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Si no t'agrada el que veus al mirall, el més fàcil és llençar el mirall.

"If you don't like what you see in the mirror,
it's easiest to throw away the mirror."

Paul Fine, Chair
Building Name Review Committee
University of California, Berkeley

Dear Prof. Fine and colleagues:

I write in response to a proposal that UC Berkeley unname Kroeber Hall.¹ To summarize: We should rename the building without exaggerating our critique of A. L. Kroeber. The unnamng proposal rightly highlights the pain caused by limitations in Kroeber's view of "culture" and his unreflecting Euro-American discursive positionality. But it elides his writing against racism, his work to support Indian land claims and the documentation of Native oral histories, his collaborations with Native coauthors, and his enduring contributions to Indigenous cultural and linguistic revival. Focusing on Kroeber also distracts us from honest self-examination, suggesting that our problem lies with a single villain rather than being what it is — foundational and systemic.

I Introduction

This conversation involves trying to understand the agency, positionality, and values of people a century ago, so it is respectful for me to say where I come from. Personally, I am a settler-colonist whose ancestors came to Canada and the US from England, Ireland, Norway, and Russia; I moved to Ohlone land in 1994. Professionally, I am a linguist whose training and early work were on ancient and medieval languages of Eurasia. Since 2000, my work has mostly focused on Indigenous languages of northern California (especially Karuk and Yurok), first using the extensive body of archival materials held in Berkeley repositories to learn about languages, then collaborating with elder speakers and their families on language documentation. The six Yurok elders and three of the Karuk elders I worked with have passed away; my current projects involve making documentation created between 1901 and 2015 accessible to language learners and teachers, and supporting local language projects.

Material that Indigenous people created with Kroeber to benefit their descendants is the basis of my work today. In the Department of Linguistics, I direct a research unit, the Survey of California and Other Indian Languages, which maintains California's major language archive and supports language revitalization projects by Indigenous activists, learners, and teachers. In working with Native communities I have made many mistakes, some of which I have learned to see as consequences of prioritizing my own assumptions, goals, and sensibilities at the expense of others' interests; I have also had the joy of watching linguistic research make a difference for language learning and use. In writing here about A. L. Kroeber's work and legacy, I aim to respect the perspectives of all participants, hoping to treat with empathy those who lived a century ago and those who now live and work with their legacy.²

¹The author of the proposal (endorsed by over a dozen colleagues) is not named; I will call it the "unnamng proposal." The innovative words *unname* and *dename* in the sense "render nameless" are campus parlance (Building Naming Project Task Force 2017), our own Orwellian contribution to the future of the English language. For fiction on the impact of unnamng, *avant la lettre*, see Le Guin (1971).

²I am grateful to student and faculty colleagues for comments on a draft of this letter. They may not agree with me, but their generosity has improved my writing.

2 Summary of the unnamng proposal

The official campus unnamng process involves a moral judgment — a finding that a building eponym’s “legacy” disaccords with Berkeley’s values.³ The unnamng proposal asserts that A. L. Kroeber did not live up to our values in three specific respects: (1) “Kroeber and his colleagues engaged in collection of the remains of Native American ancestors”; (2) Kroeber “pronounced the Ohlone to be culturally extinct”; and (3) his treatment of Ishi “was cruel, degrading, and racist.” I write at length here because the unnamng proposal omits and simplifies some points, and includes some inaccuracies.⁴

3 Ethnographic memory research

As the unnamng proposal stresses, it is important to understand the research paradigm now (since Gruber 1970) often called “salvage” (or “Boasian”) ethnography. Here I will use an alternative term “memory ethnography” in describing the research methodology of Kroeber, his Columbia University teacher Franz Boas, and some of their students and colleagues. Their work was based on an assumption that local folk and indigenous cultural traditions around the world were being extinguished by capitalist and national forces, and that it was urgent to document them. Of course this project is associated with a 19th-century European Romanticism whose manifestations include folklore collection by Afanasyev in Russia, Asbjørnsen and Moe in Norway, and the Grimms in Germany; Child’s English and Scottish ballads; the music of Dvořák, Grieg, and others; and Lönnrot’s *Kalevala*, created out of Finnish folk traditions. Similar early 20th-century American projects were the documentation by John Lomax of Texas folk music (from 1907) and by Boas’s student Zora Neale Hurston of African-American folklore (beginning in the 1920s). In some of these traditions, and for Boas, there was also a philological assumption that cultures are best appreciated and understood through their texts and related productions.

So, in the early 20th century, A. L. Kroeber had a research practice oriented toward documentation of Indigenous languages, stories, songs, and other cultural practices based on memory ethnography. That means that rather than observing contemporary sociocultural practices or focusing on the present experiences of Indian people, the anthropologist would ask people (typically, elderly people) how life used to be. As Kroeber explained in the introduction to his book *Handbook of the Indians of California* (1925:v), he sought “to reconstruct and present the scheme within which [California Indians] in ancient and more recent times lived their lives.” Revealingly, his verb is *lived*, not *live*. His goals were diachronic and comparative — to explain how California’s many Indigenous civilizations had changed over millennia (typically, in his view, through increasing complexity in material culture, technology, and social systems) and to understand patterns of interrelation among them.⁵

The memory ethnography of Boas and Kroeber had interrelated and widely-discussed flaws that underlie some of the pain evoked today by Kroeber’s choices a century ago. One was inattention to the recent and current expe-

³See <https://chancellor.berkeley.edu/building-name-review-committee/principles>: “The legacy of a building’s [eponym] should be in alignment with the values and mission of the university.” This is revealingly simplified from what was recommended by the Building Naming Project Task Force (2017:10-11, emphasis added): “The *principal* legacy of the [eponym] of a building should be in alignment with the values and mission of the university. . . . However, no honoree should be expected to reflect modern values in every aspect of their life. The Yale Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming Report cites the example of Frederick Douglass, whose principal legacies as an abolitionist and an advocate for civil rights overrode some of his problematic statements contrasting African Americans with American Indians.”

⁴These in turn create a space for more egregious ones. For example, in an editorial on July 16, 2020, the *Daily Cal* writes that Kroeber “devoted his life to acts or advocacy of racial oppression and subjugation — desecrating and violating Indigenous lands and lives” (<https://www.dailycal.org/2020/07/16/rename-buildings-to-rectify-racial-injustice/>).

⁵“Civilization” is his usual term; for example, Hupa, Karuk, and Yurok people “[speak] diverse languages but [follow] the same remarkable civilization” (Kroeber 1925:1). For his diachronic conclusions, see chapter 12 of *Anthropology* (Kroeber 1923:293-325).

periences of living people, notably including their experiences of genocide. Even if this seemed to be a theoretically grounded choice (at the time, given his research goals), it is a fact that Kroeber was better positioned than any other scholar to document what the US and California did to Indigenous people. He chose not to take advantage of that important opportunity. He did not even call out the crime, as some predecessors and contemporaries did (Platt 2011:50-51). Most of these were outside academia; maybe Kroeber thought he was pursuing “the ideal of objective science” (Le Guin 2004:12). Perhaps he thought it would be pointless to speak out, or maybe we should give weight to his comment that he “could not stand all the tears” in memories of suffering (Buckley 1989:440). Platt (2011:52) goes too far when he calls Kroeber’s reticence “moral cowardice,” implying that he was afraid to do what he knew he should do. But whatever its emotional or intellectual causes and whatever we call it, I think it is the most important of Kroeber’s failures.

A second flaw is that Kroeber’s view of cultural change as an organic process involving the accretion or loss of material, technological, ceremonial, or social “culture elements,” and a Romantic or essentialist view of “culture,” led him to disregard diachronic processes involving radical transformation, eclectic construction, hybridization, etc. This intellectual blind spot had small-scale ramifications (such as suppressing structured Rumsen-Spanish code-switching in an oral narrative in favor of “pure” Rumsen) and large-scale ramifications, the latter including the assumption that cultures transformed through hybridization or syncretic processes are gone, or “extinct.”

Third, some critics suggest a mutually constitutive relationship between Boas’s and Kroeber’s practices and the “myth of the vanishing Indian” (as the unnamng proposal puts it). Kahnawake Mohawk anthropologist Audra Simpson’s (2018:167) trenchant critique of Boas could be directed just as well at his student Kroeber:

The presumed inevitability of Indigenous decline and disappearance is present throughout Boas’s thinking. This declensionist narrative — a story about Indigenous culture loss and demographic weakness necessitating Boas’s salvage of those whose displacement he pretends is inevitable — seems rather remarkable, coming as it does from an ethnographer and linguist who spent considerable time with Native people, living and dead. Such a view is thus far from a break with the past. Boas, like his anthropological predecessor [Lewis Henry] Morgan, worked in concert with a settler state that sought to disappear Indian life and land in order to possess that land and absorb that difference into a normative sociopolitical order.

Boas and Kroeber were working within a broader system whose goals and assumptions were as Simpson writes; the University of California was part of that system. And it seems from their writing that they believed, in error, that the “displacement” and “absorption” she mentions were indeed inevitable. Whether they “pretended” this (or were just mistaken) and worked “in concert” with settler-state dispossession is another matter. Kroeber did not resist or contradict a prevailing cultural narrative, but his role in creating it and determining its effects seems more uncertain. Buckley (1999:202) has written as follows:

[Anthropologists] were indeed “complicit” in the weak sense that they all contributed to the formation of the discourse on tribal organization and extermination in California utilized . . . in creating policy, but a great many others — Spanish, Mexican, and Russian as well as Anglo, churchmen, traders, soldiers, explorers, settlers, and a variety of capitalists as well as trained professional anthropologists and the surviving native Californians who were in dialogue with them . . . — were implicated in that discursive formation as well.

Even many people with privilege now see that “white silence is violence.” I am unsure what judgment to pass on those who, a century ago, did not understand this.

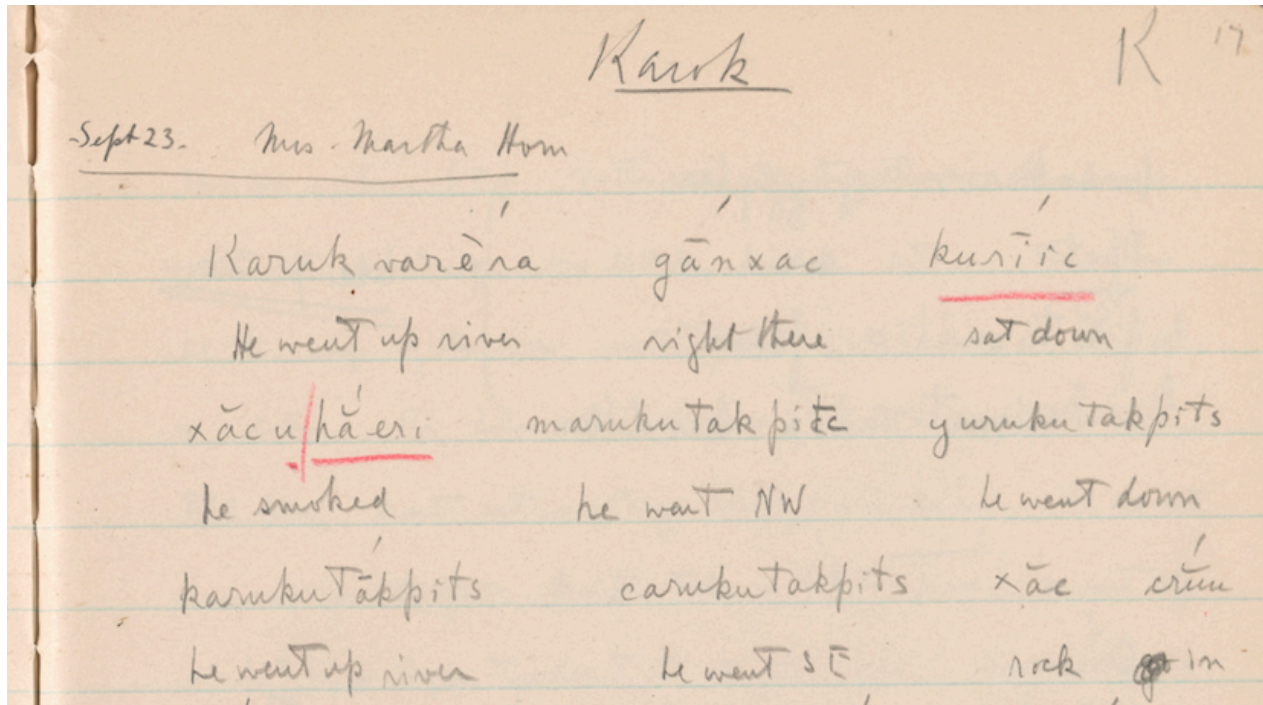


FIGURE 1: Transcript of the beginning of a Karuk story told by Martha Horn to A. L. Kroeber, Sept. 23, 1901 (now in the Bancroft Library). Mrs. Horn was the first Native woman to share her language with a Berkeley researcher.

4 Work with Indigenous people

The unnamings proposal omits discussion of Kroeber's work with Native Americans other than Ishi, and its legacy today. The knowledge, histories, perspectives, and status of Native people were uplifted in that work, as I will discuss under three rubrics.

4.1 Ethnography

Kroeber's most enduring legacy is a direct consequence of his naïve essentialism, organic theory of culture, and memory-ethnography focus on pre-European social practices. Kroeber assembled a unique documentary corpus of notes and recordings of a wide range of traditional narratives, ceremonial and medicine texts, songs, and information about Indigenous languages of North America (especially California). For example, he personally made over 1,000 sound recordings with speakers of 28 such languages — the earliest recordings of each, including the only known recordings of four.⁶ The 200 narratives, historical and legal texts, and songs that he recorded in Yurok between 1901 and 1909 are now used in linguistic and cultural revitalization projects. His detailed notes on dozens of languages beginning in 1901, available in the Bancroft Library (and widely distributed to Indigenous stakeholders), are critical for language reclamation throughout California.⁷ An example is in Figure 1.

Rumsien Ohlone artist and scholar Linda Yamane (2001) has written movingly about her use of these notes in

⁶Kroeber made recordings of Atsugewi, Chinook Wawa, Esselen, Hopi, Huchnom, Karuk, Maidu, Mattole, Modoc, Mojave, Nlaka'pamux, Nomlaki, Northern Paiute, Northern Sierra Miwok, Purismeño, Rumsen, Shoshone, Sioux, Tachi, Tolowa, Wailaki, Whilkut, Wiyot, Yahi, Yawdanchi, Yowlumne, Yuki, and Yurok. See Keeling (1991) for details.

⁷On a long-term Chukchansi Yokuts language revitalization project partly using Kroeber's notes, see Aune (2012); on Mohave, see Weinberg and Penfield (2000).

re-learning her language, partly at Berkeley's biennial Breath of Life Archival Institute in 1997. I myself recall a Breath of Life participant a few years later, in tears, after she had found a recording that her great-grandmother made with Kroeber, and learned to understand and use her great-grandmother's words on that recording.⁸ Yurok cultural activist Joy Sundberg assessed the situation as follows (Platt 2011:46): "I don't put Kroeber or any of those anthropologists down, because there's lots of things that would not have been documented if it hadn't been for him to come up and interview these people."

4.2 Oral history

In 1935, Kroeber and his graduate student Frank Essene directed an oral history project funded by the State Emergency Relief Administration. Through this project, Native people in eastern and northern California were hired to interview elders in their communities. What resulted are 90 notebooks (now archived in the Bancroft Library) containing about 4,500 pages that describe not just traditional cultural practices and language but experiences of life in the late 1800s and early 1900s, ranging from the quotidian to the traumatic (surviving genocide, abuse, and discrimination). One such person was Lassik / Wailaki elder Lucy Young, who explained her wishes as follows:

If you could only know the truth of how the Indian has been treated since the first white man came into this part of the country, it would make any ordinary man shake and shudder. I would like to tell you the whole story from 1846 up to the present date. I am afraid it would not be allowed to be put in print.

These and other oral histories recorded under Kroeber's supervision in the 1930s inform published accounts of Indigenous history (Goldschmidt et al. 1939, Essene 1942, Bauer 2009, 2016) and have been used by Native communities repatriating knowledge, for example, about land usage (Steenland 2015).

4.3 Collaboration

A further significant aspect of Kroeber's work is his support and public acknowledgement of younger Indigenous collaborators, notably Juan Dolores, Gilbert Natches, and Robert Spott.

Dolores (Tohono O'odham) worked for the Museum of Anthropology off and on from 1912 to 1936, including as a Research Fellow in 1918-1919, and then permanently as a preparator from 1937 until he retired in 1948 (Kroeber 1949). His publications include papers on Tohono O'odham linguistics prepared in collaboration with Kroeber but published under Dolores's sole authorship (Dolores 1913, 1923), a contribution to Kroeber's *Festschrift* (Dolores 1936), and a methodologically innovative analysis of color terms (O'Neale and Dolores 1943). He also created a substantial unpublished documentary corpus: about 100 sound recordings of Tohono O'odham songs and speech from 1909, 1919, and 1932, in his own voice and those of elders whom he recorded.⁹

A nephew of Sarah Winnemucca, Natches (Kuyuidokado Paiute) was a notable landscape painter (Bandurraga 1990) who worked with Kroeber (and other researchers) intermittently over many years. His 1923 paper on Northern Paiute verbs was again prepared with Kroeber, but with Natches as sole author.¹⁰ This practice was far from common in the early 20th century; more often, only a white outsider would claim authorship. Also partly in collaboration with Kroeber, Natches created extensive unpublished documentation of Northern Paiute language, speech, and song, including 69 recordings, an important notebook with texts and linguistic material, and other

⁸See Baldwin et al. (2018) on the Breath of Life model for language reclamation.

⁹See <https://cla.berkeley.edu/list.php?plid=11122>

¹⁰Natches's curlew in Figure 2 is part of a small collection of his drawings accessible through the California Language Archive (<http://cla.berkeley.edu/item/2699>).

materials now archived at Berkeley.¹¹



FIGURE 2: Gilbert Natches drawing, undated, with a Northern Paiute word for “curlew”

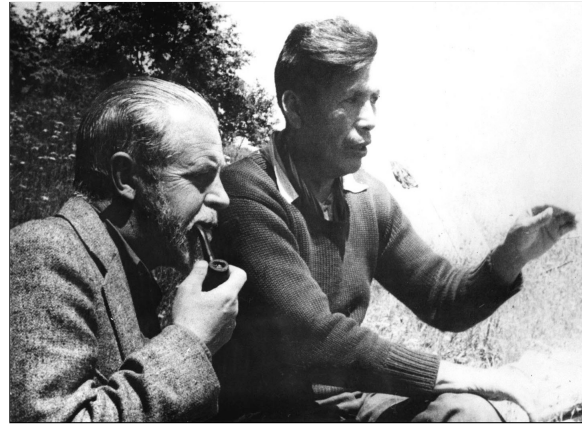


FIGURE 3: A. L. Kroeber and Robert Spott in Napa Valley, ca. 1939 (Hearst Museum #15-19477)

Finally, Kroeber’s collaborator Robert Spott (Yurok) worked with him for many years, coauthored a remarkable monograph whose structure and texture are unique in California (Spott and Kroeber 1942), and left behind a wealth of documentation (in the form of notebooks full of linguistic, cultural, and historical information copied down by Kroeber, now in the Bancroft Library). Friendly with Kroeber’s family, Spott is vividly recalled as follows by Kroeber’s daughter Ursula K. Le Guin (2004:19):

Robert was grave, serious; we took no liberties with him. . . . I can still blush when I remember myself rather unusually holding the table, chattering away breakneck, telling some event of the day, and being abruptly silenced by Robert. I had far exceeded the conversational limit proper to a well-bred Yurok girl, which I imagine may be a word or two. Robert laid down his fork and swallowed, and when I paused for breath, he spoke to the adults on a subject of interest to adults.

. . . There is a photograph of my father and Robert [Figure 3], one listening, the other telling, with lifted hand and faraway gaze. . . . Robert and Alfred talked together sometimes in English sometimes in Yurok. It was perhaps unusual for the daughter of a first-generation German immigrant from New York to hear him talking Yurok, but I didn’t know that. I didn’t know anything. I thought everybody spoke Yurok.

5 Excavation

The unnamings proposal writes that “Kroeber personally engaged in excavating grave sites, directed the work of others in this regard, and built a repository for human remains exhumed by academic researchers and government agencies” and that “[t]his has always been wrong” The initial statement is misleading; Kroeber was not mainly an archaeologist and did not personally excavate in the US.¹² But he did employ others who excavated archaeological sites; he received human remains along with cultural objects in the museum he directed; he was fully aware of what colleagues and students were doing; and he did not object. Two examples are instructive.

In 1907, workers digging a trench on the south side of Strawberry Creek near the Faculty Club “cut through a

¹¹See <https://cla.berkeley.edu/list.php?plid=371>.

¹²See Platt (2011:88-89) and Rowe (1962); the unnamings proposal cites as its source the 2017 UC Berkeley Tribal Forum Report, which, however, does not say that Kroeber excavated grave or other sites. Kroeber did excavate at several sites in Mexico and Peru (Rowe 1962).

deposit of clay mixed with sea shells, bones and charcoal”; Berkeley paleontologist J. C. Merriam then excavated a buried adult and child in addition to shells, a charmstone, and other artifacts.¹³ He noted that the “shell bed was from one to two feet in thickness and extended for a known distance of nearly two hundred feet along the bank of Strawberry Creek.” Additional human remains and artifacts were uncovered during Faculty Club construction projects in 1914 and 1925. Today the Hearst Museum of Anthropology houses them all. Kroeber suggested in 1914 that the Strawberry Creek site was inhabited 500-1,000 years ago, while his colleague T. T. Waterman wrote in 1915 that the Faculty Club “has been built over an ancient Indian cemetery.” I am not aware that the campus or Faculty Club has any associated public memorial; the Faculty Club restaurant instead features a set of murals depicting how California food culture has evolved from an Indigenous past through the Mexican era to modern home cooking and *haute cuisine*.

In 1913, Kroeber sent museum employee L. L. Loud to northwest California to do archaeological and geographic research near Humboldt Bay and Mad River, and to make sound recordings of place names.¹⁴ Three key points emerge from their disputatious correspondence (Heizer 1970). First, Kroeber certainly wanted Loud to excavate a habitation site (“mound”), which would be expected to contain house traces, domestic artifacts and food waste, and perhaps human remains and funerary artifacts.¹⁵ Second, Loud did excavate human remains and gave details to Kroeber. And third, both Kroeber and Loud were concerned to have permission from the (white) “owner” of any land being excavated, but neither seem aware of other kinds of owner or cultural-heritage stakeholder.

All in all, clearly Kroeber felt that there was no ethical difference between archaeological excavation in California and in Eurasian contexts where excavation of domestic and funerary sites was and still is common. Examples of the latter are Roman Britain, pre-Celtic Ireland, Bronze Age Greece, Iron Age Anatolia and Jordan, Yamnaya steppe cultures, and pharaonic burial sites (Egyptian pyramids), most of them associated with languages or “cultures” later replaced by invasion or migration; some are excavated by Berkeley archaeologists. I do not know how to assess the unnamings proposal’s universalizing moral judgment, but clearly Kroeber did not understand that California’s Indigenous people are owners and should be stewards of their archaeological heritage.

6 Ishi

The Yahi man we call Ishi lived in the Bay Area from August 1911 until his death in March 1916; he was in his 50s, Kroeber in his 30s. Ishi mostly lived in the University of California Museum of Anthropology in San Francisco, and for a summer in anthropologist T. T. Waterman’s house on Cherry St. in Berkeley. Two caretakers also lived in the museum; Indian visitors sometimes stayed there. Ishi’s work included Sunday cultural demonstrations for

¹³See Buckley et al. (2008:48-53) for the information in this paragraph; Merriam quotations are from his notes, which Buckley et al. cite. Merriam chaired Berkeley’s paleontology department and was appointed dean of the faculty before leaving to direct the Carnegie Institution; he is honored in two campus websites (<https://ucmp.berkeley.edu/about-ucmp/history-of-ucmp/john-c-merriam/>, <http://eps.berkeley.edu/content/john-c-merriam/>).

¹⁴These recordings are available on request in the California Language Archive (<http://cla.berkeley.edu/collection/11054>).

¹⁵Platt (2011:90) pushes a critique of Kroeber beyond what the evidence will bear when he writes that “Kroeber wanted Loud to devote all his time on Indian Island to purely archaeological matters” and suggests that Kroeber did not want Loud to document the infamous 1860 Indian Island massacre through ethnohistorical research. In fact Kroeber had simply told Loud to do “exploration of at least one mound” (July 12) or to “excavate one or two of the most promising mounds” (Aug. 30) anywhere along the shores of Humboldt Bay. He was responding to Loud’s Aug. 24 report that he was “getting something of value from the [white] pioneers” when he wrote on Aug. 30 that “I know of no reason why you should be operating as far away from Humboldt Bay as Little river, nor why you should be planning to work up a historical paper, or any kind of a paper, except along the lines of work specified in your instructions.” There is no evidence that Kroeber knew or imagined that Loud’s work could develop as it did, namely, to the highly original and damning ethnohistorical study included in his 1918 monograph; for example, Kroeber wrote on Sept. 16 that “I have not yet been able to get from your letters a clear idea of what you have been doing, or even of what you have been trying to do.” These details are important because they bear on whether Kroeber actively worked (as Platt implies) to suppress knowledge about the California Indian genocide.

museum visitors, a few hours a week as a janitor, and Yana linguistic and cultural documentation. Field (2005:83) poses a critical ethical question:

Was Ishi treated as a living exhibit of primitive culture, the last example of a vanquished Indian world, on display at the museum for both a voyeuristic public and a data-hungry anthropological community? Or was Ishi instead a willing, conscious participant in co-creating a new life for himself in San Francisco, a life that afforded him comfort, dignity, friendship, and personal satisfaction?

If we must choose only one answer, it is hard to be confident; maybe “yes” is the answer to both questions. In his first weeks in San Francisco, Ishi himself was asked by a Bureau of Indian Affairs representative if he wanted to live on a reservation. Through the interpreter Sam Batwi, he answered, “I want to stay where I am. I will grow old here, and die in this house [the museum].”¹⁶

Ishi had an eclectic set of friends he spent time with in San Francisco, Berkeley, and on rural day (and longer) trips, including university and other white middle-class people, his colleague Juan Dolores (Tohono O’odham), and people he met in parks and other places he visited. The anthropologists he saw most often were E. W. Gifford and Waterman. The latter worked with him extensively and concluded his memories as follows (1918:68):

A final word about Ishi himself would be in place, but I find it difficult to say the right thing. It was patent that he liked everybody, and everybody liked him. He never wished to go back to the wilds, naturally enough, for there was nothing to go back to. He had however, to be reassured repeatedly that we had no intention of sending him back. As a matter of fact I think the closing years were far the happiest of his life.

Waterman’s account is self-serving; his last comment is surely a fantasy. And the recollection that Ishi “had . . . to be reassured repeatedly” that they would not send him back to northeast California suggests both that Ishi did not feel fully free and that those around him felt they were honoring his choices. It is easy to imagine that both could be true.

The most textured memoir of personal encounters with Ishi is that of Zumwalt (2003 [1962]), recalling childhood experiences like the following¹⁷:

When I knew Ishi was coming to see me I would wait for him on the corner of 11th Avenue and Lake Streets so that I could look down 11th Avenue and see him get off the street car. Usually he would see me and start waving while still a block away — once across the street he would pick me up like a sack of potatoes and carry me into the garage where he would remove his shoes, casually give me a present, and greet Jerry, my King Charles Spaniel and Billy, my pet chipmunk. Billy would immediately run up his arm as soon as he opened the cage and dive into Ishi’s shirt where he rode around all day — when it came time for Ishi to put him back in his cage Billy was usually sound asleep in a pocket somewhere. Jerry adored him too but was not permitted to go on our walks since he was too noisy and would frighten birds. Our walk would then begin by a trip to the kitchen for a handout of cookies, bar chocolate and jerky. . . . Our next point of call was the garden where Ishi examined the progress of slips that he brought from time to time. One of the gardeners in Golden Gate Park gave him slips of roses and fuchias which he brought to my mother and were planted. He was always pleased to see his gifts growing.

. . . I can recall one afternoon when we both lay nose to the ground smelling the earth from different places

¹⁶As the Anishinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor (2008:5) puts it, quoting this answer, “Ishi was a native of survivance.” The anecdote is from Kroeber (1912:306), an interested party who was writing for the public, but its specificity makes invention unlikely. Batwi (Yana) was the only person who could converse with Ishi until Ishi learned English; by all accounts the two did not get along.

¹⁷The unnamings proposal cites a derivative account of Ishi’s San Francisco life, none that are first-hand. The fullest first-hand accounts I know are by Kroeber (1912), Pope (1920:178-189), Waterman (1918:64-68), and Zumwalt (2003); T. Kroeber’s (1961) book is also crucial.

around the lake so that I would learn how to tell one place from another by scent alone. Then Ishi drew an outline of the lake and marked from where each sample came.

Concerning Ishi's own sense of his living situation, already mentioned above, the evidence even from a single source (Pope 1920:178-186) paints a complex picture:

The Museum is near the Hospital, and since Ishi had been made a more or less privileged character in the hospital wards, he often came into the surgical department. Here he quietly helped the nurses clean instruments, or amused the internes and nurses by singing his Indian songs, or carried on primitive conversation by means of a very complex mixture of gesture, Yana dialect, and the few scraps of English he had acquired in his contact with us. . . . He visited the sick in the wards with a gentle and sympathetic look which spoke more clearly than words. He came to the women's wards quite regularly, and with his hands folded before him, he would go from bed to bed like a visiting physician, looking at each patient with quiet concern or with a fleeting smile that was very kindly received and understood.

. . . His residence in the Museum caused many misgivings in his mind. The presence of all the bones of the dead, their belongings, and the [Egyptian] mummies were ever a source of anxiety to him. He locked his bedroom door at night to keep out spirits.

. . . In 1915 . . . Ishi was given a little canvas house on the hill back of the Museum. Here he slept and spent much of his time. He had to be taught to keep his windows open at night [for health], and even this outdoor sleeping did not please him. He always preferred to sleep in his old room on the second floor of the Museum where it was warm and dry.

. . . [H]e was making a competent income, understood the value of money, was very thrifty and saving, and looked forward to the day when he could buy a horse and wagon.¹⁸

To me it seems that each person who assesses Ishi, with no evidence but these reports, fills in a profound lacuna with presupposition, so Ishi serves as a mirror of our expectations.¹⁹ The unnamings proposal says that Kroeber's treatment of Ishi "was cruel, degrading, and racist."²⁰ Our view of such a claim must depend on how we think about Ishi's own agency and wishes. Starn (2004:150-151) offers an anecdote and an assessment:

The suggestion that Ishi was somehow less than human . . . infuriated Kroeber. He dashed off an immediate reply to one newspaper's report that the "wild man" was "mentally a mere child." "There is nothing undeveloped about him," Kroeber declared. "He has the mind of a man and is a man in every sense." . . . I do not think Ishi was a helpless victim any more than Kroeber was the evil scientist. It must have demanded great force of character to survive for so many years in hiding, and even in San Francisco Ishi often exercised his own will when it mattered to him.

Clifford (2013:107) suggests that Ishi may have been "a prisoner of drastically limited options, a narrowed freedom created by colonial violence, with an inability to imagine alternatives." And Karen Biestman (2003:153), director of Stanford's Native American Cultural Center, reflects as follows:

[Ishi] can best be remembered as . . . a human being whose selective disclosure of knowledge and experience

¹⁸The unnamings proposal (p. 3) writes that Ishi's "white benefactors" gave him "a janitorial position to earn pocket money."

¹⁹Cf. Vizenor (1994:126): "Ishi is a simulation, the absence of his tribal names. He posed at the borders of the camera, the circles of photographers and spectators, in the best backlit pictures of the time."

²⁰Reframing Pope's (1920:188) description of Ishi's English usage as selectively cited by Starn (2004:43), the unnamings proposal asserts that Ishi's "white benefactors taught Ishi racial slurs as a way to refer to Black and Chinese people with his approximate 300-word English vocabulary, a sad testament to the culture." Pope provides a list of English words Ishi knew, emphasizing Ishi's interest in words for people, but there is no reason to think he learned these words from Kroeber or other "benefactors" rather than other people he met in San Francisco.

constituted active resistance; a man who was intellectually curious and generous of spirit in reciprocal relationships. He was an imaginative survivor of one of the most lethal chapters in American history, but never a victim. Instead, with only a 600-word vocabulary, Ishi adapted early twentieth-century San Francisco society into a relative Yahi construct with dignity, poise, and humor.

What is plain is that Kroeber himself could be extractive, paternalistic, and possessive in relation to Ishi despite his strong personal attachment to him.²¹ He prioritized his own research goals in a way that disturbs us now.²² He wrote about Ishi with terms like “wild” (Golla 1984:62) that seem dehumanizing today.²³ In 2020, none of this is acceptable (if not as rare as we would wish). Whether it amounts to “cruel, degrading, and racist” treatment is dependent, perhaps, on how we choose to assemble the individual pieces of evidence in the dossier of Ishi’s friends’ memories, to judge what he himself wanted in the last years of his life.

7 Race and culture

Two major books that Kroeber published in the 1920s are mentioned in the unnamings proposal and cast relevant light on his views.

7.1 *Anthropology* (1923)

The unnamings proposal notes that this book was influential, but does not discuss its content. The following early excerpt (pp. 5-6) sets the stage:

It is commonly considered useful for a man to know that Napoleon was a Corsican and was defeated at Waterloo in 1815, but a rather pedantic piece of knowledge that Shi Hwang-ti was born in northwestern China and unified the rule of China in 221 B.C. From a theoretical or general point of view, however, one of these facts is presumably as important as the other, for if we wish to know the principles that go into the shaping of human social life or civilization, China counts for as much as France, and the ancient past for as much as the nearby present.

The language is old-fashioned. The positionality is also unreflectingly Euro-American, as throughout Kroeber’s writings, whose implied audience rarely if ever includes the people under discussion.

But in its content, *Anthropology* is a sustained, scientific assault on racism, published a year before Native Americans were granted US citizenship, three decades before *Brown v. Board of Education*, and at a time when eugenics was accepted even in progressive circles and segregation was a norm. The subsequent year saw the Immigration Act of 1924, which banned Asian immigration to the US and restricted immigration from southern and eastern Europe. Supported by the Ku Klux Klan and other advocates of “Nordicism”, the Immigration Act’s racist goals are plainly shown by Carl Vinson’s remarks in the House of Representatives (April 11, 1924, quoted in Committee

²¹On the personal attachment: T. Kroeber (1970:87), Scheper-Hughes (2001, 2003), and Le Guin (2004:13) describe the deep depression that overtook Kroeber after Ishi’s death, his period of psychoanalysis, and his temporary move away from university work to set up a therapeutic practice himself. He did not fully reengage with academia until 1922.

²²An instance of research blindness: after Ishi appeared to have recovered from a brief illness, Kroeber wrote in a letter that “the moral is to get from him what we can while he is well instead of trusting that he will last indefinitely” (Golla 1984:186-187). This attitude was common at the time, and is not unknown today.

²³On this word Le Guin (2004:29) writes compellingly: “I admire [my mother’s] book as deeply as I admire its subject, but have always regretted the subtitle, *A Biography of the Last Wild Indian in North America*, for it contradicts the sense and spirit of the story she tells. Ishi was not wild. He did not come out of the wilderness, but out of a culture and tradition far more deeply rooted and soundly established than that of the frontiersmen who slaughtered his people to get their land. He did not live in a wilderness but in a dearly familiar world he and his people knew hill by hill, river by river, stone by stone. Who made those golden hills a wilderness of blood and mourning and ignorance?” See also Starn (2003) for a refutation of Ishi’s alleged lack of interaction with white society.

on the Judiciary 1950:64):

Were the immigrants now flooding our shores possessed of the same traits, characteristics, and blood of our forefathers, I would have no concern upon this problem confronting us, because, in the main, they belonged to the same branch of the Aryan race. Americans and their forebears, the English, Irish, Scotch, and Welsh, are the same people. . . . But it is the “new” immigrant who is restricted in emigrating to this country. The emigrants affected by this bill are those from Italy, Greece, Russia, Poland, Bulgaria, Armenia, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Turkey. . . . [P]eople from these countries do not yield their national characteristics, but retain them practically unimpaired by contact with others.

The fourth chapter is in effect an argument marshalling evidence from anatomy, physiology, and psychology against the belief that some races are innately superior in any cognitive, evolutionary, or intellectual way.²⁴ It concludes (p. 85) that “[m]ost of the alleged evidence [for intrinsic racial disparities] is likely to be worthless.” Significantly, too, in developing his overall argument throughout the book, Kroeber uses the cultural patterns of Indigenous North America to introduce concepts and explanatory models, and applies them secondarily to the cultures of Eurasia. At the end of the book (p. 506), alluding to racist discourses in the US, he compares dossiers of “culture elements” world-wide and writes, archly:

[T]he Nordic branch looms insignificant. Up to a thousand years ago the Nordic peoples had indeed contributed ferment and unsettling, but scarcely a single new culture element, certainly not a new element of importance and permanence.

Finally, summing up five hundred pages of argument, he concludes:

[A]ny fears of the arrest and decay of human progress if a particular race should lose in fertility or become absorbed in others, are unfounded. Such alarms may be attributed to egocentric imagination. They resemble the regrets of an individual at the loss which the world will suffer when he dies; what he really fears is his own death. When we loosen the hold of such narrow and essentially personal emotions, and allow our minds to range over the whole of the labors and gradual achievements of humanity, irrespective of millennium or continent, the result is an unperturbed equanimity as to the slight and temporary predominance of this or that racial strain and as to the stability or future of culture. To contribute to this larger tolerance and balance of mind is one of the functions of anthropology.

Anthropologists no longer write in this humanistic style, and now tend to problematize potential contributions to society, but Kroeber’s point was relevant for the US in 1923 and remains sadly relevant today.

7.2 *Handbook of the Indians of California* (1925)

What is most important here about this book is what the unnamings proposal indicates: in the *Handbook*, Kroeber described Ohlone and over twenty other tribes and tribal groups as “culturally extinct.”²⁵ Concerning this, two things must be said. One is that it was hurtful, a source of ongoing trauma. It is as if the University of California declared some Indigenous Californians dead. To quote Miranda (2013:136): “it breaks my heart. My identity as

²⁴It is therefore an argument against both contemporary racism of the 1920s and earlier academics such as Louis Agassiz and the Berkeley naturalist Joseph LeConte.

²⁵He also used the expressions “ethnologically extinct,” “extinct for all practical purposes,” and simply “extinct.” Those he described with these terms include Chimariko (p. 109), Lile’ek Wappo (p. 221), Southern Yana and Yahi (p. 339), Salinan (p. 368), Delta Yokuts (p. 442), Ohlone (p. 464), Tuholi Yokuts (p. 478), Toltichi Yokuts (p. 481), Koyeti Yokuts (p. 482), Apiachi Yokuts (p. 484), Fresno Valley Yokuts (p. 489), Esselen (p. 544), Toloim (p. 610), Tataviam (p. 611), Vanyume (p. 614), Alakwisa (p. 797), New River Shasta, Konomihu, and Okwanuchu (p. 889), and Gabrielino (p. 910).

‘Indian’ stares right into the mouth of extinction. Who am I, if I’m not part of a recognized tribe?”

The pain is multigenerational. Rumsien Ohlone artist and scholar Linda Yamane (2001:429) writes as follows about the 19th and early 20th centuries (cf. Milliken et al. 2009:211-216):

[N]ative peoples began to scatter and intermarry. Finding themselves at the bottom of the social structure, with little future but to do other peoples’ dirty work, it was not easy to feel proud of who they were. . . . Traditions went underground — so deeply that most (or at least many) were lost. Our families learned to blend in so well that we eventually “disappeared” to the outside world, and the anthropologists declared us extinct.

A second thing to say about Kroeber’s pronouncements of “cultural extinction” is that he described what he meant by the term in 1954 (Kroeber and Heizer 1970:2-3):

[T]here is a widespread belief that many Indian groups . . . have now become extinct. . . . Anthropologists sometimes have gone a step farther, and when they can no longer learn from living informants the speech and modes of life of the ancestors of these informants, they talk of that tribe or group as being extinct — when they mean merely that *knowledge* of the aboriginal language and culture has become extinct among the survivors. The survivors are there; . . . but they can no longer help the anthropologist acquire the knowledge about the group that he would like to preserve.

Representing a widespread critique (cf. Simpson in §3 above), Laverty’s (2010:225-226) comment is appropriate:

When his informants did not provide him with the “memory culture” his “salvage” anthropology required to reconstruct preconquest cultures he categorized their tribe as “extinct.” Kroeber’s fixation with an ethnographic present situated just before the arrival of Europeans seems a case of imperialist nostalgia: a longing for that which “progress” has destroyed which simultaneously masks the current and historical power relations between the colonizer and the colonized. Kroeber’s essentialist, and here bounded and static, conception of culture allowed him to deem extinct those indigenous peoples who did not display sufficient amounts of pure, “primitive,” precontact culture

The first and last points accurately restate Kroeber’s own description. As for a “fixation with” and “longing for” a bygone time, Kroeber’s (1923:6) warning about anthropology as a whole is relevant:

It is probably true that many researches into early and savage [*sic*] history have sprung from an emotional predilection for the forgotten or neglected, the obscure and strange, the unwonted and mysterious. But such occasional personal æsthetic trends can not delimit the range of a science or determine its aims and methods.

As I see it, Kroeber’s language in the *Handbook* is another instance of his Euro-American discursive positionality; Indian people remained the “other” despite his anti-racism and humanistic goals.

8 The dispossessed

The unnamings proposal raises the matter of Kroeber’s role in US government determinations about Indian legal rights. Evidence is lacking for the claim it makes, unfortunately, while it silently passes over evidence that points in another direction.

8.1 Terminations

The unsupported claim is that Kroeber’s language in *Handbook of the Indians of California* (1925) — the language of “extinction” discussed just above — contributed to US governmental decisions to terminate or fail to support

Indian tribes. The unnamings proposal states:

Kroeber wrote erroneously in 1925 that for all practical purposes this tribe [the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe] was culturally extinct, and based on Kroeber's statement the federal government removed the tribe's recognized status and forced the surviving members of the band to vacate land protected for Native Americans.

It is inaccurate that the government decision was based on Kroeber's statement, though it is undeniable that he wrote what the unnamings proposal reports (Kroeber 1925:464):

The [Ohlone] group is extinct as far as all practical purposes are concerned. A few scattered individuals survive, whose parents are attached to the missions of San Jose, San Juan Bautista, and San Carlos; but they are of mixed tribal ancestry and live almost lost among other Indians or obscure Mexicans. At best some knowledge of the ancestral speech remains among them. The old habits of life have long since been abandoned.

We must acknowledge the pain that Kroeber's word "extinct" and seeming general dismissiveness has evoked. It is a source of joy that he was wrong, limited by his conception of "culture."

There is no evidence that Kroeber's academic writing affected the key government decisions, as those who have researched them have acknowledged; what evidence there is indicates that his judgments played no role.²⁶ The main exhibit is a 27-page memorandum written in 1927 by a government agent in Sacramento, L. A. Dorrington, identifying California Indian communities for whom land should be purchased. In almost all cases (about 135), he advised against land purchases — recommendations that had devastating effects, leading to loss of federal recognition among other outcomes.²⁷ The Verona Band (descendants of Mission San José, continued today by the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe) was denied the prospect of land with a brief dismissal (Dorrington 1927:1): "It does not appear at the present time that there is need for the purchase of land for the establishment of homes."

From Dorrington's memorandum, he evidently based his decisions on two considerations: whether members of an Indian community lived apart from white people, and whether in his opinion they "needed" land or already had it. Knowledge of language or cultural practices played no role. Around Chico, he wrote (p. 3), "approximately 86 Indians . . . are living the same as white citizens, are of the laboring class, and consequently no land is required." He wrote condescendingly about Mutsun Ohlone people (p. 16): "the San Juan Baptista band . . . have been well cared for by the Catholic priests and no land is required." He also dismissed three Salinan groups in Monterey County, writing in one case (p. 14): "The Pleyto band have provided their own homes and are not in need of any home site." Dorrington named each of these three groups by location, not as "Salinan"; there is no evidence that he knew how Kroeber's broader tribal designations related to any one community. In short, Dorrington's recommendations were not based on cultural status as "extinct" or otherwise, but on more mundane factors. This is not to excuse the government's destructive actions, but to suggest that Kroeber's words did not have the practical influence others have sometimes supposed.

8.2 Land claims

In contrast, it is well documented that Kroeber contributed in the 1950s to a determination *against* the US government, *in favor of* tribal interests. This was in a case brought to the Indian Land Claims Commission by the

²⁶Important historical studies include those of Field (1999, 2003), Milliken et al. (2009), Laverty (2010), and Arellano et al. (2014).

²⁷Arellano et al. (2014:53) write that he was instructed "to list by county all of the tribes and bands under his jurisdiction that had yet to obtain a land base Dorrington, who was not an advocate for California Indians, was chronically derelict in his duties and he decided not to respond to this directive. He also decided not to respond to many . . . other requests [He] reluctantly responded on June 23, 1927 by generating a report, which in effect . . . 'terminated' the existence and needs of approximately 135 tribes and bands throughout northern California He did this by completely dismissing the needs of these identified homeless and landless tribal groups."

“Indians of California”, who sued to establish that they occupied and used the entire state of California before Europeans invaded. The position of the US government was that only areas with permanent habitations and especially frequent land use had been taken from Indigenous people. A number of anthropologists testified for the government. For the plaintiffs, Kroeber and his Berkeley colleagues presented evidence recorded early in the 20th century that all areas were traditionally used. In June and July 1954, at the age of 78, Kroeber testified and was cross-examined before the commission for ten days, three hours a day.²⁸ He was described as the plaintiffs’ primary witness, compelling to the commissioners, who accepted his perspective in their 1959 decision (Stewart 1961:190):

[Indians] lived and had their permanent abodes in places best suited to their economic life and which they exploited as the primary sources of their subsistence and at the same time, or at least in connection therewith, they exploited the available resources in the less productive territory surrounding or in the vicinity of their settlements. The Commission therefore concludes that the Indians have proven aboriginal Indian title to all of said lands

As summarized in an *Oakland Tribune* article, “Dr. Kroeber and his students demonstrated in elegant and lucid terms [that] the Indians not only possessed all of the lands, but had so for some 10,000 years” (Riley 1959). Interviewed for that article, Kroeber said this:

[I]f as recent[ly] as 25 years ago I had been asked what the chances would be to obtain recompense for the Indians and their heirs who lost lands to the whites, I would have said they were very slim. I’m amazed and delighted with the decision last Tuesday.

To me, it seems that Kroeber was simply conveying what Yurok elder Domingo had told him in Yurok in 1907 (here translated; the same Yurok verb means both “own” and “care for”):

This land is cared for very well. You [white people] got to be in charge. You said it wasn’t owned. But on this river every place is cared for. Everything has a name. [Specific legal rules related to land rights are enumerated.] That’s how it was owned / cared for.

Domingo’s sense of the relation between naming and curatorial responsibility are also quite relevant today.

9 Naming the University of California

California is a settler-colonial state — founded by the seizure of Native land for grazing, agriculture, timber, and minerals like gold; and by the state-sponsored killing and removal of the Indigenous people who owned the land.²⁹ The University of California was established as a settler-colonial project (Garrett et al. 2019:20).³⁰ The thousands upon thousands who came to make their livings, and their fortunes if they were lucky, naturally wanted to set up the kinds of cultural institutions they were used to. How did they pay for a new university? A

²⁸After Kroeber’s last day of testimony, according to the *Oakland Tribune* (“Papal bulls” 1954), “many of the California Indians seated in the audience arose to shake hands with the well-known Indian authority. Many said they remembered the college professor when they were children and he would visit their parents to ask questions on early California Indian life.”

²⁹See Lindsay’s *Murder state* (2012) and Madley’s *An American genocide* (2016) among many other studies since Kroeber and Heizer (1968) first applied the term “genocide” to California (e.g., Norton 1979, Heizer 1993). The eponym of California Hall itself — the perpetrator of genocide and the enslavement of Indian people — is the most deserving of our moral condemnation.

³⁰The University of California still advertises itself as a settler-colonial project, celebrating what it calls “the audacious [1868] idea that California should have a great public university — one that would serve equally the children of immigrants and settlers, landowners and industrial barons” (<https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/university-california-born>). Not served, we see, are the children of those whose land was taken.

campus website tells us:

One of Abraham Lincoln's lasting legacies — the Morrill Land-Grant Act, a law on using land proceeds to establish new schools — forever changed Americans' access to higher education and had a profound effect on our great university.³¹

Not mentioned is the following (Ahlone and Lee 2020; for details see Lee and Ahlone 2020):

[T]he Morrill Act of 1862 . . . was a wealth transfer disguised as a donation. The government took land from Indigenous people that it had paid little or nothing for and turned that land into endowments for fledgling universities. . . . [T]he act redistributed nearly 11 million acres, which is almost the size of Denmark. The grants came from more than 160 violence-backed land cessions made by close to 250 tribal nations. When adjusted for inflation, the windfall netted 52 universities roughly half a billion dollars.

Subsequently, many individuals gave generously to build Berkeley. Some great philanthropists and philanthropic families gained their wealth in the Gold Rush. Prominent figures who came to San Francisco and profited from the theft of Indigenous land and killing of Indigenous people include George Hearst (mining), Simon Koshland (wool), Peder Sather (banking), and Levi Strauss (dry goods); those who were not miners themselves outfitted miners and other participants in the system. For example, the "earliest retailer invoice" (Downey 2007:18) in the Levi Strauss Archives shows a large sale to a dealer in Benton, California, a mining town on Paiute land in the area of a series of massacres of Native people by miners and companies from the 2nd Regiment California Volunteer Cavalry in the 1860s (Key 1979). At UC Berkeley, we have Levi Strauss Scholarships, an endowed chair with Strauss's name, the Hearst Memorial Mining Building, and of course the Sather Gate and Tower. These are campus treasures, but endowed with blood money.

Especially relevant is the philanthropy of Hearst's widow Phoebe Apperson Hearst, after whom Hearst Memorial Gymnasium and the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology are named. A UC Regent working closely with UC President Wheeler (eponym of Wheeler Hall), she conceived and funded the project of collecting from Indigenous and other cultures for a new university museum, hired Kroeber to do the work, and made operational and financial decisions in the first decade of the twentieth century.³² It was the eclectic collector Hearst, not Kroeber, who exhibited the "imperialist nostalgia" (Rosaldo 1989) sometimes ascribed to early anthropologists.

Indigenous cultural heritage material assembled by Hearst and her campus employees, and by her counterpart Hubert Howe Bancroft (a collector of manuscripts and historical records), now reside in landmark campus repositories named after them. Christen (2018:4032) emphasizes the colonial context of such collections:

The origins of modern archives are intimately linked to colonial logics of vanishing races, imperial projects of collection, and colonial nation-making strategies. . . . The archive was simultaneously a physical place to store Indigenous materials and a political representation of policies of displacement and destruction of Indigenous cultural practices, languages, and ways of life.

It seems right — the minimal duty to those whose cultural heritage we curate (Lonetree 2012) — to work to make these collections visible and accessible, but that is not a campus funding priority.³³ The campus does, however,

³¹See <https://150.berkeley.edu/story/cals-land-grant-roots>.

³²As Rowe (1962:396-397) puts it, Kroeber "was appointed Instructor in Anthropology at the University of California to take part in a broad program of anthropological research at that institution financed by Mrs. Phoebe Apperson Hearst. Again he was assigned the task of doing research on California Indians." For more detail see Ferrell and Hull (2001).

³³Individual repositories are committed to these needs, but without campus funding or support. Campus leaders have acted on none of

persist in mythologizing Indian people as vanished, even on its own home page.³⁴ It would be better to support and empower the actual Indigenous people who are our students and colleagues, on whose land we work, and whose knowledge has enriched us for so long.

In short, it seems to me that an honest examination of the University of California's role in Native displacement, dispossession, and even genocide — and how we memorialize those who benefited from it — would not mainly gaze at an anthropologist, however celebrated and influential within the academy.

10 Conclusion

Where does all this leave us? Kroeber Hall should be renamed. Its name brings pain to those we would welcome; a building with anthropological tenants should not have its eponym from the era of extractive, patronizing academic attitudes to Indigenous communities; and there is no need for a Victorian white man from New York to adorn a campus center celebrating world-wide cultural diversity. These reasons suffice.

As for A. L. Kroeber himself, this was his daughter's assessment (Le Guin 2004:29):

[A] white immigrant's son learning Indian cultures and languages in the first half of the twentieth century, he tried to save meaning. To learn and tell the stories that might otherwise be lost. The only means he had to do so was by translating, recording in his foreign language: the language of science, the language of the conqueror. An act of imperialism. An act of human solidarity.

Tempted to point a finger at Kroeber, we may instead consider pointing at a mirror. Ours is a university built with the profits of genocide, as part of the US colonization of California. A hundred and twenty years ago, campus leaders decided to spend some of that wealth to collect cultural heritage from around the world. The benefactors and leaders are memorialized in stone throughout our campus, if we want to rename monuments. Or use the wealth to fund actions to make our cultural heritage collections accessible to those from whom we took them, including repatriation, and to benefit their communities in a university that truly serves all people of California.

Respectfully,



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the many practical recommendations offered over a year ago in a report they commissioned on this very question (Garrett et al. 2019).

³⁴Those who vanish leave legends behind. This week, the UC Berkeley home page featured an article called "The legend of Indian Rock" (Joseph 2020), mainly about bouldering and not including any legend, unless it is the reference to "the mortar rocks where, for thousands of years, the Ohlone ground acorns into mash."

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