

Preface

This volume represents the efforts and contributions of the next generation of rock art researchers. This diverse and up-and-coming group have one thing in common—their rock art research has developed in the university setting. The academic pursuit of rock art research is not new, but the recent proliferation of rock art-related investigations at the graduate level and its impact on the discipline as a whole are fueling the productivity and standards of this research domain.

From 2001 to 2003, graduate student rock art research sessions were organized at the Society for American Archaeology meetings to give these investigators a venue to present their work to the professional community. The high quality of the papers was a pleasant surprise and elicited a strong and positive response. Indeed, the crowds that clogged the session room chairs, aisles and doorways demonstrated how important and far-reaching these papers could be. The work needed to be made available and distributed to an even bigger audience; it needed to be put into print.

The volume has developed from the efforts of the first two session organizers, Marilyn Sklar and Jennifer Huang, who initiated the project and first compiled the 2001-2002 papers. Elisabeth joined the project a short time later to include the 2003 session, and it was at this point that the American Rock Art Research Association agreed to fully fund the volume. Ultimately, this compilation represents the editorial endeavors of Jennifer and Elisabeth to present recent research of a new generation of scholars to members of the related disciplines, focusing strongly on the archaeological community.

Many presenters from those three sessions had plans to publish or had already published their research, and therefore did not participate in this volume (see the Appendix for a complete list of participants in all three sessions). But the papers here are a terrific representation of the broad scope of work detailed at the sessions and that is still ongoing today. Readers will find that while prehistoric art is the primary focus of each study, these papers, and rock art research in general, are integrative. These scholarly pursuits speak to archaeology, ethnology, art history, chemistry, museum studies and conservation, to name but a few disciplines involved. In addition, their geographic foci are global.

We decided to organize the volume by region to highlight the papers' diverse contents. The volume begins in Central America, moves to South America, then across the Pacific Ocean to New Zealand and Australia. From there, the papers jump to South Africa and Europe, finally coming around to the North American Southwest, West and Great Basin regions. The diversity of the papers is obvious, but as you read through this volume, pay close attention to the details that unify and connect the students' research in surprising and illuminating ways. You will begin to see great potential in the future of rock art research.

It is important to note that all figures, tables and photographs, unless otherwise stated, were created by the authors. In addition, while the content of the chapters and any claims made within are the sole responsibility of the authors, any errors incurred during layout of the text or graphics are the full and accepted responsibility of the editors.

Both editors are grateful to the many people who helped see this volume through to the end. We are indebted to the many anonymous reviewers who volunteered their time and expertise to constructively critique and improve each paper. There were more than two dozen people who acted as reviewers for this volume, and we are particularly appreciative. We must also thank the ARARA publication committee members over the years who have helped guide us into and through the world of publication editing; their suggestions and comments kept us on the right track. We would like to extend a particular thank you to Dr. Marvin Rowe for writing the wonderful introduction to this volume. It was his generous comment regarding the quality of the student sessions that encouraged the pursuit of this project. We are indebted to him for that courage and for his continued support and participation.

In addition, the editors would like to individually thank those who have supported our efforts.

From Jenny: I would like to thank all of the authors from the two sessions that I organized for sticking with me through this long and drawn-out process. It has been a hard road, but the authors were always there, cheering the project on, and willing to do whatever they could to see it through. Thank you all! I am also indebted to my fabulous, brilliant husband for picking me up and dusting me off during the several set-backs this volume inevitably faced. Wayne, you are my everything and I love you for watching my back and urging me forward! I also wish to thank my advisor, Peter Welsh, for patiently following this volume's progress without chastising my priorities when I should have been working on my thesis!

And finally, last but not least, I want to thank my co-editor for being there even when she wasn't physically able, and for attacking the tasks of this volume with a sense of nobility and pride, which turned out to be completely contagious. Thank you, Elisabeth!

From Elisabeth: I too would like to thank the volume contributors. This must always be a difficult process, but these authors have cheerfully suffered through neophyte editors, changing deadlines and constant demands. Your patience and hard work is appreciated. A special thanks to Phil Hoog for the emergency help at not such a good time! I would especially like to thank my advisor, Kelley Hays-Gilpin. Throughout my career at NAU and specifically with the challenges of this volume, she has offered high standards, support and sage advice. I thank my entire committee and the NAU anthropology faculty for their patience as my thesis sat unattended in favor of this publication and its lessons. But of all of the people who have been involved in this project, it is Jennifer Huang who has persisted from start to finish, through authors' crises and editors' crises. It is because of Jennifer that we can reach a broad audience and help shape the discipline. If I take nothing more from this project but a fraction of your patience, good sense and professionalism, I have gained an enormous amount! It has been a real privilege to do this with you!

So while many of the student presenters and authors in this volume have completed their degrees and become professionals out there in the world, we urge you to keep an eye on the students of rock art research in your area of study. Their work is leaving an impression on the discipline as a whole. Students are making marks!