

**Anthropology  
Student  
Research  
Conference**

**April 7, 2021**



**Explore. Experience. Excel.**

Eastern New Mexico University

Department of Anthropology  
and Applied Archaeology

Student Research Conference

2021 Conference Proceedings

Portales, New Mexico

April 7, 2021

## **About the Student Research and Creativity Conference**

Eastern New Mexico University's annual Student Research and Creativity Conference is designed to showcase research and creative projects being done by undergraduate and graduate students. Students present their work in professional poster/creative work display and paper/performance sessions and are judged and critiqued by an inter-disciplinary group of faculty members. Through this process, students can see how their work compares with that of other students, get feedback on their work and presentations, and practice their professional presentation skills. Students, faculty, staff and community members are invited to attend the presentations. Cash awards are presented at the evening banquet. The Eastern New Mexico University Student Research Conference began in 1974 with a grant from the ENMU chapter of Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Society. The first director of the conference was Dr. Ram Sharma, who held the position for 25 years. While the conference was originally for students in the sciences, later on students from all academic disciplines were eligible and encouraged to participate. A poster session was added to the conference in 2011. Creative work display and fine arts performance sessions were added for the first time in 2018, broadening the scope of the conference to include students in all majors.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ENMU's 2021 Student Research and Creativity Conference was cancelled. Therefore, the Department of Anthropology and Applied Archaeology decided, with the support of the ENMU SRCC Committee, to hold an online conference for their students.

### **For More Information**

[www.enmu.edu/src](http://www.enmu.edu/src)

<https://my.enmu.edu/web/anthropology/home>

**Anthropology Student Research Conference Committee  
2020–2021**

Dr. Brendon Asher  
Ms. Samantha Bomkamp  
Dr. Susan Kuzminsky  
Dr. John Montgomery  
Dr. Erik Stanley  
Dr. Robert Stokes

with administrative assistance from  
Ms. Barbara Senn

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## **Presentation Abstracts**

### **Challenges with Cultural and Biological Affiliations for NAGPRA**

Presenter: Laura Evans

Advisor: Dr. Susan Kuzminsky

One of the most important aspects of museum curation is the cultural affiliation of Native American artifacts, funerary items, as well as the documentation, analysis and repatriation of ancestral human remains back to the tribal communities in New Mexico. My thesis work is focused on this topic, with the goal of completing a detailed skeletal analysis of human remains currently curated in our department at ENMU. Although there are standard procedures for systematically studying the human skeleton, many challenges can arise that make the analyses difficult for demonstrating a biological affiliation with Native American people. In this talk, I discuss some of key challenges associated with the cultural and biological affiliation of human skeletal remains, and how some of these challenges might be resolved in future research.

### **Powwows In The Time Of The 2020 Novel Coronavirus Pandemic**

Presenter: Gabrielle Rucker

Advisor: Dr. Erik Stanley

Presentation Award Recipient

Powwows have been a long-standing tradition in the indigenous community as a way to commune with one another and perform traditional rituals. However, due to the 2020 pandemic, powwows and the in-person gathering of indigenous peoples have been canceled. In response to the lack of in-person events, the Social Distance Powwow (SDP) group was created to allow Native Americans to participate in powwows within a virtual forum.

Based on the emergence of these virtual events, this research studies the use of virtual powwows and their effects on their member's participation in the group. Using ethnographic methods of participant observation and interviews, this paper examines the potential for creating *communitas*, ritual, and kinship bonds through these virtual events. *Communitas* allows this selected group to experience the same issues together and build bonds compared to those of kinship, which in turn allows for the study of their personal feelings toward powwows and virtual powwows due to the pandemic. Based on my ethnographic research, which included participant observation, interviews, and content analysis, my research explores the transition between kinship and *communitas* in powwows the effects of the virtual powwow platform during the pandemic. The results also give way to further research for other anthropologists in the future when evaluating virtual powwows and adds to the anthropological literature on *communitas*, rituals, and the indigenous community.

### **Choctaw Placenames**

Presenter: Jacob Spurlin

Advisor: Dr. Erik Stanley

The Choctaw are a tribe from the mid-Mississippi, southeastern Louisiana, southern Tennessee and western Alabama area of the bayous who speak a Muskogean language. I aim to capture some of the experience of colonialism, from the 1600s onward, and removal experienced by the Choctaw by looking at how they interacted with the land. I hope to capture this through the way they made up their placenames. In order to look at this, I will look through the literature on places, as well as GIS and social media posts, that have Choctaw language roots or important events to the Choctaw and how those places got those names. This will aid in the contextualization and historical experience of the Choctaw.

## **Reinvestigating the Folsom Wedge at Blackwater Draw**

Presenter: Amber Clarkson

Advisor: Dr. Brendon Asher

The Blackwater Draw site near Portales, NM is known for its Clovis and Folsom stratigraphic layers. In the 1960s gravel mining at the site was in full swing and excavations were hastened to protect as much prehistoric evidence as possible. During salvage excavating and artifact recording, some areas required additional time for proper analysis. One example was a large group of faunal bones that were encased in a plaster jacket, and then removed from their original context. This jacket is referred to as the Folsom Wedge in associated fieldnotes. The contents of the jacket have not been entirely excavated or analyzed, and the original location it was removed from is only speculative. I will excavate the faunal remains inside the plaster, making note of the stratigraphy inside. I will then analyze and compare the stratigraphy of the Folsom Wedge with the known site stratigraphic records developed over the many years of excavation at BWD. Coupled with photographic records and fieldnotes, this information will help to determine with greater certainty the place of origin of the Folsom Wedge at the site. After the Folsom Wedge has been carefully excavated and all materials inside the plaster jacket documented and removed, I will then examine the faunal remains for evidence of prehistoric butchery and determine the species as well as the number of individuals present. This study will finish the work that began in the 1960s and continue to add to the faunal collection and stratigraphic interpretations of the Blackwater Draw site.

## **Recording Railways in the Lincoln National Forest, Sacramento District, New Mexico**

Presenter: Cash Ficke

Advisor: Dr. Robert Stokes

The Sacramento Mountains in Southern New Mexico have been logged since the early 1900s, beginning with the construction of the Alamogordo and Sacramento Mountain (A&SM) railway. The railway allowed for easy transportation from the source to the sawmills down below in the Tularosa Basin unlike ever before. The “Cloud-Climbing Railroad” as it became known has been a topic among preservationists in New Mexico for decades. In recent years entities, such as the Forest Service and the NM Rails-to-Trails Association have worked vigorously to preserve what little architecture remains. This presentation will discuss some of these preservation efforts along with my own personal accounts from recording various railroad grades, camps, and log shoots.

### **Paleoindian Use of the North Bank at the Blackwater Draw Site: Debitage and Stone Tool Patterns**

Presenter: Fanxiu Meng

Advisor: Dr. Brendon Asher

Blackwater Draw Locality No.1, the Clovis type site located in eastern New Mexico, is one of the most important Paleoindian kill and camp sites in North America. Several episodes of archaeological investigations have occurred at the site, but analyses of cultural materials and dissemination of results remain in varied stages of completion. For example, the systematic analysis of lithic artifacts recovered from excavations at the site’s “north bank” are still lacking. The goal of this project is to explore Paleoindian behavior by examining patterns in lithic tools and debitage from a theoretical perspective of technological organization and risk management. Discussion will address results in light of similar analyses conducted on materials recovered from the entire to better understand variability in Paleoindian behavior through time at Blackwater Draw, New Mexico. The presentation will cover the introduction and phased results of my work.

## **Piecing Together a Puzzle: Conserving Historical Midden Ceramics, Ligonier, PA**

Presenter: Jonah Jankovik

Advisor: Dr. Robert Stokes

My presentation is about historical archaeology, which is the study of events and people of the recorded and recent past. A rescue excavation of the buried midden at the Through the Field Farm (TTFF) site in southwestern Pennsylvania was undertaken in 2009 preceding construction. The midden's use dates from 1857 to 1937. Its contents included many ceramic pieces, primarily dishware. During 2018 and 2019, the artifacts underwent conservation and restoration efforts. The post-depositional processes of deterioration, transformation, and preservation that acted on the ceramics create their condition at recovery and must be considered during conservation. The primary topics of my discussion are the varying states of the recovered ceramics and how they were treated in the lab to conserve and reconstruct them over the span of a year and half—specifically cleaning and rejoining—for the purposes of further analysis and storage.

## **A Case Study and Results of Landform Use, Site Density and Lithic Use Behavior on and Around a Portion of Sevenmile Ridge in Northwestern Colorado**

Presenter: Michael Rohrer

Advisor: Dr. Robert Stokes

Presentation Award Recipient

In the summer of 2020, I traveled north to fulfill a required internship for the Anthropology Department at Eastern New Mexico University. Fortunately, this was accomplished through archaeological cultural resource management (CRM) field work with Western Archaeological Services (WAS) out of Rock

Springs, Wyoming. WAS was tasked with conducting a Class III inventory for a portion of a new proposed transmission line in northwest Colorado. The Class III inventory covered the direct area of potential effect (APE) across public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service, the State of Colorado, and private property. As part of the Class III inventory and to fulfill university requirements, I specifically decided to examine the relationship between landform use, raw material availability, and lithic use patterns, in an area known as Sevenmile Ridge. The landforms I chose included ridgelines, juniper breaks, and low-lying sagebrush/greasewood flats. The data revealed a wide variety of raw material use, but a preference for local fossiliferous cherts and quartzite along with seasonal occupation among the juniper breaks.

### **Okinawans: The astounding Tribe**

Presenter: Courtney Hicks

Advisor: Dr. Erik Stanley

Pre-recorded Video

My presentation is over the astound Okinawan tribe and in this presentation, I will cover main topics such as their environment, their past and present material culture, the customs that they participate in, some noticeable Okinawan members, their land, as well as their struggles and their successes as an Indian tribe. With this presentation, I hope to enlighten individuals about the astounding tribe that is the Okinawans and inform viewers about their way of life and open their eyes to the forgotten tribe.