

Publicly Engaged Humanities

UNH anthropologist receives fellowship to establish museum in Belize

Friday, March 3, 2017



ELEANOR HARRISON-BUCK, AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE HAS BEEN AWARDED A \$50,000 WHITING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FELLOWSHIP TO ESTABLISH A PUBLIC HISTORY MUSEUM IN BELIZE THAT FOCUSES ON THE KRIOL (CREOLE) COMMUNITY.

Eleanor Harrison-Buck, associate professor of anthropology, has been awarded a \$50,000 Whiting Public Engagement Fellowship to establish a public history museum in Belize that focuses on the Kriol (Creole) community.

More than a third of the population of Belize is part of the Kriol

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community descended from enslaved Africans brought to the country by Europeans in the 18th and 19th century.

“The legacy of British colonialism in Belize is strong: national school curricula, offerings at the national museum and a booming tourism market all tend to focus on the ancient Maya and colonial periods with little emphasis on the rich history and culture of the Kriol,” says Harrison-Buck. “I’ve conducted archaeological research in Belize for more than 25 years and helped to establish a temporary exhibit on Kriol culture last summer. It’s time there is a permanent record of this community.”

Harrison-Buck will work in collaboration with Kriol community leaders, educators and local and regional authorities. The new museum, housed in a building donated by the town of Crooked Tree, will include local oral histories, artifacts, images and stories to present the culture to tourists, teachers and students.

Her research focuses on the classic Maya “collapse” period and subsequent Spanish and British colonial periods in Belize. Since 2009 she has directed the Belize River East Archaeology project, examining the history of the eastern watershed from preclassic to colonial times. Through her work she uncovered the history of the Kriol culture and heritage.

The Whiting Public Engagement Fellowship celebrates and supports faculty in the humanities who embrace public engagement as part of the scholarly vocation. She will receive a year-long leave to pursue this public-facing project and has secured external funding from the Alphawood Foundation of Chicago to help support the project costs. Harrison-Buck was one of eight humanities scholars around the country to receive the fellowship. The goal of every Whiting-funded project is to engage a public audience in the richness of the humanities.

WRITTEN [Erika Mantz](#) | Communications and Public Affairs |

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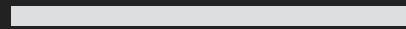
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