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From archetypes to actors: the impact of the repatriation movement on museum displays of Native America

Penelope Heilbrun Duus
Vassar College

From Archetypes to Actors:
The Impact of the Repatriation Movement on Museum Displays of Native America

A Senior Thesis submitted by

Penelope Heilbrun Duus

Department of Anthropology

Vassar College

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Readers:

Dr. April M. Beisaw and Dr. Zachary Cofran

Introduction

Museums in the United States have been displaying Native American cultures for over 150 years. Throughout that time, changes in interpretive and display practices resulted from trends in anthropology and shifting relationships with source communities. The 1990 passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) led to widespread changes in museums practice and increased Native involvement with museums, including participation in the exhibition design and redesign process.

Repatriation, the return of individuals and objects to the people and places from which they came from, did not start with NAGPRA, but the law increased claims for the return of human remains, associated and unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony from collections in federally funded museums. NAGPRA lays out guidelines for repatriation, including dates by which inventories of collections had to be completed and mailed out to tribal nations. These inventories notified possibly culturally affiliated groups what was available to be claimed. This notification is intended to be part of a "good faith effort" to initiate the consultation process, during which tribal representatives travel to museums to view collections and discuss matters of repatriation (Fine-Dare 2002: 134). NAGPRA's consultation requirements meant that, after many decades of collecting, museums were required to reach out to tribes for the first time.

While the relationship between NAGPRA and changing display practices is worth scholarly attention, other factors also contribute to changes in a museum's displays. Logistical factors might include the interests of donors and directors, availability of display and storage spaces, institutional mission, and funding. Philosophically, the changes seen in museums have

been a part of a broad pattern in the social sciences of questioning relations "between scholars and those whom they study" (Peers and Brown 2003: 11). Such recent re-evaluation has been spurred by activists seeking to reshape the hegemonic ways in which indigenous groups are studied and displayed.

There was—and is—certainly much to criticize about the display of Native America in American majority museums[1]. Established during the second half of the nineteenth century, these museums were instrumental in reifying the nation's westward expansion. Museums were part of a "'mass communication' to convince the public that the possession of territories, resources, bodies, and property of natives-turned-enemies is justified" (Fine-Dare 2002: 14). During this time, the Army Medical Museum seemed justified in its curation of Cheyenne and Arapaho people killed by U.S. soldiers during the Sand Creek massacre of 1864 (Stannard 1992: 131). Some of the dead were scalped and otherwise mutilated before being de-fleshed and shipped to Washington D.C. (Thomas 2000: 53). After NAGPRA, museums were no longer empowered to possess the bodies of Native Americans. Between 1993 and 2012, the remains of seven Sand Creek victims were repatriated to Cheyenne and Arapahoe Tribes and interred at the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site (National Museum of Natural History 2012).

NAGPRA, and the repatriation movement it was part of, neither originated in museums nor within anthropological scholarship. Repatriation was fought for by Native Americans. The Red Power Movement of the 1960s and 1970s challenged Native Americans stereotypes, fought for Native civil rights, and established Native American studies as a field. But it wasn't until the

[1] The term "majority museum" is borrowed from James Clifford, who, in his essay "Four Northwest Coast Museums: Travel Reflections," uses it to distinguish larger museums, often with primarily-white audiences, from smaller tribal museums and cultural centers (Clifford 1997: 107-145).

passage of NAGPRA that American museums were forced to acknowledge these changes. Acknowledgement did not bring immediate action. At first, museum personnel "were not culturally sensitive and did not grasp the magnitude of the spiritual and emotional impacts of of the repatriation processes on tribal representatives" (Peters 2006: 39). Twenty-six years have afforded time for these relationships to improve, and now the resultings changes in museum practice are finally making their way into exhibits.

To illustrate some ways in which repatriation has changed museum displays, I examined two Native American exhibit halls at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) and the Native American gallery at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (UPMAA). The AMNH displays pre-date NAGPRA but subtle changes have been made since its passage. The UPMAA display was designed after NAGPRA and contains elements that are clearly tied to the consultation and collaboration with Native communities that repatriation has fostered. Through this analysis it is possible to see that repatriation has helped shift representations of Native Americans from passive archetypes to vibrant actors within museums. To contextualize this shift, it is necessary to review the history of both Native American museum displays and of NAGPRA in greater detail. This will be followed descriptions and analysis of the AMNH and UPMAA displays. This thesis ends with a summary of the changes that have occurred and suggestions for future improvements that go further in acknowledging the agency of Native Americans, past and present.

Displaying Native America Through Time

Anthropological museum displays have followed a pattern of change that mirrors anthropological theory and research interests of the time. In the late nineteenth century, social

evolutionism inspired museum displays that placed Native American cultures on an evolutionary ladder according to the complexity of things they made. The work of Franz Boas in the early twentieth century shifted museum displays towards showing each culture as a discrete unit, enunciating differences between each culture's way of life. In the late nineteenth century, tribal museums were established as dynamic cultural centers with few static displays. Now, early twenty-first century anthropological museums are redesigning their displays with a focus on post-coloniality.

Late Nineteenth Century Evolutionary Thought

Anthropology came into its own as an academic field in the late nineteenth century. Inspired by the theory of evolution by natural selection, anthropological theory became focused on cultural evolution (see Spencer 1967, Tylor 1871, and Morgan 1877). Lewis Henry Morgan categorized the world's cultures into stages of "savagery, barbarism, and civilization" according to their level of technological advancement. His work provided a way for museums to organize their collections by object type or use (Thomas 2000: 48). Often cultural objects, especially tools, would be displayed in a way that disconnected the objects the culture that produced them in favor of showing the evolution of a type of object by displaying examples from various cultures. An example of this is "Synoptic History of Inventions" that was on display at the U.S. National Museum in 1900 (figure 1).

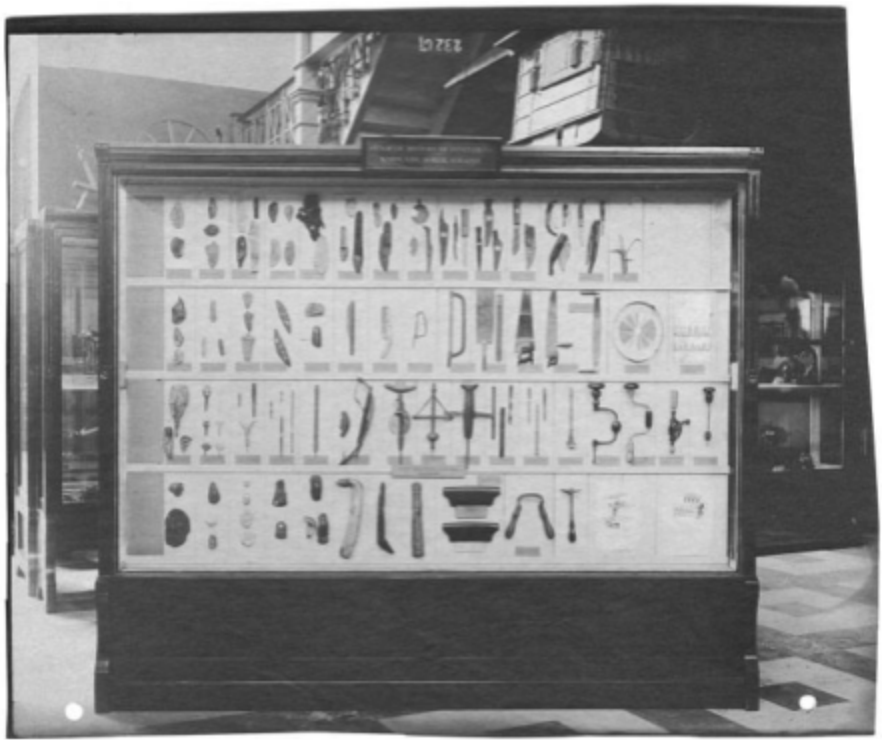

Figure 1. Synoptic History of Inventions: Knife, Saw, Borer, Scraper in the U.S. National Museum (now the Arts and Industries Building) circa 1900. Copyright Smithsonian Institution.

Otis T. Mason, curator of ethnology at the U.S. National Museum, found himself in a dispute with Franz Boas over this evolutionary treatment of human culture. The disagreement began in 1887, when Boas wrote a letter to Mason on the subject of his displays. Boas would later summarize the advantages and disadvantages associated with Mason's displays:

> [Mason's] method, as far as applied to objects which have a close connection with each other, is very good. The collection of moon-shaped Eskimo knives or labrets from North-west America has given us great pleasure, and enable us to trace the distribution of those implements; but even they do not fully answer the purpose of ethnological collections. Besides these, we want a collection arranged according to tribes, in order to teach the peculiar style of each group. The art and characteristic style of a people can be understood only by studying its productions as a whole. In the collections of the national museum the marked character of the North-west American tribes is almost lost, because the objects are scattered in different parts of the building, and are exhibited among those from other tribes (Boas 1974: 62).

At the heart of Boas' critique is that Mason's approach draws conclusions by analogy using the deductive method. Boas favored the inductive method, in which one would trace "the full history of the single phenomenon" (Boas 1974: 64). The inductive approach required a holistic method of exhibition that would show entire cultures, rather than bits and pieces of multiple.

The Transition to Cultural Groupings

Museums did not commonly display Native American cultures by geographic and cultural areas until after Boas became the assistant curator of ethnology at the AMNH in 1896. Boas believed museums served three purposes: entertainment, instruction, and research (Boas 1907: 921 cited in Jacknis 1985: 86). He believed that most museum visitors are seeking nothing more than entertainment. Therefore, his displays would entertain first and then instruct. To "catch the visitor's attention and direct it to more specific exhibits," Boas used a display technique known as the life group (Jacknis 1985: 100).

Life groups had been introduced to the U.S. at the 1893 World's Columbian Exhibition, which Boas contributed to, but this technique had begun in Europe a few decades earlier (Jacknis 1985: 81, footnote 2). At the Columbian Exhibition, Boas employed Native people to "act out" the ways of their ancestors, often donning clothing that had not been worn for generations in an attempt to seem "authentic." At the AMNH he instead used groups of mannequins to represent cultures and demonstrate the ways a culture's objects were used. Life groups typically showed the nuclear family that white museum goers would be able to understand easily. These exhibits were "anthropology's attempt to create a functional or contextual setting for its specimens," as habitat groups did for biological specimens such as elk or bison (Jacknis 1985: 82). Figure 2

provides an example of a life group display created by Boas for the AMNH. It depicts Kwakwaka'wakw people engaged in a variety of activities, such as weaving and drying fish. A modified version of this group can be found in the Hall of Northwest Coast Indians at AMNH today.

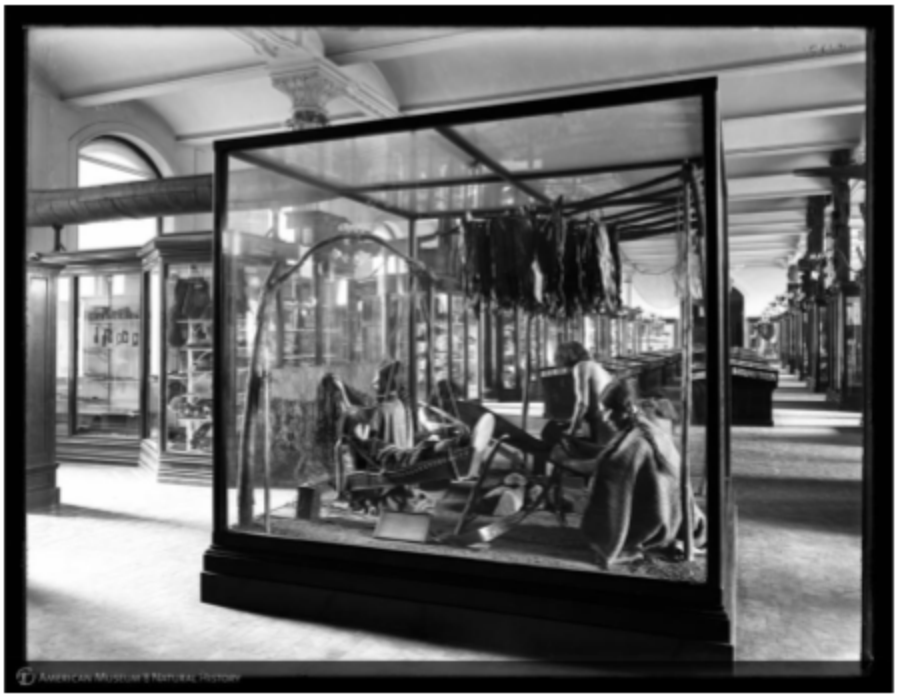

Figure 2. Kwakwaka'wakw life group in the Ethnological Hall (now the Hall of Northwest Coast Indians), 1899. Copyright AMNH.

The mannequins were made of papier-mâché and created from casts of living people, either obtained during field expeditions, from casting the students of the Carlisle Indian School, or opportunistically when Native people visited (Jacknis 1985: 99). Boas also placed single mannequins outside of life group displays "to demonstrate the correct disposition of costumes, ornaments, and tools" (Jacknis 1983: 95). Life groups can still be found throughout the AMNH's cultural halls today. They were successful in moving museums away from social evolutionary

theory, but life groups possess a taxidermic quality that continues to be a point of contention between museums and Native Americans (Wakeham 2008, Diep 2014).

The Red Power Movement and its Effects on Museum Representations

Boas and his contemporaries worked within a paradigm inspired by the myth of the Vanishing Indian. But Indians did not vanish. Not long after Boas' death on December 21st, 1942, the Native American civil rights movement, known as the Red Power movement began to assert itself and demand control over the Native past, present, and future (Rosenthal 2012: 130). Native American boarding schools and populations living in urban areas had experienced increased interaction between individuals of different nations, resulting in the Red Power movement being an inter-tribal, or pan-Indian, cause advanced by several different groups who each had their own issues and tactics for bringing attention to the movement. The first inter-tribal protest to gain widespread recognition was the March 1964 "fish-in" and protest organized by the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) to protest Washington State's restrictions on fishing, which violated treaty rights of the Native tribes living in the state (Shreve 2009: 403-404). After the fish-in, inter-tribal protests became more common through the 1960s and 1970s, the most famous being the 19-month occupation of Alcatraz Island (1969-1971) organized by the Indians of All Tribes (Johnson 1994: 63-64). The Alcatraz occupation helped establish Native American Studies as an academic field with its own expertise, often separate from Anthropology. As a result of Native American students on college campuses demanding to have their pasts and presents included in the curriculum, the first Native Studies programs were established at San Francisco State University and the University of California–Davis in 1969 (Thornton 1999: 89).

The Red Power movement lead to new government provisions such as the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968, the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978. The movement also changed the way institutions, including museums, interacted with Native Americans. The movement's focus on self-determination inspired the establishment of Native-run museums and cultural centers (Simpson 1996: 135). The first tribal museum[2] had been established by the Cherokee in North Carolina in the 1940s. Others were begun and started to flourish in the 1960s (Fuller and Fabricius 1992: 224). The North American Indian Museums Association (NAIMA) was established in 1978 "to support the work of Indian museums throughout North America and to assist in their future development including resources, collections, marketing, research and interpretive programmes," and by 1981 there were more than 40 "professional" Native museums and cultural centers in the U.S. and Canada (Simpson 1996: 136; Fuller and Fabricius 1992: 224).

The role of tribal museums is different from that of majority museums such as the AMNH. These museums have a primarily white audience and are located in places not typically considered to be "Native," (i.e. in cities, not near reservations). Tribal museums are geared toward Native American audiences and are often located on or adjacent to tribal land (Simpson 1996: 136). Tribal museums display material culture, but also act as cultural centers that "provide [tribes] with the means to reinforce the cultural identity of the tribe, particularly for the

[2] The North American Indian Museum Association's by-laws define an Indian, or tribal, museum as "an established non-profit institution essentially educational or aesthetic in purpose, with professional staff, that provides exhibits, research, or programs in North American Indian subjects. In addition, the institution must meet the following requirements: 1. A majority of either the Board of Directors or the staff members, must be North American Indian, Eskimos, Aleuts, Inuit, or Métis. 2. The institution must serve a local Indian population" (NAIMA 1980 cited in Simpson 1996: 137).

benefit of the youngsters" (Simpson 1996: 136). Majority museums are also in the business of educating "youngsters," reinforcing the colonial history and Euro-American perspectives they are taught in school. Majority museums do this work "*directly,* by promoting and affirming the dominant values, and *indirectly,* by subordinating or rejecting alternate values" (Ames 1992: 22). On the other hand, tribal museums "emphasize Native American survival and cultural continuance: the obvious, yet powerful reminder that 'we are still here'" (Lonetree 2012: 20).

The Red Power movement, the rise of tribal museums, and the new field of Native American Studies caused majority museum professionals and academic anthropologists to reflect on the relationships between museums and source communities. By the 1970s these groups were expressing concern over the role of museums in "possessing, displaying and representing Native American cultural objects and human remains" (Fine-Dare 2002: 76). Much of their critique was focused on the unequal treatment of Native American bodies by museums and anthropologists. For example, in 1970, the American Indian Student Association at the University of Minnesota submitted a grant request to the National Science Foundation to excavate a white settlers' cemetery to bring attention to inherent biases in the treatment of Native American versus European-American dead (Fine-Dare 2002: 77). In 1971, the Second Convention of Indian Scholars held a panel discussion focused on how to increase Native Americans' roles in museums. This is when repatriation began to be a topic of regular discussion, resulting in claims beginning to stream into museums. The U.S. government took its time crafting a system in response, NAGPRA.

From NAGPRA to Now

NAGPRA was enacted by Congress on November 16th, 1990 as the latest articulation of a repatriation movement that was over 100 years old (Fine-Dare 2002: 47; Conn 2011: 500). The Act instructed museums and universities receiving federal funding to inventory their collections of Native human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and and other items of cultural patrimony and to make those inventories available to tribal groups. Whatever individuals and objects are claimed by culturally affiliated lineal descendants or tribal groups must be returned. It is important to note that NAGPRA does not cover every Native American object in a museum or university's collection, and only applies to museum receiving federal funding. It does not apply to foreign museums, nor does it apply to non-federally funded museums within the United States.

The first deadline set by NAGPRA was November 1993, by which time institutions subject to the Act had to complete general summaries of their Native American collections and share them with tribes. By November 1995, the detailed inventories of collections had to be completed and made available (Echo-Hawk 2002: 20). In between 1993 and 1995, institutions were to supposed to start the consultation process, speaking with Native peoples and collaborating with them on the determinations of cultural affiliation for each individual and object they intended to claim (Echo-Hawk 2002: 31). It is important to note that tribes and linear descendants were not required by the law to engage with the museums and no funding was provided to offset the costs they would incur in doing so. Due to limited resources, many initial letters are not responded to.

Although NAGPRA deals with property rights, it is not solely property law, but is actually a complex combination of human rights, administrative, property, and Indian law (Nash

and Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2010: 100). It falls within the definition of human rights law because it was "intentionally designed by Congress to benefit a group suffering discrimination—in this case, Native American sovereign communities and lineal descendants of Native Americans" (Echo-Hawk 2002: 10). Therefore, the NAGPRA consultation process takes on a multiplicity of meanings; it is not solely about discussing an object to be repatriated, but about forming and reforming relationships between source communities and their objects that have been held in museum collections (Clifford 1997).

Museums and Me

I have been lucky enough to experience this multiplicity during a NAGPRA consultation at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (UPMAA) while I was working as an intern in their NAGPRA Office in 2016. Although the Tlingit delegation of six men was there primarily to retrieve two items that were being repatriated from the museum, they also used the visit as an opportunity to reestablish relationships with objects that were to remain in the UPMAA's collection. This was done by sharing songs and stories with each other and with the objects. Events such as these make it clear that Native objects are part of a living culture and must be treated as such by museums. Before working at the UPMAA, and before studying Anthropology and Native American Studies at Vassar College, I spent time as an intern at the AMNH. I have chosen to ground my analysis in examinations of the Native American exhibits at these two museums. Through this I will explore what display decisions can be traced back to the repatriation movement and to the relationships with Native communities that repatriation has fostered.

The Case Studies

In order to examine the influence of NAGPRA through concrete examples, I have chosen two case studies: the Halls of Eastern Woodlands and Plains Indians at the AMNH, and *Native American Voices: The People. Here and Now* (NAV) and the UPMAA. These exhibits were chosen for multiple reasons. The AMNH exhibits were created before NAGPRA and therefore allowed me to experience such an exhibit for myself. I focused on the Halls of Eastern Woodlands and Plains Indians rather than the Hall of Northwest Coast Indians because the latter has undergone many more renovations, complicating its analysis and interpretation. Additionally, many of the tribes included in the Northwest Hall reside in what is now Canada, outside of NAGPRA's jurisdiction. Although the Northwest Coast hall will not serve as a case study, a new addition to that hall will be used as an example of how the AMNH is working toward incorporating Native American perspectives into older exhibits. NAV at the UPMAA will serve as my post-NAGPRA example. NAV makes use of many touchscreen stations and multimedia, and is organized very differently from the AMNH halls, reflecting collaboration with a large number of Native American consultants.

As institutions, the AMNH and UPMAA are fairly comparable. Both are large majority museums, although the UPMAA is not nearly as large as the AMNH. The two museums have some other differences: the AMNH is a natural history museum; the UPMAA is an archaeology and anthropology museum. The UPMAA is associated with a university; the AMNH is not[3]. The possible consequences of these differences for the present research will be identified and

[3] The AMNH does have a small graduate school on its premises, the Richard Gilder Graduate School, through which the AMNH offers a master of arts degree in teaching and a Ph.D in comparative biology (Pogrebin 2015).

explored later on. Despite the differences between the institutions, the UPMAA proved a better match for the present study than some other options, such as the National Museum of the American Indian, which was eliminated due to its similarities to tribal museums.

Pre-NAGPRA Exhibits: The Halls of Eastern Woodlands Indians and the Hall of Plains Indians at the American Museum of Natural History

The Hall of the Eastern Woodlands Indians opened to the public on May 24th 1966 ("New Major Exhibition Hall at Museum Depicts Indian Lore, with Musical Accompaniment," Photo Folder 1, AMNH Vertical Files). Shortly after, on February 21st 1967, the Hall of Plains Indians opened ("Facts on the Hall of the Indians of the Plains," Photo Folder 1, AMNH Vertical Files). Construction on the halls had begun in 1960, with the funds for them having been established in 1958 (Memorandum to George B. Decker from Walter F. Meister, May 29 1958, AMNH, Box 453). This section will provide a description of the two halls as they are at the time of this writing. Following a description of my observations in the halls, made in October 2016, will be a discussion of how they are exemplary of a pre-NAGPRA mindset.

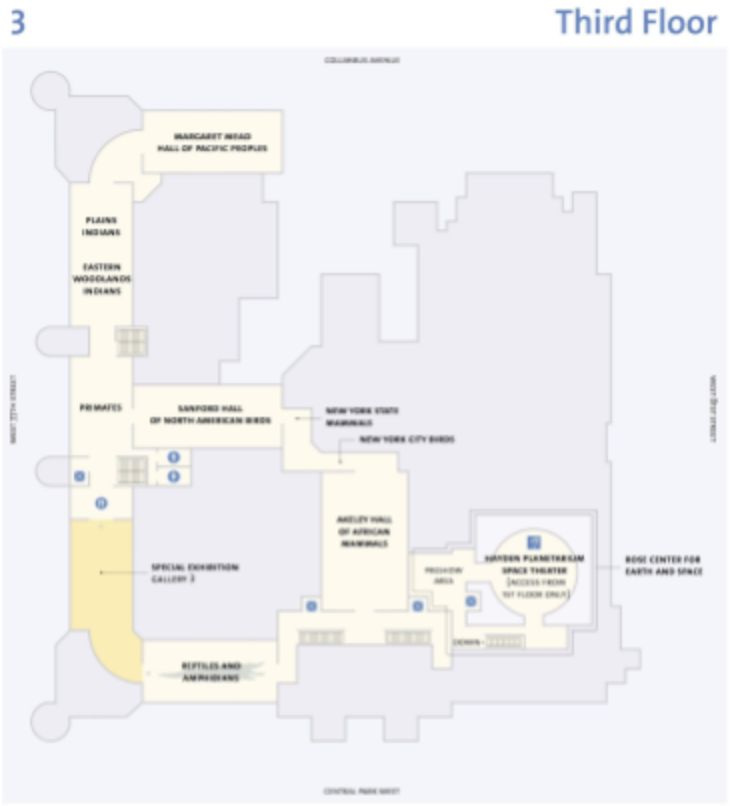

Figure 3. AMNH floor plan showing location of the Halls of Eastern Woodland and Plains Indians in relation other halls. Copyright 2011 AMNH.

The halls of Eastern Woodlands Indians and Plains Indians are located on the third floor of the Museum. Visitors can access the Plains Indians hall through the Eastern Woodlands hall. When facing the stairwell, the Eastern Woodlands hall is on the left and the Hall of Primates is on the right (see figure 3). The resulting juxtaposition with taxidermied animals is an issue that will be discussed later on. The exhibition begins at the top of the stairs with a case containing Paleoindian lithics and imitation rock art more reminiscent of Lascaux Cave art than Native American rock art (figure 4).

Figure 4. Paleoindian case at the beginning of the Hall of Eastern Woodland Indians. Photo by Penelope H. Duus, October 2016.

The halls are organized into sections such as "Basketry," "Transportation," "Warfare," and "Art." Within these sections, similar objects are grouped together, sometimes to show differences among tribes. When entering the hall, the visitor greeted by dozens of mannequins, which are used to display how clothing and headdresses are worn. Most of the mannequins have the same face, although some have had face paint applied. Although it is indicated whether a garment was worn by men or by women, the mannequins have the same face regardless of gender. Sometimes, when only a headdress is being displayed, there is a disembodied head wearing it, seemingly decapitated from the display beneath it, as in figure 5. In addition to the standalone mannequins there is a life group, which greets visitors as they enter the Plains Indians hall from the Eastern Woodland hall. The life group represents a Blackfoot family in the 1850's, at home in their tipi.

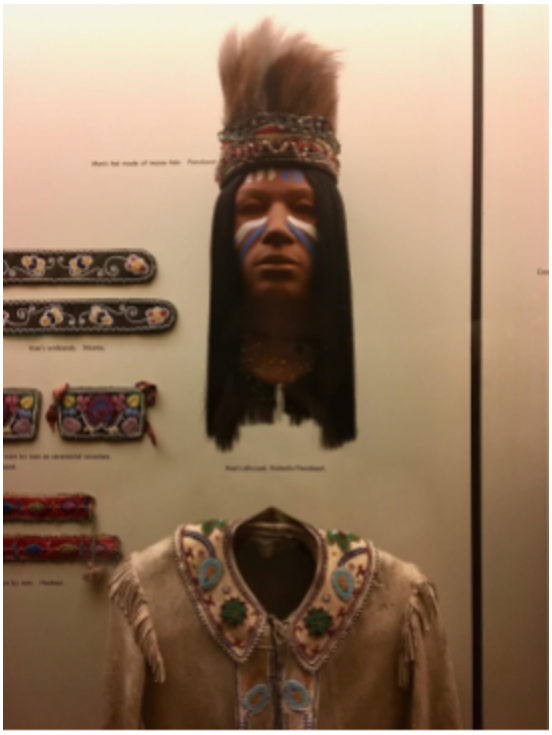

Figure 5. A typical mannequin head. Photo by Penelope H. Duus, October 2016.

Temporality in the halls is entirely dependent on European colonization as a demarcation of periods. Once the visitor moves past the initial section of the exhibit on Paleoindians, the only indications of time given are pre- or post- European contact. This suggests to the visitor that the only cultural changes worth learning about are those brought by Europeans, and that Native American cultures remained fairly stagnant otherwise. Going along with this, all of the verbs describing actions of Native Americans are in the past tense, giving the sense that these activities no longer take place. The only mention of contemporary—as of the 1960s—Native Americans comes at the beginning of the Plains Indians hall and again in one or two pieces of descriptive labels. These describe the issues "modern Plains Indians" have had "transition[ing] from a nomadic hunting culture to full participation in a modern industrial society" due to being

"handicapped by poverty and inadequate education" (AMNH label, "Indians of the Plains"). Further into the exhibit, the growing population of Dakota people is mentioned. Although it is of course beneficial for the exhibit to mention population resurgence and some current issues, these do not do enough to show Native survival when the rest of the hall conveys to the visitor that Native people are no longer extant.

The idea of Native American cultures as stagnant and homogeneous is represented in other aspects of the hall as well. The exhibits focuses on similarities between various groups of Eastern Woodlands Indians, defined by the AMNH as including cultures in "the region east of the Mississippi River, from Florida and Louisiana to Hudson's Bay," and consisting of three subareas: the Great Lakes tribes, the Southeast, and the Eastern Algonquians (Freed 2012: 397). The specific tribal origins of objects on display are marked by labels but these tribal groups are not reinforced and made clearer by discrete spatial organization. The intermixing of objects within the overarching Eastern Woodlands exhibit leads visitors to believe that one massive, and fairly homogenous, culture group, once occupied the vast landscape east of the Mississippi an impression further enforced by the language used in the hall's descriptive texts. The same issue is true of the Plains Indians Hall, which describes "a few dozen tribes" (Freed 2012: 398).

An overarching issue in the both halls is that Native practices and objects are portrayed through a Western framework of understanding that is insufficient for describing their true meaning. One example is how wampum—the purple and white shell beads used by Northeastern tribes for a variety of purposes—are exhibited. The wampum is placed in a case next to European-style jewelry. Displaying it in this context reinforces the misconception that wampum was a monetary trade instrument. Wampum are described this way in the case's explanatory text,

which reads “Early European settlers found that Indians willingly exchanged furs and other products for wampum. Gradually wampum began to function as a medium of exchange. During part of the seventeenth century, wampum was legal currency in the Dutch and English colonies” (AMNH label, “Wampum”). In reality the role of wampum in Native cultures was quite different. Rather than being a monetary tool, wampum was used as “a signifier of a contractual relationship” (Kidwell 2002: 88). The descriptive text in the exhibit does mention the role of wampum as “mnemonic devices” for “marriage proposals, to ransom captives, to express condolences at death, and to convey messages” (AMNH label, “Wampum”). Therefore, while the label does mention wampum’s many uses, it upholds the false understanding of wampum as a monetary instrument first and foremost. This is problematic because wampum’s depiction as money “reinforces the idea that the Indians had no concept of the value of land and were merely intrigued by gaudy baubles,” for example when they supposedly exchanged the island of Manhattan for $24 worth of “beads and trinkets” (Kidwell 2002: 87-88). However, when one understands the role of wampum in treaties and contractual agreements, one can understand that the “purchase” of Manhattan was not a purchase at all, but instead was a treaty agreement between two sovereign nations.

The halls of Eastern Woodlands Indians and Plains Indians display Native Americans as members of the past by using techniques of the past. Although the halls were opened in 1966 and 1967, respectively, many of the display techniques would be at home in a hall of Boasian design dating from the turn of the 20th century, particularly the mannequins and life group. Life groups reflect the mindset of the period in which they were developed, a time in which anthropologists sought to preserve what they thought were dying cultures. This style of exhibit was not created to

show the present and future because the present was not thought to be pure and the future did not exist. Life groups certainly encourage this temporal approach, freezing in time a moment from the past.

The issue with life groups is not only that they are an outdated method of display that could be replaced by something more engaging, but also that they perpetuate harmful and violent racial stereotypes that date back to the days of social evolutionary theory. Part of what places life groups so firmly in the past is that they are often arranged nearby to displays of fossils and taxidermied animals (Lonetree 2012: 14). This is especially true in "natural history" museums. While this may seem harmless to visitors, the association of these exhibits causes conceptions of the two to be merged and the differences between them to become less obvious: "by constructing an equanimity and proximity between taxidermic animals and native mannequins as affiliated bodies locked in an intense symbiosis, these tableaux amplify the racializing codes inherent in this mode of exhibition" (Wakeham 2008: 3). The end result is that the viewer comes to associate the Native mannequins—and therefore Native people—with animals, living and extinct. This creates the illusion that Native people are subhuman and a thing of the past.

We must also look at where information conveyed in the exhibits was drawn from. In a 2007 email from Stanley Freed, curator of the ethnographic portions of the halls, to Tom Baione, director of the AMNH library, Freed says that he relied primarily on *Ethnographic Bibliography of North America* by George Peter Murdock, then one of the best sources for this purpose. This book breaks down sources by geographic region, and then further by tribe. In addition to this text, Freed also consulted Junius Bird, curator of South American archaeology, regarding textiles (Correspondence between Freed and Baione, Photo Folder 2, AMNH Library Vertical Files).

Although some of the sources in Murdock's *Bibliography* may have been representative of a Native point of view, and Dr. Bird may have known something about the emic perspective as well, this letter indicates that there was not a concerted effort to present Native perspectives in the exhibits. Given the period in which it was designed, the very beginnings of large-scale intertribal activism, this is not a surprising absence.

I argue that the above described aspects of the Halls of Woodlands and Plains Indians indicate the pre-NAGPRA mindset of the curators. The focus was on showing the past, as Native American cultures were not thought to be as vibrant as they once were, or had "completely disappeared," as Dr. Harry L. Shapiro, then chairman of the Department of Anthropology at the AMNH, said at the opening of the Eastern Woodlands hall ("New Major Exhibition Hall at Museum Depicts Indian Lore, with Musical Accompaniment," Photo Folder 1, AMNH Vertical Files). NAGPRA helped to change these misconceptions by obliging museums to acknowledge and work with modern Native American people.

It is important to recognize what changes in exhibit design due to NAGPRA look like. Most obvious of course is the removal of objects to be repatriated. This is also the only type of change that it is possible to prove is entirely due to NAGPRA. Others, such as removal of objects due to issues of cultural sensitivity, are, I argue a result of changing relationships which have been affected by NAGPRA's requirements for consultation, as well as changes in museology more broadly. Other changes of this type are inclusion of more Native American scholars and community members in the design process, and increasing focus on contemporary Native people and the issues they deem relevant. Such changes are evident in newer exhibits such as those at the Penn Museum.

The influence of NAGPRA on the relationships between Native American tribes and museums cannot be overstated. While there was Native participation in museums prior to NAGPRA, the Act "marked the creation of a watershed in relationships between Native Americans (including Native Alaskans) and universities, museums and federal agencies" (Fine-Dare 2002: 6). The Act hasn't just affected museums and archaeologists, but has, according to Lucy Fowler Williams, associate curator of the American Section at the UPMAA, "created a pathway forward for anthropologists who work with Native North American peoples" by overhauling the ways in which these two groups have historically related to one another (personal communication, 8 December 2016).

Post-NAGPRA: Changes at AMNH

As alluded to previously, there have been some updates made to the Native American culture halls at AMNH that may be in part due to NAGPRA. The Blackfoot life group used to show the Thunder Pipe ceremony, however, due to issues of cultural sensitivity the exhibit was redone in 1993 to show everyday objects and activities (Freed 2012: 406; Williamson, personal communication, 2 November 2016). Since that renovation it has been further updated, and currently displays two women playing a game of dice, a man with a tobacco pipe, a boy with a small bow and arrow, and another man brushing his hair. Figure 6 shows the evolution of the exhibit overtime from its original state to its current one.

Figure 6. The Blackfoot tipi exhibit in the Hall of Plains Indians in its original configuration (left, 1992) and its current configuration (right, 2016). Left image copyright AMNH, right image by Penelope H. Duus.

In addition to the changes to the Blackfoot tipi life group, perhaps the most obvious change is a large subtraction from the Hall of Eastern Woodland Indians. Between the exhibits on warfare and shamanism is a large empty case that once held False Face Society and Cornhusk masks. The items in the case were removed in the early 1990s out of concern for the cultural sensitivity of the material (Williamson, personal communication, 2 November 2016). Although there is no indication in the hall of what was removed, the 2002 teacher's guide stated that the False Face Masks had been "removed from display" and pointed the reader to a text box that gave a brief overview of what NAGPRA is ("A Teacher's Guide: The Hall of Eastern Woodlands Indians" 2002). As of the 2016 educator's guide, however, there is no mention of NAGPRA or of the False Face Masks ("Educator' Guide: Hall of Eastern Woodlands Indians" 2016). As of this writing, at least one of the False Face Masks (catalogue number 50.2/ 4246) that was originally on display is still in the AMNH's collections, as per comparisons of archival photos with the Museum's online collections (Photo Folder 2, AMNH Library Vertical Files).

The False Face Society is the most well-known of the Haudenosaunee medicine societies. All medicine societies play a key role in maintaining individual and community health, and the medicines they practice are "essential to the spiritual and emotional well-being of the Haudenosaunee communities" ("Haudenosaunee Confederacy Announces Policy on False Face Masks"). The masks worn by people in the Society are sacred, and as such "the public exhibition of all medicine masks is forbidden" ("Haudenosaunee Confederacy Announces Policy on False Face Masks"). Furthermore, information about medicine societies is not meant to be made publically available. Due to the culturally sensitive nature of False Face masks, the Grand Council of the Haudenosaunee declared in 1995 that "the sovereign responsibility of the Haudenosaunee over their spiritual duties must be respected by the removal of all medicine masks from exhibition and from access to non-Indians" and furthermore that "all Haudenosaunee medicine masks currently possessed by non-Indians, including Museums…should be returned to the Grand Council of Chiefs of the Haudenosaunee, who will ensure their proper use and protection for the future generations" ("Haudenosaunee Confederacy Announces Policy on False Face Masks"). Although the False Face and Corn Husk society masks were not removed by the AMNH for repatriation, their removal shows that the AMNH has begun to listen to Native people when it comes to what is and isn't appropriate to display. This has been one of the major effects of NAGPRA; through the consultation process museums and other institutions receiving federal funding have had to listen to the concerns Native people have about their cultural heritage that's held in museums.

Numerous other items have also been removed from the halls. From the Eastern Woodlands hall, two Ojibwa items were repatriated in 2005, as well as an Oneida Wampum

string in 1999. Another Wampum belt was removed in 2004 and a repatriation case is pending (Williamson, personal communication, 2 November 2016). In addition to the removal of the objects from the Thunder Pipe scene in 1993, more items have been removed from the Plains Indians hall. In 1991 a Pawnee skull bundle was removed from display and placed in storage at the request of the Pawnee tribe. Blackfeet Sun Dance objects were removed for repatriation in 1999. In both of these cases, other objects replaced those removed (Williamson, personal communication, 2 November 2016). This demonstrates a definitive effect of NAGPRA: the removal of culturally sensitive objects for repatriation and replacement with items that are more suitable for public viewing.

The major changes that have been made in the Halls of Eastern Woodland and Plains Indians have thus been subtractions and replacements. Elsewhere in the Museum, however, there have been additions that may illuminate what changes could be made in the Eastern Woodlands and Plains Indians halls. Downstairs, in the Hall of Northwest Coast Indians, there have been some recent updates. The center of the hall now features a "digital totem," installed in 2016, which was designed to accompany the textual information in the hall. The "totem" has information divided into four sections: "Northwest Coast Voices," which contains interviews with Native Northwest Coast tribal members, "Made in the Northwest Coast," which gives extended information on featured objects from the hall, "Northwest Coast Sounds," which has audio samples such as sea lions, ravens, shell rattles, and a Nuu-chah-luth song, and an "Information" section, which has information on the curation of the digital totem and other historical information regarding the hall. The "totem" was created by AMNH's exhibition department under supervision of Dr. Peter Whiteley, curator of North American ethnology, and

David Harvey, senior vice president of exhibition. Whiteley and Harvey collaborated with many Native people of the Northwest Coast on the project, including people from the U'mista Cultural Centre and the Haida Gwaii Museum, among other institutions. The "Information" section of the "totem" also notes that "the culture-names in the alcoves [of the hall] reflect what anthropologists called these communities a century ago, not what the communities call themselves now" (Information section, *Digital Totem*). In a phone interview with Dr. Whiteley he remarked that although the addition of the "digital totem" was no substitute for refurbishing the hall, it is evidence of AMNH's work with Native communities (personal communication, 18 October 2016).

Native American Voices *at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology*

The concept of *Native American Voices: The People. Here and Now* (NAV), which opened at the UPMAA on March 1st, 2014, was to "freshen up" the Native American gallery (Quinn 2016). The design process focused heavily on input from the exhibit's Native American contributors, and especially its four principle advisors: Tina Pierce Fragoso (Nanticoke Lenni-Lanape Tribe), Suzan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne and Hodulgee Muscogee), Patty Talahongva (Hopi), and Teri Rofkar (Tlingit).

Rather than grouping objects by geographic region, tribe, or purpose, NAV is organized around four main themes: "Local Nations," "Sacred Places," "Continuing Celebrations," and "New Initiatives" ("About the Exhibit"). Each theme is linked to its own graphic, helping to indicate when it is brought up throughout the hall (see figure 7). These themes are a major departure from the ways Native American objects have usually been displayed, such as at the

AMNH, where they are grouped by function. They allow for objects from all eras to be linked to the Native present and for their important role in that present to be shown.

Figure 7. Graphics representing (from left to right) Local Nations, Sacred Places, Continuing Celebrations, and New Initiatives. Images copyright UPMAA.

A bit more on these themes: "Local Nations" focuses on the Lenape people, the original inhabitants of Philadelphia and the Delaware Valley (UPMAA 2014b). This section is notable because it is an acknowledgement that the city of Philadelphia is located on Native land. Native American nations in the eastern U.S. are often less visible than tribes in the western U.S. The "Local Nations" theme seeks to undo the conception that the northeastern U.S. is not a Native place by centering the local Native nations. "Sacred Places" explores the importance of place and landscape in Native American cultures (UPMAA 2014b). Objects that demonstrate a connection to place are used to consider issues that Native people often face when trying to gain access to and protect sacred locations. "Continuing Celebrations" highlights contemporary Native American traditions such as powwows, using regalia as an entry point for discussing the role of ceremonies and celebrations in solidifying and passing on Native traditions to future generations. The final theme, "New Initiatives," calls attention to economic, health, and education initiatives (UPMAA 2014b). Topics explored in this section include language revitalization programs, casinos, tourist markets, and repatriation. Aside from these four main themes, other subjects,

such as sovereignty, are frequently referenced and explored through a variety of objects. In the case of sovereignty, Cayuga Haudnosaunee lacrosse sticks dating from the early-19th century are displayed with an Iroquois Nationals lacrosse team practice pinnie from 2013. This is a prime example of how NAV links items from the Native past to issues of the Native present.

NAV relies on extensive use of technology to incorporate Native voices into the exhibit. There are four large digital columns, two facing each entrance to the hall. These touch screen panels contain essays by the exhibit's Native American advisors and contributors, as well as video interviews and other footage. In front of the cases along the walls are a total of 12 digital interactive stations. Here, visitors can select items that they see displayed and learn more about them through essays and information on present geographic distribution of the tribe from which the item originated, as well as how many speakers of that tribe's Native language remain. Finally, in the center of the room is a projection of a fire onto the floor, surrounded by benches. This serves as an introduction to the exhibit, with a voiceover of Native people discussing historical and contemporary issues, such as the cultural genocide carried out through Native American boarding schools. The use of so much technology and multimedia was done deliberately as a way to include as many Native American perspectives as possible (Kate Quinn quoted in UPMAA 2014a). This gives the exhibit multivocality, allowing perspectives of Native contributors and museum curators to be present in the same interpretive space (Lonetree 2012: 21).

The display style of NAV is noticeable different from the halls at AMNH (figure 8). It is very modern, incorporating, in addition to the extensive use of technology, an otherwise clean, minimalist design. In total, more than 250 objects in the exhibit tell stories of Native American

people today (UPMAA 2014b). Objects from as much as 11,000 years ago (a Clovis projectile point), are linked to current Native communities, creating a sense of cultural continuity between Paleoindians and modern tribal nations. This continuity is reinforced by the inclusion of works by contemporary Native artists, such as three masks by Nicholas Galanin (Tlingit) from his *Imaginary Indian* series, and a ceramic piece by Jason Garcia (Tewa) titled *Grand Theft Auto*.

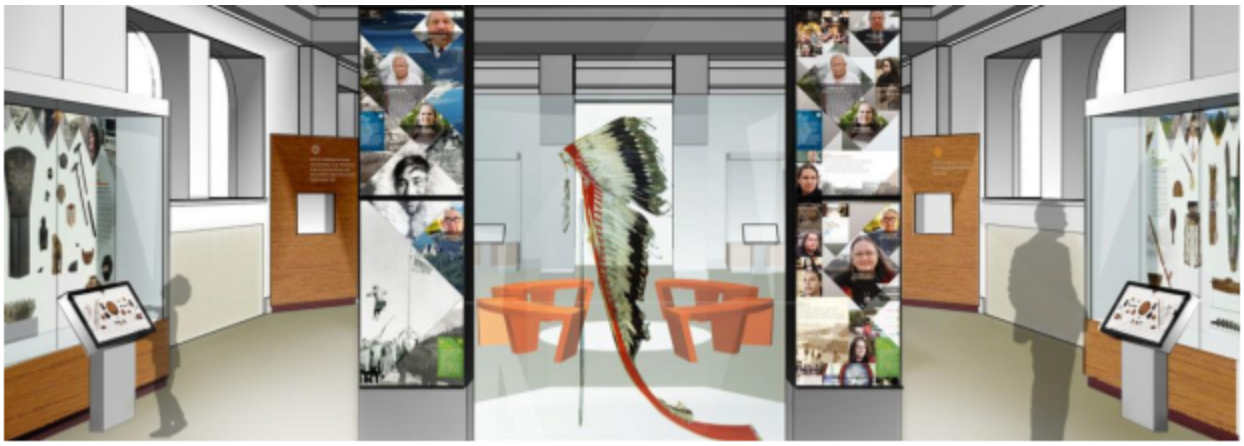

Figure 8. Mock-up of NAV as viewed from the lobby-side entrance. Copyright UPMAA.

It is clear that NAV is the result of the work of the Native advisory board and contributors as well as consultation with Native communities. Although Native people have had a long history of being involved with anthropology at the UPMAA, Dr. Lucy Fowler Williams, associate curator of the American Section at the UPMAA, believes their role has become more visible in the past 25 years due to changing dynamics in the relationships between Native source communities and museums. NAV also has many more Native contributors than previous exhibits at the UPMAA have had (Williams, personal communication, 24 October 2016). At least four of the contributors to NAV were first introduced the the UPMAA through NAGPRA consultations. Building off these relationships, and because they had had positive experiences working with the

Museum, they were interested in collaborating with the UPMAA on NAV (Williams, personal communication, 24 October 2016).

Modern Native American perspectives are pervasive through the exhibit thanks to the input of Native American contributors. Whereas descriptive text in the halls of Eastern Woodlands and Plains Indians at the AMNH use the past tense and do not discuss present Native American groups—except for briefly mentioning their economic turmoil—the labels and descriptions in NAV frequently quote prominent Native American figures and refer to contemporary traditions, such as lacrosse, connecting the sport to issues of sovereignty (Williams, personal communication, 29 Nov 2016).

While the number of Native American perspectives found in NAV is clearly reflective of extensive collaboration between Native people and the UPMAA, not all collaboration is a result of NAGPRA, though the Act has certainly lead to an increase in communication and collaboration between museums and Native American tribes. This collaboration, when translated to exhibits, means the introduction of multivocality, specifically Native American perspectives, throughout the exhibit. Interactive technology has done much to make this possible, as it allows greater amounts of information than what would fit in text labels to be incorporated into the exhibit.

Discussion: NAGPRA and Other Influences

NAGPRA and the broader repatriation movement have certainly had enormous impact on museums. Institutions which were founded on collecting and preserving the Vanishing Indian are now obligated to work with the Native people they once thought would disappear. This

obligation has led to increased Native participation in museums and the formation of new relationships. These relationships, and the things that museums have learned from them, are now beginning to be incorporated into exhibits of Native America. Older exhibits have been made more respectful though the removal of sacred or otherwise culturally sensitive material. New exhibits bring in Native American perspectives that make Native cultural survival and resilience apparent.

Even before NAGPRA, majority museums' displays of Native America had changed drastically since their beginnings over a century ago. Many factors have affected these changes: contemporary anthropological theory, technological developments, and Native activism, to name a few. NAGPRA has also played a role in the changes that have occurred over the past 26 years. NAGPRA requires museums to initiate consultation with Native American tribes. If museums have the resources available, as will be discussed further below, lessons from NAGPRA consultations and the resulting relationships that form may be incorporated into new exhibits.

An essential caveat is that, while NAGPRA has influenced museum displays, out-of-date displays are not necessarily reflective of an institution's minimal or outright non-compliance with NAGPRA. The stagnancy of the Native American culture halls at the AMNH isn't reflective of the Museum's level of compliance with NAGPRA or repatriation in general, as the Museum does make a good faith effort regarding repatriation, both domestically and internationally (Whiteley, personal communication, 18 October 2016).

Other factors have undoubtedly played into decisions as to which museum displays are updated to reflect the knowledge gained since the passage of NAGPRA. For example, without funding it is impossible to renovate exhibitions. The AMNH's financial statements show that the

total functional expenses[4] associated with exhibits in the 2015 fiscal year was $44,081,799, about 21% of total functional expenses for the fiscal year (AMNH 2015: 30). Undoubtedly, most of this money went to the grandiose temporary exhibits that the AMNH puts on. Exhibitions costs were eclipsed only by expenses relating to scientific research, which reached a total of $68,698,265, or about 34% of total expenses. This is in line with what seem to be the current goals of the institution, which in 2014 announced plans for a $325 million expansion to house the new Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education and Innovation (Pogrebin 2014). The most recent anthropology hall to be updated, the Spitzer Hall of Human Origins, which reopened after a complete overhaul in 2007, gives similar focus to scientific research. The exhibits in the hall are accompanied by the Sackler Educational Laboratory for Comparative Genomics and Human Origins, in which visitors can do hands-on activities (Wilford 2007). It seems, therefore, that the AMNH has increased its focus on scientific research and education, as these ventures appear to be well-funded. It may be, that the AMNH is in the process of moving away from the antiquated category of "natural history" in favor of a focus on natural and physical sciences. As the Museum continues to market itself as a research and education powerhouse, money for upgrading permanent cultural exhibits may have fallen by the wayside.

While there may not be significant funding for exhibit redesign, there does seem to be money available for research on Native America; Dr. David Hurst Thomas, Curator of North American Archaeology, has conducted fieldwork with the museum on St. Catherines Island, GA, since 1981 ("St. Catherines Island, GA," AMNH). There is clearly a large difference in cost between funding research and completely overhauling multiple galleries. However it is important

[4] Functional expenses includes the following subsections: payroll and fringe benefits, supplies, energy services, outside services and insurance, professional fees, depreciation and amortization, interest, and other (AMNH 2015: 30).

to note that the AMNH is actively engaged in creating knowledge about Native America while its Native American halls remain stagnant.

When the UPMAA's current director joined the Museum in 2012, one of his goals was to "raise the appeal of [the Museum's] contents by highlighting their relevance to modern life" (Hurdle 2012). NAV certainly fits within this institutional objective as one of the intentions of the exhibit was to show the continuity between Native American objects from all eras with contemporary Native nations. The UPMAA's financial report for fiscal years ending in 2014 and 2015 is less detailed than the information available from the AMNH (UPMAA 2015: 24). The total expenditures for the fiscal year were reported to be $20,462,958, about 10% of the AMNH's total expenditures for the same year. The financial statement published in the UPMAA's Annual Report does not specify the amount spent per department, so the percentage of their budget that goes towards exhibitions is not clear. Funding for NAV did not come entirely from within the UPMAA's budget, as there were a number of sponsors who made the exhibit possible[5]. This means that there are individuals and companies interested in sponsoring exhibits on Native America, leaving questions remaining about why the AMNH has not already begun working with such parties to update their cultural exhibits.

The scope and purpose of the institution is another factor in what exhibits get updated. The AMNH, being a natural history museum, was founded with an incredibly broad focus. It

[5] Presenting underwriters: Adolf A. Paier and Geraldine S. Paier, Ph.D, Frances Rockwell and John R. Rockwell. Lead underwriters: The Annenberg Foundation/Gregory Annenberg Weingarten, A. Bruce Mainwaring and Margaret R. Mainwaring, Selz Foundation, Inc. Partnering underwriters: Coby Foundation, Joanne H. Conrad and William L. Conrad, Delaware Investments/Macquarie Group Foundation. Supporting Underwriters: Richard Goldberg, in honor of Arlene Goldberg, Eleanor O. Hill and Robert W. Hill, Sara Levan in memory of Lawrence Levan, Grace E. Schuler and Thomas Tauber, Ph.D. ("Sponsors").

should not be surprising, then, that it has proven difficult to keep all sections of the museum up-to-date with current ethical codes of museum practice and research standards. Especially as the AMNH builds itself as a center for scientific research and education, sections of the museum that rely on "softer" science, such as anthropology, have been less attended to. Natural history museums now face the challenging question of what to do with exhibits of indigenous cultures as scholars and activists have rightly pointed out the racist assumptions that put indigenous cultures into "natural history" museums in the first place, while leaving European and Euro-American cultures for art museums. The UPMAA, being an archaeology and anthropology museum, does not face the same challenges in this regard. Its focus, while geographically broad, is past and present human culture. Anthropology does not have to contend with often better funded "hard" sciences; to let their cultural exhibits fall by the wayside would be to become a defunct institution. The more concise focus allows for a greater percentage of the Museum's resources to go towards maintaining cultural exhibits that are up-to-date and culturally sensitive.

Conclusion: Where to Go from Here

NAGPRA has forced museums to consider Native people as modern actors, rather than as the historical archetypes presented in many museum exhibits that pre-date its passage. Museums play a pivotal role in the education of the public. Outdated exhibits that show Native American people as historical archetypes rather than modern actors have the potential to deleteriously affect how visitors interact with and understand Native America today. The importance of this can't be understated as museum displays are an incredibly powerful mode of representation; even children who are enrolled members of tribes can be convinced by exhibits that their cultures

are things of the past (see Diep 2014). This misrepresentation has far-reaching consequences. Supporting narratives that depict Native Americans as historical and non-sovereign peoples leads to further attacks on Native rights and sovereignty, such as the building of the Dakota Access Pipeline through unceded Sioux territory (Sack 2016).

Given the gravity of these misrepresentations, museums that have not updated their displays should make a concerted effort to do so. This requires more than just support of curators and museum anthropologists; it requires that the institutions make these exhibits a priority. The "digital totem" in the Northwest Coast Hall at the AMNH shows that it is possible to make additions to outdated halls that introduce multivocality and Native American perspectives. While additions such as this are not enough, they makes it apparent to those who engage with them that Native American people are very much alive today. Still, the "totem" is easy enough to miss, as would be similar additions in other halls. New exhibits of Native America need to make it clear to visitors that Native American cultures are vibrantly alive. This is something that NAV at the UPMAA has succeeded in doing. Even if just passing through, the visitor will see and hear modern Native American people. In contrast, visitors to the Native American halls at the AMNH leave under the impression that the cultures they just observed are things of the past, making remarks such as "it's a good thing we killed them all," while examining a mannequin representing a Dakota woman or "hey look, cavemen!" at the sight of the Kwakwaka'wakw life group in the Northwest Coast hall. These exhibits reflect the mindset of the time in which they were designed, a time when Native people and cultures were thought to be disappearing or irreversibly damaged by acculturation. However, Native people have not gone anywhere, and

museums have finally begun to acknowledge them as sovereign actors. It is time for exhibits to reflect what museums have learned.

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