

SAR NOW

SPRING/
SUMMER
2021

issue 08

SCHOOL FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH NEWS

Going Digital

As we head into summer 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic is slowly and erratically releasing its grip on global society. Lock-downs are lifted and then reimposed. Distribution of vaccines accelerates in some places but lags in others. Despite resistance in some quarters, mask-wearing remains part of public life in much of the world.

At SAR, we are monitoring this situation with an eye toward restarting in-person events when we can safely welcome members to the campus. Until then, we continue our ambitious schedule of online webinars, artist interviews, book talks, and non-credit classes.

We're also engaging in a sustained period of strategic planning that draws on lessons learned over the past year.

Two of these lessons:

Online events dramatically increase the diversity and scale of our audience, whose size at last count numbers in the thousands and whose location encompasses all fifty states and nineteen countries. Our local audiences miss the more intimate experience of in-person events yet also express appreciation for the ability to view YouTube recordings of our events at more convenient times. As some have wryly pointed out, this also solves the problem of parking on campus.



PRESIDENT MICHAEL F. BROWN RECORDING PROGRAMS FROM HIS HOME OFFICE

Although support for anthropology, archaeology, and Native American art remains at the heart of SAR's mission, these fields themselves are undergoing a process of expansion—an interdisciplinary stretch, if you will—that takes them in new directions. Some of the Native artists we support are now expressing their creativity in fields as diverse as fashion design, video production, and installation art. Cultural anthropologists increasingly work in new, non-print media that offer possibilities as well as challenges. SAR needs to offer content responsive to

// continued on page 3

Grounded in Place—SAR Summer Series

In 1996 SAR Press published *Senses of Place*, an edited volume that originated as an SAR Advanced Seminar co-chaired by Steven Feld and Keith Basso, two anthropologists working at the forefront of their field. Feld studies the anthropology of sound and worked for many years in the Bosavi rain forest of Papua New Guinea, researching environmental sounds, bird calls, weeping, poetics, and song. Basso worked with the Western Apache people to understand how they use their landscape to generate, reflect upon, and share knowledge—and wisdom—with each other.

“Place is the most fundamental form of embodied experience,” argue Feld and Basso, “the site of a powerful fusion of self, space, and time.” And yet, wrote Basso, “place” and its profound effects on human life were rarely studied by cultural anthropologists. Feld, Basso, and their collaborators were among those who changed the conversation in anthropology, and this book was one of the first to show what we could learn from a study of place. Its importance is reflected by its status as our best-selling scholarly book.

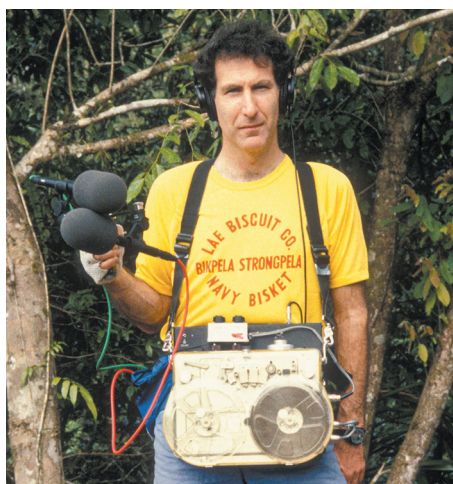
To celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of its publication, SAR Press hosted Steven Feld (distinguished professor of anthropology emeritus, University of New Mexico), Amahl Bishara (associate professor of anthropology, Tufts University), and Kristina Lyons (assistant professor of anthropology, University of Pennsylvania) for a virtual conversation about the book's impact, as well as more recent developments

During their talk, Feld and colleagues addressed current topics of refugees and displacement, cosmopolitanism, and feminist studies of science and environment, especially in relation to Indigenous place-making and transnational politics, all of which have changed anthropological thinking about place over the last twenty-five years.

in the field. “Like anthropology more generally,” says Feld, “I have shifted in the last fifteen years from intensely rooted and bounded place experience, like in Papua New Guinea, to work with deeply rooted cosmopolitans in Ghana. The field of place studies has moved into globalized, diasporic, disbursed, and cosmopolitan placed identities.”

During their talk, Feld and colleagues addressed current topics of refugees and displacement, cosmopolitanism, and feminist studies of science and environment, especially in relation to Indigenous place-making and transnational politics, all of which have changed anthropological thinking about place over the last twenty-five years. In collaboration with Bishara, who contributed a chapter on Palestinian resistance to *Walling In and Walling Out* (SAR Press, 2020), and Lyons, who recently published *Vital Decomposition* (Duke University Press, 2020), Feld explored these recent developments and expanded on the conversation that *Senses of Place* helped to start.

This event launches a series of discussions focused on place this summer at SAR

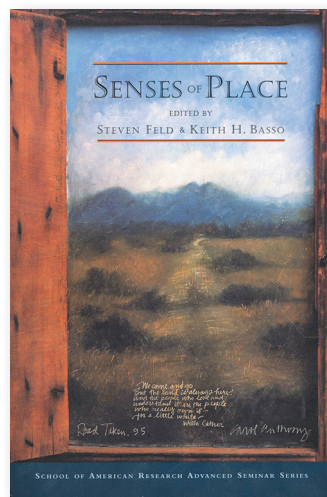


STEVEN FELD RECORDING IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

funded in part by the Ethel-Jane Westfeldt Bunting Foundation. Panelists will discuss earthen architecture at several New World archaeological sites in the US Midwest and coastal Peru, Pueblo architecture at sites across the US Southwest, and more.

Lest we think that places matter only to people who lived long ago or somewhere else, Clifford Geertz in the afterword to *Senses of Place* reminds us that “no one lives in the world in general.” We are all of us always somewhere, whether we

are at home, at work, or, as we have been over the last year, someplace in between. More than ever, adds Feld, “place is no less at the center of so many cultural conversations about what's at stake for localities and research in the contemporary world.”



Watch the *Senses of Place* book talk and the rest of the summer series on SAR's YouTube channel, sarsf.info/youtube

IS THAT A FACT? UPDATE ON THE CREATIVE THOUGHT FORUM

Who do we trust to tell us what is true and what is not? The profusion of new technologies and social media platforms that undermine public understanding of science, politics, and truth itself had us wondering how we could contribute to a better understanding of how communities and individuals distinguish fact from misinformation. To that end, and as part of SAR's commitment to providing intellectually adventurous content to our members, we dedicated our signature public program series, the Creative Thought Forum, to presenting online lectures and discussions following the theme “Fact and Fraud in the Digital Age.” The series offered virtual attendees informed perspectives on the challenges and opportunities that our digitally saturated world has created when it comes to understanding facts and the importance of questioning sources in our daily lives.



ANNA MERLAN, AUTHOR OF *REPUBLIC OF LIES: AMERICAN CONSPIRACY THEORISTS AND THEIR SURPRISING RISE TO POWER*

Each program can now be found on our YouTube channel. Highlights from this spring include a discussion of the long history of conspiracy theories and their persistence despite contradictory evidence, shared by journalist Anna Merlan, author of *Republic of Lies: American Conspiracy Theorists and Their Surprising Rise to Power* (Macmillan, 2019).

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Working Hands, Indebted Bodies: The Bioarchaeology of Labor and Inequality in an Era of Progress

“Inequality is different across different landscapes, and it gets into the body in different ways,” observes Alanna Warner-Smith, an interdisciplinary scholar who is SAR’s first Paloheimo fellow. A worn shoulder joint, an arthritic hip, a stressed wrist—all tell stories about a life and the place of that life in society and history. As a historical bioarchaeologist, Warner-Smith combines the study of remains like these with extensive archival research to reconstruct the lives of Irish immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Her research draws from the Huntington Anatomical Collection at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington DC, which includes the two hundred Irish immigrants who died in New York City between 1893 and 1921 and form part of her study.



ALANNA WARNER-SMITH, SAR’S INAUGURAL PALOHEIMO FELLOW

“What I’m trying to do,” says Warner-Smith, “is recover the complexity of the life stories of the people who became part of the collection—to rehumanize and reinvigorate this collection with identities and place them back on the landscapes where they lived. They contributed to and shaped these landscapes and were shaped by these landscapes. They were so critical to the formation of New York City. Their bodies were foundational to anthropological knowledge. And yet those stories haven’t been fully told.”

Warner-Smith is making connections between archival records and physical

remains not only to learn more about the lives of these individuals, but also to reshape our understanding of the historical relationships between labor, aging, and the body. The questions that guide her research as a first-generation college and graduate student are ones she’s been thinking about since she was a child, discussing philosophy with a grandfather who loved to read or visiting cemeteries with her equally curious parents and imagining past lives. “Trying to disentangle what the archival sources and skeletal remains can tell us, not just about life in New York City, not just about a representative sample of urban labor or industrialization, but how different things are representative of rural life in Ireland and in

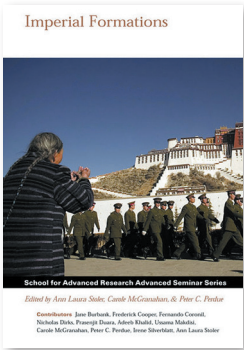
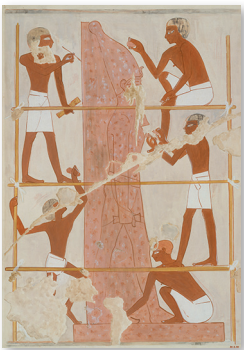
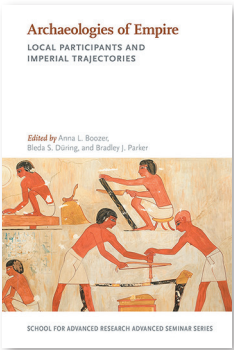
New York City, allows them to move beyond the categories or single places that they’ve often been associated with. If we only stay at the level of disarticulated elements,” like individual bones, she says, “then we leave them disarticulated in the same way that they were when they were dissected and curated” for the collection.

Being at SAR has given Warner-Smith much-needed “space to think.” She states, “The landscape was such a wonderful part of the writing. If I got stuck with something, I would take a break and go on a hike and it was on those hikes that I would work out the problems that I couldn’t work out just by trying to type at my computer. But this process was not just about coming here to write. It was also about being with other people. I didn’t realize how much it would make me think about my own writing and the work I was doing. The power of the community here is something that I wish people knew more about.”

This fellowship is generously funded by the Paloheimo Foundation.

Beyond the Page: SAR Press Publishes Books and More

As a scholarly and public resource, SAR Press offers not only books, but also community events, project support, and access to experts. We recently hosted our first book talk to celebrate the publication of Archaeologies of Empire, featuring co-editors Anna Boozer and Bleda Düring in conversation with Peter Perdue, co-editor of Imperial Formations. We have planned and hosted several more, including one to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Senses of Place with co-editor and SAR senior scholar Steven Feld.



SAR PRESS PUBLICATIONS AND DETAIL FROM ARCHAEOLOGIES OF EMPIRE (CENTER)

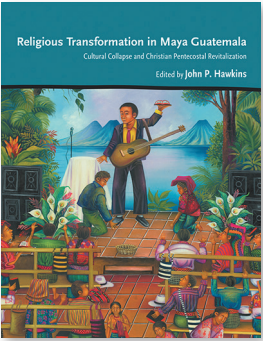
In our new blog series, How to Publish Your First Book, we interview diverse scholars who have recently published or are in the midst of publishing their first book and who can offer guidance and encouragement to colleagues who are just getting started. We are hoping that these interviews offer some support to junior scholars as they begin the publishing process. “I think the best thing that I was able to do was reach out to colleagues who were already in that process, who had recently finished their books,” says 2020 Adams summer scholar Nicholas Barron. “Having the opportunity to hear other people’s experiences and what they did is vital.”

The blog also hosts SAR Press Top Reads, collections of books from SAR Press and other publishers on topics including Chaco Canyon, politics, resident scholar favorites, and Indigenous identity. Felicia Garcia, IARC curator of education, describes the books on the Indigenous identity list as “important because for too long Native peoples were not in control of our own narratives and representation. Being able to tell our own stories on our own terms through scholarly works and literature is critical to our process of healing from the wounds of colonization.”

Anyone looking for more information about scholarly publishing can find two guides on

our website: Writing & Publishing Resources and Promote Your Book. Both contain a wealth of knowledge and advice on all aspects of academic writing and publishing—turning a dissertation into a book or publishing open access—and are updated regularly. Every week on Facebook and Twitter we share new resources like these, as well as stories of interest to our readers and new publications from our authors.

As we continue to publish, we are always thinking about new ways to connect and to support the communities that readers, writers, and publishers build together.



Look for our latest publication, Religious Transformation in Maya Guatemala: Cultural Collapse, Exclusion, and Christian Pentecostal Revitalization in a Shattering World, written and edited by John P. Hawkins and co-published with UNM Press this spring.

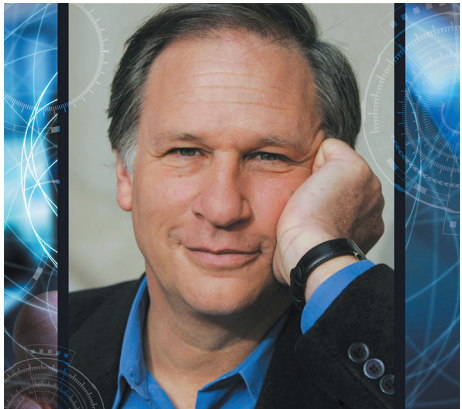
Is That a Fact? // continued from page 1

Giorgio Patrini, CEO of Sensity, a “visual threat intelligence company” based in the Netherlands, introduced us to the rise of “deepfake” video technologies that can manipulate and falsify video content with unsettling realism.

This year’s President’s Lecture, the annual capstone event of the Creative Thought Forum, featured the science journalist Robert Krulwich, known to many SAR members from his long-running radio and podcast program *RadioLab*, as well as his reporting on National Public Radio and elsewhere. Krulwich offered witty ruminations on the complex relationship between rigorous scientific method and human intuition in a talk entitled “Why Things Are the Way They Are.”

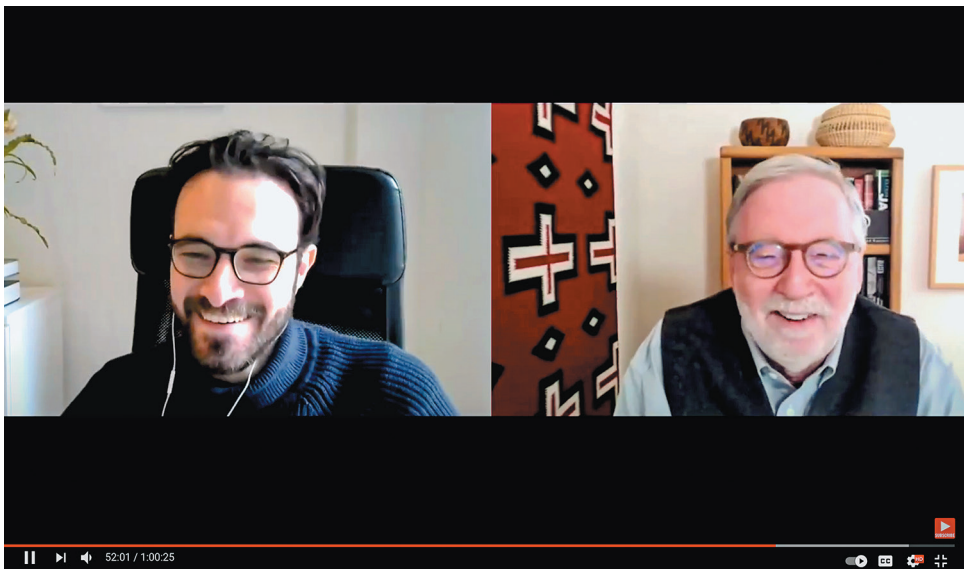
As we move into the summer, we reflect back on the remarkable size and geographical diversity of the audiences our recent virtual events have attracted. It is through the generosity of our sponsors and SAR’s Founders’ Society members that we are able

to continue the Creative Thought Forum and to share perspectives that push the traditional boundaries of anthropology and related disciplines, while still honoring our institutional heritage. Members both locally and globally can expect to see the many faces of contemporary anthropology and archaeology represented in our online and soon-to-be in-person programming in the months to come.



ROBERT KRULWICH

Members both locally and globally can expect to see the many faces of contemporary anthropology and archaeology represented in our online and soon-to-be in-person programming in the months to come.



GIORGIO PATRINI, CEO OF SENSITY, AND PRESIDENT MICHAEL F. BROWN, DURING THE LIVE Q&A PORTION OF THE APRIL 8, 2021, CREATIVE THOUGHT FORUM VIRTUAL EVENT

IARC Curator of Education Felicia Garcia
on the 2021 IARC Speaker Series



Over the last year, many cultural institutions have been faced with difficult questions about the changes that need to be made within our field to move toward a more equitable future. At SAR, projects like the Guidelines for Collaboration have provided an example for other organizations on the critical importance of ongoing community input and partnerships. This year’s IARC Speaker Series, Museums Pivot: Shifting Paradigms for Collaboration, aimed to highlight meaningful collaborations that we can look to as we envision the future.

A moment that really stood out to me came from Sven Haakanson, curator of Native American anthropology at Seattle’s Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, in response to a question about how institutions should begin to approach this work:

“How do you build those relationships? That means rolling your sleeves up and establishing a long-term relationship and being honest about what’s working and what isn’t working and how to build and move forward from there. We make mistakes—we’re human, and that’s okay, but learn from those mistakes and then figure out what works best for the community. . . . Find a way to build those bridges of trust. In the presentation, one of the things that’s really important is how do we build that trust and how do we maintain it?”

This year’s speakers represented institutions from across the country, from New York City to Chicago, Phoenix, and Seattle. Each presentation provided insights about what makes for a successful collaboration. Collectively, the speakers also demonstrated the wide range of roles and support necessary to build meaningful relationships.

During our opening event, we heard from three Apsáalooke intellectuals and artists, Nina Sanders, Ben Pease, and JoRee LaFrance, who described how they successfully bridge their cultural values with the work that they do within museums and other cultural institutions. In our second event, Heard Museum curator Erin Joyce spoke with artists Ian Kual’i and Marie Watt about the importance of collaborative relationships between museum staff and artists in exhibition development. For our third conversation, Sven Haakanson was joined by traditional kayak builder Alfred Naumoff, and they shared the lasting impact that these types of relationships can have on both museums and communities.

To close out the series, keynote speaker Dr. Patricia Norby spoke about the importance of Indigenous representation and shared her vision for the future of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the museum field at large. Reflecting on this incredible lineup of speakers, we feel inspired and energized to take what we have learned and continue moving forward.

Watch the IARC Speaker Series on SAR’s YouTube channel, sarsf.info/youtube




MARIE WATT, TURTLE ISLAND, FALL–WINTER 2020 AT MARC STRAUS GALLERY, NEW YORK

Going Digital // continued from page 1

those new realities, as we did in our recent webinar on so-called deepfake videos, which featured Dr. Giorgio Patrini, CEO of Sensity.


While continuing to push the envelope with our online events, we remain committed to our New Mexican location and cultural heritage. When circumstances permit, we will be restarting SAR’s popular field trips that take members to parts of our region, and sometimes the world, unfamiliar to many.

Until then, I look forward to your continued engagement with the range of exciting and transformative ideas that we offer to our members and the general public.

Cordially,

Michael F. Brown
President

“ ONLINE EVENTS DRAMATICALLY INCREASE THE DIVERSITY AND SCALE OF OUR AUDIENCE, WHOSE SIZE AT LAST COUNT NUMBERS IN THE THOUSANDS AND WHOSE LOCATION ENCOMPASSES ALL FIFTY STATES AND NINETEEN COUNTRIES. ”
—Michael F. Brown, president of SAR

Stay Connected

 Sign up for our weekly email, SAR Connects, and receive inspiration from scholars and Native American artists *directly to your inbox*. If you aren’t receiving these messages, please reach out to our membership team to update your email address at schiffer@sarsf.org.

As we head into the summer, SAR has planned a full series of virtual programs, from webinars and scholar-led conversations to artist talks and virtual studio tours. Be sure to check the online calendar for opportunities to engage with SAR from home.

sarsf.info/calendar




SAR MEMBERS ARE SAYING:

“ I learned a great deal. It was excellent to have Theresa Pasqual (Acoma) there giving us an idea of the different concept of time, space, and significance from descendant culture.”
—SAR member
Virtual attendee of the SAR Press book talk on Aztec, Salmon, and the Puebloan Heartland of the Middle San Juan (April 2021).

“ We hope you will be able to keep the digital component whenever we all emerge from the pandemic lock-down. We live in Taos and enjoy coming down for programs in the middle of the day, and we will continue to do so when we can gather again. However, it has been a huge intellectual boost to plug into your programs over the past year.”
—Carol Farmer
Carol attended Skeletons at the Lake with SAR advisory board member Douglas Preston and biological anthropologist Agustín Fuentes.

Over the last year SAR has expanded our virtual public program offerings and discovered exciting new ways to connect with the community.

SAR BY THE NUMBERS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS

 67 online programs
 73% of online participants come from outside of NM
 7000+ registrants from 50 states and 19 countries

SAR VIRTUAL MEMBERSHIP

This spring, SAR launched a virtual membership for new members. You can welcome friends and family into the SAR community and introduce them to a world of fascinating ideas, regardless of their location, by gifting a virtual membership for just \$25 a year. Learn more at sarsf.org/virtualmember.

