

RACHEL L. JOHNSON, MA

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EDUCATION

Expected May 2026	Ph.D. Anthropology, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA Thesis: <i>Ceramic Technological Trajectories of the Upper Puccha Valley, Ancash, Peru (1100 BCE – 900 CE)</i> , Chair: Jason Nesbitt	
2018	M.A. Anthropology, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA	<i>Summa Cum Laude</i>
2016	B.S., B.A. University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA B.S. in Geology, with honors B.A. in Anthropology, with honors Minor: Chemistry; Concentration: Latin American Studies Honors Thesis: <i>Households and Empire: a pXRF study of metal artifacts from Cerro la Virgen</i>	<i>Summa Cum Laude</i>

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Ceramic Chaine Opératoire Analysis and Provenance; Social Identity; Early Complex Societies; the Formative Andes, Upper Amazon, and *Ceja de Selva*; Museum and Legacy Collections Research

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

External

2022	Collections Study Grant, American Museum of Natural History (awarded to Ryan Clasby, PI \$950)	
2021	Rust Family Foundation Archaeology Grant	(\$8,350)
2016	National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	(\$126,000)

Internal

2025	Tulane Graduate Studies Student Association Conference Travel Grant (\$400)	
2024	Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Tulane University (\$25,000)	
2024	Tulane Graduate Studies Student Association Conference Travel Grant (\$200)	
2023	Tulane School of Liberal Arts Graduate Student Summer Research Fellowship (\$3,000)	
2022	Land Fund for School of Liberal Arts Graduate Student Travel, Tulane University (\$1,000)	
2021	Tulane School of Liberal Arts Graduate Student Summer Research Fellowship (\$3,000)	
2020	Tulane Anthropology Graduate Student Summer Research Grant (\$1,200 – declined)	
2019	Tulane Anthropology Graduate Student Summer Research Grant (\$1,800)	
2019	Tulane Graduate Studies Student Association Conference Travel Grant (\$450)	
2018	Land Fund for School of Liberal Arts Graduate Student Travel, Tulane University (\$1,000)	
2018	Stone Center for Latin American Studies Tinker Foundation Grant, Tulane University (\$2,100)	
2017	Stone Center for Latin American Studies Summer Research Grant, Tulane University (\$1,800)	
2015	International Studies Fund Summer Research Grant, University of Pittsburgh (\$1,500)	
2014	Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship, Kichwa, University of Pittsburgh (\$8,700)	

AWARDS AND HONORS

2019, 2020	Graduate Research Assistantship and Tuition Waiver, Tulane University
2016	Norman K. and Margaret Flint Memorial Field Scholarship, Department of Geology and Environmental Science, University of Pittsburgh
2016	University Scholar, University of Pittsburgh, <i>top 2% of senior class</i>
2015	Corrado Undergraduate Research Award, Department of Anthropology, University of Pittsburgh
2014	University Scholar, University of Pittsburgh, <i>top 2% of junior class (by credits)</i>
2012	University Honors College Scholar, University of Pittsburgh

PUBLICATIONS

In Preparation

Rachel Johnson, Sarah Paterno

Reinvestigating the Cave of the Owls legacy collections: a petrographic and pXRF study of ceramic production in the Peruvian montane forests. To be submitted to *Archaeometry*, Spring 2026.

Jason Nesbitt, **Rachel Johnson**, and Bebel Ibarra Asencios

Reconsiderando el estilo Waira-jirca: Cronología y distribución en la región de Conchucos en la sierra Peruana (1100-800 ANE). To be submitted to *Boletín de Arqueología PUCP*, Summer 2026.

Rachel Johnson, Bebel Ibarra Asencios, Jason Nesbitt, MinJoo Choi, and Julia Sjö Dahl

Ceramic Production and the Emergence of Chullpa Mortuary Architecture at Coronajirca (600 CE – 850/900 CE), Ancash, Perú: a Communities of Practice Approach to the Identification of Early *Ayllus*. To be submitted to *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, Fall 2026.

Rachel Johnson, Bebel Ibarra Asencios, Jason Nesbitt, Julia Sjö Dahl and MinJoo Choi

Ceramic Production at Huampáran (200-900 CE): a study of Recuay ceramics in ritual contexts. To be submitted to *Andean Past*, Spring 2027.

Rachel Johnson, Patrick Mullins, Brian Billman, and Jesús Briceño Rosario

Metallurgy in the Chimú Heartland: a pXRF study of metal artifacts from the hinterland town of Cerro la Virgen, La Libertad, Peru. To be submitted to *Historical Metallurgy*, Summer 2027.

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Rachel Johnson, Jason Nesbitt, MinJoo Choi, Julia Sjö Dahl, and Bebel Ibarra Asencios

2026 Continuity and Change in Ceramic Production Practices in Conchucos: New Data from Reparín (650/600 BCE -200 CE), Ancash, Peru. *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*, 70 (105616). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2026.105615>

Rachel Johnson, Jason Nesbitt, Julia Sjö Dahl, MinJoo Choi, and Bebel Ibarra Asencios,

2025 Ceramic Production and Exchange in the Chavín Heartland: An Archaeometric Study from Canchas Uckro (1100-800 BCE), Ancash, Peru. *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences*, 17(238). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12520-025-02333-0>

Jason Nesbitt, **Rachel Johnson**, and Bebel Ibarra Asencios

2021 Connections Between the Chavín Heartland and the Upper Amazon (1100-850 BC): New Perspectives from Canchas Uckro. In *The Archaeology of the Upper Amazon: Complexity and Interaction in the Andean Tropical Forest*, edited by R. Clasby and J. Nesbitt. University Press of Florida, Gainesville.

Jason Nesbitt, **Rachel Johnson**, and Rachel A. Horowitz

2019 Was Obsidian used for Camelid Shearing in Ancient Peru? An Experimental and Usewear Study. *Ethnoarchaeology*, 11 (1): 80-94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19442890.2019.1573286>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Rachel Johnson and Sarah Paterno

2025 “A Connecting Link”: An Archaeometric Reinvestigation of Ceramic Artifacts from the Cave of the Owls and their Relationship with Upper Amazonian Ceramic Assemblages. Paper to be presented at the 90th annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Denver, CO. [Invited]

Jason Nesbitt, **Rachel Johnson**, and Bebel Ibarra Asencios

2024 *Reconsiderando el estilo Waira-jirca: Cronología y distribución en la región de Conchucos en la sierra Peruana (1100-800 ANE)*. Paper presented at XI Encuentro de Teoría Arqueológica de América del Sur, Huaraz, Peru. [Invited]

Rachel Johnson, Julia Sjödhahl, MinJoo Choi, Ryan Clasby, and Jason Nesbitt

2024 *Return to Yarinacocha: a pXRF and Petrographic study of ceramics artifacts from the Tutishcainyo site series (1400 BCE – 900 CE), Ucayali, Perú*. Poster presented at the 89th annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, New Orleans, LA.

Jason Nesbitt, Bebel Ibarra Asencios, Lars Fehren-Schmitz, Eden Washburn, and **Rachel Johnson**

2024 *Cultural Transformations in Conchucos After 500 BC*. Paper presented at the 86th annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, New Orleans, LA.

Rachel Johnson, Jason Nesbitt, MinJoo Choi, Julia Sjödhahl, and Bebel Ibarra Asencios

2023 *Pots and People on the Move: New Geochemical and Petrographic Evidence from Canchas Uckro (1100-800 BCE), Ancash, Perú*. Paper presented at the 40th Northeast Conference on Andean and Amazonian Archaeology and Ethnohistory, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

Rachel Johnson and Jason Nesbitt

2022 *Resilience and Risk in the Placement of Initial Period Coastal Centers*. Paper presented at the 87th annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Chicago, IL. [Invited]

Rachel Johnson, Jason Nesbitt, and Bebel Ibarra Asencios

2021 *A Comparison of Ceramic Compositions from Canchas Uckro (Ancash) and the Cave of the Owls (Huánuco), Peru: Implications for an Upper Amazon Interaction Sphere*. Poster presented at the 86th annual meeting for the Society for American Archaeology, online.

Rachel Johnson and Jason Nesbitt

2019 *An Analysis of Ceramic Compositions from Canchas Uckro, Ancash, Perú: Implications for Trade and Exchange in the Formative Andes*. Poster presented at 84th annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Albuquerque, NM.

Rachel Johnson

2018 *Animism and Agency in the Amazonian Landscape: a consideration of Amazonian perspectivism and the ontological turn utilizing perspectives from a modern Runa community*. Paper presented at 83rd annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Washington, D.C. [Invited]

Andrew Schroll, Jason Nesbitt, **Rachel Johnson**, and Sadie Weber

2018 *Analysis of the Lithic Assemblage from Canchas Uckro (1100-800 B.C.), Eastern Ancash, Perú*. Poster presented at 83rd annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Washington, D.C.

Jason Nesbitt, Bebel Ibarra Asencios, Sadie Weber, **Rachel Johnson**, Andrew Schroll, and Anne Titlebaum

2017 *Canchas Uckro: A Late Initial Period (1100-800 B.C.) Site in the Chavín Heartland*. Paper presented at the Southeastern Meeting of the Society for Amazonian and Andean Studies, Millsaps, MS.

Rachel Johnson, Patrick Mullins, and Brian Billman

2016 *Households and Empire: a pXRF study of metal artifacts from Cerro la Virgen, Perú*. Poster presented at the 81st annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Orlando, FL.

RESEARCH AND FIELD EXPERIENCE

Field Technician, Hudson Cultural Services, Salt Point, New York 2023 - present

- Conduct historical and archaeological research on areas of potential effect (Phase 1A), following guidelines for cultural resource investigations and the curation of archaeological collections outlined by the New York Archaeological Council (NYAC) and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP)
- Plan, conduct, and supervise field reconnaissance surveys (Phase 1B), recording soil textures and colors, and identifying significant historic and pre-contact cultural resources

Research Assistant, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA 2016 - present

- PhD Candidate researching diachronic (1200 BCE - 900 CE) changes in ceramic production in the eastern Andes and Upper Amazon and their implications for political, economic, and social change;
Committee Chair: Jason Nesbitt
- Analyzing geochemical data of metal compositions from archaeological sites in the Moche Valley to assess practices metal production in an ongoing project with Brian Billman (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), and Patrick Mullins (Washington College)

Research Assistant, Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA 2020 - 2023

- Digitized LiDAR data from the Yucatan Peninsula and Maya lowlands using ArcGIS Pro to document settlement patterns and train algorithms to improve future data processing.
- Research contributions acknowledged in Estrada-Belli, F., Canuto, M.A., Sprajc, I., and J.C. Fernandez-Diaz. 2025. New regional-scale Classic Maya population density estimates and settlement distribution models

through airborne lidar scanning. *Journal of Archaeological Science, Reports* 66: 105288,
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2025.105288>

- Visiting Researcher*, American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY Fall 2022
National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.
- Investigated technological changes c. 1200 BCE – 900 CE within a ceramic type collection from Yarina-cocha, Ucayali, Perú, originally excavated in the 1950s.
- Lab and Field Technician*, RC Goodwin and Associates, New Orleans, LA 2021
- Facilitated field and lab operations by coordinating resources across field teams and preparing artifacts for accession and storage.
 - Organized landowner and utility company notifications (811 calls) for Phase 1B Surveys.
 - Phase III excavation team member at the Behrman Site, Algiers Point, New Orleans, LA.
- Carnegie Museum of Natural History Intern*, Anthropology Annex, Pittsburgh, PA 2013 - 2016
- Processed and accessioned museum donations, conducting artifact photography, preparing written descriptions, and constructing specialized acid-free boxes and supports
 - Transitioned paper files to digital KE-EMU database
- Moche Archaeological Field School*, UNC Chapel Hill, Huanchaco, Peru Summer 2015
- Conducted rescue excavations, pedestrian survey, and drone mapping of fortified hill-top Chimú sites in the mid to upper Moche Valley, directed by Patrick Mullins, PhD
 - *Honors thesis research*: portable x-ray fluorescence (pXRF) of metal artifacts from Cerro la Virgen, a Chimú-era farming village
- Andes and Amazon Field School*, FLAS Fellow, Tena, Ecuador Summer 2014
- Ethnographic research focusing on Kichwa views on women’s access to reproductive health care and reproductive intercultural health care practices in the Upper Napo region of Ecuador’s Amazon Basin
 - Immersive Kichwa language instruction

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA

- Spring 2022 Instructor of record for “Native America: An Introduction”, using intersecting archaeological data, historic documents, and current events to examine the lasting impact of colonialism
- Fall 2021 Instructor of record for “Environmental Archaeology”, using archaeological methods to reconstruct human-environment interactions and evaluate archaeological case studies

Tutor

- Fall 2019 Statistical Analysis for Anthropologists (Course Instructor: Tatsuya Murakami)

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Elemental Analysis with LA-CIP-MS for Archaeology: SAA online seminar instructed by Laure Dussubieux, February 22, 2022

<i>Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM):</i>	Trained by Dr. Jibao He, Coordinated Instrumentation Facility Microscopy Lab, Tulane University, <i>Spring 2017</i>
<i>Geologic Mapping and Stratigraphic Analysis:</i>	6 week field-course instructed by Drs. James Sears and Michael Hoffman, University of Montana, <i>Summer 2016</i>
<i>pXRF analysis:</i>	Bruker Training Seminar, Lee Drake, University of Pittsburgh, <i>Spring 2015</i>
<i>Igneous and Metamorphic Petrology:</i>	Lab-based instruction by Dr. J. Brian Balta, Visiting Assistant Professor of Geology, University of Pittsburgh, <i>Spring 2015</i> Lab-based Instruction by Dr. Stephen A. Nelson, Associate Professor of Geology, Tulane University, <i>Spring 2019</i>
<i>Optical Microscopy (Mineralogy):</i>	Lab-based instruction by Dr. Brian Stewart, Associate Professor of Geology, University of Pittsburgh, <i>Fall 2014</i>
<i>Sedimentology and Stratigraphy:</i>	Lab and field-based instruction by Dr. Charles Jones, Lecturer, University of Pittsburgh, <i>Spring 2014</i>

SERVICE

2020 - 2023	<i>Student Ambassador</i> , Society for Archaeological Sciences (SAS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-organized “<i>Spring 2021 Early Career Archaeology Brown Bag Series</i>” for emerging scholars - Co-organized <i>Spring and Fall 2022 Interview Series featuring SAS board members</i> - Co-organized <i>SAS 2022 Award Recipients Recognition Event</i>
2020 - 2021	<i>Committee Member</i> , Anthropology Colloquium Planning Committee, Tulane University
2018 - 2019	<i>Event Planning Committee Chair</i> , Tulane Anthropology Graduate Student Association (TAGS)
2017 - 2019	<i>Department Representative</i> , Graduate Studies Student Association (GSSA), Tulane University
2017 - 2018	Tulane Anthropology Student Association (TASA), Tulane University

SKILLS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Higher Education Teaching Certificate, awarded by the Tulane Center for Education, Learning, and Teaching (CELT)

Languages

Spanish: High Working Proficiency: spoken; Professional fluency: written, reading with dictionary

Skills

Remoting Sensing and Mapping: QGIS, ArcGIS Pro, ENVI
Ceramic analysis: rim drawing and digitization (Wacom tablet, Adobe Photoshop)
Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS): multivariate Statistical Analysis
portable X-Ray Fluorescence (pXRF): data collection, cleaning, and post-processing
Archaeological survey design; Horizontal excavations
Geologic and geo-hazard mapping
Backpacking, wilderness survival, and first-aid; over 650+ back-country miles hiked

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

2015 – present Society for American Archaeology (SAA)
2019 – present Society for Archaeological Sciences (SAS)
2024 – present Ceramic Petrographers of the Americas (CPA)
2025 – present New York Archaeological Council (NYAC)

REFERENCES

Jason Nesbitt, PhD

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