TERM EXPIRES 1993:

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TERM EXPIRES 1994:

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Sturbridge, MA 01566
(508) 347-3362

TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP:

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COVER:

Log cabin site, Amherst, New Hampshire
Located by PAL, Inc.
WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?:
COMMUNITY AND DIVERSITY IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEW ENGLAND

by Parker B. Potter, Jr.
New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources

The purpose of this position paper is to introduce Dena Dinczauze's follow-up position paper, and together these papers are intended to set the stage for our upcoming Conference on New England Archaeology. Unlike Dena's position paper -- which will actually contain positions -- this paper attempts to synthesize, summarize, and characterize the process by which the Steering Committee has come to frame this year's topic, a process that has entailed three working lunches and a conference call.

For better or worse, our two most basic starting points for thinking up a 1993 Conference had more to do with form than with content, and these starting points address concerns raised by the format of the 1992 Conference. First of all, we feel that the 1993 Conference should consist of both formal presentations and well-organized collegial discussion, in about equal measure. Second, we suspect that Conference participants will benefit from a 1993 Conference that is somewhat "closer to the dirt" than was the 1992 Conference. At the risk of overextending the metaphor of a "Steering" Committee -- or driving it into the ground -- I would like to suggest that these two changes from 1992 do not represent a U-turn in the Committee's thinking but rather, are relatively minor mid-course corrections that will allow us to build on last year's Conference while insuring that this year's Conference is of the greatest possible benefit to all those who attend it.

Once we settled on a general framework of "fewer papers, more dirt," we still faced the problem of selecting a topic. Again, we began with two starting points, one quasi-historical, the other more thematic. Our historical starting point is a general curiosity over whether New England archaeology in 1993 is more or less where CNEA-folk figured it might be when the CNEA was first organized in 1980. It is important to note that we are not much interested in the institutional history of the Conference, but rather, in the developments in New England archaeology enacted by CNEA members (and others) during the 364 days each year when we're not at the CNEA meeting. Has New England archaeology developed in the ways we all thought it would, or not? Our most fundamental statement of the "historical" question grows out of the very act of establishing the CNEA. In 1980, a sufficiently energetic group of people felt that there was such a thing as New England archaeology, and felt strongly enough about the subject to create a forum for discussing it. The question we ask now is: "What is New England, archaeologically?" Or we could ask, with a tip of the cap to Dorothy Parker, "Is there a here here of the sort we thought there was a dozen years ago?"

Our more thematic approach to constructing a Conference topic proposes part of an answer to the questions raised in the previous paragraph. Specifically, several of us on the Steering Committee have observed that many attempts to think synthetically about New England archaeology end up grappling with the same conundrum that gives life to every good incarnation of Anthropology 101. In Introductory Anthropology, teachers teach (and students learn) that any given pair of individuals, societies, or cultures is simultaneously similar to and different from each other. In New England archaeology, the paradoxical dichotomy/continuum with which most of us deal is strung between the poles of commonality and diversity. Working anywhere along the line from artifacts to features to sites to regions, and right up to New England as a whole, any collection of archaeological phenomena exhibits both similarity and difference, both commonality and diversity. Thus we ask ourselves, and we ask the 1993 Conference to ask all of us, to what extent does the binary opposition of commonality and diversity provide us with a set of parameters that may be used to define the enterprise we call New England archaeology?

In attempting to structure a Conference based on exploring the issue of commonality and diversity we have tried to remember that when examining any complex archaeological phenomenon or when comparing any group of archaeological phenomena, it is possible to find commonality or diversity or commonality and diversity, and this range of possibilities does not even include the seeming plethora of statements such as "their commonality is their diversity." Faced with this array of plausible conclusions, the one thing we know we don't want is a Conference based on the premise of those old beer commercials which featured fading sports legends shouting back and forth "Less filling?"/"Tastes great."

Recognizing that New England archaeology is less filling and tastes great, we have decided to focus on two aspects of the commonality/diversity conundrum: how and why. Another way to think about how and why is in terms of intention and imposition. If you intend to go into the field to study commonality (or diversity), just how do you find it (or it)? If we accept that both diversity to be found in almost any archaeological phenomenon, then intentions and the question of how do we make it more convenient (or less convenient), more attractive (or less attractive), more profitable (or less profitable) to find commonality (or diversity). Intentions are the "how;" imposed circumstances are the "why," and to understand the issue of commonality and diversity in the archaeological New Englands we all write, we need to explore both how and why, both intention and imposition.

Thus, the Conference we have thought up is broken into two parts, how in the morning, why in the afternoon. Each half-day will consist of two 30-minute formal presentations to the entire Conference, followed by a pair of concurrent facilitated workshop/discussion/break-out sessions. The morning part, devoted to how, will be our chance to fulfill the Conference's "more dirt" mandate while the afternoon part, devoted to why, will give us an opportunity to discuss, among other things, the impact of CRM and public history on the picture(s) of New Hampshire history and prehistory that we have created archaeologically over the last dozen years. As an example of the kinds of issues we can address, there are the two sides of commonality: common-
ality as an abstract, intellectualized research topic that merits \( x \) number of test pits worth of further work and commonality (re)defined as "data redundancy," the point at which CRM archaeologists allegedly don't "need" any more of this or that kind of site. This is just a sample of the kinds of directions in which the Conference may move.

The Steering Committee has done its best to assemble a top-notch crew of speakers and workshop facilitators. The rest is up to you. We hope that you will think about the topic of the Conference, mull over Dena's position paper, and come to the Conference ready to contribute to—and benefit from—the discussion sessions that will follow the formal presentations. More so than is often the case, this Conference will depend on participation from both sides of the podium.

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**Diversity and Commonality**

**Diversity and Commonality in New England Archaeology**

Dena F. Dincauze

...there is tremendous scope for idiosyncratic variability, at a cultural or individual level, in most areas of human response to biophysical limitations. Indeed, there is a strong case to be made that this variability is the distinctively human and cultural feature of the archaeological subject; hence, it should be the special interest of an anthropological archaeology.

Wylie 1985:90

Several different concerns have been expressed in the course of defining diversity and commonality for this meeting; I will try to touch on most of them. There is the concern (1) that regional archaeology is being Balkanized (shudder) by a kind of territoriality developing in the several states, among both academics and contractors, who increasingly are specializing within state borders or even within drainages. There is the concern (2) that the flow of information is beginning to channel within adjacent or socialized groups of contractors or academics to the effective, if unintended, exclusion of others more distant. CNEA, of course, was founded to counter such channeling. There are concerns (3) that boiler-plate models and the bureaucratization of contract work leads to the creation of a limited, conventional, number of conceptual or taxonomic categories of sites and resources, and that once so categorized, sites might be written off from further protection with the claim that we "know enough" about a representative sample of that class. And, there is my own growing concern, in the face of discussion about post-modernism and multi-vocality, about (4) a premature consensus for certain established or simply fashionable interpretations of various kinds of sites and cultural entities. Here I want to explore some of these themes. I start by expanding the key terms.

Diversity is an attribute of systems and populations—the larger either one is, the more internally diverse it is likely to be; one might call this the Law of Large Samples. Analogical thinking and taxonomic classification, on the other hand, disguise diversity—they are intended to do so. They reduce diversity to the status of noise rather than information. Diversity can be realized only analytically, and only if it has been sought consciously in carefully planned research designs and data gathering. You have to fish for diversity with a carefully baited line, and such fishing, however rewarding, is a time-intensive and unreliable activity.

Commonality, on the other hand, is a product of classification. Commonalities are conventionally of two kinds: trivial truisms and fundamental ontological attributes. The former are easily imputed by the casual abuse of analogical thinking; the latter are demonstrable only by disciplined analysis of large bodies of data rich with interpreted diversity.

The search for diversity in archaeological data is a relatively recent concern; it did not trouble the minds of the systematizers and taxonomists who dominated the discipline until at least the decade of the nineteen-sixties. In the early heroic years of American archaeology, prestige
accrued to those who pulled sense and order (usually in the form of hierarchical taxonomies) out of the chaotic jumble of sites and artifact collections that required to be interpreted. The search for commonalities is an ancient theme in anthropologically, going back to the founders in the sixteenth century and before, when a major goal for students of human nature was to discover basic human nature.

As an example and object lesson I recall Clyde Kluckhohn, one of my professors at Harvard, whose career was initially dedicated to the search for fundamental commonalities of human nature and behavior. Kluckhohn diligently and imaginatively pursued ontological commonalities (he called them "universalities") through his professional life, which began in the first half of this century (e.g., Kluckhohn 1953). I do not know that he found any, but in the search he defined or discovered unexpected dimensions of diversity, thus raising his work far above the almost antiquarian search for commonalities and assuring its lasting interest and value. The diversity Kluckhohn found as he sought its opposite, and the richness of the texture of human experience he revealed through his field work and analyses, should inspire and encourage archaeologists today.

It is necessary at this point to distinguish intrinsic from imposed diversity and commonality. Intrinsic properties are inherent within phenomena themselves; they are the goals of analytical research. Imposed properties are those originating among the researchers themselves, or in the organization of their work--its reward system and its unexamined assumptions. It is intrinsic diversity and commonalities that we ostensibly value in our analytical work, but it is trivial commonalities we often settle for, without recognizing their sources in extrinsic organization. The enduring value given ontological commonalities, and the prestige likely to be conferred on their discoverers, is created by the fact that as intrinsic diversity is revealed, non-trivial commonalities are ever more elusive.

The four concerns summarized in the opening of this essay appear to have emerged as the properties of the present-day organization of archaeological research. That both certifies and explains their timeliness and importance. Organizational properties of professional archaeological research impose diversity by augmenting the numbers of researchers and by channelling information flow sub-regionally, at the state level, and differentially among contractors and academics. Such diversity is a product not of the archaeological record itself, but of the organization of the recorders. At the same time, the centralization and bureaucratization of contract work impose commonalities by forcing research results to be expressed in a limited number of established categories and by penalizing innovation in field work and reporting. In its turn, the academic literature of archaeology imposes commonalities by privileging authorities, by abusing analogical reasoning, by surrendering to intellectual fads, and by accepting truisms uncritically. The "post-processual" critique of archaeological practice, and its more recent "reflective" relatives, properly challenge the evils of institutionally imposed diversity and commonality. Clearly, if archaeology anywhere is to grow and achieve significant and relevant insights into lives observed only indirectly, it must escape equally the conceptual traps of imposed diversity and commonality.

The exponential expansion of archaeological research across the country in the last two decades has raised imposed diversity to the level of very distracting noise in the national system. In each state, archaeology is done in highly individualistic modes, within limited collegial circles, addressed to mainly local audiences or to small groups of professional peers. The lack of integration is bewildering those who fought for a national system for archaeological resource management. Federal and state governments accepted the argument that there was an important public interest in archaeological resources. The federal and state agencies tried to set basic requirements and respectable performance standards. They have had more success at the first than the second, and so far little success in integrating either research questions or the language in which we address the public. Be that situation good or ill intellectually, it does leave archaeological research and interpretation in this country resembling the building of the Tower of Babel.

An example ready at hand is the increasing divergence between the literatures of prehistoric New England and of areas adjacent to the north, south, and west. Those few of us who regularly review the publications of the Middle Atlantic states and of the eastern provinces of Canada are aware of the increasing intellectual distances. In each area, despite the sharing of superficially similar prehistoric artifact assemblages, different ways of talking and thinking about them have developed. Different assumptions and different terminologies owe their establishment to competitive and provincial citing circles in each area. It's as if each regionally defined group of archaeologists is swimming, feeding and working exclusively in its own perceptual environment, like marine organisms in different but adjacent water bodies. We need upwelling, to mix the water bodies in order to benefit from the increased nutrient richness of the mix. Within and beyond New England, archaeologists working in the Northeast need to beware of provincialism. It's a career strategy very destructive to the common enterprise, which must be to evaluate all possible alternative points of view, and to multiply the possibilities.

If imposed diversity is subversive, imposed commonalities are perhaps even more insidious. The CRM concepts of representative and adequate samples are based on an assumption of replication, of commonalities existing in quotidian activities, of predictabilities within the resource mass--as of molecules in gases. We know at some level of consciousness that every site is different. However, when we are indolent about interpreting the sometimes subtle indicators of such differences, we leave the field to the levelers, who impose commonalities and dismiss the diversity as "noise." The new sciences of complexity--Chaos theory and complex dynamic systems--show us that noise in the system is information, often information that our theories cannot now use. Chaos theory predicts that systemic innovations will come from the noise in the system, not the regularities. We need more and stronger theories and interpretive models, and we can only achieve those by paying ever more attention to the noise, the diversity, in our data. As the resource base disappears around us, we must vigilantly cherish every bit that remains, learn from it all that we possibly can, and share the wealth.

Archaeologists have been seriously misled, even deflected from their best interests, by their abuse of analogy--borrowing from contexts of the present to apply second-hand descriptions and interpretations to past conditions (Trigger 1989: Chapters 9 and 10; Wobst 1978; Wylie 1985). The search for intrinsic diversity requires that the data we have before us, and the data we can teach ourselves to seek, must be valued on their own terms, and interpreted by application of all the rigor and resourcefulness and initiative we can command (Dincauze 1980, 1990).
For example, comparisons of European Upper Paleolithic sites with northeastern American Paleoindian sites provide easy commonalities—both groups of societies have been characterized as caribou hunters in late-glacial landscapes. Both have been interpreted in terms of nineteenth and twentieth-century Arctic and sub-Arctic peoples, opening the interpretations to abuses not only of analogy but of circular reasoning as well. What’s new there? What’s important there? Why do we, as anthropologists, need to multiply examples of modern peoples and extend them into the unknown past? Extended analogies will not inform us about commonalities—they create and impose commonalities. Extended analogies cannot inform us about diversity—diversity is submerged by detailed analogical models unless those are used explicitly to expose differences. The interest in peoples of the Pleistocene must be to learn more about the course and experience of human history—what happened and why, so that we can learn more about our species. Not specifically, with imposed commonalities, but significantly, with the search for intrinsic diversity and ultimately, perhaps, ontological commonalities.

Over the past six years, I have taught an undergraduate course in survey methods that includes four three-hour days of field work in the local Amherst area. The course has as its continuing research goal the search for dimensions of behavioral diversity within a limited spatial area—the watershed of the Fort River, a moderate-sized Connecticut River tributary. We began by asking diversity-seeking questions such as:

• Where are the archaeological remains?
• Why there and not elsewhere?
• What kind of what ages are they?
• How were they used?
• Why this particular range of diversity?
• Was the Fort River basin a complete territory for any community? By what criteria could we judge?

The Fort River basin in Amherst has turned out to have rather less environmental diversity than I expected, including as it does both the bed of a glacial lake and the peaks of rocky uplands. From the viewpoint of prehistoric humans, Amherst lands were predominantly swamp and rock—not great places to live. Nonetheless, we have encountered traces of prehistoric human behavior, much of it travelling behavior of people on their way to or from the Connecticut River shores on a variety of errands. We expect that in a few more seasons we will have a unique record of how people used this particular hinterland; at the moment, I know of no body of closely observed data with which to compare our Fort River set. This is not non-site archaeology, but it is archaeology that gets along without the classical kind of residential "site," and it is the only kind of archaeology that seems likely now to expand our awareness of the diversity of land use in the past. The class continues, without disappointment and with pleasure in the task.

If we exert ourselves to wring detailed inventories of diversity from our archaeological assemblages, we will have a much richer prehistoric record, and a much richer data base from which to ponder together commonalities that might be more than trivial.
PROGRAM SCHEDULE

MORNING SESSION

SATURDAY MAY 8, 1993

8:30-9:30  Coffee and Registration

9:30-9:45  Opening Remarks
Dorothy Krass, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

9:45-10:15 "Managing Diversity in New England Urban Archaeology"
Steven Pendery, City of Boston and The Peabody Museum, Harvard University

10:15- Morning Break

10:30-11:00 "Diversity, Commonality and Complexity; Interpreting The Meaning of Ceramic Design in Southeastern New England"
Robert Goodby, University of New Hampshire

11:00-12:00 Concurrent Discussions and Workshops
A. "Changing Scales of Analysis in New England Archaeology"
Led By Mary Beaudry (BU), and Russ Handsman (URI)

B. "Rocky Road"
Dick Boisvert and Barbara Cologero

12:00  LUNCH (on your own)

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

AFTERNOON SESSION

SATURDAY MAY 8, 1993

1:30-2:00 "Using Archaeology To Talk About Race"
Susan Hauteniemi

2:00-2:30 "Exploring Prehistoric Diversity and Commonality at the Local Level: Examples from Western Vermont"
Peter Thomas

2:30- Concurrent Discussions
A. "New England's Archaeological Identity?"
David Bernstein and Connie Crosby

B "Diversity In CRM Studies: Is More Ever Enough?"
Deborah C. Cox (The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.) and Jim Bradley (Robbins Museum)

4:00  Post-Conference Discussion and Fun
Bar at Sturbridge

NOTE: Each paper will be between 20 and 25 minutes in length, followed by five minutes of questions and discussion.
References Cited

Dincauze, Dena F.

1990 Centering. Presentation to CNEA meeting.

Kluckhohn, Clyde

Trigger, Bruce G.

Wobst, H. Martin
1978 The archaeo-ethnology of hunter-gatherers or the tyranny of the ethnographic record. American Antiquity 43:303-309.

Wylie, Alison
CURRENT RESEARCH

MASSACHUSETTS

The Derby Wharf, Salem

contributed by Jim Garman, UMASS Archaeological Services

In Salem, an important piece of the city's maritime history that has been buried for over two hundred years is revising notions of wharf construction and commercial development in the eighteenth century seaport. Working under contract to the National Park Service/Denver Service Center, University of Massachusetts Archaeological Services (UMAS) has completed a program of archaeological research at the Salem Maritime National Historic Site that has raised at least as many questions about the nature of coastal trade as it has answered.

Excavation focussed on Derby Wharf, which is undergoing restoration prior to the development of new exhibit space for the National Historic Site. The UMAS team, led by Project Archaeologist Jim Garman and Field Supervisor Tim Barker, worked through the winter to expose the wooden bulkhead of the original wharf. Constructed by sales merchant Richard Derby between 1764 and 1771, the bulkhead and it's system of pine tiebacks was buried during the expansion of the structure in the 1780's. The widening of the wharf has direct links to the expanding network of Salem commerce, particularly Elias Hasket "King" Derby's opening of the East Indian spice.

Archaeological evidence from the research program has revealed many discrepancies with the documentary record, including the size, configuration and type of construction used in building Derby Wharf. The 1764-1771 structure is much narrower than the present wharf, perhaps reflecting a coastal trade in which goods transported from point to point rather than warehoused for long periods of time. Other features revealed during the excavation include a midden of wine bottles and ceramics jettisoned of ships mooring alongside the wharf; the UMAS team also recorded evidence of maintenance and repair in the form of cobble deposits placed up against the interior of the bulkhead.

Analysis of the fieldwork results is concentrating on the specific economic processes that affected the development of Derby Wharf. Artifacts from the fill inside the wharf and from the midden outside the bulkhead have provided a fairly tight sequencing for the site's development, but many questions remain. A report for the National Park Service is currently in preparation; inquiries about the site may be directed to Jim Garman, UMASS Archaeological Services, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

South Central New Hampshire Reconnaissance

contributed by Ann Davin, The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.

The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. recently completed a reconnaissance/inventory survey of an approximately 3000 acre project area in south-central New Hampshire in the towns of Amherst, Mont Vernon, and New Boston. Initially, a sensitivity assessment ranked the project area into zones of high, moderate, and low potential to contain prehistoric and historic sites on the basis of a previous preliminary study, environmental attributes, and historic documentary research. Ann Davin (co-principal investigator) and Steve Willan (prehistoric supervisor) oversaw the prehistoric component and general project area testing. Two prehistoric sites, the East Meadow and Wells Bog sites, and four prehistoric find spots were located. Suzanne Glover (co-principal investigator) and Paul Russo (historic site supervisor) investigated 28 historic period sites, including 22 rural homesteads (two agrarian, 20 agrarian), three mill/dam sites, a pump/spring house, a school house, an historic road, and a dump. These sites ranged in occupation from the initial pioneering phase (ca. 1730-1750) to final abandonment in the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries.
The Massachusetts Archaeological Society is engaged in a project to open the doors of the Robbins Museum of Archaeology in Middleborough, Mass. this Fall. In order to do this, we need to solicit support from a wide audience of potential Friends of the Robbins Museum. For the past two years, the Friends have offered a lecture series in Middleborough, which for the most part has drawn on a local audience. What we would like to begin early next Fall is a series of programs around the state offering a variety of talks on archaeology.

Members of CNEA who would be willing to offer individual lectures are encouraged to contact the Society and to give us your topics and available times and geographical areas. We will make arrangements with local organizations and will provide a few slides about the Robbins Museum project to go at the end of your talk. We will also provide a local contact person who can distribute literature and answer questions about the Museum.

Sign-up forms will be available at the CNEA meeting in May, or you can contact the Society on Wednesdays at (508) 947-9005, or the Museum Coordinator, Ruth Warfield, evenings at (508) 752-8043.

Curtiss Hoffman
President

"WE BOTH TALK, WE ALL LISTEN: NATIVE PEOPLES' AND ARCHAEOLOGISTS' APPROACHES TO THE PRE-EUROPEAN PAST"

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Native people and archaeologists approach New England's pre-European past through different perspectives. Both of these ways into the past are potentially valid and each of them can assist the other. Especially for Native people, it is their own ancestors' ways which they wish to preserve and pass on to future generations. By presenting our different methods and conclusions together, we can help our two communities to come to a broader understanding of each other. This can result in the establishment of a long-term relationship of respect in which each group is able to share its knowledge freely with the other.

The course will consist of 6-2 hour sessions and will be held at the Cranberry Specialty Hospital in Middleborough, Mass. on Tuesdays from 7-9 pm starting March 16, 1993 and ending on April 20th.

For more info contact the MAS, Inc.
Robbins Museum of Archaeology
PO Box 700
Middleborough, MA 02346-0700

REGIONAL

NEW YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL COUNCIL
1993 PLANNING ANNOUNCEMENT FOR ARCHAEOLOGY WEEK

The NYAC Board and Members decided at the January 30 meeting in Albany to coordinate and co-sponsor the second annual New York statewide Archaeology Week. Celebration of Archaeology Week will coincide with National and NYS Historic Preservation Week.

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Please Contact
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CONFERENCE ON NEW ENGLAND ARCHAEOLOGY
REQUEST FOR ARTICLES

Please submit a brief paragraph on your current New England Archaeological research for inclusion in the next CNEA Newsletter. Also submit any new bibliographic titles for books, articles, reports, etc. in American Antiquity format. Thank you.

Send To:

Your local CNEA Steering Committee representative. If possible send your contribution on a computer diskette (with paper copy). Please specify the computer model and word processor operating system used to create your file. Your diskette will be returned to you. Begin by stating your research topic, research questions, and how your data are used to answer your research questions.

NAME:

INSTITUTION:

MAILING ADDRESS:

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ENTRY:

RESEARCH TOPIC:

C-14 DATES (See page 29)

PLEASE MAIL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
REQUEST FOR
RADIOCARBON DATES

Please report C14 dates as fully as possible.

Date: ___________________ ±B.P.

Laboratory: ___________________ Lab number: ___________________

Institution responsible for the excavation: ___________________

Principal Investigator(s): ___________________

Name of Site: ___________________

Town: __________ U.S.G.S. Quad: _______ State: __________

Sample (charcoal, shell, bone, etc.): ___________________

Describe feature or object that was dated:

Diagnostic artifacts (temporal or cultural) **directly** associated with the date:

Bibliographic references:

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CNEA NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION POLICY

The purpose of the CNEA newsletter is to strengthen communication and facilitate a continuous interchange among archaeologists who work in New England.

To this end researchers are encouraged to submit short abstracts on their current research by topic or region, bibliography, and radiocarbon dates.

One volume of the newsletter will also include a position paper which is solicited by the steering committee addressing the annual meeting topic.

Any other submitted papers will be reviewed by the steering committee prior to their inclusion in the newsletter.