



Dear Dr. Brown:

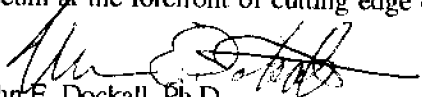
July 9, 2002

This is a letter of interest in pursuing collaborative digitization projects with the North Dakota State University (NDSU) Archaeology Technologies Laboratory (ATL). The project(s) that I am interested in have broad application to Digital Archive Network for Anthropology (DANA), Immersive Virtual Environments (IVE) and Virtual Museums Exhibits (VME) projects that are currently underway at the ATL.

The Bishop Museum has significant holdings of stone tools from across the Pacific region representing Micronesia, Melanesia, and Eastern and Western Polynesia. These collections are significant from the standpoint that they represent a key line of evidence for addressing such regional topics as seafaring, technological developments, economic exchange, and craft specialization.

I would like to pursue collaboration through preparation of joint grant proposals for submission to both private and public funding sources. James Landrum of the ATL at NDSU has elaborated upon this in a recent presentation to you. Stone tools represent a very viable venue for funding pursuits. These artifacts are a pervasive part of Pacific Island adaptive technology and have been used by researchers as a measure for establishing inter-island and inter-archipelago contact, trade, and migrations. This is especially true for stone tools such as adzes, which have, in a sense, become the hallmark stone artifact for Pacific Island groups. Archaeological research has documented stylistic, morphological, and technological similarities and differences among adze forms but there has, as yet, been no attempt at an overall comparative synthesis of adze forms in the Pacific. By focusing initial efforts on Bishop Museum adze collections from various regions across the Pacific, the basic groundwork for broader comparative studies can be initiated. The information that results from collaborative Bishop Museum and NDSU/ATL projects can be utilized by other researchers or incorporated into a wide array of educational products such as VME or IVE.

Such collaborative projects between NDSU/ATL and the Bishop Museum will provide greater access to Bishop Museum collections via the creation and maintenance of shared databases and multimedia archives. Not only will this make our collections more accessible to researchers, educators, and students around the world, but would enable the Bishop Museum to expand collections access without subjecting these collections to repeated handling and damage. Three-dimensional images of stone adzes provide a unique way of presenting data on artifacts manufactured of natural materials such as stone that are not conveniently conveyed in two-dimensional images or in conventionally published articles. Three-dimensional images in combination with contextual and technological information on each collection and representative adzes will provide a dynamic and interactive educational and research tool to all individuals with an interest in Hawaiian and Pacific material culture. These types of projects also place the collections of the Bishop Museum at the forefront of cutting edge collections-based research and information technology.



John E. Dockall, Ph.D.
Archaeologist/Anthropologist
Hawaiian and Pacific Studies
jdockall@bishopmuseum.org
(808) 847-8283