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Jacknis, Ira.

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A New Thing?

The NMAI *in Historical and Institutional Perspective*

IRA JACKNIS

In 1916 George Gustav Heye (1874–1957), a wealthy engineer and financier, founded the Museum of the American Indian in New York City. According to one curator, Heye "managed over some sixty years to acquire the largest assemblage of Indian objects ever collected by a single person, . . . now including more than 800,000 objects."[1] Heye served as director of the museum, which opened to the public in 1922, until 1956. In 1989, after several decades of financial problems and declining attendance, the Heye collections were transferred to the Smithsonian Institution, where they became the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI).[2] The original buildings in upper Manhattan and the Bronx have now been replaced with three structures: the George G. Heye Center, which opened in lower Manhattan in 1994; the Cultural Resources Center in Suitland, Maryland, which was completed in 1998 and fully opened in 2003; and the main exhibit building on the Mall in Washington DC, which opened in September 2004.

As my title suggests, my basic question is to what extent is and was the (National) Museum of the American Indian unique or different or new? In order to answer this question, we must compare the institution to other collections of Native American objects. Museums, however, come in many varieties of size, subject, and mission, and they change and evolve over time. They also have multiple functions. Among the primary aspects considered here are collection, exhibition, and education/outreach. In this essay, I will attempt to place the Museum of the American Indian in varying disciplinal (anthropology, art, history) and geographic (city, region, nation) contexts.

Naturally, this vast undertaking would require many more pages than

I have here, so my approach will be to sketch out the "big picture," composed of broad strokes instead of fine detail.[3] Although I consider the basics of Heye's life and subsequent history of the Museum of the American Indian, this essay is meant to relate Heye and the MAI to a larger historical context.[4] Taking Heye as our reference point, we can divide the history of the Museum of the American Indian into three periods: the time under Heye, the period after Heye's death, and the present, as the National Museum of the American Indian at the Smithsonian.

NATIVE AMERICAN COLLECTIONS BEFORE HEYE

When Heye began his museum, Native American objects had already been the subject of four centuries of collecting.[5] During the first, extended period, from European exploration through the Civil War, collecting was both governmental and personal, and the principal agents were explorers, scientists, and merchants. Given the colonial situation, the very earliest collections are in Europe. One of the earliest American endeavors was the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804–6, the first of many national reconnaissance surveys. The objects obtained on the trip went to President Jefferson and to Charles Willson Peale, whose Philadelphia museum served as an unofficial national repository. Like many museums before the Civil War, Peale's was a commercial operation, devoted to entertainment. Another institutional model were the many collections of local amateur societies, devoted to history or natural science. For example, the Peabody Museum, founded in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1799 as a maritime society, has significant Native American collections, especially from the Northwest Coast.[6]

Although the national collections at the Smithsonian were founded in 1846, it took at least until the Centennial of 1876 until it had accumulated significant American Indian artifacts.[7] At the Institution, Native American cultures became the concern of the research Bureau of American Ethnology in 1879, assisted by the related U.S. National Museum, opened in 1881. Soon, the primary venue for Native American collections would become the great municipal natural history museums, most notably New York's American Museum of Natural History, founded in 1869, and Chicago's Field Museum, founded in 1893.

It was also about this time that anthropology became a specialized scholarly profession, in Europe as well as in America. Among the earliest homes for the discipline were the university museums of anthropology. Founded in 1866, the Harvard Peabody Museum of Anthropology is the oldest American museum devoted exclusively to anthropology. It was followed in 1889 by the University of Pennsylvania Museum and in 1901 by the University of California Museum of Anthropology (now known as the Phoebe Hearst Museum).

During the late nineteenth century, many state museums were founded in the West. Often located at the state university, they included anthropology. In addition to the University of California, Berkeley, the largest and oldest are the Washington State Museum (now the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture) in Seattle, founded in 1885, and the Arizona State Museum in Tucson, founded in 1893.[8] All these museums tend to feature the Native artifacts of their respective regions. For instance, Arizona is solely an anthropology museum, dealing almost exclusively with the Southwest.[9]

These, then, would have been the relevant models for Heye as he set out. In some ways, his own collections would be like them; in other ways, different. From his developing practice, we can conclude that his closest model must have been the large collection in his hometown of New York, the American Museum of Natural History; but as his interest developed he would have learned about the important collections at Harvard, the University of Pennsylvania, and the Smithsonian. There were not many other places to see American Indian art on the East Coast, nor much more in Europe, where he traveled frequently, except in Berlin, which was then actively building its collection.

Each type of museum carried a different disciplinary message. History museums included Native and Anglo objects in a single narrative, even if it was a tale of conquest and disappearance. Natural history museums, on the other hand, were predicated on colonialist notions of survey, uniting the natural and cultural for the Native peoples encountered in contested lands. Art museums in the nineteenth century were generally reserved for Western culture and its direct ancestors. With some exceptions, such as the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Asian arts were not yet granted full status; these were collected by only a few specialized museums, most in Europe.

While anthropology museums had the advantage of treating all of human culture on a comparative and autonomous level, their principal constraint was their general omission of Western cultures. In almost all of these museums, however, collections and exhibits were systematically arranged according to some disciplinary principle of classification. The dominant anthropological scheme—notably at the U.S. National Museum—was a putative evolutionary typology, from simple to advanced. In some museums—notably the Harvard Peabody—specimens were arranged according to geographic survey, with a distribution of types in space.

All these museums were also embedded in changing relations between dominant national powers, throughout the Americas, and their Aboriginal peoples. By the 1890s, when Heye began, the American frontier was declared officially closed. With the cessation of the great Indian wars and the confinement of Native peoples to reservations, the dominant society adopted a range of ambivalent attitudes.[10] On the one hand, the federal government implemented assimilationist policies that were designed to obliterate Native societies, including land allotment, boarding schools, and banning of certain religious practices on reservations. At the same time, however, many began to valorize the Indian cultures. This period of romantic nostalgia witnessed perhaps the greatest period of private collecting. Stimulated by the Arts and Crafts movement, which valued handmade objects of natural materials, many people between 1880 and 1915 sought out Indian baskets, blankets, and pots. None, however, collected on the scale of Heye.

HEYE AND THE MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN (1897–1957)

Like many museums, the Museum of the American Indian has a prehistory, prior to its founding and subsequent opening. From a single Navajo hide shirt picked up casually in Arizona in 1897, Heye had, by 1914, become a full-time collector.[11] Two years later, he formally incorporated his private collection as a public museum, but it took until 1922 before the exhibits opened to the public. Without doubt, the 1920s were the museum's "heyday," seeing the most extensive collecting, the opening of the public exhibits, and the erection of a storage building (called the Research Branch or Annex) in the Bronx in 1926. In discussing the museum under Heye, it may be useful to first consider features of the objects he collected before turning to his staff and his relation to contemporary anthropology.

In regard to their regional scope, Heye decided to focus his holdings only on the American continents, not the entire world, as most anthropology museums did. Yet, as Kidwell notes, when Heye started, American museums were actually losing interest in North American Indians.[12] The situation varied, however, from region to region, and for anthropological subdisciplines. At the two largest natural history museums, in New York and Chicago, collecting on the Northwest Coast did taper off by about 1905, but for the Plains it continued for another decade. For the Southwest, which is probably the most heavily collected region of Native America, it has never really stopped since the Smithsonian started in 1879. Compared to these other regions, the East tended to be ignored, but this was one area that Heye emphasized.

Unlike the many smaller personal collectors of American Indian artifacts, Heye extended his American scope from the United States to the rest of North, Central, and South America. The Spanish-American War of 1898 generated an interest in Latin America among American anthropology museums, and with his many expeditions to Mexico, the Caribbean, and South America, Heye was, in fact, a pioneer of this trend.

Anthropological collections come from two very different sources: ethnographic objects obtained directly or indirectly from Native owners and archaeological specimens, which are generally removed from the ground. It is an interesting and somewhat surprising fact that Heye's main collecting interest was archaeology.[13] Most American museums of the time focused on ethnology, if only because these objects tended to be more colorful and varied and thus popular with visitors. There were also more theoretical reasons. For instance, Alfred Kroeber at Berkeley shunned archaeology because he believed that Native Californians had not changed much during what he thought was their relatively short time in the region. Heye, on the other hand, was particularly interested in the Indian past. One consequence of this focus is that—like other museums with important archaeological collections, such as Harvard's Peabody or Penn—the total size of his collection was vastly inflated compared to those composed only of ethnography. There are several reasons for this: these objects often consist of refuse and other kinds of remains; they can be obtained *en masse* through excavation; and, perhaps most importantly, the objects generally do not need to be individually purchased from a Native owner, who may still be using the object. Finally, collecting trends for archaeology were also somewhat distinct from ethnography. For many regions, this collecting peaked in the 1930s (in the 1950s, for

California), often following in the wake of development projects such as roads, dams, and buildings. Again, Heye's activity fits these trends.

Heye's artifactual sources, as in most anthropological museums, were diverse. Some objects he collected directly from Native people or, on occasion, on an archaeological expedition. He purchased many artifacts, especially ethnographic objects, from dealers, both local ones encountered on his trips—such as Grace Nicholson in California and William A. Newcombe in British Columbia—and merchants in distant cities such as London and Paris. The bulk of Heye's collections, especially the archaeology, came from his sponsored expeditions. Following the practice of the time, he also made exchanges with other museums (e.g., the Smithsonian, Pennsylvania, Field Museum, the private museum of Rudolf Haffenreffer).[14] And as his museum became better known, particularly after 1930, he accepted donations from like-minded patrons and collectors.

To a greater degree than others, Heye's was a collection of collections. As a wealthy individual with a passion for rapidly building a huge collection, Heye was well known for his purchase of large, existing collections, as opposed to the more usual method of acquiring objects one by one. He began the practice in 1903, when he bought an assemblage of Southwestern archaeological pottery. It was this purchase that signaled his intention to expand his activity from a personal to a more scientific assemblage. Among the benefits of this practice was his acquisition of very old ethnographic collections, full of items that were no longer obtainable in Native communities. Even when negotiating for single items, Heye tended to "buy in bulk," and his "vacuum cleaner" approach has been criticized for netting large quantities of undocumented, damaged, and unattractive objects. As curator Mary Jane Lenz notes, however, this practice may actually increase the collections' research value. For, as Franz Boas maintained, anthropology shares with natural science an interest in the typical and in the full range of variation, as opposed to art's focus on individuality. Boas would also have agreed with Heye's desire that the "material must be old, no tourist material."[15]

One sign of Heye's disciplinary identifications was his creation in 1903 of a formal, written catalogue, and he continued to personally catalogue every object until his death.[16] The nature and degree of this documentation varied, however. Heye was notorious for his supposed lack of interest in such documentation, but the reality seems to contradict that idea.

On the one hand, archaeologist Samuel Lothrop reported that he often recorded guesses as fact, and one consequence of Heye's frequent purchases of existing collections was that documentation was often lost.[17] On the other hand, Heye stressed to his collectors the necessity for field tags. In his correspondence with art dealer Julius Carlebach, Heye repeatedly insisted on documentation. As he wrote in 1953, "The point of view for purchasing an ethnological piece is entirely different from the artistic point of view than it is from the scientific one," and he threatened to return some pieces unless he could get their provenience documentation.[18] In support of the research value of his collections, Heye also amassed relevant photographs, archives, and books (held by the separate but related Huntington Free Library in the Bronx).

Turning now to Heye's human and disciplinary context, we note that he maintained an ambivalent relation to the museum anthropology of his time. In 1907, after building a sizable collection, he joined in a cooperative arrangement with the University of Pennsylvania Museum. In exchange for public gallery space, "duplicate" specimens, and museum processing of his objects, Heye funded collecting expeditions and several staff positions.[19] The director assumed that in time these collections would be donated to Penn. In 1916, however, Heye withdrew his collections from Philadelphia in order to found his own museum in New York. When Boas—who had left the American Museum of Natural History in 1905 for a full-time professorship at Columbia—heard that Heye was about to establish his museum, he encouraged Heye to merge his collections with the large American Indian holdings at the Natural History Museum or to found a university museum at Columbia. Heye declined, citing his desire for an independent operation.[20] We must conclude that Heye supported Penn when he benefited from the relationship but rejected collaboration with Columbia when he had become large and experienced enough to go it alone.[21]

An analysis of Heye's roster of field collectors and professional staff is one of the clearest indications of his relationship to contemporary anthropology. Among his more prominent collectors, all on the permanent staff, were Marshall H. Saville, George H. Pepper, Mark R. Harrington, Frederick W. Hodge, and Samuel K. Lothrop. Heye hired Pepper and Harrington as curatorial assistants while his collections were at Penn.[22] Not surprisingly, however, most of the staff were hired after 1916, when Heye had access to funding from his fellow trustees.

Saville (1867–1935) and Pepper (1873–1924) have been credited with being Heye's anthropological mentors, and while this may be strictly true, both were about the same age as their patron (born 1874), who was in his twenties when he started to collect.[23] Significantly, both had worked at the American Museum with Frederic W. Putnam (who was serving simultaneously as director of the Harvard Peabody Museum), and both were archaeologists, Saville solely and Pepper primarily.[24]

Saville studied anthropology at Harvard, working at the Peabody with Putnam in Mesoamerica. In 1894 he followed his mentor to the American Museum, again focusing on Central America, and in 1903 he joined the faculty of Columbia University.[25] After working with Heye in 1907 on an expedition to Ecuador, Saville joined the MAI staff in 1918, serving at both the MAI and Columbia until his retirement in 1932. Pepper also worked with Putnam at both the American Museum and Harvard. After a 1904 expedition for Heye and another with Saville in 1907, Pepper was hired as curatorial assistant at the University of Pennsylvania in 1909. From 1910 until his death in 1924, Pepper worked for Heye. He was known for his collecting in the Southwest, archaeological as well as ethnographic.

M. R. Harrington (1882–1971), who collected more than anyone on Heye's staff, was yet another Putnam protégé.[26] At the American Museum until 1903, he came to know both Saville and Pepper, as well as Boas, who guided his 1908 masters thesis. Hired as one of Heye's curatorial assistants at Penn, Harrington worked for Heye from 1911 until leaving for the Southwest Museum in 1928.

In addition to Saville, Heye hired two leading archaeologists: Frederick W. Hodge and Samuel K. Lothrop. Clearly the most prestigious appointment Heye ever made, Hodge came to the MAI in 1918 from the Smithsonian's Bureau of American Ethnology. At the museum, he served as assistant director and editor of the publication series until 1932.[27] The independently wealthy Lothrop was a specialist in Latin America, especially Mesoamerica. After earning his doctorate in anthropology from Harvard in 1921, he served on Heye's staff between 1924 and 1930 and was later associated with Harvard.

Several other notable anthropologists worked with Heye, although often for only short periods. Alanson B. Skinner was a specialist in the ethnology of the Indians of the East, especially the Great Lakes. After service at the American Museum (1907–15), he worked for Heye between 1915 and 1920, and again in 1924–25.[28] Jesse L. Nusbaum, known for his work in the Southwest, was employed by the MAI from May 1919 to June 1921. Ethnobotanist Melvin R. Gilmore, with a 1914 doctorate in botany, served on the staff from 1923 to 1928.

In characterizing these men, one notes that few of them were among the leading anthropologists of their day.[29] Although some had university training, few held doctorates (among the permanent staff, only Lothrop and Gilmore did).[30] In fact, many of Heye's field agents had no college at all and little formal training: for example, preparator William C. Orchard, staff assistant Charles O. Turbyfill, and staff photographer Edwin F. Coffin, all of whom made field collections.[31] Heye actually seems to have favored such self-trained men, just as he was self-trained in anthropology. In fact, when declining to join his museum with Boas and Columbia, Heye spoke of his support for the education of the general public over university training.[32] Admittedly, this was a time of transition in anthropology, as the discipline gradually professionalized. None of the early practitioners could have received a degree in the subject, and Heye's support enabled many talented men to obtain important field experience. The contributions of two men—Skinner and Pepper—were muted due to their early deaths: at forty and fifty-one, respectively.

In addition to his permanent staff, headquartered in New York, Heye funded many local collectors on a more or less regular basis. Although these men made their livings through other professions, they were often quite serious in their ethnographic collecting. Two of the most significant were William Wildschut, a Dutch-born businessman living in Billings, Montana, who collected among the Crow (1918–29), and Edward H. Davis, a rancher and hotelier from southern California, who made diverse collections from the Greater Southwest (1916–33).

Also among Heye's contract collectors were several Boasian anthropologists: Frank G. Speck, Samuel A. Barrett, and Thomas T. Waterman.[33] Notably, each collected for relatively short periods and relatively early in their careers (with the exception of Speck, who sent Heye objects for almost twenty years [1910-29]).

Broadening our view from the museum to the university, we note that Heye had no effective ties to the academy. It is true, as Kidwell claims, that he subsidized academic programs at Penn and Columbia, but this support was short-lived.[34] Instead his primary support of academic anthropology came through his funding of a publications program, under the editorship of Frederick Hodge.

This freedom from academia was double-edged. As Lathrop notes, this was a time when most anthropologists "were tied up by teaching."[35] For someone wanting to rapidly amass collections, full-time fieldwork was certainly desirable. On the other hand, the lack of students was an issue in the museum's gradual isolation. Not being at a university or effectively supporting university programs after the founding of his museum, Heye's institution succumbed to the fundamental problem suffered by all museums: they could not use the ready supply of new students for recruitment and to spread their influence. Without successive generations of new students, they could not easily reproduce themselves.

Heye, however, did have a distinctive, though informal, relationship to the anthropology of the time. It should be obvious that many of his staff had ties with Frederic W. Putnam (either at the American Museum or Harvard Peabody) or with the Smithsonian. They were not part of the circle of Boas at Columbia, who would soon come to dominate American anthropology. It is surely noteworthy that there were no real Boasians on the permanent staff, with the possible exceptions of Pepper and Skinner. Although Boas knew both from the American Museum, they were protégés of Putnam. And although Lothrop entered the program after Putnam's retirement, he was also a product of Harvard. As historian George Stocking maintains, there was a broad coalition between Boston (Harvard) and Washington (Smithsonian).[36] One of its traits was a concentration on archaeology, Heye's collecting focus. Boas in New York was known for his teaching in ethnology and language. Of Heye's staff collectors, only Harrington, Pepper, and Skinner did significant ethnographic collecting, and for the former two, it was secondary to their archaeological work.

Not surprisingly, the most direct personal context for Heye was his fellow trustees, old friends who, like him, were members of New York's elite.[37] All donated objects as well as funds. Among them were James B. Ford, a vice-president of the U.S. Rubber Company; Harmon B. Hendricks, the owner of a metal-works; and Minor C. Keith, the founder of the United Fruit Company, which had substantial land holdings in Honduras. The most important, however, was Archer M. Huntington, son of railroad tycoon Collis P. Huntington. It was Huntington who had encouraged Heye to incorporate the museum by offering him land on Audubon Terrace, in upper Manhattan, where Huntington planned a cultural center consisting of the Hispanic Society, American Numismatic

Society, American Geographical Society, American Academy of Arts and Letters, as well as the Museum of the American Indian.

The decades of depression and war (1930–45) were almost literally the dark ages of American museum anthropology. Most of the great collections were fairly static and neglected during this period. The American Museum, for example, focused on impressive dioramas and displays of dinosaurs; yet even it suffered during this period. In fact, for Heye the Depression started a year earlier, in 1928, with the almost simultaneous deaths of two of his most important trustees, Ford and Hendricks. Although both left generous bequests, these could not replace the substantial outright funds they had previously donated. With the loss of this income, Heye was forced to choose between collecting and his scientific staff.[38] He decided to lay off almost the entire curatorial staff and to end scientific work. As several commentators have noted, this was a clear expression of Heye's priorities.

Some collecting continued, however, in the succeeding years. By the early 1930s, Heye was sending out modest expeditions, primarily for archaeology.[39] Even more important, he took the opportunity of hard times for other museums and collectors for purchasing significant existing collections. These were cheaper to acquire because they did not need staff to gather them. On the other hand, at times he was forced to do his own deaccessioning. In the early 1940s, Heye sold parts of his collections, especially Eskimo and Northwest Coast pieces, to local dealers.

While other museums gradually recovered after World War II, especially for disciplines other than anthropology, Heye's museum did not. The Museum of the American Indian never regained the dynamism and activity it had achieved during the 1920s. Moreover, when Heye began his collections, museums were the prime institutional home to anthropology, but by 1930 they had been largely supplanted by university programs. The rise and fall of Heye's fortunes coincided with the curtailment of his museum, further contributing to its growing marginalization.

AFTER HEYE: CRISES AT THE MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN (1957–89)

Although the fate of Heye's museum after his death was to some extent special and unique, in many respects it participated in dominant trends in the collecting and display of Native American artifacts. Most fundamental, perhaps, was the gradual cessation of large-scale collecting, especially among the largest, eastern museums. The collecting that did continue was mostly of newly made objects by smaller institutions in the West.

In the absence of new additions, these accumulated collections began to attract the attention of researchers. There seems to be little evidence that Heye's collections were so used during his lifetime, despite mentions in museum publications of such research.[40] Heye's interest seemed to be on accumulation for study in an indefinite future. In this, however, his museum was like most of the great anthropology collections made in the early twentieth century. This was a period of acquisition, not one of researcher study of museum collections. This came only in the 1960s, with a retrospective view of Native American history and a growing appreciation for the uses of these accumulated collections (see later discussion).[41]

Like the MAI, the largest anthropological collections in the East—most notably those at the "big three" natural history museums (New York's American Museum of Natural History, Chicago's Field Museum, and Washington's Smithsonian)—left their Native American exhibits virtually unchanged (with the exception of the Field's Arctic and Northwest Coast Hall, opened in 1982).

Instead, the "center of gravity" regarding Native American collections shifted west, especially to smaller museums such as the Heard Museum in Phoenix and to the art museums of cities such as Denver or Seattle, which are associated with strong regional Native cultures and, more important, strong markets. For example, the Heard has thrived because of the influx of collectors and wealth to the Sun Belt. As in many western museums, closer to substantial Indian territories, here Indians are seen as part of the local, regional identity. Over the twentieth century, there has been a decline in the somewhat colonialist domination of metropolitan museums, except perhaps in some of the great eastern art museums.

With the death of Heye, the crisis at the MAI was partly financial but primarily institutional. The museum was never able to overcome the financial problems that had first set in around 1928. One of the inherent structural problems of a single-patron museum is the difficulty of continuation when that support wanes (see next section). Although Heye had adequate funding from his fellow trustees during the 1920s, he was not able to replace them, and his own finances dimmed over time.

Administrative succession is a problem for all institutions, but it is even more critical with a personally founded and funded museum. The Museum of the American Indian has had relatively few directors in its almost-ninety-year history: Heye (1916–56), Edwin K. Burnett (1956–60), Frederick J. Dockstader (1960–75), Roland W. Force (1977–90), and W. Richard West Jr. (1990–present). With the exception of the interim appointment of Burnett, each director has represented a significant departure from the practices of his predecessor.

Burnett clearly represented a temporary solution. With no academic credentials, he had been the museum librarian and Heye's assistant. Dockstader, on the other hand, came with a doctorate from Case Western Reserve University (1951). He started out as a breath of fresh air, refurbishing the exhibits and publishing several books on the collection, but Dockstader's later tenure was marred by a host of museological problems: claims of unethical deaccessioning of objects, a lack of inventory control, and unchanging displays and a consequent lack of visitors to a site in an unattractive neighborhood.[42] Force, a Pacific ethnologist but an experienced museum director, was hired to try to resolve these accumulated problems.[43]

Like all museums, Heye's institution has to be considered in relation to others of its locality. Considering the issue of "urban ecology," we may ask, To what extent did the MAI act as a local institution, catering to local audiences, and to what extent did it serve a national role? The great cultural complex on Audubon Terrace envisioned by MAI trustee Archer Huntington never matched their founders' dreams. Despite its great size, Heye's museum had little relation to the other great Native American collection at the American Museum of Natural History or to the important but smaller one at the Brooklyn Museum. In fact, it never received the attention or visitorship that these did. One would imagine that many of its visitors were from out of town.

One solution to the MAI's problems was to merge with another institution. Several possibilities were explored, but the most serious offer was from the American Museum of Natural History. Ironically enough, Boas had suggested the very thing when Heye founded his museum back in 1916, but Heye rejected this, having been in partnership once before, with Penn. Yet, by the 1970s, this seemed like a compelling approach to the trustees. The American Museum was pushing for it, proposing the merger of their two American Indian collections. But this was ultimately rejected by the Heye administration; as before, they thought that the merger would not be on their terms or in their best interests.

HEYE'S MUSEUM: PRIVATE AND PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

During his lifetime, Heye's collection went though several changes in ownership and direction. While it may have begun as a purely personal passion, upon the museum's incorporation in 1916, it was required to serve public functions as part of its charter. In this, the Museum of the American Indian differed from other private museums, which may not be open to the public or, if so, rarely have a large professional staff, a complete catalogue, and a publication series. Clearly, Heye was modeling his institution on those such as the American Museum or the University of Pennsylvania. Heye's fellow trustees seem to have supported him completely, allowing him to serve as director for the remainder of his life. While his funds could not fully support all the institution's activities, the Museum of the American Indian functioned as Heye's personal fiefdom until his death.

Heye's museum was certainly the largest "private" collection of American Indian artifacts, but it was not alone. Other significant collections of the early twentieth century included those founded by Rudolf Haffenreffer (Mount Hope, Rhode Island), Dwight and Maie B. Heard (Phoenix, Arizona), Mary C. Wheelwright (Santa Fe, New Mexico), Millicent Rogers (Taos, New Mexico), Mary and Francis Crane (Florida Keys, now in Denver), and Sheldon Jackson (Sitka, Alaska).[44] Heye's friend Rudolf Haffenreffer was clearly his most similar exemplar. Even more common were prominent art museums dominated by a founding collector. Among the best known are the institutions founded by Isabella Stewart Gardner in Boston, Henry Clay Frick in New York, and Albert C. Barnes in Merion, Pennsylvania; and there are many more.

As diverse as they are, these museums share important features. First, as noted by historian Kathleen McCarthy, relatively marginalized fields such as anthropology or folk art or modern art often attract patrons who are themselves marginalized, such as women, the young, or those living in distant regions. (Of course, all this is relative; almost all subjects of collecting go through cycles of interest.)[45] In such arenas there was less competition from the wealthiest and most prestigious collector-patrons. While Heye and his trustees were not as marginal as some, certainly their money went further for the purchase of American Indian artifacts than it would have for Old Master paintings.

Personal direction also encourages idiosyncrasy and freedom from disciplinary boundaries. With his control, Heye did not have to be exactly anthropological, although he followed this discipline more than any other. Heye's single-minded control of the institution, from direction to cataloguing, also meant that he did not fully make use of trained professionals. Such freedom also carries with it a negative side, a lack of support from that discipline. When Heye encountered financial and then staffing problems in the Depression, he was largely on his own.

Another problem that affects many such museums that have grown out of a founder's vision is that they often find themselves in now-undesirable locations.[46] The Museum of the American Indian was never able to overcome its location in Manhattan's far uptown. Rudolf Haffenreffer's museum in Mount Hope, on the Rhode Island coast, is far from the Brown University campus to which it joined in 1955. The Southwest Museum, in the Highland Park section of Los Angeles, is perhaps the closest parallel to the MAI. The oldest museum in the city, the Southwest Museum, was founded by Charles F. Lummis in 1907, although most of its finances came from others. It too had accumulated many fine collections over its distinguished history, but by the end of the twentieth century it was not attracting the funding and visitors it needed. Trustees at both the Southwest Museum and the MAI were confronted by a dilemma: on the one hand, they needed the assistance of a larger museum (or a very rich patron), while on the other, neither desired to lose its autonomy and distinguished history. Finally, in 2003, the Southwest Museum became a unit of the Autry National Center (formerly the Autry Museum of Western Heritage).

Fundamentally, many of these private museums have a problem of succession, in the broadest sense. Unlike the U.S. Constitution, it seems that it is not so easy for personally founded museums to formulate both a vision and a means of support in order to extend their institutions beyond the lives of their original owners. In some cases—such as the museums founded by Phoebe Hearst or Gene Autry, to name two diverse examples—the museum successfully redefines its mission and the institution grows beyond the visions of its founders. When it does not, like the MAI, it often declines. Although there are some notable exceptions—such as the Heard on a larger scale and the Wheelwright on a smaller scale — most of these private museums have survived by merging with a larger and stronger institution. This, in the end, was the fate of Heye's museum.

A NATIONAL MUSEUM (1989–PRESENT)

In 1989 the Museum of the American Indian became the National Museum of the American Indian, as a part of the Smithsonian. Its new director, W. Richard West Jr. (Southern Cheyenne), has served from 1990 to the present.[47]

The story of the Museum of the American Indian is very much an account of institutional changes. All museums have life histories, with their ups and downs, but for the Heye, it was particularly severe and dramatic, a rapid and great high and then a protracted low followed by a radical transformation. Its ownership and control moved from totally private to almost completely public, the extremes of corporate embodiment.

This change in ownership also coincided with temporal shifts in Native American cultures, their relation to the dominant society, and the collection and study of their artifacts. These larger trends would have affected the MAI whatever its status, as they have all Native American collections. As suggested by anthropologist Edward Bruner, all ethnography embodies narrative strategies. For all those concerned with Native American culture—Native as well as non-Native — there has been a shift over the twentieth century from a story of vanishing cultures to accounts of survival and resistance.[48] Beginning in the late 1960s and coming to fruition through the 1970s was the Red Power movement, broadly defined. Like other "minority groups," Indians now demanded control of their representation. Very little of this was represented at the MAI during the Dockstader years. In 1977, after Dockstader's departure, things started to change as the first of thirteen Indian trustees were appointed: George H. J. Abrams (Iroquois) and Vine Deloria Jr. (Dakota).[49]

In considering the place of the Heye collections at the Smithsonian, one must examine the Smithsonian's other acquisitions of entire museums, for this was not the first time that the institution had grown by merger. There had been the much earlier donation of the Asian art collection of Charles L. Freer (donated in 1906 and opened in 1923) and the later one by Arthur M. Sackler (donated in 1982 and opened in 1987). Even closer parallels were the 1967 takeover of the Cooper-Hewitt collection of design and decorative arts in New York (founded in 1897) and particularly the 1979 acquisition of Washington's Museum of African Art (founded in 1964 and opened on the Mall in 1987).

While relatively rare, such complete mergers are not unusual in the museum world. In many cases, the unions are perceived as filling in perceived gaps in collecting. For instance, in 1976 the Museum of Primitive Art, founded by Nelson Rockefeller in 1957, joined with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which had not previously collected the tribal arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas. Encyclopedic museums like the Met seem to be constantly adding entire departments of photography, modern art, or "primitive" art, objects that had not been defined as art at the museum's founding in the mid-nineteenth century.

The acquisition of entirely new collections and museums at the Smithsonian must be considered in light of the institution's constant redefinition of its mission. Its vast collections and the museums that house them have been especially fluid over their more-than-150-year history.[50] Even at its birth, following the bequest of British scientist James Smithson, its fundamental mission was uncertain and contested. In time, the Smithsonian was defined as the national museum. As the collections grew in size and scope, they were constantly subdivided and rearranged. Whole new subjects were declared desirable; for instance, until Freer donated his Asian art, the Smithsonian had not formally collected fine art, and it was only in 1964 that a museum of American history was opened. Coupled with these dramatic changes, however, is a great deal of institutional inertia, due partly to a lack of funding but more to the accumulated bureaucracy and the restrictions of congressional support.

One of the interesting consequences of this tangled institutional history is that in many cases the Smithsonian has accumulated multiple museums that collect and display the same kind of objects. Again, the primary parallel is with the African and Asian collections. In these cases, new museums—formed from new collections—opened in 1987: the National Museum of African Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery for Asian art. African and Asian artifacts had long been separately collected and displayed as ethnology at the National Museum of Natural History. The Smithsonian attitude toward this overlap has been to "let a hundred flowers bloom," that is, to encourage—or at least tolerate—multiple presentations.

The terms of the MAI merger called for the naming of an independent board of trustees. While this may be somewhat unusual at the Smithsonian, it is not unheard of, as the National Gallery is similarly independent. So there was plenty of precedent for keeping the Heye collection separate from the existing and important Native American collection in the anthropology department of the National Museum of Natural History. By maintaining its separate identity, the Heye collection could develop freely, as Heye and the last board of MAI trustees had insisted upon.

There are, however, two major problems with the Smithsonian anthropological approach to Native American cultures. First, like so many of its sister institutions (particularly the largest, in New York and Chicago), it is part of a natural history museum. As noted earlier, such presentations stem largely from colonialist notions that only some humans are part of nature. During the 1970s there were abortive plans for a National Museum of Man, but this idea never got beyond a sign outside the building that read: "National Museum of Natural History" and "National Museum of Man." Separate national museums for anthropology and human cultures are actually the norm in most parts of the world. There are such museums in the capital cities of Canada, Mexico, France, Germany, and Japan, among many others. Even in Britain (where such collections are part of the encyclopedic British Museum), there had been a separate Museum of Mankind from 1970 to 1997.

An even more unfortunate problem was that the American Indian displays at the Natural History Museum remained static for decades, until finally closing in May 2004. In 1999 the museum was able to open African Voices, a new hall of African cultures, but it has not been able to do the same for Native America. The recently closed hall had "ancient" roots, much of it having been prepared by William H. Holmes in 1903. It was revised by John C. Ewers in the mid-1950s, and there were many more minor changes since; but years of planning have not resulted in a new hall.[51] The thoroughly outdated and unappealing gallery was quite a contrast with the new national American Indian museum. The reasons for this inaction are unclear, and are probably multiple, but it seems evident that the ongoing fundraising efforts during the past decade to build the new museum on the Mall competed with and swamped Smithsonian attempts to create a specifically anthropological presentation.[52] More than this, it leaves some very important collections unseen and dangerously unknown by the general public.

This recent spate of ethnically marked museums raises the issue as to who and what determines which groups should be honored at the national museum by their own freestanding institution. Currently, there is ongoing planning for a National Museum of African American History and Culture, but its collections and general relation to the Smithsonian have yet to be determined. Is there any limit to these ethnically delimited museums? Certainly there is a spatial limit on the Mall, home to most of these institutions. In fact, many museums devoted to American ethnic groups, often with "National" in their title, are not part of the Smithsonian and have homes outside of Washington. For instance, the Japanese American National Museum (founded in 1985) is in Los Angeles. The problems of the Museum of the American Indian in New York were fortuitously taken advantage of in Washington, advanced by strong congressional support.

There is a tendency for national anthropology museums, especially in non-Western countries, to have the largest and most comprehensive such collection in the nation. The Smithsonian collection is clearly comparable to the national anthropology museums in the capitals of most large Western countries: Canada (Canadian Museum of Civilization), Mexico (Museo Nacional de Antropología), France (Musée de l'Homme), Germany (Museum für Völkerkunde), and the United Kingdom (the Ethnology Department of the British Museum).

For anthropology, a "national" collection generally implies that the collection is owned by the nation-state, not that it is restricted to objects produced only within the country's borders. Interestingly enough, however, the other American national museums, in Ottawa/Hull and Mexico City, focus on the Native peoples of their country, while the European ones, all associated with major colonial powers, collect from all over the world. The NMAI shares this American focus but includes collections from throughout the Western hemisphere, from Canada to Chile.

COMPARATIVE COLLECTIONS: REGIONAL REPRESENTATION AND SIZE

Many collections of American Indian material are regional museums, focusing on the Native peoples of their local area. This seems to be particularly true in the Southwest, which has the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles, the Museum of Man in San Diego, the Heard in Phoenix, and the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, School of American Research, and Wheelwright Museum in Santa Fe. A regional focus also characterizes most of the state museums in the West. For example, the Hearst Museum at UC Berkeley has the preeminent collection of California Indian material, just as the Burke Museum at the University of Washington focuses on the Northwest Coast and the University of Arizona emphasizes the Southwest.

There are several good reasons for such specialization. As is well known, there are substantial differences among Native American cultures, particularly in art and artifact styles. Taking as an example the dominant form of containers, we have wooden boxes on the Northwest Coast, plant fiber baskets in California, clay pots in the Southwest, and hide bags on the Plains. This diversity makes it hard to generalize. More practically, if an individual or small institution has limited funds, it is easier to build and manage a comprehensive regional collection than one for the entire continent.

This is true even for the largest institutions. Only a handful of museums have substantial representation of the entire continent, let alone all of North, Central, and South America. And, in fact, the Heye does not have the totally encyclopedic coverage that one may think. According to one former curator, "There are collections from all major culture areas of the Americas," but while "virtually all tribes of the United States" are represented, from Canada, it is "most," and from Mexico, Central, and South America, it is "a smaller number."[53]

The National Museum of the American Indian may be the largest devoted completely to that subject but it is especially difficult to determine this. First, one would need to compare the sizes of just the Native American components of the largest collections, but such figures are not readily available. More importantly, it is almost impossible to determine the size of especially large collections. This is due in part to the sheer difficulty of the procedure, but a fundamental reason is the varying and almost arbitrary definitions of what a single object is.[54] For this reason, museums often give two totals: the number of catalogue entries, usually more definite, and the number of individual objects in the collection, more often an estimate.[55]

Among collections comparable to the NMAI's (with about 890,000 objects), at the top in the United States are the three largest natural history museums, those in New York, Washington, and Chicago. Of the university anthropology museums, only the largest, the Harvard Peabody Museum, has strengths in every region.[56] Those with a somewhat smaller size and scope include the university museums at Pennsylvania and Berkeley and the natural history museum at Milwaukee. Among art museums, the clear leader is the Denver Art Museum (ca. 16,000), which, though relatively smaller, excels aesthetically and in documentation. In addition to the NMAI, these eight institutions are the largest with comprehensive American Indian collections.

DISCIPLINARY DISTINCTIONS: ART AND ANTHROPOLOGY

As James Clifford reminds us, anthropology and art are but two discourses of Western disciplinary culture, whatever real differences they may have.[57] And both are apt to vary profoundly from the original conceptions of the makers and users of Native American objects. In Heye's day, few art museums collected Native American artifacts, unlike the museums of history, natural history, and anthropology. Due to specific historical situations, such artifacts were included in some smaller museums, such as those of Brooklyn and Cincinnati, but the art museums of the largest cities, such as New York, Boston, or Chicago, collected American Indian art not at all or only by accident. The first art museum to specialize in Native American objects was, not coincidentally, located in the heart of Indian country—the Denver Art Museum, beginning in 1925.[58]

Heye had no doubts about his allegiance to anthropology. As he annunciated in his mission statement,

> This Museum occupies a unique position among institutions, in that its sole aim is to gather and to preserve for students everything useful in illustrating and elucidating the anthropology of the aborigines of the Western Hemisphere, and to disseminate by means of its publications the knowledge thereby gained.[59]

To accomplish this aim, Heye hired many trained anthropologists and established a department of physical anthropology.[60]

Yet all around him the museum treatment of Indian objects was changing. The primitivist revolution begun by Picasso with African art was spreading to America. One of the pioneers was René d'Harnoncourt, director of the U.S. Indian Arts and Crafts Board and later director of New York's Museum of Modern Art. In 1941, d'Harnoncourt and

Frederic Douglas, curator of Denver's collection, put together an influential exhibit at MoMA: Indian Arts of the United States. At the same time, Heye was unwittingly encouraging this movement. As Heye was deaccessioning Eskimo and Northwest Coast objects to Julius Carlebach and other dealers, they were eagerly snapped up by a group of émigré French surrealist artists living in New York during World War II. They, and the abstract expressionists who came after them, made great claims for the high aesthetic status of these objects.[61]

The current widespread presence of Native American objects in art museums is a relatively recent development, which began in the mid-1960s.[62] This positive reevaluation has certainly affected how Heye's collections are viewed by the general public. The NMAI's exhibits are now reviewed by the art critics of the *New York Times*, and, more importantly, the very same kinds of things on display in its galleries now fetch high prices among private collectors. The millions of dollars that it took to construct the new NMAI building on the Mall would never have been possible if these objects were still defined as anthropological specimens.

As we have seen, the Museum of the American Indian's freedom from a natural history perspective has long allied the museum with the several freestanding anthropology museums. On the other hand, its limited focus on Native America has given it a kind of cultural unity more often found in history museums; the NMAI is not nearly as cross-cultural as most anthropological museums. In this, it resembles the scholarly field of Native American studies, which incorporates multiple academic disciplines. Most important, it recognizes the validity of alternative Native American realities. In the realm of museums, the Museum of the American Indian is thus more like a tribal museum.

THE TRIBAL PERSPECTIVE

As the NMAI has been defined by the enabling legislation and the practice of Richard West's administration, the Heye collection has became a fundamentally different kind of institution in regard to Native peoples. Given the emphasis of the other essays in this special issue, I will not dwell on the current practices of the museum, but a few comparative comments are useful.

From all accounts, Heye had little interest in contemporary Indians; it was the Native American past that motivated him. As one associate recalled: "He didn't give a hang about Indians and he never seemed to have heard about their problems in present-day society."[63] In his own practice he seems to have embodied some of the larger society's ambivalence toward American Indians, simultaneously destroying and preserving Aboriginal cultures. On a number of occasions, he was involved in shady ethics. In 1914 he and his team were arrested—but acquitted—for grave robbing in New Jersey. On the other hand, he did hire at least one Native American: Amos Oneroad (Dakota), who became a close collaborator with Alanson Skinner.[64] Unfortunately, the best example of Heye's progressive behavior was not what it appeared to be. In 1938 he agreed to repatriate a medicine bundle to the Water Buster Clan of the Hidatsa.[65] It seems, however, that Heye could not bear to part with it, as he gave back generic bundle contents. In 1977 the museum returned what remained of the original. One might note that if Heye may have been a little more disrespectful than most, such practices were relatively common at the time. Convinced that American Indians would soon be extinct, culturally if not physically, even Boas uncovered burials.

It is certainly in the role of a Native voice that the National Museum most differs from its ancestor. Following the spirit of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990, which does not apply to the Smithsonian, the museum has a policy of expedited repatriation of skeletal and sacred collections. These archaeological collections, of such interest to Heye, are now items that many Native people think should not be in museums, and relatively few are exhibited. For those sacred objects that it preserves, the museum tries to care for them according to Native protocols.[66] The NMAI offers a wide range of services to Native communities, and in this it is carrying forth and expanding several outreach programs that the Smithsonian had been sponsoring since 1973.[67] Among them are onsite programs for student interns, artist research and artist residencies, museum professionals, elementary and secondary students, as well as offsite community workshops and a wide of media productions in radio, books, sound recordings, and the Internet. Museum staff at the NMAI liken this to their "fourth museum," apart from the actual buildings in New York, Maryland, and Washington.[68]

While the NMAI clearly operates according to many Native programs and procedures, to what extent can this be mandated for a national museum, funded, at least in part, by the federal government? The fundamental direction, as one might expect, was laid out in the establishing legislation, which calls for more than half of the trustees to be Native American.[69] Thus, Indians have a deciding say in the conception and running of the museum. They could conceivably choose a non-Native director and staff, but their basic priorities are clear. Another factor in opening up the museum to outside influences is the fact that, like the rest of the Smithsonian, the federal government does not fund the museum's total budget. In fact, the NMAI was required by the Congress to seek outside funding for its Mall building.[70]

In some ways, one may view the NMAI as a kind of national tribal museum. As a type of museum, tribal museums are a particularly recent development.[71] Although there was a Cherokee tribal museum as early as 1828, most existing tribal museums have been founded since the 1960s. Today there are more than two hundred tribal institutions in the United States and Canada. With the notable exception of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center in Connecticut (opened in 1998), most suffer the problems of many smaller museums, such as a lack of collections, trained staff, funding, and facilities. With its relatively abundant resources, the National Museum can be of enormous assistance to its sister institutions.

Yet, because the NMAI is a single, national institution, located in Washington, it must be something few other tribal museums are: multi-tribal. It cannot simply present one Native viewpoint, given the tremendous diversity within Native American cultures. One way out of this dilemma is a certain focus on the local Native peoples who originally inhabited the museum's homes in Washington and New York. For instance, the café in the Mall building is called Mitsitam, which means "let's eat" in Piscataway and Delaware. The other approach is multiple perspectives. For instance, the cafe contains five stations, each featuring a different geographical and culinary tradition.

A fundamental question for any museum is the identity of its audience. Are the museum's programs directed primarily to those inside or outside the culture being represented? Like many tribal museums, the NMAI embodies an institutional tension, serving as a venue for Native insiders to present their cultures to the many non-Native outsiders who visit the Mall museums. Even if it is largely staffed by Natives and many of its programs are for Natives, as a national institution it has to speak to the entire nation and world.

There are a few things that the old Heye Foundation shares with the new National Museum of the American Indian. Some are relatively trivial, such as the ethnobotanical garden at the Bronx research branch, which anticipated the current plantings on the Mall.[72] Others are more structural and substantial. The Museum of the American Indian has always been big and wholly concerned with Native Americans. Because of the size of the collection, both versions have separate buildings for exhibits and collections storage. Since the time of Heye, the museum's trustees have insisted on a relative autonomy, which survives even as a branch of the Smithsonian. In this, it has been able to remain somewhat free of disciplinary categories such as art, anthropology, or history.

On the other hand, as many have noted, the museum would probably be unrecognizable to Heye.[73] Instead of his focus on a distant past represented by non-Natives, the current museum emphasizes the present as seen by American Indians themselves.

Thus, the conclusion to my initial question is that while the National Museum of the American Indian may not be a completely new thing, it is essentially unique. It resembles a wide variety of museums, containing aspects of these others, but there is really nothing exactly like it, even in other countries. Because of this, I suppose the conclusion must be that no matter what else happens in its long history, it will never be dull.

NOTES

For assistance in the preparation of this essay, I would like to thank Malu Beltrán, Curtis M. Hinsley Jr., and Amy Lonetree.

1. Mary Jane Lenz, "George Gustav Heye: The Museum of the American Indian," *Spirit of a Native Place: Building the National Museum of the American Indian*, ed. Duane Blue Spruce (Washington DC: National Museum of the American Indian; National Geographic Society, 2004), 87.

2. In this essay, I use the abbreviation MAI (Museum of the American Indian, also known as the Heye Foundation) to differentiate it from NMAI (National Museum of the American Indian), as part of the Smithsonian.

3. Given the wide scope of this essay, a word is in order on my sources. In addition to specific historical sources, cited below, this essay derives from my thirty-plus years of work in anthropology museums and research on Ameri-

can Indian art and culture. I have worked at the Yale Peabody Museum, Field Museum, Smithsonian, Brooklyn Museum, and Hearst Museum and have conducted extensive archival and collection research in other museums. This essay also draws on the research on Northwest Coast collections embodied in my recent book, *The Storage Box of Tradition: Kwakiutl Art, Anthropologists, and Museums, 1881–1981* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002).

4. There are relatively few published sources on the Museum of the American Indian. Among the useful overviews are "Aims and Objects of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation," *Indian Notes and Monographs*, no. 36 (New York: Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 1929); "The History of the Museum," *Indian Notes and Monographs, Miscellaneous Series*, no. 55 (New York: Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 1956); U. Vincent Wilcox, "The Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation," *American Indian Art Magazine* 3, no. 2 (1978): 40–49, 78, 79, 81; Tim Johnson, ed., *Spirit Capture: Photographs from the National Museum of the American Indian* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998); Duane Blue Spruce, ed., *Spirit of a Native Place: Building the National Museum of the American Indian* (Washington DC: National Museum of the American Indian; National Geographic Society, 2004); and the special issue of *American Indian Art Magazine* 29, no. 4 (2004).

5. There is no comprehensive review on Native American collecting, but see Shepard Krech III and Barbara Hail, eds., *Collecting Native America, 1870–1960* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999), and Beverly Gordon with Melanie Herzog, *American Indian Art: The Collecting Experience* (Madison: Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1988). For specific regions, see Douglas Cole, *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985); Nancy Parezo, "The Formation of Ethnographic Collections: The Smithsonian Institution in the American Southwest," in *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory*, ed. Michael B. Schiffer, 1–47 (New York: Academic Press, 1987); Don D. Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology: Science and Romanticism in the Southwest, 1846–1930* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000); Marvin Cohodas, *Basket Weavers for the California Curio Trade: Elizabeth and Louise Hickox* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997).

6. Castle McLaughlin, *Arts of Diplomacy: Lewis and Clark's Indian Collection* (Cambridge: Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 2003), 70; Mary Malloy, *Souvenirs of the Fur Trade: Northwest Coast Indian Art and Artifacts Collected by American Mariners, 1788–1844* (Cambridge: Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 2003).

7. Curtis M. Hinsley Jr., *Savages and Scientists: The Smithsonian Institution*

and the Development of American Anthropology, 1846–1910 (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981).

8. In both Seattle and Tucson, however, it was years before the first anthropologist was hired: 1930 for Washington, and 1915 for Arizona (although its director/curator, Byron Cummings, had been trained as a classical archaeologist).

9. Founded somewhat later, in 1932, was the University of New Mexico's Maxwell Museum, Albuquerque, also focusing on the Southwest.

10. Amy Lonetree, "Reckoning with the Past: Indigenous Peoples and Museums," invited lecture, "Women Warriors: Native Historians Advancing the Indigenous Cause and Perspective Conference," Southwest Minnesota State University, Marshall, Minnesota, April 2005.

11. For further details on George G. Heye and his collecting, see J. Alden Mason, "George G. Heye, 1874–1957," *Leaflets of the Museum of the American Indian*, no. 6 (New York: Heye Foundation, 1958); Kevin Wallace, "A Reporter at Large: Slim-Shin's Monument," *New Yorker* 36 (November 19, 1960): 104–46; Clara Sue Kidwell, "Every Last Dishcloth: The Prodigious Collecting of George Gustav Heye," in Krech and Hail, *Collecting Native America*, 232–58; Lenz, "Heye," 86–115; and Edmund Carpenter, "9/3428: Three Chapters from an Unfinished Two-Volume Study of George Heye's Museum of the American Indian," *European Review of Native American Studies* 15, no. 1 (2001): 1–12. The early essays of Mason and Wallace were the principal sources for both Kidwell and Lenz, who are often cited here because of their easier availability.

12. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 236.

13. Mason, "Heye," 13. Cf. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 241; Lenz, "Heye," 93.

14. Lenz, "Heye," 105–6, 95, 106. Franz Boas, "The Occurrence of Similar Inventions in Areas Widely Apart," *Science* 9 (1887): 485–86, reprinted in *The Shaping of American Anthropology, 1883–1911: A Franz Boas Reader*, ed. George W. Stocking Jr. (University of Chicago Press, 1974), 63.

15. Lenz, "Heye," 95, 105. For Boas, see Jacknis, *Storage Box*, 40–43.

16. Lenz, "Heye," 91.

17. Lothrop, "Heye," 67; cf. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 252; Lenz, "Heye," 104–5; Lenz, "Heye," 95.

18. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 252; Lenz, "Heye," 105–6.

19. Eleanor M. King and Bryce P. Little, "George Byron Gordon and the Early Development of The University Museum," *Raven's Journey: The World of Alaska's Native People*, ed. Susan A. Kaplan and Kirstin J. Barsness, 16–53 (Philadelphia: University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 1986). Cf. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 240.

20. Mason, "Heye," 16. Cf. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 236–37, 242–43.

21. When it suited him, Heye did collaborate with other institutions in col-

lecting. For example, in 1924 Heye sent Mark R. Harrington to Lovelock Cave, Nevada, to work with UC Berkeley's Llewellyn L. Loud, and he also jointly funded the excavations of the Smithsonian's Jesse W. Fewkes on St. Vincent and Trinidad.

22. The other two Penn assistants were William C. Orchard and Frank G. Speck. King and Little, "Gordon," 39–40.

23. Mason, "Heye," 13; see Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 236.

24. The most successful anthropological entrepreneur of his time, Frederic W. Putnam (1839–1915) served as director of Harvard's Peabody Museum from 1875 to 1909, while also directing anthropology programs at the Chicago World's Fair (1891–93), the American Museum of Natural History (1894–1903), and the UC Anthropology Museum (1901–9).

25. At the American Museum, Saville served as assistant curator (1894–1905), curator (1905–8), and honorary curator (1908–10).

26. Mason, "Heye," 20. Cf. Lenz, "Heye," 90. From 1911 to 1915, Harrington also served as a curator at Harvard.

27. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 247.

28. Alanson Skinner is mentioned as having attended Columbia and Harvard, but there is no reference to his degrees and no record of a doctorate. Between 1920 and 1924, he worked for the Milwaukee Public Museum.

29. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 247, Lenz, "Heye," 103. Other, less-renowned collectors included Donald A. Cadzow, Theodore de Booy, Thomas Huckerby, and Foster Saville.

30. Another who held a doctorate (in biology) was physical anthropologist Bruno Oetteking, who served Heye officially from 1921 to ca. 1928. Oetteking held a simultaneous faculty appointment with Columbia.

31. An artist from England, Orchard worked briefly for the American Museum before coming to Heye. He was skilled in object restoration and model-making. See Frederick J. Dockstader, "Preface," in *Beads and Beadwork of the American Indian*, by William C. Orchard, Contributions from the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 11 (New York: Museum of the American Indian, 1929; second edition, 1975), 13. Turbyfill, who originally ran a livery stable and hardware store in North Carolina, worked as Heye's general assistant and resident manager of the Research Branch in the Bronx; Wallace, "Slim-Shin." A former race car driver, Coffin first worked for Heye as a chauffeur before showing a talent for photography; see Natasha Bonilla Martinez, "An Indian Americas: NMAI Photographic Archive Documents Indian Peoples of the Western Hemisphere," in Johnson, *Spirit Capture*, 39.

32. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 243.

33. Frank G. Speck (Pennsylvania PhD who studied with Boas, 1908) collected among Eastern tribes; see Natasha Bonilla Martinez, "Camera Shots: Pho-

tographers, Expeditions, and Collections," in Johnson, *Spirit Capture*, 92–97. Samuel A. Barrett (Berkeley PhD, 1908) collected among the Cayapa in Ecuador, 1908–9. Thomas T. Waterman (a Berkeley student who got his PhD at Columbia in 1914) collected among the Puget Sound Salish between 1919 and 1921 while teaching at the University of Washington (1918–20).

34. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 243, 251.

35. Samuel K. Lothrop, "George Gustav Heye: 1874–1956 [*sic*]," *American Antiquity* 23, no. 1 (1957): 66.

36. George W. Stocking Jr., "Ideas and Institutions in American Anthropology: Toward a History of the Interwar Period," in *Selected Papers from the American Anthropologist, 1921–1945*, ed. George W. Stocking Jr. (Washington DC: American Anthropological Association, 1976), 9.

37. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 244.

38. Mason, "Heye," 19–20; cf. Martinez, "An Indian Americas," 45. Trustee Minor Keith died the next year, in 1929.

39. Mason, "Heye," 23. Cf. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 249; Lenz, "Heye," 109.

40. MAI, *History*, 4–5. In fact, one 1929 review went so far as to claim that "The main object of the Museum is not to appeal to the general public, welcome as it will be to view the exhibits; rather it is the aim to afford to serious students every facility for utilizing the collections in their researches" (MAI, *Aims and Objects*, 18). In the end, the MAI probably served Heye more than either the scholarly or general public.

41. William C. Sturtevant, "Museums as Anthropological Data Danks," *Anthropology Beyond the University*, Southern Anthropological Society Proceedings, ed. Alden Redfield, 7 (1973): 40–55.

42. Frederick J. Dockstader, *Indian Art of the Americas* (New York: Museum of the American Indian—Heye Foundation, 1973), *Masterworks from the Museum of the American Indian—Heye Foundation* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1973).

43. These interim years between the death of Heye and the Smithsonian take-over are extensively covered by Roland W. Force in his book *The Heye and the Mighty: Politics and the Museum of the American Indian* (Honolulu: Mechas Press, 1999).

44. While most of these collections developed in place into formal museums, the Crane collection was acquired in 1968 by the Denver Museum of Natural History (now the Denver Museum of Nature and Science). For information on the Crane collection and many of these institutions, see Krech and Hail, *Collecting Native America.*

45. Kathleen D. McCarthy, *Women's Culture: American Philanthropy and Art, 1830–1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 140–41.

46. In the art world, the Barnes Foundation, located in a Philadelphia suburb,

is another well-known example of a museum constrained by its founder's vision. John Anderson, *Art Held Hostage: The Battle over the Barnes Collection* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003).

47. The story of the planning process for the new museum is recounted in George Horse Capture, "The Way of the People," in Blue Spruce, *Spirit*, 31–45.

48. Edward M. Bruner, "Ethnography as Narrative," in *The Anthropology of Experience*, ed. Victor W. Turner and Edward M. Bruner, 139–55 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986).

49. Force, *Heye and the Mighty*, 466–67.

50. James Conaway, *The Smithsonian: 150 Years of Adventure, Discovery, and Wonder* (New York: Knopf, 1995); Steven Lubar and Kathleen M. Kendrick, *Legacies: Collecting America's History at the Smithsonian* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001).

51. The South American gallery was also closed during the summer of 2004, so there are now no Native American displays in the museum. For the hall's history, see John C. Ewers, "Problems and Procedures in Modernizing Ethnological Exhibits," *American Anthropologist* 57, no. 1 (1955): 1–12; John C. Ewers, "A Century of American Indian Exhibits in the Smithsonian Institution," *Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1958* (1959): 513–25; William W. Fitzhugh, "Ambassadors in Sealskins: Exhibiting Eskimos at the Smithsonian," in *Exhibiting Dilemmas: Issues of Representation at the Smithsonian*, ed. Amy Henderson and Adrienne L. Kaeppler, 206–45 (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997). For a comparative case, see Ira Jacknis, "'A Magic Place': The Northwest Coast Indian Hall at the American Museum of Natural History," in *Coming Ashore: Northwest Coast Ethnology, Past and Present*, ed, Marie Mauzé, Michael E. Harkin, and Sergei Kan, 221–50 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

52. Evidently, the Natural History Museum still has plans for a Native American hall but continues to have funding problems. Joel Achenbach, "Within These Walls, Science Yields to Stories," *Washington Post*, September 19, 2004.

53. Nancy B. Rosoff, "Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian, Research Branch," *Anthropological Resources: A Guide to Archival, Library, and Museum Collections*, ed. Lee S. Dutton (New York: Garland, 1999), 270. See also Wilcox, "Museum of the American Indian," 78, 79, 81.

54. At the Hearst Museum, for instance, some sets of Yurok arrows are each given separate catalogue numbers; others, seemingly identical, are given one number with suffixes (a-b-c, etc.) for each object in the set. While theoretically this implies that the first are all individual items, while the latter are part of a functional set, different cataloguing standards and procedures may have been applied over the years. The problem is only magnified when trying to compare one institution to another.

55. Here, for instance, are estimated sizes of the anthropology collections for some of the leading museums: National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian, 472,394 catalogue entries, 2 million objects; Peabody Museum, Harvard University, 450,000 entries, 5 million objects; American Museum of Natural History, 530,000 entries; University of Pennsylvania Museum, 250,000+ entries, 1 million objects; Field Museum, 600,000 entries, 1.5 million objects; Phoebe Hearst Museum, UC Berkeley, 630,000 entries, 3.8 million objects; in addition to the NMAI, 890,000 objects. Taken from respective publications and websites. See also Cornelius Osgood, *Anthropology in Museums of Canada and the United States*, Publication in Museology, no. 7 (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Public Museum, 1979), 71.

56. The museum claims to have more than 100,000 Native American objects, but this figure probably represents catalogue entries, not objects. Barbara Isaac, ed., *The Hall of the North American Indian: Change and Continuity* (Cambridge: Peabody Museum Press, Harvard University, 1990), 2.

57. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 215.

58. Richard Conn, *Native American Art in the Denver Art Museum* (Denver: Denver Art Museum, 1979). For a summary of the interest in American Indian objects by American art museums, see Jacknis, *Storage Box*, 117–34, 188–92.

59. MAI, "Aims and Objects," 3.

60. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 247.

61. Among this group was French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. Ira Jacknis, "A Magic Place," 238.

62. The recent literature on Native American art worlds is huge. See Margaret Dubin, *Native America Collected: The Culture of an Art World* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), especially 83–99, focusing on the inaugural exhibits of the NMAI; Janet Catherine Berlo and Ruth B. Phillips, "Our (Museum) World Turned Upside-Down: Re-Presenting Native American Arts," *Art Bulletin* 77, no. 1 (1995): 6–10.

63. Wallace, "Slim-Shin," 118; see also Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 251.

64. Mason, "Heye," 15; Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 241, 247.

65. Mason, "Heye," 24. Cf. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 250; Lenz, "Heye," 112–13.

66. Nancy B. Rosoff, "Integrating Native Views in Museum Procedures: Hope and Practice at the National Museum of the American Indian," *Museum Anthropology* 22, no. 1 (1998): 33–42, reprinted in *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader*, ed. Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown, 72–79 (New York: Routledge, 2003). James Pepper Henry, "Challenges in Maintaining Culturally Sensitive Collections at the National Museum of the American Indian," in *Stewards of the Sacred*, ed. Lawrence E. Sullivan and Alison Edwards, 105–12 (Washington DC: American Association of Museums, 2004).

67. Patricia Pierce Erikson, with Helma Ward and Kirk Wachendorf, *Voices of a Thousand People: The Makah Tribal Center* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 147–66.

68. Horse Capture, "Way of the People," 43.

69. W. Richard West Jr., "As Long as We Keep Dancing," in Blue Spruce, *Spirit*, 54.

70. Reportedly, the NMAI raised "$100 million of its $219 million from private sources (a third of that from Indian tribes made wealthy from gambling casinos)." Edward Rothstein, "Museum with an American Indian Voice," *New York Times*, September 21, 2004.

71. For good reviews of American Indian tribal museums, see Moira G. Simpson, "Native American Museums and Cultural Centres," in *Making Representations: Museums in the Post-Colonial Era* (London: Routledge, 1996), 135–69; Christina F. Kreps, *Liberating Culture: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Museums, Curation, and Heritage Preservation* (London: Routledge, 2003), 79–113; George H. J. Abrams, *Tribal Museums in America* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 2004).

72. The Bronx garden was supervised by Heye's wife, Thea, and staff ethnobotanist Melvin Gilmore; Mason, "Heye," 19; cf. Lenz, "Heye," 101. The current landscaping was directed by Donna House (Navajo/Oneida); cf. Donna House, "The Land Has a Memory," in Blue Spruce, *Spirit*, 74–79.

73. Kidwell, "Dishcloth," 252–53; Lenz, "Heye," 115.