

The Chumash Internet Project

[2002 Commentary]

Welcome to the homepage of the Chumash Internet Project. Web pages in this matrix focus on the Chumash Indians of California. They have been written by John M. Anderson.

Below are answers to frequently asked questions [faq's].

Project Status: The project is now in an inactive mode, until funds are found to continuously update the content and hire staff to answer email questions. Most of these pages will remain on the internet for you to look at, however.

Faq #1 -- How many people read these web pages on the Chumash Indians?

As of June 2001, some 200,000 readers have logged onto our web pages. [By November 2002, it was around 300,000 hits]

Our main Chumash web page lists the contemporary Chumash councils. This single web page will register over 59,000 hits as of early June, 2001. [John Anderson, June 2, 2001] By November 2002, it had over 123,00 hits.

Faq #2 -- Why doesn't the staff at the Internet Project answer my questions right away?

There is no staff to answer your questions. The project is on 'inactive' status. John is working on the Coastal Band's federal re-recognition history project in 2002-2003.

Faq #3 -- My family has Chumash ties. Can you help me learn more about Chumash genealogy?

John's interests are in Chumash mythology, religion, and ethnohistory. He is not a genealogist and can't help the many families who make contact in hopes of tracing their family heritage.

The Chumash are deeply divided over genealogical issues, and if you are seeking family information there is no one place you can go for confirmation of your ancestry.

For some years, I maintained a web page citing government, academic, and other sources on genealogy. It warned the reader to keep in mind that each of those email sources has its own slant on who is and

who is not a Chumash. You may need a strong ego to pursue genealogy issues. [This web page is no longer maintained].

Faq #4 -- Who funds these web pages?

The Chumash Internet Project was funded by John and his wife Jill. The project is run from a small office in their north Idaho home, cluttered with research files and books and piles of paper.

Faq #5 -- Does John Anderson speak officially for any Chumash group?

No, he speaks only for himself. To make this clear to the reader, a disclaimer is added to the bottom of each web page that reads something like: "This web page represents the views of the author, and does not necessarily represent the views of the Chumash Indians, either individually or in a group."

Faq #6 -- Do all Chumash people agree with John Anderson's views?

No.

The Chumash are a complex people, with many differing factions. It is impossible to address any serious problem facing the Chumash, without someone finding your remarks objectionable on some level. And that is what makes the internet so interesting.

Piles of emails inches thick are stacked on John's desk, above the computer. Many are from Chumash people who praise specific web pages and cordially thank John for his efforts to educate the public about contemporary issues facing the Chumash. John corresponds with the various Chumash councils fairly regularly, to make sure that his commentary is accurate and to inquire about current activities of the councils.

Faq #7 -- How can I get in touch with Chumash who disagree with John Anderson's views?

Try contacting the various Chumash Councils. Each council is different, and you can always ask them for someone to talk to who disagrees with the commentary in my web pages.

You could also read my web pages. A number contain criticism of my views. Commentary by Sipish, for example, is quite critical. And the dialogue between Brian Haley and John makes for some interesting reading.

Faq #8 -- Just because someone calls themselves a Chumash in a news story or on one of your web pages,

does that mean they are really Chumash?

"No, not necessarily. Our policy has been to try to identify alternative sources of information on the Chumash, especially information on the internet. We tell the public where to find this information, and let them decide for themselves who is an authentic Chumash.

This is a very complicated issue, and certainly beyond the ability of our modest Internet Project to attempt to solve.

People are very interested in Chumash issues, and the universities, museums, and the Santa Ynez Reservation are not the only sources of information, nor are they the only sources of legitimacy for 'Chumashness.' When in doubt, we ask the various Chumash councils for advice, as well as scholars and tribal members with whom we have kept in touch over twenty years of doing Chumash research.

Determining who is a Chumash is what the federal recognition process should be about. This is why it is so important to move forward with the federal recognition procedure for the various non reservation Chumash. This procedure is stressful, frustrating, expensive, and often divisive but is a necessity if the non reservation Chumash are to establish their legal status with the federal government. And that is necessary if they hope to gain a federally protected land base, like the Samala branch of the Chumash has done at Santa Ynez. [John Anderson, June 1, 2001]

Faq #9 -- How are your web pages organized?

The core web pages, as of early June 1, 2001, are:

Chumash Councils ---59,000 hits [127,000 as of November 2002].

Chumash Topics I --- 16,658 [29,410 as of November 2002].

Chumash Topics II -- 4,117 [7,125 as of November 2002].

[These pages were later removed from the internet]

Faq #10 -- How many Hits Do the Different Council Have Now?

SLO5,708 [17,321 as of Nov. 2002]

Coastal Band4,682 [13,433 as of Nov. 2002].

Ventura 3,455 [9,614 as of Nov. 2002]

Kern County2,628 [4,909 as of Nov. 2002]

San Fernando1,767 [4,783 as of Nov. 2002]

Barbareno743 [2,795 as of Nov. 2002].

* These figures partially reflect the number of years different council pages have been online. This is especially the case for the Coastal Band, which maintained its own web page for a long time. It had many hits before closing down, and these are not reflected on the page counter on our newer page.

The secondary page, linked to the main council page, describes area of Chumash aboriginal influence which do not have contemporary councils. It has 2,332 hits [7,501 as of Nov. 2002]. Also check: Kagismuwas at 4134 hits [8,997 as of Nov. 2002], and Chumash Islanders at 11,494 [20,710 as of Nov. 2002].

; Faq #11 -- I want to read the most frequently read web pages in your large collection. Which one's are they?

Some of the most read web pages are:

The Chumash Islanders at 11,494 hits [20,710 as of Nov 2002]; The Invisible History of the Chumash Islanders at 3,187 hits []; Gold Rush Commentary []; Point Conception as a sacred site at 1,792 [3,627 as of Nov. 2002]; Jonjonata at 1,396 [2,260 as of Nov. 2002], Sacred Chumash sites at 1,339 [3,109 as of Nov. 2002]; Fort Tejon at 1,135 [2,163 as of Nov. 2002]; Tejon Indians at 1,257 [3,306 as Nov. 2002], Chumash gold mining at 1,007 [4,827 as of Nov. 2002]; and so forth. The total number of web pages are over 200 now, covering a wide range of topics. They are linked to one another in various ways, so in many cases an interested reader could follow links for hours of reading before initiating a new computer search.

Faq #12 --How did the Chumash Internet Project get started, and when will it be revived?

The project began with a couple of basic web pages, listing the various Chumash councils and discussing some controversial issues that were of interest to me. These were entered in the late 1990's. Eventually the project grew too large for me to handle. People from all over the country were emailing me, asking questions about my pages, wanting genealogical data, information on Chumash social and religious events, etc. After a couple of years, my typical email list for any given day was over a hundred emails long. That was not a hundred emails a day, but a backlog of a hundred emails still to deal with. My research came to a standstill. I was working full time, and could not adequately answer all these inquiries.

Faq#13 --Where Can I learn about Chumash religion and sacred sites?

You can read excerpts from John's books, such as: [Kuta](#) and [Circle Within the Abyss](#).

Faq #14 - Where can I go to read about the newest controversies impacting the Chumash?

The importance of Chumash participation in National Park Service hearings on the Gaviota Coast is an issue of great importance. You can read about it at: [Seashore Planning](#) and [More](#).

Faq #15 - How can I learn more about John Anderson?

See [John](#).

Faq #16 - What were the strengths and weaknesses of this internet project?

The greatest strength that has been shown from these years of development is the independence of the views and information expressed. People can, and do, use existing local, state, and federal agencies to acquire information about the Chumash. But museums, state parks, libraries, and other facilities are limited in their freedom of action, typically moving at a snail's pace, and dealing timidly with controversial issues and/or offending any faction of the Chumash.

Without the internet, I could not have reached as many people with my commentary, nor supplemented park service and museum information with critiques of their programming, content, etc. I remain appreciative of the internet's capabilities in this realm, for I believe that the information that reaches the public through museums and park service staff is highly filtered and doggedly cautious. This probably will always be the case, so it will be up to others to fill in the information and opinion voids.

My initial target audience was non-Chumash who wanted to learn more about native Californians and were interested in the ethical dilemmas facing them as they confronted public policy issues related to the Chumash. I anticipated that scholars and Chumash would look at these pages, but did not expect a heavy response from either. My targeted audience was the general public and students, and they have consistently proven to be a primary reader base. There remains an ongoing need, on the other hand, for increased internet content for scholars studying Native Californians such as the Chumash!

It is fascinating to me that my efforts to discuss issues with state and federal staff came to little, while my dialogue with the non reservation Chumash grew slowly but surely over the years. At first few Chumash had personal computers, but that has definitely changed by now. By the time Jill and I decided that I had to put the project on hold, my communications with the non reservation Chumash had become a major component of my correspondence. The non reservation Chumash councils are more outspoken than ever, and public interest in their views had increased considerably, based on the emails that I received in the last year." [John Anderson, June 4, 2001]

Faq #17 - Many of your web pages involve academic debates over the role of anthropologists and archaeologists, in government programs designed to study and regulate Native American communities. What is your relationship with University of California, departments of anthropology, the Santa Barbara Museum anthropology department, and other mainstream staff in local, state, and federal programs?

As a result of my open criticism of government and academic programs involved in the study and regulation of Native American culture, my current relationship with scholars in these institutions remained strained. You can read samples of my commentary at [Jonjonata](#), at [Point Conception](#), at [Fort Tejon](#), and at [Critique of Fort Tejon Public History](#).

You can also read a long dialogue between Dr. Brian Haley and myself, over the impact of his 1997 article in the journal called *Current Anthropology*, co-authored with Larry Wilcoxon at [Haley/Wilcoxon](#).

Last year I wrote a [web page](#) critical of Haley's article on so-called "responsible research" on Native Americans. When I came back from presenting my recent historical research findings to a November conference on federal re-recognition for the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation (Buellton), I learned of a new article by Haley, published in the Swedish journal of Native American studies, called *CATA Americana*.

Much to my disappointment, Haley denounced me as a "pseudo-scholar" who has launched an "idiosyncratic and ill-informed campaign" to delegitimize his research (120). In spite of some thirty years of research, during which I published peer reviewed articles in national journals and published two peer reviewed dissertations, Haley curiously dismissed me as a "layman" who publishes without peer review.

In spite of the opening phrase of his article title, "Going Deeper," Haley's blustering language and misinformed personal attacks offer the reader little understanding of the deep social and academic issues that divide his commentary from mine.

I have a masters in philosophy from the University of Wisconsin, and a Ph.D from the interdisciplinary field of Educational Policy Studies, Madison, Wisconsin. This Ph. D program was designed to bring historians, sociologists, and philosophers together in an interdisciplinary dialogue. My MA. and Ph. D. dissertations focused on community theory, specifically epistemological issues impacted by community ideals. Until 1980, I focused my research and writings on the dissemination of data and program assessment for the expanding community of users of instructional improvement information in postsecondary education. After 1980, I shifted my research to the study of Native California communities, including the Chumash and Tejon Indians. In spite of my degrees and multidisciplinary training in research, Haley insisted in this new this recent article that I am a "layperson who lends a misleading air of scholarly authority to his self-published ethnohistory and mythology booklets by placing "Dr." in front of his name."

I just don't know where to go from here, in trying to keep a dialogue going with this young scholar. He appears to have sunk into the depths of discourtesy. I published for more than a quarter century before he got his degree. A number of my colleagues have suggested that I give him another quarter of a century, before responding again to his misleading personal attacks.' [John Anderson, November 19, 2002].

Faq #18 - How will the Project be revived?

"When it is time to get this internet project back in business, I will focus on a couple of goals. One is to expand my commentary pages, but to do this and continue answering the many emails I would need to identify a funding source I would enjoy keeping myself involved in this fascinating internet community, of both Chumash and non-Chumash who have so much to learn from one another.

But there are other aspects of the project which do not necessarily involve my continued participation. They involve basic information on contemporary Chumash activities, and they could be funded through the Chumash councils themselves if they succeed in gaining federal recognition. [John Anderson, June 4, 2001].

The Chumash Internet Project web pages have been available on the internet for two decades. Some of these pages provides excerpts from the author's short books and articles from the 1990's to the 2010's. Others provided commentary on social issues impacting the Chumash and other native Californians in these decades.

In 2019, the John M. Anderson Library Project was initiated with the purpose of making the full texts of a number of his larger books available for free download on the internet by 2020. When these texts become available, you will be able to access them at the g-mail address listed below.

Email: jandersonlibrary@gmail.com