. For a long time after, she had given up weaving. She said, "I didn't want to make any more baskets. [Madeline Davis] gave me some [basket weaving materials] and old Daisy gave me some material; I wasn't gonna make any more."¹⁷⁶ When she finally came back to weaving, she had to spend quite a bit of time replenishing her stores of materials.

Dams, Water Flow, and Drought

With the construction of dams along the Klamath in the early 20th century, changes in flood patterns had, and continues to have, a direct effect on the plant systems on the sandbars. The construction of the dams also negatively impacted traditional dip net fishing practices. Many weavers were concerned about the effects of the dams had on the willow that grows along the river. Weavers rely on willow shoots to be harvested in spring and fall, as well as the willow roots, which were easily gathered after the winter storms, when the river receded. While numerous scientific studies have been carried out regarding the effects of the dams on the Klamath River (e.g. Bartholow, Campbell, and Flug 2004; United States Department of the Interior et al. 2012; Karuk Tribe 2009; Salter 2003; Tucker and Karuk Tribe 2005), the purpose for this discussion is to point out how basket weaving practices have been negatively impacted.

Ron Reed (Karuk), the Karuk Tribe's cultural biologist, stated that before the dams were erected, there were never large willows that grew along the river (Salter 2003). This was because the winter storms would scour them out, with new growth being produced in the spring. The new growth would be fine and wispy, easily used

¹⁷³ Vera Ryerson, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 18, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹⁷⁴ Ryerson, CHM, 1982.

¹⁷⁵ Grace and Madeline Davis, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 13, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹⁷⁶ Davis, CHM, 1982.

for fine basketry. However, Ron exclaimed, “Even when new shoots come up they are not as delicate as they used to be. The growth patterns are different because of increased nutrients in the water” (Salter 2003:64). Laverne Glaze (Karuk), who began weaving in the 1960s, saw a noticeable shift in the resilience of willows that grow along the Klamath, stating that the materials had significantly deteriorated over the decades (Salter 2003). The willows were full of bugs, and she reasoned that “the water doesn't come up enough to push out all the old willows and bring new growth back so here we have this big old stob of a willow that pushes out shoots that are all buggy because they've gotten too old” (Salter 2003:37). Pruning willow branches, clipping off the slender new growth from the main branches, and topping off tall willow trees are all methods of pruning and caring for willows. But this is not enough. Without the high water flows that sweep the sand bars where willow grows, the bugs continue it invade these stands.

Mavis McCovey (Karuk) noticed that in the 1970s, during the 1976-1977 drought, the quality of the willow had decreased significantly:

Now the water comes up and silts in around them [willows] because there are big bunch of them and sand comes in across these river bars. There used to be sand on the river bar at the end of Orleans Bridge. There wasn't all those big gray willow trees. There was just clumps of little willows toward the edge. The basket weavers all started to complain in the Seventies that their willows were buggy. They weren't sending out new shoots and they just got buggy and it's because they were above the water line. The water had gone down. (Salter 2003:53).

Between the drought conditions and the dams that fed upriver agriculture, the water in the Klamath was dangerously low, not only for basketry plants, but also for the fish and other flora and fauna that rely on the cool depths of the river.

Mr. Reed expressed his concerns about the effects of water quality for basket weavers who use their mouths as third hands while weaving (Salter 2003). He wondered if the high nutrients and the subsequent algae blooms could negatively impact the health of weavers who processed materials with their mouths. Roots and other materials are washed off in the Klamath River and given degraded water quality, the very materials for basket weaving could pose health risks (Tucker and Karuk Tribe 2016). Vera Vena Davis (Karuk) echoed Mr. Reed's concern, sharing that her elders were scared to use materials that they thought may be contaminated by the river water. She said, “I remember my old people saying basket materials weren't like they used to be. They were kind of scared to put them in their mouths. Scared if there was something on them. So they heated them up before they did anything with them” (Salter 2003:33).

Renee Stauffer (Karuk) spoke to the correlation between the low water levels and the fineness of willow shoots that basket weavers collected. Before the dams, agricultural water diversions, and the drought, weavers were able to gather very fine materials. But as the decades passed, the materials have fundamentally changed. She stated,

If you look at old baskets and see how fine they are. I mean they are fine, you can't find sticks like that anymore. They are big and clunky. If you don't have materials that are really fine you'll never get fine baskets. Even the spring growth now is way bigger than it used to be. Cause we always look at those baskets and we go, 'How did they get that so fine?' People are not making fine baskets anymore because you can't get the materials. (Salter 2003:67).

Fire: Culturally Prescribed Burns, Wildfires and the United States Forest Service

Fire was one of the most important tools that California Indians employed to cultivate their landscape. Intentionally set fires and those occurring from lightning strikes helped to greatly strengthen the biodiversity of the state (Lightfoot and Parrish 2009). Fires, whether lightning-set or culturally prescribed, supported better harvests, controlled for invasive pests, provided ample grazing areas for deer and other animals, and reduced fuel for catastrophic forest fires (Anderson 2005). California's ecosystem has adapted to fire, meaning that native plant species have evolved to withstand the periodic fires that run through its lands. "Indeed, fire cycles are part and parcel to these ecosystems, just as the cycling of water and nutrients is" (Jensen and McPherson 2008:33).

In the early 20th century, the US government, as part of wilderness land management practices, outlawed prescribed fires. With the advent of the US Forest Service in 1907 and the Clarke-McNary Act of 1924, which increased funding to the Forest Service to institute policies of fire suppression, Karuk peoples were no longer able to produce the fires necessary to insure vigorous growth of much utilized basket materials, hazel and beargrass (Anderson 2005:117). Basket weavers were forced to rely on naturally occurring wildfires to burn through the lands in which their elder relatives and ancestors had gathered materials for millennia. While willow was difficult to procure because the flood events and drought, hazel and beargrass were even more so. These important weaving materials needed to be burned every year or two in order to generate new growth free from bugs, that grew straight and supple. Implicated in the difficulties gathering these materials were not only USFS polices, but also staff that worked within the Klamath River region. Relationships between weavers and the foresters were, and continue to be, very much bound together.

At one time, lightning-set fires burned through the forests unsuppressed, which cleared out undergrowth and debris. These fires would burn at a low intensity until they naturally went out on their own, sometimes taking months to extinguish (Biswell 1999). Without letting fires run their course, by quickly putting them out, a build-up of highly combustible fuel occurs. When lightning-set fires *do* get out of control, they burn hotter and faster because of the dense materials that were allowed to accumulate over years and decades (Jensen and McPherson 2008).

Prescribed fires, those set intentionally, assisted with cleaning out areas that hold important resources for people and animals. Prescribed fires, in combination with the naturally occurring lightning-set fires, would decrease the detritus from building up. Anderson (2005) explains that using fire as a land management tool is beneficial to ecosystems for many different reasons. It decreases insect and pathogen infestations by removing the detritus that attracts pests and disease. Fire

also helps release nutrients into the soil by increasing the turnover rate of dead materials, working faster than natural decomposition. Fire is also a way to actively shape the landscape by clearing out dense underbrush from forests, which then promoted the growth of grasses and wildflowers. She notes that regular burning of these areas kept out of control wildfires from occurring, simply because the fuel was not there. For hazel and beargrass, two important materials for basket weaving, the use of fire as a land management tool helps produce bug-free, straight and supple materials. Creating open spaces under the tall canopy of trees growing on the mountainsides, long-burning, low-intensity fires allowed for hazel and beargrass to thrive in the dappled sunlight, rather than be choked out by other plant materials.

Craig Ervin explained in depth why it was important to burn beargrass:

The bear grass has to be burned before it can be used, because it's very coarse and very, it will cut you. And, it has to be soft and tender so in the fall, [Karuk peoples would] go and they'd set the beargrass patch on fire and they'd burn it off. Now this was not a real hot fire that killed the roots; they knew just when to burn after there'd been a rain and burn slowly and burn the year's growth and burned it off clean.

Then, in the spring, that beargrass comes up just like fine grass and it grows and by August, it's at its peak and then you pick that. Also, that should be under trees. Now, you're going to ask me how can Indians burn under trees 'cause they're gonna kill the trees and we know that Northwestern California is very famous for their timber industry and the Indians did burn.

But you see, a long time ago, the Indians burned every year and the brush and the leaves was not like it is today and so there was just a few leaves on the ground and a few twigs and so the fires never burned any higher than probably about four inches and it would just pick up, you know, the excess leaves and stuff and never got hot enough to kill the roots and plants or to harm trees. So, that's how they get the beargrass and how they took care of it.¹⁷⁷

As mentioned in the previous chapter, by the 1960s, basket weavers began to work in cooperation with the USFS and other parties to harvest basket materials. However, the basketweavers ran into many different problems with getting the USFS to set the prescribed fires.. The main issues—roadblocks—of concern were: where the burns took place, how much material to burn, and the permitting process that allowed weavers to gather on “government” land. Additionally, the high employee turnover rate at the ranger stations was another source of frustration for the weavers because as soon as they developed a relationship with the rangers, the rangers would leave after only a few years. The next crew needed to be trained again, and some weavers expressed exasperation with having to do that year after year.

¹⁷⁷ Craig Ervin, interview by Coleen Kelley, July 1, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

Vera Ryerson said that she knew that it was difficult for weavers to gather beargrass for a very long time, but she was hopeful because the relationship with the USFS was changing:

for a long time it was hard for us to get our hazel sticks or bear grass because we were not allowed to burn and—but now I understand the Forest Service will burn for you if you go and ask them. And I never have because I have a friend in Orleans who works for the Forest Service and she takes me out each year to—to the control burns... with the Forest Service they burn the slash that the loggers—after the loggers get through logging and they pile up the debris and then the Forest Service goes in and burns and if it's in an area where there's beargrass, well, then she lets me know.¹⁷⁸

Unfortunately, hazel does not grow in the same areas and under the same conditions as beargrass does, so the burning that was happening at the time was not, to Vera's knowledge, reaching stands of hazel bushes. Mrs. Ryerson had to turn to using willow sticks for her weft material exclusively, saying "I have no hazel sticks because it's hard for—like I say—[the USFS] just don't burn [them] and so I use altogether willow sticks."¹⁷⁹

Josephine Peters stated that she would find places to gather hazel by following the patterns of forest fires in years previous; "we'd have to go to where there was a fire that burnt the hazel before we could pick it."¹⁸⁰ She mentioned that if the weavers approached the USFS and told them where to burn, that they would cooperate and would burn patches of land for hazel and beargrass. She did concede, however, that bear grass, along with maidenhair fern, was still very difficult to harvest.

When Lena McCovey was growing up, she noticed clear stands of hazel growing on her family's property and other places nearby.¹⁸¹ She distinctly remembered that there were a few people, her family included, who would burn their properties to clear out the underbrush in order to promote the growth of hazel and other plants. When she was sharing her stories with Ms. Kelley Marks in the 1980s, Ms. L. McCovey said that those grassland areas were now completely overgrown; "Yeah, all over [there is] brush because they don't burn it. Indians use to burn it every year, every fall or in spring so the grass grewed there...Now it's nothing but brush...now brush all over now you don't see hardly any hazel sticks there."¹⁸²

Violet Moore mentioned that it was difficult for her to gather the beargrass that she needed for her baskets. She said that they used to burn all the time, but the fires were so infrequent, so she had a hard time finding patches of beargrass. She

¹⁷⁸ Ryerson, CHM, 1982.

¹⁷⁹ Ryerson, CHM, 1982.

¹⁸⁰ J. Peters, CHM, 1982.

¹⁸¹ McCovey, CHM, 1982.

¹⁸² McCovey, CHM, 1982.

was also concerned because there were people who knew where to find burned patches of beargrass, but they wouldn't share the information:

Well, they don't have that much fire in the mountains no more. Whoever, they won't tell each other where. Some people won't tell where so I have to find it, hard to get... They used to burn all the time nowadays it's gettin' harder. It's gettin' harder.¹⁸³

Ollie James (Yurok) also had difficulty gathering hazel and beargrass for the same reason, saying that only sometimes people would let him know when and where the burns occurred.¹⁸⁴

Daraxa Peters stated that she wanted to boil her stores of willow and hazel every year to make sure that any bug infestations were taken care of.¹⁸⁵ She said that even the fresh sticks that she collected were full of bugs, which she had attributed to the lack of prescribed burns. Even though the USFS would burn the areas that weavers requested, it was not always performed correctly. Mrs. D. Peters shared her frustration, saying, "You gotta ask and somebody sets a fire and then they put it out before it burns a big enough place."¹⁸⁶ Even though her daughter burned hazel patches on her property, Mrs. D. Peters was afraid for the future of basket weaving, sharing with Ms. Kelley Marks that materials were going to become harder and harder to come by because there weren't enough prescribed burns.

Grace Davis, Susan Burdick and Nancy Richardson described more in depth the problems working with the USFS. They remarked that there were often miscommunications with the USFS about where the prescribed burns occurred. There was also the lack of knowledge on the part of USFS personnel on how to conduct prescribed burns, including intensity and location. Additionally, there were restrictions put on basket weavers about where they could gather. One of these restrictions is the process of obtaining permits from the USFS, which weavers were, rightfully so, offended that they needed permission to harvest basket weaving materials from lands where their families had gathered historically.

Circumventing the USFS policies, basket weavers became resourceful and counted on word of mouth to learn of areas that had been burned for other purposes, in hopes that they would find some materials to harvest. Ms. Burdick mentioned, "unless you keep up with who's logging where—when they burn their slash—it's pretty hard to find... I've never ever used bear grass that hasn't been burned. It's just the way that I was taught, you gather beargrass that's been burned."¹⁸⁷ Regarding hazel, Mrs. G. Davis stated that she and her sister would try to make do with sticks that were not burned, but they were definitely inferior

¹⁸³ Moore, CHM, 1982.

¹⁸⁴ Ollie James, interview by Coleen Kelley, December 17, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

¹⁸⁵ D. Peters, CHM, 1982.

¹⁸⁶ D. Peters, CHM, 1982.

¹⁸⁷ Susan Burdick, interview by Coleen Kelley, July 27, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

materials. She would have preferred to use hazel sticks, but she could not find any that were burned, adding, "We just pick it here and there where it's been cut and that's awful rough, strong."¹⁸⁸

Both Ms. Richardson and Mrs. G. Davis expressed their exasperation with working with the USFS, trying to get prescribed burning to occur. They shared a story with Ms. Kelley Marks about a particular instance when they tried to work with the rangers in the Orleans district to burn a patch of beargrass:

Mrs. G. Davis: There's that one place we saw that bear grass. Beautiful. If they could only burn—just a little place like this—if they could only burn that it would be so pretty.

Ms. Richardson: Where they went that one time, they burnt down there at Orleans, but I could never find it. They told me and I went way up Lonesome Ridge Road and finally they burned it so hot with those little torches that they burned the whole thing out.

Mrs. G. Davis: That was no good when they used that torch.

Ms. Richardson: They burned it too hot.

Mrs. G. Davis: And they burned it down to the roots.

Ms. Richardson: They killed them.¹⁸⁹

It is a delicate balance. Knowing how long to burn certain areas and knowing how soon to put the fires out are skills that come only through experience. Basket weavers, who have witnessed and heard stories from their elders about carrying out these fires, would have been an asset to USFS rangers when they went out to set fires with their gas-fueled torches. But, as Ms. Richardson said later, the rangers were not interested in having their help. She stated,

Well, they want to try to do things—they want to help and they have all these studies. I know the Klamath National Forest has their files for Indians Cultural Resource Files—that have a lot of stuff they've gathered and they hide it away somewhere and so does the Six Rivers National Forest. And they do like to try to help, but they really have to control everything they do. And they have to control what you want, too. And they wanted to help so Madeline and Grace went down there and told them that they needed some bear grass, so they went up and so they said, "Okay. We know up Lonesome ridge there's bear grass up there so we'll go burn some in little spots, but they burned 'em right off."¹⁹⁰

Madeline Davis echoed this distrust of the USFS as well. She was apprehensive about the continuance of basket weaving because weavers were unable to gather

¹⁸⁸ Davis, CHM, 1982.

¹⁸⁹ Davis, CHM, 1982.

¹⁹⁰ Nancy Richardson, interview by Coleen Kelley, August 3, 1982, transcript, Clarke Historical Museum, Eureka, CA.

materials because the USFS “gets the best of it.”¹⁹¹ Her sister, Mrs. G. Davis, explained what Mrs. M. Davis meant, saying that the USFS would not let them gather freely in the mountains. “We always have to go down Orleans at the station and inquire about if they have any beargrass. Then they tell us and we look all day and never find any.”¹⁹²

Ms. Burdick had a similar experience as Mrs. G. Davis, saying that she did not believe the USFS staff actually carried out prescribed burns they said they were going to perform. She said that she had talked with USFS rangers about burning beargrass. Several times, she said, the USFS promised that they would carry out burns on beargrass areas. But she had “never, ever gone to a place where they've ever burned yet, and I don't know of anyone that ever has. They've been saying it for several years now, and it hasn't [happened].”¹⁹³

When answering Ms. Kelley Marks's question regarding the continuance of basket weaving in the face of unreliable sources for basketry plants, Ms. Burdick also brought up an important issue that weavers have faced: permission to gather on US government lands. Ms. Burdick asserted her right to gather in places she selected because they were spaces where her grandmother and ancestors gathered:

[Right] now, where I go out and I gather, spruce roots, you know, I don't know if it's against the law to gather there or not. But I know that's where my grandmother and my people have always gathered, so I'm going to go there, and if I get in trouble, why I'll get in trouble.¹⁹⁴

Pesticides and Herbicides

Another concern that was voiced, particularly by Susan Burdick, was the use of pesticides and herbicides in areas where basket weavers gathered their materials. In the 1960s, timber stands were treated with aerial herbicides. “The spraying was part of what is known as a ‘conifer-release program,’ in which herbicides were used on logged areas to prevent the growth of broadleaf trees and brush, species perceived to compete with newly planted conifer seedlings after clear cutting” (Norgaard 2007:459). While this practice was suspended in the late 70s to early 80s, roadside herbicide spraying by Caltrans continued. Daraxa Peters said that the pesticides and herbicides were killing basket weaving material, particularly the beargrass.¹⁹⁵ Josephine Peters mentioned that aside from the lack of prescribed burns, the spraying of pesticides and herbicides in gathering areas made it very difficult to gather beargrass and hazel. She stated,

¹⁹¹ Davis, CHM, 1982.

¹⁹² Davis, CHM, 1982.

¹⁹³ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

¹⁹⁴ Burdick, CHM, 1982.

¹⁹⁵ D. Peters, CHM, 1982.

Well, right now it's getting real hard, of course, they spray it and they kill it out—ya know—it dies out. We used to go up in Bluff Creek and gather, and then they've sprayed them areas and it's just killin' it off.¹⁹⁶

Mavis McCovey, who was a medicine woman, community health organizer and a nurse, noted that when pesticides and herbicides were being sprayed in gathering areas, there were increased incidents of miscarriages, cancer, and birth defects amongst people who lived and gathered in these areas (McCovey and Salter 2009; Norgaard 2007). In her research on invasive weed management in the Klamath watershed, Norgaard (2007) stated that in 1976, one third of the pregnancies in the areas being sprayed with herbicides ended in miscarriage, one deformed child was born and there were three molar pregnancies (2007:466). It was of great concern to weavers, who typically handled and processed basket weaving materials through their mouths, using their teeth like a third hand. But in addition to the exposure basket weavers faced, they were also concerned about the exposure to those who would be using their baskets. Norgaard (2007) interviewed one weaver who shared this with her:

For me, I worry about myself, but I like to make rattles, and the first thing you do is you give it to a baby and they're going to put it in their mouth. My kids teethe on their rattles, and I think that most kids do. So, it spends a lot of time in their mouth. Then, you also have your bowls that you eat out of. So, your food sits right in there. (2007:467)

The concern was not only that of Northwestern California basket weavers, but also a concern for weavers across the state. But it took nearly a decade from the CHS interviews for weavers all over California to come together with a unified voice to protect weavers from the health risks of exposure to pesticides and herbicides.

Organization and Calls to Action

In the 1980s, Karuk basket weavers were making visible to the broader public the issues that they had with being able to gather weaving materials that were usable and were safe to use. Connecting with USFS personnel in the Happy Camp/Oak Knoll or the Orleans Ranger Districts, weavers had some success with collaborating on prescribed burns in gathering areas. However, the issue of pesticide and herbicide spraying was not at all addressed by the USFS.

Since the 1940s, herbicides were used on cut tanoak stumps to reduce competition for the more valuable conifers that were harvested (Bowcutt 2015). Although there was some backlash to the wholesale eradication of tanoak trees within the USFS staff itself, it wasn't until the 1970s that environmental groups led the way to public protests (Bowcutt 2015:66, 67). While basket weavers may have participated in these protests, specific concerns about exposure to herbicides and

¹⁹⁶ J. Peters, CHM, 1982.

pesticides from gathering plant materials were not addressed. These protests were aimed at halting the use of aerial spraying over timber stands over concerns about the health risks posed to rural communities from chemicals such as 2, 4-D; 2, 4, 5-T; and triclopyr (Bowcutt 2015).^{197, 198, 199}

Karuk basket weavers were not the only indigenous weavers in California that were concerned about exposure to harmful chemicals in the process of gathering and processing their materials. However, many weavers were unaware that there were others who held these concerns. In the late 1980s, Sara Greensfelder, a community activist who held a deep appreciation of traditional basket weaving, began to talk with weavers all over California to find ways to not only help preserve traditional basket weaving, but also to organize weavers to address the concerns over traditional plant stewardship. On this end, the California Indian Basket Weavers Association was formed in 1991.

In addition to the issue of pesticides and herbicides applied in gathering areas, weavers still found it difficult to find beargrass and hazel that needed to be burned. Individual weavers' efforts with working in partnership with the USFS were unsatisfactory, with burns happening erratically, improperly, or not at all. But in 1997, with funding from the USFS' Passport in Time, Karuk basket weavers created a unique partnership the several agencies to create a program, called *Following the Smoke*, which gave hands on experience to participants on how and why materials were managed, gathered and used the ways that they were.

California Indian Basketweavers' Association (CIBA)

In the 1980s, Sara Greensfelder, one of the founders of the California Indian Basket Weavers Association, spent time speaking with weavers throughout California (Cardozo 2005). She recognized that there was a resurgence in basket weaving practice, but many new weavers did not necessarily have the support and guidance that they needed from elder teachers. In interviews with Ms. Greensfelder, weavers shared their concerns about the lack of community support they had, as

¹⁹⁷ According to Jervais et al. (2008), 2,4-D can cause eye and skin irritation on contact. In higher concentrations, it can cause diarrhea, vomiting, headaches and confusion. There is not a clear link between 2,4-D exposure and cancer; the EPA states that there is not enough data to make that determination.

¹⁹⁸ 2,4,5-T is an herbicide was banned from use in United States in 1985, due to its toxicity. According to the Center for Disease Control, high doses of exposure to 2,4,5-T resulted in headache, nausea, weakness, renal injury and other outcomes. "Epidemiological studies have reported associations of several types of cancer, such as soft tissue sarcoma and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, with the exposure" (Biomonitoring Summary: 2,4,5-Trichlorophenoxyacetic Acid. Electronic resource. https://www.cdc.gov/biomonitoring/2,4,5-TrichlorophenoxyaceticAcid_BiomonitoringSummary.html, accessed June 3, 2016).

¹⁹⁹ The triclopyr group of herbicides have mild to severe irritation to eyes and skin, depending on the exposure concentrations; however there is no data to support that is causes cancer or birth defects in humans (National Pesticide Information Center 2002).

well as restricted access to weaving materials. The greatest concern by far that was on everyone's mind was the issue of pesticide and herbicide treatment in gathering areas.

In addition to bringing together an advisory board made up of California basket weavers and others deeply interested in supporting the resurgence of basket weaving, Ms. Greensfelder spent a couple of years applying for grants to create a community of weavers from all over the state (Cardoza 2005). Ms. Greensfelder and the advisory board saw that intergenerational and intercultural learning was the key to supporting California Indian basket weaving traditions:

Many of the finest California Indian weavers are very old. The generation of "master weaver," those that provide a vital link from past to future, are fast disappearing. Although some have apprenticed younger weavers who will carry on the tradition, in bringing a group of the older and younger weavers together, it is anticipated that a unique forum will be created for exchange of ideas, techniques, and materials and that the combined creative energies of such a dedicated and special group of artists will provide a boost to the tradition itself.... To the younger ones, it may be a source of great inspiration to continue in their art despite the ever increasing difficulties of doing so. (Sara Greensfelder in Cardoza 2005:83)

The first meeting was held in 1991, with many Karuk and Yurok attendees. The two-day meeting was filled with workshops and talks, in which some of the weavers voiced their concerns with the ability to freely gather plants. On the second day of the meeting, CIBA had invited staff from the USFS and other government agencies to attend a panel regarding access to traditional gathering areas (Cardoza 2005). This was an opportunity for weavers to share their particular issues they had with gathering basketry materials with each other, as well as agencies that control their lands. Both Susan Burdick and Verna Reece (Karuk) discussed their concerns about the sustainability of harvesting hazel and beargrass in areas that need to be burned. Ms. Burdick pointed out that even though weavers had the cooperation of USFS staff to burn areas, the staff had difficulty obtaining permission to carry out prescribed burns, as there was still a priority of fire suppression within the USFS policies (Ortiz 1991/1992). Additionally, Ms. Burdick shared that even if the fires did happen, the USFS would burn the same area a year later, before weavers had a chance to gather their materials.

Ms. Reece discussed how the USFS would not protect traditional gathering concerns over those of commercial florists. There was fierce competition occurring between weavers and commercial florists over the gathering of maidenhair fern and woodwardia ferns. She voiced her frustration over the restrictions that the USFS would place on weavers, who sought to cooperate with the policies, only to be undercut by commercial interests. She stated:

And another thing is...when we go out to gather, you go in the Forest Service and they say go ahead and do it, but some of them say, 'Well, you're only allowed so many ferns, and after that, you have to pay for them.' Well, we

have to fight with the... florists... that come up and take our ferns, the maidenhair ferns and the woodwardia ferns. You know, they'll come in and just cut them down! Mostly the places where we [gather from] ... is mostly where the older people can get to, so they go right to the easy spots, where the elders get it too. (Verna Reece, quoted in Cardoza 2005:101)

Another major issue that was brought up by weavers was the herbicide use in basket gathering areas. Echoing sentiments brought up by Karuk and Yurok weavers in the 1980s, California basket weavers from across the state identified this as a problem for them as well. Linda Yamane (Rumsien Ohlone) said that signage was not posted in areas of spraying, so basket weavers could not be sure that they were being exposed when they went into gathering areas (Cardoza 2005:102). Susan Burdick expanded on the problems with herbicide exposure:

In Northern California where I come from, in Humboldt County, we're getting sprayed every year, doused with these chemicals. And on the Klamath River, we have a lot of cancer in our area. Not only do we use basket materials and put them in our mouths, but I'd say again about 50 percent of our food comes from the forest lands. We gather a lot; we're gatherers... In Klamath, people were complaining about diarrhea, vomiting, a number of things after the spray... there has to be an alternative... (Susan Burdick, quoted in Cardoza 2005:102)

From these first conversations at the meeting, the USFS and other agency staff members were able to connect with the larger basket weaving communities throughout the state. These conversations were the beginnings of mutual understanding regarding the impacts of land management policies that have affected basket weavers. It was one of the first steps in creating cooperation, not just with individual basket weavers, but also with a wide network that shared similar concerns (Cardoza 2005). "Once CIBA provided a unified voice for the weavers, their concerns began to be taken seriously as the group started to work with federal and state land management agencies to bring about needed changes in the existing land management system" (Cardoza 2005:235).

Understanding that land management practices, community involvement, and spiritual obligations were interconnected with basket weaving practices, CIBA developed a vision statement that looked to taking care of the whole wellbeing of basket weavers, which serves to "preserve, promote and perpetuate California Indian basket weaving traditions."²⁰⁰ CIBA seeks to achieve this goal by:

- By promoting and providing opportunities for California Indian Basketweavers to pursue the study of traditional basketry techniques and forms, and to showcase their work.

²⁰⁰ CIBA Vision Statement. Electronic File. <http://ciba.org/2-uncategorised/8-vision-statement>, accessed April 24, 2015.

- By establishing rapport and working with public agencies and other groups in order to provide a healthy physical, social, cultural, spiritual and economic environment for the practice of California Indian basketry.
- By increasing California Indian access to traditional cultural resources on public and tribal lands and traditional gathering sites, and encouraging the reintroduction of such resources and designation of gathering areas on such lands.
- By raising awareness and providing education for Native Americans, the public, public agencies, arts, educational and environmental groups of the artistry, practices and concerns of Native American Basketweavers.
- By promoting solidarity and broadening communication among Native American Basketweavers and with other indigenous traditional artists.
- By monitoring public and private land use and encouraging those management practices that protect and conserve traditional Native resources.
- By monitoring and discouraging pesticide use in traditional and potential gathering areas for the safety of weavers, gatherers, and others in tribal communities.
- By doing all of the above in a manner that respects our Elders and Mother Earth.²⁰¹

Annual meetings with basket weavers across California provided a way for CIBA to assess weavers' concerns so that they could address these in written policy and political action. One of the first issues that they tackled as an organization was land management. Because of their organized and unified voice, CIBA captured the attention of the USFS and other agencies (Cardoza 2005). As Cardoza (2005:239) explains, CIBA worked with government agencies at the national level to voice the issues of prescribed burns and the health risks of herbicide spraying in basket weaving gathering areas, as well as work directly with staff in local offices, educating them about these issues. CIBA board members also provided training sessions and meetings with agency staff members to reinforce the need for prescribed burns, pesticide health risks, and the cultural importance of basket weaving and gathering plants in specific areas.

Through their work, CIBA has been able to work with US and state agencies to decrease herbicide spraying in gathering areas and increase awareness about the benefits of prescribed burns on public lands in California. But the most important outcome from CIBA's organization of basketweavers was, and continues to be, the empowerment that comes from the community of practitioners. Jennifer Bates (Miwok) summed this point up best, saying:

²⁰¹ CIBA Vision Statement. Electronic File. <http://ciba.org/2-uncategorised/8-vision-statement>, accessed April 24, 2015.

[CIBA] opened the door for a lot of tribal people to be able to go in and speak on behalf of the land that's going to be used for whatever [purpose] with an agency, be it state or federal. I feel we've become a recognized organization, one these agencies will contact to get input from, or to ask for help on who they need to contact, so they can get input on whatever project they're working on. In my eyes, I think for us it's been able to do that, and especially work with the Forest Service as we have, and Caltrans, and again, many of those agencies — it's been phenomenal the things we've been able to accomplish. (Jennifer Bates, quoted in Cardoza 2005:405)

Following the Smoke—Passport in Time

Basket weavers from the Klamath River, chiefly Laverne Glaze, Paula McCarthy, and Verna Reece, worked tirelessly to cultivate relationships with the USFS to educate personnel about the importance of prescribed fire for the health of basket weaving materials. Sympathetic to their issues with gathering basketry plants, Ken Wilson, former Heritage Resource Program Manager for the Six Rivers National Forest (SRNF), was very interested in developing significant and meaningful relationships with tribal peoples in the area, focusing particularly on cultural resources. He worked specifically with weavers to target beargrass gathering sites, identifying those that would benefit from controlled burns (Ken Wilson, personal communication, 2016). Seeing the importance and the value of fostering partnerships with basket weavers and with the tribe, Mr. Wilson worked with basket weavers to find the funds to support gathering. Despite some resistance from local rangers and some Karuk cultural practitioners, Mr. Wilson, Mrs. Glaze, Ms. Reece, Ms. McCarthy and others worked to put together a proposal through the USFS Passport in Time program to get funding to raise awareness about cultural land stewardship, basket weaving and ethnobotanical knowledge by creating an educational camp for the broader public (Ken Wilson, personal communication, 2016).

In 1997, an innovative program, called *Following the Smoke*, was developed in partnership with the USFS-Six Rivers National Forest, Karuk Indigenous Basketweavers, Karuk Tribe, California Department of Transportation, California State Office of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the California State Preservation Office.²⁰² *Following the Smoke* was funded by the USFS Passport in Time, which is a heritage resource program that offers volunteers hands-on training in all manners of preservation activities, including archeological survey and excavation, archival research, oral history, and curation.²⁰³ Karuk basket weavers and cultural practitioners, along with Ken Wilson envisioned *Following the Smoke* as a way to educate Klamath River stakeholders and others about gathering basketry plants, medicines, and other culturally valued plants across the aboriginal territories

²⁰² The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Electronic Document <http://www.achp.gov/>, accessed May 31, 2016.

²⁰³. Passport in Time. Electronic Document, <http://passportintime.com/about.html>, accessed May 31, 2016.

that were stewarded by various government agencies.²⁰⁴ This program was created to bring together basketweavers and teachers from across the United States, as well as federal and state agency staff to foster mutual understanding and collaboration on issues that Karuk basket weavers faced when gathering plant materials. Education was the key to *Following the Smoke*, with weavers focusing their attention to practice, having the volunteers shadow the weavers in various activities.

“Following the smoke” is a phrase that basket weavers have used for a long time. To follow the smoke means to find and map out the USFS’s fall season slash burning program (Heffner 1984:20). The areas in which the USFS burned were also prime areas for beargrass, which needs the fire to regenerate. When prescribed fires were not taking place for cultural purposes, finding lands that were burned for other reasons, such as the slash burns or lightning-set fires, was one way for weavers to gather much needed, but rare materials. By using the name “following the smoke,” Karuk weavers highlighted not only their problems with gathering materials, but also their resourcefulness in getting around fire suppression and permitting policies. Also, an undercurrent to “following the smoke” was weavers’ and cultural practitioners’ indignation about having to rely on the unintentional benefits of slash burns, rather than the cultural burns that were, at times, promised to them by the USFS.

The intention behind *Following the Smoke* was to provide leaders in their respective communities and those who worked in education about the whole process of weaving, from gathering to processing, as well as weaving basketry materials, so that they could share the message with their own communities and colleagues (Ortiz 2008). Mr. Wilson stated that a very important aspect of the program was to bring awareness to the general public about the importance of ethnobotanical materials and knowledge (Ken Wilson, personal communication, 2016). Basketweavers vetted the applications to the four-day long program, choosing those whom they felt would carry on the message. Kathy McCovey (Karuk), one of the weavers who taught the volunteers and who was on the SRNF staff, stated:

We chose people who could take a message out to other people, because sometimes the managing agencies look at the Karuk people and say, "Why should we manage for you? You're just another special use group." And we're not. The knowledge that our people have about this area is very specialized. It's very precious. We need to keep that knowledge and keep using that knowledge. (Ortiz 2008:150)

Ms. K. McCovey went on to say that the basket weavers and cultural practitioners had something very important to say and that they needed a venue like *Following the Smoke* to get their message across. She realized the importance of raising these issues publically, so that their concerns could be shared by the wider public; “There's a strength in numbers, and if you have a lot of people [learning] about the

²⁰⁴ Following the Smoke. Electronic Document. <http://www.eurekareporter.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?ArticleID=13427>, accessed April 18, 2015.

rights of other people to live as their ancestors have done for thousands of years, you don't just have the Indian people saying that, but you have a population backing you" (Ortiz 2008:111).

Volunteers assisted basket weavers in going out into the forests and river banks to gather materials such as hazel, beargrass, woodwardia and maidenhair ferns, and willow roots and sticks.²⁰⁵ The materials that were collected were then brought back into the camp so they could be processed, whether stripped of its bark in the case of willow and hazel, or it would be dyed as in the case of woodwardia fern. Other activities included cleaning pine nuts, grinding acorns with traditional mortars, pestles, and *ikráamnam* (hoppers), and weaving baskets.²⁰⁶ One of the most exciting activities that participants had identified was learning how to weave *pátarav* (soup bowls), *uhsípnuuk* (tobacco basket), or *axrukuxrúkuar* (baby rattle). Since traditional basket materials were still difficult to come by, Karuk basket weavers would have their students use purchased reeds and raffia, instead of willow roots and sticks (Ortiz 2008). One student stated, "We used nontraditional commercial basketweaving supplies since one the goals of the week was to help provide sufficient traditional materials to the Karuk basketweavers for their own needs."²⁰⁷ Articulating the collaborative process of the *Following the Smoke* meetings, Mary MacGregor-Villarreal stated,

The basketweavers receive a hand with the intensive labor needed to sustain the gathering and processing aspects of their basket weaving tradition, while imparting important information about forest resource management. The PIT project, the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and California Department of Transportation have a platform for collaboration and for articulating their mission to members of the public at large. The combined resources of the partnering groups produce an effective program for all involved.²⁰⁸

Participants also took part in opportunities to learn more about Karuk peoples' relationship with the ecosystem and how it relates to cultural values and beliefs. Director of the Karuk Department of Natural Resources Leaf Hillman (Karuk) brought participants to a ceremonial site and taught them about the current spiritual practices of tribal members (Ortiz 2008). Ortiz stated that this was not only

²⁰⁵ "Following the Smoke" Project Wins ACHP Chairman's Award. Electronic Resource. achp.gov, accessed April 20, 2015.

²⁰⁶ "Following the Smoke VII": A Week in Karuk Cultural Practice. Electronic Resource. http://216.92.187.150/More_Information/Following_the_smoke.htm, accessed April 18, 2015

²⁰⁷ "Following the Smoke VII": A Week in Karuk Cultural Practice. Electronic Resource. http://216.92.187.150/More_Information/Following_the_smoke.htm, accessed April 18, 2015

²⁰⁸ "Following the Smoke VII": A Week in Karuk Cultural Practice. Electronic Resource. http://216.92.187.150/More_Information/Following_the_smoke.htm, accessed April 18, 2015

an opportunity for people to learn about Karuk beliefs, but also a rare occasion to learn the connections between land stewardship and spirituality. Gathering, she said, was not about the act of picking sticks and roots as an isolated practice; instead it was the interrelationships, responsibilities, and sacred bonds between the environment and people. Elaborating on this profound connection, Ms. K. McCovey stated simply, “We’re part of them, and they are part of us” (Ortiz 2008:109).

One 2005 participant, Tom Leskiw, who worked for the USFS salmon restoration program, gained a deeper insight to the differences between the traditional ecological knowledge that the weavers and the cultural practitioners spoke and the western science knowledge that he employed on the job. Through his experience at the 2005 meeting, Mr. Leskiw (2006) stated that he was wrong to think that, historically, the wilderness was pristine and untouched by Native peoples—something that he had not previously considered. He was surprised to find that gathering practices of prescribed burning, pruning, and a whole host of other techniques described by basket weavers were proven scientifically to be sound and beneficial to maintain healthy ecosystems. It was a moving experience for him, one that changed his outlook on environmental stewardship, stating:

Participating in “Following the Smoke” was a humbling experience. While I have fair grasp of the ebb and flow of nonhuman processes in a watershed, it’s the cultural component—how humans have affected the evolution of present-day plant communities—to which I’m less attuned... Humans are a part of—not distinct from—nature. (Leskiw 2006:21)

This was one of the points that weavers tried very hard to impress upon the participants at *Following the Smoke*, that people were not just the managers of the landscapes, but because they were a *part of nature*, they had a responsibility to ensure the health, vitality, and well-being of the ecosystem. Part of that responsibility was to actively care for the plants, animals, lands, and watersheds through the timely and appropriate use of landscape resource techniques, such as prescribed fire.

Through their work with *Following the Smoke*, basket weavers were able to show that weaving was not a practice that just involved going out into nature and grabbing whatever materials they could get their hands on and then sitting down to weave. In fact, more than one weaver commented that the meetings were important because it showed people that basket weaving was a living and complex practice; indeed, Deanna Marshall (Karuk) stated, “I’m hoping that they see that this is still alive. It’s not in the past,” (Ortiz 2008:112). Because of the respect and reverence Karuk peoples had with the ecosystem, weavers impressed upon participants that the basket weaving plants were more than just resources to be utilized. This was what was desired for participants to learn. Ms. K. McCovey stated,

Hopefully they’ll [the PIT volunteers] leave here with a different view about the forest, because a lot of people view the forest as wilderness, as a wild place, but it’s our home. I’m more comfortable here out in the woods than I am down in the city. The trees are full of spirits—the plants, the animals, the

bugs—and so once they get to know these creatures and plants as intimately as I do, they'll view them more as their friends, and that they have every right to be here as the people do. (Ortiz 2008:105)

For some indigenous participants, joining in *Following the Smoke* was an important part of building a community because they were the only weavers left in their tribes (Ortiz 2008). Kathy McCafferty (Wailaki/Yuki) stated that it was important for her to get to know other weavers because she did not have the opportunity to learn from others about gathering and weaving techniques; instead, she was self-taught from books and trial and error (Ortiz 2008). Of her experience at *Following the Smoke*, Ms. McCafferty said, "I love getting together with other people of my culture. It revitalizes me. It makes me feel good" (Ortiz 2008:102). For Karuk weavers, it was a chance to get to know and help other weavers across the US who faced similar problems with revitalizing their basket weaving traditions and gaining access to basket weaving plants on lands governed by the USFS and other agencies. Thelma McNeal (Karuk) shared, "These gatherings are wonderful for getting people together and learning. I think it helps people understand a little bit about the Indian way" (Ortiz 2008:106). Virginia Larson (Karuk/Yurok) said that *Following the Smoke* brought a sense of community to present-day basketweavers and revealed the strength and closeness with ancestral weavers; "It makes me feel close to the ones who are gone" (Ortiz 2008:108).

After about twelve years of *Following the Smoke*, which was one of the most successful and award-winning Passport in Time projects, it was discontinued. Lack of funding was reported to be the main reason why it had stopped. According to one weaver, the camp was very expensive to produce and the funding streams were drying up by the late 2000s. Explaining this further, Ken Wilson, who departed from his position at the SRNF in 2003, stated that his replacement was not interested in carrying on the project and did not reapply for funding, despite the program's success (Ken Wilson, personal communication, 2016). *Following the Smoke* allowed weavers to immerse participants in everyday activities as a basket weaver, most of which that time is spent stewarding the landscape by gathering and tending to plants at sites that had been cared for millennia.

The positive impact of this educational program reverberates today through the increased communication between Karuk basket weavers and cultural practitioners and the Six Rivers National Forest District in Orleans. In 2006, Bill Rice, Six Rivers National Forest-Orleans/Ukonom district ranger, stated that he looked forward to working together with basket weavers to maintain the "health of the river community," which included creating programs that would thin overgrown forest lands and reduce the overload of fuels that had accumulated in gathering areas. One such program, "Orleans Community Protection Project," was purported to treat over 3,000 acres of land surrounding Orleans, which would have the benefit of supporting beargrass and hazel growth.²⁰⁹ Mr. Rice stated that *Following the Smoke* signified "a tremendous and great relationship we have with the traditional

²⁰⁹ *Following the Smoke*. Electronic Document. <http://www.eurekareporter.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?ArticleID=13427>, accessed April 18, 2015.

practitioners within the Karuk Tribe—basket weavers specifically.”²¹⁰ Kathy McCovey shared that *Following the Smoke* was both an act of courage on the part of weavers and cultural practitioners and a political act of self-determination and sovereignty:

I'm aware that some people feel...if you're not Native American from that area, then you shouldn't know some of the things. That it's better off if you don't know, because that lessens the chance of exploitation and damage to what we have. But in the other sense, people need to know about our lifestyle, the plants we use, and that the Indian culture is alive and well and thriving and getting stronger every day.... There's a strength in numbers, and if you have a lot of people [learning] about the rights of other people to live as their ancestors have done for thousands of years, you don't just have the Indian people saying that, but you have a population backing you. (Ortiz 2008:105)

It is important to point out, however, that the partnerships among the USFS, Karuk basket weavers, and Karuk cultural practitioners are not always successful. For example, just three short years after the creation of the “Orleans Community Protection Project,” the Karuk Tribe, along with the Klamath Forest Alliance and the Environmental Protection Information Center sued the USFS over the Orleans Community Fuels Reduction (OCFR). The action against the USFS claims that portions of the project were in violation of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA). The OCFR project, in which the tribe, local community members, and the USFS worked collaboratively, was supposed to manage forest stands to improve the forest health around Orleans. The intended effect was to enhance the “cultural values associated with the Panamnik World Renewal Ceremonial District.” According to the lawsuit, the USFS, against the proposed plan, brought in heavy equipment into sacred sites, and harvested large trees and hardwoods that would have helped maintain fire resiliency, among other issues (Driscoll 2010).

Continuity and Commitment

The elder weavers identified the problems of gathering basket weaving materials. The first conversations with government agencies that stewarded the aboriginal territories of the weavers were somewhat effective in that it made the staff members of these agencies aware of the positive effects of fire on the landscape. But it was not until the formation of the Hoopa Pottery Guild in the 1950s and the Yurok-Karok-Hoopa Weavers of the Klamath-Trinity Arts and Crafts Association in the 1960s that their unified voice on issues of stewarding the gathering sites gained traction.

²¹⁰ *Following the Smoke*. Electronic Document. <http://www.eurekareporter.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?ArticleID=13427>, accessed April 18, 2015.

Heeding the call from their elder weaving teachers, the younger weavers picked up the mantle of working with the USFS, the BLM, and other agencies to care for the land. Learning from their elders and at the same time working with the agencies, younger weavers were able to deepen their relationship to the land and watersheds, identifying that this was their responsibility to do so as part of the weaving practice. Weavers, both young and old, began to assert not only their responsibility to landscape management, but also their right to do so, since these areas were tied to who they were as Native peoples. Since time immemorial, their ancestors walked the same paths that they did, gathering from the same sites, and praying and singing songs as they performed nearly the same actions as their ancestors.

Through these actions, weavers expressed their desire for cultural sovereignty and self-determination. Norgaard (2007) states that control over how the landscape and watersheds are managed is an issue of cultural sovereignty. Weavers, exposed to pesticides and herbicides in their gathering areas, revealed how little input they had and how little their concerns meant to government agencies who were managing the landscape to harvest valuable forest “products.” This lack of acknowledgement for their concerns and the willful continuation of spraying in their gathering sites by government agencies meant for some that it was just “one more event in a series of acts of genocide over the past 150 years” (Norgaard 2007:468).

Through their individual actions, and through CIBA and *Following the Smoke*, weavers articulated their needs for proper and culturally appropriate land management policies that would assist their efforts in carrying on their cultural responsibilities for caring for the earth. As stated previously, Kathy McCovey shared that “We're part of them, and they are part of us.” Above and beyond the practice of basket weaving, weavers hold the responsibility for caring for the land as a whole, for doing their part in the daily experience of *pikyav*.

Chapter VI

Contemporary Karuk Basket Weaving

Introduction

This chapter emphasizes the aliveness and animacy of baskets through myths and narratives of gathering and weaving. To introduce the animacy of Karuk baskets, I refer to a myth that weaves its roots through to contemporary practice, through its description of the time before humans. From this starting point, I then delve into the importance of gathering from three different standpoints: beginning weaver (the author), advanced weaver (Brittany Souza), and master weaver (Verna Reece). Each of these standpoints of gathering brings forward significant aspects of the interrelatedness of basket weaving, social ties, and land. From these three different perspectives—beginner, advanced, and master weaver—I discuss the significance of the baskets that weavers bring to life with regard to the connections to family and community.

In the previous two chapters, I outlined the ways in which Karuk weavers nurtured the basket weaving culture, protecting and sharing it so that it would persist. As the types and designs of baskets changed and as the next generation took up the mantle, they also reinvigorated the roots of basket weaving, drawing on their strength as Karuk peoples to talk more openly about their self-identification as Karuk and as Karuk basket weavers. This is in direct contrast to the period between the end of the Arts and Crafts movement and the beginning of active movement to regain and reassert rights to gather basket weaving materials. Before women hid their weaving out of a sense of shame and fear. They often worked by themselves, disconnected from others who were carrying on the tradition in secret. But today, women are developing communities—“basket families”—strengthening their bonds as Karuk women and as basket weavers.

Through the ties that weavers have with their community, with their families and ancestors, with the earth and with the future generations, baskets are enmeshed in everyday, social life. Emphasizing those ties, Kathy Wallace (Yurok/Karuk/Hupa) stressed that basket weaving is more than just a craft: it is also a responsibility (Peterson 1996:72). Weavers manifest this responsibility by stewarding the land in ways that ensure that plants flourish for future generations and by passing their knowledge down to the next generation of weavers. The work that weavers take on to steward the land is part of a larger scheme of ecosystem management that provides for the health and wellbeing of not only basket weaving plants, but of the people as well.

Basket weaving is about experiential learning and practicing. Experiential learning nurtures relationships with people, including those from the past, those who are presently living, and those who will be future weavers and tribal members. Relationships are also created with the places where weavers gather, the places where weavers sit down to weave, and the places where baskets are put into practice, stored, and displayed. The practice of weaving is experiential and relational because the weaver is *doing-in-relation-with* the environmental factors

(weather patterns, ground disturbances, fire, floods); the botanical sources (growth patterns of plants, pruning, anthropogenic burning practices); the interactions with harvested materials (peeling bark, crushing stems, boiling roots); the consideration of what type of basket to weave while preparing materials (scraping roots, determining what materials to use, sorting sticks); and the act of weaving (selecting, adding, and subtracting weavers and body sticks, applying overlay materials, improvising styles, designs, and techniques as needed). All of these factors, choices, and processes that come before and during basket weaving are where we can see the basket infused with animacy and aliveness.

Prior to a basket coming into being, the materials from which it was woven was already infused with a living spirit. Pimm Tripp-Allen refers to *ápxaan* (basket caps) in the following statement: “We believe that the dance stuff, it’s alive and has a spirit and it wants to dance. That’s part of the responsibility of having it is that it needs to dance and it needs to hear the songs” (Johnson 1997:175). In the Karuk worldview, baskets and regalia are alive and are agents in the world in their own right. They are made from mortal beings and, through the process of production, are imbued with a spirit that is actualized when they dance with Karuk peoples, meaning that they are also an important participant of ceremonies:

The regalia are themselves living, sentient beings who must dance and be danced to fulfill the purpose of their lives. Regalia must be danced not only to fulfill their function, but also because of the sentient nature of these objects, their individual needs and destinies (Field 2008:132).

To understand gathering and weaving, these stories can really only be told through *doing*. Articulating one’s own thoughts, feelings, emotions, and embodiment is difficult because gathering and weaving are not direct processes. They are instead relational, sensuous, and cyclical. Weaving brings together of all these activities, thoughts, prayers, and emotions and the finished basket expresses these experiences of a particular way of knowing about the world. The finished basket is a culmination of these experiences and when the basket is done, it is released to the world to fulfill its own purpose.

One reflection that becomes clear in Ms. Souza’s, Ms. Reece’s and my own experiences is that our weaving community helps sustain our practice. Our community includes not only those who we weave with now, but also those who came before us: our own teachers and family members. And our community includes those future students, the ones in the making. *Doing-in-relation-with* not only speaks about the connections among the ecosystem, weavers, and baskets, but is also enmeshed with the ways in which basket weavers configure their identification with other weavers and with their tribe. It is not enough to say that you are a basket weaver. Instead the weaving practice is connected to your own teachers and your own students and to your fellow weavers. It is connected with stewardship of the land, air, water and all that is contained within. Weaving is not a solitary practice, nor is the end product the sole focus. Instead, when weavers bring their work into fruition, they are offering their part in *pikyav*, to fix the world.

Aliveness of Baskets:

Stories of *The Greedy Father* and *The Pool in Big Rock*

There is a profusion of baskets and basketry use in Karuk myths. While there are a handful of myths in which the main focus is baskets, basketry materials, or medicine derived from each, baskets are often mentioned as a vehicle to carry some action, an aid to the *ikxaréeyav* (spirit person; a god, such as inhabited the earth before the coming of humans) or human, or are simply present, as witnesses of the happenings in the story. The *ikxaréeyavsa*, the spirit beings, lived in the world before the *áraar* (humans) emerged. All aspects of the natural world, from the insects to the trees, from the deer to the bear, from the people to the plants, were once *Ikxaréeyavsa*. These acts of creation and transformation are told in the stories, in the myths and in song. The *ikxaréeyavsa* also taught Karuk peoples how to live right and in balance with the world. They provided moral lessons to Karuk peoples, as well as taught them where to fish and hunt, what to gather for food, medicine, and basketry, when to carry out ceremonies, and all manner of ways of being in the world. Julian Lang (Karuk) describes how baskets are woven with the roots of Karuk ways of knowing:

Baskets are dividends of the indigenous belief system stemming from myth. They are made from materials which are not merely considered natural fibers, but are the gifts of the *Ikxaréeyavsa*, or Spirit beings, who lived on this earth during the Myth Period, all of whom labored to understand and perfect a way of life on Earth. They were responsible for inventing the languages, ceremonies, institutions and ways that the “Humans-to-be” would be adopting when they descended to the earth. Basketry was one such perfection and is reflected in the myths of the...Karuk. (1991:19)

One often-told myth that is connected to basket weaving is “The Greedy Father.” There are multiple recitations of this myth: two were recorded by Bright (1957); one by Harrington (1930), whose version, “The Man who Ate the Salmon on the Sly,” was told to him by Phoebe Maddux; and others recorded by Kroeber and Gifford (1980), whose versions of the story were retold by Little Ike and Mrs. Bennett, retitled “Kingfisher Snitches Food.” The version excerpted here is the version that Lottie Beck shared with Bright (1957). It is important to note that I include only paraphrasing and short excerpts out of respect of the Karuk tradition for telling stories only during the winter months.

The story recounts how a man, who was an *ikxaréeyav*, went out each day to fish for his family. On his way home, he would eat the fish, leaving only the tail. One day, his wife followed him and found out what he was doing. She packed her kids away up a hill. And when he caught up with them, his wife told him that he will eat mud everyday, but she and their children will be in front of rich people. He tried to reach out for his children and his wife, but one by one, they had transformed. One became beargrass, and another turned into a hazel bush. When he reached out for his wife, she turned into bull pine. He transformed into a bird who eats from the

mud. But whenever there is a particular ceremony happening, the children and his wife sit in front of rich people.

This story speaks about the values of Karuk people, not to be stingy, to share and provide for their families or else bad luck would happen. But it also speaks to the very creation of basketry plants. The materials that Karuk weavers use, willow and hazel, beargrass, ferns and roots were once *ikxaréeyavsa*, and are still infused with their spirits. Basketry plants and the baskets that are made from them are a part of Karuk peoples' legacy, and are also a part of their present and future. Weavers have a profound responsibility to care for these plants, as the plants have rewarded them with the gift of weaving. This myth of the creation of basketry plants reminds weavers not to be greedy in gathering materials, like the father was greedy in catching salmon. It also reminds weavers that they have a duty to share their baskets with their families and communities, not hoarding or wasting them, especially since the materials are living entities. And since baskets are made from living beings, weavers are duty-bound to ensure that the baskets are able to fulfill their roles in ceremonies and everyday life.

When I spoke with Brittany Souza (Karuk) in 2015, she shared this story with me when we talked about how baskets are living entities. She stated that by making baskets, weavers are helping the plants fulfill their destinies. It is something that weavers are supposed to do so that the plants, which are the gifts of the *ikxaréeyavsa*, can go about doing what they are supposed to be doing. Weaving baskets is not only a way to keep Karuk traditions alive, Ms. Souza shared, but is also a way that weavers make medicine for everybody. "It's keeping who we are going. And we're not here for no reason. This is what's supposed to be."²¹¹

In another myth, "The Pool in Big Rock," Shan Davis (Karuk) describes basketry as medicine and having the ability to heal. This story tells of a woman who gained good luck in selling her baskets, even though she was not a particularly good weaver. She placed the roots that she had gathered into the waters of the Klamath River, near a spiritually powerful place. After she had pulled the roots out of the river and began making a basket, people came from far and wide to buy baskets from her. The pine roots, dipped in the waters of this powerful place, became medicine. One day, the woman found the bones of an unlucky man in the river, who had been missing for a year. She gathered his bones in an *árus sípnuuk* (seed storage basket) made from the river-dampened roots and carried them home with her. She spent a year tending to him, healing him. After the year was over, he became lucky.

Not only are the plants themselves infused with the gifts from the *ikxaréeyavsa*, but they are also medicine. Baskets are one example of the tangible products that extend from the *ikxaréeyavsa* to Karuk peoples today. The medicine found in spiritually important places, combined with the gifts from the *ikxaréeyavsa*, lends baskets the power to heal. Infusions of prayers and the positive intentions of weavers who lovingly work with these materials also give weavers the strength and resilience to bring forward the healing powers of basketry plants.

²¹¹ Brittany Souza , interview by Carolyn Smith, September 27, 2015, transcript, Happy Camp, CA.

“It’s such a powerful place to be”²¹²:

The Joys and Responsibilities of Gathering

The practice of putting together fibers in a particular shape known as “basket weaving” does not encompass what it means to actually make a basket. In order to create a basket, weavers spend most of their time gathering, processing, and sorting materials. Embodied in these activities are the thoughts, feelings, memories, and connections weavers have with the places that they visit, the plants that they gather, and relationships that they nurtured. The narratives below delve deeper into these connections that reach into the past to move forward into the future. The space which plant gathering occupies is one in which weavers gain their sense of who they are and where they belong within the time, place, and space of their basket weaving practice.

Within the scheme of ecological management, practices of caring for basket weaving plants are enmeshed with eco-cultural restoration. Karuk cultural environmental practices work *in-relation-with* ecological processes to promote biodiversity (Karuk Tribe 2009:6). The relationship with and stewardship of the land is interwoven with Karuk onto-epistemology:

We share our existence with plants, animals, fish, insects, and the land and waters. We are responsible for their wellbeing. Our ancestral landscapes overflow with stories and expressions from the past which remind us of who we are and direct us to implement sound traditional management practices in a traditional, yet contemporary context. (Karuk Tribe 2009:7)

The work that weavers do by tending basket weaving plants—burning, weeding, pruning, coppicing—supports the overall practice of eco-cultural restoration. The work that they do helps develop and sustain habitats for flora and fauna within Karuk aboriginal territories. In particular, the practice of setting low-intensity prescribed fires positively affected the abundance and densities of many animal and plant species (Anderson 2005).

Ms. Reece’s Narratives of Gathering

Verna Reece is an elder basket weaver who began weaving in the 1970s, when she had returned to the Klamath River after living in Southern California for many years. Throughout her life, she always felt a connection to baskets and she collected them, but when she came back to the Klamath, she apprenticed with two Karuk weavers, Grace and Madeline Davis. Grace and Madeline were known as the “queens of the river,” not only for their fine work, but also because they carried on the tradition of weaving since the 1920s. A queen of the river is not royalty, but is a woman held in high esteem, “a woman of great dignity, character, and compassion” (Lang 1991:10).

Memories of gathering trips are enmeshed with specific places that are cared for throughout the years and the qualities of the materials being gathered, but more

²¹² Souza, 2015.

importantly the relationships that are cultivated so fondly. Laughter...these social experiences are infused with laughter and joy, and are reflected upon tenderly. In fact, when I talked with Ms. Reece about how she began to take classes from Grace Davis and Madeline Davis in the 1970s, she said that she and Grace Davis became fast friends:

Well, when Frank and I moved here, we bought that little log cabin over here [in Happy Camp]. And I seen that [Madeline Davis] had a basket class. And I went down there. And started doing the basket class. And they handed me these big old bull pine roots and they said, "Scrape these." So I took the class and scraped roots. Poor roots, they were in little pieces by the time I finished....they taught me how to split them and scrape them. Madeline was the teacher. Grace would come. But Madeline used to take off, have somebody else want her to do something and she'd take off. She traveled a lot. So Grace did her class. Grace and I just hit it off. Just seems like it was meant to be with each other. And she lived down Ti Bar. I spent a lot of time down there. We'd gather, prepared, we made a cooking basket. During the wintertime, she'd move up here. And then, spent a lot more time. We'd go to the coast and gather spruce roots. So Grace is the one that I really learned almost everything from.²¹³

Ms. Reece told me that she is partial to going out into the woods gathering; "that's what I like to teach people. I love to gather. And I'd rather teach them how to gather than sit in a room and teach them how to weave."²¹⁴ She would much rather be out on the river sifting through sandbars, gathering roots or clipping beautiful willow sticks. She enjoys being up in the hills, too. Although most of her gathering trips are solitary or with her husband, she would prefer that her students and other weavers go with her, not over concerns about safety, but because others need to learn:

Well I don't have no fear of doing things by myself. I used to have a gun permit. Because I did everything by myself. And my mentors are gone, left me. Most people are so busy. They don't have time to stop and go...So I did a lot of it by myself.²¹⁵

Ms. Reece is concerned that Karuk basket weaving may become a "lost culture," since so few new weavers learn how to gather their own materials; "That's why I said I think it's becoming a lost culture...We don't have people gathering. That's what I say. I just keep going because it's going to be lost when it comes down to one [person] that's teaching."²¹⁶

²¹³ Wilverna "Verna" Reece, interview by Carolyn Smith, September 28, 2015, transcript, Happy Camp, CA.

²¹⁴ Reece, 2015.

²¹⁵ Reece, 2015.

²¹⁶ Reece, 2015.

Ms. Reece and I talked about other basket weavers we knew on that warm September day. There are wonderful Karuk weavers that live out on the coast, near Eureka, CA, which is roughly 130 miles from Happy Camp. Even though there are materials up and down the Klamath River, some weavers from the coast prefer to go out with Ms. Reece to gather. I mentioned to Ms. Reece that for many of us who do not live on the Klamath, we rely on her to let us know when basketry materials are ready. She replied that she does let them know because she wants them to weave, saying,

I want them to be able to keep going.... When it's time, I let them know so they can get off their rear and come and gather. That weeds out the wannabes, because if you really want to, you do it.²¹⁷

I learned from Ms. Reece what it really means to know the seasons. It is not enough to follow Lila O'Neale's (1995 [1932]) harvesting season chart in *Yurok-Karok Basket Weaving*, which Ms. Reece has passed out to students so that they could get a feel for the typical months in which to gather specific materials. Instead, weavers need to read the signs of plant growth well enough to be able to know when they are ready.

Cultivating an intimate relationship with the plants is so important, particularly since there is tangible evidence of climate change in the Klamath River basin. For example, in 2015 the usual gathering times were anything but. We harvested willow sticks more than a month earlier than normal during the spring and fall gathering times (Plate 28). Ms. Reece stated that she had never seen anything like the strange season we had that year.

All of our gathering was goofy. But like September usually you'll look at the willows and you can see it's, oh, what do they call it? Sage green color. It has a sage color on the leaves and it looks puffy. And that's when they're ready to pick for the second picking. So you see that, traveling down the road. Some places have, some places don't. So you see that puffy sage color, and that's when you go start checking the willows and they're peeling for their second time. And it's a short period. So this year it was short.²¹⁸

This is why it is vital to know not just the months in which gathering normally occurs, but also an understanding of the plant morphology, weather patterns, water levels, and the growth patterns of certain plants with regard to the altitudes in which they thrive. This kind of knowledge only comes with experience and an intimate knowledge of the plants, waterways and the landscape. Without that depth of knowledge, Ms. Reece's concern about basket weaving becoming a lost culture is a possibility. Finding people who have the time and devotion to basket weaving is difficult. But Ms. Reece pointed out that even though there were a few of her students are deeply passionate about weaving, they were limited physically or

²¹⁷ Reece, 2015.

²¹⁸ Reece, 2015.

were constrained by work and home life, so they could not spend the time needed for her to pass it along like she would like.

Ms. Reece truly wants to pass this knowledge down, stating, “I always wanted to have somebody who had the interest and just do like Grace and I did.”²¹⁹ Grace and Madeline Davis had carefully tended specific sites, year after year, just like their mother Maggie Charley (Karuk) had taught them in the early 20th century.

When Grace and Madeline were young girls, their mother was a weaver and they taught them. And they had their area. They manicured it, they burned it, because they never had cars. They had a horse or on foot. And they’d go up and in the mountains...they’d go up there and camp out and get what they need for the year. They’d take care of it up there and they’d bring it back.²²⁰

Ms. Reece has been a part of that legacy and was urged by Grace Davis often to pass the knowledge down. However, as noted in the previous chapter, stewarding the landscape like her teachers had taught her was not a possibility,

[O]ur area is wherever the lightning strikes, fire burns it, just like that mountain over there. It’s all burned, so next year we’re going to have hazel and bear grass. But I mean, we don’t have, we’re not allowed to do it ourselves, so it’s not—there’s certain places like Ti Bar that we get ferns. And you just go around and try to find a fern patch. I found some of the [ferns] at Fort Goff on a walk with the girls, and some beautiful ones that belong on a trail there. But I mean no, we don’t have a certain area to go get materials nowadays. Don’t have enough weavers to worry about that, I guess.²²¹

When Ms. Reece went out to harvest plants with Grace and Madeline Davis, each experience was more than just gathering materials. When I asked Ms. Reece what it was like to gather with them, she shared this story:

Grace and Madeline, I mean, just going out and gather. You know, one time when the high water was getting willow roots, and we was down river. And the water dropped. And we was down the Rogers Creek. I believe it was. And here’s all these roots, you could just see them in the water. And they don’t swim. When you see them around the river, you hold your breath. But anyway, there’re these beautiful roots. They’re just like hair. So I... jump in, and take those roots and push them on the bank. Those women were up there just laughing! And they talk Indian. And they just laugh! So. That was a fond memory. We had a lot of roots. Yeah, those ladies, I just being around them, they always talk Indian to each other and laugh. You never know if you’re [the focus of] the story or not, but, it was a lot of fun. They’d try to teach me Indian, and wasn’t going to do it. (laughs) But we used to, yeah,

²¹⁹ Reece, 2015.

²²⁰ Reece, 2015.

²²¹ Reece, 2015.

Madeline used to travel with us. We'd go, wherever we went together, we always had to go eat someplace. They loved to eat out or go get dresses. They used to, Evans Mercantile used to have clothes. They'd go in there and buy their dress on payday.²²²

Beyond gathering the roots and beyond doing other activities, Ms. Reece's shared experiences with Grace and Madeline Davis expresses what she means by basket weaving as a "culture," rather than an art or a craft. For Ms. Reece, basket weaving as a culture means that it encompasses a whole way of knowing and being in the world. The culture of basket weaving is the interrelationships with people, places, and the land that are cultivated through tending and harvesting basket weaving materials, and then weaving the roots. The culture of basket weaving includes the responsibility to foster the practice in such a way that weavers are able to pass their knowledge to the next generation. And the culture of basket weaving is the roots that are woven from the past and into the future. The way that Ms. Reece expressed this was by saying that, while neither her mother nor her grandmother taught her to weave, basket weaving was in her DNA.

Basket Weaving Culture and Practice Theory

The ways in which Ms. Reece describes basket weaving culture could be considered akin to Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice, in particular his notion of *habitus*. "Practice" is neither mechanical processes reducible to modes or roles that one takes up in the world, nor can practice be entirely reduced to an untethered state of free will because by doing so, it reduces an individual's actions in the world to conscious and deliberate actions and intentions (Bourdieu 1977:73). Instead, practice implies cognition and practical operations of construction, along with references to practical functions that include systems of classification, which organizes perception and structures practice (Bourdieu 1977:97). Structures are inherent to practice in the world because they order systems of social life and fulfill important social functions (Bourdieu 1977:97). By looking at how practices are both objectified by and embodied within an individual's perception, as well as action in the world, comes closer to an understanding of the social world.

The embodiment of practices and of practical sense is grounded in the world, connected to the past, and transcending the present. The body, rooted spatially and temporally in social fields, is the medium where practices are realized. Bourdieu notes that bodily practices, "the elementary acts of bodily gymnastics," are fundamental structures of the group illustrating the division of labor and thus, the meanings and values of the social world; "In particular, there is every reason to think that the social determinations attached to a determinate position in the social space tend, through the relationship to one's own body, to shape the dispositions constituting social identity" (1990:71). Bourdieu proposes that the body's relation to practical sense is a fundamental dimension of *habitus* and practice, not a mechanical inscription of memorization and repetition (1990:72).

For Bourdieu (1977:72), *habitus* is a way to describe the regularities of

²²² Reece, 2015.

everyday practices without relying on rules or structures that limit new types of actions, and illustrating how an individual's actions and practices are embodied. The place of collective action in relation to the individual is an important element of habitus, since individuals shape and are shaped by the world in which they live. A product of history, this collective action—the habitus of a given group—is acquired during childhood, but can also be during other life stages and activities (Bourdieu 1977:81). The habitus becomes embodied in the individual through daily interaction with the group they belong to, where interaction between people in the group is within the limits of the social structure. Because of the continual reinforcement of practices within a given society, Bourdieu notes that collective action is a place of mutual influence (1977:80).

The place of collective action in relation to the individual is an important element of habitus, since people shape and are shaped by the world in which they live. This collective action—the habitus of a given group—is often, but not always, acquired during childhood. The habitus becomes embodied in the individual through daily interaction with the group they belong to, where interaction between people in the group is within the limits of the social structure. Because of the continual reinforcement of practices within a given society, Bourdieu notes that collective action is a place of mutual influence: people correct, synchronize, and construct habitus with such precision as to insure agreement (1977:80). As such, if people are confronted by practices that are not within their established repertoire of agreed-upon behavior, he states that it is likely that they would see this as peculiar, whereas their own behavior, in comparison is considered to be sensible (1977:78). However, Hanks states (2005) that habitus does not rely on rule-governed processes, but instead on the practices and dispositions of people. Habitus enables people to cope with changing situations, all the while reproducing the structures of which they themselves are a part (Bourdieu 1977:72). Additionally, Bourdieu points out that the customary rules that do appear in a particular field of practice are, in a sense, secondary to the practices of people (1977:76).

Ms. Souza's Narratives of Gathering

Brittany Souza and I are Ms. Reece's students, along with many, many other people who, over the years, have taken classes from her and have gone on gathering trips with her. Ms. Souza was born and raised in various towns along the Klamath River, although she spent a few years away, living in Yreka, CA. Ms. Souza has been weaving since she was a young girl. She works for the Karuk Tribe and has two children. Her youngest, just over one year old, has accompanied Ms. Souza on all of her gathering trips and often sits on her lap while she weaves. Although still in her 20s, Ms. Souza, like Ms. Reece, feels a profound responsibility to share her gift with her tribe, her family, and the next generation of basketweavers.

When Ms. Souza and I started talking about gathering, she told me the story of the "Greedy Father." As mentioned above, she tied this myth to the responsibility weavers have to ensure that the plants that were once *ikxaréeyavsa* were brought into-relation-with the world so that they could continue to be active beings in the world. Ms. Souza stated that when weavers gather and weave,

we're honoring those plants. That's what they were meant to be. Like that's what they, we're honoring them by making them into a basket.... we're honoring those plants by helping them fulfill their destiny. So for me, that's medicine.²²³

For Ms. Souza, going out into the mountains and along the creeks and the Klamath was one way in which she could solidify her ties with her ancestors. Ms. Souza originally learned to gather from Ms. Reece, but now she spends a lot of time exploring the Klamath River region herself. Each time she goes out for materials, in the forefront of her mind are thoughts about her great-great grandmother, Adeline Billings (Karuk). Adeline was a weaver who was raised in Happy Camp, but moved with her miner husband to the Rogue River in Oregon during the worst of the conflicts in the late 19th century. When Ms. Souza explores different areas, she is reminded of this connection to place and her relations:

Knowing that...some of the places where I gather she's probably touched the same plant or [gathered from] some of the same spots. So that kind of made me feel pretty close to it when I was first weaving. Big thoughts that ran through my mind when I was gathering...like, I wonder if she came to these spots. Obviously some of the spots where we weave, I mean, she had to have been to...So here is where her mom wove. And she saw that her daughter was interested in it. So she started giving her material, putting material in her hand. And then I guess she saw that she was really talented. And so she knew that she would do really good weaving. So she must have obviously really loved it because she kept doing it.²²⁴

Tying together the closeness she felt to her ancestors, with the devastating history of her ancestors fleeing their homeland to escape the violence, Ms. Souza feels even more fortunate to carry on the tradition. At the same time she feels that the times before contact with miners and reverberations of that tragic history still resonate, both physically and spiritually. She articulates this point by sharing a story of when she happened upon the mine in which her great-great grandmother's white husband used to work.

When we [were children, we] didn't want to do any work, and we'd go off to go hide and we'd go sit in the mine. So I wondered. I wondered if he had a part of that. I wondered if he drilled into this mountainside, or whatever. And you know how like different things happen, almost like déjà vu or just you know, like different signs...

And then there's a bunch of *tíiptip* [Woodwardia fern] down there. So there's obviously like a lot of history and a lot of land changing places where obviously some places are not the same as before contact...Before a lot of people came here, a lot of things [were] destroyed or different or they left

²²³ Souza, 2015.

²²⁴ Souza, 2015.

their print here....Not only with the people and our blood thinning out or our culture thinning out, they just changed things physically, too. Like their print is here. You know, their lifestyle is here. So while there's no going back, we're still here, too.

Like Ms. Reece, Ms. Souza sees basket weaving and gathering as an intrinsic part of her history and her identification as a weaver. Going out to gather materials is a way for her to reaffirm this connection from the past. Also like Ms. Reece, Ms. Souza experiences basket weaving as a way on knowing and being in the world, cultivating and experiencing the interrelationships with people, places, and the plants. When we talked about going out to gather with Ms. Reece, Ms. Souza and I agreed that it was not just about getting plant materials, but also about going to places that were cultivated so carefully by Ms. Reece's teachers and others. Ms. Souza identified a specific place where we gather maidenhair fern that was particularly extraordinary because it was so abundant. She said that when you think about it, it is a place that has been there forever.²²⁵ She went on to say,

You know that people from a long time ago used to gather there....And it's one of those places like you could go there and just be in your own box and even if there are other people there with you...it's such a powerful place to be. You just could feel that.

That feeling of power is carried through to the baskets that are woven from sticks and roots. The aliveness of baskets is carried through from the experiences of gathering in specific areas, channeled through the weaver into the basket. Ms. Souza told me that each basket is special; that each basket is an individual. She explained this to me by telling me about the baby basket that she had made for her sister:

You're not going to be thinking the same thing when you're making every basket. You're going to be in a different part of your life. You're going to be using a different stick from a different tree. And you're not going to go to the same bush. You might. But that's different. It's alive, too. Like when I made my sister's baby basket, when I thought about it, I was like, it's Happy Camp.

She continued,

It's here. I mean, I got sticks from over [the mountains]. I got sticks from over [the] Grade. I had sticks from [the] Creek. I had sticks from up here [near her home]. It's like a Happy Camp basket. It's like just a part of you... when I'm making a baby basket or a basket or something, then a lot of different thoughts and a lot of different memories are going into that basket. I'm doing something. It's like here I'm *doing* a memory, here I'm *doing* a prayer.²²⁶

²²⁵ Souza, 2015.

²²⁶ Souza, 2015.

The active moments while gathering are all at once growing memories and relationships that are infused with prayer. To illustrate that point, Ms. Souza talked about how she went gathering when she was pregnant. When she was pregnant with her first child, she gathered the sticks to make his basket before he was born. Each time she revisits those places where she gathered his sticks are special moments, powerful moments, because she knew that the strength of those sticks and her weaving were going to “nurture a baby and help them grow right.”²²⁷ “Right,” in this sense is to help the child grow strong and confident in Karuk culture.

Ms. Souza went on to talk about when she was pregnant with her second child and going out to gather with a group of weavers. Rappelling down a hill to gather ferns, Ms. Souza recognized that this experience was something that she shared with her unborn child. “It makes you know that you like are part of something that’s really, really special.”²²⁸ In explaining the experience, she said that gathering was beyond the state of being and beyond feeling a part of perpetuating Karuk cultural practices. Gathering and weaving is a part of praying, and when Ms. Souza’s baby was just a few months old, she took her up the mountains to gather ferns with her. Of that experience, she stated,

It’s really, just a part of who we are. And it’s a really good feeling...for me to have her in my belly and have her be a part of that. And then to be included again this last year, to be able to take her down there. Not down the rope, but down in that spot and have her grow up with that and not just the weaving, but like the spiritual part of it. Like that it’s who we are. And it’s just going to be second nature [for her].²²⁹

The gathering practice is all at once a solitary, communal, and relational experience. It is solitary because there are numerous internal choices to make about what to select and external factors about the location and condition of the plants. It is also a practice that is community based. Especially when learning about the gathering process, weavers will go out in pairs and groups. These opportunities are joyful outings, with shared laughter, often over a meal. The satisfaction of a gathering trip, whether successful or not, is a shared experience, outside of the everyday. Additionally, the practice is relational, because there is a new and renewed connection to being in the forest, with purpose and intention.

Gathering materials is both a memory maker and a memory prompt. It is an act that is cyclic. While weavers are growing new memories while they are gathering, they are also remembering times past. The same movements, the same smells and senses are invoked with the act of gathering, but at the same time there are new sensations being experienced. Gathering both calls to mind experiences with teachers and mentors and friends from the past—the laughter, the meals, the mishaps, the exceptionally prized materials—and it builds new moments, new experiences, and new memories. It is within those memories that one’s

²²⁷ Souza, 2015.

²²⁸ Souza, 2015.

²²⁹ Souza, 2015.

identification as a basket weaver and a Karuk woman are made and deepened. The presence of weavers past—their knowledge, experiences, and memories—are with contemporary weavers as they gather and as they weave. And gathering is a spiritual practice, one that is infused with prayer. It is a total way of life and a way of living in the world (B. Souza, personal communication, July 10, 2016).

Learning to Gather

Because I do not live on or even near the Klamath River, I feel that I am left out of a part of the aliveness of basket weaving, which seems to make a difference in the strength of my own work. I need to rely on those who live there to share with me when to go gather. My own connection to the land, to place, is removed because I am left unaware of the rhythmic and cyclical changes of the land, the river, and the plants. While I have ties to the land on a larger scale—meaning that it feels like home whenever I am there—the close connection to place is still an abstract concept to me. I think of Ms. Reece and Ms. Souza and their feelings of place, the way that they refer to places on the landscape, and how this illustrates their deep relation and connection to home. While I am *at* home when I am in Happy Camp, I am not *in* my home: it is not a lived space for me. Because of this step removed from place, I lack a certain understanding about gathering and about the places where to find materials that will enable me to grow as a weaver.

The materials that I work with are from some of my own gathering, but are mostly from Ms. Reece, Paula McCarthy, and Ms. Souza. Comparing the materials that I had gathered to theirs, there is a difference.... Given that I have such a limited time to gather, I lack the trained eye and the trained senses to gather materials. I have been lucky in the respect that I have had Ms. Reece show me what to gather and I have spent hours with her to know what I am gathering.

Because my time is limited when I gather, I feel rushed to get what I can during the short window I am there. Since I am still building up my stores of materials and experimenting with different basket styles, I tend to gather all different sizes of materials. Some are appropriate for larger *tháxtuuy* (baby baskets); some are appropriate for fine *ápxaan* (basket caps). Even though I try to gather what I can, almost indiscriminately, I am still slow, and still others are not useful at all. I haven't the skill to discriminate between the fine willow sticks that are bug free and those that are overgrown and not easily peelable. Ms. Reece has told me over and over that I need to pay attention, but to be honest, sometimes I am not sure what I am looking at. I feel clumsy and confused at times, figuring out what is appropriate and what should be left behind, as well as balancing need of leaving materials alone so that they could be gathered during the fall gathering harvest.

When I first came to the Klamath in 2008 to learn to weave, Ms. Reece and Ms. McCarthy took me and one other weaver into the mountains to see if the maidenhair and woodwardia ferns were ready to gather. At that point I had never been on the USFS network of roads that crisscrossed the mountains. We drove for nearly an hour, moving from one ecosystem to the next—higher and higher we climbed. We passed the willow stands along the Klamath, moving into a damp and shaded zone with towering dogwoods in full bloom, moving higher still to be surrounded by tall pines. The road moved from a paved two-lane thoroughfare to a

narrow dirt path with deep ruts, overgrown with grasses. At one point Ms. McCarthy had to hop out of the car to move branches that had fallen across the path. Higher and higher we went until we reached nearly the top of the mountain peak. Looking out across the vista, we could see the smoke clouding the sky from a forest fire that was raging nearly twenty miles away.

A short walk from where we parked revealed a place that was unlike any that I had seen. A cool and shady space shielded from the hot and smoky summer day, there was a spring that was nearly surrounded by maidenhair fern, the same spot that Ms. Souza so fondly described above. Down the hill from this spring, accessible by using the rope tied to a tree as a support, was a lush field of *típtiip* (woodwardia fern). By feel and by sense, I knew that this was a very special place that had been visited and carefully tended for millennia. I stood in silent awe as Ms. Reece and the others checked the ferns for readiness. I stood in silent reverence, feeling the brisk air wash over me, a soothing balm from the hot and smoky air by the River. The ferns were not ready; Ms. Reece said that it would only be another week, when, unfortunately, I was not going to be there. Driving back down the mountain, we stopped along the way to see the various wildflowers in bloom and to watch a fawn scramble up the mountainside, scared of the vehicle heading towards it.

I returned to gather ferns with Ms. Reece and a group of other weavers at this site in 2015. A devastating wildfire had raced through this area in 2014, consuming over 100,000 acres of land. Days before we left for this trip, Ms. Reece had to check in with the USFS about the condition of the roads, since many of the roads sustained damage from the fire and subsequent slides, as well as from the heavy equipment that traversed them. She received the “all clear” from the USFS and we worked our way up the mountain. I could not believe the devastation wrought by the fire and I was in shock and very afraid that the sensitive ecosystem that supported the *ikritápkir* (five-finger fern) and *típtiip* would have been irreparably damaged (Plate 29). When we reached the spring, I was close to tears. I went over to Ms. Reece, who was prepping the rope to climb down the hillside, saying how sad I was that the fire had nearly destroyed such an extraordinary area. Ms. Reece quashed my fears with one look. She told me that fires happen and that the site would be fine, saying that it is healthy for the plants and for the forest, and all will grow back in time. The fire cleans out all the dead plant materials and all the bugs, and the forest will regenerate. That day, weavers worked their way down the hillside to gather great bunches of *típtiip*, as the valley floor was teeming with beautiful stands of ferns, despite the devastation.

I have had more experience gathering willow sticks than I have with any other material. Willow is more readily available and seems to have a bit of a longer gathering window, once in the spring and once in the fall. Each year that I have been on the Klamath, Ms. Reece has told me when the willow is ready. She pointed out to me that weavers in Orleans gather willow earlier than upriver. The willow sticks are ready sooner in Orleans, so when they are ready to gather there, we know that we will be ready to gather in Happy Camp in a couple of weeks, and further near Scott River a month later. Of course this depends on the weather. If the days are hot, the buds will sprout much sooner and the window of opportunity closes at a much faster rate.

The first time gathering willow, I went out with a group during the 2008 Karuk Basketweavers Gathering. I remember being uncomfortable, it was a hot day and there were gnats circling my head. I was unsure what to gather, as Ms. Reece and the other more experienced weavers had moved quickly down the riverbank, while I stayed closer to the roadway. I gathered a bundle of sticks, not sure what I was looking at, and not sure what I needed for the next basket. My little bundle, after it was peeled, did not look like much, and was certainly not enough to make a basket with.

Over the years, I would come back to the Klamath to gather willow, and my bundle of sticks to peel grew. In spring 2016, I made a one-day trip from Eureka to gather with my friend, Denna Dodds (Karuk), up near the Scott River. We stopped in Happy Camp to catch a ride with Ms. Reece and to pick up Ms. Souza and drove 30 miles up river to gather.

Once we got to the site near the confluence of the Klamath and Scott Rivers, Ms. Souza and I hopped out of the car and headed straight for the willow. Talking and laughing while we were gathering sticks, Ms. Souza and I pruned the new growth and topped off the trees to encourage new growth. Even while I was holding a conversation with Ms. Souza, clipping willow sticks from tall stands of trees, I thought about how wonderfully straight and long the sticks were. Just a few yards over, there were thick stands of willow trees, leaning over the rushing Klamath (Plate 30). Short, stalky branches reached out and grazed the water, while the ones that I was working with were wispy and yielding. There was a notable difference between the willows that had been actively trimmed over the many years and those that had been left untouched. Intellectually I knew that this very accessible sand bar would have been attractive to many weavers who would come out to harvest sticks from them. However, it was at that moment that it dawned on me that the act of gathering had been occurring here at this spot for a long time. A very long time.

After spending a few hours with Ms. Souza, I sat down on the sand, sorting and bundling up my sticks so I could prepare them for the ride home. Ms. Reece came over and sat down beside me. Quietly she asked me what kind of basket I was thinking about making. Hemming and hawing for a couple of minutes, I told her that I wasn't sure about what I wanted to make, but I have been thinking about an *ápxaan* (basket cap). I told her that I thought it was completely beyond my ability now, but I would like to make one in the near future. Ms. Reece said that when she used to go out gathering with Grace Davis. Mrs. G. Davis would always ask her what kind of basket she was thinking about making when she gathered. She looked over my sticks, pulling out one or two, cleaning the bark off of them and showed me which ones would be a good size for an *ápxaan*. This moment was an important one, one delivered in almost hushed and reverent tones. I hold onto that moment, keeping it close to me, so the next time I go out and gather I will be more mindful of what I choose.

Traveling home with my bundle of willow sticks, I was so pleased that I had many sticks to start my basket with. I wrapped the sticks up in garbage bags to keep them damp on the eight-hour journey home. It is unbelievable how quickly the sticks will dry out, especially if it is hot. If I let the sticks dry out, they would be nearly impossible to peel, rendering them useless for all but *xathipnára* (fish

basket). It was the biggest haul of sticks that I had ever gathered and I figured that it would only take two days to clean them. Sadly, I would be doing this by myself. It is so much more enjoyable to clean sticks with others.

Cleaning willow and hazel sticks is an easy, yet repetitive task. When the sap is really flowing, the outer bark zips right off. But as the plants bud out more and more, the sap does not flow and it becomes necessary to use a blunt knife to help ease the bark off the stick. Sitting down to the task, it took nearly four days of working on and off to clean the hundreds of sticks that I had gathered. It took yet another hour or so to sort them out into four different sizes by width—very fine, fine, medium and large—before laying them out on my covered porch to dry. Taking them in at night, and setting them out again in the morning, the cool weather made it so that my sticks were not ready to be bundled and put away for several days.

I have only had the opportunity to gather hazel twice. As mentioned previously, hazel needs to be burned two years before gathering. The first time I gathered hazel was in 2014, two years after the Goff Fire, which was part of the larger Fort Complex, in the Siskiyou Mountains. The second time I gathered hazel was in 2016, again two years after a devastating fire, the Happy Camp Complex, which burned over 100,000 acres of Siskiyou and Marble Mountains (Plate 31).

Hazel seems to be intertwined with poison oak, which is a hazard for those who are very sensitive to the itchy rash that accompanies exposure. When gathering hazel, I learned that I needed to be careful. The uneven ground and the burned areas pose tripping hazards. I got a particularly nasty gash on my leg from a burned and dry blackberry bush that I brushed up against, with a scar that still exists today. It is a different feeling, gathering hazel. Stands of hazel are in mountainous terrain, far away from the Klamath. Cool breezes that rush off of the River don't reach the gathering areas. It is quiet, without the sound of the River rushing, and the air is still.

It is such a luxury to gather hazel, since there are few opportunities to do so. However, it should not be a luxury. I offer up the same complaint that weavers have expressed since Lila O'Neale's ethnographic field research in the 1920s. The hazel groves should be burned every two years, so that there are sticks to harvest, but unfortunately there are still problems with Indigenous management of aboriginal territories. The USFS personnel are willing to work with Ms. Reece on burning hazel gathering sites, but still we have to wait and we have to hope that they will choose an area to burn that is beneficial to our harvesting areas.²³⁰

Since I have had little time to gather, it will take many more years before I have enough hazel sticks to make a basket. It should not have to be this way. Ideally, weavers should have various plots burned every year, always rotating, so that there are sticks to gather in every spring and fall. However, even if there is cooperation from the USFS to do this, it would take many, many years to reverse the damage that has been wrought by fire suppression.

Gathering Beargrass with Ms. Reece and Ms. McCarthy

Like hazel, beargrass also needs to be burned, although we harvest it sooner than we do the hazel. We find stands of it in the dappled shade of pine trees. Just as

²³⁰ Reece, 2015.

new growth occurs, the center leafy blades are furled together. Bending over and grasping this cluster of leaves and giving it a little twist, many, many blades yield from the ground (Plate 32).

There was one time I went to gather beargrass with Ms. Reece and Ms. McCarthy. My partner accompanied us, just in case there was trouble. The year previous, Ms. Reece and Ms. McCarthy talked with USFS personnel from the Happy Camp/Oak Knoll district about performing a prescribed fire at a campsite that was known to have thick stands of beargrass. Ms. Reece had checked the site out, from time to time, throughout the year to check to see when it would be ready. The fire was supposed to be over an acre in size, which would hopefully supply beargrass to the weavers in the local area for a year. Disappointment set in because not enough of the land was burned. The USFS divided the plot into two, and burned the wrong side, although the reason for their choice is unknown to me. However, if they had burned the appropriate side, there would have been many more plants to gather from.

Just a week before gathering, Ms. Reece checked with the USFS again to be sure the site would be open and available for us to gather. She was informed at that time that the campground was going to be the site of a large Earth First! weeklong gathering, called the "Round River Rendezvous," at the same time we were to be collecting beargrass. This was very worrisome for many reasons. First, it seems as if the USFS had forgot that a year after the prescribed fire, weavers would be using the site to gather; if they had that institutional memory and understanding about harvest times for beargrass gathering, it seems as if they would have not allowed such heavy impact from 100+ people to be in that area. Second, while they could not legally prevent the Earth First! gathering from happening at this particular time, the USFS had the option to recommend other sites in their jurisdiction that would have been more appropriate for the size and tenor of this group. Even more importantly, Earth First! members have had a long and infamous relationship and involvement with the environmental politics in the Klamath River region. From many standpoints, their involvement caused more damage than good.

Unlike the environmental groups, such as the Mid-Klamath Watershed Council and Klamath Riverkeeper, which work with the local communities and tribes along the Klamath River to address the health of the Klamath River watershed, Earth First!ers take extreme measures to bring about radical changes in their chosen environmental causes. According to its website, Earth First! formed in 1979 in response to an "increasingly corporate, compromising and ineffective environmental community."²³¹ They claim that there are no members of Earth First!, only "Earth First!ers," who embody the movement through grassroots organization, civil disobedience and "monkeywrenching."²³² This "monkeywrenching" was at times a nuisance, but at other times, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, outright dangerous. During the 1980s, logging and all of its secondary markets were the

²³¹ About Earth First!: No Compromise in Defense of Mother Earth. Electronic document. <http://earthfirstjournal.org/about/>, accessed June 1, 2016.

²³² About Earth First!: No Compromise in Defense of Mother Earth. Electronic document. <http://earthfirstjournal.org/about/>, accessed June 1, 2016.

main means of employment along the Klamath River. Since there was a housing boom in the 1980s, there was an increase in logging output, which became a grave concern for environmentalists. Environmental groups, both local and nationwide, were concerned with over-logging the forests and occasional clashes between environmentally minded protesters and loggers would occur. However, Earth First! were notorious for employing particularly dangerous strategies in their protests to stop all logging:

Members of Earth First! chained themselves to trees, sat on logging roads, and pulled up survey stakes. Some even pursued violent strategies, the most notorious of which involved hammering metal spikes into trees as booby traps, to disable chainsaws, shatter milling blades, and scare loggers and millworkers with flying metal.” (Thomas 1999:551-552)

Many Karuk peoples saw real harm in the over-logging of the forests of their aboriginal territories, but, at the same time, many men and women were gainfully employed in the industry. Given the contentious history of Earth First!’s engagement with the communities in the Klamath River region, it was no wonder that there was cause for concern.

Ms. Reece had arranged for us to meet USFS rangers at the campground entrance, so we could be escorted into the gathering area. USFS rangers were on high alert because there were known instances of violence at the annual Earth First! gatherings. In fact, the Round River Rendezvous promised a week-long event of “fireside song and story, hikes in the wilderness, workshops, group meals, friendship, and all kinds of rowdiness,” with the events culminating in a full scale protest.²³³ There was a tension among the group organizers already, since the USFS personnel were inspecting the vehicles of Round River Rendezvous attendees as they were coming into the campground. When we got near the campground entrance, there were four USFS vehicles parked just outside the gates, in addition to the rangers who were waiting for us inside.

This was the first time I had gathered beargrass. Our USFS escorts stayed close to us, letting us know that they had already warned camp participants to leave us alone while we gathered. Under the watchful eyes of the USFS rangers, Ms. Reece patiently showed me the plants to look for and how to grasp the tender inner leaves, “twist and pull,” releasing them from the ground. After she saw that I was starting to figure out what to gather, she hiked further up the mountainside, surveying the burned area. Coming back after about twenty minutes, Ms. Reece told me to stop gathering because there simply was not enough beargrass for everyone. I took my bagful back to Ms. McCarthy’s car and we drove back down to the Peoples Center, which is the Karuk Tribe’s museum, cultural center, and gift shop. Once there, Ms. Reece shared with me how to lay out the beargrass so the sun would bleach the green blades to a fine, almost blinding white.

²³³ 2014 Earth First! Rendezvous: Klamath Knot. Electronic document. <http://2014rrr.org/>, accessed July 28, 2014.

I returned the following year to the campground with Ms. McCarthy to gather beargrass again. As mentioned before, beargrass needs to be burned every year for the blades to be supple, but the beargrass at the camp had not been burned again. The main reason why Ms. McCarthy and I went to the same place was because it was easily accessible. (When gathering with Ms. Reece, often one must be prepared to “mountain goat,” meaning that one would go to some pretty remote areas and be willing to climb or rappel across the landscape for really high-quality materials.)

I was more than happy to accompany Ms. McCarthy to the campground, which was quiet compared to the year before. As we were out gathering, a grandmother and her young granddaughter came over to us tentatively, to ask us questions about what we were doing. I did not know how much to tell, so I stood back and watched as Ms. McCarthy told them about how we use beargrass in baskets and how we gather it during certain times of the year after it had been burned. Ms. McCarthy had me show the young girl how to pick it, but being unsure myself, I led her to a patch that was quite unwieldy. She tugged and pulled at the blades, until a handful came loose. I warned her not to tug too hard, not because she would damage the plant (although someone much stronger could), but because she might cut her fingers on the sharp blades. Holding up my own cut fingertips, I told her to “twist!” She gathered a few more bunches and Ms. McCarthy told her to lay it out in a covered area outdoors, bringing it inside in the evenings, repeating the process until it was dry and bleached.

Shortly after, Ms. McCarthy was ready to head back to town. We hopped in her car and started making our way back, winding through the campsites. I looked out the side window and saw a beautiful stand of beargrass. Ms. McCarthy pulled over when I said I wanted to gather more. Indulging me, I spent the next ten or so minutes gathering as quickly as I could, until I began to feel guilty for leaving her to sit in the car for too long.

There is a difference between the beargrass that I gathered from one year to the next. Fire makes all the difference. The new growth that springs up after fire has washed through a field of beargrass is tender. It will still cut your hands if you grasp it wrong, but it is more agreeable to work with. For a beginner like myself, I could not really notice a difference when I was collecting it; I could not tell the difference between beargrass that burned just a year before or two years previous. I did not know what to look for with the physical signs, but I certainly could tell the difference when I went to use it. The two-year growth and the one-year growth acted differently after I soaked it and went to weave with it. The older growth was hard and unwieldy—it would not lie flat in my stitch. It bunched and made for lumpy stitches.

Ms. Reece very simply showed me how to differentiate the old from the new beargrass. The next time I went out with her to gather beargrass, a group of weavers made the trek up the mountains to an area that was affected by the 2014 Happy Camp Complex fires. Scaling up to the top of the mountain was not a task I wanted to do; I got queasy just looking at the height. So instead, I tried to stay close to where we had parked, since there were beautiful stands of beargrass near the car. I reached out to twist and gather the grass, when I heard loudly from high up the mountain, “Get out of there!” Ms. Reece saw me.

The whole mountainside was filled with stands of burned beargrass, but the bunches near the car were unburned. The beargrass was so lovely and green and, to my eyes, did not look any different from the stands further up. Ms. Reece came down the mountain and guided me to a spot that had beargrass that was ready to gather. Getting close to the ground, Ms. Reece showed me what to look for. The stems of the plants that are good to gather are charred and sooty (Plate 33). Without her guidance, I would have continued to gather beargrass that was unwieldy.

Looking back on the experiences that I have had gathering materials, I have asked myself some questions. How can you know your materials without gathering them yourself? How can you learn about what sticks will make a good basket and which roots will break on you? In what ways do the processes of gathering materials connect you to the larger world? How does a weaver become in tune with the gifts of the *ikxaréeyavsa* and the past, present and future weavers? How does this interconnection, interweaving happen? One of the ways that I have found through my own practice is that you need to turn your eyes and all your senses to the world around you.

As a beginner, it is hard to know which ones to gather and which ones to avoid. As you reach for the stalks of a particularly beautiful bunch of beargrass, your teacher barks out at you “get out of there!” because the ones you chose were not burned the year before. Then you gather up your courage to hike up the mountain to be by her side as she shows you the right way, the right plants to choose, and what to look for. Details that you never knew existed and you begin to get it. And you begin to feel it, and you begin to open up your senses to the world around you. You shut out your internal dialog, and that is when it makes sense...you are as much of a part of the basket as the basket is a part of you. As you shape it, it also shapes you.

***“That kept us going”*²³⁴: Weaving Resilience and Weaving Family**

It is misleading to divide the activities of gathering, sitting down to weave a basket, and giving away or selling a basket because these activities are tied to a much larger way of living and being in the world. Weaving is similar to Ingold’s (2007) notion of *meshworks*, in which each activity is tied or woven together into a larger practice and way of being. These activities are done *in-relation-with* one another. Often a weaver is planning the next basket as she is actively weaving, one, two, three, or more projects at the same time. There are moments of prep work in which roots are scraped, sticks are being sorted, baskets and materials are being soaked or shaped. Thoughts of where the basket will ultimately be received are woven into the sticks and into the weavers. More formally, prayers are made while weaving a basket that is used in ceremony; but that does not mean that other baskets are made without mindfulness. The interplay of weaver and materials necessitates a non-verbal conversation that is an embodied expression.

The process of weaving is one that is best revealed through the actual doing of it. When I sat down with Ms. Reece and Ms. Souza, we talked not about the actual instruction on how to weave a basket, but instead how basket weaving and the

²³⁴ Souza, 2015.

basket weaving community are important in their lives. It is a lifelong learning process, even for master weavers who find new techniques, new ways to do the work that they do. Moreover, there is a balance that needs to be struck between the obligations of work and family and the expectations to continually engage with weaving so that one has the knowledge to pass it down.

Teaching and passing along the weaving culture to the next generation is one impetus to continue to weave. Hand-in-hand with teaching and passing it down is the act of weaving as self-determination, where one finds purpose, meaning, and healing in the act of weaving. Through weaving, basket weavers find connection to a larger community, who become like family and care for one another.

Ms. Reece's Narrative of Weaving

"We need to start working, to teach someone else down the road," said Ms. Reece when I first met her in 2008. Ms. Reece's concern for the future of basket weaving is immense. Along with teaching weavers how to gather, Ms. Reece wants to ensure that she teaches enough people so that basket weaving can be passed down to future generations. She sees the drive in some of her students and knows that even if their baskets are not well made at the moment, with their passion, their work will become refined. She knows that they are not going to give up, like many of her former students have.

This saddens her, when her students, who have so much promise, stop coming to class. Ms. Reece loves to see people learn and watch them progress. She told me a story of one of her young students, reflecting about her absence from class:

I had a little girl here named Starla. And she was young. And she tried to make baskets. She [would] start on a basket and she'd just cry. "I can't do it." So I'd weave a little bit and give it back to her. She'd be going pretty soon. Something would break and then she'd cry. And then I'd get her back on. But she left for a while. She came back. She's a teenager. And she started weaving again, and gathering. And she picked it up. Didn't cry no more. But just to see her come back and start weaving again. And it's like her mom says, she wish she could come back and start doing baskets again. But you've got to work. And you've got to go away from here to work.²³⁵

Ms. Reece understands that potential weavers have obligations to their families. She also understands that basket weaving is not a practice to be taken lightly, since there is so much to learn. Yet, it is hard for her to know that so few are committed to continue with the practice.

Ms. Reece's teachers, Grace and Madeline Davis, urged her to pass along the tradition. As Ms. Reece had said, "[Basket weaving] must have been in my DNA," so the imperative from her teachers is combined with a certainty that emanates from the core of her being. "To see the people that do come to class and progress, that's my enjoyment...I love seeing people learn our baskets. And watch them how they

²³⁵ Reece, 2015.

progress.”²³⁶ But being the elder weaver and teacher in the Karuk Tribe comes at a price. It can be very disheartening for Ms. Reece because there are so few peers for her to work with. There are times when she wants to quit, but if she can “get some basket weavers out of it,” she is happy. “I just need somebody to carry it on. Be able to teach.” Even though, Ms. Reece pointed out, there may be elder weavers in Hoopa, she is the only one still practicing and actively teaching in the area. She told me, “I am the elder weaver. Do you know any other weavers? They’re all younger than I am.” This is yet another reason why she feels so compelled to teach.

I am not sure how many Karuk peoples recognize how much time, effort, and devotion Ms. Reece has put into teaching basket weaving. She does not openly talk about it, but over the years she has supplied basket weaving materials for the Peoples Center classes. She has gathered and prepared materials for many of the events that she has been asked to teach at, whether for the Karuk Tribe or others. For many years, she has taught classes for the Tribe, volunteering her own time to make sure she is there for her students. And, she is generous. When she knows that a beginning weaver is interested, when she sees the spark and desire in them to keep weaving, she will often give stores of her own materials to them, so that they could keep weaving.

When it comes to her own weaving work, Ms. Reece often is working on baskets for charitable events and for orders. Ms. Reece considers herself to be a rough weaver, like her teacher, Grace Davis, who told Ms. Reece in confidence that she was a rough weaver, too. Ms. Reece said that she would rather teach her students how to gather, rather than “sit in a room and teach them how to weave.” Many of her students want to learn how to weave with overlay materials because that is how designs and patterns are made. Ms. Reece said that she could do all the designs, but prefers not to because she believes that she is not good at it because her work is rough. Instead, she “loves to weave an open weave.” Open work stick baskets are her favorites to weave: “You give me a bunch of sticks and I’ll make a stick basket any day,” but her specialty are *tháxtuuy* (baby baskets).²³⁷

When I talked to Ms. Reece about *tháxtuuy* back in 2008, she said that her hands ached when she made them.

Making baby cradles is hard on the hands...I hope to find someone to carry it on, but nobody has the desire to do it...I haven’t found one yet...It’s a lot of hard work, hard on the hands and you have to do it really tight...you don’t want your baby to fall out.

Although she has taught a few newer weavers how to weave them, many people still request baby baskets from her, and she often has special orders to make them.. These days, she sells baby baskets because there is a large demand for them. People from tribes all around the area want them because “It’s part of their culture to have their baby basket. But they don’t use them, a lot of them don’t. They want to just

²³⁶ Reece, 2015.

²³⁷ Reece, 2015.

take a picture with it.”²³⁸ She said that she does not mind making them because of the extra income that it brings in, and she is not interested in a job because she likes to be able to do what she wants to do. She is trying to meet the demand, but chuckled when she said that she attempts to make other things. “Like if I want to make a trinket basket, sit down and do that, instead of having somebody saying, ‘Where’s my baby basket?’”

Often her baskets wind up in raffles. From CIBA to the annual Karuk Basketweavers Gathering, as well as other charitable events within and outside Happy Camp, Ms. Reece’s baskets are the highlight of these fundraisers. She acknowledges that raffle baskets keep her busy. It is a time for her to make what she wants. When she is weaving with a purpose, like making raffle baskets, she sets aside the needed time to complete the project: “Seems like that’s when I get things done, is when I’m doing a raffle basket.”

Ms. Reece has been an active member of CIBA since its beginning and has taught weaving and aspects of gathering at many of their different events. Over the years she has developed a network of weaving peers from whom she both learned and taught. Working with other weavers in and around Karuk country, she has been instrumental in reviving basket weaving traditions of other tribes. Also, she has been an inspiration to many. At the 2016 CIBA gathering at the Redding Rancheria, Ms. Reece was the recipient of love and admiration of many. In the rush of registration, events, teaching, and selling baskets during that weekend, people often surrounded her, asking questions, joking and laughing. At this year’s gathering, Ms. Reece taught a small group of people how to weave *axrukuxrúkuar* (baby rattle). Weeks before, she scraped numerous roots and sorted numerous sticks so that her students, some whom have never woven before, could complete the basket in a day. That evening at the banquet dinner, I sat next to Ms. Reece. After we ate dinner, one of her students came up to her. Visibly nervous, he handed Ms. Reece a bundle of tobacco. He thanked her profusely, saying that he never wove before and that he was so grateful for her lessons that day. He gave her the tobacco, the best offering that he could give, in gratitude.

Ms. Souza’s Narrative of Weaving

Since the Peoples Center opened in 2002, Ms. Reece has been teaching basket weaving classes there. Taking classes from Ms. Reece is where Ms. Souza discovered her passion for weaving. But before she lived in Happy Camp as a teen, Ms. Souza was exposed to basket weaving when she was at the Orleans Elementary School (OES). She, along with other girls at OES were taken out of class and taught by Laverne Glaze (Karuk), who is a master basket weaver, a former board member of CIBA, and one of the founders of the *Following the Smoke* gatherings. Since Mrs. Glaze’s grandchildren were in attendance at the OES, she took a special interest in teaching the girls to weave.

I remember Laverne and her daughters—they would come in there and teach us. And then they helped us start it. And then they’d show us how to weave

²³⁸ Reece, 2015.

and then they'd give it back to us. And we were like sitting there. And, "Okay, I need help." And then they'd pull it around the stick. And then they'd give it back to me. And I'd probably just...sat there and look down and try to pretend like I'd done something. (laughter) And then when they came back, "Okay, what do I do now?" ...So basically I didn't know what the heck I was doing.

Ms. Souza remembered that when she was a child in Orleans, there were many different cultural programs happening at that time, more so then than today. Tribal members would travel from Happy Camp and other places to teach classes in Karuk cultural practices and language during and after school. She and her sister used to participate in Mrs. Glaze's classes, although Ms. Souza mentioned that she was shy and would have her younger sister ask all her questions for her. She remarked at how she did not realize how much she and her sister picked up as children; "we really didn't know that we'd learned so much." Frequently, there were different activities that kept the children at OES immersed in Karuk cultural practices. Ms. Souza recalled that there were often cultural demonstrations. For instance, she said that in connection with the basket weaving class, Mrs. Glaze and her daughters, "brought fern, they brought *típtiip* down and they brought the dye and they showed us how to dye." Ms. Souza mentioned that they may have even brought the girls out to gather some of the materials. Of the memories evoked by recalling classes with Mrs. Glaze when she was a child, Ms. Souza remembered the smell of the basket material as her favorite:

I do remember my favorite part about it was the way that the material smelled and the water. It just smells, it reminds you of the river. It reminds you of the mountains. And it smells really, really good in the water. Like willow and roots in the water just smells really, really good. So that was probably my favorite part about it. Yeah. That's what we did. We started weaving down there.

When Ms. Souza and her family moved to Happy Camp, she and her sister, along with several of their friends, began taking classes with Ms. Reece at the Peoples Center. That is where she said that she really learned to weave, even though she had some experience when she was young. Ms. Souza said that she lived right around the corner from the Peoples Center and reminisced about going to class on Wednesday evenings and walking home in the dark. It was a place for her and her friends to go and it was the place where she really learned to weave and had guidance.

The guidance that Ms. Souza spoke of extended far beyond the instruction she received in basket weaving. The relationships that she cultivated, at a time in her life that she needed them the most, were nurtured through her basket weaving mentors, who became her "basket family." As a teen, she and her friends caused a bit of trouble, like many teens do, but her basket family were the ones who kept her grounded and helped her grow up:

[We] got pushed from the adults that were there to be better...[More] was actually expected from you... I think when we were growing up, nobody really was paying attention to what we were doing. They were kind of doing what they wanted to do. So when we went to class, it was Verna, Paula and everybody, they [were] just really, more like a family. They had expectations of us. But instead of being like "Oh, you're being bad, you, go away, you can't be here" ...they would like pick on us and be like, you know, "What are you doing?"

But as Ms. Souza continued to show up to class, there were moments when "things just kind of clicked." She said that in those moments and many more moments after, she felt that when she really learned something, it made her feel really good. Those experiences made her thirsty for more. She wanted to learn even more. Recognizing that spark in her, Ms. Reece and the other basket weavers pushed Ms. Souza to do more weaving.

Ms. Souza fell in love with basket weaving during the classes at the Peoples Center, saying that she felt, "this is what makes me happy and this is what I want to do for the rest of my life." At the same time that she was coming to this realization, she had some personal difficulties for which her basket family became her solace:

[When] I felt like nobody was there for me, I couldn't wait till we could get to class and if I needed anything, if I needed somebody to talk to or whatever, I would just like find Verna or call, even if it wasn't class and just go, just go hang with those guys and feel better. Like times where you need a little bit more guidance than you're getting...they were just there.

Weaving baskets, especially with her basket family, was a good outlet for her, when "you felt like you had a purpose or a meaning or something, and it just felt good and right...just really good influences. And, yeah, like family."

Ms. Souza's basket family provided positive influences in her life and modeled for her the right way to live. She said that her mentors, Ms. Reece, Ms. McCarthy, and other weavers, were living their lives right and that they wanted to share that with others. By living their lives right, Ms. Souza explained, they did not "[look] down on everybody else...they want to share that and just be helpful and help people be better." And even when Ms. Souza and her friend did not think well of themselves, the weavers at the basket class "thought the world of us...even when we were being stupid or silly...they really thought a lot of us. So that kept us going."

With the positive affirmations that Ms. Souza and her friend experienced from their basket family, their pride in themselves and their weaving abilities blossomed. As teens, they participated in a number of cultural camps and events where they shared their knowledge with others. They made Indian teas and demonstrated other cultural practices. They sold their basket necklaces to others and to the Peoples Center gift shop; "We just thought we were so awesome... And we just felt so awesome." Ms. Souza went on to explain how much self-confidence and satisfaction she gained through her experiences with basket weaving and through participating in the cultural classes and camps:

And it's...a lot different.... [We] knew so much more than we thought we knew. And...other people don't get like the honor or whatever you'd call it to grow up like that. And we just, we didn't know how lucky we were, I guess. Because it was just a part of who we were, a part of where we come from. So then when we went to places like that, we were really proud of ourselves. Like yeah, we're from Happy Camp. We're Happy Camp Indians. We thought we were pretty cool.

It was also through these experiences that she recognized and actualized her own self-identification as a Karuk woman and a Karuk weaver.

The self-assuredness that she gained through her positive experiences also shined through in her willingness to take on new weaving projects, deepening her commitment to basket weaving. When she was in her early teens, Ms. Souza was asked by her aunt to weave a *tháxtuuy* for her niece. Her aunt joked, "Hey, you should make baby baskets so that I don't have to pay for them." So Ms. Souza did just that; she made her niece's *tháxtuuy*. The experience was a positive one:

I was so proud of myself! I felt so happy! And it's not a bad looking basket. It's just really like, I didn't know how to shape it. So I used really big sticks. And it's just really wide, like for a big baby. But I did it and it looked really good, especially for someone that young. And I was just really proud of myself.

As Ms. Souza grew older, her peers, with whom she had shared many experiences in culture and basket classes, dropped out of weaving. She said as the years went by, there were only a couple of people who continued to weave. Realizing the passion and interest needed to continue, she said, "Because it's just hard like when you grow up and you move away, unless it's like something that is really, that you really, really care about...that you're crazy about, you couldn't live without weaving." But when basket weaving is a deeply rooted part of who you are, it is difficult to set that part of you aside, even when isolated from your weaving community and from the basketry plants.

Ms. Souza recognized that it is difficult to continue to weave when access to plant materials that Karuk weavers use is effectively cut off when weavers do not live in the Klamath River region:

[It's] hard to find basket materials. So you kind of have to improvise. But a lot of different places have the same material that we have. So if you wanted to find stuff out there, you could. Like willow, especially. They have willow. So you can at least be making stick baskets.

She knew first hand how hard it could be for someone who had the calling to weave baskets, but not have unfettered access to materials. Ms. Souza moved away from Happy Camp for a short period of time and "went basket crazy"—"I need it in my life! I need to weave! This is terrible! I want to go home!" She was so frustrated by not being able to weave because she did not have any materials to weave with, so

she sought out what was locally available to her:

I just got so tired of not being able to weave, I went out there and found these ugly sticks and made a little doll basket. When I was gone, I had made a couple of baskets out of just whatever I had, and managed to get my hands on some good stuff. And I wove.

She felt terrible being so far from home. So when she moved back, she was so happy to be able to weave again. Shortly after she returned to Happy Camp, she bumped into Ms. Reece at the post office and asked her about basket class, which Ms. Reece confirmed that she was still teaching.

When she began to take classes at the Peoples Center again, Ms. Souza sincerely appreciated being back in the fold of her basket family, doubling her resolve to learn more. Reflecting back on that time, Ms. Souza shared that she realized that she would never stop learning. Each basket she works on, she builds on the knowledge that she has gained over the years that she has been weaving. She takes the mistakes she makes in her baskets and learns from them: "I could sort better. I could try harder." But, she said, that as long as she keeps trying, as long as she keeps practicing, and as long as she is not hurting anything, these lessons help her become a better weaver.

From the time she wove her first *tháxtuuy* for her niece, Ms. Souza has had a special affinity for making them. Shortly after she had returned to Happy Camp, she began to weave a *tháxtuuy* when she was pregnant with her first child, Honey Boy. She said that it was her favorite memory of weaving,

[Because] making baby baskets is like a really, like it's kind of like a really powerful, strong, beautiful, really awesome thing because it's something that's going to nurture a baby and help them grow up right.

By weaving her son's *tháxtuuy*, Ms. Souza felt that she was able to provide the nurturing to her unborn child that Ms. Reece and her basket family had provided and continues to provide for her, saying that she was doing "what Verna meant for us. [Letting] us know how special we are."

Weaving has been a part of Ms. Souza's life for a long time. And she has involved each of her children in the practice since before they were born. Her children have been involved, going out on gathering trips, sitting on her lap while weaving, or just being present at basket classes and gatherings, Ms. Souza is sharing this gift with them. She sees this as a naturalized process for them, learning about weaving by watching, participating, and being present.

[Like] Honey Boy...he knows, without even knowing that he knows it. He knows a lot about, like a lot more, about baskets and how to make them and prepare the material and get the material than adults do. [It's] just kind of like second nature, that's what it is. Like second nature because...that's how you grow up and that's how you know about things. Because people do...that's normal for us.

Several times I have gone to basket class with Ms. Souza and her children. Her baby, Inaami, sat on her lap, playing with the body sticks as Honey Boy stole across the classroom floor, picking up fallen sticks and weavers to give to his mom. It is part of their Sundays, coming to class. It is a part of their home life, when Ms. Souza weaves while the children play, or includes them in cleaning materials after they have all gone out to gather. Often, free days are taken up by short walks in the woods, collecting and gathering as they go. It is a part of their life, a part of their daily rhythm, and a part of who they are.

When Ms. Souza and I were talking about a gathering trip she went on, our conversation effortlessly developed to talking about weaving with those plants. Tying back to the myth about the Greedy Father, Ms. Souza said that it was a powerful story for her because by weaving, she is fulfilling not only her own destiny, but that of the basket plants' as well. Weavers weave,

because we're honoring those plants. That's what they were meant to be. Like that's what they, we're honoring them by making them into a basket. Like yeah, some plants are going to come and go and probably never get touched. But yeah, like we're honoring those plants by helping them fulfill their destiny. So for me, that's medicine. And when you're making baskets, and when you're doing things like that, you are creating good medicine for yourself, good medicine for your family...Being a good person is a good way to make good medicine, you know?

Her practice comes full circle. Passing along the lessons from Ms. Reece and her basket family, Ms. Souza brings the good medicine into her own family. But beyond that, her weaving practice ties her to who she is as a person and where she fits within the world. From her everyday practices, she is honoring the medicine of the *ikxaréeyavsa*, creating good medicine for the plants, for her family, and for the world.

Learning to Weave

I remember the first time I took a basket weaving class. My family and I took the nearly 400 mile trip from Sonoma to the Klamath River in April, so we could attend the 2008 Karuk Tribe Basketweavers Gathering. When I got there Ms. Reece, who I had just met, began to show me how to pick out the sticks and weavers so I could make a small, twined herb basket. "Just picking out sticks," I thought to myself, "How hard could that be?" After about a good hour or so, I figured that I was ready to start weaving. Ms. Reece looked at my sticks curiously, but then began to guide me, showing me how to make a button start and add new weavers to grow the basket. Over and over again she had to show me. After about four hours, I presented to her what I made. I didn't get very far past weaving the button. Sticks were poking out all over the place, and what wasn't poking out was falling out (Plate 34). She looked it over, turning it round and round in her hands thoughtfully. Finally she said to me, "Looks like you made a bird's nest!"

Later that same year, I made arrangements to stay in Happy Camp for a month, so I could take classes from Ms. Reece and learn more about basket weaving so that I could write a mini-ethnography about it for my undergraduate thesis. What I was not counting on was learning that the actual weaving was just a small part. My first unfinished “bird’s nest” was made in frustration. I did not know the materials, my hands felt clumsy, and I did not know how to hold my body or the materials. I was constantly aware of each ache and pain in my back, my arms, my fingers and my legs.

I am no stranger to using my hands to make things, but weaving, I came to find out, was something more than just putting elements together to make a finished product. It took a long time to learn that end product was not the final goal of weaving. Instead, through the entire practice of weaving, baskets are being brought into life, growing the materials into a belonging that has its own purpose to fulfill. Part of learning the practice is knowing that the materials will often decide for the weaver what kind of basket it is to become. Sometimes, even the most experienced weaver will have a particular basket she wants to weave, yet the materials yield in a way that can dictate the form and the design. As a beginner, this certainly happens more often, but even experienced weavers find that they must listen to the materials and what they decide to become. For example, when I tried to make a *pátanamich* (small soup basket) that was similar to a basket that Grace Davis had made, the angle of the basket did not grow gracefully into a bowl shape. Following the materials’ lead, the basket that ended up developing was an acorn-shaped *uhsípnuuk* (tobacco basket) (Plate 35, Plate 36, and Plate 37).

Part of the frustration I have with weaving is knowing how to select and process materials so that they are straight and even. While I know that I have to scrape the bull pine and spruce roots until they are even in width and depth, my fingers are not practiced enough to feel this. Coordinating scraping with a knife along with figuring out the width and the depth of the roots are exercises of attention, thoughtfulness and patience. It is a skill that is learned over the course of a lifetime. Ms. Reece had mentioned to me that when she first started taking classes from Grace and Madeline, they sat her down with bull pine roots and had her scrape them to prepare them for weaving. She chuckled at the thought, remembering how she had taken the long roots and scraped them down to small, small pieces. Other weavers that I know have spent months, just scraping roots so that when they start to weave, they will have a much better feel for the materials. Also, they will have a cache of scraped roots, so they do not have to stop often while weaving to scrape some more.

Baskets embody the thoughts and emotions of the weavers. A phrase I have learned over and over again through my time researching and weaving baskets is “weave with a good mind.” In my own practice, I have noticed a difference in the quality of the work that I create when I am calm, happy and eager to weave, as opposed to when I feel hurried, frustrated, or unhappy. On the surface, it is true that I make more weaving mistakes when I am preoccupied with unconstructive thoughts. Delving deeper, I have noticed that within my own preoccupation lays an inattentiveness that is not just within the ways in which I think about what I am doing, but also within the ways in which I position and use my body as well.

Ms. Reece has been a patient teacher to me, but as a fledgling basket weaver, I am often beset by frustration...Sorting out sticks for the warp, sorting out weavers for the weft, I think I have a handle on it. I think I know the right sizes for the basket that I want to make. My fingers glide up the sticks to measure, to see if they are all the same sizes. I scrape and scrape and scrape the spruce root until I sense the pliability of a good weaver. I talk to the basket, trying to coax the sticks and the weavers to work together, to start in a good way and the basket talks back to me...

Here is what I mean by that... There are so many ways that we communicate with each other, with the world, and it is not just through our words. (Although I do have a few choice ones when my warp sticks fall out or when my root breaks and I have to backweave. But even those select words, like "rats" and "drat," or Ms. Reece's favorite, "dirty dog," are not said in anger.) When I weave with a good mind, I am able to sense with my eyes, hands, and body the ways in which I am interacting with my materials. These are some of the interactions that I have with the basket and materials as I weave:

The tactile feel of the scraped roots gliding through my finders as I twist them around the body sticks;

The smell of the willow, whether wet or dry, reminding me of the river;

The taste of the Klamath River in the willow sticks that I chew to feather out ends so that they stay in place as I add them;

The microscopic cuts that I get on my fingers from handling the beargrass too roughly, as I add it over the roots that I am weaving with;

The red, weepy rash that I develop on my hands from the sap of older, tougher grape roots, even though the young ones don't bother me;

The firm, but not hard, tug I give to the roots as I lay them down on the course that came before;

The sound in the rush of air that the body sticks make as they swish when I pull them aside to set another stitch down;

The spring-back from the body sticks as I work with them to wrap weavers around them;

The dampness of the unfinished basket in my hands as I feel the moisture wick away, noticing how dry the roots are becoming;

The press of the basket against my raised knee, which offers support as I twist the roots into place;

The resistance of the body sticks, as I pull them back after each course is complete...

When my body and mind are attuned to these movements, I sense the ongoing conversation with my basket weaving materials. I have found that I cannot weave when I am distracted or in a poor mood because the basket materials will not tolerate it; they will not put up with it. They respond well to a more nuanced touch, neither gentle nor forceful. Purposeful—yes. Sturdy—to be sure. But demanding? No. The basket and the materials tell you what they want to be, even if I have planned otherwise. This is the space in which the basket comes into its own being. It is through the interactions with materials from the very start, which are present in the conversations that occur among weaver, materials and basket. And it is in this space of weaving where the sense of animacy of the basket grows.

Chapter VII

Conclusion: Itineraries of Karuk Baskets

Introduction

This chapter explores the itineraries of baskets—the way that they have moved in place, space, and time. I describe how contemporary weavers view the collections that are held in museums. I explore the notion of “bringing baskets back home” through exhibitions and repatriation. I also emphasize how baskets are considered social beings—belongings—that “cry out” to be back where they came from so that they can be with the Karuk peoples, hearing the songs and stories, as well as, participating in ceremonies. Finally, I describe what it means to weave *pikyav*, through self and tribal identification, through self-determination, and through healing both self and the world.

Itineraries are markers of the stops in space and time that belongings make along the way—from their home, to collectors’ glass cases, to museums, and sometimes, home once again through repatriation. Itineraries encompass the social contexts and relationships in which belongings are enmeshed. When we think of itineraries, we can grasp the belongings’ engagements in the world beyond their home and the means by which they are moved. We can trace where they went and where they are going, and also the purposes of their travels. There are stops along the way, providing the belongings periods of movement and stillness, and the disruptions to their sense of attachments to home. As Joyce and Gillespie note, Itineraries “have no real beginning other than where we enter them and no end since things and their extensions continue to move” (Joyce and Gillespie 2015:3).

Baskets “Coming Home”

In 1990, there was an exhibit of baskets that were made by Elizabeth Hickox (Wiyot/Karuk) at Humboldt State University. Titled, *Elizabeth Conrad Hickox (1873-1947): Baskets from the Center of the World*, this exhibit displayed a number of her baskets borrowed from many different museums and private collections. In the forward to the catalog, Julian Lang (Karuk) illustrated the importance of baskets to Karuk peoples, saying that after an absence of sixty years, Elizabeth’s baskets were returning home (1991:9). The sentiment of “coming home” is shared amongst many Karuk peoples who see baskets in museums and private collections as longing for their homelands: the places where they are loved; the places where their materials are from; the places where they are able to be a part of social and ceremonial life; and, the places where their makers and family members are from. “Home” is on the Klamath River— home is the place where they would be living and fulfilling their purposes.

Karuk baskets, whether they are made for ceremonies, for everyday life, or even for sale, that are in museum collections and in many private collections are not fulfilling their intended purposes. Julian Lang (1991) described baskets as not only belongings stemming from Karuk tradition, but also emanating from Karuk onto-

epistemological understandings of how the world came into being and how people are enmeshed within it:

Within this cultural context, baskets must be perceived as stemming from a divine prescription, a divine understanding, and ultimately a priceless gift. [They] are the products, not just of tradition, but of deep psychic and cultural origins. From the cultural perspective, baskets **need** to be displayed and are living entities. They are important actors in our traditional ceremonies to Fix the Earth. (Lang 1991:9)

As such, ceremonial baskets need to dance. Pimm Tripp-Allen (Karuk) shared this sentiment with Ron Johnson in conjunction with a 1997 exhibit on *ápxaan* (basket caps) called *Her Mind Made Up*: “We believe that the dance stuff, it’s alive and has a spirit and it wants to dance. That’s part of the responsibility of having it is that it needs to dance and it needs to hear the songs” (Johnson 1997:175). But even more, all baskets need to fulfill their purposes for being. When I talked with Ms. Souza in 2015, she described this very clearly, saying,

Baskets that were made for cooking are meant to cook. Baskets that were meant to be pretty are going to be pretty. Baskets that were meant to hold babies should hold babies until they can’t anymore. Cooking baskets were made to cook. Hats were made to work in or ceremonial caps were made to dance. That’s what they were made for.²³⁹

Even baskets that were made with the intention to sell still are living beings, even though they may reside outside of Karuk communities. They still have the need to be integrated in social life and not be tucked away in a box or locked in a cabinet.

As Ms. Souza shared, baskets are made with intention and with their particular purpose in mind. The relationship between weavers and the baskets that they bring into being is woven within the very roots from which they are made. As Ms. Souza and Ms. Reece had said previously, they have always liked baskets and they have always been a part of who they are. And weaving baskets helps both the weaver and the basket to carry out their reasons and purposes for living. Ms. Souza expressed that by weaving baskets,

[We’re] fulfilling *our* destiny because that’s what *they’re* supposed to be doing. So that’s making medicine for everybody. And it’s continuing who we are. It’s keeping our tradition alive. It’s keeping who we are going. And we’re not just here for no reason. This is what’s supposed to be. That’s why it is.²⁴⁰

Belongings are not just things that sit on a shelf, hang on a wall, or lay on the floor. Instead they are made purposefully. This is why so many of the weavers I have met have so few of their own baskets. They weave with purpose, for other people

²³⁹ Souza, 2015.

²⁴⁰ Souza, 2015.

who have a need for a particular kind of basket. For families with babies on the way, they want their child swaddled in a *tháxtuuy*. For girls and women who do not have weavers in their families, they will buy *ápxaan*, so that they can wear them for celebrations and major events in their lives, as well as to dance with them in ceremony.

Baskets are alive and are animate beings in the world. They are made from the gifts of the *ikxaréeyavsá* and, through the process of creation, are imbued with a collective spirit that is actualized when they dance with Karuk peoples in ceremonies, meaning that when they are an active part of social life, they are expressing their individual needs and destinies. Embodied within the baskets are also prayers for the world. Ms. Souza explained this even further. She stated the relationship, or bond, which Karuk people have with baskets, is a part of who Karuk peoples are. By weaving them and taking care of them, Karuk peoples are asserting their self-determination. Ms. Souza emphasized this by stating:

It's important for them to dance because it's part of who we are. Part of who baskets are. It's a prayer. It's important for them to dance because we're honoring them. That's how we pray. We're still here... we're still here, and that's what they want. That's what they were meant for.²⁴¹

So when baskets are not being used or displayed, they are not fulfilling their purpose. Annette Reed (Tolowa) stated that when baskets are not used, they cry out because they are “not being used for the purpose it was created for” (Esquivido 2011:62). It is a sentiment that is deeply felt and shared by many tribal members. Knowing that baskets are sitting on shelves in museums, behind locked doors is upsetting to many Karuk peoples. It is difficult for many people to witness baskets and regalia, which are living entities, just sitting on shelves, not fulfilling their purpose.

Weavers that I have spoken with identified two important problems with Karuk baskets that are in museum collections: the lack of access to basketry for teaching and learning purposes, and the myriad blockades in the way of bringing baskets back home so they could be displayed for and used by Karuk peoples. There is a growing frustration among weavers, who view baskets in museum collections as teachers, and are unable to study them. Verna Reece expressed that the baskets in museum collections need to be accessible to weavers, so that they can study them. Similar to Karuk carvers who relied on belongings in museum collections to aid them in reviving carving practices, Ms. Reece said that the baskets themselves are going to be the ones who instruct future generations (Jacknis 1995; Kelly 1930; Karuk Tribe 2014).

Baskets are Weaving Teachers

Ms. Reece mentioned that she thinks museums are a great idea, but she is aggravated by the fact that so much of the collections are in storage and not visible

²⁴¹ Souza, 2015.

to the viewing public, particularly weavers. “Put them out where people can study them!” she said during our interview.²⁴² She continued to say, “[Museums] have so many it seems like they would rotate them so you could see different one. I’ve been in that one in the Smithsonian [National Museum of the American Indian] down there. And they have the same thing in there all the time. And they have building full of baskets. Why can’t they be on display?”

So much can be learned from baskets in museum collections, including those that do not fit the conditions or the thematic programming of museum exhibits. Even baskets that are unfinished or are unraveling can offer clues to their creation and about the weaver’s technique. Design patterns and combinations that have not been seen in decades can offer new inspiration to weavers who desire to reach into the connections of the past. Even looking at the plant materials that anthropologists and others collected decades ago can show weavers how materials were sorted, prepared and stored, not to mention the quality of materials that past weavers had access to.

While access to basketry collections in museums is important for weavers, one of the challenges that basket weavers living on the Klamath River have is the ability to travel to see collections at museums across the United States, or even within California. Not every weaver has the money, time, or mobility to travel to see significant collections at the Smithsonian, at the Peabody Museum, or at the Austry Museum. Even locally, it can be very difficult to drive a few hours to the Clarke Historical Museum in Eureka or the Trees of Mystery in Klamath, CA. It costs money and it costs time, which many weavers can ill afford.

Baskets are “Memorialized” in Museums

Ms. Reece also identified a larger problem with museum collections that is particularly painful for Karuk peoples. Karuk sacred and ceremonial belongings have been far away from home for many, many years. Ms. Reece said plainly and emphatically that dance and religious items do not belong in these institutions. “They have so many of our regalia and stuff that nobody will ever see them. Learn from them.” Ms. Reece’s concern for preserving and passing down Karuk knowledge stretches beyond basketry.

Of the belongings that she is most concerned about, along with basketry, are ceremonial dresses. Dresses, which take many years to gather materials for and create, are so specialized, that few Karuk people know how to make them. If only Karuk peoples could get back the dresses that are in museums, Ms. Reece mused, then there would be so many more that could dance with Karuk peoples in ceremonies. “You know, it would be nice to have a whole bunch of dresses in here [at the Peoples Center]. And say somebody took an interest in making dresses for our young people, so you don’t have to come to the museum to borrow them.” Ms. Reece advised that by having dresses, regalia, and other Karuk belongings from museums back home at the Peoples Center it would inspire and enable future generations to perpetuate and renew cultural practices.

²⁴² Reece, 2015.

When talking about the collecting practices from the late 1800s to the 1930s, when most Karuk baskets, belongings, and regalia were removed from the Klamath River communities to large museum collections, Ms. Souza grew exasperated. She said that although it was hard to put into words, she felt that museums, and the people who created the collections long ago, were distorting, “twisting,” the meanings of Karuk belongings that they had collected. In essence, she stated that collectors were taking Karuk living belongings and turning them into memorials, literally “memorializing” them, as if the belongings were dead. Emphasizing the different way in which collectors contextualized Karuk belongings, Ms. Souza stated, “it’s not our culture, it’s not our way. It’s different to me—it’s *them* doing something with our culture that is *their* culture.”²⁴³ She further explained that there was a difference between purposefully made artworks, as opposed to Karuk belongings that are members of Karuk society:

You put sculptures in a museum. You put paintings in a museum. You paint paintings and you put those in a museum...That’s what you guys do. But you don’t put a basket away.²⁴⁴

While Ms. Souza had never visited a large museum before, when she thinks about the opportunity to do so, she feels helpless because she imagines the ways in which Karuk belongings have been removed from their homelands in the past. Her sense of helplessness comes from not being able to reach back in time and fix the problems that caused Karuk belongings to leave their communities in the first place, through theft and extortion:

I feel kind of lost... just helpless. You can’t go back in time and fix anything. You know that a lot of those were stolen. People were extorted. Like there was some people that they couldn’t pay for things or they got extorted out of baskets and stuff. And like a lot of women had to sit and weave to feed their kids. So they were getting underpaid. And that adds to that extortion, too. But some people were literally getting extorted out of their baskets. Like, “Okay, well, if you don’t give us this, then...” and a lot were stolen, just straight out stolen. And that’s pretty gross.²⁴⁵

So, when Ms. Souza considers baskets in museums far from the Klamath, she feels that baskets were sent there to die, or at the very least, were sent to purgatory.

Understanding that baskets are living entities that are in purgatory when they are on museum shelves is upsetting, but what is also distressing is how baskets were treated to preserve them. Arsenic, mercury, lead, and DDT—a veritable chemical soup—that had been applied to many museum collections over the years has created a situation in which Karuk baskets can be hazardous to the health of those who handle them. So the notion of baskets being in purgatory, in addition to

²⁴³ Souza, 2015.

²⁴⁴ Souza, 2015.

²⁴⁵ Souza, 2015.

being poisoned, is a hard situation for weavers to reckon with; as Ms. Souza related to me “it’s almost like they’re condemned to their death.”²⁴⁶

Baskets are Returning Home

In 2012, the Karuk Tribe received an NPS-NAGPRA Consultation and Documentation Grant to visit the Karuk collections held at the Autry Museum in Southern California. Preparations for the trip were complex in part because it was necessary to hire and train people to help document the collection. After these lengthy preparations, in 2014 ten tribal members, including elders, youth, cultural experts, and language speakers, visited the collections. At the heart of this repatriation visit was to take the first steps to reconnecting these belongings with Karuk peoples, eventually making the effort to bring them back home.

Documenting their visit to the Autry, Karuk tribal members interviewed several participants and honored elders about their feelings about the belongings that are held in museums. From these interviews, an hour-long documentary was produced to illustrate the difficulties tribal members encounter when they visit collections in museums, particularly when there is the intent to repatriate them. Leaf Hillman (Karuk), Director of the Karuk Department of Natural Resources and ceremonial leader, stated that collectors of Karuk belongings were so voracious in their practices that it left little behind for community members. He continued, saying that Karuk peoples feel it is their responsibility to ensure that these belongings come back to where they “rightly” belong:

Returning objects and bringing them home where they belong....the importance to practitioners today and tribal members today is not only in returning [belongings] to their rightful owners and their rightful home, but many of these objects the collectors of the day were so prolific and so thorough in their collecting that there are certain ceremonial objects that are extremely rare today (Karuk Tribe 2014).

Mr. Hillman made the inseparable link between early 20th century collection processes and federal Indian policy of compulsory boarding school education for Karuk children as contributing to the fragmentation of Karuk communities. His statement illustrated the centrality of Karuk belongings as members of Karuk everyday, social, and ceremonial life, characterizing belongings as "family members" and "relatives":

During the same era that federal policy was dictating actually taking our children away and removing them from the place where they come from, the same thing was happening to our other relatives in the form of collectors coming in and removing these family members from their home (Karuk Tribe 2014).

²⁴⁶ Souza, 2015.

His statement attests to the nature of Karuk belongings: they are relations of Karuk peoples and have the right to be cared for within their communities.

Members of the repatriation team who visited the Autry were well aware of the different values for which Karuk belongings are regarded by museum professionals, although they did not explicitly state what those values were in the documentary. Julian Lang explained that Karuk peoples perceive belongings as “alive and knowing” (Karuk Tribe 2014). He further stated that belongings are individuals who experience emotions and need to be engaged with Karuk society in order to fulfill the purpose for which they were made.

We often refer to these items as individuals who are happy and sad, as entities who need to be used for the purposes that they were originally created, often spiritual and ceremonial purposes. Our creation stories tell us that the first baskets were living, talking women. The regalia used in ceremonies are gifts of the spirits. (Karuk Tribe 2014)

Mr. Lang acknowledged that both perspectives—museum and Karuk—“are destined to coexist,” but NAGPRA “recognizes that many of these objects should be returned.” In fact, it is imperative that Karuk belongings are returned to the tribe because, as Mr. Lang said, “They are indeed central and necessary to the continuance of tribal cultural identities into the future” (Karuk Tribe 2014).

Several of the participants in the documentary expressed feelings of sadness and depression that rose up in them during their visit to the Autry. The emotional toll of seeing Karuk belongings on museum shelves was pronounced. One of the reasons why visiting museum collections was emotionally fraught was because of the sheer amount of belongings on the museum shelves, which was overwhelming. For Verna Reece, seeing the amount of baskets on the shelves was difficult, especially since the baskets are belongings that new generations of weavers can learn from:

I never thought I would be emotional but just to see our baskets all piled up on a shelf...it's pretty hard to take. There is so much there that we need to get back so that we can learn, to see how the other weavers made their hats or all the stuff that we're trying to bring back our culture (Karuk Tribe 2014).

Bari Talley (Karuk), Karuk Tribe Peoples Center Coordinator, remarked that the experience was emotional for her as well. She felt the process was artificial because it was prohibitive; she could not interact in a way that respected the relationship between Karuk peoples and the belongings, having to cover up with gloves, masks and lab coats because of the pesticide contamination on the belongings:

It was really interesting how powerful the emotions were. And then all the items that were brought out, they seemed very forlorn. For instance the dresses that are meant to have sound—you don't want it to be too noisy, you want it to be the right sound—but for them to be displayed in a way that has no interaction...I think all of the items need interaction, so I really wanted to

put on the hats, but you were worried about pesticides and you are wearing these gloves and masks and overcoats and it was very artificial, the interaction between the items and the people... It was really very sad to see these huge warehouses full of objects or canoes. There were tons and tons of stuff all wrapped in plastic and sprayed to keep forever and ever, but not being used in the way it was meant to when it was made.

On the emotional aspects of museum visits, particularly visits that are associated with repatriation, Mr. Hillman noted that no amount of preparation could prepare someone for the magnitude of the task.

My experience has taught me that you're never really prepared to face [seeing belongings in museums]. Even if you've done it before, you're still not prepared to experience those emotions again. One of the things that I think is important is bring a lot of *kíshvuuf* (Karuk medicine root) with you and pray. And enjoy that time that you have because our relatives enjoy seeing us. And they are as happy to see us, as we are to see them. Sharing a song sometimes feels like the right thing. Other times, standing in a corner by yourself and praying is something that feels like the right thing to do.

References to Karuk belongings as relatives—relatives that have emotions, relatives that are happy to be (briefly) reunited with their Karuk peoples—offers insight into the Karuk onto-epistemological understanding of belongings. As Mr. Hillman expressed above, the belongings/relatives were happy to see Karuk peoples. In his responsiveness to the belongings, he perceived what was most needed by them, whether it was a song or a prayer. More plainly, Mr. Hillman stated that when he visited the Karuk belongings at the Autry, it was like seeing “long lost relatives” that were unable to interact with their relatives from home because they were “taken away from the people” (Karuk Tribe 2014). Brian Tripp (Karuk), artist and cultural practitioner, stated that belongings miss the interaction that they previously experienced when they were in their home community: “I’ve seen our stuff in different places and you see it, it’s kind of ‘Wow!’...They do enjoy the use and people picking them up and...being personal with them. They do miss that” (Karuk Tribe 2014).

The need for belongings to be social and interact with Karuk peoples and Karuk lands is essential to their ability to fulfill their purposes. However, the ability of belongings in museums to be social is highly restricted, and as Ms. Talley stated, “artificial.” Robert Attebery (Karuk), Karuk Tribe Enrollment Officer and cultural practitioner, further explicated how belongings are responsive to the highly “artificial” setting in which they find themselves and, consequently, the Karuk world has been thrown out of balance:

I mean, we can go to the museum and see some of our regalia that has been imprisoned all over the country...it’s still alive.... Our regalia and so called “artifacts and objects” in museums is like seeing relations held against their will... They belong to this place [Karuk country] and the place belongs to

them. It has been thrown out of balance. And I think it would go along way in helping us create more balance, bringing both back together again.

The Karuk Tribe has been making efforts to bring back home their belongings from museums since NAGPRA has been passed into law. Of their many different successes, the Benton County Historical Society repatriation illustrates both the importance of bringing Karuk belongings back home and some of the difficulties that Karuk peoples encounter when repatriating belongings.

In 2012, the Karuk Tribe repatriated 38 baskets and regalia from the Benton County Historical Society (BCHS) via Oregon State University (Tarler 2012a; Tarler 2012b). Thirty-five of the 38 Karuk belongings were from the collection of Mrs. James Edmond Barrett, a school teacher in southwestern Oregon, who had collected these and other Native American belongings over the course of 60 years (Plate 38). In 1927, she loaned the belongings to Oregon State University (OSU), which at that time was called the Oregon Agricultural College, in honor of her son and daughter-in-law who were alumni. In 1972, the collection was donated to the Horner Museum at OSU by Mrs. Barrett's daughter-in-law. Three of the belongings in this collection were known to have originated from Happy Camp and one belonging was known to have been used in ceremony.

There were no condition reports that came with the belongings from the BCHS. It was unknown whether or not they had been treated with chemicals to prevent pest infestations. When they came home to the Karuk Tribe Peoples Center, the belongings were segregated from the rest of the 400+ belongings in their collection, awaiting pesticide testing. Funds from the 2012 NAGPRA Repatriation Grant were set aside to perform the testing; however, it was not until 2015, when I was the Peoples Center Coordinator, that the belongings were tested. In the interim, the baskets from the collection were put on display, some of them integrated with the rest of the known uncontaminated collection. My fear was that there would be cross-contamination from unknown chemicals to the belongings that were lent out often to ceremonial leaders and used in ceremony.

In July 2015, Dr. Peter Palmer, Analytical-Environmental Chemistry, and Rosene Salmo, then Master of Science in Chemistry Candidate, from San Francisco State University, travelled to the Karuk Tribe Peoples Center to perform nondestructive testing of nine of the ceremonial belongings from the BCHS repatriation (Plate 39). Using a portable X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) analyzer, they tested these belongings, including baskets, arrows, a drum and a bow, to find out if they had been treated with arsenic and mercury based pesticide agents (Plate 40) (Palmer and Salmo 2015). Several Karuk Tribe peoples came to the Peoples Center that day to witness and be a part of the conversation about the previous use of organic and inorganic materials applied to Native American belongings in museums as part of comprehensive pest management treatment programs.

The day opened with a prayer from Alvis "Bud" Johnson (Karuk), Tribal Council member and ceremonial leader. Dr. Palmer and Ms. Salmo set up their equipment within the museum space and fielded questions about the hazards of exposure to the chemicals that museums have used to treat belongings, such as arsenic, mercury, and lead. Several participants expressed their anger and

frustration about the treatment Karuk belongings have been subject to in museums. Cultural protocols were followed with the handling of the belongings. In particular, Tribal Chairman, Russell “Buster” Attebery held the men’s ceremonial objects, the drum, bow, and arrows, and a few women, including myself, held many of the baskets under the XRF analyzer (Plate 41). In addition to the XRF analyses Dr. Palmer and Ms. Salmo performed, they also took swab samples to take back to their lab to perform more rigorous testing (Plate 42). After a long and exhausting day, it was determined that the belongings that came home from the BCHS were not treated with arsenic, mercury, or lead, although there were trace amounts on some items, but not enough to pose health risks. These belongings were now determined to be safe to integrate with the rest of the Peoples Center’s collections.

Afterwards, Brittany Souza and I talked about the problems with pesticide residue on museum collections in the past. She told me how shocked she was when she learned that as part of their pest management programs, treatments were carried out on Karuk belongings. Her shock was understandable, given that these treatments are rarely talked about outside of academic and museum circles. Ms. Souza revealed that while she knew that weavers got sick from the pesticides that were sprayed by the USFS and CalTrans on basketry plant materials out in the forest and along roadsides, she had “no idea at all that they put poison on baskets to preserve them.”²⁴⁷ She was outraged at the “inconsideration” on the part of museum conservators to treat baskets with poisons:

They didn’t care, or maybe even know that people—that [baskets] are prayers. And that they are people. That’s *our* people in there. It’s like [the baskets] are in jail. So it’s like they didn’t have the consideration to think that maybe those could be busted out of jail later.²⁴⁸

But busted out of jail they were. The 38 Karuk belongings from the BCHS now reside at the Peoples Center, many on display, although they have not yet had a chance to dance. Ms. Souza was responsible for putting them on display, when she had worked for the Peoples Center, before I came on board as the Coordinator. Ms. Souza felt duty-bound to bring the BCHS belongings out of their boxes and put them on display because she wanted them to “come out.” She said, “They should be talked to, they should be sang to, they should be able to observe us observing them...they deserve to be free.”²⁴⁹

“[People] need to respect that basket and let it go.”²⁵⁰

Years ago the Karuk Tribe considered purchasing a collection of baskets for the Peoples Center. I recalled reading in a long ago Tribal Council report that Ms. Reece had dissuaded the Tribe from purchasing them, saying that they had already lived their full life. When I interviewed Ms. Reece, I asked her about this potential

²⁴⁷ Souza, 2015.

²⁴⁸ Souza, 2015.

²⁴⁹ Souza, 2015.

²⁵⁰ Reece, 2015.

purchase and if she could explain to me what she meant. She said, “Well, they have a life. They’re just like us.”²⁵¹ She went on to tell me that there were three *tháxtuuy* (baby basket), valued at roughly \$700.00. They were very worn, all of the fibers in the baskets had broken down, and they were not repairable. “Their life is over. It’s time to put them to rest. Put them back into the earth.”²⁵² She said that she would never recommend buying baskets in such shape, saying, “Why would you want to go pay a lot of money of things that lifetime’s up?”

To further illustrate her point, Ms. Reece told me about another collection of baskets that she had seen at the Clarke Historical Museum in which she is an acting board member. She said that she went in the museum one day and saw some baskets on a table. She told the director, Ben Brown, “These baskets are done. Their life is up.”²⁵³ He replied that that was the reason why they were there. Ben shared that the museum was planning on having a ceremony and put them back into the earth. Ms. Reece stressed that she understood that people do not want to let the baskets that have lived their life go. “But,” she articulated, “they need to go to rest...[People] need to respect that basket and let it go.”

“We are fix-it people”²⁵⁴: Weaving *pikyav* (to-fix-it)

Even when weavers finish a basket, there are thoughts about the new one that they are considering to make. The feelings of hope, of joy, and of potential are buzzing as they begin to look through their cache of materials, sorting and scraping roots. The process is always beginning, unfolding, and renewing.

When weaving a basket, the past, present, and future are close at hand. Sometimes a movement or a smell or a breaking root will call up memories of teachers who admonished them for pulling the roots too tight, of classes in the basket room at the Peoples Center, of gathering trips with friends. Those memories are part of what is being woven into the basket.

When weaving a basket, Karuk weavers are a part of the larger purpose of fixing the world. Starting within ourselves, weaving helps with healing the pain of the historical trauma that weavers have experienced. Weavers are working to continue a practice that was nurtured by only a handful of women, who were brave and fierce enough to protect and fight for Karuk rights to steward the land and carry out cultural practices.

I think to practice tradition and carry it on is to help our people heal, to bring back balance and values that we lost but still have pieces of in our DNA. Things like self worth, pride, love. There was a balance before. I think a lot of us struggle to figure out what those missing parts are. And weaving and tradition and prayers balance it out. (Souza, personal communication, July 15, 2016)

²⁵¹ Reece, 2015.

²⁵² Reece, 2015.

²⁵³ Reece, 2015.

²⁵⁴ Souza, 2015.

The importance of understanding the aliveness of Karuk basketry comes to a point where we need to consider the ethics and morality of the treatment of basketry within museum collections; the stewardship of basketry plants; and the support of future generations of basket weavers. According to Karuk onto-epistemological understandings, baskets are alive when they are made with purpose, whether in everyday life or in ceremony. This includes basket that were made for sale, since they are made from the very plants that were transformed from the *ikxaréeyavsa*, and their purpose was to support the weavers, their families, and for the perpetuation of the tradition. Karuk peoples have the responsibility to care for the land, the plants, the animals, and the waterways because they understand that they are in-relation-with the world. Karuk peoples understand that basketry is interwoven with their responsibility to the world; therefore, supporting the practice of weaving is a part of that responsibility.

Actively caring for self, communities, ecosystems, and really the whole world, is the underlying principle of *pikyav*. Karuk peoples are “fix the world” peoples and what that means is that they have a deeply rooted responsibility to repair and restore social, cultural, and ecological relationships.²⁵⁵ Through basket weaving, weavers are participating in a practice that has been established since time immemorial. Through basket weaving, weavers engage in a lifelong commitment of learning, weaving, and teaching to ensure that the legacy is carried forward to the future generations. Also through weaving, basket weavers are working in-relation-with the world. The relationships are with the ecosystem and also with Karuk peoples, past, present and future. The past includes the spirit world of the *ikxaréeyavsa*; the past of their ancestors who lived before and after the invasion of their homelands by miners and settlers; and the past of their relatives who survived and were resourceful in their ways and methods of preserving and perpetuating basket weaving. The present relationships that are nurtured surmount the problems of historical trauma, lack of time, and lack of access to plant materials in order to build lasting connections—networks of weavers who become like family. The future relationships that are yet to be established with one’s own children, relatives, tribal members and friends are looked forward to with hope—hope that weavers will live right and teach what they know, passing down the knowledge to future generations.

I am still learning enough skills to weave, so that I, too, can weave well enough to pass it along. So, in this vein I feel it important to not have the last word on a practice and responsibility that has existed and carried on since time immemorial and has been carefully stewarded and fought for through time.

As I talked to Ms. Souza late into the warm September night in 2015, we spoke about why it was important for baskets to be a part of the social world of Karuk peoples. We came to a point in our conversation about what it means for Karuk peoples to fix the world. As basket weavers, we come to know our basket weaving culture through the knowledge that is passed to us from generations of weavers who have come before. But as individuals, we come to embody the basket weaving in our own ways and through our own experiences. At the same time, we

²⁵⁵ Practicing Pikyav. <https://nature.berkeley.edu/karuk-collaborative/>

actively nurture, cultivate, and share this knowledge with others. In each act of weaving, we feel the responsibility to not only our basket weaving culture, but to Karuk peoples and to the world. At the close of our conversation, Ms. Souza explained to me what it means to weave *pikyav*.

That's what we are. We're fix it people. We fix things. So, that's at least what I'm trying to learn from people. Like we're fix it people. That's why we have ceremonies and different things. To fix the world. So it's just kind of an ongoing thing. Like fix—fix the woods, fix the water, fix the people. We're always going to be fixing things. That's the way I feel about that...

We all have our different reasons why we're on this earth. We're not all going to do the same thing. And that's the beauty about being a person. We all have a different destiny.

So I'm sure if you talked about fishing or hunting or making regalia or different things like that with different people that know about those things... this is what I know. This is what I [was] taught.

But it's all interconnected. Everything is. The different prayer items, the different dresses, the different hats...It all has a process. It all came from, you know, it all came from something that somebody made. So. Somebody learned it somewhere.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁶ Souza, 2015.

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Appendix

Plates 1-27

**Chapter IV
Northwestern California Indian Basket Weaving
in the Late 20th Century**



Plate 1. "Covered Tobacco Basket." *uhsipnuuk* (tobacco storage-basket), 24.0x23.0cm. #411392A&B, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 2. "Basketry Bowl" *muruk*, mealing tray. 13.0x45.5cm. #411504, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 3. "Hopper." *ikráamnav* (hopper), 20.0x50.0cm. #411543, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 4. "Clothes Basket." *tínvaap* (flour sifter), 20.0x64.5cm. #411461, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 5. "Cooking Basket." *asipárax* (cooking basket), 20.0x31.0cm. #411379, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 6. "Hopper." *ikráamnav* (hopper), 15.5x44.0cm. #411544, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 7. "Basketry Bowl." *múruk* (mealing tray), 15.0x56.0cm. #411525, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 8. "Basketry Bowl." *sípnuuk* (storage-basket), 14.0x18.0cm. #411389, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 9. "Cooking Basket." *asipárax* (cooking basket), 20.0x40.0cm. #411388, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 10. "Basketry Bowl." *múruk* (mealing tray), 12.0x54.0cm. #411517, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 11. "Pack Basket." *átikiinva* (burden-basket). 33.0x33.5cm. #411546, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 12. "Wedding Cap." *kaschiip' ápxaan* (porcupine basket hat), 9.0x17.5cm. #411443, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 13. "Soup (?) Basket." *sipnúk'anamahach* (little trinket basket), 14.0x17.0cm. #411427, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author 2011.



Plate 14. "Miniature Basket." *sipnúk'anamahach* (little trinket basket), 5.5x3.7cm. #411421, NMNH, ,
Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 15. "Basketry Plaque." *tínhich* (flat woven mat for ornamental purposes). 18.2cm dia. #411678, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution. December 1, 2014, accessed October 8, 2015. <http://n2t.net/ark:/65665/36dfa4549-a19b-4621-8f09-85edc8d85dfa>



Plate 16. "Basketry Bowl.." *tínihich* (flat woven mat for ornamental purposes), 17cm dia. #411497, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 17. "Doll's Cradle." *chaxtúyhiich* (toy cradle), 25.0x11.5cm. #411465, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 18. "Openwork Bowl." *sikhmahyaanaram* (spoon basket), 16.0x23.0cm. #411447, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 19. "Pack Basket." *átimnam* (pack basket), 28.5x39.0cm. #411552, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 20. "Wedding Gift Basket." *sipnúk'anamahach* (little trinket basket), 9.0x12.5cm. #411426, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution, photograph by author, 2011.



Plate 21. "Spoon Basket." *sikihmáhyaanaram* (spoon basket-literally spoon-putting-in-place). 9.7x16.0cm. #411643, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution. December 1, 2014, accessed October 8, 2015. <http://n2t.net/ark:/65665/3f894c4b2-344a-4080-b2bb-7fe890242892>



Plate 22. "Cooking Basket." *asipárax* (Cooking basket). 13.0x22.5 cm. #411644, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution. December 1, 2014, accessed October 8, 2015.
<http://n2t.net/ark:/65665/389598e8c-3ae4-4324-a89e-0b77b4759a10>



Plate 23. "Cooking Basket." *asipárax* (Cooking basket). 12.5x19.0cm. #411646, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution. December 1, 2014, accessed October 8, 2015.
<http://n2t.net/ark:/65665/33c50b9f8-a3b6-43cb-8d5e-30a7e234719f>



Plate 24. "Soup Bowl." *sipnúk'anamahach* (little trinket basket). 6.0x7.5cm. #411636, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution. December 1, 2014, accessed October 8, 2015. <http://n2t.net/ark:/65665/3da3a2ef9-72ee-48f6-8c16-246db0a08de6>



Plate 25. "Soup Bowl." *sipnúk'anamahach* (little trinket basket). 8.5x14.50cm. #411637, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution. December 1, 2014, accessed October 8, 2015.
<http://n2t.net/ark:/65665/381a5d24a-60b3-46e6-98ea-8b125b09f623>



Plate 26. "Storage Basket." *sipnúukith* (money basket). 29.0x35.0cm. #411688, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution. December 1, 2014, accessed October 8, 2015.
<http://n2t.net/ark:/65665/34b63e22b-70f0-42dc-a16e-36b045b66f71>



Plate 27. "Basket Cap." *ápxaan* (basket hat). 9.0x18.0cm. #411638, NMNH, Smithsonian Institution.
December 1, 2014, accessed October 8, 2015
<http://n2t.net/ark:/65665/3afffe9b3-5195-4469-a7ec-f4ffe22e63df>

Plates 28-37

Chapter VI
Contemporary Karuk Basket Weaving



Plate 28. Gathering "Fall" willow. July 2015. Klamath River region, photograph by Robert E. Smith.



Plate 29. Gathering *típtiip* after the 2014 Happy Camp Complex fire. July 2015. Klamath River region, photograph by author.



Plate 30. (Left) unpruned and not coppiced willow; (Far Right) pruned and coppiced willow. April 2016. Klamath River region, photograph by author.



Plate 31. Gathering hazel two years after the 2014 Happy Camp Complex fire. April 2016. Klamath River region, photograph by author.



Plate 32. Twisting beargrass. July 2014. Klamath River region, photograph by Brandon DeSavigny.



Plate 33. Beargrass that had been burnt in 2015. July 2016. Klamath River region, photograph by author.



**Plate 34. Author's first basket, with toy bird for illustration purposes. 2008.
Sonoma, CA, photograph by author.**



Plate 35. *Pátanamich* (small soup basket), made by Grace Davis. Klamath River region, photograph by author.



Plate 36. *Uhsipnuuk* (tobacco basket) in progress. June 2014, Happy Camp, CA, photograph by author.



Plate 37. Completed *uhsipnuuk* (tobacco basket). June 2014. Happy Camp, CA, photograph by author.

Plates 38-42

Chapter VII

Conclusion: Itineraries of Baskets



Plate 38. Assortment of Karuk belongings from the Benton County Historical Society repatriation. July 2015. Peoples Center, Happy Camp, CA, photograph by author.



Plate 39. Rosene Salmo and Dr. Peter Palmer. July 2015. Peoples Center, Happy Camp, CA, photograph by author.



Plate 40. Portable XRF analyzer set up in the Peoples Center museum gallery. July 2015. Peoples Center, Happy Camp, CA, photograph by author.



Plate 41. Analyzing Karuk drum, (Left to Right) Rosene Salmo, Dr. Peter Palmer, Tribal Chairman Russell "Buster" Attebery. July 2015. Peoples Center, Happy Camp, CA, photograph by author.



Plate 42. Dr. Peter Palmer taking swab samples from an *úpxaan* (basket cap). July 2015. Peoples Center, Happy Camp, CA, photograph by author.