Lee Panich

“Native Agency at the Margins of Empire: Understanding Landscapes & Community at the California Missions”

California’s Spanish missions are often seen as “carceral,” or prison-like, institutions in which colonial authorities pushed Native Californian societies to the brink of extinction. Without downplaying the tragic and often lethal challenges posed by Spanish missionization, recent research seeks to establish a more nuanced view of native agency and persistence in colonial California. Through the examination of the archaeological and ethnohistorical record for Mission Santa Clara de Asís, this talk explores two interrelated avenues of investigation: the formation of pluralistic indigenous communities at mission sites, as well as connections between missions and broader indigenous landscapes. I will examine obsidian provenance data, shell bead assemblages, and mission sacramental registers to explore how native people of diverse backgrounds integrated into the mission population at Santa Clara while simultaneously maintaining connections to people and places in their ancestral homelands. Due to their enduring importance in scholarly and popular understandings of Native Californian histories, the role of Spanish mission sites in the modern landscape will also be considered.

Lee Panich is an assistant professor of anthropology at Santa Clara University and holds a PhD from the University of California, Berkeley. His research employs a combination of archaeological, ethnographic, and archival data to examine the long-term histories of the indigenous societies of Alta and Baja California, particularly their entanglement with the Spanish mission system. His current research includes archaeological investigations of native life at the Franciscan mission of Santa Clara de Asís on the campus of Santa Clara University. From 2005-2009, he led a collaborative research project at the site of Mission Santa Catalina in Baja California, Mexico. Lee is also the co-director of an ongoing, binational study of indigenous obsidian procurement and conveyance in Baja California. His recent publications include the edited volume *Indigenous Landscapes and Spanish Missions: New Perspectives from Archaeology and Ethnohistory* (co-edited with Tsim Schneider), as well as articles in *American Antiquity* and the *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*.

If you have any questions regarding our events, please contact Julie Hitchcock:
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Wednesday, October 22, 2014
12:00pm - Seminar Room

Location: Building 500
            488 Escondido Mall
            Room 106