Proposed Roundtable:

**Cultural Heritage from the Diverse Perspectives of U.K. Anthropologists**

For the first annual  
**Bluegrass Discussions on Anthropology and Social Sciences**  
October 29, 2022: 3:00-4:30

In the last ten years, the number of faculty and staff in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Kentucky with interests that align with or center on issues of cultural heritage has grown significantly. We now have strengths that focus on these issues from archaeological, biological or evolutionary anthropological, and cultural anthropological perspectives.

This roundtable is meant for U.K. anthropologists to gather and for the first time, to discuss our respective interests in cultural heritage. Our goals are both academic and practical: To identify the key issues or core debates in cultural heritage from each of our research, management, or practice perspectives; as well as to explore a potential concentration in cultural heritage studies for the department. The following departmental roundtable participants have provided a brief statement of their interests and work with cultural heritage below:

**Renee Bonzani, Senior Lecturer:** As an archaeologist, my whole career and life has focused on cultural heritage. I am interested in promoting public and community discussions on what cultural heritage is and how it relates to other forms of heritage/inheritance including genetic inheritance, socio-political heritage, and ecological/environmental heritage.

**Celise Chilcote, Assistant Professor & NAGPRA Coordinator, William S Webb Museum of Anthropology:** [I will be] speaking about the intricacies of cultural heritage within NAGPRA. I'm thinking specifically talking about how sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony have often been overlooked in favor of prioritizing ancestors and funerary objects when completing inventories/summaries, as well as the new trend of museums and tribes collaborating on exhibits to replace culturally insensitive ones.

**George Crothers, Director, William S. Webb Museum of Anthropology, Associate Professor:** [My interests in cultural heritage concern] site preservation and collections management/preservation issues.

**Lisa Guerre, Curator/Lab Manager, William S Webb Museum of Anthropology:** My research interest regarding cultural heritage lies in the preservation and sustainability of archaeological collections and their associated data with a focus on accessibility and collections management best practice. This process begins at the trowel’s edge and includes best practice in excavation and recordation methods, field processing, laboratory analysis, curation preparation, and proper stewardship.

**Phil Mink, Assistant Director, Office of State Archaeology:** My interests are in heritage (geospatial) data collection and management, decolonizing heritage data via incorporating indigenous and descendant community perspectives on how and what we record of the archaeological record, non-destructive archaeological heritage prospection, and the intersection of heritage management and cultural resource management.

**Hugo Reyes-Centeno, Assistant Professor:** I am particularly interested in the [im]possible separation of natural and cultural heritage and its practical applications.

**Elena Sesma, Assistant Professor:** In my work as a historical archaeologist doing community-based research I have found myself engaging in conversations that run parallel to and intersect with cultural heritage, although I don’t always adopt it in name. My work in the Bahamas focused on issues of memory and collective identity, which was tied to the material landscape, and how folks on this island were mobilizing memory for political
action. Cultural heritage (the tangible and intangible) thus became a point around which community members advocated against real estate development and for more sustainable tourism models that would not alienate them from their land and history. I’ve also addressed heritage in terms of historical narratives that heritage professionals create and maintain in museums, historical/archaeological sites, considering how the stories we tell about the past impact living people today (specifically in New England but I have also begun working this into my research and teaching here in Kentucky).

**Chris Pool, Professor:** [My] research and practice in southern Veracruz Mexico engages closely with local communities and municipal, state, and federal governments to help preserve, protect, and make relevant cultural heritage. Over the last three decades, [my] activities have included construction of a research facility and repository to allow retention of artifacts within the community of Tres Zapotes, Veracruz; consultation and securing of federal support for the local museum, community and school presentations, site visits to record and report objects of national patrimony, and assistance to US Customs for the identification and return of smuggled artifacts.

**Evan Taylor, Teaching and NAGPRA Postdoctoral Scholar:** If I were to identify with a specialty, it would be the politics of heritage. I am interested in diverse ways that the concept of heritage is mobilized in society. I study heritage from archaeological and cultural anthropological perspectives—as a historical and contemporary site formation process, and as a practice of making and maintaining relations with specific things, beings, places, and pasts. I approach heritage from a critical perspective, asking how heritage is put to work towards creating just futures, but also how it is invoked in processes of erasure. Most recently, I have explored these questions in Palestine/Israel and Greece with residents of the old cities of ‘Akka (Acre) and Rhodes, both of which are UNESCO World Heritage sites and subjects of intensive state-sponsored tourism development. I have also done research on representation and the mobilization of heritage narratives in museums in the United States and Canada.

**Monica Udvardy, Associate Professor:** My research interests in cultural heritage concern the contextually changing meanings of tangible and intangible cultural property, as well as cultural identity politics and anthropological ethics. These interests have emerged from my advocacy work with my collaborators, wherein I am exposing the current global traffic in a category of contemporary African art/artifacts (called vigango), as well as advocating and facilitating their return to Kenya from U.S. museums and private collectors.