



Seminar

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Forgotten Forty-Niners: Native Americans in the California Gold Rush

Tuesday, 12 February, 2019, 2:15 p.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala
www.swedishcollegium.se

S W E D I S H
C O L L E G I U M
for ADVANCED STUDY

ABOUT BENJAMIN MADLEY

Benjamin Madley holds a BA in History from Yale University, an MSt in History from the University of Oxford, and a PhD in History from Yale. He was an Andrew Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at Dartmouth College before he joined the faculty at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Madley is the author of more than a dozen book chapters and articles. His essays have appeared in four edited volumes as well as journals, including *The American Historical Review*, *European History Quarterly*, the *Pacific Historical Review*, and the *Journal of Genocide Research*.

Yale University Press published his first book, *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe, 1846–1873*. It received the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize for History, the Raphael Lemkin Book Award from the Institute for the Study of Genocide, the Charles Redd Center/Phi Alpha Theta Award for the Best Book on the American West, the California Book Awards Gold Medal for Californiana, the Heyday Books History Award, and the Norman Neuerburg Award from the Historical Society of Southern California. It was also named a *New York Times Book Review* Editor's Choice, an *Indian Country Today* Hot List book, a Caroline Bancroft History Prize Honor Book, and a *Choice* magazine Outstanding Academic Title. *True West Magazine* named Madley the Best New Western Author of 2016. In 2018, he received the California Commendation Medal from the Military Department of the State of California. According to California Governor Jerry Brown, "Madley corrects the record with his gripping story of what really happened: the actual genocide of a vibrant civilization, thousands of years in the making."

At SCAS, Madley will be working on a book about Native American miners in the California gold rush.

ABSTRACT

Although their story is almost completely forgotten today, thousands of Native Americans mined in the California gold rush. During the first year of the rush, California Indians and Native Hawaiians comprised more than half of all miners in California. As the rush continued, other Native Americans joined them, traveling from as far away as Alaska, Mexico, Oklahoma, and Kansas. Some worked as slaves. Others discovered rich gold deposits, worked as independent entrepreneurs, or developed new mining technologies. Then, even as Native American gold mining reached its zenith in 1849 and 1850, they faced punitive state taxes and organized violence. Still, many resisted and continued to mine well into the 1860s. Some became wealthy mine owners. Others left the mines to found businesses, write California's first novel, or parlay their new wealth into political careers or business ventures in their home communities. Eventually most left the mines, but these Native Americans played important roles in a world-shaping event. This presentation will tell their story.