



Conference on New England Archaeology

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CONFERENCE POSITION PAPER

Archaeological *Mise en Place*: Dialogues from New England's Archaeological Kitchen

By Jonathan K. Patton, Staff Archaeologist, Massachusetts Historical Commission

As archaeologists are infamous for borrowing from other disciplines (e.g., Dinceuze 2000: 3), I offer for this year's CNEA, the concepts of the kitchen, generally, and *mise en place* in particular, as analogies with which to frame our approach to discussing the multiple ongoing dialogues on the doing and being of archaeology in New England today. *Mise en place* is the French culinary term for the totality of preparation. Once a kitchen is put in motion, all elements must follow smoothly to ensure that the resulting dishes will enliven all of the senses of those who partake. The kitchen is an entity that encompasses all the tangible and intangible elements that go into the dishes that come out of it. The *mise en place* includes the acts of preparation and planning by which the people, places, and things; including the raw foods, recipes, staff, knives, refrigerators, pots, pans, cook ranges, etc., are shaped and crafted to produce dishes that are the sum of all the parts; combining materials, methods, creativity and essentially blending art and science.

As Matthew Johnson has observed, "Our audience (other archaeologists, people in other disciplines, the 'general public' however defined) needs to have a clear idea from us of why our research is important, why it is worth paying for, why are we worth listening to" (Johnson 1999: 3). In order for us as anthropological archaeologists in New England to continue to justify ourselves and our work, we must continue to demonstrate that we are adequately prepared, that we are ethical, professional and self-aware; that we know our own historic, political and economical contexts, and that we work with the correct tools, techniques, methods, theories, agencies, groups and individuals.

By conceptualizing the doing of archaeology as a kitchen, with an emphasis on *mise en place*, we reinforce the idea that archaeology must be a self-reflexive, critical blending of art and science, and be properly prepared to justify itself, by presenting the most current, logical results using the most applicable theoretical positions, frameworks, methodologies, tools and techniques. The dishes that comes out of the archaeological kitchen must be the best stories possible, as "certainly the past does not existing anywhere outside our own heads" (Johnson 1999: 10). The archaeological dishes likewise must emphasize presentation, whether as a comprehensive technical report or oral or popular presentation in the field or in the classroom. The technical report may be most effectively utilized only much later by others to answer comparative research questions, but the connection of our audience to the past lives



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we have revealed requires us also to be present in our presentations. Not surprisingly the better our *mise en place*, and the more organized the kitchen, the richer and more nuanced the past we can create and share.

The purpose of today's conference is to offer another framework for continuing dialogues through an open format using the holistic idea of the kitchen, with its emphasis on preparation, organization, and using the right tools for the right jobs. These discussions are not new (e.g., Kerber 1994) and will continue to evolve as we continue to question ourselves and refine the ways archaeology is done in New England. The object of the conference is to have academic and cultural resource management perspectives be equally presented, examined and understood.

Today the halls of UMass Amherst are our kitchen, to learn and refine our understandings, and share knowledge to enhance our practice of New England archaeology. We will undertake facilitated discussions after hearing from three speakers, in order to understand the current dialogues in three aspects of our *mise en place*: first, the using, adopting and adapting of new technologies to archaeology; secondly, the who, what, where, when and why of participation in archaeology; and thirdly, the how and why of maintaining standards of fieldwork, reporting, and their concurrent ethical responsibilities.

References Cited:

- Dincauze, Dena 2000 *Environmental Archaeology: Principles and Practices*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.
- Johnson, Matthew 1999 *Archaeological Theory: An Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, MA.
- Kerber, Jordan A. 1994 Editor *Cultural Resource Management: Archaeological Research, Preservation Planning, and Public Education in the Northeastern United States*. Bergin & Garvey, Westport, CT.



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CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

Is Duty-Bound Good Enough? Considering Archaeological Ethics beyond Codes and Laws

Angela M. Labrador

As archaeologists we are bound by professional codes and legal statutes, which typically presume the primacy of the archaeological record and grant us some level of authority over it. Some scholars have critiqued this normative core by questioning who the archaeological record serves and to what greater goods archaeologists should contribute. Such critiques have led to wider acknowledgement and consideration of the social responsibilities that archaeologists have toward various stakeholders. However, in practice, archaeologists often become de facto managers of stakeholders, complicating the archaeologist's own position as stakeholder and the multiplicity of moral codes that the stakeholders bring to the table. This paper probes the often veiled normative philosophies that underlie archaeological ethical codes by focusing on the examples of stakeholder management and the ideal of stewardship. In what ways are our traditional duties to the archaeological record and its representative cultures not "good" enough?

Diana D. Loren, Christina J. Hodge, Patricia Capone (Peabody Museum, Harvard University) and John Stubbs (Paideia School)

Materializing Harvard's Colonial Indian College through Community Archaeology

Harvard University's 1650 Charter dedicated the institution to the education of "the English and Indian youth of this country in knowledge and godlines [sic]." The Indian College was built next to the Old College in 1655 to fulfill these purposes. Today, the Charter reads as an enlightened document, which was also its intent in 1650. Five indigenous students attended the physical Indian College. Within twenty-five years, however, the mission of Harvard along the Massachusetts Bay Colony had shifted away from Indian education, and by 1692 the Indian College was physically dismantled. The Indian College traditionally has been memorialized as a footnote in colonial New England histories, as a failed experiment with limited impact. Collaborative remembrance by different stakeholders, however, demonstrates that the Indian College has ongoing relevance and power. In this paper, we discuss the mission of the Harvard Yard Archaeology Project: to materialize the historical narrative of Indian and English students at Harvard, provide experiential learning, and facilitate community and civic engagement.



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The Use of Geospatial Technologies to Integrate Geophysical Data into Cultural Resource Management Surveys

William Chadwick, Ph.D., RPA, PG, Principal Geoarcheologist

John Milner Associates, Inc.

West Chester, Pennsylvania

Recently, the request for and the use of geospatial technologies has raised dramatically in the field of cultural resource management. Geospatial technology is currently being used during the planning, survey, analysis, and management stages of cultural resource surveys. This presentation will examine the integration of data from geophysical techniques such as ground-penetrating radar and gradiometry with geospatial data collected using GPS units placed into project specific GIS workspaces during the discovery phase, evaluation phase, and mitigation phase of archeological survey. Case studies will include the integration of geophysical survey results at each phase to facilitate survey planning, analysis, and management of the discovered resources from projects from the Middle Atlantic and Northeast. These case studies will include a Confederate battery used during the blockade of the Potomac River in Quantico, VA, a historic homestead outside Dover, Delaware, an antebellum African American community in Timbuctoo, NJ, and a historic well in Coram, NY.



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PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH ABSTRACTS

Shoals Marine Laboratory Excavations on Smuttynose Island, Maine.

Contributed by Nathan D. Hamilton and Ingrid B. Brack

University of Southern Maine

The Shoals Marine Laboratory has ongoing excavations of prehistoric and historic occupations on Smuttynose Island, Isles of Shoals. Investigations have focused on 17th century fishing station, the Haley operations (1760-1840) and Leighton's Mid-Ocean house (1840's-1910).

Research has focused on stratigraphic packages of faunal remains. Abundant well preserved bone and marine gastropod samples have been recovered. Fish analysis includes estimation of size, understanding processing and consumption and building demographic profiles. The abundant sample of identifiable bird bone contributes to knowledge of bird demographics off shore during the historic period. Gastropods offer a unique opportunity to detail the ecology of the invasive *Littorina littorea* as well as predator-prey relationships. These issues relate to the primary mission of the Shoals Marine Laboratory. In addition, mineralogical analyses (XRD, XRF) of redware smoking pipes are being conducted to ascertain provenience.

The prehistoric deposits are Middle to Late Ceramic Period in age and document extensive non-shell midden deposits intact below 70-90 cm of historic deposits.

Groton Community-wide Archaeological Survey

Contributed by Mitchell Mulholland

UMass Archaeological Services

UMASS Archaeological Services is conducting a Community-wide Archaeological Survey for the Town of Groton, Massachusetts. The project is being conducted by Christopher Donta, Sheila Charles, Mitchell Mulholland and Kathryn "Kit" Curran. Michael Roberts is the Local Project Coordinator. The project involves intensive documentary research for Native American and European American sites, production of archaeological site sensitivity maps for the town, and providing a cultural resource management plan for use in protecting archaeological sites from development and other disturbances. Site sensitivity will be built into the town's GIS maps. The project is developing a series of interpretive themes for use in education in the town. Signage and walking tours are in preparation. Remarkably Groton has very few recorded Native American sites in the state inventory. We are seeking information from CNEA members on archaeological sites in Groton. Anyone willing to share information is asked to E-Mail Mitch Mulholland at mulholland@tei.umass.edu.



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Debitage Analysis of the Archaic-Woodland Transition

Contributed by Jaclyn A. Nadeau

University at Albany, SUNY

I am currently involved in research that will incorporate methods of lithicdebitage analysis into the examination of the proposed technological and subsistence changes occurring during the Late Archaic and Early Woodland in Northeastern North America. Essentially, the transition from the Archaic to the Woodland period involves significant transformations of some technological industries; however, there is little evidence for the modification of general subsistence patterns. I plan to study assemblages of sites in eastern New York to determine if definite changes can be identified by comparing Late Archaic, Terminal Archaic, and Early Woodland components. Specifically, I intend to analyze the effect of increasing sedentism on the variation in resource use and reduction strategies.

Ceramic Period Raw Material Analysis in Blue Hill Bay, Maine

Contributed by Nathan D. Hamilton and Stephen G. Pollock

University of Southern Maine

The Nevin and Richards sites located in Blue Hill Bay, Maine were excavated under the direction of Douglas Byers and Fred Johnson in the late 1930's. The artifacts were excavated and curated by the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology. Analysis of artifacts and fauna has been completed and research is focused on a lithic raw material assessment and material fabrication of middle and late ceramic period ceramics. The faunal sample is dominated by beaver and moose and indicates a primary cold season of occupation.

Ceramic analysis is conducted by petrographic study of diagnostic dentate-impressed and cord wrapped stick-impressed ceramics. The two sites combined represent *ca.* 10,000 sherds and 200 vessel lots. Several of the vessels were disaggregated to their primary paste and temper components with an ultrasonic technique. X-ray diffraction analysis suggests the paste component of the vessels was derived from the bluffs of glacial marine clay at the Richards site.



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Eustis Street Firehouse, Boston

Contributed by Christopher Donta

UMass Archaeological Services

Proposed rehabilitation of a 19th century brick firehouse in the Roxbury section of Boston was of archaeological concern because of its proximity to the Old Burying Ground dating to the first settlement of the Roxbury neighborhood in 1630. The standing structure dates from 1859, and was built within the confines of the burying ground, on the footprint of earlier structures dating from the 18th and early 19th centuries. Subsurface testing was designed to inform on how to avoid existing burials, and to document areas of disturbance. Excavations detailed extensive land surface modifications due to the building construction, but also from landscaping and utility work. A wide variety of artifacts were recovered, including isolated lithic flakes from Native American occupation, and 18th to 20th century use by firefighters and veterans housed at the site.

Transmission Line Corridor Sites, Millbury, Massachusetts

Contributed by Martin Dudek

John Milner Associates, Inc.

JMA conducted archeological testing for transmission lines in Millbury, Auburn, Leicester and Worcester. Two pre-Contact find spots of stone chipping debris were identified in Millbury. Identified historical archeological sites in Millbury included a stone-lined well and a stone foundation and well, both, recommended for avoidance and protection. An isolated find of an eighteenth-century Chinese coin in Worcester may be related to adjacent nineteenth century railroad work.

Blackstone River Bikeway Project, Central Massachusetts

Contributed by Martin Dudek, Barbara Donohue, and Eric Metzger; John Rempelakis

John Milner Associates, Inc.; MassDOT

John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) was contracted to provide historical, archeological, and interpretive services in the preparation of a draft and final EIR/EA for sections of the Blackstone River Bikeway, a 28-mile long bikeway proposed through portions of Blackstone, Millville, Uxbridge, Northbridge, Grafton, Sutton, Millbury, and Worcester. The Bikeway project, a cooperative venture between MassDOT and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), is seen as a transportation corridor that will link the mill villages and neighborhoods with the many recreational, environmental, and historic features of the Blackstone Valley.



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In 2009, JMA conducted field survey, research, analysis, and documentation in order to comply with the appropriate federal and/or state legislation and regulations concerning the protection of historic and/or archeological resources. Under the Section 106 review process JMA was required to inventory resources along the Blackstone River corridor, which is rich with both natural and cultural history. Through their background research, JMA identified a number of documented archaeological and historic resources in the vicinity of the project corridor, including reputed village sites home to the Nipmuck Nation in Grafton and Uxbridge; pre-contact Native American sites along waterways and the margins of wetlands and within upland areas in Sutton; former industrial complexes such as fulling, saw and grist mills, trip hammers, scythe, hoe and axe shops, a paper mill, an oil mill and potash works dating to the 18th century in Sutton and Northbridge; and features and structural remnants associated with the construction and operation of the Blackstone Canal during the 19th century.

Sub-surface testing of more than 470 shovel test units by JMA along the Blackstone River Bikeway corridor revealed both pre-contact Native American and post-contact Euro-American archaeological sites. Eight pre-contact Native American sites or find spots were identified, including one site dating from the Late Archaic period. Historic sites identified include a former Unitarian church and a mill/sluceway site, as well as evidence of historic quarrying. Analysis is ongoing regarding these sites. After completing their analysis of these sites, JMA will provide their findings and recommendations to MassDOT and the MHC to determine whether additional archaeological work will be necessary.

Neponset Esplanade Sites, Milton

Contributed by Christopher Donta, UMass Archaeological Services

Phase 1 and 2 surveys were completed for the proposed construction of a multi-use pathway along the banks of the Neponset River in Milton, Massachusetts, for the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Two Native American sites and an 18th-19th century historic site were identified. The Native American sites include a variety of lithic raw materials from the Boston Basin; one site contained multiple rhyolite triangular projectile points, probably of Woodland period date. The other site contained a hearth feature and post mold, along with a small number of lithics. The historic site is situated at the edge of an 18th century mill race, where historic documents indicate a corn mill operated until the 1830s. The sites are being avoided by construction.

Northwest Vermont Utility Lines, New Haven to Burlington

Contributed by Christopher Donta

UMass Archaeological Services

UMass completed the analysis and report writing of Phase 1, 2, and 3 surveys of a 43 km long survey of proposed power line expansion for the Vermont Electric Power Company in the Champlain Valley of Vermont. The line is required to improve reliability of electric service in Vermont. During the Phase 1 surveys, 58



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archaeological sites were found, 28 of which were subject to Phase 2 site examinations, and 10 were subject to limited Phase 3 data recovery surveys. Temporal information was obtained related to eight of the 22 Native American sites investigated. Of these, all eight date to the Woodland period. The largest amount of information was gathered from the Vergennes Substation site, where excavations documented a series of lithic work areas, one burn episode in association with several postmolds, and over 14,000 lithic artifacts. Levanna projectile points predominate the diagnostic artifacts, which also include a Meadowood drill. This site is interpreted as representing a hunting camp with ongoing tool reworking. Smaller sites document a variety of site locations in the Little Otter Creek to LaPlatte River area, all related to Woodland occupations.

Birch Hill Dam Area Investigations, Worcester County, Massachusetts

Contributed by Martin Dudek

John Milner Associates, Inc.

JMA is conducting site evaluations for the Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) at the Birch Hill Dam area, comprising a total of 4,648 acres, in the towns of Royalston, Templeton, and Winchendon in Worcester County, Massachusetts. Birch Hill Dam was constructed in 1940-1942 as part of a national program to develop and improve natural water resources in the interest of flood control, water conservation, and recreational development. The site evaluations are being conducted for the Corps as part of their Section 110 obligation to locate and establish the National Register eligibility of previously identified pre-contact and historic period archeological resources. A total of eight pre-Contact and 18 historic archeological sites are included as part of the investigation.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Largy, Tonya, and E. Pierre Morenon

2008 Maize Agriculture in Coastal Rhode Island: Imaginative, Illusive, or Intensive? In *Current Northeast Paleoethnobotany II*. Pp 73-85. John P. Hart, ed. New York State Museum Bulletin 512, Albany.

Twenty years ago the evidence for indigenous maize agriculture in Rhode Island included 16th Century descriptions of Narragansett farming practices by European observers, stone hoes with no provenience, and anecdotes. Without physical botanical evidence, was pre-European intensive maize agriculture real or imagined? Recently a substantial archaeological-botanical record has emerged, project by project, due to fine extraction procedures and careful attention to C¹⁴ dating. The cumulative record enhances our understanding of farming practices in a coastal setting: Cultigens appear as a discrete historical episode when settlements and activities significantly intensified after 1100 AD. However, other important 5000 year-old food practices persisted.