arts

MDPI

Article

A Pathway Home: Connecting Museum Collections with Native Communities

Cynthia Chavez Lamar

National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, DC 20560, USA; lamarc@si.edu

Received: 16 August 2019; Accepted: 19 November 2019; Published: 22 November 2019



Abstract: In 2016, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) and the Poeh Cultural Center, owned and operated by the Pueblo of Pojoaque in New Mexico, begin work on a loan of 100 ceramics in NMAI's collections to the Poeh Cultural Center. Making loans to other institutions is regular practice for NMAI. In making loans to tribal museums and cultural centers, a loan can take on cultural and spiritual significance, which was the case for the Poeh Cultural Center and the community members it supports and represents. This article addresses the importance of connecting Native peoples with museum collections, which has the potential to contribute to community well-being, by featuring the partnership between NMAI and the Poeh Cultural Center.

Keywords: Poeh Cultural Center; National Museum of the American Indian; pueblo; collaboration; stewardship; Tewa; loan; exhibit; revitalization; well-being; collection

1. Introduction

"I honestly do not know if it was all of us that brought the pots home", he mused, "or if the pots themselves decided it was time".[1]

In 2016, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) and the Poeh Cultural Center, owned and operated by the Pueblo of Pojoaque (Po'su wae geh, water gathering place) began working together to implement a loan of 100 ceramics[2] primarily from the late 19th and early 20th centuries from NMAI to the Poeh, in New Mexico.[3] The loan's primary purpose was for a major exhibition titled *Di Wae Powa* (*They Came Back*), which opened on 12 October 2019 at the Poeh Cultural Center. The multiyear project started with an initial loan of nine ceramics for an exhibit titled *T'owa Vi Sae'We* (*The People's Pottery*, also at the Poeh), workshops on collections storage mount making and exhibit mount making, and many working sessions at the Poeh and NMAI, which included staff from both locations and the Tewa Pottery Advisors.[4] This experience, including activities and processes,

1 Frances Madeson quoting Pojoaque Pueblo Governor, Joseph Talachy, "9 Ceramic Pots Lead the Way Home, 91 More to Follow", *Indian Country Today*, https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/9-tewa-ceramic-pots-lead-the-way-home-91-more-to-follow-pEbTxAgr6EW6tEN69WzIew/ (accessed on 26 July 2019).

2 NMAI's collections have their foundation in the collection of the former Museum of the American Indian (MAI) assembled largely by George Gustav Heye (1874–1957). NMAI was established through Congressional legislation in 1989 (Public Law 101–185), and this included the transfer of MAI's collections to the Smithsonian. The referenced ceramics entered the MAI collection via donations and purchases made by Heye or MAI staff.

3 NMAI's current strategic plan includes as a priority to "reunite Native communities with elements of their heritage under our care through long-term loans, digital access, study visits, and repatriation". Multiple NMAI staff from the registration, collections management, and conservation departments participated in this project. I served as the program manager working directly with Poeh leadership to plan and implement the project. I am overseeing simliar projects with the Makah Cultural and Research Center and Nohwike' Bágowa (White Mountain Apache Culture Center). This article draws on my twenty years of experience working on collaborative projects and programs with Native people.

4 Tewa Pottery Advisors is the official name of the group of artists Poeh Cultural Center worked with throughout the process of the loan, exhibit development, programming, and exhibit opening. The group consisted of individuals from the six Tewa

prioritized collaborative planning and decision-making regarding the stewardship of these pots while at NMAI and the Poeh. Stewardship often focuses solely on the material preservation of collections based on accepted museum standards with the expectation that the objects will exist in perpetuity.[5] Collaborative stewardship recognizes that connecting Native people to their material culture found in museum collections is essential to caring for and understanding these collections.

While stewardship of Native collections in museums preserves the ancestral belongings of many tribes and nations, most of these collections remain disconnected from their communities of origin and people—those places and individuals who can impart meaning to these often-isolated collections. Direct interactions between Native people and collections provide a more complete and complex understanding of these items. This helps museum professionals as caretakers of these collections who become better informed about the items, which can help improve the items' care and documentation. Native people also benefit by engaging directly with these items because the knowledge gained can potentially contribute to cultural, artistic, and linguistic continuance and renewal in their communities.[6] Cultural centers, such as the Poeh, recognize the importance of museum collections to cultural revitalization, because they can directly involve culture and arts practitioners who have the knowledge to provide the cultural context or significance of these collections. Museums, on the other hand, most often base their understandings on aesthetics, provenance or provenience, and historical, documented sources. While this is important information to have, involving descendant community members in collection interpretations can develop a fuller picture of a collection item's story. Through these interactions, museum professionals can begin to understand the animate nature of these collections to Native people and their potential impact on the well-being of people and communities. NMAI staff's experience in listening to and working with the Poeh Cultural Center staff and Tewa advisors underscored the importance of these pots going back to Tewa country.[7] In our discussions, the Tewa advisors contextualized the pottery within Tewa culture and values—the pottery was brought to life as it was filled with their knowledge and memories.[8]

2. The Poeh Cultural Center

The Poeh Cultural Center, established in 1988, represents the arts and cultures of Pueblo people with a specific focus on the Tewa pueblos of Pojoaque, Nambe, Ohkay Owingeh, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, and Tesuque (Figure 1).

---

pueblos. There are twenty pueblos in New Mexico. Each is an independent sovereign nation with its own governing body. The languages spoken include Keres, Zuni, Tiwa, Towa, and Tewa, depending on the pueblo's language group affiliation. I refer to the six pueblos here as Tewa pueblos, because that is the language of Pojoaque, Nambe, Ohkay Owingeh, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, and Tesuque. Tewa is part of the Tanoan language group. Individuals from these pueblos may self-identify as being from a specific pueblo, such as Pojoaque, but they may also identify as Tewa.

5 I use the term "objects" in this sentence intentionally as this is the word commonly used to refer to materials in museum collections. Objects can connote stasis and inanimacy, which is counter to how Native people may view these materials. Native people may use different terms to acknowledge the spiritual, cultural, and/or sacred nature of collection items, including, for example, cultural belongings and/or ancestors.

6 I do not mean to imply this always happens or is immediate. Engagement with collections and the outcomes of that interaction vary due to multiple factors. However, revitalization in any form usually occurs within a community through the efforts of the community itself.

7 For the remainder of the article, I will use the terms pots and pottery instead of ceramics. Pots and pottery are the terms used by Poeh staff and the Tewa Pottery Advisors.

8 Similarly, Alison Brown and Laura Peers came to this realization in working with people of the Blackfoot Confederacy on the Blackfoot Shirts Project (see: http://web.prm.ox.ac.uk/blackfootshirts/). In a Pitt Rivers Museum blog post, Brown states, "And we learned these are not 'objects': they are also material forms of spirits, of those who made and used them, and those whose physical bodies are present in the hides, sinew, quills and hair. For Blackfoot people, these are ancestors, not museum specimens" (Peers and Brown 2013).



Figure 1. The Poeh Cultural Center, Pojoaque Pueblo, New Mexico. Used by permission of the Poeh Cultural Center.

Culture, art, education, and community service are integrated in one campus, a multi-building complex with a museum, art studios, gallery, and outdoor gathering areas. The Poeh regularly offers courses in traditional and contemporary arts for Native peoples, highlights the art of regional Native artists and its students and instructors in the museum, and provides training to artists to help them advance their business. The Poeh epitomizes what an active and engaged cultural center can be when it emphasizes cultural continuity, preservation, and revitalization.[9] It serves as "a gathering place for the respectful sustaining of Tewa traditions through being, doing, and sharing". This institutional focus resulted from a strategic planning process that stressed Tewa cultural values so the Poeh could better serve its Tewa constituents and communities. A review of their mission objectives of "being, doing, and sharing", reveals the concepts of personal and community well-being communicated through the values of harmony, respect, teaching, and caring.[10]

I offer this introduction about the Poeh Cultural Center as evidence of self-determination, because the Poeh and its activities contribute to the ongoing survival of Tewa people, and well-being is central to their survival. In the exhibit text panel for *T'owa Vi Sae'We*, the narrative specifically addresses how a Poeh program, in this case an exhibit, supports Tewa well-being:

> "Bringing Home the Collections represents the continuing vitality, relevance, and well-being of Tewa Pueblo communities. The return helps to inspire and bring healing and community well-being. Regathering collections or return of objects helps us remember that we are within Tewa Country; where for millennial people continue to live and thrive, absorbing new ideas while rejecting others but always retaining a strong inner core of Tewa values and principles".

Native people often recognize what their tribes and other Native communities have lost, yet they continue to remain hopeful that they can regain threatened practices, traditions, and languages.

---

[9] By the 18th century, the Pueblo of Pojoaque population's was severely diminished. The Pueblo recognizes the fragility of culture and makes efforts to support arts and cultures initiatives. The homepage of their website at http://pojoaque.org reads as follows: "We continue our traditions and practice our culture in these contemporary times. For those things that have been lost or forgotten, we attempt to bring them back and further strengthen the foundation of who we are and where we come from. We learn and adapt; accomplish and progress".

[10] See: http://poehcenter.org/about/ for the Poeh's vision and mission statements and objectives (accessed on 27 July 2019).

Collections in museums can potentially contribute to the processes of cultivating revitalization, which can then lead to initiatives in communities that contribute to their society's well-being.

Jennifer Shannon in a *Museum Anthropology* journal commentary, "Posterity is Now", makes an important point in acknowledging that "the discourse and framework of well-being comes from community members themselves; it is how *they* define what is valuable" (Shannon 2019, p. 10). For museums stewarding Native collections, *posterity is now*; Shannon explains:

> Posterity is not (or not only) the general public in an unidentified future: it is Indigenous peoples, today. The purpose of this reorientation relates to what many of us who work closely in collections with Native peoples have already come to learn: that more so than connecting with their past, collections and heritage work is about maintaining well-being in their communities in planning for their future, and future generations". (Shannon 2019, p. 5)

Those who work to provide Native communities access to collections often share the same view as Shannon. Cara Krmpotich and Laura Peers in their book, *This is Our Life*, relay the following about a major project involving the Haida and United Kingdom (UK) collections:

> Haida delegates describe working with objects in emotional and spiritual terms, and in physical ways that differ from how non-Haida scholars might describe the same objects: singing to the objects, talking to them, holding them. As ancestral heritage items, museum collections represent cultural knowledge and history to Haidas today, knowledge and history that is central to Haida culture and identity. (Krmpotich and Peers 2013, p. 37)

In the museum profession, stewardship most often refers to the physical care of collections because of the concern for "preserving for posterity". At NMAI, we recognize that care can also encompass other aspects, such as the spiritual. We cannot tend to the spiritual care of collections nor would we attempt to do so. However, when Native people connect with their collections, they can enact these other elements of care. Those in the museum profession who work with Native people have experienced instances where prayer, song, touch, or other spiritual stewardship by a descendant community member(s) have been necessary to attend to the care of an item. Throughout the experience with the Poeh and Tewa advisors, there were indirect and direct instances of individuals enacting stewardship practices that encompassed, not only the physical care, but also the emotional and spiritual. This care supported and continues to support, not only the pottery, but also the people.

3. Breathing Life into the Pots

The Tewa advisors and Poeh staff made emotional and physical connections with the pottery when they visited the NMAI's Cultural Resources Center (CRC).[11] In the first year, the group made three visits to select pots for the loan from hundreds representing the Tewa pueblos (Figure 2).[12] During later visits, they decided approaches to conservation treatments and exhibit mounts—how they wanted the pottery to look while on exhibit and from which angle each should be displayed. Each visit and interaction with the pottery brought opportunities for discussions about art, culture, and the significance of the pottery's return to New Mexico. Eventually, these work sessions turned into informal gatherings and generated dialogue related to clay processing, designs and their meanings,

---

[11] NMAI consists of three facilities: NMAI on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., where there are exhibits and public programs; NMAI in Lower Manhattan in New York City, where there are exhibits and public programs; and the Cultural Resources Center, where the collections are housed.

[12] Poeh staff and the Tewa Pottery Advisors determined early in the process that they wanted a broad representation of individuals representing Nambe, Ohkay Owingeh, Pojoaque, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, and Tesuque involved throughout the process. Careful consideration was given to group composition, such as who would make the trips to the CRC to select pots for the loan. The intention was to reflect a shared Tewa sense of identity for the decision-making rather than one focused on a particular pueblo. This became clear with their self-reminders about not selecting pots that had names or signatures associated with them and ensuring that there were participants from all the Tewa pueblos involved at various stages of the project.

and shapes and textures, but these material and aesthetic details were often embedded in personal stories and reflections about clay processing with family and the potters' own trial and error in creating similar shapes, surfaces, or colors. These working sessions resonated with laughter and the spoken Tewa language. When was the last time these pots had heard the language or laughter of their people?



Figure 2. Reviewing pottery for the loan. (left to right, clockwise) Karl Duncan (Poeh Executive Director), David Trujillo (Advisor), Lynda Romero (Poeh Collections Manager), Martha Romero (Advisor), Erik Fender (Advisor), and Kelly McHugh (National Museum of the American Indian Collections Manager). Used by permission of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian.

In sharing their expertise, opinions, and personal experiences, the Tewa advisors gravitated towards pots that they found unusual or unique in design or construction. Compared to 21st century pots, these older versions do not exemplify perfection. Uneven shapes, asymmetrical designs, and firing mistakes come together beautifully and leave room for questions, admiration, and inspiration. The advisors looked at each pot thoughtfully and, at times, lovingly, even pots that appeared damaged or worn. For Tessie Naranjo, an advisor from Santa Clara, each pot held a story and the pot's imperfections revealed aspects of that story. In talking with and listening to the Tewa advisors, NMAI staff began to understand that conservation treatment might mask the story of a collection item if repaired or cleaned. For example, one particular pot has extensive cracks, and the fiber cord wrapped around it is fraying and flaking (Figure 3). This pot generated a lot of discussion about its history and use. The advisors said that it was likely a cooking pot when it was first made, but after extensive use, it cracked, and no longer had use for cooking. Instead of disposing it, the owner decided to wrap its exterior in fabric and secure it with strips of denim and yucca fiber cord so it could become a storage container. Residues of its use are still inside. The advisors surmised that the pot must have been important to the family, because they went to such great lengths to keep it together and useful. A potter mentioned that it could have belonged to someone with little money, who may not have had access to potters who could make a new one. All this discussion and interest in this pot resulted in the advisors deciding that it should not receive conservation treatment to repair the crack or clean the surface or interior. For them, the signs of its use, reuse, and survival tells a story—a story that the advisors discussed and developed by looking at the pot closely and handling it. To repair or clean the pot could mask the

visual cues of the pot for others to see and interpret.[13] The handling, close examination, and discussion by the advisors revealed multiple, previously unrecognized, interpretive layers of the pot. This created a meaningful connection between the people and the pottery.



Figure 3. Tesuque Pueblo Jar. Collected by John Louw Nelson (a musical performer and amateur ethnologist) in 1930 during fieldwork sponsored by the Museum of the American Indian. Possibly created between 1870–1900. 17/6153. Used by permission of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian.

Other museum professionals who work with Native communities and collections often comment on how story or song can emerge from direct handling and examination of items. Sanchita Balachandran and Kelly McHugh, in their recent article on preventative conservation, note the following:

> In our own work, talking with stakeholders as they handled objects resulted in the most transformative and informative ways for understanding collections. The experience of touching, moving, and turning objects in their hands elicited reactions and triggered stories and muscle memories that would otherwise have remained inaccessible. The physical object—be it sewn skin or fired clay—has the power to evoke responses, observations, questions, and endanger reminiscences that are part of the object's story. (Balachandran and McHugh 2019, p. 13)

Often in exhibitions, many museums strive to make collections look "perfect" by way of conservation treatments. Through the discussions with the Tewa advisors, NMAI staff learned that a "perfect" pot cannot always tell an item's full story. More importantly, these stories only surface through contact with people. Knowledge resides in Native collections in museums, but in most instances, you need people to activate it, especially Native people.

The Poeh staff and Tewa advisors handled pots that they had not seen before, which prompted emotional experiences. Erik Fender from San Ildefonso, a well-known artist, saw and felt pots made by his relatives and handled many pots from his pueblo to help NMAI better understand the materials,

---

[13] Choosing not to treat this pot did not compromise its preservation, because NMAI staff took other measures to protect it during handling, while in transport, and on exhibit. Krmpotich in *This is Our Life* notes that, in her experience with the Haidas, collections that showed wear indicated to the Haidas that it was a family treasure or well loved (Krmpotich and Peers 2013, p. 58).

construction, and designs of the pots. Through this work, he also gained inspiration from them for his own creations (Figure 4).[14]



Figure 4. San Ildefonso Pueblo Jar made by Dolorita Vigil. Purchased by the Museum of the American Indian from an unknown source in 1949. Possibly created between 1880 and 1920. 21/3333. Used by permission of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian.

The responses of Native people to being in the presence of their ancestral collections for the first time varies and requires careful consideration and sensitivity by the museum staff hosting the individuals or groups.[15] For some Native people, the experience can be akin to seeing one's ancestors, and the impact can be profound. At NMAI, we ask if community members would like time alone with collections before any work with collections begins. While this can be helpful, sometimes people simply need time alone to process the experience. One Tewa advisor, upon walking into a room full of Tewa pottery, had to exit the room soon after entering it. She then said that she needed time to process the experience and chose to go outside and take a walk. While not sad or upset, she was clearly touched by the sight and feel of the pots in the room.

These emotions often translated into actions. Being in the presence of the pots prompted discussions about the future, which, in turn, led to action. Some mentioned how the pots would influence artist-led classes at the Poeh or their own pottery making. Many remarked on the importance of having these pots at the Poeh—bringing them closer to the pueblos, so other community members could be near them. Since the project began, responses to the pots have developed into unexpected outcomes in various ways.

4. Collections Inspiring Action

As others in the museum field and anthropology have noted, the connections that descendant communities make with museum collections can invigorate artistic creation and cultural continuity. Programs such as Recovering Voices, also through the Smithsonian, provide research grants to

---

[14] Erik identified this pot as one made by his great aunt Dolorita Vigil and said that the line break on the rim of the pot and the thick line around the shoulder of the pot indicate the Vigil family's artistic trademark.

[15] A useful guide to help museum professionals in their collaborations with Native people is the "Guidelines for Collaboration", which can be found at http://guidelinesforcollaboration.info. This resource includes specific information regarding cultural considerations when hosting Native people at a museum with Native collections.

tribes to work with Smithsonian collections and facilitate these human/collection interactions and human-to-human discussions, which can result in tangible outcomes at the community level. In a project report about Kiowa tribal representatives' Recovering Voices visit to Smithsonian museums, author Michael Paul Jordan notes that "viewing the collections also served as a catalyst for broader discussions about cultural revitalization efforts in the Kiowa community" (Jordan 2015, p. 90). Kiowa representatives expressed that their discussions during the visit were an important component of the process. Collections visits can be a perfect storm, because the situation often brings together groups of like-minded, knowledgeable people for a short time in the presence of items that are beautiful, sometimes unknown or unusual, and powerful. The emotions can range from enthusiasm to sorrow, but inevitably, they spark some kind of reaction, which often leads to action. In the case of the Kiowa representatives, they returned home to later develop programs focused on beadwork, clothing, and games.

The Poeh staff and the Tewa advisors became inspired to action. In 2018, the Poeh published the children's book *Sengbeh Enyukeh, Water-Jar Boy: A Tewa Story*. The book's inspiration came after the first exhibit of the nine pots, because teachers told Tewa children attending the Pueblo of Pojoaque Early Childhood Center the story of Sengbeh Enyukeh, and then, they went to visit the pots on display at the Poeh.[16] The Poeh staff and the advisors decided to write and publish a book so the children would always have a copy of the story. The dedication of the book reads as follows:

> This book is dedicated to the children at the Pueblo of Pojoaque Early Childhood Center and all the Tewa children and their teachers. The Pojoaque children first listened to the Sengbeh Enyukeh story in their classroom. One week later, Evone Snowflake Martinez, teacher, and Suzanne Panas walked the children down the hill to the Poeh Cultural Museum. At the museum the children visited the old Tewa pots, made pottery and colored a drawing of a pot before they returned to their classroom. Their short journey is a reminder of the longer journey we as Tewa people will experience as we learn about ourselves through our families, our teachers, and other guides. (Naranjo and Romero 2018, p. 2)

The book connects a Tewa original story with the Poeh pottery exhibit. The tale also relates the idea that pots are similar to people, because in the narrative, Sengbeh Enyukeh is identified as a "water jar made from clay" who "could talk and play with other children in the pueblo". Later, Sengbeh Enyukeh rolls down a hill, hits a rock, and emerges as a boy. The Poeh has also produced two short videos about the project, and both speak to the importance of the pottery returning to New Mexico.[17] The institution also plans to offer a pottery class that utilizes the exhibited pottery for students' creative inspiration.

Part of the path for creating inspiration for these connections included making the *Di Wae Powa* exhibit feel as if viewers were walking into a room of pottery sitting in a pueblo home. Although the pottery would be in cases, the Poeh staff and Tewa advisors, from the beginning, communicated a design concept that deemphasized the idea of a barrier between people and the pots: "People are being with the pots rather than looking at the pots. The pots are watching you as you are walking in" (Bolen quoting Poeh program director Stephan Fadden (Bolen 2019, p. 15)). The exhibit attempts to achieve this effect by minimizing visual barriers between the viewers and pots. Another method of allowing the visitor to simply be with the pots and experience them on their own was the advisors' decision not to include interpretive labels for each piece of pottery.[18] Visitors can experience the pottery without the influence of NMAI's catalog records—instead, visitors can develop their own interpretations of the pottery.

---

[16] The front matter of the book has an image of the children in the Poeh exhibit gallery viewing the pots.

[17] See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ASFgGofBeU and https://poehcenter.org/theycameback/ (accessed on 15 August 2019).

[18] There is a gallery pamphlet that identifies the pot's type and pueblo affiliation.

Although enclosed in cases for exhibition, about a quarter of the pottery are available for handling programs organized and implemented by the Poeh staff. The handling pots were placed in the front of the cases to enable easy removal and transport into an adjacent research room for handling sessions with artists, students, elders, and other community members. The promise of interaction with some of the pots was an essential part of the pots' return home. The use of all senses when working with and interacting with collections has been noted by those in the field (Balachandran and McHugh 2019; Hodge 2018; Krmpotich 2015). Native communities believe that the senses are of utmost importance to understanding and knowing. In watching the Tewa advisors interact with the pottery, we saw them smell the inside of pots, run their hands along the interior surfaces, and sometimes speak Tewa inside a pot. All these actions prompted different responses and, at times, no verbal response, only a knowing smile or other sign of recognition.

The *Di Wae Powa* exhibit opened at the Poeh Cultural Center in October 2019 on a beautiful day in northern New Mexico. Approximately 650 people attended the grand opening and participated in the celebration. Before the pots made their way to New Mexico, in June 2019, a small group of Tewa representatives came to the Cultural Resources Center (CRC) to open up a path for the pots' return home by providing prayer. This act was an important part of the pots' journey home to Tewa country. Several months later, in September, the pots arrived in crates at the Poeh. They had to remain in the crates for a few days to acclimatize. In the museum world, acclimatization allows collections time to become accustomed to a new climate. Often, this means allowing shipped crates coming from a humid environment, such as Washington, D.C., to an arid environment, such as New Mexico, to sit for several days and adapt. For the Poeh staff and Tewa advisors, acclimatization also included the pots being welcomed back home in the Tewa language when they arrived (Chavez Lamar 2019). Sitting in the cabinets at NMAI, the pottery likely had not heard Tewa for a long time until the first visits of the Poeh staff and advisors to the CRC Now, the pots, in place at the Poeh Cultural Center, are likely to hear Tewa every day.

5. Conclusions

If "posterity is now", museums will continue to have more and more Native individuals and communities initiating access to collections in storage. NMAI has witnessed this development and experienced it with Pojoaque Pueblo. From the beginning, Pojoaque, Poeh Cultural Center and their staff, and the Tewa Pottery Advisors proactively involved themselves in securing a loan from the NMAI for an exhibition of Tewa pottery, but the initiative has always been about much more than an exhibit. This exhibition, while visually focused on 19th-and 20th-century pottery, is about a homecoming, with a hope that these pots will contribute to the perpetuation of culture, language, history, and art, which, in turn, will promote the well-being of the Tewa people.

Native peoples who access museum collections, whether for loans or research, leading to cultural revitalization efforts, are part of an ongoing movement, which began in earnest in the latter half of the 20th century and will now only continue to grow in the 21st century. Jim Enote, Colorado Plateau Foundation CEO and former director of the Zuni Tribe's A:shiwi A:wan Museum and Heritage Center, recognized this sea change. In speaking about museums and the collections they steward, he crafted a *Manifesto* that describes a "movement" as being central to the work around collections evoking self-determination for Native peoples: "Inclusion of expert peoples representing the source of collection materials is the keystone of a collaborative movement. Welcoming and respecting knowledge of objects by the makers and users of the objects does not change the objects".[19] Enote has witnessed anxious moments of some curators and other museum professionals when he and fellow Zuni members have visited museums to see Zuni collections. His statement that "welcoming and respecting knowledge

[19] Jim Enote, "Museum Collaboration Manifesto," http://ashiwi-museum.org, http://ashiwi-museum.org/collaborations/museum-collaboration-manifesto/ (accessed on 26 July 2019).

by the makers and users of the objects does not change the objects" references that anxiety. He wants to reassure museum professionals that connecting Native peoples to museum collections only enhances the documentation and understanding of these items; it does not change them or the existing documentation the museum may already have. The movement Enote refers to relies on the ongoing and proactive involvement of Native peoples in the documentation, interpretation, and stewardship of collections housed in museums across the world, which is in process and will continue to grow. New meanings will emerge, new connections will be made, and, ideally, revitalization will happen in Native communities. Pojoaque Pueblo, the Poeh Cultural Center, and the Tewa Pottery Advisors are part of this movement, and NMAI is grateful to have been part of the experience.

Funding: The partnership with the Poeh Cultural Center is supported by a grant from the Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest. The funder had no role in the writing of the manuscript or in the decision to publish.

References

Balachandran, Sanchita, and Kelly McHugh. 2019. Respectful and Responsible Stewardship: Maintaining and Renewing the Cultural Relevance of Museum Collections. In *Preventative Conservation: Collection Storage*. Edited by Lisa Elkin and Christopher A. Norris. Society for the Preservation of Natural History: American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works: Smithsonian Institution: New York: The George Washington University Museum Studies Program, pp. 3–25.

Bolen, Anne. 2019. The Path of a Pot. *American Indian Magazine*, Fall.

Chavez Lamar, Cynthia. 2019. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, USA. Personal communication with Karl Duncan, Poeh Cultural Center Executive Director.

Hodge, Christina J. 2018. Decolonizing Collections-Based Learning: Experiential Observation as an Interdisciplinary Framework for Object Study. *Museum Anthropology* 41: 142–58. [CrossRef]

Jordan, Michael Paul. 2015. Documenting and Revitalizing Kiowa Knowledge: Material Culture Studies and Community Engagement. *Museum Anthropology Review* 9: 80–95. [CrossRef]

Krmpotich, Cara. 2015. Teaching Collections Management Anthropologically. *Museum Anthropology* 38: 112–22. [CrossRef]

Krmpotich, Cara, and Laura Peers. 2013. *This Is Our Life: Haida Material Heritage and Changing Museum Practice*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Naranjo, Tessie, and Lynda Romero, eds. 2018. *Sengbeh Enyukeh, Water-Jar Boy: A Tewa Story*. Pojoaque Pueblo: The Canelo Project.

Peers and Brown. 2013. Things We Have Learned from the Blackfoot Shirts Project. *Brave New World Curator*. April 8. Available online: https://pittrivers-americas.blogspot.com/2013/04/things-we-have-learned-from-blackfoot.html?m=1 (accessed on 13 August 2019).

Shannon, Jennifer. 2019. Commentary: Posterity is Now. *Museum Anthropology* 42: 5–13. [CrossRef]



© 2019 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).