



[IPCAS Website](#)

## The Calumet • September 2020

Greetings from IPCAS! I hope you've all had a socially distant and healthy summer. My summer flew by and I can't believe September is here. Don't forget that IPCAS *will not* have a regularly scheduled chapter meeting next week. Instead of one lecture next week, we're presenting a [series of lectures and events](#) at the end of the month for the [Colorado Archaeological Society Annual Meeting](#).

Thanks to Dr. Mark Mitchell for sharing findings from Molander with us on August 13. [If you missed Mark's presentation, you can find it here on IPCAS's YouTube channel](#). I hope PCRG can go back! We're looking forward to Dr. Bonnie Clark's presentation on her new book, [Finding Solace in the Soil: An Archaeology of Gardens and Gardeners at Amache](#), on October 15.

Colorado Archaeological Society members should have received a notice last week about an upcoming vote about a dues increase at the CAS Annual Membership Meeting on Saturday, September 26 at 4 pm. The proposed vote would *eliminate the Senior Individual and Senior Family membership categories* as well as *increase dues for Individual to \$20/year, Family to \$30/year, Individual Student to \$10/year, and Family Student to \$15/year* started in 2021. All CAS members are

encouraged to attend the meeting to vote on this and other issues. [Register for the conference through Member365 to secure your spot today.](#) If you'd like to attend the meeting and not the conference, please email [annual.meeting@coloradoarchaeologicalsociety.org](mailto:annual.meeting@coloradoarchaeologicalsociety.org) to request the meeting link and call information. You can also contact [Larry Beidle](#), CAS Executive Secretary, with additional items for the membership meeting.

For those unfamiliar with the CAS dues structure, the vote is on the amount that CAS takes from each chapter per member. The total cost for a membership is decided by individual chapters. While CAS may increase their cost for each membership, IPCAS may or may not change the overall cost of each membership. [Cheryl Damon, IPCAS Treasurer](#), and [Christian Driver, IPCAS Outreach Coordinator](#), will present a breakdown of how the vote impacts IPCAS at the October chapter meeting.

Finally, [please take 10 minutes out of your week to help the Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation with an engagement survey.](#) This survey is helpful for preparing and organizing PAAC classes and more.

Stay safe out there!

*Katy Waechter, Chapter President*

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## Connect With IPCAS



Facebook (@IndianPeaksCAS)



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## Support IPCAS



[Member365: Donate directly to IPCAS](#)

**Amazon:** If you shop on Amazon.com, use [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) and select Colorado Archaeological Society to receive a small portion of all eligible purchases.

**Zazzle:** IPCAS shirts, water bottles and tumblers are available from [our Zazzle store](#).

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## Upcoming Lecture

**There is no regularly scheduled chapter meeting this month!**

[Register today for the 85th Annual Meeting of the Colorado Archaeological Society!](#)

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September 25-26

Virtual Conference



**ANNUAL MEETING**  
OF THE  
COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Keynote address by Wyoming State Archaeologist, Dr. Spencer Pelton.

Stay tuned at [ipc.as.org](http://ipc.as.org) for details on conference speakers, poster session and workshops!

**Hosted by the Indian Peaks Chapter**

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## What We're Reading

- **CAN'T MISS WEBINAR:** On September 2nd, "[Reclaiming the Ancestors: Indigenous and Black Perspectives on Repatriation, Human Rights, and Justice](#)" webinar was broadcast featuring [Dr. Michael Blakey](#), [Dr. Dorothy Lippert](#), [Shannon Martin](#), [Dr. Rachel Watkins](#), and moderated by [Dr. Sonya Atalay](#).
- **EVERYONE HAS ARCHAEOLOGY:** A look at [indigenous peoples' interpretations of their ancestral landscapes and Oral Traditions in Papua New Guinea](#).
- **GOING VIRTUAL:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, [Wyoming's Archaeology Fair has gone virtual](#). Check out [their first videos of Virtual Archaeology Fair](#).
- **COLORADO'S NEWEST STATE PARK:** Get the [low-down on Fishers Peak, Colorado's newest state park, from History Colorado](#).

- **WHAT'S THAT SMELL?:** In both the US and Europe, trained [archaeology-sniffing dogs are helping archaeologists find compounds from human remains](#). (*No photos of human remains shown.*)
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## Feature Article

# How Vulnerable Are We to Collapse?

By **Jim O'Donnell**

Along the cottonwood-lined rivers of southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona, the Mimbres people did something unique: By the year 1000, these farmers were producing stunning ceramics decorated with naturalistic images of fish, people, and rabbits, as well as magical creatures and elaborate geometric patterns. And then, rather abruptly, they stopped.

After roughly a century of higher than normal rainfall, the area the Mimbres inhabited suffered a powerful drought, as indicated by the archaeological record. Big game—already scarce—became even less abundant, and it became harder to grow the beans, corn, and squash that the Mimbres relied on. By about 1150 the Mimbres were no longer making their signature pottery.

This abrupt change in pottery styles has long been considered a sign of a complete societal collapse and disappearance: Many scholars have interpreted it as evidence that when the climate shifted the society fell apart. But Michelle Hegmon, an archaeologist at Arizona State University's School of Human Evolution and Social Change, disagrees with that narrative: "They didn't disappear—they reorganized."

Hegmon and her colleagues have helped to uncover evidence that the Mimbres moved from their centralized villages into smaller hamlets. They let go of their formal plazas and rooms that had been dedicated to ritual purposes. Their material culture became more diverse, and they abandoned their famous ceramic style for imported pottery and locally made knockoffs. Many of them even left the region, migrating to other parts of the U.S. Southwest as well as south into what is now northern Mexico. The ones who stayed expanded their trading connections to

supplement their sedentary farming culture. Perhaps most interesting, the Mimbres were able to accomplish all this reorganization without falling to pieces. Skeletal remains from the period show little evidence of disease, starvation, or violence.

Change is inevitable, but how cultural groups respond to the challenges they face determines whether they are able to cope—or not. Hegmon and her colleagues have turned a spotlight on how and why cultures like the Mimbres adapted and survived in the face of such challenges while other groups collapsed. Over 20 years of research, Hegmon and a handful of other scholars have taken a hard look at several cultures that lived in the American Southwest from about 1000 to 1500 and compared them to communities such as the Norse in Greenland to learn lessons about resilience: how to be nimble in the face of change and what that means for today's societies.

[Read the rest of the article here](#)

*[Jim O'Donnell](#) is a freelance journalist, author, and [conservation photographer](#) who focuses on climate change adaptation, human migration, and public lands.*

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## Upcoming Events

History Colorado | Borderlands Lecture Series: 6-7 p.m., September 24

[Fort Lewis Indian School, 1892-1911](#)

[85th Annual Meeting of the Colorado](#)

September 25-26

[Archaeological Society](#)

[Register through Member365](#)

IPCAS Chapter Meeting, presentation by Dr. Bonnie Clark 7-8 p.m., October 16

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### ***About the Calumet***

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The Calumet is the newsletter of the Indian Peaks Chapter of the Colorado Archaeological Society, and is produced and edited by Daniel J. Schneider in coordination with the board.

Members are encouraged to send ideas and material for The Calumet. All content is subject to review and approval by [the IPCAS Board](#), and may be edited for length, style

and clarity.

The submission deadline is the 3rd Monday of the month for the next month's issue.  
Submissions should be emailed to:

[indianpeaksarchaeology@gmail.com](mailto:indianpeaksarchaeology@gmail.com)

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