

Introduction

Nathan Harrison, an African American born into slavery in Kentucky decades before the Civil War, endured some of the most treacherous times in US history for anyone who was not white. Despite this, he grew into a permanent and prominent fixture thousands of miles from his birthplace on a remote mountain in Southern California. Confronted with unfettered violence and bigotry in nearly every stage of his life—be it enslavement in the Antebellum South as a child, the hazardous trek across country as a subjugated teenager, Gold Rush exploitation as a young man, or the chaos of the Wild West as a newly emancipated free person—Harrison survived, persevered, and adapted. Although he ultimately lived alone, high up on Palomar Mountain in rural San Diego County for nearly half a century during the late 1800s and early 1900s, Harrison was deeply enmeshed in multiple local communities, including nearby Indigenous groups, an extensive network of Mexican ranchers, and burgeoning Anglo populations in both rural and urban San Diego. Harrison did not sound, look, or act like any of his Southern California neighbors during his lengthy time in the region. Despite these pronounced differences and the lethal racial turmoil of the early US period in California, he gained widespread acceptance and was celebrated by his contemporaries for his extraordinary longevity, resourcefulness, regional knowledge, and charming demeanor.

Regardless of this past acclaim, most people alive today have never heard of Nathan Harrison. Those relatively few individuals who do recognize his name have likely encountered a wide array of tall tales, rife with far-fetched fabrication. While Harrison's actual life story was a microcosm of the diverse cultural heritages and volatile histories of the nineteenth-century United States, a wealth of enticing exaggerations with tantalizingly unverified secondhand details have elevated his already significant biography into something more. They exalt Harrison, transforming this unsung migratory laborer of humble origins into a legendary western trailblazer and an enduring American pioneer. As such, Nathan Harrison has become larger than life.

The list of entertaining yet often highly inaccurate anecdotes about Harrison is so lengthy and broad that it covers nearly everything from his time in bondage before the Civil War to his later years at a rustic cabin high up Palomar Mountain in the southwest corner of the United

States. Below is a sampling of some of the most conspicuous claims that were found in the historical research about him. Allegedly, Nathan Harrison:

- perilously escaped slavery, floating down the Mississippi River in the 1840s,
- fought with Frémont’s Battalion in the Bear Flag Revolt in the summer of 1846, helping the United States defeat Mexico and acquire California,
- joined the Mormon Battalion in 1846–47 as it made the longest infantry march in US history,
- sailed in treacherous waters around South America’s Cape Horn on the way to California in 1849,
- jumped ship at San Pedro (Los Angeles) in the 1850s as a fugitive slave,
- encountered notorious gold-country bandit Joaquin Murrieta in 1853,
- drove an ox team with the first wagon train over Tejon Pass in 1854, opening the primary route to Southern California,
- narrowly averted being scalped by tomahawk-wielding Native Americans in 1864 while traveling via covered wagon from Missouri to California,
- had multiple Southern California Indian wives in the 1880s,
- was the consummate Wild West mountain man—he rode a radiant white horse, could tame any wild stallion, had “owl eyes” (the ability to see in total darkness), and once killed a mountain lion measuring over 14 feet in length,
- hid a sizable stash of gold from his mining days near his cabin; it has never been found,
- lived to be 107 years old, finally succumbing to natural causes in 1920, and finally . . .
- to this day, Nathan Harrison’s ghost morosely wanders his Palomar Mountain home, distraught that his body was placed in an unmarked grave, over 100 miles away from his beloved hillside homestead.

Some of these embellished stories have slivers of actual bygone realities in them. Others are entirely false. Nonetheless, the collective lore can be used to reveal important hidden truths about Harrison and his times. Like elusively shifting flames in a campfire, these mythical accounts hint at some greater understanding of days gone by, but then flicker away into the darkness of the disappearing past.

The enduring stories of Nathan Harrison are reflections of generations of people who told these accounts and the many audiences who continue to bear witness to such narratives. As author Tony Horwitz noted, “History is arbitrary, a collection of facts. Myths we choose, we create, we perpetuate . . . The [mythical] story may not be correct, but it transcends truth” (2008: 37). Lasting stories, such as the ones told of Harrison, result from a series of intricate performances that contain insights far beyond the original subject matter, narrator, or audience member. The collective lore can act as a prism of wisdom when observed from informed perspectives by bending and transforming singular understandings of the past into broader and better-contextualized knowledge.

Aside from being born enslaved in the early nineteenth-century American South and dying in San Diego as the region’s first African American homesteader, there are few incontrovertible historical facts of Harrison’s existence. The lone verifiable details of his life pale in comparison to the often deliberately sensationalized stories featuring his exploits. Truth rarely impedes the telling of an entertaining tale. Generations of narratives of Harrison’s adventures, eccentricities, and personal charms—told and retold long after his death—have grown his biography from a relatively obscure historical footnote into a captivating figure of local mythology. As such, Harrison’s legend has been far from static. The widespread tales of his origin story, his path to emancipation, and even his place in history have changed with great regularity in the century since his passing.

Nathan Harrison’s mixed legacy, until now, has been both as an untold and a mis-told account of American history. If it were not for the many tall tales, he likely would have been forgotten long ago. This book offers a new narrative of Harrison. It is informed by a critical reading of past records and accounts, broadened by an appreciation of multiple cultural perspectives, and most importantly, fueled by an entirely new data source of over 50,000 recently uncovered archaeological artifacts. These unearthed fragments from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries include the ordinary and the extraordinary. In the same deposit of everyday smoking pipes, sheep shears, and leather boot fragments, excavators found numerous ornate goods, including a stylish pocket watch, gaudy “President” suspender clips, and nickel-plated sock garters. We were even able to identify and pull a 100-year-old thumbprint off of one of the fired rifle cartridges uncovered at the site! This text is a study in history, anthropology, and archaeology; yet over the course of the analysis presented here, the reader will be drawn into discussions from a wealth of additional fields, including mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology, geology, architecture, litera-

ture, philosophy, performing arts, and many others. Insights from the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and arts all contribute to greater understandings of Nathan Harrison's particular past and how people like him helped shape the present.

Nathan Harrison is both a subject and an agent of the past. He actively made history, and his story has also been repeatedly used by others to remake history. In fact, Harrison's alleged actions often heighten intrigue into the nostalgic narratives surrounding his life. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the exact words he purportedly spoke. According to dozens of accounts, Harrison would routinely greet visitors to his remote Southern California hillside property with the introductory quip, "I'm N—r Nate, the first white man on the mountain."¹ This is by far the most common direct quote in all of the extensive Harrison lore (Mallios and Lennox 2014). If it is possible to get past current-day shock and outrage over the inflammatory racial epithet, one can begin to contextualize and appreciate the ironic humor, ethnic insight, and dualistically crafted identities Harrison employed in this profound statement.

These dualisms were not subtle. At the turn of the nineteenth century, he was both white (non-American Indian) and non-white (African American). He was liberated (legally emancipated) and bound (overtly disempowered by racist Reconstructionist policies and rampant discrimination). He was private (living alone and apart on a remote mountain) and public (on display for frequent visits from tourists). Harrison managed to broach such polarizing societal issues in a nonthreatening fashion, with disarming humor and charm. Furthermore, he used a titillating phrase² visitors were certain to remember and repeat. His bold yet playful proclamation teemed with individual agency, multivalent symbolism, and strategic identity-politics of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Through his distinctive and memorable greeting, Nathan Harrison firmly established his right to be—and his right to be *right there* on the west side of Palomar Mountain in particular—yet successfully elicited a smile from nearly every guest to his homestead. This hard-to-forget and oft-repeated phrase is one of numerous story elements that reveal as much about the life and times of the Postbellum West (1865–1914) as the individual biography of Harrison itself.

Harrison's noteworthy introduction toyed with established notions of race and ethnicity. Every individual experiences, constructs, and exhibits a sense of self, which often develops in complexity over time. Shared identities result through connections with others and can draw on anything from a common religion, language, ancestry, activity, etc. Ethnicity, being a concept that unites identity and community, is a

prominent part of an individual's sense of being. It connects that person with others who share common history and culture. These connections are clearly distinguishable by a literal or figurative boundary dividing one group from another (Barth 1969: 13). Origin myths are a tool often used in the construction of ethnic identity as these stories both underscore a common history and express shared values. Though commonly tied to shared heritage and ancestry, ethnicity also includes important cultural differences from nonmembers (Voss 2008: 27). Despite these marked divisions, ethnicity is a fluid construct continually altered through situational interactions. The origin (ethnogenesis), development, and growth of ethnic groups are often tied to interaction with other groups in a setting that was intense, volatile, or oppressive (Penner 1997: 259).

Race is not the same as ethnicity. Race is a social grouping based on a loose, superficial, and scientifically unrigorous set of physical traits. Furthermore, race is often imposed onto groups of people by others, especially outsiders. It is a product of the human mind—a decision—not the human body. Racialization involves the process of deliberately assigning people into groups in order to fabricate the biological or social superiority of one set of people over another (Miles 1989: 75). Racialization was integral to Nathan Harrison's life and times as he suffered great hardship as the result of a race-based system of slavery that had ramifications well beyond the Emancipation Proclamation. These highly nuanced issues of group affiliation, evolving identity, and social hierarchy were of major consequence to Harrison, and much of this book is geared to examining how he managed to follow rigid societal norms yet still live a life that transcended established racial and ethnic groups.

Government documents in the form of census and voting registration records made it clear that Nathan Harrison was black because all official forms asked for identification by race. However, he regularly redefined his ethnicity, immersing himself in a wealth of different communities. Harrison's shared history and culture evolved over the course of his adventurous life, intersecting at times with Native Americans, Mexicans, and many other marginalized non-Protestant groups in the Old West. He also won favor with dominant white populations, both rural and urban. Harrison was not just liked by these different groups, he was an active member in their communities.

Few people in US history embody ideals of the romanticized American Dream more than Nathan Harrison. His is a story with prominent and celebratory themes of overcoming staggering obstacles, forging something from nothing, and evincing gritty perseverance. In a biog-

raphy of hard-fought and hard-won progress, Harrison survived the horrors of slavery in the Antebellum South, endured the mania of the California Gold Rush, and prospered in the rugged chaos of the Old West. Each of these mini-eras resulted in incredibly short lifespans for most people, especially those who were not white. By nearly all measures, Harrison would have been expected to die young. His achievement of such Jeffersonian principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness was even more impressive when one contextualizes his accomplishments in the times in which he lived.

Nathan Harrison succeeded against nearly impossible odds and seemingly insurmountable barriers, yet his biography also brings readers face to face with certain harsh realities. The glorified ideals inherent to his American success story were compromised by the despondent manner in which he met his end. Harrison's final year and ultimate demise were shrouded in sadness. For all he achieved during his near century-long lifespan, Harrison died alone in a public hospital surrounded by neither friends nor family. Furthermore, his remains were unceremoniously placed in an unmarked grave, far from the communities and the natural mountain environment he purportedly cherished most. Harrison's life saga, though rife with impressive real and embellished accomplishments, was no fairy tale, especially at its conclusion.

Historical Archaeology

The field of historical archaeology is optimally suited to examine the complexities of Harrison's biography. It specializes in both documents (words) and artifacts (things). Few disciplines are so dualistically aligned with famed lexicographer Samuel Johnson's poetic declaration that, "Words are the daughters of the earth and . . . things are the sons of heaven" (1755: paragraph 17). Historical archaeologists find new clues by locating previously undiscovered and often buried materials through excavation. We also piece together insights from written records of the past with a careful eye on the social and political context in which they were first created. We must be versatile because archaeological science and text interpretation are very different tasks. On the one hand, it is necessary to employ relatively standardized field methodologies to pinpoint material realities of the past through long-established archaeological dimensions of space, time, and form (Spaulding 1960). On the other, we must be keenly aware of humanistic biases inherent to written records, oral accounts, and other kinds of narratives. As this discipline routinely employs disparate lines of evidence—through ar-

tifacts, primary historical documents, oral histories, secondary narratives, photographs, etc.—its practitioners need be especially attuned to contradiction, revision, and omission in widely accepted stories of the past.

Despite this diverse analytical tool kit, historical archaeologists are far from immune to the myth-making process. In fact, we occasionally contribute to biographical exaltation by privileging certain insights while dismissing others. When uncovering historical complexities and pointing to the flaws in one-dimensional truths about the past, it is imperative that historical archaeologists do not fall into a similar trap by presenting our own conclusions as exclusive, all-encompassing, or absolute. Human activities of the past were intricate performances that have been further complicated by subsequent generations of historical revisions and reconstructions, including the most current interpretations from the edge of the archaeologist's trowel (Hodder 2004). Our intention to be as accurate as possible in our methodologies and interpretations should never be conflated with insisting a singular technique and theory is sufficient or the final word on the subject. We must keep in mind Alison Wylie's observation that artifacts "do not speak for themselves" (1989: 2). On the contrary, archaeologists speak for artifacts.

Many historical archaeologists, including myself, maintain a most democratic fixation on the everyday detritus and details of the past. Old garbage, mundane bureaucratic documentation, and other ordinary materials can be used to challenge traditional one-dimensional histories that tended to privilege the elite, the white, the male, or those with some sort of inherited status. We often emphasize that corporeal demise and daily refuse are the tangible end-products of every human existence regardless of societal privilege in all of its guises. With a deferential nod to Benjamin Franklin, nothing is certain except death and garbage.

Every person who has ever written a narrative had a particular perspective that included innate biases, but these types of inevitably distorted literary lenses are not necessarily present in the garbage of the past as it rests in the ground awaiting discovery. Whereas only wealthy individuals often had access to the supplies, abilities, and circumstances to perpetuate and curate grand stories of their past, everyone produced refuse. Furthermore, few people ever had a particular agenda, especially one that considered personal legacy, when dumping their trash. Though archaeological narratives are constructions like any other story,³ and occasionally stray far from any established notions of a factual past, they often start anonymously and posthumously with

a collection of disassociated and fragmented artifacts pulled from the earth long after the demise of their original owner.

The Nathan “Nate” Harrison Historical Archaeology Project

Working on the Nathan “Nate” Harrison Historical Archaeology Project meant striving to learn everything possible about Harrison’s life, legend, and legacy. Simultaneously, I wanted to disseminate these insights broadly and engage all of those who were interested in meaningful discussions about the multiethnic history of the United States in which Harrison lived. From its outset, the project united research, teaching, and community engagement. At its analytical core, the endeavor was driven by a research design with specific questions that would be best answered by archaeological fieldwork, rigorous historical studies, and multicultural perspectives. University students, many of whom were training to be professional archaeologists, executed the fieldwork as part of their undergraduate or graduate curricula. They were involved in each aspect of the field project (Figure 0.1). In addition, public history was a priority of this project, resulting in annual technical reports, a complete artifact catalog on the project website (<http://nathanharrison.sdsu.edu>), and extensive community outreach through presentations, open houses, and school lesson plans.

Excavations during the Nathan “Nate” Harrison Historical Archaeology Project (2004–08 and 2017–present) were the core of our research endeavor, and they were entirely dependent on archaeological field schools. Our primary classroom was the site, and in a broader sense, Palomar Mountain. In exchange for getting trained in how to dig and being included in cutting-edge research, dozens of undergraduate and graduate students lived in tents on the former Harrison property, toiled long hours at the high-elevation site, ate camp food, and shared a makeshift latrine. Over the years, many of the field-school participants would stay on with the project, engaging in further site-specific research, analysis, and other archaeological internship and volunteer roles. In addition, eight graduate students—Sarah Stroud, Matthew Tennyson, Jaime Lennox, Shelby Castells (Gunderman), Kristin Tennesen, Katherine Collins, Rachel Droessler, and Cecelia Holm—wrote Master’s theses on research relating to the Harrison site.

Extensive historical research was conducted before, during, and after the excavations. At the outset of the project, the land owners gave us what was thought to be a comprehensive catalog of all of the historical records, accounts, and photographs of Harrison. Our digging



Figure 0.1a/b. Field-school students actively participated in all phases of the archaeological process, including placement of the datum (*top*) and site excavation (*bottom*). (Courtesy of the Nathan “Nate” Harrison Historical Archaeology Project.)



was not just in the dirt, as significant archival investigations turned up numerous additional materials relating directly to the life and times of the famed Palomar pioneer. Furthermore, the excitement and attention the excavations brought to the site and the intriguing subject matter inspired other community members to share their personal historical collections with us. One of the more spectacular rediscoveries included

a cache of original documents that were first found in the Harrison cabin years after his passing, forgotten, but then found, scanned, and sent to us. Known as “The Cabin Collection,” these materials included personal letters, receipts, and a photograph. Rediscovering the long-lost items was nothing short of thrilling. We suddenly could read the handwritten words of Harrison’s stepson in a lengthy correspondence, see the face of his step-granddaughter in a faded picture, witness the racism of poll taxes through a voter-registration receipt, and follow the detailed business squabbles of everyday frontier life. Throughout our research, we continued to include new information in our quest to assemble every contemporaneous record relating to Harrison, classify them according to type and content, examine how they changed over time, trace patterns of invention, evaluate most likely scenarios, and construct multiple plausible narratives.

Community outreach and public history were an inseparable part of this project at nearly every step. Not only did many Palomar Mountain locals grant us access to their property, turn over their archival material to us, and welcome us into their homes, but they also shared important insights into the quirky history of the region and its long-time inhabitants. With unwavering ideals of inclusion, transparency, and sustainability, the Nathan “Nate” Harrison Historical Archaeology Project continues to rely on collaboration and cooperation in order to make progress towards finding ways to share Harrison’s story with all.

Archaeological projects often evolve over the course of the excavations. In living and working up on Palomar Mountain each summer, witnessing the awe of first-timers at the site and surrounding environs, and engaging local residents in a research project that involved complex issues of historical identity, agency, and community, I began to develop a different and deeper appreciation for the importance of place—this particular place—in history.⁴ The natural beauty, the tranquility, the isolation, the security, the community . . . these innate qualities of Palomar Mountain make it more than a simple place of residence for today’s inhabitants. They hint at the profound effect it might have had on past occupants.

Harrison’s time on the mountain cannot be separated from the mountain itself. After decades of nomadic travel—migrating across the country and throughout California, first as a slave and later as a laborer—Harrison arrived at Palomar. Repeated clues in the historical records suggest that it was a highly meaningful space for Harrison and one with which he deeply identified. His many years of drifting and wandering concluded at this place where he finally was able to take root and make a permanent home. Philosopher Simone Weil em-

phasized that rootedness in a place is “the most important and least recognized need of the human soul” (1971: 43). Furthermore, the road winding up the west side of the mountain, which has borne his name for over a century, was the only non-Indigenous route up Palomar during his lifetime. In addition, one of the area’s well-established Native American trails—still actively used during Harrison’s time on Palomar Mountain—also ran through his property, right by his front door. It was no exaggeration or mere poetic figure of speech to state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that nearly all Palomar Mountain roads went through Nathan Harrison. He was an intrinsic part of the land, and I believe that the land became an intrinsic part of him (Figure 0.2).

There are important differences between space and place. Whereas *space* merely designates location, *place* is imbued with a sense of meaning. Palomar Mountain was more than a space to its past inhabitants and to Nathan Harrison in particular. It transcends simple literal descriptions. Scholars can offer a wealth of emotionless details about the area. Geographers can tell you Palomar Mountain rises northeast of San Diego at 33 degrees, 21 minutes, 22.82 seconds north by 116 degrees, 51 minutes, 56.34 seconds west. Prehistoric archaeologists can report



Figure 0.2. This undated photograph of Nathan Harrison at his Palomar Mountain cabin captured the dramatic canyon view and the rise of Boucher Hill to the east. Look closely: he is holding a puppy. (Courtesy of the Nathan “Nate” Harrison Historical Archaeology Project, Kirby Collection.)

that it has been occupied by local Native American groups for many thousands of years as bedrock mortars, created gradually over millennia, still cover much of the landscape. Linguists can explain that the Indigenous population first knew this place as “Paauw,” Spanish explorers labeled it “Palomar Mountain,”⁵ and American settlers renamed it “Smith Mountain.”⁶ Furthermore, geologists will insist Palomar Mountain never be called “Mount Palomar” because it is not a peak; rather, it is part of a range (the In-Ko-Pah Mountains) with a rolling plateau extending twenty-five miles along the northern boundary of San Diego County (Beckler 1958: 6). These facts, no matter how interesting or informative, fail to get at the far more profound question of what the mountain signified and continues to symbolize for its many residents.

The stories Palomar Mountain inhabitants tell are far different from such sterile academic descriptions; they are far more deeply connected to the land and get at the environmental relationship between human and earth. For example, the first people of Palomar—the Luiseño Indians—refer to the mountain as “Paauw.” It is a blend of the words “mother” and “mountain.” For many Luiseño, Palomar Mountain is a sacred place, where Paauw rose above a flooded earth and saved her children, the Luiseño. Paauw maintains great prominence in traditional Indigenous stories.

Early US American pioneers also expressed tales of reverence for Palomar Mountain. Regional historian Ed Davis avowed of local settler Theodore Bailey:

This mountain [Palomar] meant more to him than so much cattle range and so much timber. The soul of the mountain spoke to him in the crooning of the pines, the murmuring brooks, the rustling leaves, the massive oaks, the fragrant flowers, the whistle of the mountain quail, the coo of the wild pigeon, the coughing squirrels, all in a language he loved and understood. (1938: no page numbers)

These descriptions go beyond lifeless portraits of space and shed light on the meaning of place. This is a paramount issue for the Nathan “Nate” Harrison Historical Archaeology Project to address. Specifically, what did it mean for Harrison to call this land home? Relatedly, when did he become a *permanent* resident, one who was seen as inseparable from these environs? Furthermore, how did he tie his identity directly to Palomar Mountain and to the diverse local communities that maintained a special connection with the immediate terrain? These were just some of the intricate inquiries that the study of Harrison’s life and legend elicited.

A Brief Overview of Theory in Historical Archaeology

I stated earlier that the field of historical archaeology was particularly well-suited to analyze Nathan Harrison's intricate biography. In parallel fashion, I believe that this project—due to the dynamic intersection of rampant myth-making, fluid identity politics, and rigorous archaeological science—has the potential to influence how scholars at different sites interpret the past. Over the past eighteen years, careful examination of all things relating to Harrison gradually drew me toward ideas that allowed for multiple perspectives and disparate theories. Even though historical archaeologists, past and present, are far from uniform in thought or practice, I found myself especially receptive to envisioning how certain profoundly different interpretations could coexist. I gravitated away from prizing singular theories that necessitated isolating a unique correct explanation at the expense of all others. As a result, this book is both my statement on the historical archaeology of Nathan Harrison and a case for more inclusive ideas about how we think about the human past. However, before proceeding with Harrison's story and the different interpretations I propose, some context is needed for past and current anthropological theories in historical archaeology.

Simply stated, theory is used in anthropology to frame interpretations in broader context and to explain why humans act the way we do. Historical archaeology (study of recent past peoples, often those with some sort of associated documentation) is a subset of archaeology (study of past peoples), which is itself a subfield of anthropology (study of people). As a result, anthropological theory is often employed by historical archaeologists to interpret people, behaviors, and events of the recent past, no matter how seemingly bizarre, unique, or disconnected they may seem. Over time, scholarly theories have tended to come and go, eventually replaced by a newer approach; each has proved to be susceptible to waves of curious initial engagement, widespread popularity, and later critical dismissal.

When early historical archaeologists from the late 1800s and early to middle 1900s dug and analyzed sites, they often constructed descriptive chronologies that defined and classified people of the past by the artifacts found at their sites. This "Humanistic Historical Archaeology" focused on questions of who, what, where, and when; the answers were then used to create classifications of past cultures, often with a singular label and associated list of traits. This approach was also called "particularistic" because it focused so closely on the unique (or highly particular) circumstances that occurred at an individual site or complex of sites. Like anthropologist Franz Boas's theory of Historical Particu-

larism, it did not necessarily seek comparisons with other cultures or investigate change over time. Sites already established as historically important, like Jamestown, Virginia,⁷ the Miles Standish House in Plymouth, Massachusetts,⁸ and President Abraham Lincoln's house in Springfield, Illinois, were dug by archaeologists funded by antiquarian, preservation, public works, and touristic cultural-heritage sources. These sites were already famous due to existing historical accounts and lore; the excavations served primarily to expand insight into the exalted landmarks. History, and more specifically historians, had already set the narrative process in motion long before the first trowel hit the ground as the sites were predetermined to be archaeologically important because they were historically famous, instead of being famous because they were archaeologically important (on the basis of what was excavated). The primacy of the historical record led some of the field's leading practitioners to relegate archaeology to secondary and tangential status. J. C. Harrington, for whom the Society of Historical Archaeology's lifetime achievement award is named, called historical archaeology "an auxiliary science to American history" (1955: 1121). Ivor Noël Hume took it a step further and insisted archaeology "was a handmaiden to history" (1964: 224). This Culture History approach emphasized that archaeology's purpose was merely to augment history.⁹

Scientific revolutions overtook many scholarly fields in the 1960s and '70s, and archaeology did not escape this intellectual firestorm. Dissatisfied with the subjectivity inherent to a humanistic approach, advocates of a more scientific historical archaeology toiled to construct a theoretical framework based on objectivity, analytical rigor, and scientifically controlled comparison. It was highly positivistic, focusing on what could be observed, tested, and later, predicted. This new approach¹⁰ attempted to move beyond descriptive questions to arrive at a more robust research issue of explaining human processes¹¹ of the past. It applied deductive reasoning to formulate laws of human behavior. Seeking to elucidate nuanced ways of life in place of producing highly particularistic histories, the query of "how" transcended "who," "what," "when," and "where." This approach was strikingly different as were the decisions on which groups to study. Many historical archaeologists began to take interest in past peoples who did not appear in the written records, including non-elite, nonwhite, nonliterate, nonmale groups for whom archaeology might have been one of the only empirical voices to speak their often lost and overlooked history. Instead of reinforcing or substantiating historical facts, scientific historical archaeologists developed narratives based in material remains (empirical data) and saw historical accounts as subjective and secondary. As a

result, archaeology was no longer presented as peripheral, secondary, tangential, or auxiliary to history. In fact, historical archaeologists such as Stanley South explicitly exalted archaeological analyses over related historical studies (1977: 12).

Cognitive historical archaeologists shifted intellectual discussions in the 1970s and '80s from the "how" to the "why," insisting that differences in material culture over time were the results of changing past mindsets. Rather than focusing on external processes, they started in the minds of historical peoples—specifically in binary mental structures that are a unique trait of the human brain—and developed elaborate grammars establishing time-sensitive cultural norms across all aspects of society. Drawing heavily on the social science theories of Structuralism and Symbolism, these historical archaeologists looked for material parallels between people in a given culture, positing broad explanations for cultural transformations independent of established general histories or universalistic laws of human behavior.¹² The meaning of artifacts was linked to how they were cognitively conceived as opposed to what they were and how they were used. Though presented as a compromise between humanistic and scientific historical archaeologies of the time—deemed "Scientific Humanism and Humanistic Science" (Deetz 1983)—it soon became clear this was an entirely different theoretical framework as opposed to a paradigmatic midpoint or compromise.

Other historical archaeologists also searched for explanations of "why" that were not necessarily tied to mental structures. For example, in the late 1970s, '80s, and '90s, various historical archaeologists began to employ Marxist historical materialism in their work, prioritizing discussions of class over culture when studying and interpreting actions, events, and items of the past (Leone 1977, 1982; M. Johnson 1995; Mullins 1999). Marxist thought brought attention to differences in class position into historical archaeology, distancing itself from previous theories that treated highly hegemonic cultures as cohesive wholes. It emphasized the agency of individuals who created a world on their own terms and reacted to the spread of capitalism and its concurrent issues of inequity, exploitation, and commodification.¹³ Historical materialists also often highlighted repeating cycles of change, noting recurring themes of the human condition (Cannon 1989). Marxists were far from alone in breaking down holistic concepts of culture and recognizing meaningful internal divisions. Other archaeologists, regardless of theoretical orientation, began to focus on gender, ethnicity, age, religion, and other important intracultural differences (Deagan 1983). These distinctions often reflected tensions related to power discrepancies and struggles among diverse historical groups.

During the same time, feminist archaeologists both examined new issues and offered a significant challenge to archaeology's scientific approach. These scholars investigated a variety of qualitatively different topics, such as social constructions of gender, parenting and childhood issues, and gender inequity in studies of the past (Conkey and Spector 1984; Little 1994; Beaudry 2006; Wilkie 2014). In addition, they effectively challenged the singularity and exclusivity of many previously established archaeological theories. Two scholars in particular, Margaret Conkey and Joan Gero, though not historical archaeologists, exposed often unaddressed agendas in science and debunked the practice of presenting archaeological conclusions as absolutely correct or final (Conkey and Gero 1991).¹⁴ They demonstrated that feminist thought in archaeology was not just about gender. It questioned purportedly value-free objective archaeological science and the premise that the past was singular (Conkey and Gero 1997; Gero 2015: 12).

Likewise, the late 1980s, '90s, and early 2000s saw historical archaeologists draw on Ian Hodder's postprocessual ideas concerning contextualized and interpretive archaeology (Hodder 1985, 1986). These practitioners focused on studies of identity, grounding their investigations in how distinct groups negotiated daily life in volatile historical and cultural contexts. They also focused on the experience of individuals, expounding on the role and importance of personal agency in history, often on a small scale (A. Praetzelis and M. Praetzelis 2001). A highly interpretive and contextualized historical archaeology resulted. Scholars such as Mary Beaudry, Adrian and Mary Praetzelis, Laurie Wilkie, and Julia King used multiple perspectives and disparate lines of evidence to show how archaeological insights were empirically, yet subjectively, constructed as opposed to objectively discovered, observed, or extracted (Beaudry 1996; M. Praetzelis and A. Praetzelis 2004; King 2012; Wilkie 2014: 60). These constructions fit multifarious archaeological insights into an interpretive whole.

Interpretive historical archaeologists were often highly reflexive and engaged deconstructionist thought. Like many contemporary critical theorists, these scholars were adept at acknowledging their own agendas and biases as well as pinpointing those of their peers, archaeological predecessors, and the writers of the historical records relevant to the sites under study. They employed multiple perspectives of past events and were especially successful at exposing and dismantling dominant assumptions of marginalized groups. Although the specific theory of "Critical Historical Archaeology" was deeply rooted in Marxism (Leone 2010),¹⁵ contextual and interpretive approaches to historical archaeology employed many of the same "critical" approaches. Consequently,

current critical, contextual, and interpretive historical archaeologies remain highly varied. Many ongoing practitioners prioritize a highly contextualized approach, some emphasize alternative narratives, and others focus on the feminist-identified fallacy of objectivity (Trigger 2006: 455–71).

To complicate matters further, the early 2000s has also witnessed controversial claims that the field has experienced “the death of archaeological theory” (Bintliff 2011; Pearce 2011; J. Thomas 2015a). Scholars have taken many figurative suspects into custody for the murder of theory. Some blame technological advances, some eye the political agendas of individual practitioners, and others depict a “post-ideological 21st century” of practicing nontheoretical archaeologists (J. Thomas 2015b: 14). When it comes to theory in today’s historical archaeology, there is little consensus. As a result, it is futile to suggest a singular theoretical label for the field, be it interpretive, critical, or even nonexistent (atheoretical). Rather than lament this chaos, Charles Orser explained that it is precisely the fact that historical archaeology is “not a conceptually unified field of inquiry” that makes it so “contentious and alive” (2001: 625–26). Likewise, Julia King optimistically observed that, “interpretive diversity presents exciting opportunities for accessing an ultimately inaccessible past and, in so doing, revealing avenues of inquiry that may have previously gone unnoticed or unexplored” (2012: 11).

Simply put, theory in historical archaeology went from descriptions of what happened, to explanations of how it happened, to appreciations of why it happened. We are now coming out of a period in which every previously established theoretical construct has been contextualized, picked apart, and deconstructed. Given the name of one of the latest paradigms (Critical Theory), it should come as no surprise that critical theorists were so thorough in their critique of all theories. This process included not only the archaeological literature in question but the scholars themselves. Deconstructionist thought has expanded significantly in academic disciplines across early twenty-first-century universities; seemingly no theory has gone unscathed under the post-modern lens.

Rather than dwell on the shortcomings of our collective predecessors, I propose an approach that engages the contributions of each, be they humanistic, scientific, cognitive, materialist, feminist, interpretive, contextual, critical, or other. At various times, humans of the past were functional, rational, symbolic, idiosyncratic, or contrarian. As a result, I am drawn to ideas that allow for this versatility and offer a more complete picture of human experiences, especially through multiple perspectives. Likewise, we all know people who have a wealth of cultural,

historical, and anecdotal information (humanists); who can eliminate distractions, see intricate patterns, pinpoint cause-and-effect relationships, and successfully predict coming actions (scientists); who can deduce uncanny insights into the mindsets of others (cognitivists); who can identify inequity and oppression even when well-cloaked (materialists); who appreciate the diversity of experience and the fluidity of perspective and are not frozen by interpretive ambiguity (feminists); who are sensitive to individual motivations even in group settings (agency specialists); and who emphasize the futility of reducing complex human systems, events, and actions to general categories, causes, or characteristics (postmodernists). Let us invite them all to our analytical party and embrace Laurie Wilkie's declaration that "no one set of theory can contain us" (2014: 375).

Toward an Orthogonal Historical Archaeology

I am not the first person to call for pluralistic approaches to archaeological theory.¹⁶ Famed archaeologist J. O. Brew wrote in the 1940s on the dangers of classifying artifacts in a singular manner. In a time when his peers often defined and charted culture groups as monolithic blocks that were fixed by conceptions of a static artifact type, Brew demanded additional classificatory systems based on new research questions. He declared:

We need more rather than fewer classifications, different classifications, always new classifications, to meet new needs. We must not be satisfied with a single classification of a group of artifacts or of a cultural development, for in that way lies dogma and defeat. (1946: 65)

While many archaeologists are familiar with Brew's bold statements and embrace the importance of new and innovative classifications, his insistence on inclusion of *existing* classifications has been often overlooked. It is worth emphasizing that Brew wanted more, not just new.¹⁷

We can draw parallels between new analytical questions that inspire new classificatory criteria and those that provoke new theories explaining the human experience. Brew's ageless call for continual growth in a classificatory method is extended here as a plea for the development of new theories for historical archaeology that are equally innovative and inclusive of past ideas. Likewise, archaeologist Alison Wylie emphasized the need for scholars to tack back and forth between polarized scientific and humanistic models when constructing their interpretations (1989).

I believe that now is an optimal time to employ new anthropological theories governed by different themes and explanations while still evaluating and incorporating important insights from past theories. Anthropologist Bruce M. Knauft recently suggested that this inclusive move is already starting to occur. In a 2006 article, he noted that many scholars have increasingly given up grand theoretical debates—many of which were mutually exclusive and thus highly polarizing in nature—and “now weave together approaches and perspectives from a toolbox of possibilities” (407). Accordingly, Alison Bell recently transcended a dualistic debate in historical archaeology regarding Vindicationist and Diasporic perspectives by insisting on inclusion of both approaches (2008). Knauft celebrates emergent anthropology as “mosaics of part-theoretical assertion, part-subjective evocation, part-ethnographic and historical exposition, and part-activist voicing” (2006: 411). I am heartened by Knauft’s observations and Bell’s approach, yet I propose the field take it a step further. It is not enough to have access to a diverse analytical toolbox, each of the tools needs to be employed purposefully.

The current moment of paradigmatic chaos and deconstructionist anti-theory creates an opportunity to apply a deliberately inclusive type of omni-theory, one that brings together all established and relevant models of the human experience on the same archaeological data set and historical records. I call this approach “orthogonal” (pronounced “awr-**thog**-uh-nl”) though I acknowledge at the outset that some may be tempted to dismiss this as merely a new title for an already existing practice.¹⁸ In fact, the term is not new at all and has already come to mean different things among distinct disciplines, but each involves an act that broadens, deepens, or expands.¹⁹ In meditative philosophy, orthogonal thought connotes a mental spaciousness that results from unfolding one’s mind to contemplate greater breadth and depth of meaning (Kabat-Zinn 2012: 72). Across disciplines, the word orthogonal generally refers to a deliberate movement for additional perspectives that is expansive yet still measurable from its origin.

Applying this approach to historical archaeology involves, but is not burdened by, perspectives from each of the field’s earlier prominent theories. It starts with attention to site-specific historical descriptions and assemblage-specific material classifications that are humanistic and particularistic. However, there is no insistence on a singular story, typology, or cultural pattern. It does use rigorous, repeatable, and scientific methodologies based on empirical realities in the ground and in the associated historical documentation. Instead of attempting to generate universal behavioral laws and assuming objectivity, the inter-

pretations of past human acts are culturally and historically contextualized, as are the analytical frameworks of the archaeologists. In addition, this approach appreciates how the collective mindsets of groups of past people can be a driving force in organizing and participating in the world. While acknowledging that individuals often carried formative blueprints in their minds for mediating everyday life, this omni-theory is also closely attuned to the role of individual agency, reflexivity, and resistance and the remarkable diversity of expression. Likewise, orthogonal perspectives employ analytical techniques sensitive to marginalized populations within larger cultures and detail exploitative processes when empirically based, but do not start with the assumption of material expressions of inequity at all sites. Furthermore, critical theory is used to examine all narratives in context, be they historical, archaeological, or analytical, in an effort to be thoroughly transparent. It also pays close attention to issues of identity creation, maintenance, and negotiation. Embracing orthogonal thought means not being defined by a single theory, which enables historical archaeologists to acknowledge the value of a particular paradigm and then move on, instead of dwelling in it. That is the mindful spaciousness of this approach: the ability to appreciate something fully and in a most open-minded manner, which can facilitate the process of transcending it.

When examining Harrison's life and legacies, the approach described here opens the interpretive floodgates to a deluge of different and often cacophonous narratives. Rather than assess them along a single measure of plausibility and seek to eliminate all except the seemingly truest explanation, I endeavor to accept and embrace the multiplicity of perspectives. In addition, although an evaluation process is inevitable, it can be applied deliberately using what I call the saturation process. It is a sequence of immersion in as many viable interpretive potentialities as possible. This inundation of multiple perspectives, multiple explanations, and multiple experiences greatly resembles the performance, reception, and interactive quality of the human past itself. It embraces complexity instead of automatically seeking to reduce, order, and simplify it. In his iconic novel, *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, Italo Calvino captured the literary inundation that transforms a mass of seemingly rival explanations into an orthogonal presentation of experience. He wrote directly to his audience:

What I want is for you to feel, around the story, a saturation of other stories that I could tell and maybe will tell or who knows may already have told on some other occasion, a space full of stories that perhaps is simply my lifetime, where you can move in all directions, as in space, always finding stories that cannot be told until other stories are told first, and so,

setting out from any moment or place, you encounter always the same density of material to be told. (1981: 105)

Calvino's saturation of narratives transcends a gravitation toward singular stories with inherently isolated and privileged truths. It enables his audience to embrace multiplicity without being overwhelmed by the din of different narratives.²⁰ In fact, the din becomes the melody, or at least melodic. The work presented here emulates Calvino's approach but endeavors to balance narrative inundation with archaeological rigor.

Documentary Evidence, Contextualized Histories, and Seriations

History is a record of past events and times. Traditional chronological accounts are linear, customarily starting with births and ending with deaths. Einsteinian relativity and *Terminator* movies aside, they correspond with the assumed steady forward movement and singularity of the current timeline. Even in this postmodern age of seemingly omnipresent relativity, there still is an expectation of basic historical facts about a given subject matter. We may anticipate great debates about the "how" and "why" of history, but the opening statements about the "who," "what," "when," and "where" of our primary topic are typically straightforward and easily answered with direct and definitive evidence.

Despite the abundance of existing information about Nathan Harrison, there is great confusion. There is extensive historical documentation about him, with well over one hundred records and accounts of his life (Mallios et al. 2017a; Mallios et al. 2018). In addition, there are thirty-one different historical photographs of Harrison (Mallios et al. 2017b). As a result, it would seem as though we have great insight into his story. For example, numerous official documents definitively state that Harrison was born in 1833. In scrutinizing all of the evidence, however, we see other seemingly reliable sources affirm 1831 as his date of birth. There is also a good chance he was born sometime in the late 1820s . . . or perhaps the early '20s. In fact, it is not entirely possible to rule out the late 1810s. Likewise, many records make it clear that Harrison was a native of Kentucky. Others list Virginia as his home state. There is evidence he was born in either Missouri or Mississippi as well . . . or perhaps Tennessee. It is even difficult to be definitive about his very name. San Diego County's Nathan Harrison was listed in the historical records under a variety of aliases, including Nat, Nate, Nath,

Nathan, and Nathaniel Haris, Harris, Harrisen, and Harrison. We archaeologists base most of our insights on established dimensions of space, time, and form, and yet it is impossible to be certain of Harrison's state of origin (inaugural space), date of birth (inaugural time), or given name (inaugural titular form). As a result, there is no simple empirical starting point for our study. With such rampant inconsistencies about the most basic of historical facts, one cannot help but ask: how can there simultaneously be so much assertive historical clamor about Nathan Harrison's life and so little verifiable information or agreement?

The extensive documentary evidence concerning Nathan Harrison falls into two nonexclusive categories: primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are experienced; they were created contemporaneously and included such items as governmental records (historical censuses, registers, certificates, receipts, maps, and other official forms) and newspaper clippings, letters, photographs, primary oral histories, and written accounts from individuals who personally knew Harrison and had firsthand interaction with him.²¹ Secondary sources are interpretive; their information came from a distance, often either second-hand or after-the-fact and traditionally consisted of oral histories and written accounts from individuals who knew of Harrison but did not have direct dealings with him.²²

Primary sources are often privileged over secondary sources because of their immediacy and interactivity with the subject in question, but both types of sources have inherent individual biases by the author and reflect broader cultural perspectives of the era. Historical inaccuracies abound in the stories of Nathan Harrison and take many forms. Some were clerical errors, some were sympathetic reflections by members of the tight-knit mountain community, and some were deliberate historical revisions for political gain.

Historiography is more nuanced than history; it is contextualized history. Historiography is a narrative presentation of multiple histories that includes a critical examination and evaluation of primary and secondary sources. This process employs significant scholarly attention to differing agendas, biases, and perspectives. The resultant narrative flows back and forth between straightforward chronicles of the past and discussions of the historical, cultural, and individualistic contexts of the source material. There are many Nathan Harrison stories, but an overwhelming majority of them are not contextualized. In essence, this history is in dire need of historiographic insight.

Due to the seemingly mercurial nature of the many existing biographies, those of us working on the archival aspects of the Nathan "Nate" Harrison Historical Archaeology Project had to embrace a wealth of

perspectives and allow for multiple plausible alternatives. We employed fluidity and flexibility in reconstructing the past, always ready to appreciate complexities and nuances of differing and often evolving perspectives. We were aided by experts in many different and nontraditional academic disciplines. For example, conflict resolution specialist Marguerite Yourcenar provided insight as to how one turns contradiction into reconciliation. She offered a broad overview, which included the following detailed directions:

The rules of the game: learn everything, read everything, inquire into everything . . . when two texts, or two assertions, or perhaps two ideas, are in contradiction, be ready to reconcile them rather than cancel one by the other; regard them as two different facets, or two successive stages of the same reality, a reality convincingly human just because it is complex. (Quoted in Cloke and Goldsmith 2000: 1)

We endeavored to apply these goals and ideas of narrative intersection and union to apparent historical discrepancies. For example, when one reliable source claimed Harrison never married and another well-informed narrative insisted he was a “squaw man” (married to a woman of Indigenous descent), both perspectives could be incorporated in multiple empirically-based yet nonexclusive manners (Asher c. 1938: no page numbers). As will be detailed in the coming chapters, perhaps Harrison had been married, but it was not necessarily a traditional Western union of which all in the area would know, acknowledge, or publicize; or perhaps he chose to keep his nuptials from some audiences. The lack of documentary evidence of the marriage in the form of a certificate from a church (or other official institution) might be attributable to the informality of the union, the fact that all Pala Indian Reservation records from 1886–92 were destroyed in a fire, or some other factor. Regardless of our self-professed dedication to narrative inclusion, glaring contradictions—those clearly at odds with other accounts—had to be evaluated on the basis of the best evidence.²³ Harrison could only be born in one year, be a native of one particular southern state, and first arrive at Palomar Mountain at one particular time.

Harrison’s status as a former slave complicated the process of evaluating and assembling competing narratives. Even though he was not enslaved during his time on Palomar Mountain, Harrison had survived the institution that treated people as property and interacted out west with many individuals who had owned slaves. Disparate views of slavery and former slaves abounded in the region, especially considering the fundamental question of whether enslaved individuals were peo-

ple or property. Awareness of strikingly different viewpoints on such a cornerstone issue required paying additional attention to the racist rationalizations and biases of those who defended and identified with slaveholders and constantly considering how enslaved people asserted their humanity in various ways.

While attention was now paid to the historical and cultural context of each source, the process was further complicated by the ways in which the content in these documentary accounts changed over time. Fortunately, archaeologists are especially skilled at noting how things change over time, so much so that we even created our own word for the study of materials in a sequence: “seriation.”²⁴ Traditionally, seriations are employed to determine chronology at a site; for example, types of stone tools—based on their relative frequency and gradual changes in style—can be placed in order to show which areas were occupied earliest, latest, and in between.²⁵ They have been used with great success on a wide variety of archaeological material culture from strikingly different eras, including famous studies on ancient Egyptian pottery vessels and relatively recent colonial gravestones in New England (Petrie 1899; Deetz and Dethlefsen 1965). About a decade ago, I started employing this archaeological technique on the historical records themselves (Mallios 2007). These nontraditional seriations of past written accounts treated the documents as artifacts in order to examine how they changed over time. Simply put, these seriations allowed us to observe how stories evolved. It was not as much historical archaeology as it was archaeological history.

Archaeological seriations are rigorous tools for showing how items of the past changed. If the selection process of traits for these items is explicit, transparent, and justifiable, then the resultant pattern pinpoints meaningful and precise transformations.²⁶ Although seriations can be especially effective at demonstrating how things evolve, they do not answer the much more difficult question of why these particular things were altered. To answer the question of “why” requires the process of interpretation, which requires an entirely different set of analytical tools. In the words of Erwin Chargaff, the famed biochemist who led the discovery of the double helix structure of DNA, “Science is wonderfully equipped to answer the question ‘How?’ but it gets terribly confused when you ask the question ‘Why?’” (1977: 8). Likewise, formulating explanations as to why social phenomena changed in such a peculiar manner can benefit greatly from an approach that transcends science by employing multiple perspectives, measures, and scales. There can be multiple valid explanations for why stories changed even if the transformation appears singular in nature.

One of the analytical benefits of having so many narratives told of Harrison in the century since his passing is the remarkably detailed resolution of how these tales changed over time. There are multiple accounts from nearly every decade, and numerous narratives contain rich descriptions of his life and legend.²⁷ Temporal patterns, although not necessarily evident when reading a single narrative, become clear when viewing all of the accounts in their entirety. It was in this dual approach of discerning macro-scale assemblage-wide historical patterns and scrutinizing micro-scale individualized historiographic insights that we sought to understand and appreciate the histories of Nathan Harrison.

The Evolution of This Project

When I first set out to find the Harrison site, I was met with skepticism. During my initial years in San Diego (2001–03), I heard comments such as: “There already is an article on blacks in San Diego,” “African Americans did not impact San Diego history,” and “you really should just focus on the missions; they were first.” In addition, I witnessed how San Diego’s past was regularly told and taught as a series of four culturally monolithic historical periods—California Indian (pre-1769), Spanish (1769–1820), Mexican (1820–46), and American (1846–present)—and capped by Kevin Starr’s dismissive claim that, “From a historian’s point of view, nothing much happened in San Diego before the Second World War” (Reid 2003: 6). These factors pushed me to investigate the context behind them and helped me present a much more comprehensive study into the life and legacies of Nathan Harrison, especially in terms of multicultural perspectives on the Gold Rush, the Old West, and the emergence of Modern America.²⁸

While the past half-century has produced important archaeological research on slave experiences at sites in the Antebellum South, far less attention has been given to analyzing the lives of African Americans after emancipation. Recent work at places like Annapolis, Maryland (Mullins 1999); New Philadelphia, Illinois (Fennell 2011); the Harriet Tubman home in Auburn, New York (Armstrong 2011); and Boston Saloon in Nevada (Dixon 2011) has made important contributions in presenting post-emancipation African American life as “more than a history of victimization” (Cobb 2011: xii). These current scholars and others have blended discussions of race and racialization with other prominent issues of the time period, including Reconstruction, migration, and industrialism. Despite this progress across the US, little work

has been undertaken on these sorts of sites in California (M. Praetzellis and A. Praetzellis 1992, 2004; Carrico et al. 2004).

As I started writing this book, I wanted to create a simple text about Nathan Harrison. I failed in that endeavor. In my defense, little about Harrison's life and legend is straightforward. I abandoned my initial goal of simplicity, and instead, now hope to have written with clarity about a most complex topic, allowing for exploration of the subject matter's most intricate nuances. Yes, this book meanders; it includes forays into everything from landmark Supreme Court cases to *Alice in Wonderland* symbology to individual vials peddled by scheming snake-oil salesmen. However, it is united on a distinct theme of inquiry: how did Nathan Harrison achieve acceptance from both his contemporaries as well as subsequent generations of people following his death? He experienced a remarkably full and widely embraced life, and once gone, he evolved from person to myth to legend.

Nathan Harrison's extraordinary existence was defined not by privilege, inheritance, or providence, but by the journey to liberation and expression of his ultimate acceptance by many different groups. He succeeded where many others failed. Close historical, anthropological, and archaeological examinations of his particular survival strategy revealed an odd mix of interpersonal relationships, self-deprecating performances, and socioeconomic opportunism through strategic gift-giving. Throughout this book, different lines of evidence repeatedly emphasize Harrison's ability to gain support from disparate communities, tailor his identity for distinct audiences, and acquire acclaim through purported generosity. Harrison moved forward under a guise of backwardness; he befriended the disenfranchised, tactically played the fool, and publicly gave away wealth. In doing so, he managed to make great social strides without ever appearing presumptuous.

This text includes three chapters: the first concerns the history of Nathan Harrison, the second focuses on the many myths surrounding his life story, and the third centers on what was learned through archaeological excavations at his former Palomar Mountain home. Most readers would expect the history chapter of the book to consist of truths, the myth-making chapter to be full of falsities, and the archaeology chapter to be the final and most empirical word on Harrison's life, legend, and legacy. Contrary to these expectations, many pages in the history chapter are spent on fallacious accounts, the discussion of myth-making reveals a great many truths about the creators and tellers of the fictions (including Harrison himself), and the archaeology chapter evokes as many questions as it answers. As tempting as it is to privilege all things archaeological—would anyone dare contradict Franz Boas's al-

leged proclamation that, “Man never lies to his garbage heap”?—it is essential to contextualize the interpretation of material remains as yet another narrative. Despite purportedly rigid disciplinary boundaries, I propose that the processes of engaging in history, anthropology, and archaeology are each, in the end, acts of story-telling (Isaac 1993). This book is about stories and more stories. Rather than lament any inconsistencies among them, I eagerly present them all as part of the saturation process that is necessary to amass appreciation for the many perspectives, interpretations, and realities of Nathan Harrison.

Notes

1. The N-word is quoted over fifty times in this book. Although this racial epithet is highly offensive and one of the most provocative words in twenty-first-century American speech, it is also an integral part of Nathan Harrison’s story. Nearly every early narrative includes the word, and even the title of the county road that bore his name was officially labeled “N— —r Nate Grade” until 1955. Quite frankly, the N-word is too important to discussions of the life and times of Nathan Harrison to ignore or avoid. Out of respect for modern-day sentiments, the word is always placed in quotes and veiled with interior dashes even though none of the historical sources treated the word in this fashion.
2. The N-word was not as inflammatory in the late nineteenth century as it is today, but even then it was often used and interpreted in a charged and disempowering manner.
3. Archaeological data might be immune to the biases of written documentary evidence, but it does suffer from its own biases, starting with what fails to preserve in the ground. Furthermore, the interpretations of archaeologists are rife with agenda, perspective, and bias.
4. There is something about uninterrupted weeks of hearing mountain critters scurry by your head in the middle of the night as you sleep in a tent, watching the sun rise over the cloud-covered valley below as if the mountain floated on air, roasting dinner over an open fire as the nighttime temperature suddenly plummets, and avoiding poison oak, rattlesnakes, and other maladies when looking for a safe place to do your business that draws one closer to what certain aspects of daily life might have been like for people of the past.
5. In Spanish, “paloma” translates to female pigeon, a common site in the area during the nineteenth century. “Palomar” is a common reference to “the place of the pigeons” or to a dovecote, a structure for housing domestic pigeons. An 1846 Mexican land grant was the first written account of the name “Palomar.”
6. This short-lived name change occurred after the 1868 murder of pioneer Joseph Smith; locals successfully petitioned to change the name back to “Palomar” in 1901 (Wood 1937: no page numbers).

7. Jamestown, and more specifically “1607 James Fort,” was the first permanent English settlement in the Americas.
8. Captain Myles Standish was one of the original *Mayflower* pilgrims, a leading English settler, and the first commander of the Plymouth Colony militia.
9. The Culture History approach, also called the “Classificatory-Historical Period” in American Archaeology, was a dominant theory in all of archaeology during much of the first half of the twentieth century (Willey and Sabloff 1971: 88–130).
10. The “New Archaeology” and its allegiance to a more scientific approach was paralleled in many other intellectual disciplines, even those that would traditionally be seen as more humanistic, like literary theory and its “New Criticism” (Ransom 1941).
11. This emphasis on “process” led to the new theory to be labeled as “Processual Archaeology,” used interchangeably with the “New Archaeology.”
12. Structuralists argued that these changes often shifted from one abstract extreme to the other, transforming conceptually from public to private, natural to artificial, asymmetrical to symmetrical, etc. (Deetz 1977; Glassie 1971, 1975).
13. Whereas choice merely reflects the decision-making process of individuals, the term agency implies “the struggle from freedom of action within systems of inequality not of their making” (Orser 2007: 53; Silliman 2005: 281).
14. Feminist thought significantly influenced archaeologist Ian Hodder’s ideas regarding deconstructionism and contextual archaeology; he cited Conkey’s work in his seminal 1985 article, “Postprocessual Archaeology.”
15. Critical Theory’s reflexivity centers on exposing political and economic inequity and exploitation.
16. Deetz’s 1983 plea for paradigmatic pluralism was, in fact, a case for Structuralism. Instead of finding common ground between particularistic approaches and the New Archaeology, he developed a cognitive theory for Historical Archaeology that was distinctively different and shared little with the other theories (Deetz 1983).
17. In my mind, new ideas will always have a lure that engages scholars and students; the real challenge is appreciating past insights and contributions while being impressed by never-before heard theories.
18. There is obvious overlap between contextual archaeology and my calls for an orthogonal archaeology as both draw on insight from contextual meanings of artifacts and constantly moving hermeneutic circles of interpretation (Hodder 1986: 150–53). However, I see orthogonal thought as less reliant on deconstructing the work of others, and more drawn to the inclusion of past theories and the cumulative nature of archaeological research. Furthermore, my emphasis on a union of different paradigms echoes Conkey and Gero’s observation that “feminist practice . . . might coordinate multiple strategies and objectives of different co-investigators into the research of nonrenewable archaeological resources (1997: 429). Even my coming invocation of Italo Calvino’s story saturation could be framed as the “thick description” of cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1979).

19. In the sciences, orthogonality denotes the creation of right angles from a single point, vector, or function. The etymology of the word orthogonal comes from “ortho” (meaning rectangularly straight) and “gony” (meaning knee); together the terms relate to the right angle formed by a bent knee. The literal meaning ties to exact 90-degree rotations. In mathematics, it refers to a process of rotation that creates right angles and results in perpendicularity. This rotation produces in a pair of vectors having a defined scalar product equal to zero or a pair of functions having a defined product equal to zero. Likewise, in general science, orthogonal has been expanded to describe any matrix composed of right angles. However, psychologists have come to use the phrase “orthogonal contrasts” in reference to a group characteristic that does not overlap with and is totally unrelated to another. Likewise, in colloquial speech the term has become synonymous with “irrelevant to,” especially in reference to expanding into highly tangential and off-topic material. I find it ironic that a scientific term that originally referred to a strictly controlled 90-degree rotation would later be used to describe uncontrolled mental meandering.
20. This saturation of stories is an ongoing and gradual process. Since second readings of a given tale inevitably lend additional insight, it can seem endless. Nevertheless, once all current narratives are assembled, read, and appreciated in context, it is possible—in Calvino’s terms—to set out from any moment or place and encounter the same density of historical and biographical material. Like the satisfaction of binge-watching an entire television show series after being piqued, puzzled, and perplexed by a few out-of-sequence episodes, the saturation from an orthogonal approach allows us to see the current totality of a storyline. While numerous questions remain regarding certain characters, plot developments, and future directions, these queries are no longer based on the partial sampling of the performance.
21. These sources included firsthand accounts by Harrison acquaintances Robert Asher (Asher c. 1938), Edward Davis (Davis 1932, 1938), Abel Davis (Davis c. 1955), Bessy Ormsby Helsel (Day 1981a), Max Peters (Day 1981b; Ryan 1964h), Jim Wood (Day 1981c), Chris Forbes (Day and Melvin 1981), Winbert Fink (W. C. Fink c. 1931), Adalind Bailey (Hastings 1959a), Louis Salmons (Hastings 1959b; Ryan 1964b), Harry Jones (Hastings 1960a), Joseph Reece (Hastings 1960b), Clarence Rand (Ryan 1964a), Clyde James (Ryan 1964c), Thekla James Young (Ryan 1964d), Frank Jones (Ryan 1964e), Wallace Stewart (Ryan 1964f), Donald Jamison (Ryan 1964g), Mary Beemer (Ryan 1964i), and Fred Blum (Ryan 1964j), in addition to a variety of contemporary newspaper articles (Van R. 1912; “Memorial Fountain” 1921; Heath 1921; and “West Palomar Grade May Be Abandoned” 1938). There was no standardized manner in which these accounts were originally recorded. They were amassed whenever a local historian was inspired to record testimonies from elderly pioneers, and, as a result, are located in historical societies across the county. Some of the interviews were structured by a specific set of questions, others were simply presented as a lengthy narrative of one’s life story (Mallios et al. 2006, 2007).

22. These sources ranged from popular magazine pieces to academic journal articles and included the following sources: "Palomar Mountain" 1958; "Pioneer's Grave to Have Marker" 1972; "Pillar of Palomar" 1982; . "North County Yesterday" 1986; "Historic Quotes" 1993; "Front Pages: Did You Know?" 2002; Bailey 2009; Bartlett 1931; Beckler 1958; Bevil c. 1995; Bostic c. 1964; Bryson 1962; Carlton 1974, 1977; Craine c. 1963; John Davidson 1937; G. Fink 1979; Fleisher c. 1963; Frazee-Worsley c. 1960; Heath 1919; Helsel 1998; B. Jackson 1971; James 1958; Kelly 1978; Lockwood 1967; Lynch c. 1990; Madyun and Malone 1981; Melvin 1981a, 1981b, 1981c, 1981d, 1981e, 1982a, 1982b; B. Moore, n.d.; Eloise Perkins 1971, 1972; Ross 1998, 2005; Rucker 1951; Rush 1952a; J. Stone 1972; Strain 1966; Stuart 1966; Taye c. 1940; N. Thompson 1961; S. Thompson 1972; Waite 2015; Wood 1937; and Yamaguchi 1998 (Mallios et al. 2006, 2007).
23. I define "best" as firsthand, corroborated, and from a reliable source with relatively few blatant fallacies.
24. Even though this word is not in the dictionary, it is nevertheless a mainstay in the field of archaeology and has been for over a century.
25. As we noted elsewhere, "Seriations are especially useful in isolating the inception, growth, peak in popularity, decline, and disappearance of a cultural trait that follows a unimodal distribution" (Mallios and Lennox 2014: 59).
26. Since there are an infinite number of possible traits and an infinite number of types based on these traits, the selection process is critical and worthy of scrutiny.
27. Brad Bailey proclaimed that Harrison was "undoubtedly the most beloved and well-known figure associated with early Palomar Mountain" (2009: 46).
28. It also helped me understand how my own work is situated among my regional colleagues. Archaeologist Kelly Dixon detailed a recent shift from the classic "Old West of mountain men, cowboys, Indians, gunfighters, prospectors, and outlaws" to the "counterclassic history of wage earners, women, minorities, urbanization, industrialization, and colonialism" (2014: 179). Of course, the approach advocated here involves both classic and counterclassic themes.