

Alfred L. Kroeber's Career and Contributions to California's Indigenous Peoples

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Cet article fait partie d'une série de six communications présentées le 19 novembre 2021, lors d'une session intitulée "Alfred L. Kroeber : The Man, His Work and His Legacy", organisée pendant la réunion annuelle de l'American Anthropological Association (AAA). Le 27 janvier 2021, l'Université de Berkeley (Californie) a débaptisé le "Kroeber Hall" qui abrite le département et le musée d'anthropologie - institutions fondées par Kroeber. Il nous a semblé intéressant d'offrir en lecture dans Bérose ces six contributions discutées en novembre. Sans prétendre à l'exhaustivité, elle offrent des éclairages complémentaires sur l'oeuvre d'une figure majeure de l'histoire de l'anthropologie états-unienne. Participaient à cette session : Herbert S. Lewis (organisateur, Université du Wisconsin-Madison), Stanley Brandes (Université de Californie, Berkeley), James Stanlaw (président, Illinois State University), Jack Glazier (Oberlin College), Nicholas Barron (Mission College), et Nancy Scheper-Hughes (Université de Californie, Berkeley).

The need for a session devoted to Alfred Louis Kroeber at the 2021 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association became obvious when, on January 27, 2021, the name of that distinguished anthropologist was publicly removed from Kroeber Hall on the campus of the University of California, Berkeley. It has been just over 60 years since Kroeber died; it is a grim commentary on our discipline that recent generations of anthropology students have grown up knowing little or nothing about the man or why his name was on that building. It is therefore incumbent upon those of us who know about the career, works, and influence of A. L. Kroeber to discuss at least a few of his many achievements, his contributions to American and world anthropology, to the University of California, and to the Indian peoples of that state.

Kroeber had been called "the dean of American anthropology" after the death of his teacher, Franz Boas, in 1942. When I attended my first annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association in 1955 the then-president of the then-much-smaller

organization remarked that anthropology was the most democratic of academic professions. “Why, everyone from A. L. Kroeber down to a second-year graduate student is welcome among us...” As first-year graduate students, my friend and I were somewhat discomfited, but it was clear who was the most highly regarded of us all. The participants in the session devoted to Kroeber at the 2021 annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association presented different aspects of his remarkable career and influence.

Kroeber’s Career and Prominence

Alfred Louis Kroeber [1] began life in New York in 1876, receiving an MA in English literature from Columbia University before discovering anthropology by way of Franz Boas and receiving Boas’ first Columbia PhD degree in 1901. [2] His dissertation was a study of Arapaho decorative symbolism based on fieldwork in Wyoming and Oklahoma. He came to San Francisco first in 1900, working on a small collection for the California Academy of Sciences, and he immediately started surveying California’s Indian population (Thoresen 1975:263). In 1901 he was hired at the University of California at Berkeley to establish a department and a museum of anthropology and he did both, retiring from the department in 1946 at the age of 70. It was the first department of anthropology in the US west of Chicago and the most important. Among his many students were Cora DuBois, William Duncan Strong, Anna Gayton, Dorothy D. Lee, Earl Count, Laura Thompson, Katherine Luomala, W. Lloyd Warner, Harold Driver, Philip Drucker, Ralph Beals, Isabel Kelly, Omer Stewart, Julian Steward, Margaret Lantis, Walter Goldschmidt, George Foster, Robert Heizer, Robert Spencer, and William Elmendorf. He encouraged the work of many others who were not his students, and found funds for fieldwork and publication, much of it in the unmatched series, *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, whose 50 volumes were published from 1903 to 1964.

Despite serious heart problems Kroeber would remain at the center of the world of anthropology until his death at 84 in 1960. After retirement from Berkeley, he taught for short stints at Columbia, Chicago, Harvard, Yale, and at Brandeis University. [3] He died in 1960 in Paris, a few days after attending a small workshop he had organized on “Horizons of Anthropology”, including Claude Lévi-Strauss, Eric Wolf, and Dell Hymes.

Kroeber was a founder of the American Anthropological Association in 1902 (president 1917–18), president of the American Folklore Society (1906), and a founder of the Linguistic Society of America (president 1940). In 1952 he organized the international symposium that produced the monumental “encyclopedia inventory” of the field, *Anthropology Today* (1953). That volume of almost 1000 pages, with 50 extensive articles, represented the most authoritative statements by leading experts on the major concerns of four-field and applied anthropology at that time.

Above all, however, Kroeber established his importance in the field with his remarkable record of publication of both substantive findings (data) and of theory. His published works

are reckoned at more than 550, including many books, book-length monographs, and articles, long and short. A large portion of his research and writing was devoted to California's Indian peoples, but his fertile mind and writings covered an amazing range: basically, all of the world's cultures and their history. His contributions of fundamental data of ethnography, linguistics, and archeology were prodigious, but much of his writing was motivated by ideas, theories, and perspectives that he was exploring. [4]

Kroeber was always looking for patterns, trying to understand processes, preferences, styles, and dynamics of culture. (Stanley Brandes discusses the importance of culture to Kroeber [5].) According to his students and later colleagues (Robert Heizer, George Foster, and Theodore McCown 1962) "[Kroeber's] search for cultural patterns obtrudes in papers on such diverse subjects as changes in women's fashions, prehistoric South American art styles, Mohave epic tales, classificatory systems of relationship, [types of] arrow release [...], basketry techniques and designs, aboriginal American Religious [movements], [and] Romance languages." He engaged alike with Mohave epics, Mozart trios, and Mochica pottery. His knowledge and the range of subjects he wrote about was unmatched.

Kroeber's wife Theodora offered a "sampling" of titles that "suggests the scope of his bibliography" (257): *The Arapaho* (1902-1907), "The Yokuts Language of South Central California" (1907), *Zuni Kin and Clan* (1917), *Peoples of the Philippines* (1919), *Anthropology* (1923, 1948), *Handbook of the Indians of California* (1925), *Cultural and Natural Areas of Native North America* (1939), *Peruvian Archaeology* (1944b), *Configurations of Culture Growth* (1944a), *The Nature of Culture* (1952), *Style and Civilizations* (1957), *Miao and Chinese Kin Logic* (1958), "Parts of Speech in Periods of Poetry" (1958), "Semantic Contribution of Lexico-Statistics" (1961), "Three Quantitative Classifications of Romance" (1961), *An Anthropologist Looks at History* (1963)...

His *Anthropology*, published in 1923, was the first general teaching text for anthropology (Heizer et al 1962) and the completely rewritten 1948 version with that title is an amazing tour de force. Its 856 pages (plus 39-page index) covers such a world of human activity and phenomena that it has been called "the magical green Kroeber." It was only partly the sort of textbook that summarizes the state of knowledge of a field at a moment in time. It is a work rich both in facts and ideas, of attempted syntheses as well as the innovative notions, especially about invention, "culture growths and spreads," and "cultural psychology." He ends the book with his conclusion about "the main values of anthropology":

"This is the realization of ethnocentricity as one of the great perversers of truth, alike in thinking and in acting; and the recognition of culture as being the conceptual means of breaking the hold of this shackle. To see and appraise humanity and its works, and men and their deeds, and beyond that man's relation to nature—to see these free from the distortions of ethnocentricity, with full acceptance of all attainable objectivity whether painful or pleasant; to contribute to such an attitude is perhaps the largest contribution of anthropology" (1948:849).

Several of Kroeber's papers that are notable for the stimulus they gave to creative discussion,

development, or controversy in the field, should be added to a list of his important works. These include: “The Superorganic” (1917), “Zuni Clan Functioning” (1917); “Classificatory Systems of Relationship” (1909), “Basic and Secondary Patterns of Social Structure” (1939); “Stimulus Diffusion” (1940); “Three Centuries of Women’s Dress Fashions. A Quantitative Analysis” (with Jane Richardson) (1940). His former student, Ralph Beals, remarked on Kroeber’s wide-ranging curiosity and his tendency to write provocative pieces on new topics, new fields, that he might never follow up. “Nevertheless, in almost every case the field was never the same again after Kroeber’s foray into it. People could disagree with what Kroeber did and said but they could not ignore it” (1968).

Here is a summary of Kroeber’s character by former students who became colleagues:

“As an anthropologist, Kroeber displayed a truly remarkable degree of insight, held no bias, welcomed new ideas, possessed a phenomenal memory for data, displayed a wide-ranging intellectual curiosity, and exhibited an unusual ability to draw generalizations from a body of concrete data. As a person he was patient, kindly, and tolerant, avoided dogmatic statements because they were uncongenial, was a delightful conversationalist, a good listener, and a warm human being” (Heizer et al 1962) [6].

As an undergraduate student I recall this world-famous professor bearing himself modestly, without airs, and I heard stories about Kroeber from my guru, Professor Robert Manners, that bore out this impression. [7]

Kroeber’s Ethnography

By the time of Kroeber’s arrival in California, he had completed fieldwork during three summers, with Southern Arapaho Indians in 1899 in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), Northern Arapaho in Wyoming (1900), and Gros Ventre in Montana (1901). This research resulted in monographs published in 1902, 1904, and 1907 that were eventually reissued as one volume in 1983. For this research, Kroeber combined participant-observation with many interviews with consultants [knowledge holders] to produce more than 400 pages of details of ceremonials, beliefs, art work, ritual regalia, and social organization that could never be recovered otherwise. He witnessed the Sun Dance, that highly significant institution of the Great Plains Indians and First Nations, and the Crow Dance, and he reports the many ancillary activities, games, orations, ideas of supernatural powers, and the mood and tone of these occasions. It is richly illustrated with hundreds of artistic designs with their symbolic meanings, ceremonial equipment, and other items of material culture. In the words of Fred Eggan, “Kroeber’s excellent analysis of the Arapaho not only remains unequaled, but has provided a solid base for further study. His presentation of Arapaho material culture, both descriptively and in terms of illustrations, is outstanding” (Eggan 1983:vi).

Although Kroeber did significant work in archeology (at Zuni pueblo, in Mexico, and in Peru), his primary research and publications were in ethnography and linguistics. A major

portion of his writings are devoted to the ethnography and languages of California's Indian peoples; these began in 1902 with a "Preliminary sketch of the Mohave Indians."

Kroeber began his research in California at a time when the Indians of the southern third of that state had been under the missionizing power of the Catholic church for about 130 years, until replaced by the US government in 1848. The impact of the Gold Rush and increasing Euro-American settlers had reduced the Indian population of the northern two-thirds of California almost to the vanishing point as a result of diseases, expropriation, and mass murder. E. D. Castillo writes of "the state's genocidal aim" in the 1850s (1978:109) and Benjamin Madley (2016) expands on the case for calling the period 1846-1873 "An American Genocide." (See also Lightfoot 2004.) Although there is no agreement about the numbers of the pre-Columbian Indian population, it is recognized that the land that would be called California originally held the densest native population in all North America. For the sake of argument, it seems likely that there were no fewer than 310,000 indigenous people there in the late 18th century, but by the time Kroeber arrived, the indigenous population was estimated at as few as 15,000 souls (see Cook 1978:91-98). Clearly the settler-colonialists were succeeding in their aims. "The decrease was terrifyingly rapid in the first decades after 1859..." (Kroeber & Heizer 1970:2.)

In 1901 it was unclear whether these very small Indian groups could survive at all, let alone maintain cultures of their own. Most California Indians were living in small groups, in scattered settlements, were swamped by settlers or living in relatively remote refuge areas. Their land had been taken from them, as had their former way of life. Some survivors had converted to Christianity, some intermarried with other peoples, and some had taken laboring jobs. Their languages were endangered and their rich cultures and social arrangements could not be maintained for long. Kroeber's extensive research program was also intended to challenge the ethnocentrism, prejudice, and racism rampant in California, through an understanding of the history, lifeways, and arts of the native peoples of the state. Ethnographic, linguistic, and historical research was supplemented by publications, lectures, and museum exhibits open to the public. (Ishi, the sole surviving Yahi Indian, gave exhibitions of fire-making, flint-knapping, archery, and singing. His endearing personality had an important role in the early days. [See the paper by Jack Glazier in this series of papers. <https://www.berose.fr/rubrique1087.html?lang=en>])

Kroeber was dedicated to recovering whatever possible of their lives—their "traditional" lives, to be sure. Yes, this was "salvage anthropology." He tried to reconstruct the use of environments, the livelihoods, the institutions, ceremonies, beliefs, stories, language styles, material cultures, and arts, that had been the distinctive lifeways of the indigenous people of California before the destruction and changes wrought by the Spanish, the Catholic missions, Protestant missionaries, the gold rush miners, the settlers, the US government, and time itself. [8]

To Kroeber it was a sacred task—as well as an intellectual one—to record whatever he could before it was too late. He enlisted his students and his colleagues from elsewhere to do the

same. These included Samuel Barrett, Edward Sapir, T. T. Waterman, E. W. Gifford, Roland B. Dixon, Pliny Earle Goddard, J. Alden Mason, Isabel Kelly, Robert Heizer, Mary Haas, and Walter Dyk. He also encouraged his Indian friends, the Yurok man, Robert Spott, and Juan Dolores of the Tohono O'odham, to do scholarly writing, both in collaboration and in their own names. According to Ralph Beals, "When he first visited California in 1900, the California Indians were little known and of little interest to anthropologists. At the time of his death probably no comparable area of the world had such a large anthropological literature, a substantial portion written by Kroeber himself" (Beals 1968).

Beginning in 1900, Kroeber traveled the vast state of California seeking out Indian groups. He also went to the archives and used every means at hand to organize knowledge of the Indian population of that state. [9]Kroeber's major work, *Handbook of the Indians of California*, was ready to be published by 1917 although it wasn't issued until 1925. It is 995 pages long, with 419 illustrations, 40 maps, and 26 pages of bibliography, much of it annotated. (And the print is remarkably small!) The terms "magisterial" and "monumental" have been used to describe this work.

The *Handbook* contains as full descriptions as possible at the time for "some 50 little nations" (vi) based on his own fieldwork for 15 groups plus available published data. It is the baseline for further research or for attempts to revive and reconstruct communities and cultures. The coverage of so many different groups, however, is very uneven. Even when supplemented by the work of others, based on only a decade and a half of research it is necessarily catch-as-catch-can. Some topics are covered in considerable detail while others are slighted.

Kroeber attempted to record the locations of peoples, the probable relations among different peoples, the names by which groups and sub-groups were known, and the names and location of their settlements. These accounts are accompanied with detailed maps, presenting a baseline of information about each people. Kroeber attempts to trace the origins and diffusion of cultural traits and behaviors, a concern central to his scholarship and a lifelong passion. As Eric Wolf points out, Kroeber was always absorbed with "the probabilistic reconstruction of connections between cultural forms both temporally and spatially" (1981:44). Over the course of this career, he evaluated phenomena such as arts (California basketry, Peruvian pottery, e.g.), ceremonies, rituals, complex traits, considering them as more or less "developed" as he tried to figure out directions and processes of change and elaboration. He will do the same for every type of "civilization" throughout his career, above all in *Configurations of Culture Growth*.

Where ethnographers had an opportunity to ask, and even observe, there is considerable information in the *Handbook* about religious beliefs, ceremonies, and activities. There is much less about kinship, social, and political life. These are difficult to obtain from interviews and generally impossible to observe in short visits. The descriptions in the *Handbook* are strongest for material culture which could be described, illustrated, and studied at leisure in museum collections. He wrote a good deal about the production and artistry of basketry because many California Indian groups created works of remarkable

quality. "Pomo baskets have the fame...of being the finest made in California; according to many, in the world" (1925:244). Kroeber was moved by the fact that the most beautifully made Pomo baskets, those with colorful feathers worked into them, "served as gifts and treasures; and above all they were destroyed in honor of the dead. It is impressive and representative not only of the gently melancholy sentiments of the Pomo but of the feelings of the California Indians as a whole, that these specimens of the highest artistic achievement that their civilization has been able to produce were dedicated to purposes of mourning their kindred" (245-246).

Kroeber addresses the subject of ethnocentrism as it applies to visual art and music. "It is only the individual endowed with exceptional sympathy or sensibility that can understand any primitive art without a long acquaintance..." (95). He describes the negative first impressions of "a native song" to the ears of a Euro-American. These songs, perhaps expressing the emotions of "a hopeful lover, the religious devotee, the community celebrating a victory" will not be appreciated until it is "heard and heard and heard by those both willing and able to listen to it before it can be understood" (ibid.:95).

The author explains why he has deliberately slighted the subject of physical type. "It is a truism that physical type and culture have only the slightest, if any, relation in human history; and one of the earliest maxims impressed on the student of anthropology, although still one of the most frequently violated, is the fallacy of inferring one from the other" (vii). Here he repeats the major lesson of his teacher, the necessity to separate the elements of "race, language, and culture" for understanding history and human life. Kroeber will fight against biological explanations for cultural phenomena throughout his life.

He also explains why "After some hesitation I have omitted all directly historical treatment in the ordinary sense; that is, accounts of the relations of the natives with the whites and of the events befalling them after such contact was established. It is not that this subject is unimportant or uninteresting, but that I am not in a position to treat it adequately." He claims that it would require "a thorough knowledge of local history," of the institutions and archives of the Spanish missions and the US federal and state governments, early California history, etc. "In all these things many others are more proficient than I can hope to become; and it has seemed that I might better contribute to the future writing of such a history by concentrating effort in the field to which training and predilection have led me, and endeavoring to render the California Indians, as such, a more familiar object to the future historian of his political and economic relations with ourselves." When he discusses population numbers, however, both historically and contemporaneously, he cannot avoid mentioning the depredations and the killing, the land-grabbing, and displacements of the Indians. His prose is sometimes elliptical but he will employ such terms as "slaughter," "massacre," and "warfare of extermination," as in the case of the Yahi, Ishi's people (341-346).

It is possible to find expressions, turns of phrase, usages, that we would take exception to today. Perhaps a man born 150 years ago, writing 105 years ago, may be excused for expressing himself in terms we would not use now, considering the gift of the knowledge

that he has given to the peoples. Ira Jacknis wrote, “Kroeber effectively founded the study of California Indians” with the *Handbook* (2013: 442). The “California” volume of the 1978 Smithsonian *Handbook of North American Indians* lists 77 ethnographic and linguistic publications by Kroeber (Heizer 1978).



Fig. 1. Ishi with fire drill, 1914. Photo by Saxton T. Pope.

During his course at Brandeis University in 1954, discussing various techniques for making fire, Professor Kroeber told us this story. One day Ishi was giving a demonstration using a fire drill. He had succeeded in getting the tinder to smoke but audiences always wanted to see flames. “In those days I smoked,” Kroeber continued, “so I reached into my jacket pocket and broke off the head of a match.” Repeating the gestures for us, he leaned over and asked, “How is it going, Ishi?” Then, as if shooting a marble with his thumb, he flipped the match head into the tinder. The crowd soon had their flame.

(The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.)

The Fruits of Salvage Ethnography

Kroeber felt particularly close to the Yurok people, whom he first encountered in 1900 during his initial survey. He devotes four chapters and 97 pages to them in the *Handbook*, the most for any group, and he would revisit and stay involved with the Yurok throughout his career. There have been criticisms of his perspectives about that people, some by Yuroks themselves. Richard Keeling (1982) is critical of Kroeber’s posthumously published *Yurok Myths* (1976); nevertheless, he confirms that he drew heavily on Kroeber’s “salvage” of songs and myths for his book *Cry for Luck* (Keeling 1993). Thomas Buckley, who wrote powerfully about his own issues with Kroeber’s attitudes toward the Yurok, notes the significance of his work for the reinvigoration of ceremonial life of the Karuks, Yuroks, Hupas, and Tolowas. He gives special credit to the book *World Renewal* (1949) by Kroeber and his colleague E. W. Gifford. [10]

Kroeber and his colleagues produced an enormous body of sound recordings of languages, songs, narratives, ceremonials, and medical texts. The museum at Berkeley contains more than 2500 recordings of songs and spoken texts from many of the Indian peoples of California and the West, more than a thousand of them collected by Kroeber himself. “The Ethnological Survey of California resulted largely from the efforts of one man, Alfred L. Kroeber...” (Keeling 1991:xi). And these are available for the benefit of the native peoples of California today. [11]

“Richard Myers, a Yurok and Karok Indian, originally gave me the idea for a tape repatriation project,” Keeling explains, and as a result “roughly 1,700 hours of ethnographic field recordings were returned on cassettes to the Indian communities from which they were originally collected” (ibid.ix). Narratives, songs, and all sorts of texts in their languages have been given to these groups or are otherwise available for linguistic and cultural revitalization. Ethnographers’ field notes, photographs of places, activities, and individuals (ancestors and kinfolk) are accessible to the members of Indian communities today. Material objects and art works can be studied for their designs and their methods of production by artists and artisans as inspiration for their own creations. Today there is a growing interest in native foodways and cultivation as well. All this has been salvaged.

During the Great Depression, in 1935, Kroeber obtained funds from the State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA) to hire California Indians to interview elders for an oral history project. William J. Bauer writes that Kroeber specifically intended “to spread work relief money throughout California Indian communities” (2016:4). (The well-known WPA “slave narrative” projects usually hired graduate students—including Zora Neale Hurston.) [12]The Indians themselves “determine[d] the interview’s structure and content,” and matters of “historical authenticity” (ibid.). Their work produced 160 notebooks as a result of interviews with about 100 individuals (Bauer 2016:125). These are accounts of life in the late 1800s and early 1900s covering everyday life as well as of cases of abuse at the hands of settlers, ethnic cleansing, and genocide. Could this perhaps modify the charge that Kroeber ignored the terrible history of California’s Indians?

In the 1950s Kroeber played the leading role in the deliberations of the US Indian Claims Commission, providing vital testimony based on his researches that established Indian rights to compensation. He was the principal witness hired by the law firm representing California Indians “in a no-holds-barred legal battle” against the Justice Department of the United States.

The government attempted to prove that the Indians didn’t need and hadn’t used or laid claim to large areas of land. “In accordance with the Indian Claims Commission Act...aboriginal Indian title could be established by evidence that an identifiable group used and occupied a definable area, at the exclusion of others, since time immemorial” (Stewart 1961: 185).

Omer C. Stewart reports that Kroeber, then over 75, “entered energetically and

wholeheartedly into restudying the ethnohistory of California in order to present accurately and completely the information pertinent to the case” (Stewart 1961:185). He and Robert Heizer, with the help of graduate students “combed the massive literature,” and with his *Handbook* as the primary basis, they added 186 more exhibits of botanical, historical, ethnographic, and archaeological significance. And then he “spoke or submitted to cross-examination for three hours a day for ten days. It was a masterful performance by a gifted scientist and talented, energetic scholar.” Kroeber was “the most significant presence; he seemed at all times the ‘ideal witness’” (ibid.:185-186).

The Indian Claims Commission accepted Kroeber’s position on aboriginal land use in California and rejected the government’s stance. Kroeber succeeded in getting the commission to adopt a more liberal, expansive view of Indian land use, to the Indians’ advantage. That view included the idea that the Indian enjoyed and appreciated his land just as the government lawyers did, and this, too, had value. (Sutton 1985:112-113.) According to his widow, Theodora Kroeber, “He won the battle: his evidence was indubitable; his testimony was vivid, precise, and interesting...He spoke...with a contained passion; he was testifying for a people and land which he knew intimately and loved deeply” (222). “Alfred Kroeber, the eminent Berkeley anthropologist, often simply overwhelmed everyone in the court” (Sutton 1985:134).

There was recently a program on KQED San Francisco devoted to “How preserving indigenous languages revitalizes California culture, identity, and history” (Oct. 21, 2021). It featured several individuals who couldn’t learn much, if anything, from their parents or other members of their family because they hadn’t spoken the language for decades. Fortunately, there is a remarkable online resource available: *Survey of California and other Indian Languages: California Language Archive*. This remarkable trove of texts, recordings, grammars, and other material necessary for learning these languages and traditions is built on the foundation of Kroeber’s passion for “salvaging” these materials. [13]

In Kroeber’s time California Indians had much to contend with, and for many reasons were not much concerned with old-time matters. [14]The thirst for American Indian cultural and language revitalization, along with other American identity movements, would begin in the late 1960s, a decade after his death. At the end of his life, Kroeber mused about his drive to publish the third volume of Mohave myths, ones he had begun collecting in 1901. It was a “descriptive job”—different from the interpretative and theoretical works he had been working on for years. At the time he assumed it would only be consulted by academic folklorists and a few “Mohaveists.” His answer was clearly elitist, directed toward an audience of academics like himself: “I have long pondered to whom we owe the saving of human religious and aesthetic achievements such as are recorded here. It is probably not to the group that produced them. Why should we preserve Mohave values when they themselves cannot preserve them, and their descendants will likely be indifferent? It is the future of our own world culture that can be enriched by the preservation of these values, and our ultimate understandings grow wider as well as deeply thereby” (in T. Kroeber 1970:

271-272).

Alfred Kroeber left a remarkable record of publication and a great volume of letters and other papers for researchers to work with. In that vast corpus, modern writers, Indians among them, have found statements and attitudes by him that are insensitive and troubling by today's more sensitive, understanding, and enlightened standards. Kroeber died before the great Indian revivals and the increase in the number of people eager to relearn what their parents forgot or even rejected. But when the recent renewals and revitalization attempts arose, the material that Alfred Kroeber, and those he taught and encouraged, was there for the newly inspired descendants to work with and build on if they choose.

Afterword

Theodore D. McCown wrote the following about the dedication of Kroeber Hall:

“The gratification of his friends and colleagues was intense that he should see accomplished the material and physical transformation of anthropology at Berkeley. They knew, however, that pleased as he obviously was on this occasion, he valued more the esteem and affection of his colleagues, of his intellectual children and grandchildren. As much as any man, and more than nearly all others, he gave coherence, unity and a rationale to Anthropology during the first six decades of the century. So much of what he wrote and thought that was original with him has passed or is passing into the common body of anthropological knowledge and its identification with him is being forgotten. This is, from one point of view, his greatest and most enduring contribution to Anthropology as a scientific and intellectual discipline, and to mankind” (1961).

When the Department of Anthropology and the chancellor of UC-Berkeley recommended—and congratulated themselves on—the removal of Alfred Louis Kroeber's name from that building, they dishonored a great man who did far more to produce, encourage, and preserve knowledge about the Indian people of California than anyone else in history. More than that, they dishonored the history of their department and American anthropology as well. They refused to educate themselves, shirked their obligation to educate others, and sanctioned a distortion of the history of anthropology.

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[1] For general biographies and testimonies see Theodora Kroeber (1970), Beals (1968), Heizer et al. (1962), Steward (1962), Steward et al. (1961), and Jacknis (2013).

[2] Alexander F. Chamberlain received the first PhD in anthropology in the United States at Clark University in 1892, also under the direction of Franz Boas.

[3] The first four institutions and the University of California all awarded him honorary degrees. I was fortunate to take two courses with Kroeber at Brandeis in 1954.

[4] Kroeber compared his approach to publication to that of his younger contemporary Leslie White. He said that White would write a paper, stick it in a drawer, and let it lie there for a year or so while he thought about it. His own style was to get an idea, write it up, and send it off. That could help explain some of the comparative size of their bibliographies.

[5] <https://www.berose.fr/rubrique1087.html?lang=en>

[6] Ralph Beals writes, "Students in ethnology might be advised to take plenty of paper and pencils or not to become involved with reservation factions. Yet at various points they did learn the necessity of identifying the native viewpoint; of recording native terms, particularly for conceptual materials; of maintaining a holistic viewpoint and an awareness of the interrelatedness of culture—before any of these ideas were 'discovered' by the methodologists of a later generation" (Beals 1968). (The insistence on the recording of native terms and place names was a primary lesson from Franz Boas who practiced this beginning with his first fieldwork in Baffinland [Zumwalt 2019]).

[7] Kroeber referred to Franz Boas as his guru. Bob Manners said the same of Julian Steward, Kroeber's prominent student.

[8] One of Kroeber's lifelong concerns (a defining interest) was with the ways in which cultures, and various aspects of culture, grow, through both internal invention and borrowing ("diffusion"). This was

manifest in his works like *Cultural and Natural Areas of Native North America* (1939), *Configurations of Culture Growth* (1944), and *A Roster of Civilizations and Culture* (1962). He needed comparable material from as many different groups as possible for this work.

[9] Kroeber credits the amateur efforts of the journalist Stephen Powers who attempted a survey of California's Indians and published a series of articles in 1872-1875 and then a volume (1877). He found his efforts seriously wanting, however.

[10] As one Yurok elder told Buckley, "Thank God for that good Doctor Kroeber and Doctor Waterman and Gifford and those other good white doctors from Berkeley who came up here to study us. If they hadn't taken an interest in us and come up here and written it all down we wouldn't know a thing today about who we really are" (1996:294). For more on Kroeber and the Yurok, see Thoresen 1976; Rosa 2019.

[11] Ira Jacknis lists 23 different California groups and ten other Western Indian peoples whose music and words Boas and his students had recorded between 1901 and 1911. He wrote profoundly about the recordings that Ishi made with T. T. Waterman and Kroeber. Ishi was pleased to perform songs and stories and to record what he could of the Yahi culture that would otherwise die with him (Jacknis 2003).

[12] In 1938 the linguistic anthropologist Morris Swadesh used the same approach for a WPA project recording the language of Oneida Indians in Wisconsin (see Lewis 2005.)

[13] This is supported by the Breath of Life Workshop based on the Breath of Life Archival Institute for Indigenous California Languages, also founded on the work of Kroeber and those he hired and inspired.

[14] Thomas (Tim) Buckley writes about the Yurok woman Lucy Thompson, a major exception (2002). Kroeber's friends and collaborators, Robert Spott and Juan Dolores, were two others.