

*The Taking and Displaying  
of Human Body Parts  
as Trophies  
by Amerindians*

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Edited by Richard J. Chacon and David H. Dye

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*The Taking and Displaying  
of Human Body Parts  
as Trophies  
by Amerindians*

**Edited by**

**RICHARD J. CHACON**

*Winthrop University  
Rock Hill, South Carolina, USA*

and

**DAVID H. DYE**

*University of Memphis  
Memphis, Tennessee, USA*

 **Springer**

Richard J. Chacon  
Department of Sociology  
and Anthropology  
Winthrop University  
Rock Hill, South Carolina, 29733, USA  
E-mail: chaconr@winthrop.edu

David H. Dye  
Department of Earth Sciences  
University of Memphis  
Memphis, Tennessee 38152, USA  
E-mail: daviddye@memphis.edu

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*To the memory of the late James Petersen (1954–2005).*

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RICHARD J. CHACON

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DAVID H. DYE

# Contributors

**Carrie Anne Berryman** is a Ph.D candidate in anthropology at Vanderbilt University and a visiting instructor at the University of the South, Sewanee. She has conducted bioarchaeological research in Guatemala, Honduras, Bolivia, Jordan, Greece, and the Southeastern U.S. Her research interests include New World bioarchaeology and the rise of socio-political complexity among Pre-Columbian societies of Latin America. *Contact information:* Department of Anthropology, Vanderbilt University, VU Station B #356050, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37235, [carrie.a.berryman@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:carrie.a.berryman@vanderbilt.edu)

**William Billeck** is the Director of the Repatriation Office at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. He specializes in archaeology and ethnohistory in the Great Plains and Midwest with an emphasis on the protohistoric and historic period and glass trade bead research. *Contact information:* Repatriation Office, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, PO Box 37012, MRC 138, Washington, DC 20013-7012, [billeckb@si.edu](mailto:billeckb@si.edu)

**James Brown** is a Professor of Anthropology at Northwestern University with field experience in Eastern Woodlands archaeology from the Archaic to Historic Periods. Current focus is on Cahokia site archaeology and the social and religious interpretation of pre-contact material culture history with particular attention to the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex. Interests also include comparative mortuary studies and the evolution of cultural complexity. *Contact information:* Department of Anthropology, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 60208, [jabrown@northwestern.edu](mailto:jabrown@northwestern.edu)

**Karin Bruwelheide** is a Physical Anthropologist at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. She is a practicing forensic anthropologist. Her



basic research is focused on human skeletons from the Great Plains and African and European skeletal remains from the Mid-Atlantic region. *Contact information:* National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37012, NMNH, MRC 112, Washington, DC 20013-7012, bruwelka@si.edu

**Laurie Burgess** is a historical archaeologist at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. Her research centers on the material culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with a research emphasis on glass trade beads in North America. *Contact information:* National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37012, NMNH, MRC 112, Washington, DC 20013-7012, burgessl@si.edu.

**Richard John Chacon** is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Winthrop University. He has conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Amazonia among the Yanomamo of Venezuela, the Yora of Peru, and the Achuar (Shiwiar) of Ecuador. He has also worked in the Andes with the Otavalo and Cotacachi Indians of Highland Ecuador. His research interests include optimal foraging theory, indigenous subsistence strategies, warfare, belief systems, the evolution of complex societies, ethnohistory, and the effects of globalization on indigenous peoples. *Contact information:* Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC 29733, chaconr@winthrop.edu

**John Crock** is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Vermont and the Director of the UVM Consulting Archaeology Program. He has conducted archaeological excavations in Northeastern North America and on several islands in the eastern Caribbean. His research interests include trade and exchange, maritime adaptations, and the development of chiefdoms. *Contact information:* 111 Delehanty Hall, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405, John.Crock@uvm.edu

**Arthur Demarest** is a Professor of Anthropology at Vanderbilt University. He has conducted archaeological fieldwork in El Salvador and Guatemala for over 25 years. His research interests include the archaeology and cultural evolution of Mesoamerica and South America. *Contact information:* Department of Anthropology, Vanderbilt University, VU Station # 356050, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37235, arthur.a.demarest@vanderbilt.edu; arthurdemarest@hotmail.com; arthurdemarest@gmail.com; vilmaanleu@gmail.com

**David H. Dye** is an Associate Professor of Archaeology in the Earth Sciences Department at the University of Memphis. He has conducted archaeological research throughout the Southeastern US. His research interests include the archaeology and ethnohistory of the Midsouth. He has had a long-term interest in late prehistoric warfare, ritual, and iconography in the Eastern Woodlands. *Contact*

*information:* Department of Earth Sciences, 1 Johnson Hall, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN 38152, [daviddye@memphis.edu](mailto:daviddye@memphis.edu)

**Alberto Esquit-Choy** is a Ph.D candidate at Vanderbilt University. He is a Kaqchikel Maya who has conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Guatemala. His research interests include the Maya movement in Guatemala, political and social movements, and applied anthropology. *Contact information:* 2a. Calle 7-23, Zona 1 Patzicia, Depto. Chimaltenango, Guatemala. [ae7420@yahoo.com](mailto:ae7420@yahoo.com)

**John W. Hoopes** is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Kansas. He has conducted archaeological fieldwork in eastern, northwestern, and southeastern Costa Rica. His research interests include ceramic analysis, human ecology, iconography, and the evolution of Precolumbian complex societies in Latin America. *Contact information:* Department of Anthropology, University of Kansas, Fraser Hall, Rm. 622, 1415 Jayhawk Blvd., Lawrence KS 66049-7556, [hoopes@ku.edu](mailto:hoopes@ku.edu)

**Keith Jacobi** is an Associate Professor of Anthropology and Curator of Human Osteology at the Alabama Museum of Natural History at The University of Alabama. He has conducted bioarchaeological research in the Midwestern, Southwestern, and Southeastern US as well as in the Caribbean, Belize, and Peru. He continues to be a forensic consultant for the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences. His research interests include the health of prehistoric and historic groups. *Contact information:* Department of Anthropology, P. O. Box 870210, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0210, [kjacobi@tenhoor.as.ua.edu](mailto:kjacobi@tenhoor.as.ua.edu)

**Patricia Lambert** is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Utah State University. She has conducted bioarchaeological research in several regions of North America and in north coastal Peru. Her research interests include New World bioarchaeology, prehistoric warfare, and paleopathology. *Contact information:* Anthropology Program, UMC 0730, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-0730, [Plambert@hass.usu.edu](mailto:Plambert@hass.usu.edu)

**Joan Lovisek** is a Consulting Anthropologist specialized in the application of ethnohistorical method to ethnographic and archaeological data. As Principal of Lovisek Research, based in British Columbia Canada, she provides Treaty and Aboriginal rights research on various ethnohistorical issues involving the First Nations of Canada. *Contact information:* Lovisek Research, 14965 25A Avenue, Surrey, BC, Canada, V4P 1N7, [lovisek@telus.net](mailto:lovisek@telus.net)

**Herbert Maschner** is Anthropology Research Professor at Idaho State University. He has conducted archaeological and anthropological research throughout the

North Pacific and western Arctic regions. His research interests include complex systems, Darwinian Theory, complex foragers, Geographic Information Systems, and the anthropology of war. Most recently he has been involved in the development of applied archaeology in relation to fisheries policy and management. *Contact information:* Department of Anthropology, Idaho State University, 921 S. 8th Ave., Stop 8005, Pocatello, ID 83209-8005, [maschner@isu.edu](mailto:maschner@isu.edu)

**Marcela Mendoza** is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Oregon. She has conducted ethnographic fieldwork among the Western Toba of Argentina, and her research interests include the socioeconomic organization of lowland South American indigenous peoples. *Contact information:* University of Oregon, Department of Anthropology, 372 Condon Hall, Eugene, OR 97403, [mmendoza@uoregon.edu](mailto:mmendoza@uoregon.edu)

**Rubén G. Mendoza** is Professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences at California State University, Monterey Bay. He has conducted archaeological excavations in California, Colorado, Arizona, and in Guanajuato and Puebla, Mexico. His research interests include Mesoamerican and South American civilizations; and Hispanic, Native American, and mestizo traditional technologies; and material cultures of the US Southwest. He currently serves as the Director for the California State University, Monterey Bay's Institute for Archaeological Science, Technology, and Visualization. *Contact information:* Institute for Archaeological Science, Technology and Visualization, California State University, Monterey Bay, 100 Campus Center, Seaside, California 93955-8001, [rmendoza.csumb@gmail.com](mailto:rmendoza.csumb@gmail.com), [ruben\\_mendoza@csumb.edu](mailto:ruben_mendoza@csumb.edu)

**Robert Mensforth** is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Cleveland State University. He has conducted bioarchaeological research on skeletal material from eastern North America. His research interests include the Archaic Period, and human and nonhuman skeletal biology, hominid paleontology, primate behavior, forensic anthropology, paleodemography, paleoepidemiology, medical anthropology, and human gross anatomy. *Contact information:* Department of Anthropology, CB 119, Cleveland State University, 2121 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115, [r.mensforth@csuohio.edu](mailto:r.mensforth@csuohio.edu)

**Dennis Ogburn** is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (as of Fall 2007). He has conducted archaeological excavations and surveys in Ecuador, Peru, and the western US. His research interests include the Inca Empire in Andean South America, Geographic Information Systems, geochemical sourcing, remote sensing, and ethnohistory. *Contact information:* Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001, [matallama@yahoo.com](mailto:matallama@yahoo.com)

**Douglas Owsley** is the Division Head for Physical Anthropology at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. He has conducted bioarchaeological investigations in the Plains and the eastern US. His research interests include historic and prehistoric populations of North America, paleodemography, skeletal and dental pathology, and forensic anthropology. *Contact information:* National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37012, NMNH, MRC 112, Washington, DC 20013-7012, [owsleyd@si.edu](mailto:owsleyd@si.edu)

**The late James Petersen** served as Chair of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Vermont. He conducted archaeological excavations in northeastern North America, the Caribbean, and Amazonia. His research interests included material culture, style and ethnicity, among various other aspects of Pre-Columbian and historic occupation of the Western Hemisphere.

**Katherine Reedy-Maschner** is an Affiliate Research Assistant Professor and part-time lecturer in the Department of Anthropology at Idaho State University. She has conducted ethnographic research among the Aleut of southwestern Alaska and the eastern Aleutian Islands. Her research interests include social organization, kinship, indigenous identities, fisheries, status competition, and local-global interactions. *Contact information:* Department of Anthropology, Idaho State University, 921 S. 8th Ave., Stop 8005, Pocatello, ID 83209-8005, [reedkath@isu.edu](mailto:reedkath@isu.edu)

**Nancy Ross-Stallings** is a Senior Archaeologist/Biological Anthropologist at AMEC Earth and Environmental, Inc., an environmental consulting firm located in Louisville, Kentucky. She also is an Affiliated Scholar in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky. She has conducted excavations at prehistoric and historic sites throughout the Central, Midwestern, Eastern, and Southeastern portions of North America. Her research interests include forensic anthropology, human osteology, pathology, trauma, and faunal analysis. *Contact information:* AMEC Earth and Environmental, Inc., 690 Commonwealth Center, 11003 Bluegrass Parkway, Louisville, Kentucky 40299, [Nancy.Ross-Stallings@amec.com](mailto:Nancy.Ross-Stallings@amec.com)

**Polly Schaafsma** is an Archaeologist at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture/Laboratory of Anthropology of the Museum of New Mexico. She has conducted excavations and surveys throughout Southwestern North America. Her research interests include rock art and belief systems along with documenting the presence of Mesoamerican influence in the Southwest. *Contact information:* 38 Bonanza Creek Road, Santa Fe, NM 87508, [shingo3@AOL.com](mailto:shingo3@AOL.com)

**Mark Seeman** is a Professor of Anthropology at Kent State University. He has conducted archaeological excavations throughout Eastern North America. His research interests include Hopwellian society, human ecology, exchange, and style. *Contact information:* Anthropology Department, 215 Lowry Hall, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242, mseeman@kent.edu

**Tiffany Tung** is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Vanderbilt University. She has conducted bioarchaeological research in the Peruvian Andes, Southeastern US, and the Eastern Mediterranean. Her primary research focuses on reconstructing patterns of morbidity and mortality among Andean populations in the Wari Empire to illuminate the biological and social effects of ancient imperialism. Her studies are particularly focused on violent trauma in all its forms. *Contact information:* Department of Anthropology, Vanderbilt University, VU Station B #356050, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37235, t.tung@vanderbilt.edu

**Ron Williamson** is the President and Chief Archaeologist of Archaeological Services Inc., a cultural resource management firm based in Toronto, Ontario. He has directed numerous archaeological assessments, excavations, and planning projects throughout northeastern Canada, many of which have focused on Iroquoian archaeology. *Contact information:* 528 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2P9, Canada, rwilliamson@archaeologicalservices.on.ca

**William Woodworth** is a Mohawk Traditionalist from Six Nations of the Grand River, Canada. He has a Doctorate in Traditional Knowledge and a professional degree in architecture. His research interests include the integration of native traditions into modern cultural practices. In addition to his work as an architect, he does interpretive work and ceremonial teaching and consulting for cultural resource management projects. He is the Founder and Director of a nonprofit foundation, Beacon to the Ancestors, which is facilitating the design and construction of a sacred ceremonial site on the ancient shore of Lake Ontario in Toronto. This will be the setting for local native peoples to once again assume their traditional duties as hosts of their homeland. *Contact information:* 165 Bathurst Street, Studio 212, Toronto, Ontario M54V 3C2, Canada, thambos@rogers.com

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Part I

North America

# Introduction

WILLIAM WOODWORTH

The recovery and recounting of the visceral practices of our ancestors and my native relations on Turtle Island [North America] can inspire the same apprehension invoked among the waves of European immigrants, who often came here to escape the oppressive tactics of their own relations back home. The cultural constructs of indigenous peoples arise naturally out of an understanding that we share our environment with all things. Our bodies are no different than other bodies. This contrasts with other spiritual doctrines which hold the human body sacred. The evidence and scope of the excellent archaeological research reported in these papers could serve to reinforce this chasm unless we can find the larger context which reconciles them.

I am a Mohawk *Ganenigehageh* descended from a great warrior culture. As an indigenous researcher, I am required to speak from the culturally specific place held in my own body and mind. However I observe many similarities between our Iroquoian, or more properly *Hotinonshonni* [people who build the long house], ways and those of the other North American native cultures reported here. *Hotinonshonni* are the keepers of a great political legacy which defines our place in the indigenous cultural ecology of Turtle Island. That is the perspective from which I will reflect on what many would consider practices of atrocity.

The conduct of *Hotinonshonni* people has been continuously moderated by forces which define us in Creation, namely the birth of male twins who facilitated the realm which we continue to inhabit. Maple Sapling *Teharonhiawakhon* [holder of the sky] created expressions of order, peace, and good. His brother Flint *Tawiskeron* held a competitive and jealous bent counter-creating his twin brother with things of a darker nature. Finally, they engaged in a bloody struggle which ended in the dominance of *Teharonhiawakhon*. In our periodic recounting of these events we are reminded that this world is a navigation among counter forces which require

constant vigilance. This struggle is played out in the story of the people over time. We are living out a constant cyclic transformation among conflicted forces.

In time we *Ganenigehageh* joined in the democratic confederation of Five Nations in which the waves of refugee immigrants from Europe found us five hundred and more years ago. The great story of the founding of this confederation is embodied in the nine day recitation of what is called The Great Law *Gaianerengowah*, or the story of the coming of a spiritual messenger almost a thousand years ago. The Peacemaker *Deganawidah* [a name usually spoken only in the sacred space of ceremony] found my ancestors corrupted from the ways of the Good Mind which *Teharonhiawakhon* oversaw. At this time forms of “human trophy taking” and cannibalism were rampant practices among our men. With the assistance of Hiawatha *Aionhwathah*, *Deganawidah* facilitated our clan system, transferred authority to the women, and defined the protocols of consensus building in a circle of fifty male chiefs gathered in a circle around at the base the Great White Pine Tree *Skaronhehsegowah*. We abandoned violent practices in favor of forms peace, until the arrival of aggressive colonization, and our need to defend our people and homelands. Once again forms of “human trophy taking” dominated our reputation as warriors. As our contemporary fate has settled over us, we have assumed a relatively peaceful yet restless place in the conquest.

Among *Hotinonshonni* people, for whom I can speak, our actions have always been characterized by a certain grace and respectful conduct even in our most violent practices. The evidence of atrocity cannot begin to convey the nature of the encounters, the practices of ceremony, and sacred preparations which were often an integral part of most visceral practices. The violence the evidence presented in these papers represents should be no more unsettling, and probably less shocking, than contemporary practices which fill current media among all peoples of the Mother Earth. We understand this to be in the nature of Creation and the cyclic transformative processes which are a part of all our existences at this time.

Onen.

William Woodworth, Ph.D.  
Mohawk Traditionalist

## Chapter 1

# *Introduction to Human Trophy Taking*

### **An Ancient and Widespread Practice**

RICHARD J. CHACON AND DAVID H. DYE

The Amerindian practice of taking and displaying various human body parts as trophies has long held the imaginations of both the public and scholars alike. Sensationalized accounts of such practices recorded by various New World explorers frequently shocked Old World sensibilities and often served to reinforce Eurocentric notions of superiority over the indigenous “Other.” Rather than following this colonialist tradition of denigrating indigenous customs and belief systems, this book seeks to respectfully and dispassionately shed light on why such behaviors occurred in the Americas.

It is remarkable that until the present volume there was only one other scholarly work that specifically addressed the topic of human trophy taking on a continent-wide basis.<sup>1</sup> Our collective analysis of the archaeological, ethnohistorical, osteological, and ethnographic evidence in this book clearly indicates that not only is human trophy taking of great antiquity in the western hemisphere (dating back to the Archaic Period), but it also appears to have been widespread in every major culture area of the Americas (except for Patagonia, which has not provided any evidence of human trophy taking).

It would be naïve in this context to propose a single or even primary cause or set of variables that underlie human trophy taking among indigenous peoples (Hoskins 1996). Theoretical discussions of indigenous warfare and ritual behaviors often associated with fighting (such as human trophy taking), necessarily require consideration of the region’s tremendous ecological and cultural diversity. Similarly, we must acknowledge that human motivations for taking trophies in any one context may vary dramatically and or change accordingly through time.

Rather than promoting any one explanation, we collectively investigate the evidence for these practices in each of the culture areas of the New World (except for Patagonia) on a case-by-case basis. We believe that this approach illuminates the causes and consequences of human trophy taking for the case studies that are scrutinized.

Because this is an effort to provide scholars with a reference source documenting the various reported reasons for trophy taking in the hemisphere, we do not restrict ourselves to a single theory. Notwithstanding this self-imposed limitation, we nevertheless believe this effort will serve as a stimulus for further research centered on theory building and the quest for causal variables underlying the practice of trophy taking. It is important to note that this book focuses primarily on the warfare-related motivations associated with trophy taking. In this study, trophies are defined as severed body parts obtained from fallen enemies which are then curated. An in-depth analysis of the curation, exhibition, and veneration of severed body parts taken from beloved ancestors (i.e., ancestor cults) is beyond the scope of this volume.

In the course of conducting research for a manuscript entitled "Scalplocks, Forearms, and Severed Heads: War Trophy Behavior in the Mid-Continent" (n.d.), David Dye recognized the need for a synthesis of available information on Amerindian trophy taking.

This consideration was at the heart of efforts by Chacon and Dye to bring together a distinguished cohort of scholars for a symposium entitled "The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts by Amerindians" at the 2004 annual meeting of the Society of American Archaeology held in Montreal, Québec.<sup>2</sup> The prime objective was to document the antiquity and widespread indigenous practice of human trophy taking as well as seeking to understand why it was done. This led to organizing the present volume.

Our subsequent call for contributions to the edited volume was so successful that it became necessary to increase the number of participants to include those who (due to limited space and time) were excluded from presenting papers at the conference.

## A EUROPEAN INTRODUCTION?

Deloria's (1969) claim that scalping was not a traditional Amerindian practice has been vitiated by data reported in various publications. In actuality, the earliest evidence for scalping in the Americas comes from precontact sites possibly as early as ~485 BC (Owsley and Berryman 1975; Miller 1994). This, along with other findings put forth by France (1988), Hamperi and Laughlin (1959), Hoyme and Bass (1962), Lothrop (1954), Merbs and Birkby (1985), Neiburger (1989), Neuman (1940), Owsley (1994), Snow (1941, 1942), Willey (1982, 1990), and Willey and Bass (1978), provides evidence that human trophy taking was practiced by Amerindians long before the arrival of Europeans.

## AMERINDIAN HUMAN TROPHY TAKING

The removal of heads, scalps, eyes, ears, teeth, cheekbones, mandibles, arms, hands, fingers, legs, feet, and sometimes genitalia for use as trophies by Amerindians was an ancient and widespread practice in the New World (Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005; Engel 1963; Friederici 1985a; Grinnell 1910; Krech 1979; Le Barre 1984; Métraux 1948; Nadeau 1937; Neumann 1940; Proulx 1971, 1989; Verano 1995). Some groups in Colombia (Redmond 1994) and in the Andes (Rowe 1946) kept the entire skins of dead enemies. Indeed, given the near universality of trophy taking throughout human history (see Walker 2000), it truly would have been unusual if New World peoples had not engaged in such widespread activities. Therefore, the data presented here serves to illuminate and confirm the commonality of human experience rather than to denigrate any particular group.

There were many reasons for severing, preserving, and exhibiting the body parts of enemies (see chapters 22 and 23 in this book for an overview). Therefore, we argue that only a careful analysis of the data on a case-by-case basis offers the possibility of understanding why these aboriginal practices took place.

Ethnohistorical reports of human trophy taking in the Americas date back to early contact with Europeans such as when Francisco de Garay recorded the taking of scalps during his ill-fated 1520 expedition to the Rio Pánuco region of Mexico (Friederici 1985a; Garay 2002). Jacques Cartier recorded a slightly more detailed account regarding human trophy taking in northeastern North America as he traveled along the St. Lawrence River at a time (1535) when the region was largely unaffected by Western contact (Friederici 1985a). Among the Hochelaga of Montreal, he reported seeing “the skins of five men’s heads, stretched on hoops, like parchment” (Biggar 1924:177). Members of the Hernando de Soto expedition recorded scalping by the Apalachee in the summer of 1540 by noting that “scalps were what they most prized to display at the end of the bow with which they fought” (Vega 1993:252). Furthermore, this expedition experienced the practice of human trophy taking first-hand when one of its men suffered the ignominy of becoming the first recorded European to be scalped by an Amerindian (Friederici 1985a). In the early 1540s, Cabeza de Vaca also reported human trophy taking among indigenous South Americans (Friederici 1985a).

In 1560, the Luna expedition found scalps attached to a center pole in a Napochie town (Hudson 1988). In 1564, Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues described his first-hand observations of Timucua raids in northeastern Florida. On returning to the village, the warriors placed the enemies’ legs, arms, and scalps “with solemn formalities . . . on tall poles set in the ground in a row” for a subsequent ritual (Le Moyne 1875:6-7). They sang praises to the sun, to which they attributed their victory (Laudonnière 2001). In 1603, Samuel de Champlain was invited to a victory feast where the Montagnais danced with the scalps taken from their Iroquois enemies, and in 1609 he personally witnessed the capture, torture, and subsequent scalping of enemies (Axtell and Sturtevant 1980; Friederici 1985a).

Lastly, in 1628, Zuni Puebloans revolted against the Spanish killing and mutilating the bodies of two Spanish friars with ceremonial dances being performed over the scalps of the clerics (Reese 1940).

## NON-AMERINDIAN DISPLAY OF HUMAN BODY PARTS

The indigenous peoples of the Americas were by no means the inventors of the practice of the taking and displaying disarticulated human body parts, nor did they hold a monopoly on this custom. Modification, use, and public exhibition of severed sections of human anatomy have been longstanding traditions throughout the Old World beginning as far back as possibly the Pleistocene, through the Middle Ages, and continuing into the modern era. This chapter provides a brief overview of the display of disarticulated human body parts by non-Indians both through time and by geographical location.<sup>3</sup>

Possibly, the earliest known example of this practice can be found in the 600,000-year old Bodo cranium from Ethiopia (Conroy et al. 2000). This Middle Pleistocene skull exhibits signs of postmortem defleshing that are consistent with scalping (Tattersall 1995). The Paleolithic Ethiopian site of Middle Awash (160,000–154,000 years old) yielded fossilized human crania manifesting signs of some type of mortuary treatment and curation after death (Clark et al. 2003). Another ancient site is the extraordinarily rich Upper Paleolithic double child burial dating back to ~22,000 BC that was found in Asia (200 km from Moscow). Among various sumptuary goods, an adult human femur shaft had been filled with ocher and had been placed adjacent to the left side of one of the deceased (Formicola and Buzhilova 2004).

More evidence for this ancient practice comes from the Paleolithic site of Grotte du Placard in France where human skull caps were thought to have been used for drinking (Le Barre 1984). Similar skull caps dating from this same time period have been recovered at sites from northern Spain to Moravia (Le Barre 1984). There is one case of possible scalping from another Old World site yielding an Aurignacian skull (ca. 36,000–27,000 years old) which shows cut marks on the frontal portion of the crania similar to those marks found on the skulls of documented scalp victims (Keeley 1996).

Another ancient site yielding disarticulated human body parts is located at Grosse Ofnet in Germany and dates to the Mesolithic Period ca. 7000 years ago. At this location, two caches of 34 human skulls were recovered with most showing signs of violent trauma (Frayer 1997; Keeley 1996). At the Neolithic site of Jericho, Palestine (ca. 6000 BC), a human skull had a naturalistic face modeled out of clay applied to it for reasons unknown (Piggot 1965). Another possible case for the taking and exhibiting of human body parts occurs at the site of Dryholmen Bog in Denmark (ca. 4500 BC) where the remains of several individuals were recovered with signs indicative of scalping such as cut marks on the frontal bone of the cranial vault (Murphy et al. 2002). Five Neolithic crania (ca. 4000 BC) revealing cut marks

commensurate with scalping were found in the Hebei and Henan Provinces of China (Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005). Another Neolithic skull (ca. 3000 BC) was recovered from the site of Alvastra in Sweden. The disarticulated cranium, possibly a trophy head, exhibited various cuts resembling scalp marks on the frontal bone (During and Nilsson 1991). Additional human skull caps that were converted into drinking cups were recovered from various French and Swiss sites from the Neolithic (Le Barre 1984).

A number of remains dating from the Bronze Age through the Iron Age have been recovered throughout Eurasia bearing cut marks that have been interpreted as evidence of scalping (Murphy et al. 2002). An Early Bronze Age (ca. 3000 BC) site called Bab-edh-Dhra in Jordan yielded a skull displaying signs of scalping with subsequent healing after the trauma.

The ancient Egyptians were also known to mutilate their enemies and to exhibit the separated body parts. Two rows of decapitated individuals, with their severed heads tucked between their legs, are depicted on the reverse side of the famous Palette of Narmer which dates back to ca. 3000 BC (Stokstad 2002). Ramses III (XX Dynasty) who lived from 1186 to 1154 BC commemorated a military victory by commissioning a carved relief depicting the piles of severed hands and phalli of his defeated enemies to be displayed at his Mortuary Temple Complex in Medinet Habu near Luxor, Egypt (Partridge 2002).

The earliest Biblical reference to a similar practice, which the Israelites conducted against their Philistine enemies, can be found in the following event recorded in the Old Testament. Sometime in the period 1085–1015 BC, “Saul commanded them to say this to David, ‘The king desires no other price for the bride than the foreskins of one hundred Philistines, that he may thus take vengeance on his enemies’” (1 Samuel 18:25).<sup>4</sup> Consequently, “David made preparations and sallied forth with his men and slew two hundred Philistines. He brought back their foreskins and counted them out before the king, that he might thus become the king’s son-in-law” (1 Samuel 18:27). Prior to these activities recorded above, a young David defeated Goliath and “... he took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem” (1 Samuel 18:54).

An Assyrian ruler named Assurnasirpal II (who ruled 883–859 BC) responded to a rebellion in the Aramean community at Bit-Kalupe on the Euphrates River, firstly, by looting the settlement, secondly, by cutting off the legs of the military leaders involved in the uprising, and thirdly, by flaying local nobles and displaying their stretched skins over a large scaffold to serve as a warning (Gilmore 1954; Stokstad 2002). Another Assyrian king named Assurbanipal who ruled 669–627 BC decorated his palace at Nineveh with artwork depicting the head of a vanquished Elamite king hanging upside down from a tree (Saggs 1984; Stokstad 2002).

During the fifth century BC, the Greek historian Herodotus graphically detailed how central Asian Scythian warriors sought and preserved human trophies. “The Scythian warrior must bring the king the heads of all those he had killed in battle... A cut is made in the head near the ears, and then the head is taken by the hair and shaken out of the skin” (Herodotus, cited in Borodovsky and



Tabarev 2005:87). They then proceeded to remove the skin from these heads, thus creating fleshy “handkerchiefs.” These handkerchiefs were then hung on the bridles of horses belonging to warriors as symbols of their victory in war. Herodotus goes on to report that drinking cups were fashioned from the remaining skulls (Burton 1864; Murphy et al. 2002). Indeed, archaeological excavations conducted in southern Siberia have confirmed that the Iron Age Scythians engaged in scalping (Murphy et al. 2002). Moreover, recent findings indicate that scalping in western Siberia was an ancient practice dating back to 780 BC (Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005).

Remarkably, there is a report of the persistence of scalping by some traditional peoples of western Siberia continuing through the early 1930s. The case involved an ethnic conflict between the Khanty-Ugry people and some Soviet representatives. Several communists were killed and subsequently scalped by the tribe (Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005; Golovnev 1995; Tabarev, personal communication 2005).

Further references to trophy taking can be found in the deuterocanonical books of the Bible. The Book of Judith relates how Nebuchadnezzar II (who reigned 605–562 BC) dispatched his general Holofernes to subdue the Jews who were besieged at Bethulia. So as to avert a surrender, and after having fasted and prayed, a beguiling Jewish widow named Judith (who was quite beautiful) ingratiated herself with the Assyrian general and subsequently decapitated the military leader. Upon hearing of the death of Holofernes, the Assyrians panicked and were easily defeated by Jewish forces. This Biblical account is as follows: “Judith was left alone in the tent with Holofernes, who lay prostrate in his bed for he was sodden with wine. She had ordered her maid to stand outside the bedroom and wait . . . . She went to the bedpost near the head of Holofernes and taking his sword from it, drew close to the bed, grasped the hair of his head and said, ‘Strengthen me this day, O God of Israel!’ Then with all her might she struck him twice in the neck and cut off his head . . . . Soon afterward, she came out and handed over the head to her maid, who put it in her food pouch” (Judith 13:2-3,6-7). Upon their return to Bethulia, Judith took the head out of the pouch, showed it to them and said, “Here is the head of Holofernes, general in charge of the Assyrian army” (Judith 13:15). “Then Judith said to them, ‘Listen to me brothers, take this head and hang it on the parapet of your wall’” (Judith 14:1) and upon realizing what had transpired “those [Assyrians] still in their tents were amazed and overcome with fear and trembling. No one kept ranks any longer; scattered in all directions and fled along every road . . . . Then all the Israelite warriors overwhelmed them” (Judith 15:1-2).

Another deuterocanonical example of trophy taking involves second-century BC Israelites and how they avenged their Seleucid persecutors: “Then the Jews collected the spoils and booty; they cut off the head of Nicanor [a Seleucid general] and his arm, which he had lifted up so arrogantly. These they brought to Jerusalem and displayed there” (1 Maccabees 7:47). Scalping is also mentioned in the Old Testament as the following reference describes the tortures inflicted

on second-century BC Jewish captives: "At that the king [the Seleucid Antiochus Epiphanes], in a fury, gave orders to have pans and cauldrons heated . . . . He commanded his executioners to cut out the tongue of the one who had spoken for the others, to scalp him and cut off his hands and feet, while the rest of his brothers and mother looked on" (2 Maccabees 7:3-4).

It has also been reported that some Jewish and other Semitic groups were known to take and keep human heads in the belief that these body parts could prophesy (Onians 1973). However, the most infamous Biblical example of the display of a severed body part is found in the New Testament: After being delighted by a dance performed by Herodia's daughter, Herod said to the girl, "Ask of me whatever you wish and I will grant it to you" (Mark 6:22). After consulting with her mother, the girl replied, "I want you to give me at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist" (Mark 6:24). Herod then, "promptly dispatched an executioner with orders to bring back his head. He went off and beheaded him in the prison. He brought in the head on a platter and gave it to the girl. The girl in turn gave it to her mother" (Mark 6:27-28).

The Celts (~800 BC to the first century AD) had established communities from Ireland to the Middle East at the height of their expansion. The severed head appears to have had great significance as disarticulated crania have been recovered throughout the Celtic temporal and spatial regions. These large-scale trophy takers were known to attach the heads of vanquished foes to the necks of their horses (Le Barre 1984; Fairgrove 1997). The Celts sometimes took the heads of the slain and placed them on their houses so as to receive protection from their enemy's ghosts (Onians 1973). In 216 BC, a Roman General named Postimius met his end at the hands of the Celts who decapitated him and triumphantly carried their prize to their most sacred temple. They then fashioned the victim's crania into a sacred drinking vessel by gilding the skull, which thereafter was employed by priests and temple attendants. The Celts would embalm the heads of their most distinguished enemies using cedar oil so as to preserve them for celebratory displays (Le Barre 1984; Fairgrove 1997). Perhaps one of the best-known examples of the exhibition of human body parts by Celtic peoples is found at the great stone shrine at Roquepertuse in France. At this location, niches were built into the walls in order to display human skulls (several crania remain in place). This sanctuary was eventually destroyed by the Romans in the late second century (Le Barre 1984). Additional evidence of the Celtic trophy head cult can be found at a second-century AD hill fort at Entremont, France, where a stone pillar was found with numerous severed human heads carved into it (Piggot 1965).

At the Karlstein site in Germany, skulls dating to the time of the Roman Emperor Hadrian (AD 117–138) were found with signs of having been subjected to trauma along with telltale scalp marks on the frontal bone (Murphy et al. 2002) and Roman coins have been recovered depicting Celtic warriors brandishing severed heads (Sear 1998). Human crania were sometimes used by the Romans for drinking. One skull cap recovered at Pompeii had been mounted in precious metals with the following inscription in Greek: "Drink and you shall live for many

years" (Le Barre 1984:23). However, the most infamous act of trophy taking was committed by Emperor Nero against the Christians (as scapegoats) in response to the great fire of AD 67 at Rome: "Nero substituted as culprits, and punished with the utmost refinements of cruelty, a class of men . . . whom the crowd styled Christians . . . . First, then, the confessed members of the sect were arrested; next, on the disclosures, vast numbers were convicted . . . and derision accompanied their end; they were covered with wild beasts' skins and torn to death by dogs; or they were fastened on crosses, and, when daylight failed, were burned to serve as lamps by night" (Tacitus, cited in Bennet 2002:74).

The first example of early Christians carefully preserving and publicly revering the remains of individuals who had been martyred for their faith during the various Roman persecutions dates from ca. AD 110: "Thus did the pagans cast him to the wild beasts . . . so that the desire of the holy martyr Ignatius be fulfilled. For only the harder portions of his holy remains were left, which were conveyed to Antioch and wrapped in linen, as an inestimable treasure left to the holy Church by the grace which was in the martyr" (Eusebius, quoted in Bennet 2002:149).

The Early Church practice of exhibiting the physical remains of individuals considered to be saints continues to this very day among many Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians (Bennet 2002; Cruz 1991). In fact, Ignatius' few remaining bones are venerated by pilgrims at the Basilica of St. Clement in Rome where his relics have lain since AD 637 (O'Connor 2004).

The significance associated with the physical remains of deceased individuals considered to have led holy lives can be seen in the following incident that took place in November of 2004. In a gesture of goodwill, the Vatican returned the relics of St. John Chrysostom (which had been taken to Rome by monks in the eighth century to escape destruction by iconoclasts) along with those of St. Gregory Nazianzen (whose remains probably came to Rome at the time of the Latin rule of Constantinople, ca. 1204–1258). The relics were returned to the St. George Orthodox Cathedral in Istanbul (Helicke 2004; Polk 2004; Simpson 2004).

Scalping was a "rite in the ancient Germanic code of the Visigoths (fourth and fifth centuries), where the *decalvare* of the enemy is reported as *capillos et cutem detrhere*" (Reese 1940:7). The Byzantine general Belisarius (ca. AD 505–565) reported the practice of scalping during his military campaigns against the Vandals and Ostrogoths (Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005). In Flodard of Rheims' (AD 812–866) archival collections, Anglo-Saxons as well as the Franks are reported to have scalped their enemies. These documents provide the last historical references to European scalping (Axtell and Sturtevant 1980; Borodovsky and Tabarev 2005; Burton 1864; Miller 1994; Neiburger 1989; Owsley 1994).

While the practice of scalping apparently disappears from Europe at this time, the taking and displaying of human heads continued. Medieval Christians not only executed criminals, but they also set the severed heads on stakes to serve as a deterrent. Some European rulers fashioned receptacles from the crania of defeated enemies. For example, in AD 880, Prince Krom of Bulgaria commissioned

that a drinking cup be made from the skull of his former rival, the Byzantine Emperor Nicephoros II (Le Barre 1984).

There is ample documentation of trophy taking by both Christian and Muslim forces during the Crusades, as the following example illustrates: A particularly brave Frenchman belonging to the Military Order of the Knights Templar named Jakelin Mailly was killed by a Muslim raiding party in Galilee in 1187. Mailly's exceptional courage in battle was noticed by his adversaries as one chronicler wrote, "Such a great number of Turks had rushed in to attack, and this one man [Mailly] had fought for so long against so many battalions, that the [agricultural] field in which they stood was completely reduced to dust and there was not a trace of the crop to be seen. It is said that there were some who sprinkled the body of the dead man with dust and placed dust on their heads, believing that they would draw courage from the contact . . . . In fact, rumor has it that one person was moved with more fervor than the rest. He cut off the man's genitals, and kept them safe for begetting children so that even when dead the man's members—if such a thing were possible—would produce an heir with courage as great as his" (Tyerman 2004:2).

The Scottish patriot William Wallace was captured and horribly executed by the English in 1305. He was first hung, then drawn and quartered with his head eventually being placed on a spike on the London Bridge with his severed limbs being displayed separately in various localities throughout England (Wallace 2003). The practice of displaying heads on the London Bridge would continue for the next 355 years with many heads being dipped in tar so as to preserve them from the elements. The exhibition of severed heads on the London Bridge would come to an end following the restoration of King Charles II (London 2003). During the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603), English military officers employed the public display of severed heads to subdue the Irish population. The paths leading to the tents of military commanders would be lined with the skulls of Irishmen (Axtell and Sturtevant 1980). In this manner did English authorities employ the display of body parts as a means of terrorizing the Irish.

Trophy taking among the English continued into the Victorian era as the following recorded incident illustrates: "A serving wench is wronged by the son of the house, then driven away pregnant as a fallen woman. Forced to work on the streets, years later she becomes the madam of a brothel. One day, who should walk in but her ex-lover. She kills him, cuts off his head, and has the skull set in silver. Every night she drinks wine out of it. It makes the taste sweeter" (Barley 1995:215) <sup>5</sup>.

In the 1680s, Europeans traveling in the West African kingdom of Whydah reported that the great majority of prisoners taken in battle were left in the hands of their captors and the heads brought back as trophies remained in the possession of those who took them. There were also reports that thieves were punished by decapitation and by having their genitalia removed. Both the head and private parts of the criminal were brought to the king's palace where the thief's relatives could pay a fine in order to redeem the severed body parts (Law 1989, 1992).

In the Dahomian Kingdom (ca. 1720s), captured enemies were decapitated as part of a ceremonial offering designed to honor royal ancestors. The disarticulated heads resulting from these public sacrifices were regularly preserved for display. Moreover, as late as the 1840s, the bones of enemies, considered to be a source of great wealth for rulers, were sometimes incorporated into the architecture of royal palaces (Law 1989). In 1845–1846, the dried scalps of up to 700 vanquished enemies were publicly exhibited in West Africa as trophies (Burton 1864).

European powers operating in Africa committed countless atrocities against local peoples and in many cases these acts included the taking and displaying of various body parts. In 1885, Belgium's King Leopold II established the Congo Free State with the goal of extracting the region's wild natural rubber by coercing local populations to tap latex. There were severe punishments for those who did not meet their quotas, as Charles Lemaire (a former government official) would later admit after his retirement: "During my time in the Congo, I was the first commissioner of the Equatorial district . . . I wrote to the government, 'To gather rubber in the district . . . one must cut hands'" (Hochschild 1998:165). If a village refused to meet the rubber quota, intransigent individuals would be killed by Leopold's enforcers who severed the right hands of their victims and then presented them to their superiors as tangible proof that the ordered executions had taken place (Hochschild 1998).

A Catholic priest recorded the region's oral history and quotes a man from the area named Tsawambe, who spoke of one particularly cruel European enforcer: "From all the bodies killed in the field, you had to cut off the hands. He wanted to see the number of hands cut off by each soldier, who had to bring them in baskets . . . . A village which refused to provide rubber would be completely swept clean" (Hochschild 1998:166). This is why some military units had what was termed a "keeper of the hands" whose job it was to preserve (smoke) the severed hands (Hochschild 1998). In the late 1800s, a British journalist traveling through the Stanley Falls region visited the post of Captain Leon Com of the Force Publique. There he described the aftermath of a punitive military expedition against a population who had opposed Leopold's rule. "Many women and children, and twenty-one heads were brought to the falls, and have been used by Captain Rom as a decoration round a flower-bed in front of his house!" (Hochschild 1998:145).

The tradition of trophy taking in Africa continued well into the twentieth century. Every Afar tribesman sought external marks of his military prowess, and his victims were castrated to furnish the warrior with tangible proof of his valor. Some contend that warriors wore severed genitalia around their necks while others report that these items were hung within huts (Lewis 1955).

Life among the Balkan Montenegrin tribesmen of the early 1800s was marked by internal blood feuds along with the activities of raiding parties designed to take heads from the neighboring Ottoman Turks. In fact, the Eastern Orthodox Bishop of Montenegro was known to have encouraged military expeditions to take Turkish heads and also to have allowed the public display of such trophies on a

tower in the main monastery in Cetinje (Boehm 1984). The Montenegrins raided for heads, livestock, or women, and would sometimes prod their less bellicose Serbian or Albanian neighbors into rising up and casting off the Ottoman yoke which was not above carrying Christians off into slavery (Boehm 1984). However, "raiding was also pursued as a kind of sport or test of manhood; and after a raid on Moslems, many a Montenegrin youth brought home his first human head to his mother, as a proud mark of manly accomplishment" (Boehm 1984:46). Traditional blood feuding and headhunting in the Balkans continued until the establishment of a confederation in the Montenegrin region in 1841 (Boehm 1984; Otterbein 1994).

European colonials continued trophy taking in the Americas during the nineteenth century. In 1810, Padre Miguel Hidalgo called for Mexican independence and was later decapitated by the Spaniards after a failed revolutionary attempt. His severed head was publicly displayed in a cage for a decade by the colonial authorities as a warning to others who might follow in his footsteps. Today, Hidalgo is considered to be the father of the Mexican independence movement, and so this same skull is now reverently displayed (under glass on red velvet) in a burial vault under the Independence Monument in a place of honor befitting a revolutionary hero (Osmond 1998; Stevenson 1998; Walker 2001). One need look no further than modern-day Russia for similar veneration of the founding father, Vladimir Lenin, who remains on public display despite the fall of the former Soviet Union (Stevenson 1998).

In 1870, a group of Cistercian monks contracted a woodcarver to redecorate the interior of their fourteenth-century chapel (presently located in the Czech town of Sedlec). The craftsman employed over 40,000 disinterred human bones to create truly unique patterns and displays for all to see inside the sanctuary (Kutna 2005; Walker 2000).

It is important to note that Europeans continued the practice of publicly displaying human bodies (and body parts) well into the modern era by actually transporting African "trophies" for display in various museums. Perhaps the most infamous case of European trophy taking involving an African woman named Sarrtje Baartman who, in 1810, was taken to England for exhibition in various side shows. In London, she was paraded about much like an animal in a circus in front of an audience who paid to gawk at her unusual anatomy. Customers who wished to touch her buttocks were charged an additional fee. She was sold to a Parisian animal trainer who occasionally rented her out as entertainment for dinner parties. Upon her death in 1816, Baartman's body was dissected, her bones were defleshed and her skeleton was mounted and placed on display in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris. Her brain and external genitalia were preserved in sealed jars containing embalming fluid and were put on view. Remarkably, the exhibition of her skeletal remains and organs were continued until they were removed from public view in 1974 (Tobias 2002). On May 3, 2002, the French government returned the remains of Sarrtje Baartman to the South African government for proper burial ("Return of Hottentot 2002").