Layering Diverse Relationships to Place:
A View from the Top of
Inscription Rock
by Kelsey Hanson

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s “Third Thursday Food for Thought” Dinner Presentation
Thursday February 21, 2019, from 6 to 8:30 p.m.
This month at Karichimaka Mexican Restaurant, 5252 S. Mission Road, Tucson

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Towering high above El Morro Valley in New Mexico, Inscription Rock is a massive sandstone promontory that has attracted diverse groups of people for centuries. Known principally for its early Spanish inscriptions, Inscription Rock manifests a centuries-long reverence in its hundreds of petroglyphs and pictographs, hand-and-toe-hold trails, and pueblos. In this talk, Kelsey Hanson addresses the question “How can we both recognize and protect diverse relationships to a single place without privileging some relationships over others?”

Drawing from ongoing work to nominate the Inscription Rock Archaeological District to the National Register of Historic Places, Hanson demonstrates the importance of underappreciated legal mechanisms for layering historic relationships to places. This developing nomination has two primary goals: to faithfully represent the diversity of historic and ongoing relationships to Inscription Rock and to provide additional layers of federal protection to this significant cultural resource. By including perspectives from multiple stakeholders including representatives from the Pueblo of Acoma, Pueblo of Zuni, and the National Park Service, the nomination seeks to recognize the nuances of historic and ongoing relationships to place. Kelsey’s presentation will highlight the benefits of working with multiple stakeholders and the importance of proactively seeking multiple layers of protection for places of cultural significance.

Guest Speaker Kelsey Hanson holds a B.S. in Anthropology from Grand Valley State University and an M.S. in Anthropology from Illinois State University. She recently escaped the bitter cold of the Midwest to pursue a Ph.D. in the School of Anthropology at The University of Arizona. Her developing doctoral research examines how any why religious practices are taken “underground”—literally and figuratively — by exploring changes to religious performance space and to the execution and deposition of religious objects. An avid caver and a chemist-in-training, Hanson examines these changes through the study of underground caves and noninvasive spectroscopic analyses of paint recipes. Beyond this, she actively seeks creative solutions to heritage management and to make archaeological research accessible, community-oriented, and collaborative.