Native American and Indigenous Studies is an interdisciplinary initiative of faculty and students interested in teaching and research that explores, and increases the understanding of, the cultural traditions and political experiences of Indigenous Peoples (especially in the Western Hemisphere) through historical and contemporary lenses.

Courses offered by NAISI-affiliated faculty explore American Indian historic and contemporary lifeways; the history of contact between European and Native peoples; environmental health and research in Native communities; historic and contemporary peoples of Central and South America; Indigenous knowledge and the sciences; and Native American religion, literature and media.

To join our email list, learn about our initiative, or stay informed of upcoming events visit:

brown.edu/go/naisab
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Greetings! I hope you’re all as healthy and content as can be expected during this challenging time. This fourth year of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative (NAISI) at Brown has been one of big plans, furious activity, and rapid reshuffling. The ongoing goal of NAISI has been to provide a space of education and collaboration around issues important to Indigenous communities both here on Turtle Island and more globally. We entered this year with big plans and a vibrant team! We were very fortunate to be joined by Rae Gould, a member of the local Nipmuc tribe and anthropologist with extensive experience in both Native Studies programming and consulting between tribes and academic institutions, as our Associate Director of NAISI. With Rae’s help, our team of faculty, staff and students hit the ground running, organizing working groups to carry out the goals of the Mellon Foundation grant we received this year and to bring to campus an all-star lineup of speakers and collaborators, which you can read about in greater detail below.

NAISI currently includes 26 faculty members in American Studies; Theater; History; Anthropology; Religious Studies; Cognitive, Linguistic and Psychological Sciences; International and Public Affairs; Africana Studies; Neuroscience; Hispanic Studies; Behavioral and Social Sciences; and Music, as well as affiliated with institutions such as the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs; the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology; the John Carter Brown Library; the Cogut Institute for the Humanities; the Institute at Brown for Environment and Society; and the University Library. NAISI is also currently composed of four staff based at 67 George Street, four affiliated Native staff housed predominantly in other institutions and centers across campus, 11 affiliated graduate students, and two postdoctoral fellows.

The fall and early spring were busy times, with a number of great events that included:

- A call to action around food and community, including discussions by Verner Wilson (Caryung) and Deenaalee Hodgdon (Deg Xit’an Dene/Alutiiq) on the impacts of the proposed Pebble Mine on the people, fish, animals, land and waters of their region of Bristol Bay in Alaska; and efforts to promote food sovereignty among the Narragansett people here in Rhode Island by Cassius Spears (Narragansett);
- Lectures and discussions by Native American Studies scholars Alyssa Mt Pleasant (Tuscarora), Darren Ranco (Penobscot) and Jean O’Brien (Ojibway) about their research on settler colonialism, land tenure, the construction of history and memory, and university/tribal relations, with advice on how to best construct an Indigenous Studies program that works to serve the needs and interests of students, faculty, and Native communities;
- Reflections on the process of constructing museum exhibits around Indigenous themes on campus by Adrienne Keene (Cherokee) and Isabella Robbins (Navajo).

One of the year’s highlights for NAISI was the residency and presidential lecture by Linda Tuhiwai Smith. The residency also included Linda’s husband Graham Smith and provided a week of events, talks and reflections from the team who built Maori studies from the ground up at the University of Auckland. They inspired us with their determination, sharp wit and dedication to community as they described the steps that went into building a monumental program.

There was also a great deal of work that went into planning events that had to be canceled: a screening
of the documentary film *Dawnland*. A brown bag talk about Indigeneity at the US-Mexico Border. A week-long residency and conversation about border crossing, unsettling, and the practices of culture and identity. A symposium about “Radical Gardening in the Time of Climate Anxiety” that would have brought together community members from across New England to talk about gardening projects in Indigenous and other POC communities that have worked to make these communities resilient. We are all sad at having missed the opportunity to taste Wampanoag chef Sherry Pocknett’s food, which was set to conclude the symposium. After two years of coordinating schedules we were excited to host Sarah Deer for a presidential lecture to share her research about violence against Native women. We are especially sad about the events planned in coordination with our undergraduate students in Native Americans at Brown (NAB) and the Native American Heritage Series—namely the Spring Thaw Powwow (this would have been the 19th one) and the Annual Commencement Dinner, in coordination with NABA (Native Americans at Brown Alumni). In lieu of this celebratory gathering, staff, faculty, and alumni came together to create a video and Zoom event in honor of the 14 Native graduates to attempt to celebrate them virtually. Alumni from as far back as 1974 videoed in to give best wishes to the graduates.

Missing the powwow was especially poignant for me this year. I came to Brown as a graduate student in the fall of 2001 and helped to launch the first powwow at Brown in the spring of 2002. I have left and returned to Brown several times over the past two decades—I took a break from graduate school in the fall of 2004, only to return as a visiting instructor of Ethnic Studies in the spring of 2005. I graduated with my PhD in 2010, only to return in 2011 as a visiting professor of Ethnic Studies, and then an assistant professor of American Studies, determined to work with other like-minded colleagues here to build Native American and Indigenous Studies. It has brought me great joy watching the powwow grow and continue, and serving as a connecting point between Brown students and the broader local Native community.

While I will continue to return each year for the powwow as an alumni, supporter, and fancy shawl dancer, this would have been my last year helping to organize as a faculty member. While I hold much appreciation and fondness for Brown as an institution, and for the amazing folks that make up the NAISI crew, I have accepted a position as an associate professor in the Environmental Science and Policy Management (ESPM) department at the University of California Berkeley, starting July 1. In this new capacity I will be able to expand my work with Native communities around issues of environmental justice and food justice, and my partner Adam will be able to expand his work in documentary photography with Native communities. While it was a very difficult decision to leave Brown and the Northeast, we look forward to new adventures!

And the work of NAISI will continue! We are making progress in the process to hire a Senior Director of NAISI. The curriculum working group (composed of faculty and students) will continue to develop the outlines of a NAIS concentration, even among the challenges of the pandemic’s impact on course format. We are looking forward to welcoming a new crop of Native students to campus (some of whom we had the opportunity to meet virtually as they were making their college choices), including a robust incoming class of Public Humanities masters students. Even from afar, I look forward to watching this program grow and develop.

Elizabeth Hoover
*Faculty Chair, NAISI Steering Committee*
At the end of my first year at Brown, I am reflecting on an ambitious year of growth and development for the Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative (NAISI). In addition to so many great things that have transpired over the 2019/2020 year, this summer we will also have a bittersweet transition, as we say goodbye to a long-time community member and leader of Native American and Indigenous Studies at Brown University: Elizabeth Hoover. As she noted, Elizabeth will begin a position at the University of California Berkeley for the upcoming academic year. We wish her all the best but will miss her guidance as we move forward with the development of NAIS at Brown.

Elizabeth has deep roots at Brown and her contributions to the University, and to the development of NAIS over the past two decades, have been immeasurable. In addition to galvanizing the Native community at Brown since she first arrived in 2001 as a graduate student, she has developed into one of the most respected and prominent scholars in both Native American and Indigenous Studies and Environmental Justice. Her PhD dissertation in 2010 defined the direction that her career had taken, as it focused on “Local Food Production and Community Illness Narratives: Responses to Environmental Contamination and Health Studies in the Mohawk Community of Akwesasne” (also the basis for her first book).

Central to our work, Elizabeth has served on the Steering Committee that has been building NAIS since it began as a faculty working group (with members from departments across campus) in 2011, formally organized into a Steering Committee in 2015. She contributed in several roles: from 2015 to 2019 as a member of the executive committee of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative and then as Faculty Chair of the Steering Committee over the past year. Elizabeth has also helped to define the area of Environmental Justice and Indigenous food sovereignty through her teaching, research and publications in the American Studies department. Her first book The River is in Us: Fighting Toxics in a Mohawk Community (2017, University of Minnesota Press) received a number of awards, and she brought that knowledge to the classroom through popular classes like “Treaty Rights and Food Fights: Eating Local in Indian Country.” She also designed the Introduction to American Indian Studies class at Brown, now foundational to our developing NAIS program. So much of Elizabeth’s presence on our campus over the years has been connected to the relationships we’ve built with her and that she has fostered with and among our community, especially students.

Under the leadership of Elizabeth and the Core Steering Committee (which also includes Adrienne Keene and Sarah d’Angelo), this past year our office progressed in our work to develop the curriculum for an undergraduate concentration in Native American and Indigenous Studies (what other institutions often call a “major”). The most exciting development was the awarding of a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation that will provide support for building the concentration (see more in this report). Having Darren Ranco, Alyssa Mt. Pleasant, Jean O’Brien and Linda Tuhiwai and Graham Smith on campus this year were definitely the highlights of our programming. Through the work shared by each of these established scholars in Native American and Indigenous Studies, our community had opportunities to learn how other institutions approach NAIS and reflect on how we can move forward in our work at Brown. Across our campus new connections were made to discuss these topics outside of events with guests, through faculty and staff workshops, the development of a Curriculum Working
Group, collaborating with the Brown University Library and the Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, and beginning to develop a mentor network for students. More on these events and developments is included in this year’s report.

Another important step this year has been expansion of the NAISI office staff. American Studies PhD student Makana Kushi joined our office as Program Coordinator in September, followed by Communications Coordinator Rae Kuruhara (also the Public Humanities/NAISI fellow for 2019-2021), who also joined us last fall. In January Sara Wintz (who also works for the Program in Early Cultures) rounded out our staff as Administrative Coordinator. Expansion to an office of four enables the Initiative to broaden our offerings and, in particular, provide opportunities for engagement with undergraduate students as we focus on developing the concentration.

A letter from the NAISI staff is below.

If you haven't already found them, please be sure to follow our social media platforms (facebook.com/NAISatBrown and instagram.com/naisatbrown)! I’m very much looking forward to all we will accomplish in the coming few years, and thankful for the foundation that Elizabeth has helped to build for Native American and Indigenous Studies at Brown.

Aquene,
Dr. Rae Gould
Associate Director
Letter from the NAISI Staff

RAE KURUHARA
Communications Coordinator

I came into this year with the same starry-eyed mindset that afflicts a lot of new Brown students: the feeling that I now had a real chance to change the world, or, more reasonably, to be a part of something bigger than myself. The opportunity to serve a role in NAISI as the Public Humanities fellow and communications coordinator has satisfied these lofty dreams, as even the simplest or unglamorous of tasks completed means building a better foundation upon which the future of Native American and Indigenous Studies at Brown can flourish. Fond memories such as laughing around the table during open hours with the undergrads, hosting and toasting with some of the most treasured thinkers in the field and, of course, partaking in Kabob & Curry during family dinners at 67 George have punctuated my year with love and fulfillment. And even as these beloved events were forced to suspend at the onset of the global pandemic, the transition to online service and our ability to persevere in this time of social deprivation will remain with me as a learning experience of adaptability and unwavering commitment to community. It has been such a pleasure to be welcomed into this family of scholars, artists, and all around remarkable individuals. In whatever shape the next academic year may take, I am excited at the chance to continue our already ambitious work in creative ways.

MAKANA KUSHI
Program Coordinator

From organizing a graduate student workshop with renowned scholars of Indigenous methodologies and education, Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Graham Smith, to introducing a talk by one of my scholar-activist inspirations Candace Fujikane, to collaborating with staff across the university in places like the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice, the Office of Institutional Research, the Brown Center for Students of Color, and so many more, my work this year has been full of enriching experiences. All the events and projects that I’ve enjoyed this year are too many to name, so in summary I’ll say that my favorite part of the work I do with NAISI is the community building. When I look back at what we’ve done this year, tucked in between the formal events and important deadlines are the days where students dropped by our offices to study in the company of friends, asked for help accessing our resources to make their events happen, and shared with us their experiences at Brown and suggestions for making it a better place for Native students. My charge as program coordinator within the Initiative’s goal of developing a Native American and Indigenous Studies concentration has been to help students feel that they are an essential part of NAISI; after all, the work we do is for them.
When I first started working for NAISI, I felt excited about the prospect of acquiring new administrative skills, such as how to facilitate financial transactions, how to book travel, and how to navigate the process of creating a new concentration at Brown. I was also excited about the opportunity to learn from Rae Gould, a successful leader whose work combines scholarship and practice, as I hope to do one day. Working in academia is a privilege that provides infinite opportunities to learn more, to understand more, sometimes (as I learned from Linda Tuhiiwai Smith) about the complicated nature of even sharing knowledge outside of one’s community. Everyone in the NAISI community has been kind, thoughtful and generous and I am grateful for the opportunities that this Initiative and this team have provided: to learn about leadership, academia, history, and cultures while supporting a shared vision. Thank you for inviting me to learn with you, and for the privilege to learn from you this year.

Mellon Foundation Grant will support development of Brown’s NAIS concentration

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has awarded Brown University a $750,000 grant to support the development of an interdisciplinary undergraduate concentration in Native American and Indigenous Studies. Over the three-year grant period the University will expand in the areas of teaching and course development, community engagement, student support and programming. Funding to build the concentration will enable both development of new courses and revision of existing courses through co-teaching, exploring innovative curricular ideas and faculty workshops. The grant will also support hiring individuals to teach additional courses and a Tribal Community Member in Residence, who will help expand engagement with students and serve in an advisory role for faculty and staff on critical topics such as how to deepen representation of Native and Indigenous peoples and cultures and include Indigenous epistemologies within our curriculum.

With this grant, Brown University also plans to expand NAIS curricular resources (such as library materials, databases, and language instruction packages). We will also have funding for more robust programming that will include public lectures by both academics and tribal leaders and scholars, guest lectures in courses, and funding to engage with tribes in their homelands or on their reservation lands.

Linda Tuhiiwai and Graham Hingangaroa Smith Residency at Brown

For the week of February 17, 2020 the Brown University NAISI community had the honor of hosting Māori scholars Linda Tuhiiwai and Graham Hingangaroa Smith. Linda was invited to deliver a lecture the evening of February 20, sponsored by the Katherine Greenberg Presidential Fund. Throughout the week, Linda and
Graham hosted drop in hours with students and faculty, shared meals with our community, and led two workshops on Indigenous studies, one with faculty and library staff and one with graduate students. NAISI Communications Coordinator (and Public Humanities Fellow) Rae Kuruhara (with Rae Gould) offered the following reflection on the week-long residency.

In the field of Native American and Indigenous studies, few scholars are more inspiring than Linda Tuhiwai Smith. Any Indigenous studies student and scholar knows that Smith’s 1999 book *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* has been a field guide for those dedicated to reimagining academia from the perspective of, and in service to, Native peoples; it remains an essential addition to any library as it approaches its third edition over 20 years later. For many, their weathered copy of *Decolonizing Methodologies* is more than required reading; it is also a reminder of the progress made in reclaiming space for Indigenous communities in research practices and the work that remains to restructure relationships between the academy and Native and Indigenous peoples.

What would Linda Tuhiwai Smith be like to sit down and chat with? I didn’t think I would ever have the chance to entertain this idea until it was announced that not only would she be visiting Brown to deliver a presidential lecture, but that she would be gifting us with so much of her time, knowledge, and generous spirit. Hosting Linda and her husband, esteemed Indigenous education scholar Graham Smith, for a week-long residency was nothing short of incredible. I remember walking through the mild chill of the winter mumbling “kia ora, kia ora” (the Māori greeting) under my breath to practice pronunciation in anticipation of meeting these legends, only to flub up the formalities and fall into the most natural of first conversations over dinner. The world-renowned scholar who once said that, “our survival, our humanity, our worldview and language, our imagination and spirit, our very place in the world depends on our capacity to act for ourselves, to engage in the world and the actions of our colonizers, to face them head on,” was passing me a salad and telling me about her new life goal of eating more colorful foods.

This set the tone for the rest of the jam-packed week, which moved between workshops robust with productivity and quieter mealtimes where we consumed more than just pizza and curry, but also the stories the Smiths shared. My graduate student colleagues and I had the pleasure and privilege of attending a workshop with Linda and Graham, an intimate and personalized opportunity during which we were invited to share our interests to receive guidance and feedback. In addition, we eagerly asked questions about Linda’s home institution, the University of Waikato, as well as their pivotal roles in the National Institute of Research Excellence for Māori Development and Advancement at the University of Auckland. It was not only invaluable to hear from their perspective how our individual projects were impactful, but also how we as graduate students played a part in the overarching goal to build Native American and Indigenous Studies as a concentration at Brown. The Smiths led another workshop with faculty and staff that focused on the transformative work both have engaged in over the decades, stressing the
need for Indigenous inclusiveness in higher education transformation processes.

Engaging storytellers, Linda and Graham shared many of their experiences through meaningful recollections and hilarious tales, taking us along a globetrotting narrative from their home in Aotearoa to the cold of Scandinavia and everywhere in between. With drop in hours to connect with students, faculty, and staff, a mini food tour of Providence and a cozy community dinner at 67 George Street, our week with the Smiths was both energizing and reflective. The week of learning and fellowship culminated in Linda's highly anticipated presidential lecture, which filled the Granoff Center's Martinos Auditorium with guests from the larger Brown community as well as the southern New England area.

“The struggle of Indigenous knowledge and of Indigenous peoples has been a struggle of trying to put ourselves back together,” Linda began as she addressed why she so passionately wrote *Decolonizing Methodologies*, why it was crucial to speak out against Western research practices that were predicated on the dismantling of Indigenous communities, and why this topic is as prevalent today as it has ever been. She continued to push the conversation that she started twenty years ago even further, revealing twenty five more “projects,” her intentionally ordinary term for new methodologies and ongoing work that center Indigenous thinking as the foundation upon which new and exciting work done in the service of Indigenous people can germinate and flourish. The first of these new tenets: “simply, loving.” As Linda so beautifully puts it, “it is important that we do this work from a place of love...that is more powerful than the impulse to save.” To love Native people, every broken bit of ourselves, is what should anchor our desire to deepen our knowledge, not some desire to save us from ourselves. Following tremendous applause, almost 200 people filed out of the auditorium, exhilarated, and then as natural as friendship, we’re sitting across from Linda and Graham the next morning, exchanging stories over breakfast and Campus Center coffee.
Looking back at a spring semester of cancelled events and tabled programing due to the disruption of Covid-19, the time we spent together that week in February as a community with Linda and Graham Smith has become a happy memory as well as a longing, harkening back to a time when togetherness was not via a Zoom meeting. The lasting effect of their visit is the reminder of what it means to persist. Especially now—as the world continues to turn in strange and unforeseeable ways—the lessons of change, adaptability, and shifting perspective that solidified *Decolonizing Methodologies* as one of the most important pieces of Indigenous scholarship will propel us through turbulent times (something Native people know all too well). We will create opportunities to implement the knowledge Linda and Graham Smith shared at Brown, to meet them again as the friends they have become, and to dedicate ourselves to the project of loving all that we are.

**NAISI Drop In Hours at 67 George St.**

This past year NAISI offered regular drop-in hours for our community twice per week. Students enjoyed time together and with staff, and used drop-in hours as an opportunity to catch up on studying or to just socialize over lunch, a snack or some tea or coffee. When we had to move these to remote gatherings in late March, our staff continued to ensure that NAIS students had the opportunity to connect. During our last gathering this spring everyone brought their beading or other project (pictured left). We look forward to continuing these gatherings with NAIS students and community members in the coming year!

*Members of the NAISI community gather online for drop-in hours.*
An Interview with Leah Hopkins, Community Engagement Specialist, Haffenreffer Museum

Leah Hopkins (Narragansett) joined the Haffenreffer Museum as the Community Engagement Specialist in September 2019. In that capacity, she has become an integral part of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative at Brown. Leah holds a BA in Anthropology from the University of Rhode Island and has a background in museum and tribal education that spans over 10 years, working at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) and with other regional institutions, organizations and tribal communities.

She has done and continues to do extensive work within the New England region to promote the visibility, histories, cultural complexities and cultural continuity of the area’s Indigenous peoples.

As Community Engagement Specialist, Leah works to build bridges between the Museum and local communities, developing and implementing public programs within the museum and education outreach programs that bring Haffenreffer exhibits beyond the museum to area schools and engage with local tribes. NAISI Administrative Coordinator Sara Wintz spoke with her at the end of the Spring 2020 semester to learn about the challenges, highlights and daily efforts connected to her work.

**IS THERE TENSION WORKING IN MUSEUMS AS A NATIVE PERSON? IF SO, HOW DO YOU NAVIGATE THAT TENSION?**

Many Native people view museums in a negative light because for so long, museums have been so extractive. Anthropologists, archaeologists, ethnographers, collectors and government personnel swooped into communities and extracted knowledge and belongings, and presented them back to academia or institutions. What did Indigenous communities get in return? Usually nothing. This happened across the country and around the world, for about 200 years. Even longer. Here in the Northeast, the English were taking Native people, flora and fauna back to Europe as curiosities. Working as a Native person in a museum, there’s always going to be kind of a solemn tone when you go into any collection, especially for the first time, because you feel and acknowledge that you don’t always know where these collections come from - in all museums. Sometimes these collections are coming from people who did raids in various communities and were taking things, who were, unfortunately, harming people and taking their belongings. You don’t always know. You only will know because of the documentation and the oral history that go with the object. Sometimes the whole field where documentation could have been provided is left blank and we don’t know. You could be walking in and see this most beautiful object and it’s absolutely lovely but it could have been taken in the most horrific way. For me, going into those places, I feel it. Sometimes there is a sense of heaviness. On the other hand, sometimes there are moments of joy being around the objects that your ancestors or your community members have made. Whether they’re historical or contemporary or even archaeological, to see the craftsmanship, to feel that connection of the objects can also feel really positive and powerful, too.
Because of this harmful history, Native people have been very stand-offish with museums. At the same time, some museums have been able to provide structures that tribal communities can adapt to have their own museums. People like being able to have a home or community museum to exhibit their community's cultural belongings in order to tell their story in their voice. There are other non-Native museums that are very progressive in their work towards harm reduction and also in the decolonizing movement. Many museums have a long way to go, but some are trying and need to be steered in the right direction. That’s another tension that exists: when you have a non-Native run museum, whether it’s small or large, you won’t necessarily have the Native voice represented. It’s absolutely key to bring in those tribal perspectives right away, not after the exhibit or program has been developed to put a seal of approval on it. I’ve always worked really hard to ensure that the Native voice is centered and is first whenever there’s content about Native people, and I advocate for content when there isn’t any representation at all. I’m always trying to make connections between institutions and knowledge keepers and communities so that at least those conversations can start. I’m starting to do that here at the Haffenreffer Museum and I have great support from my Director Robert Preucel, Deputy Director Kevin Smith and Manager of Museum and Educational Programs, Leah Burgin.

**How does it feel to work in institutions, in this capacity?**

I love it. In this position I’m able to meld my two passions: working with tribal communities and working with museums. I like to bridge the gap. Museums can be places of great value to communities if they are doing things respectfully and ethically and if they’re acknowledging the trauma that has been caused in the past, by moving forward to heal that trauma and work collaboratively with tribal nations as equal partners. It’s important that museums work from the very beginning to bring in tribal communities, to bring in tribal partners, to advise on the whole process, whether it’s NAGPRA-related or whether it’s exhibits and public programming-related.

**When does it feel most positive and most powerful to work in a museum?**

I love when I’m able to bring community to the museum through consultation, programming and professional development opportunities. I think that many museums have a lot to offer, and should give back after many years of taking. Native communities always want to have their cultural belongings home and they want to be around them but that may or may not always be possible because of infrastructures or agreements or funding. Sometimes the institution doesn’t want that either, repatriation of belongings. And other institutions may want that. It really is a mixed bag. Native communities need to have the space held for them, so they can accurately tell their stories. When you’re only telling that half-story without telling the Native story, you’re telling a half-truth.

In being in a museum or collection facility, I appreciate being able to connect on a personal level to the cultural belongings when there is an open door policy to community members.

For me, especially being a mom to a small child, I love seeing the more contemporary collections that talk about womanhood and motherhood because those subjects really speak to me. It is a joy that I experience, being able to be around those objects, and I want everyone to be able to experience that joy.
WHEN DID YOU KNOW THAT THIS WAS THE KIND OF WORK THAT YOU WANTED TO DO?

It happened gradually. I worked in a museum, then I worked in a tribal community. I was able to see both sides. Even though I worked in a tribal museum, a lot of the people I worked with were not of that Native community. I have a lot of respect for them, but it all goes back to being able to tell your story and not the researcher’s story or the archaeologist’s story. If those parts are told, the Native perspective has to be given equal footing. It’s not the experts or the researchers or the archaeologists, it’s the Native people first. Then you can have input from the researchers and the archaeologists. That’s how you can tell a story that is multi-pronged because everybody has something to contribute.

WHAT ARE YOU STILL LEARNING HOW TO DO?

There are so many things. I think of myself as a young person. I’m only 30. I acknowledge that I don’t know everything whether it’s professionally, but more importantly, culturally. I’m always striving to learn how to best and respectfully interact with communities and figuring out how to put their voices forward in an institution where there are many voices. There are always going to be people that agree and people that disagree. Navigating that is a struggle that I’m still learning, helping institutions understand that engaging with tribal communities may not always be on your time schedule. It’s a relationship that needs to slowly be built on trust and respect over time. It’s not something that happens in a month or a year. I try to follow the best practices put out by Native-led institutions such as Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums (ATALM), but I acknowledge that these best practices are always changing. If I can get an institution to follow the best practices of 2020, great, but in 25 years what are those best practices going to be? How are things going to evolve and develop over time? I’m always researching, I’m always following models, not just in the United States but also how this is happening in Canada, New Zealand, Australia. And these best practices are unfolding in African countries as well. I definitely don’t profess to know everything. It’s a learning process for me.

IN MEMORIAM: Kevin Thomas Tarrant
January 14, 1969 - May 4, 2020

The Brown community mourns the passing of Kevin Thomas Tarrant (HoChunk/Hopi) due to complications from COVID-19. Mr. Tarrant was a life-long, third generation NYC Native community member, former Chairman of American Indian Community House (and former Executive Director), lead singer of the Silvercloud Singers, and founding member and Executive Managing Director of Safe Harbors Indigenous Collective, NYC. Mr. Tarrant is survived by his wife Murielle, daughter Henu Josephine (Travis), father Sam, brothers Donald (Tina) and William, and sisters Judy, Margaret, Kathleen and Patricia; as well as uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces and friends.
In 1990, Mr. Tarrant founded and served as the lead singer for the intertribal drum and dance troupe Silvercloud Singers. The popular drum is known widely in circles throughout the U.S. and Canada and supported Brown’s annual Spring Thaw Powwow for many years. Mr. Tarrant was known to our community for his good songs, welcoming heart and good humor. Silvercloud Singers were scheduled to return this year to support our dancers at the Spring Thaw Powwow before COVID-19 closed Brown’s campus in mid-March.

As a songcarrier, Mr. Tarrant’s singing was a transformative gift. He began singing and dancing at the drum at an early age. According to his artist bio on Amerinda.com, he said, “It’s not about the glory. The way it was explained to me, each person is given a gift by the creator. If you are a good singer, that is your job. If you are a good hunter, you hunt. If you are a good speaker, you speak. I consider this a gift. Singing is my job in the community.”

Mr. Tarrant was also a firm believer in the healing power dancing and the drum brought to people and communities. In a 2017 interview with New York City’s Interfaith Center he stated, “You do these things for those that can’t…and you do these things to make yourself feel good and make others feel good.” Mr. Tarrant and Silvercloud Singers have shared their songs and dances world-wide as well as in national venues such as The Apollo, Roseland and the Theater at Madison Square Garden. Silvercloud Singers performed on Music for the Native Americans, a 1994 album released by Robbie Robertson and the Red Road Ensemble. Mr. Tarrant also distinguished himself as an international solo artist and performed regularly with the award-winning First Nations group Ulali and with other notable artists, including jazz composer David Amram, choreographer Savion Glover and percussionist Alessandra Belloni.

As a theatre artist and Executive Managing Director, he co-founded New York City’s Safe Harbors Indigenous Collective in 2016 with his life-long partner, wife and company artistic director Murielle Borst Tarrant. Working as a branch of LaMaMa Experimental Theatre Company, Safe Harbors develops and produces Indigenous theater performances while creating new paradigms of Indigeneity using humor and parody to trouble stereotypes and Indigenous representations within the broader American theater. Mr. Tarrant performed and served as the music director in Don’t Feed the Indians: A Divine Comedy Pageant, written and directed by Murielle Borst Tarrant and performed in November 2017 at La MaMa. He was the composer and percussionist for the 2018 Broadway production and national tour of Ajijack on Turtle Island, written by Ty Defoe, with lyrics by Defoe and Dawn Avery. Ajijack on Turtle Island was directed by Murielle Borst Tarrant and performed in Providence in February 2018. Mr. Tarrant’s last stage performance was in November 2019 at Pangea World Theatre in Minneapolis, appearing in Carolyn Dunn’s latest play Soledad, also directed by Murielle Borst Tarrant.

As a community leader and activist, Mr. Tarrant served as board chairman and executive director of
the American Indian Community House (AICH) for several years. During his time at AICH he was a speaker, teacher, presenter and coordinator of countless events, shows and honoring ceremonies. As an arts activist, Mr. Tarrant worked closely with policymakers to provide cultural understandings of Indigenous methodologies and education through theatrical performances, panel conversations and events. Mr. Tarrant was tireless in his dedication to bring awareness to the economic and legal barriers that exist within Indigenous arts building and production.

Throughout his life, Mr. Tarrant remained humble, generous and dedicated to sharing his gifts. According to his family, “We carry his song forward; his footprints are ones that will be followed by many generations to come. The warmth Kevin gave radiated from his smile and he welcomed all with an embrace that would feel like “home.” For in him, we saw “home,” a place where a shared vision of inclusiveness existed. Never losing his optimism, he shined on and encouraged us to forge ahead with love and dedication. Creating a safe haven for community members to gather and compose their own songs and stories, his focus was always that of bringing the community together, wanting a harmonious song to be spoken between all.”

Whether it was an individual, a grassroots non-profit, or the United Nations, no person or organization was too big or too small for Mr. Tarrant. He was always willing to share his knowledge and gifts with those willing to listen and learn. In the words of his family, “Kevin’s contributions are endless and he will not be forgotten.”

Collaborations with the Brown University Library and DISA Project

Members of the NAISI community and the Brown University Library began collaborating closely this year on several projects. The first was a series of discussions focused on Indigenous understandings regarding collections and focused on the model of the Society for American Archivists Protocols for Native American Archival Materials. Library and NAISI staff met twice this past year to learn, engage with and consider potential applications of these protocols. NAISI anticipates continuing these conversations with the Library and to discuss how the University can increase general and special collections resources at the Library to support and expand Native American and Indigenous Studies at Brown. Library staff have also been attending NAISI lectures and workshops to build a toolkit for this work.

NAISI Steering Committee member Linford Fisher (History Dept.) has also been developing a Database on Indigenous Slavery in the Americas (DISA), supported by Brown’s Center for Digital Scholarship based at the University Library. DISA is a digital project that seeks to work with local Native communities to understand, interpret and present the history of Native enslavement and the legacies of settler colonialism to a wider audience. Librarian Lydia Curliss (who has experience with archives and digitization projects) is working closely with Linford to guide engagement with local tribes. In December 2019, thirteen tribal representatives from eight regional Native communities and nations met with Linford, Lydia and Library staff to learn more about the DISA project and consider how tribes could provide feedback and input on the project moving forward, with regular meetings planned.
News and Updates continued

Mellon-Funded Graduate Workshop in Settler Colonial Entanglements

The Mellon Graduate Student Workshop in Settler Colonial Entanglements over the 2019/2020 academic year allowed graduate students working in Native American and Indigenous Studies to read and discuss key NAIS texts, workshop their writing with distinguished scholars of the field, and draw Indigenous studies connections across their respective projects and disciplinary homes (history, art history, environmental studies, political science, anthropology, American studies, ethnic studies, public humanities, and more). Sponsored by the Cogut Institute for the Humanities and co-organized by three American Studies PhD students (Ally LaForge, Makana Kushi and Nicole Sintetos), the workshop also welcomed people across the university to join the conversations. Participants included American Studies faculty members, staff of the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students from other universities, and advanced undergraduates writing senior theses in Indigenous studies.

Common themes of material culture and museums, land-based research methods, and Indigenous relationships to various communities of color made for an eclectic syllabus. Key texts included J. Kēhaulani Kauanui’s “A Structure, Not an Event,” Jodi Byrd’s Transit of Empire, Robin Wall Kimmerer’s Braiding Sweetgrass and Tiffany Lethabo King’s The Black Shoals. Further, they discussed the introduction to the Asian Settler Colonialism anthology and the article “Materials and Methods in Native American and Indigenous Studies: Completing the Turn” with authors Candace Fujikane and Alyssa Mt. Pleasant, both of whom joined the group to workshop graduate student writing and delivered public lectures at Brown co-sponsored by NAISI. Next year the workshop will continue under NAISI’s purview instead of the Cogut’s and will be geared toward NAIS curriculum and resource development, in addition to continued intellectual engagement of our graduate students. ✤

Candace Fujikane with Mellon Workshop organizers Ally LaForge, Makana Kushi and Nicole Sintetos
Post-Doctoral and Graduate Fellows at Brown

Postdoctoral Fellows

**Mary Tuti Baker**

**Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Political Science, 2018–20**

Mary Tuti Baker’s work examines the relationship between Kanaka ʻŌiwi values and practice and the politics of decolonization. The questions that drive her work include: How are Kanaka ʻŌiwi stepping away from the trauma of colonialism and the toxic culture of neoliberal capitalism? How do we transform structures that work to eliminate the kinship relationships between people and the ʻāina (that which feeds us physically, spiritually and intellectually), relationships that have developed over millennia in Hawai‘i? Dr. Baker is currently working on a book project that refines her thinking on Indigenous ideologies and is based on her dissertation “Ho’oulu ʻĀina: Embodied Aloha ʻĀina Enacting ʻŌiwi Futurities.” She argues that through resurgent practices Indigenous peoples develop ideologies that provide the springboard for enacting Indigenous futurities. Indigenous ideologies emerge out of discursive and material practices that are anchored in place and worldviews that honor the kinship relationship between humans and ʻāina.

Beginning Fall 2020 Tuti will assume a position at Western Washington University in Comparative Indigenous Politics. We wish her all the best in her new position!

**Nitana Hicks Greendeer**

**Ph.D. University of Hawai‘i at Manoa, 2015**

Nitana Hicks Greendeer ’03, a citizen of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, completed her two-year Presidential Diversity Postdoctoral Fellow in American Studies and Native American and Indigenous Studies this year. She is also affiliated with the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America. Having completed her PhD at the Lynch School of Education at Boston College in 2015, Nitana most recently worked for her tribe as the Education Department Director. She has also worked for the past 15 years with the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project as a teacher and researcher and serves as a Fluency Coach for teachers of the program’s Wôpanâak Language immersion school, Mukayuhsak Weekuw. Nitana’s research interests include culture-based education and culturally appropriate curricular models, language education, and Indian Education.

**Graduate Fellows**

**Taylor Payer**

**Public Humanities Masters Fellow in Native American and Indigenous Studies, 2018–20**

**Rae Kuruhara**

**Public Humanities Masters Fellow in Native American and Indigenous Studies, 2019–21**

**Breylan Martin**

**Public Humanities Masters Fellow in The Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice, 2019–21**
NAISI Faculty Updates

Over this past year NAISI-affiliated faculty have been engaged with tribal and Indigenous communities and in research projects connected to Native American and Indigenous Studies. Here are some highlights of their accomplishments.

**Geri Augusto**
*International & Public Affairs and Africana Studies*

Professor Augusto developed and piloted a new course over the 2019/20 academic year: DEVL 1874, Development’s Visual Imaginaries: Still and Moving Images That Shaped the Field. The course explores visual imaginaries created and circulated between the 18th and early 20th centuries in the colonial and later independent Americas that underpinned the most prominent 19th and early 20th-century development theories and shaped public perception regarding resultant policies and notions of progress, modernity, production, land use, technology, nature, sovereignty, and hierarchies of the human.

Professor Augusto also helped to develop a collaborative online photo exhibition with graduating Development Studies seniors entitled Development’s Wayward Geographies, and contributed to the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice’s Entangled Legacies project (developed by CSSJ Fellow Chandra Marshall). The CSSJ project was a partnership with NAISI and resulted in an on-line Zine featuring Dr. Augusto’s essay “Fragment from a Red, Black and Green Memory” and photo of an assemblage, “Caboclo and Finda.”

**Neil Safier**
*History, Director, John Carter Brown Library*

Under the direction of Neil Safier, the John Carter Brown (JCB) Library held a variety of different events and activities related to Native American and Indigenous Studies, including the Paper Worlds of Native Voices exhibition and an Indigenous Languages Workshop.

The JCB commemorated UNESCO’s International Year of Indigenous Languages with a special exhibition, “Paper Worlds of Native Voices.” The exhibition highlighted the JCB’s exceptional collection of Indigenous language materials from throughout the Americas, ranging in origin from the Arctic to Patagonia. The display of documents served as an open invitation for scholars, interested publics and bearers of traditional tribal knowledge to explore these items with an eye toward recovering linguistic traditions and challenging interpretations that have been garnered over centuries. Coinciding with the launch of this exhibition, the Library hosted four Indigenous language speakers from Central and South America for a discussion around how the JCB could better connect with Native communities, led by postdoctoral fellow Guillaume Candela and featuring Eduardo de la Cruz Cruz, Emil Keme, Elisa Loncon, and Americo Mendoza-Mori (speakers of Nahuatl, Maya K’iche, Mapuzungun and Quechua, respectively). The JCB also congratulates Emil Keme for being awarded the 2020 book prize from the Casa de las Americas for his Le Maya Q’atzij/Nuestra palabra maya. Poéticas de resistencia y emancipación en Iximulew 1960-2012.

**Stephen Houston**
*Anthropology, History of Art and Architecture, Early Cultures*

With graduate students, and one talented undergraduate, Professor Stephen Houston explored the contours of
Classic Maya myth in a seminar this year devoted to the rich imagery and hieroglyphic texts of that time (c. CE 300–850). The seminar also triangulated with the extraordinary treasury of present-day Maya narratives that explain the world and ponder its unresolvable mysteries. The creativity and beauty of such narratives—some canonical, others varying by time and space—will lead to a book project contracted with Thames & Hudson, to be completed in 2020. Houston is also putting final touches, with Andrew Scherer and others, on a monograph for The Getty focused on the dynastic masterworks by one renowned Maya sculptor, Mayuy, one of over 120 named carvers identified by scholars.

**Andrew Scherer**

*Anthropology*

Andrew Scherer (along with Charles Golden) is leading a team that is investigating the newly discovered polity capital of the ancient Maya kingdom of Sak Tz'i’ (White Dog). The site is located near the contemporary Indigenous community of Lacanja Tzeltal, Chiapas, Mexico. The kingdom has long been known from references in hieroglyphic inscriptions but its actual location wasn’t known until quite recently. The location was secured when a new monument was brought to the team’s attention and analyzed by the project epigrapher, Stephen Houston. The team, which also includes three Brown PhD students, is conducting ongoing investigations at the site to understand how this kingdom survived (and even thrived) within the shadow of much larger and powerful kingdoms, including Piedras Negras, Yaxchilan and Palenque. Scherer and his team are collaborating with local residents both in the immediate investigations and in the longer term goal to open the site to visitors. A 2020 article (Centering the Classic Maya Kingdom of Sak Tz'i’)

Sarah dAngelo

*Theater and Performing Arts*

Safe Harbors Indigenous Theatre
Collective Artistic Director and 2020 Mellon Foundation Fellow Murielle Borst Tarrant (Kuna/ Rappahannock) engaged students in Indigenous methodologies in a week-long residency via Zoom (April 27- 29) in Professor Sarah dAngelo’s TAPS 23 Acting class. Ms. Tarrant, who is an accomplished playwright, actor and director, led students through a series of writing and embodied exercises to develop and create a character, with the final goal of writing and performing a monologue centered on the theme of “quarantined during the pandemic.” The students learned storyweaving and traditional storytelling methodologies to investigate character development. *The Viral Monologues* created space for students to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic impact in an artful manner. The monologues centered on the premise that students’ characters were sheltered in place, isolated and alone dealing (or not) with their life upended by “these unprecedented and uncertain times” of COVID-19. The restrictions of social distancing amplified their circumstances. Their only safe contact with others occurred through the screen of their smartphone or laptop. The Brown Arts Initiative (BAI) website showcased these final class projects that utilized digital media during Brown’s shift to online teaching. TAPS 23 students are enjoying some first-time global coverage of their work. Ms. Tarrant brought a wealth of
knowledge to the class and with that demonstrated the flexible nature of Indigenous storytelling methodologies.

Bathsheba Demuth
History, Environment and Society

In January 2020, Iñupiaq poet Joan Naviyuk Kane spoke at the Cogut Institute in conversation with Bathsheba Demuth. Kane discussed how issues of gender, economic parity and environmental justice have informed or complicated Indigenous poetry, and the role of history and historical scholarship in her work and community. Her presentation included readings in both English and Iñupiaq to a large audience of students, faculty and community members.

This May, Professor Demuth also received a Carnegie Fellowship to fund a research project focusing on ideas of rights, sovereignty and environmental change along the Yukon Watershed in what is now Canada and Alaska. She will be working with Deenaalee Hodgdon (Deg Xit’an Dene & Supiaq, class of ’19), along with other community members in the north as the project unfolds over the next several years.

Scott AnderBois
Cognitive, Linguistic and Psychological Sciences

Last September Professor Scott AnderBois and colleague Dr. Wilson Silva (University of Arizona) received a multi-year grant from the National Science Foundation’s Documenting Endangered Languages program to support research documenting A’ingae (Cofán), an isolate language spoken in the Ecuadorian Amazon. In addition to examining scientific questions about reported speech constructions in the language, they aim to work in collaboration with community members across four A’i communities to facilitate workshops on digital media, produce digital animations of traditional stories, and further other community language goals. In January Dr. AnderBois travelled there with Hugo and Sadie Lucitante (members of the Cofán Community of Zábalo and Brown class of 2019) to conduct a survey to assess the vitality of the language and attitudes about it across several Cofán communities.

Iris Montero
Hispanic Studies

Last Fall Dr. Montero taught HISP 1331E “Visions and Voices of Indigenous Mexico” and invited Eduardo de la Cruz Cruz (a Nahua researcher and Nahuatl pedagogue and instructor) to visit. Eduardo gave an inspiring presentation on translating a 16th-century Indigenous version of the Conquest of Mexico to contemporary Nahuatl; he also discussed the reactions of the children from his community to this version of events. Students in this course learned the basics of Nahuatl and Eduardo shared his immersion method for learning Nahuatl. Anthropologist Miguel Ángel Sosme also provided an online lecture to this class about his work on Indigenous organizing and on the Cooperativa de Tejedoras de Zongolica, a group of Indigenous weavers recovering the ancient art of weaving and dying. In addition, the class produced a label for the Mixtec urn exhibited at the Rockefeller Library on campus. Dr. Montero also hosted Linda Tuhuiwai Smith and Graham Smith at the John Carter Brown Library, sharing Indigenous works with them during their February residency.
Lectures, Discussions and Events

Native American and Indigenous Studies
Brown Bag Series

This past year NAISI hosted or co-hosted a number of events that helped our community of faculty, fellows, staff and students engage in Indigenous pedagogies, epistemologies and research methods as we embark on creating the NAIS concentration at Brown University. Many of these events featured prominent Native and Indigenous scholars from the Northeast and beyond and are highlighted in this section.

OCTOBER 24, 2019

Drive-by History: Roadside Markers in Haudenosaunee Homelands
Alyssa Mt. Pleasant

This talk explored the public history of Haudenosaunee people through the lens of state historical markers and how these markers shape narratives of violence and dispossession, contributing to “replacement” narratives that engender Haudenosaunee erasure and fuel anti-Indigenous rhetoric. In the late 1990s a group calling itself Upstate Citizens for Equality organized to resist land claims and economic development initiatives by the Oneida Nation and the Cayuga Nation. After her public lecture, Dr. Mt. Pleasant led a workshop with graduate students working in Native American and Indigenous Studies, offering comments on graduate student Ally LaForge’s paper “Wabanaki “Wonder Works”: Tomah Joseph’s Birchbark Art as Past, Present, and Future” (which won the American Ethnohistory Society’s best graduate student paper award). Then Dr. Mt. Pleasant shared reflections on her collaborative process and motivations for writing the award-winning co-authored article “Materials and Methods in Native American and Indigenous Studies: Completing the Turn.” Mt. Pleasant is an Assistant Professor in the Dept. of Transnational Studies at University of Buffalo.

NOVEMBER 4, 2019

Marking Indigenous Space on a University Campus
Darren Ranco

Dr. Ranco’s talk reflected on his work over the past decade as Chair of Native American Programs at University of Maine, Orono, and the recent installation of Penobscot Language signs at the campus. He also highlighted a Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the Penobscot Nation regarding the protection of Penobscot cultural heritage items in University holdings as a model for how other institutions could approach their work with, about and in service of tribal communities.

FEBRUARY 11, 2020

Monument Mobility: The Memory Work of Massasoit
Jean O’Brien

Dr. O’Brien's talk focused on the work of Indigenous intellectuals to reconfigure narratives of national origins in connection with the symbolism surrounding the Massasoit monument installed on Cole’s Hill in Plymouth in 1921 (marking the 300th anniversary of the landing of the English). This talk was based on her 2019
book with co-author Lisa Blee (UNC Press). Dr. O’Brien is a Professor in the History Dept. at University of Minnesota and a leader in the field of Native American and Indigenous Studies, well known for decades for her work on southern New England Native American history and individuals.

Other Events, Lectures and Discussions

September 25, 2019

Protecting Earth’s Last Great Wild Salmon Fishery: Perspectives on the Proposed Pebble Mine with Verner Wilson and Deenaalee Hodgdon

Brown alum Verner Wilson III (Curyung, Environmental Studies ’08) and Deenaalee Hodgdon (Deg Xit’an Dene/Alutiiq, Anthropology ’19) discussed the impacts of the proposed Pebble Mine on the people, fish, animals, land and waters of their homelands in the Bristol Bay, Alaska, area.

October 12, 2019

Fourth Annual Indigenous Peoples’ Day Celebration

Four years ago a coalition of Native students and faculty members successfully lobbied Brown University to change the name of Fall Weekend to Indigenous Peoples’ Day, a day devoted to thanking and honoring the traditional and ancestral guardians of this land and celebrating our rich and diverse Native cultures together! The 2019 Indigenous Peoples’ Day Celebration featured Brown University student talent and delicious traditional foods from Wampanoag chef Sherry Pocknett.

October 9, 2019

NAISA Abstract Workshop for Graduate Students

This gathering was an opportunity for graduate students in or connected to NAIS to workshop outlines and ideas for NAISA 2020 presentations (cancelled due to COVID-19). Participants shared ideas and worked on submissions together over dinner provided by NAISI.

December 11, 2019

NAISI End of Semester Dinner for Native Students and Community

This dinner provided an opportunity for the NAISI community at Brown to gather, connect and celebrate the end of the fall semester. The event presented an opportunity for NAISI staff members Makana Kushi and Rae Kuruhara to build community and gather ideas and feedback on what the Initiative could do to support Native undergraduates and ensure that they remain involved in the development of our concentration and our program.
Faculty Workshop Series

February 12, 2020

Jean O’Brien Workshop

*Workshop on Native American and Indigenous Studies*

Dr. O’Brien’s workshop with faculty, graduate students and staff provided insight into how Native American and Indigenous Studies programs have been established and sustained over the decades. Her institution, University of Minnesota, was one of the first to establish such a program (in 1969) and has been a leader in the field of *American Indian Studies* among North American institutions.

February 18, 2020

Linda Tuhiiwai Smith and Graham Smith

*Workshops on Decolonizing Methodologies*

Linda and Graham Smith led two workshops during their week-long residency at Brown University in February. One workshop was with graduate students, who benefited from feedback and guidance on their scholarship and research interests and learned about the pivotal roles the Smiths had in developing Māori studies in New Zealand. A second workshop with faculty and staff provided an opportunity for the Smiths to share their extensive knowledge on the need for institutional transformation in higher education and provide examples of how that work can take place.

May 22, 2020

Celebrating Native Graduates: Virtual Congratulations for the Class of 2020

In lieu of the usual shared meal celebrating Native graduates, NAISI organized a virtual celebration and compiled a video of congratulations messages from across the campus and beyond. NAISI-affiliated staff and faculty, BCSC staff, Native alumni and current Native students gathered on Zoom and shared heartfelt words to send off the Native students graduating in the Brown University class of 2020.
Events Supported by NAISI

September 21, 2019
“A Musical Tour of Native America”: Smithsonian Day at the Tomaquag Museum

September 23, 2019
Muriel Miguel: A Retrospective
Presented by Brown University Library

October 8, 2019
Narragansett Food Sovereignty Initiative Lunch Talk by Cassius Spears
Presented by the John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage

October 18, 2019
Tomaquag Museum Annual Honoring and Cultural Showcase

October 24, 2019
“I Just Had to Be There”: Experiences of Indigenous Students in the #NoDAPL Movement by “Drone Warriors” Co-Curator Dr. Adrienne Keene
Presented by the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology

November 1 – 3, 2019
Native Networking: Connecting Roots and Planting Seeds
Presented by the Ivy Native Council Fall Summit and hosted by Natives at Brown (NAB) with additional support from the Brown Center for Students of Color (BCSC)

November 14 – 16, 2019
Indigenous Languages and Educational Sovereignty Symposium
Presented by the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project

December 6, 2019
Reflections on “Sacred is Sacred: The Art of Protecting Bears Ears” by Curator Isabella Robbins
Presented by the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology

Isabella Robbins (Dine, Public Humanities MA ’19) returned to campus for a talk to mark the closing of her exhibit and Public Humanities practicum last year. She was joined at this event by Adrienne Keene, whose exhibit “Drone Warriors” also closed at the end of the Fall semester. Isabella is now pursuing a PhD in the History of Art at Yale, with a focus on Global Contemporary Indigenous Art.
January 24, 2020

Tagga.tuq: To See One’s Own Reflection, with Joan Naviyuk Kane and Bathsheba Demuth

Presented by the Department of History

This event focused on contemporary Indigenous poetry’s relationship to the political imperatives of intensifying global concern. The discussants considered how Indigenous poetry takes on questions of environmental harm, economic insecurity, and unstable regimes of governance, questions that Indigenous poetries situate in the long arc of U.S. and European colonialism.

February 3, 2020

Ceremony Medicine: Talk and Dinner with Dr. Lori Alvord

Presented by the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs at Warren Alpert Medical School

General surgeon Dr. Lori Alvord described Navajo ceremonies and the many elements of ceremony that contribute to healing. She discussed how ceremonies work at multiple levels, first by the use of mind states to heal our bodies (mind-body medicine or “psychoneuroimmunology”).
Dr. Candace Fujikane with Brown University students and NYU’s Dean Saranililio (far right).

March 6, 2020

Candace Fujikane: Abundant Cartographies for a Planetary Future
Presented by the Mellon Graduate Workshop in Settler Colonial Entanglements

In this talk, Dr. Fujikane shared her work as a settler aloha ‘āina, and argued that mapping abundance is an urgent insistence on life and provides a foundation for movements against climate change, one based on Indigenous economies of abundance as opposed to capitalist economies of scarcity. This event was part of a multi-day visit to Brown University by Dr. Fujikane.

March 6, 2020

Deerskin Painting Workshop with Kerri Helme
Presented by the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology

Mashpee Wampanoag master artist Kerri Helme led a workshop in sewing and painting a peetôk (small deerskin bag). This inaugural Haffenreffer Museum workshop quickly sold out!

Additional NAIS-Related Events on Campus This Year

September 25, 2019

Fernanda Sposito: The Role of Indigenous Leadership in the Construction of American Colonization between the 16th and 17th Centuries
Presented by the Brazil Initiative at the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs

October 3 – 8, 2019

Exposing Unseen Boundaries Exhibit, Consuelo Jimenez Underwood
Presented by the The Sarah Doyle Center for Women and Gender

October 21, 2019

Warmth of Voice: An Evening of Indigenous Storytelling
Presented by the Brown Center for Students of Color (BCSC)
OCTOBER 26, 2019

Re-Seeding the City: Ethnobotany in the Urban
Organized by graduate students Samuel Coren, Aja Grande and Alexandra Peck

NOVEMBER 5, 2019

Paper Worlds of Native Voices Exhibit Opening
Presented by the John Carter Brown Library

NOVEMBER 7, 2019

Mexico 1519: 5 Centuries, 5 Objects, 5 Approaches
Presented by the John Carter Brown Library (Cosponsored by Hispanic Studies)

Scholars Iris Montero, David Colmenares, Jessica Stair, Diego Luis, Mallory Matsumoto and Matthew Restall shared their perspectives on five unique objects from the JCB’s collection that speak to the local and global effects of the encounter between Spaniards and Indigenous peoples in Mesoamerica.

DECEMBER 2, 2019

Sandy Grande: Refusing the University
Sponsored by the Race, Indigeneity, and Power Workshop and the Department of Sociology

DECEMBER 6 – 7, 2019

Presented by the Cogut Institute for the Humanities

FEBRUARY 3, 2020

Webinar 1: Building Relationships of Mutual Respect

MARCH 5, 2020

Beth Piatote and Adrienne Keene: In Conversation about The Beadworkers
Presented by American Studies

MAY 26, 2020

Presented by Brown University Libraries; led by Amanda Strauss, Lydia Curliss and Rae Gould
NAISI Faculty and Staff Publications

**W. W. Norton, 2019**

**Floating Coast: An Environmental History of the Bering Strait**

Bathsheba Demuth

wwnorton.com/books/9780393635164/

The first-ever comprehensive history of Beringia, the Arctic land and waters stretching from Russia to Canada, *Floating Coast* breaks away from familiar narratives to provide a fresh and fascinating perspective on an overlooked landscape. The unforgiving territory along the Bering Strait had long been home to humans—the Iñupiat and Yupik in Alaska, and the Yupik and Chukchi in Russia—before Americans and Europeans arrived with revolutionary ideas for progress. Rapidly, these frigid lands and waters became the site of an ongoing experiment: How, under conditions of extreme scarcity, would the great modern ideologies of capitalism and communism control and manage the resources they craved?

**University Press of Colorado, 2019**

**An Inconstant Landscape: The Maya Kingdom of El Zotz, Guatemala**

Thomas G. Garrison and Stephen Houston, eds.

mountainscholar.org/handle/10217/193037

Presenting the results of six years of archaeological survey and excavation in and around the Maya kingdom of El Zotz, *An Inconstant Landscape* paints a complex picture of a dynamic landscape over the course of almost 2,000 years of occupation. El Zotz was a dynastic seat of the Classic period in Guatemala. Located between the renowned sites of Tikal and El Perú-Waka', it existed as a small kingdom with powerful neighbors and serves today as a test-case of political debility and strength during the height of dynastic struggles among the Classic Maya.

**University Press of Florida, 2019**

**Historical Archaeology and Indigenous Collaboration: Discovering Histories That Have Futures**

D. Rae Gould, Holly Herbster, Heather Law Pezzarossi and Stephen A. Mrozowski

upf.com/book.asp?id=9780813066219

Highlighting the strong relationship between New England’s Nipmuc people and their land from the pre-contact period to the present day, this book helps demonstrate that the history of Native Americans did not end with the arrival of Europeans and is, in so many ways, deeply connected to their present-day political, social and cultural practices. This publication is the rich result of a twenty-year collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors who use their own example to argue that Native peoples need to be integral to any research project focused on their histories and cultures.
Articles

Geri Augusto


Mark Cladis


Bathsheba Demuth


Elizabeth Hoover

- 2019. "Fires were lit inside them;’ The Pyropolitics of Water Protector Camps at Standing Rock.” RIAS - Review of International American Studies; Indigenous Social Movements in the Americas issue 12(1):11-44.

Stephen Houston


Andrew Sherer

Native American and Indigenous Organizations on Campus

Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative (NAISI)
The Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative is an interdisciplinary initiative of faculty and students interested in teaching and research that explores, and increases the understanding of, the cultural traditions and political experiences of Indigenous Peoples (especially in the Western Hemisphere) through historical and contemporary lenses.

Native Americans at Brown (NAB)
Native Americans at Brown is a student originated, led and run organization committed to building the local Native community and increasing awareness about Native issues. NAB aims to create a space for Indigenous students to express and explore their identity, to create a means for individuals to relate to one another across various Indigenous backgrounds, and to provide social and cultural support for Native American students. This organization welcomes people from all backgrounds to participate.

Native American Brown Alumni (NABA)
The mission of Native American Brown Alumni is:

- To improve the connections and networking among Native American students at Brown University and Native American Brown alumni
- To better the learning, living, and social experience of Native American students at Brown through support of Native Americans at Brown (NAB) and the Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative (NAISI)
- To increase Native American matriculation to, retention at, and graduation from Brown University
- To support and foster community between local Native American tribes and the institution of Brown University
- To raise the awareness of Brown University communities about Native American issues

Native American Heritage Series (NAHS)
The Native American Heritage Series events focus on the politics and culture of Native American and Indigenous peoples. Two programmer positions, employed through the Brown Center for Students of Color, work in collaboration with staff to coordinate six events each year. Signature events of the series include the Native American Frybread Social and the annual Spring Thaw Powwow held each April.
NAISI Course Highlights

Fall 2019

**AMST 2220P**

**Diaspora and Indigeneity**  
*Kevin Escudero*

This graduate seminar explores the interrelated concepts of diaspora and indigeneity. Drawing on theoretical frameworks from American Studies, history, anthropology, and law, students will explore the relationship between diasporic and indigenous communities in the United States, Canada, Middle East, Caribbean and Pacific Ocean. In the process, conversations will focus on how struggles for migrant justice can take place while critically engaging with the settler colonial legacies of many nation-states moving towards a politics of collective liberation.

**AMST 2694**

**Decolonizing Public Humanities: Intersectional Approaches to Curatorial Work + Community Organizing**  
*Micah Salkind*

This course will decenter experiences and cultural expectations attendant to whiteness, cis-maleness, able-bodiedness, heterosexuality, and middle/upper-classness in the public humanities, and thereby explore the contemporary problems and possibilities of intersectional approaches in the field. What do contemporary paradigms of “diversity,” “public engagement,” and “cultural organizing” have to teach us about effective and ethical public humanities approaches? Do different, multiply marginalized communities of affinity practice entirely different public humanities? How are cultural interventions changing to accommodate the demands of an increasingly segmented public sphere?

**ANTH 1125**

**Indigenous Archaeologies**  
*Robert Preucel*

This is an introduction to Indigenous archaeology, sometimes defined as archaeology “by, for and with Indigenous peoples.” These approaches combine the study of the past with contemporary social justice concerns. However, they are more than this. In addition to seeking to make archaeology more inclusive of and responsible to Indigenous peoples, they seek to contribute to a more accurate understanding of archaeological record. They thus do not reject science, but attempt to broaden it through a consideration of Indigenous epistemologies. This course covers topics such as the history of anthropological archaeology, Indigenous knowledge and science, decolonizing methodologies, representational practices and NAGPRA.

**ETHN 1200B**

**Contemporary Indigenous Education in North America**  
*Adrienne Keene*

In the past, formalized schooling in Indigenous communities was a tool of colonization and cultural genocide, forcing Native peoples to assimilate to western norms, values, and knowledge. However, contemporary Indigenous communities have managed to reclaim and
reshape education for Native youth, utilizing innovative methods and technologies, as well as drawing upon generations of traditional and indigenous knowledges to create environments that promote academic achievement alongside culture. In this course we will focus on the ways Native communities are asserting their educational sovereignty, through culturally-relevant/responsive curriculums, language immersion schools, indigenous charter schools, traditional ecological and scientific knowledges, and more.

**ETHN 1200I**

**History and Resistance in Representations of Native Peoples**

*Adrienne Keene*

Throughout history, Native peoples have been portrayed through a stock set of stereotypes such as savage warriors, Indian princesses, or mystical shamans. These images surround us in advertising, news media, Hollywood, sports mascots, and Halloween costumes. This course will examine the foundations of these representations and their connections to colonization, with a focus on contemporary and ongoing examples, from Johnny Depp’s Tonto, Urban Outfitters’ “Navajo” products, to JK Rowling’s “History of Magic in North America,” with a focus on the ways Native peoples are taking back and reshaping Native representations through activism, social media, art, design, film, and more.

**ETHN 1200K**

**Introduction to American Indian Studies**

*Elizabeth Hoover*

Introduces students to both historical and contemporary issues in North America, examining issues of sovereignty, representation and self-representation, culture, politics, and history. Because this course is interdisciplinary, we will use texts from Indigenous studies, anthropology, cultural studies, history, film and literature as tools to understand and appreciate the ways in which American Indian cultures survive, flourish and shape the United States. No special background is required. All students are welcome. Enrollment limited to 30.

**ETHN 1750B**

**Treaty Rights and Food Fights: Eating Local in Indian Country**

*Elizabeth Hoover*

In many Native American communities the push to “eat local” is often based on reviving a traditional food culture as well as a way of promoting better health. This class explores the disparate health conditions faced by Native communities, and the efforts by many groups to address these health problems through increasing community access to traditional foods, whether by gardening projects or a revival of hunting and fishing traditions. We will examine the ways in which Native food movements have converged and diverged from general American local food movements, and the struggles they often face in reviving treaty-guaranteed food ways.
**HIAA 1882**

**Indigenous Art, Issues and Concepts**  
*Marina Tyquiengco*

This seminar will map out the field of indigenous art with an emphasis on artworks from English-speaking settler colonial countries, concentrating on Native North American and Aboriginal Australian artists. We will approach indigenous art theoretically, outlining major issues and concepts of this global topic. Units will include defining indigeneity and indigenous art terms, anthropology in relation to art, and curatorial practice. We will begin by addressing the concept of indigeneity through legal and sociopolitical frameworks, continuing with museological display of indigenous art across time, and seeing how museums are working to better contextualize their anthropological collections.

**HISP 1331E**

**Visions and Voices of Indigenous Mexico**  
*Iris Montero*

“In Mexico we are all mixed” goes a popular dictum, placing mestizaje at the core of what it means to be Mexican. One fifth of the population, however, self-identifies as indigenous (pueblos originarios), and keeps experiencing various forms of discrimination for not abiding by the dominant national discourse. HISP 1331E explores three pillars of indigenous identity – land’s gifts, material culture and language – to inquire how indigeneity has been deployed and reclaimed by indigenous groups through time. Materials include pre-Hispanic and Colonial codices, murals and objects, and present day literary works, music and cinema, with one hour of Nahuatl basics per week.

**HIST 1310**

**History of Brazil**  
*James Green*

This course charts the history of Brazil from Portuguese contact with the Indigenous population in 1500 to the present. It examines the country’s political, economic, social, intellectual, and cultural development to understand the causes, interactions, and consequences of conflict, change, and continuity within Brazilian society.

**HIST 1331**

**The Rise and Fall of the Aztecs: Mexico, 1300-1600**  
*Robert Cope*

This course will chart the evolution of the Mexica (better known as the Aztecs) from nomads to the dominant people of central Mexico; examine their political, cultural, and religious practices (including human sacrifice); explore the structure and limitations of their empire; and analyze their defeat by Spanish conquistadors and their response to European colonization. We will draw upon a variety of pre- and post-conquest sources, treating the Aztecs as a case study in the challenges of ethnohistory.
Course Highlights continued

HIST 1340

History of the Andes from Incas to Evo Morales
Jeremy Mumford

Before the Spanish invaded in the 1530s, western South America was the scene of the largest state the New World had ever known, Tawantinsuyu, the Inca empire. During almost 300 years of colonial rule, the Andean provinces were shared by the “Republic of Spaniards” and the “Republic of Indians” - two separate societies, one dominating and exploiting the other. Today the region remains in many ways colonial, as Quechua- and Aymara-speaking villagers face a Spanish-speaking state, as well as an ever-more-integrated world market, the pressures of neoliberal reform from international banks, and the melting of the Andean glaciers.

HIST 2981Q

Histories of Empire and Decolonization
Jennifer Johnson

For most of history humans have not lived within neatly bound nation-states. Rather, empires often organized the political, economic and social lives of diverse peoples. But the age of empire came to a dramatic end by the middle of the twentieth century. How and why did this rapid transformation occur and how have the legacies of colonialism continued to shape former colonies and metropoles? This course, which examines theories and case studies of empire and decolonization throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, seeks to address these questions, through key concepts including racial difference, citizenship, self-determination, settler colonialism, nationalism, and decolonization.

LACA 1503Q

Politics of Indigeneity in Brazil
Estevao Rafael Fernandes

This course examines the politics of indigeneity in Brazil. First, it examines the relationship between native peoples and settlers, especially the Jesuits, Portuguese colonists, and the Portuguese Crown. Our purpose is to understand images of savagery and innocence as part of colonial imaginary in Brazilian’s imaginary about natives. Next, we will explore how indigenous peoples were understood by scientists and naturalists, and how these discussions are important in understanding notions about race in Brazil. Finally, we examine the relationships between native peoples and the State during the Republic, with a focus on contemporary issues, such as development, the environment, and social movements.

MUSC 0640

Ghanaian Drumming and Dancing Ensemble
Martin Obend

A dynamic introductory course on drumming, dancing, and singing of Ghana and the diaspora. Students learn to perform diverse types of African music, including
Ewe, Akan, Ga, and Dagomba pieces on drums, bells, and shakers. No prerequisites. May be repeated for credit. Enrollment limited to 15. Instructor permission required.

**POL S 1820 I**

**Indigenous Politics in Hawai‘i: Resurgence and Decolonization**

*Mary Tuti Baker*

Because kinship relationships to land and all existents of that land are fundamental to Indigenous Peoples, resurgence and decolonization must be studied in the context of specific Indigenous Peoples and the ways they resist colonial violence and build resurgent practices. This course then focuses on these issues with respect to Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians). We will read works from Kanaka Maoli scholar/activists in order to understand the genealogy of Kanaka Maoli resistance and resurgent practices. We also engage with critical Indigenous thinkers in order to understand Indigenous political praxis that is shared across differences and those that are not.

**Spring 2020**

**AMST 2220 J**

**Introduction to Critical Race Theory**

*Adrienne Keene*

This graduate seminar will explore the foundations and central tenets of Critical Race Theory, from its origins in Critical Legal Studies, to current applications, debates, and evolutions, with particular attention to CRT’s intersections with the field of American Studies. We will also bring in CRT “offshoots” such as TribalCrit, LatCrit, AsianCrit, and DisCrit. CRT posits that racism is endemic to society, but that we must also remain committed to social justice and praxis. How do we navigate these tensions, use CRT to provide a toolkit for navigating scholarship, and work toward social change in the realms of race and racism?

**ANTH 2520**

**Mesoamerican Archaeology and Ethnohistory**

*Stephen Houston*

Seminar focusing on current issues in the archaeology and history of Mesoamerica, including Mexico and Northern Central America. Draws on rich resources at Brown, including the John Carter Brown Library.

**DEVL 1874**

**Development’s Visual Imaginaries: Still and Moving Images That Shaped the Field**

*Geri Augusto*

A junior seminar in Development Studies exploring the visual imaginaries that were created and circulated between the 18th and early 20th centuries in the colonial and later independent Americas, which underpinned the most prominent 19th century and early 20th-century development theories, and shaped public perception regarding the resultant policies generated particularly in the United States. (The course will argue that, in actual fact, these two sets of policies—at home and abroad—often drew from the same set of ideas about hierarchies
and categories of human beings; land-use, relations among humans, other living beings, and inanimate features; work and livelihoods; gender, race, capacity for self-definition and political self-representation, who should wield power, and so on.) The course will juxtapose to the USA instances some development policies constructed in Brazil—a similarly large, racially and ethnically diverse American society founded on appropriation of indigenous lands, colonization and slavery, and notions of limitless expansion—as well as some utilized by multilateral development projects in Southern Africa. Visuals include paintings, advertisements, brochures, films and early television shows. Experiential sessions in collaboration with John Hay library. DIAP and WRIT-designated

**ETHN 1750X**

**Native American Language Loss, Revitalization, and Resiliency**
*Nitana Hicks Greendeer*

This class examines the issues of Native languages, primarily in the United States. The course will study the variety of languages in North America, the factors that have negatively affected the strength and use of native languages in many tribes, the impact of such loss on communities, and the ways in which those communities have worked hard to maintain, revitalize, or reclaim their languages.

**HISP 1330X**

**The Nature of Conquest: Scientific Literatures of the Americas**
*Iris Montero*

Throughout history, conquest and colonization have implied different kinds of appropriations: control over new lands, new bodies, new languages. With the appropriation of new languages came the confrontation between different ways of organizing the world and, in particular, alternative ways of understanding humankind’s relationship to nature. This course explores the scientific literatures that emerged in the wake of Spanish conquest and colonization of the Americas (1500-1800). These hybrid scientific literatures, written in Spanish but also in Nahuatl, Maya, Quechua and graphic forms, illustrate the lasting cross-pollination between Old and New World notions about American nature.

**HIST 0233**

**Colonial Latin America**
*Jeremy R. Mumford*

Colonial Latin America, from Columbus’s voyage in 1492 to Independence in the nineteenth century, was the creation of three peoples: Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans. Spanish and Portuguese conquerors brought with them the world of the Crusades, the Inquisition, and the Renaissance. Native Americans lived there already, in rich empires and hunter-gatherer bands. Africans came as slaves from Senegal, Nigeria, Congo and Angola, bringing old traditions and creating new ones. These diverse peoples blended together to form a new people. This was a
place of violence, slavery and oppression—but also of art, faith, new societies, new ideas.

POL S 0920B

Introduction to Indigenous Politics with Pacific Islander Focus

Mary Tuti Baker

This introductory course in Indigenous political thought engages with critical Indigenous thinkers in order to understand Indigenous political praxis, resurgence and decolonization. Because Indigenous study is place-based and kinship relationships to land and all existents of that land are fundamental to understanding Indigenous political thought, Indigenous politics must be studied in the context of particular indigenous peoples. To that end this course focuses on political movements of contemporary Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian). In addition to developing a fuller understanding of Indigenous political thought, this class also explores what it means to move beyond colonial relationships with the State.

REL S 1610

Sacred Sites: Law, Politics, and Religion

Nathaniel Berman

Sacred sites have long been flashpoints for intercommunal conflict the world over, as well as posing challenges to sovereign State authority. Such sites range from natural landscapes to architectural masterpieces. They often come to symbolize the perennial clash between the religious and the secular, the sacred and the political, tradition and modernity. We will discuss a diverse array of specific disputes and ask whether one may even speak of “sacred sites” cross-culturally. Can legal frameworks embrace different notions of the sacred? We will also examine the historical contexts that provoke such disputes, particularly the aftermath of colonialism.

REL S 02060

Religion Gone Wild: Spirituality and the Environment

Mark Cladis

A study of the dynamic relation between religion and nature. Religion, in this course, includes forms of spirituality within and outside the bounds of conventional religious traditions (for example, Buddhism and Christianity, on the one hand; ecofeminism and nature writing on the other). Topics in this study of religion, philosophy, and ecology will include environmental justice, environmental degradation, and depictions of humans in relation to the natural world. Of special interest is North American and Australian indigenous spiritual/cultural perspectives on the nexus between the human and the more-than-human. Enrollment limited to 20.