

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian

Reflections of a Culture Broker: A View from the Smithsonian

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian opens a window into the fascinating world of cultural mediation, where understanding, preserving, and sharing diverse heritages become an art and a responsibility. The Smithsonian Institution, with its vast collections and global outreach, offers a unique perspective on the role of culture brokers—individuals who navigate the complexities of cultural exchange, interpretation, and representation. This article explores what it means to be a culture broker through the lens of the Smithsonian, revealing insights into cultural dialogue, the challenges of representation, and the power of museums as living spaces for intercultural understanding.

What is a Culture Broker?

At its core, a culture broker is someone who acts as a mediator between different cultural groups, facilitating communication and fostering mutual respect. They help bridge cultural gaps by interpreting and translating cultural expressions, values, and traditions in ways that are accessible and meaningful to diverse audiences. In the context of institutions like the Smithsonian, culture brokers often take on roles as curators, educators, community liaisons, and researchers.

The Role of Culture Brokers at the Smithsonian

The Smithsonian's mission to increase and diffuse knowledge aligns perfectly with the work of culture brokers. These professionals are not merely custodians of artifacts; they are storytellers who ensure that the narratives behind objects resonate authentically with both source communities and the public. Their work involves:

- Engaging with indigenous and local communities to co-create exhibitions.
- Navigating ethical considerations around ownership and representation.
- Interpreting complex cultural histories with sensitivity and accuracy.
- Facilitating dialogue between scholars, artists, and the public.

This dynamic role demands a deep understanding of cultural nuances and a commitment to inclusivity.

Reflections of a Culture Broker: Challenges and

Opportunities

Reflecting on the experience of culture brokers at the Smithsonian reveals several challenges they face, alongside the opportunities their work presents.

Balancing Authenticity and Accessibility

One persistent challenge is maintaining the authenticity of cultural expressions while making them accessible to a broad audience. Culture brokers must avoid oversimplification or exoticization. Instead, they strive to present cultures in their complexity, honoring the voices of the communities represented.

Ethical Stewardship and Representation

Another critical aspect is ethical stewardship. The Smithsonian has increasingly embraced collaborative practices, inviting source communities into the curatorial process. This participatory approach helps correct historical imbalances where cultures were displayed without consent or context, fostering more equitable cultural exchange.

Opportunities for Cross-Cultural Dialogue

Despite the challenges, culture brokers at the Smithsonian have a unique platform to foster cross-cultural understanding. Through exhibitions, educational programs, and digital outreach, they create spaces where visitors can engage with unfamiliar cultures in respectful and enriching ways.

The Smithsonian as a Cultural Broker: Institutional Perspective

Beyond individual culture brokers, the Smithsonian itself functions as a cultural broker on a grand scale. Its diverse museums and research centers collect and interpret cultural materials from around the world, serving as a conduit for global cultural exchange.

Collaborative Exhibitions and Community Partnerships

One notable strategy is collaborative exhibitions that involve direct input from cultural communities. These partnerships ensure that displays are not only accurate but also resonate with the lived experiences of the people represented.

Digital Innovations in Cultural Mediation

The Smithsonian has embraced digital technology to expand its role as a culture broker. Virtual exhibitions, online archives, and interactive platforms allow a wider audience to explore cultural heritage while enabling communities to share their stories on their own terms.

Insights from Smithsonian Culture Brokers

Individuals working as culture brokers within the Smithsonian often share reflections that underscore the importance of empathy, patience, and continuous learning.

- **Listening is Key:** Truly understanding a culture requires active listening and humility.
- **Flexibility Matters:** Cultural narratives are not static; culture brokers must adapt to evolving contexts and perspectives.
- **Building Trust:** Long-term relationships with communities are essential for meaningful collaboration.

These insights highlight that culture brokering is not just a job but a practice rooted in respect and dialogue.

Why Reflections of a Culture Broker Matter Today

In an increasingly globalized world, the role of culture brokers has never been more vital. The Smithsonian's example illustrates how cultural institutions can act as bridges rather than barriers. Understanding the reflections of a culture broker from this vantage point encourages us to reconsider how we engage with culture beyond our own experiences.

Whether in museums, communities, or daily interactions, the principles of cultural brokerage—empathy, accuracy, collaboration—offer pathways to richer, more inclusive conversations. The Smithsonian's commitment to these values provides a model for others seeking to navigate the complexities of cultural diversity with care and creativity.

Through the thoughtful work of culture brokers, cultural heritage becomes a shared resource that educates, inspires, and connects us all.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'Reflections of a Culture Broker: A View from the Smithsonian' about?

It is a work that explores the role of a culture broker who mediates between different cultures, particularly within the context of the Smithsonian Institution, highlighting experiences and challenges in cultural representation and interpretation.

Who is the primary author or contributor to 'Reflections of a Culture Broker'?

The primary contributor is often a culture broker affiliated with the Smithsonian, sharing firsthand insights; specific authorship may vary depending on the edition or publication.

Why is the role of a culture broker important in institutions like the Smithsonian?

Culture brokers help bridge gaps between diverse cultural communities and museum institutions, ensuring accurate, respectful, and meaningful representation of cultures in exhibits and programs.

How does 'Reflections of a Culture Broker' address issues of cultural identity?

The work discusses how cultural identity is navigated and negotiated by culture brokers as they work to authentically represent communities while balancing institutional perspectives.

What challenges are highlighted in 'Reflections of a Culture Broker' regarding cultural mediation?

Challenges include managing differing expectations between communities and institutions, addressing cultural sensitivities, and dealing with power dynamics inherent in cultural representation.

In what ways does the Smithsonian benefit from the insights shared in 'Reflections of a Culture Broker'?

The Smithsonian gains a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in cultural representation, which informs more inclusive and respectful exhibit design and community engagement.

Can 'Reflections of a Culture Broker' be used as a resource for other museums?

Yes, it provides valuable perspectives and practical guidance for other museums and cultural institutions aiming to improve their cross-cultural communication and representation efforts.

Additional Resources

Reflections of a Culture Broker: A View from the Smithsonian

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian offer a unique lens through which to examine the evolving role of cultural intermediaries in preserving, interpreting, and presenting heritage in a globalized world. The Smithsonian Institution, as the world's largest museum and research complex, provides an unparalleled vantage point to consider how culture brokers navigate the complex intersections of identity, history, and representation. This exploration delves into the nuanced responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities that arise when mediating between diverse cultures and audiences, highlighting how the Smithsonian's approach illuminates broader trends in cultural brokerage.

Understanding the Role of a Culture Broker

At its core, a culture broker acts as a mediator who facilitates understanding and exchange between different cultural groups. This role transcends mere translation or curation; it involves a deep engagement with cultural contexts, sensitivities, and narratives. Within institutions like the Smithsonian, culture brokers play a pivotal role in shaping how marginalized or underrepresented histories are integrated into mainstream discourse.

The Smithsonian's expansive collections and exhibitions illustrate the complexity of cultural brokerage. From Native American artifacts to contemporary global arts, the institution serves as a dynamic platform where cultural meanings are negotiated and redefined. This function requires not only scholarly expertise but also empathy and ethical considerations, especially when dealing with communities whose histories have been historically misrepresented or appropriated.

Smithsonian's Approach to Cultural Brokerage

The Smithsonian has developed a multi-faceted approach to cultural brokerage that balances academic rigor with community collaboration. Key features of this approach include:

- **Community Engagement:** The institution actively involves source communities in

the curation and interpretation of their cultural heritage, fostering co-creation rather than top-down representation.

- **Interdisciplinary Research:** Scholars from anthropology, history, art, and other disciplines collaborate to provide holistic perspectives on cultural artifacts and narratives.
- **Educational Outreach:** Programs and exhibitions are designed to educate diverse audiences, promoting cultural literacy and empathy.
- **Ethical Stewardship:** The Smithsonian adheres to ethical guidelines regarding the acquisition, display, and repatriation of cultural objects, reflecting evolving standards in museum practices.

This framework underscores the institution's acknowledgment that culture brokerage is an ongoing, dialogic process rather than a fixed role.

Challenges Faced by Culture Brokers in the Smithsonian Context

Despite its progressive stance, the Smithsonian, like many cultural institutions, confronts significant challenges inherent in cultural brokerage. These challenges reveal the tensions between institutional mandates, public expectations, and the rights and voices of source communities.

Balancing Representation and Interpretation

One of the central dilemmas is how to represent cultures authentically without oversimplification or exoticization. Culture brokers must navigate the fine line between educating audiences and avoiding the perpetuation of stereotypes. The Smithsonian's exhibitions often grapple with this balance by incorporating multiple viewpoints and emphasizing the dynamism of living cultures rather than static historical artifacts.

Repatriation and Ownership Issues

The question of ownership and repatriation of cultural objects remains a contentious issue. The Smithsonian has been involved in high-profile repatriation cases, returning sacred objects and human remains to Indigenous communities. This process challenges traditional museum paradigms and requires culture brokers to engage in sensitive negotiations that respect cultural sovereignty.

Adapting to Digital and Global Audiences

In the digital age, culture brokers must also consider how technology influences cultural transmission. The Smithsonian's digital initiatives expand access but also raise questions about digital representation, cultural appropriation, and the preservation of intangible heritage. Balancing local authenticity with global accessibility is a persistent challenge.

Impact of Cultural Brokerage on Public Perception

The role of culture brokers within the Smithsonian significantly shapes public understanding of cultural diversity and history. By mediating complex narratives, they influence how society perceives cultural identities and historical experiences.

Promoting Inclusivity and Diversity

Through exhibitions like the National Museum of African American History and Culture and the National Museum of the American Indian, the Smithsonian has foregrounded stories that challenge dominant historical narratives. Culture brokers are instrumental in these efforts, ensuring that exhibitions resonate authentically with both the source communities and the broader public.

Encouraging Cross-Cultural Dialogue

The Smithsonian's programs foster dialogue among diverse cultural groups, encouraging visitors to reflect on cultural commonalities and differences. This dialogue is essential for building cultural empathy and combating xenophobia, illustrating the broader societal value of effective cultural brokerage.

Reflections on the Future of Culture Brokerage at the Smithsonian

Looking ahead, the reflections of a culture broker a view from the Smithsonian suggest a trajectory toward more participatory and transparent cultural mediation. The rise of decolonizing museum practices and digital innovation will likely redefine the culture broker's role, emphasizing collaboration, technology, and social justice.

Embracing Decolonization and Equity

There is growing momentum within the Smithsonian to address colonial legacies in collections and narratives. Culture brokers will need to champion equity by facilitating reparative dialogues and inclusive storytelling, which can transform institutional cultures and public perceptions alike.

Leveraging Technology for Cultural Preservation

Advancements in virtual reality, 3D scanning, and digital archiving offer new tools for culture brokers to preserve and share cultural heritage. These technologies can democratize access and engage younger, tech-savvy audiences while respecting cultural sensitivities.

Fostering Global Networks

As globalization intensifies cultural interconnections, the Smithsonian's culture brokers are positioned to build transnational networks that promote intercultural understanding and cooperation. This expansive vision aligns with the institution's mission to increase knowledge and appreciation of human history and creativity.

The reflections of a culture broker a view from the Smithsonian illuminate the indispensable role these mediators play in bridging cultural divides and enriching collective heritage. Their work encapsulates the challenges and promises of cultural brokerage in the 21st century, offering insights relevant to museums and cultural institutions worldwide.

Reflections Of A Culture Broker A View From The Smithsonian

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: Reflections of a Culture Broker Richard Kurin, 1997-11-17 Is culture brokered like stocks, real estate, or marriage? In this engaging book, Richard Kurin shows that cultures are also mediated and indeed brokered by countries, organizations, communities, and individuals -- all with their own vision of the truth and varying abilities to impose it on others. Drawing on his diverse experiences in producing exhibitions and public programs, Kurin challenges culture brokers -- defined broadly to include museum professionals, film-makers, journalists, festival producers, and scholars of many disciplines -- to reveal more clearly the nature of their interpretations, to envision the ways in which their messages can play to different audiences, and to better understand the relationship between knowledge, art, politics, and entertainment. The book documents a variety of cases in which the Smithsonian has brokered culture for the American public: a planned exhibit on Jerusalem had to balance both Israeli and Palestinian agendas; debates over the 1996 Olympic Arts Festival presented differing visions of the American South; and the National Air and Space Museum's controversial display of the Enola Gay prompted the Smithsonian to re-examine the role of national museums. Arguing that cultural

exhibits reflect a series of decisions about representing someone, someplace, and something, *Reflections of a Culture Broker* discusses the ethical and technical problems faced by not only those who practice in a museum setting but also anyone charged with representing culture in a public forum.

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reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: Commodities and Globalization Angelique Haugerud, Margaret Priscilla Stone, Peter D. Little, 2000 Today's growing fascination with flows of people, commodities, technology, capital, images and ideas across national and other boundaries poses fresh theoretical and methodological challenges to anthropology. Commodities offer a particularly useful window on globalization because they, unlike electronically conveyed capital, transport cultural messages. These ideological or symbolic transfers are of particular interest to economic anthropology. This collection considers how conceptions and roles of commodities may change in response to widening spheres of economic interaction and exchange. The essays in this volume are ordered under two themes. Those included in the first section, *Commodities in a Globalizing Marketplace*, address historically and culturally defined variations in meanings and practices associated with commodities in globalizing markets. In Part Two, *The Circulation and Revaluation of Commodities*, contributors analyze how commodity producers' experiences are informed by colonial and post-colonial history, state directives in the marketplace, and locations in dependent or marginalized regions. The chapters all focus on the production process as it responds to, is distorted by and increasingly is controlled by the determination of the value of those commodities outside a locality.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: A Companion to Folklore Regina F. Bendix, Galit Hasan-Rokem, 2014-08-25 *A Companion to Folklore* contains an original and comprehensive set of essays from international experts in the field of folklore studies. This state-of-the-art collection uniquely displays the vitality of folklore research across the globe. The Companion covers four main areas: the first section engages with the practices and theoretical approaches developed to understand the phenomena of folklore; the second discusses the distinctive shapes that folklore studies have taken in different locations in time and space; the third examines the interaction of folklore with various media, as well as folklore's commoditization. In the final section on practice, essays offer insights into how folklorists work, what they do, and ways in which they have institutionalized their field. Throughout, contributors investigate the interplay of folklore and folkloristics in both academic and political arenas; they evaluate key issues in the folk life of communities from around the world, including China, post-communist Russia, post-colonial India, South America, Israel and Japan. The result is a unique reflection and understanding of the

profoundly different research histories and current perspectives on international research in the field.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: Legacies Steven Lubar, Kathleen M. Kendrick, 2014-06-03 The Smithsonian Institution has been America's museum since 1846. What do its vast collections -- from the ruby slippers to a piece of Plymouth Rock, first ladies' gowns to patchwork quilts, a Model T Ford to a customized Ford LTD low rider -- tell Americans about themselves? In this lavishly illustrated guide to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, Steven Lubar and Kathleen M. Kendrick tell the stories behind more than 250 of the museum's treasures, many of them never before photographed for publication. These stories not only reveal what America as a nation has decided to save and why but also speak to changing visions of national identity. As the authors demonstrate, views of history change over time, methods of historical investigation evolve and improve, and America's understanding of the past matures. Shifts in focus and attitude lie at the hearth of *Legacies*, which is organized around four concepts of what a national museum of history can be: a treasure house, a shrine to the famous, a palace of progress, and a mirror of the nation. Thus, the museum collects cherished or precious objects, houses celebrity memorabilia, documents technological advances, and reflects visitors' own lives. Taking examples from science and technology, politics, decorative arts, military history, ethnic heritage, popular culture and everyday life, the authors provide historical context for the work of the Smithsonian and shed new light on what is important, and who is included, in American history. Throughout its history, Lubar and Kendrick conclude, the museum has played a vital role in both shaping and reflecting America's sense of itself as a nation.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: Shaping Traditions Goizueta Folklife Gallery (Atlanta History Museum), John A. Burrison, 2000 A complete catalog of the Atlanta History Center's permanent folk art exhibition, this richly illustrated volume defines and documents the folk arts of the lower southeastern United States. The objects, crafting processes, and performances represented here illustrate the unique qualities of the community-learned traditional arts of the South. John A. Burrison examines a multitude of traditional art forms, many of which still thrive today. Intricately constructed miniatures of covered wagons, sorghum-syrup mills, and pottery workshops speak of a life of subsistence farming. Decorated baskets represent the cultural exchanges of Native Americans, European Americans, and African Americans. Intricate wrought-iron gates, musical instruments, quilts, and such curiosities as face jugs combine beauty and utility--the dual nature of most folk art--with southern flair. An illuminating introduction by Burrison, the curator of the exhibit and an expert folk art collector, presents highlights of his thirty years of research and collecting experience, offering a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the exhibition. A concluding section looks at the adaptations and innovations shaping the future of southern folk arts.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: Encyclopedia of American Folklife Simon J Bronner, 2015-03-04 American folklife is steeped in world cultures, or invented as new culture, always evolving, yet often practiced as it was created many years or even centuries ago. This fascinating encyclopedia explores the rich and varied cultural traditions of folklife in America - from barn raisings to the Internet, tattoos, and Zydeco - through expressions that include ritual, custom, crafts, architecture, food, clothing, and art. Featuring more than 350 A-Z entries, *Encyclopedia of American Folklife* is wide-ranging and inclusive. Entries cover major cities and urban centers; new and established immigrant groups as well as native Americans; American territories, such as Guam and Samoa; major issues, such as education and intellectual property; and expressions of material culture, such as homes, dress, food, and crafts. This encyclopedia covers notable folklife areas as well as general regional categories. It addresses religious groups (reflecting diversity within groups such as the Amish and the Jews), age groups (both old age and youth gangs), and contemporary folk groups (skateboarders and psychobillies) - placing all of them in the vivid tapestry of folklife in America. In addition, this resource offers useful insights on folklife concepts through entries such as community and group and tradition and culture. The set also features complete indexes in each volume, as well as a bibliography for further research.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: *Folklore: The Basics* Simon J. Bronner, 2016-10-04 *Folklore: The Basics* is an engaging guide to the practice and interpretation of folklore. Taking examples from around the world, it explores the role of folklore in expressing fundamental human needs, desires, and anxieties that often are not revealed through other means. Providing a clear framework for approaching the study of folklore, it introduces the reader to methodologies for identifying, documenting, interpreting and applying key information about folklore and its relevance to modern life. From the Brothers Grimm to Internet Memes, it addresses such topics as: What is folklore? How do we study it? Why does folklore matter? How does folklore relate to elite culture? Is folklore changing in a digital age? With case studies, suggestions for reading and a glossary of key terminology, *Folklore: The Basics* supports readers in becoming familiar with folkloric traditions and interpret cultural expression. It is an essential read for anyone approaching the study of folklore for the first time.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: *Music and Cultural Rights* Andrew N. Weintraub, Bell Yung, 2024-04-22 Framing timely and pressing questions concerning music and cultural rights, this collection illustrates the ways in which music--as a cultural practice, a commercial product, and an aesthetic form--has become enmeshed in debates about human rights, international law, and struggles for social justice. The essays in this volume examine how interpretations of cultural rights vary across societies; how definitions of rights have evolved; and how rights have been invoked in relation to social struggles over cultural access, use, representation, and ownership. The individual case studies, many of them based on ethnographic field research, demonstrate how musical aspects of cultural rights play out in specific cultural contexts, including the Philippines, China, Hawaii, Peru, Ukraine, and Brazil. Contributors are Nimrod Baranovitch, Adriana Helbig, Javier F. Leon, Ana María Ochoa, Silvia Ramos, Helen Rees, Felicia Sandler, Amy Ku'uileialoha Stillman, Ricardo D. Trimillos, Andrew N. Weintraub, and Bell Yung.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: *The ^AOxford Handbook of American Folklore and Folklife Studies* Simon J. Bronner, 2019-08-06 *The Oxford Handbook of American Folklore and Folklife Studies* surveys the materials, approaches, concepts, and applications of the field to provide a sweeping guide to American folklore and folklife, culture, history, and society. Forty-three comprehensive and diverse chapters explore the extraordinary richness of the American social and cultural fabric, offering a valuable resource not only for scholars and students of American studies, but also for the global study of tradition, folk arts, and cultural practice.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: *Museum Frictions* Ivan Karp, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja, Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, 2006-12-07 *Museum Frictions* is the third volume in a bestselling series on culture, society, and museums. The first two volumes in the series, *Exhibiting Cultures* and *Museums and Communities*, have become defining books for those interested in the politics of museum display and heritage sites. Another classic in the making, *Museum Frictions* is a lavishly illustrated examination of the significant and varied effects of the increasingly globalized world on contemporary museum, heritage, and exhibition practice. The contributors—scholars, artists, and curators—present case studies drawn from Africa, Australia, North and South America, Europe, and Asia. Together they offer a multifaceted analysis of the complex roles that national and community museums, museums of art and history, monuments, heritage sites, and theme parks play in creating public cultures. Whether contrasting the transformation of Africa's oldest museum, the South Africa Museum, with one of its newest, the Lwandle Migrant Labor Museum; offering an interpretation of the audio guide at the Guggenheim Bilbao; reflecting on the relative paucity of art museums in Peru and Cambodia; considering representations of slavery in the United States and Ghana; or meditating on the ramifications of an exhibition of Australian aboriginal art at the Asia Society in New York City, the contributors highlight the frictions, contradictions, and collaborations emerging in museums and heritage sites around the world. The volume opens with an extensive introductory essay by Ivan Karp and Corinne

A. Kratz, leading scholars in museum and heritage studies. Contributors. Tony Bennett, David Bunn, Gustavo Buntinx, Cuauhtémoc Camarena, Andrea Fraser, Martin Hall, Ivan Karp, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Corinne A. Kratz, Christine Mullen Kreamer, Joseph Masco, Teresa Morales, Howard Morphy, Ingrid Muan, Fred Myers, Ciraj Rassool, Vicente Razo, Fath Davis Ruffins, Lynn Szwaja, Krista A. Thompson, Leslie Witz, Tomás Ybarra-Frausto

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: *Mei Lanfang's American Journey* Zhaohui Hong, Cunfa Dong, 2025-08-31 This groundbreaking study examines Peking Opera legend Mei Lanfang's 1930 U.S. visit through extensive primary sources and a cross-cultural lens. It meticulously chronicles his 76 performances over 182 days, reconstructing his daily itinerary, highlighting key events, and estimating box office revenues. Drawing on over 1,000 local newspaper reports from 34 states and territories, as well as diaries, memoirs, archival records, and advertisements, this book offers fresh insights into U.S.-China cultural exchange nearly a century ago—a topic with enduring contemporary relevance. Employing a mixed-methods approach, it integrates grounded theory, abductive reasoning, and the theory of para-text to deliver a rigorous and innovative analysis. As both a theoretical contribution and an analytical framework, the book reimagines transpacific cultural exchange, systematically exploring Peking Opera diplomacy, which involves non-governmental individuals and collectives engaged in cultural, artistic, commercial, and educational interactions. Furthermore, it delves into inculturation, examining how Mei Lanfang's visit contributed to the localization of Chinese culture in America, fostering cultural accommodation, adaptation, and integration. Finally, it introduces the theory of marginalization studies, shedding light on the peripheral figures and events that played a crucial role in Mei's visit. By combining rigorous analysis with innovative theoretical perspectives, this book reinterprets and reimages the significance of Mei Lanfang's visit, offering an essential resource for scholars and anyone interested in modern Chinese history, transpacific studies, cultural diplomacy, and U.S.-China relations.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: *Faces of Tradition in Chinese Performing Arts* Levi S. Gibbs, 2020-02-11 *Faces of Tradition in Chinese Performing Arts* examines the key role of the individual in the development of traditional Chinese performing arts such as music and dance. These artists and their artistic works—the faces of tradition—come to represent and reconfigure broader fields of cultural production in China today. The contributors to this volume explore the ways in which performances and recordings, including singing competitions, textual anthologies, ethnographic videos, and CD albums, serve as discursive spaces where individuals engage with and redefine larger traditions and themselves. By focusing on the performance, scholarship, collection, and teaching of instrumental music, folksong, and classical dance from a variety of disciplines—these case studies highlight the importance of the individual in determining how traditions have been and are represented, maintained, and cultivated.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: *Shadows in the Field* Gregory F. Barz, Timothy J. Cooley, 2008-09-09 *Shadows in the Field* was the first book by ethnomusicologists to consider fieldwork as an issue-laden practice, rather than as a methodology requiring a prescriptive manual. The authors in this revised second edition challenge the very notion of fieldwork, its goals, the nature of knowledge gained in fieldwork, and the place of fieldwork in historical studies. *Shadows in the Field* proposes new perspectives on fieldwork for all ethnographic-driven disciplines, such as ethnomusicology, anthropology, sociology, folklore, area studies and linguistics.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: *Young Children as Intercultural Mediators* Zhiyan Guo, 2014-06-27 This multidisciplinary approach to cultural mediation brings together insights from anthropology, sociology, linguistics and intercultural communication to offer a detailed depiction of family life in immigrant Chinese communities. Utilising a strongly contextualised and evidence-based narrative approach to exploring the nature of child cultural mediation, the author provides an insightful analysis of intercultural relationships between children and parents in immigrant families and of the informative aspects of their everyday lives. Furthermore, the family home setting offers the reader a glimpse of a personal territory that

researchers often have great difficulty accessing. This ethnographic study will be of interest to students, researchers and professionals working in the areas of intercultural communication, childhood studies, family relations and migration studies.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics, 52 Francesco Pellizzi, 2008-02-15 Res is a journal of anthropology and comparative aesthetics dedicated to the study of the object, in particular cult and belief objects and objects of art. The journal presents contributions by philosophers, art historians, archaeologists, critics, linguists, architects, artists, among others.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: Alternative Paths to Influence Giulio M. Gallarotti, 2023-06-06 This book offers new and cutting-edge analyses of under-explored subjects and issues in the realm of soft power. It attempts to fill significant scholarly gaps in understanding the process by which soft power is created, as well as gaps in demonstrating its impact. Soft power is one of the most influential ideas in the study of international politics over the past thirty years. Can nations attain their most vital foreign policy objectives in agreeable ways? Advocates of the concept of soft power have vociferously answered in the affirmative. After many years of thinking in the field of international affairs that the only effective path to influence in international politics was military and economic power, the idea of soft power offers new and exciting possibilities of gaining such influence through a more benign path, one that elevates cooperation and esteem as preferred alternatives to violence, threat and military capacity. This book posits that the realization of the full potential of soft power as a foundation for international relations is a crucial goal for our present world, one beset by war and planetary crises. The book will be of special interest to researchers across political science, international relations, cultural studies and foreign policy. It was originally published as a special issue of the Journal of Political Power.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: Writing the Hamat'sa Aaron Glass, 2021-07-15 Long known as the Cannibal Dance, the Hamat'sa is among the most important hereditary prerogatives of the Kwakwaka'wakw of British Columbia. In the late nineteenth century, as anthropologists arrived to document the practice, colonial agents were pursuing its eradication and Kwakwaka'wakw were adapting it to endure. In the process, the dance - with dramatic choreography, magnificent bird masks, and an aura of cannibalism - entered a vast library of ethnographic texts. Writing the Hamat'sa offers a critical survey of attempts to record, describe, and interpret the dance over four centuries. Going beyond postcolonial critiques of representation that often ignore Indigenous agency in the ethnographic encounter, Writing the Hamat'sa focuses on forms of textual mediation and Indigenous response that helped transform the ceremony from a set of specific performances into a generalized cultural icon. This meticulous work illuminates how Indigenous people contribute to, contest, and repurpose texts in the process of fashioning modern identities under settler colonialism.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: Negotiating Race and Rights in the Museum Katy Bunning, 2020-11-29 Negotiating Race and Rights in the Museum traces the evolution of pervasive racial ideas, and 'post-race' allusions, over more than a century of museum thinking and practice. Drawing on the illuminating history of the Smithsonian Institution, this book offers an account of how museums have addressed and renegotiated wider calls for inclusion, 'self-definition', and racial justice, in ways that continually re-centre and legitimise the White frame. Charting the emergence of 'post-race' ideas in museums, Bunning demonstrates how and why 'culturally specific' approaches have been met with suspicion and derision by powerful museum stakeholders against the backdrop of a changing United States of America, just as they have offered crucial vehicles for sectoral change. This study of the evolution of racial ideas in response to Black empowerment highlights deeply entrenched forms of White supremacy that remain operative within the international museum sector today, and serves to reinforce the urgent calls for the active disruption of racist ideas and the redesign of institutions. Negotiating Race and Rights in the Museum will appeal to those working in the international fields of museum and heritage studies, cultural studies, and American studies, and all who are interested in the production

of racial ideas and White supremacy in the museum.

reflections of a culture broker a view from the smithsonian: Folk Nation Simon J. Bronner, 2002-08-01 This lively reader traces the search for American tradition and national identity through folklore and folklife from the 19th century to the present. Through an engaging set of essays, Folk Nation shows how American thinkers and leaders have used folklore to express the meaning of their country. Simon Bronner has carefully selected statements by public intellectuals and popular writers as well as by scholars, all chosen for their readability and significance as provocative texts during their time. The common thread running throughout is the value of folklore in expressing or denying an American national tradition. This text raises timely issues about the character of American culture and the direction of American society. The essays show the development of views of American nationalism, multiculturalism, and commercialism. Provocative topics include debates over the relationship between popular culture and folk culture, the uniqueness of an American literature and arts based on folk sources, the fabrication of folk heroes such as Pecos Bill and Paul Bunyan as propaganda for patriotism and nationalism, the romanticizations of vernacular culture by popularizers such as Walt Disney and Ben Botkin, the use of folklore for ethnocentric purposes, and the political deployment of folklore by conservatives as emblems of 'traditional values' and civil virtues and by liberals as emblems of multiculturalism and tolerance of alternative lifestyles. The book also traces the controversy over who conveyed the myth of 'America.' Was it the nation's poets and artists, its academics, its politicians and leaders, its communities and local educational institutions, its theme parks and festivals, its movie moguls and entertainers? Folk Nation shows how the process of defining the American mystique through folklore was at the core of debates among writers and thinkers about the value of Davey Crockett, John Henry, quilts, cowboys, and immigrants as symbols of America.

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