Anthro's Grad Program is Thirty Years Old
- notes from one of the “Guinea pigs”

A couple of weeks ago, I attended the annual faculty/graduate student potluck at Dr. Voigt’s home. Although I’m not a faculty member and I’m no longer a graduate student, I've had a long association with the department. Part of that was being in the first class of M.A. students when the program began in 1979. Even though I hadn’t even had a beer, I opened my big mouth and mentioned to Dr. Gallivan the current graduate studies director, that this was the 30th anniversary of the department’s graduate program and we should commemorate the anniversary somehow. He suggested an article in the Newsletter, and since I brought it up to begin with…

This fall semester marks the 30th anniversary of the Department’s graduate program in Anthropology. The master's program initiated in 1979 was largely conceived and implemented by Norman F. Barka, the first director of graduate studies, Nathan Altschuler, Vincent Sutlive, Ted Reinhart, and Carol Ballingall as a vehicle in which to educate students in historical archaeology at the M.A. level while also giving them a substantial grounding in all disciplines of Anthropology.

In the fall of 1979, six students were admitted to the two-semester program: Linda Derry, Anne Garland, Conrad “Mac” Goodwin, Genevieve (Gerri) Leavitt, James Smith, and Andrew Edwards. The course was designed, as it is today, to train students in the principal areas of Anthropology with a concentration in Historical Archaeology. It was among the first Anthropology Departments in the country to offer a master's-level program with an emphasis on the relatively new discipline of historical archaeology. Others included Florida State, NYU, CUNY, UMass-Boston, BU, Michigan State and Idaho. Thirty credit hours, six of which were thesis research, were required, as was a comprehensive exam on the five sub-divisions of Anthropology and a successful oral defense of one's thesis. Eight courses were offered over both the spring and fall semesters:

- A **Proseminar in Anthropology** was offered in the spring and fall and taught by Professors Carol Ballingall (biological), Steve Brush (cultural ecology), Nathan Altschuler (social), and Mario Zamora (cultural). The Archaeology of North America was taught by Theodore Reinhart as was the summer field school, required only if a student had insufficient field experience. A course in Cultural Resource Management was taught by Professors Barka and Reinhart while the Proseminar in Archaeology was offered as a two-semester course also taught by Professor Barka.

- **American Material Culture** was offered by Visiting Professor Theodore “Ted” Dethlefsen while Professor Louis Noisin offered Ethnohistory, described as an anthropological interpretation of historical, ethnographic, and archaeological evidence. Another visiting lecturer, Alexandra Klingelhofer taught the theory and practice of artifact conservation.

The fall of 1979 was exciting and busy as well as a learning experience for both the students and the faculty. The proseminars were designed to ignite discussion and were purposely held conference-style around a table, while the other courses, excepting conservation and field methods were generally lecture courses. In ANTH 560, Thesis, each student met with his or her assigned advisor on a regular basis to discuss topics, research, and requirements.

All of the first six students completed their requirements for the MA usually within two years of finishing their course work, with one exception: your gentle author who took an additional decade or so. Where are they now? What are they doing? Did they pursue archaeology as a career? Here's what I could find out.

Linda Derry received her M.A. in 1982. Her thesis was entitled “Pin-up Art: Interpreting the Dynamics of Style.” After working as a staff archaeologist for The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation from 1982 through 1984, Linda took a job as the director of Old Cahawba near Selma Alabama. Old Cahawba was Alabama’s first capital and exists today as an archaeological park. Linda co-edited (with Maureen Malloy) a book for SAA called Archaeologists and Local Communities: Partners in Exploring the Past and is a contributing author to a new book The Search for Maubila.
Conrad “Mac” Goodwin received his M.A. in 1981 after submitting his thesis. “Ethnicity in the Graveyard.” Mac has published on both Hawaiian and Caribbean archaeology and co-authored World Regional Geography with his wife, geographer Lydia Pulsipher. Mac also went on to pursue his Ph.D. receiving it in 1987 from Boston University. His dissertation is entitled: “Sugar, Time, and Englishmen: A Study of Management Strategies on Caribbean Plantations.” Mac lives in Knoxville.

Anne Garland received her degree in 1982 submitting another graveyard thesis: “The Churchyard Enclosure around the Elizabeth City Parish Church of 1728: With Systemic and Proxemic Considerations.” Shortly after graduation, Anne left for Hawaii working there in archaeology for over a decade while attending the University of Hawaii, Manoa where she studied with Michael Graves and received her Ph.D. in 1996. Her dissertation was entitled: “Material Culture Change after Euro-American Contact in Honolulu, Hawaii, Circa 1800-1870: A Selectionist Model for Diet and Tablewares.” She lives with her husband in Smithfield and is the Interim executive director of the Lost Colony Center for Science and Research and partner and co-owner of Archaeology in Education, Ltd. She was an adjunct faculty member in the Department in 2005-2006.

James M. “Jimmy” Smith got his degree in 1981 after writing his thesis on the pottery at Green Spring near Jamestown. “The Pottery and Kiln of Green Spring: a Study in 17th-century Material Culture”, Jimmy now lives in Pennsylvania where he is the director of the Nicodemus Center for Ceramic Studies. His love of pottery was inspired by his work on the “Poor Potter” kilns in Yorktown. During the spring and summer of 1979, Jimmy and I excavated the second Rogers kiln in Yorktown working for the College under the direction of Norman Barka. Jimmy is also a curator at the Renfrew Museum and Park in Waynesboro, PA.

Genevieve (Gerri) Leavitt also received her M.A. in 1981 writing her thesis on “Slaves and Tenant Farmers at Shirley Plantation: Social Relationships and Material Culture.” After graduation Gerri returned to Arizona where she had received her BA in 1978. She pursued a career in her first love – tennis, and is today the Director of Racquet at Canyon Ranch near Tucson.

Andrew Edwards took 15 years to finish his master’s degree after starting in the fall of 1979 – definitely a record, if not a particularly auspicious one. I received my undergraduate degree from the department in 1971 and actually worked as a staff archaeologist for the Norman Barka in the Department until starting graduate school. In 1982, I began working for Marley Brown as an archaeologist with The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. I currently work for the Department of Architectural and Archaeological Research at CW and have been involved in the CW/WM summer field school for the last 25 seasons.

Four of the first six graduate students who started in the graduate program in 1979 actually went on to pursue careers in archaeology, and two attained Ph.D.s. The Department was able to begin its doctoral program some 12 years later and has thus far graduated two Ph.D.s. If you want to be impressed by how many M.A.s have been awarded, go check out the wall of theses.

I am quite indebted to Linda Derry for lending her memory and help in locating some of our cohorts, to Marley Brown for info on early grad programs and to the Alumni News for keeping track of graduates.

— Andy Edwards

Selected Current and Recent Projects at the William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research, 2009

compiled by Elizabeth J. Monroe and Derek R. Miller

Staff of the William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research (WMCAR) have been busy working on a number of interesting projects over the past year for a variety of project sponsors including the College of William and Mary, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Historic Resources.

Opportunities with the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been sponsored through that agency’s Threatened Sites and Cost Share programs. Project archaeologist Elizabeth Monroe supervised a crew composed of WMCAR staff and volunteers, including graduate student of the Department of Anthropology Oliver Mueller-Heubach, in the recovery of 1,823 stoneware sherds from an extensive waster deposit associated with the nineteenth-century Parr Pottery (44HE0806), located in the southeastern portion of the City of Richmond, within an area currently experiencing redevelopment. Inventory of the assemblage revealed a wide range of vessel forms and kiln furniture. Forms identified among the recovered manufacturing failures include cake/butter crocks, jars, jugs, milk pans, strainers, pitchers, water coolers, spittoons, butter churns, flasks, bottles, inkwells, flower pots and saucers, strainers, mugs, chamber pots, spittoons, and urns. In addition, samples from the assemblage were sent to the University of Missouri Research Reactor for a pilot study of analyzing salt glazes using X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analysis. This study has provided baseline comparative data that, as additional XRF data are gathered from other assemblages of known provenience, can potentially help identify manufacturers of highly similar but unmarked stoneware vessels.
Project archaeologist Will Moore conducted an archaeological evaluation of the Hercules Site (44AY0040) in Covington, Virginia, as part of DHR’s Threatened Sites Program. The Hercules Site consists of a Late Woodland village with numerous refuse/storage pits and burial features, as well as post mold patterns. Exposure of the site associated with a change in land-use provided an opportunity to document and sample selected intact deposits prior to their preservation-in-place. A remarkable level of integrity has been maintained at the site, in spite of the property having previously been used as a trailer park. Paleoethnobotanical analysis of flotation samples produced evidence of corn and radiocarbon analysis of maize cupule fragments returned dates from the fourteenth and the mid- to late fifteenth centuries. Faunal preservation was also quite good at the site, and the species represented in the assemblage are generally typical of eastern woodlands sites.

Mr. Moore also directed a survey/evaluation of a remnant of Redoubt 9 (44YO0051) located within the median of I-64 near Williamsburg, supported by the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Federal Highways Administration. Helping with this evaluation was WMCAR intern and Department of Anthropology graduate student Shannon Mahoney. One of a series of earthworks constructed by the Confederates as part of a defensive line stretching from the York to the James River, Redoubt 9 was the scene of heavy fighting during the Battle of Williamsburg in early May 1862. Additionally, the immediate environs of Redoubt 9 served as a military camp. Among the resources identified at the site are remnants of the redoubt, possible rifle pits and gun emplacements, subsurface remains of a likely tent or hut, and an associated hearth feature. The extant portions of the redoubt consist of remnants of the northwest and southeast defensive ditches and portions of the southwest parapet and/or rampart. Through a field program that combined metal detection, excavation, and intensive topographic mapping, it was possible to expand the limits of the site to include the activity areas associated with pre- and/or post-battle military encampment, and to gather evidence of considerable archaeological integrity that had been maintained in portions of the site.

Over the course of the last twelve months, the WMCAR has conducted several investigations within the historic campus of the College of William and Mary in advance of various planned utility improvements. This has afforded an opportunity to identify, assess the integrity of, and more accurately characterize archaeological deposits within the historic campus. Despite a long history of building, destruction, reconstruction, renovation, utility work, landscaping, and multiple episodes of prior archaeological investigation, WMCAR staff identified several areas with significant archaeological integrity and research potential, including subsurface features and deposits associated with at least two poorly documented historic-period dependencies near the Wren Building and the Brafferton. The results of this survey and testing provide important planning information about significant archaeological resources that the College can take into consideration in finalizing plans for proposed utility improvements. In addition, the results of this work confirm that areas of archaeological sensitivity and significance are extant within the historic campus, despite the centuries of ground-disturbing activities, landscape modification, construction, destruction, and renovation. WMCAR interns and Anthropology graduate students Derek Miller and Shannon Mahoney have been aiding in the analysis of the material pulled from the Wren Yard. This analysis is shedding light on the activities of the diverse individuals who lived and worked at the College but are otherwise largely silent due to the spotty documentary record.

Although much of our time is spent finishing up the data analysis of these projects, a couple of exciting new opportunities await upon the horizon. A data recovery project is set for the prehistoric Manna Site in the Delaware River Gap National Recreation Area in northeastern Pennsylvania. This innovative project will offer the unique opportunity to conduct a comparative analysis of artifacts from this site with the Potomac Creek Culture type sites with which archaeologists who study the Late Woodland period in the Tidewater are familiar. Additionally, work will continue on the historic campus itself as we continue to explore some of the exciting archaeological deposits identified in our previous surveys to help ensure that proposed utility improvements on campus avoid any adverse effects on significant archaeological resources.

**Freeman Program-Foodways and Daily Ritual in Contemporary Japan**

In May and June, 2009, five William and Mary undergraduates joined faculty mentor Dr. Tomoko Hamada-Connolly for an unforgettable research adventure in Japan. The trip was conducted under the auspices of the Freeman Foundation’s Asia Network Student-Faculty Fellows Program for Collaborative Research in Asia. Their focus, Foodways and Daily Ritual in Contemporary Japan, would introduce them to a cross-section of Japanese society, business and domestic. Sam Davis, Jeff DeMars, Jr., Chris Pugliese, Nathan Revere, and Loretta Scott prepared for their four-week mission with intensive study of the Japanese language, ethnographic interview strategy, and the fine points of courtesy and politeness.

Upon arrival, the group met their host families and soon set to work on a rigorous schedule of formal and informal interviews throughout the metropolitan areas of Tokyo and
Osaka. Interview subjects included everyone from businessmen and women to fellow transit passengers and the homeless. Each student concentrated on a theme and would partner with translators to conduct interviews of subjects such as managers and workers at places like Toyo Suisan, Maruchan Foods, or the Matsumoto sake brewery.

“The traditional Japanese diet (ie. high proportion of vegetables and fish, low fat and small quantity meals with a variety of dishes, emphasis on freshness) has been considered one of the healthiest in the world.” Throughout their time in Japan, the researchers heard people say that the traditional Japanese diet is falling apart, that the younger generation eats junk-food and that westernization is leading to obesity and other health problems. Chris Pugliese (graduated May, 2009) submitted the first of the team's individual reports, in this case on changing foodways in the Japanese household. A rising tide of western foods was everywhere and poor eating habits were a reality. Chris, however, recalled the arguments of Sydney Mintz from works like Sweetness and Power and wondered what forces and conditions were really at the root of the acceptance of non-traditional foods.

With each new interview, the reasons began to take shape. Familial roles are changing. Women are staying in the workforce after marriage; indeed, many see no need to be married at all. Working women are exposed to the public eye. “They are weight conscious” said an interviewee, “they don’t want to get fat.” Their reaction is decidedly western. Instead of reaping the benefits of a traditional Japanese diet, they turn to filling yet unsatisfying “health foods” like rice vermicelli and instant, near-zero calorie shirataki noodles made from Konnyaku seaweed powder. Economically- and socially-empowered mothers are undermining traditional Japanese paternal authority, the same authority that once set meal-times and “family time.” In single-parent households and those where both parents work, childhood is an ever-shrinking window of years before aspiring scholars and business leaders enter into grueling juku “cram schools” and meet for long hours with tutors to prepare for university. Family life is fracturing and the traditional Japanese meal is seen as too time-consuming to prepare and eat. Kitchens are often stocked not with rice, fresh vegetables, and fish, but with wheat-based noodles, sugars, and frozen meals, this last leading to the microwave's increasing importance. One interviewee commented “This recession makes it worse. Fathers may work longer during this recession to keep their job. 4 out of 5 dads – I don’t think they eat dinner together.”

Family members, parents and children alike, are more likely to eat a quick meal at a konbinni or fast-food restaurant than at home. “Meals are nothing to look forward to.” Even the Tokyo government has had to step up nutrition education and thanks to sweet, salty, spicy, processed foods, “taste indifference” toward the subtle flavors of traditional meals has become a recognized medical condition.

There have always been rich food options in Japan. “Near Nagoya Station, we ate a kishimen miso-katsu lunch, a typical local dish composed of a pork cutlet and flat kishimen noodles, and discovered that this lunch contained 500 more calories than a super sized Big Mac lunch.” In the old agricultural and industrial Japan, these meals were reasonable and necessary, but now similarly rich western foods with low nutritive value and heavy health and social costs are appealing to a largely sedentary service and technology workforce.

Thankfully, the team did find evidence that things are changing. Old stereotypes of women as the bringers of food are eroding as husbands and wives begin to act as “dinner partners” to make the preparation of traditional meals less daunting on a busy schedule. One of Japan’s most popular fast food venues, Mosburger, turned out on Chris Pugliese’s closer inspection to serve traditional Japanese ingredients in the shape of typical American burgers: “Menu items offered included kinpira (burdock and carrot) and buta shiga yaki (pork and ginger) burgers. Even the buns were made from a mixture of rice, barley and millet – lacking a wheat base of ‘traditional buns.’”

Sam Davis has modified his aspirations in business and academia and is now looking to master Japanese in a native graduate program and eventually work through NGOs INOPs in the Japanese version of soup kitchens.

Passionate about the Japanese language, Loretta Scott returned from the trip excited to teach Richmond high-schoolers and now hopes to develop knowledge and skills in graduate school that will help her create new media tools for Japanese education.
Service Learning on the Thai-Burma Border

Susan Russo

From a student’s perspective, a description of service learning might be “a component of university study generally conducive to the successful acquisition of what is known as ‘a real job’.” But service learning in the truest sense should not have significance merely as a component in academia, but in local community life.

When I first came to the border in 2007, I had little idea as to what would become of me, except that I hoped to be involved in something useful. Teaching in South Korea the year before made me yearn for a system in which education was not a commodity which could be purchased. Additionally, I thought that a bit more practical experience wouldn’t be out of place on my CV. I was accepted into the Burma Volunteer Program on a 3-month English teaching placement in a Burmese refugee camp in remote northwest Thailand. I had a one-way ticket and only a vague idea as to what the teaching commitment would involve.

Refugee camps in Thailand aren’t as they are in other parts of the world. This is partly due to the protracted situation of refugees from Burma and partly due to environment. None of the original camps, started in 1984, are still in existence today. They’ve all been burned or blitzed or swept away in landslides — but many of the original families are rather unfortunately still here, more than 20 years later. Mae La Oon camp, where I initially taught, is one of the smaller amongst 9 camps in Thailand, accommodating only about 12,000 people mainly from the Karen ethnic group. The camp lies curled amongst mountains covered in papaya trees and coconut palms, winding down to a cool green river at its base. During the day, young people go to the camp schools and adults attempt to keep busy by tending small shops, vegetable gardens and livestock. In the evenings, people gather to sing and play guitar by candlelight. At times it seemed quite idyllic.

But beneath the tranquil surface, most refugees have a horrific reason for being in Mae La Oon. On some evenings, I’ve had people quietly describe to me how their parents were shot in front of them, or how their villages were burned to the ground.

The time I spent in Mae La Oon laid a foundation for my current involvement in Burma issues, which I don’t think I would have acquired in any other way. A blessing and a curse of working in a refugee camp is that it is logistically very difficult to leave, and so I found total cultural immersion not an option, but a requisite. I struggled at first with insider-outsider dynamics and have made more than my share of cultural faux pas; but soon realized that the refugees were ready to give fair allowance to me being a galowa and we all got over it. Although I did my best to teach well, I finished the placement in the debt of many wonderful individuals who certainly gave me more than I gave them. Although I later worked for a longer period of time in another larger camp, Mae La Oon still feels like “home” here, and I’ve got an adoptive Karen grandmother who doesn’t let me forget it. She never lets the fact that I can’t understand a word she says get in the way of our relationship. (That’s not for lack of linguistic application, by the way. I can understand other Karen people, but even other Karen people have difficulty understanding Grandmother; on account of her speaking softly and having very few remaining teeth.)

I’ve since given up on the “real job” idea and have instead just spent my time trying to do something useful and relevant within the context of the border. This approach had led to many wonderful opportunities, both voluntary and otherwise. Expats who have stayed on the border long-term will tell you that what started out as a 3 or 6-month commitment has somehow become 8 or 10 years. Service learning in the truest sense benefits not only the student but also the larger community, and in making those personal connections, service learners tend to stay involved in those communities, in one way or another, for the long haul.

These days I work out of the small town of Mae Sot, managing a small service learning program which facilitates placements for university faculty and students at local Burmese CBOs on the border. I primarily work with regional universities throughout Asia offering scholarships or fee waivers for Burmese students in their undergraduate and graduate programs. I interact with Burmese community organizations and migrant schools on a daily basis as part of this work, and I create links for new people to contribute in their own way. But that’s not really how I consider myself involved in the community here. I think that involvement is a gradual process, and it happens at a personal level, and it’s ongoing, even if starts out as something which seems temporary (such as a service learning commitment.) Karen people sleep at my house and Burmese migrant workers come over to watch music videos and activism films. I’m in the market for a water buffalo, (not for myself, for a friend.) My husband and I spent most of our evenings last week making a bright pink pig piñata for children at a local school who’ve never had a birthday party before.
And I’m weaving a traditional shirt for Grandmother, which at the moment is mostly still string. This is our community life.

From Helen Wong:

Mae Sot may be considered little more than a middle-of-nowhere, nothing-to-see town but it is a W&M student’s dream. The ability to help marginalized people as a direct affront to a long-standing and brutal military regime! I’m surprised that hordes of intrepid W&M students haven’t flooded the place! The only possible explanation is that people haven’t heard of Mae Sot. After all, I certainly hadn’t heard of it before this year.

In 2007, I graduated from W&M and moved to Hong Kong on a Fulbright scholarship. While there, I received my Master of Law in Human Rights from Hong Kong University (HKU). In January of this year, my dissertation advisor encouraged me to apply for a six-month Sohmen Fellowship. The fellowship is funded through HKU, but facilitated through a Thai organization called Burma Border Link. Although I double-majored in International Relations and Chinese Language & Literature, my knowledge of the Burmese situation was embarrassingly meager. However, the more I learned about the junta’s decades of human rights abuse and the particular situation of the displaced, the more eager I was to come to the border.

I had communicated with Susan before arriving in Mae Sot, but did not realize that we had attended the same school until I had been here for a week. It surprised me to find another W&M grad here, but—upon further reflection—made perfect sense. The two aspects of W&M that have always stood out to me are its commitment to academic exchange, and emphasis on service-learning. Burma Border Link facilitates those two models perfectly!

While the term “academic exchange” may seem synonymous to “study abroad”, it is actually far more than that. One of the initial factors that drew me to this fellowship was the opportunity to teach what I had learned about human rights through my masters program, and to cultivate critical analysis beyond simply transmitting knowledge. The first time I encountered abject poverty in Honduras, I had felt incredibly conflicted for having opportunities like education when so many others had nothing. However, that guilt about certain advantages does not require one to forego those privileges. Instead, I have used my skills and knowledge to “pay it forward”.

I arrived in Mae Sot on Tuesday, September 1st after taking a 7-hour night bus from Bangkok. There was the requisite three days of orientation, but by the following Monday I was sitting behind my desk at my new job. I work at the Burma Lawyers’ Council (BLC), a legal advocacy group formed by lawyers and academics that fled persecution in the 1990s. The BLC and its members are exiled from Burma due to their vocal criticism of the military State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). The BLC also supports a school for human rights advocates where I teach women’s rights three times each week. The students are mostly from ethnic minority groups and are trained in human rights law for two years before returning to their home villages.

The BLC lawyers instruct several legal courses in Burmese, but also depend heavily on foreign volunteers to teach other subjects. My role as a women’s rights educator is particularly significant for two reasons. First, it has been the dominant theme overarching and linking the majority of my university courses; as a result, I have acquired a broad education in gender-related issues. Second, the traditional patriarchal mindset found in many Asian cultures (including Burmese) tends to under-emphasize the importance of women’s rights. So while students would likely brush upon the topic, they would probably not be pushed to confront and evaluate female issues if I were not here to encourage it. (An unthinkable scenario for an avid women’s rights activist like me!)

Teaching alone would be enough to make the fellowship worthwhile, however, I have the additional service-learning component to further enhance my experience. While at HKU, I spent an entire year focusing on law. Many people view law as very black and white, straightforward, and absolutely irrefutable—it’s not! The world would be a better place if law functioned the way it should, but after spending countless hours pouring over case law, resolutions, declarations, legislation, reservations (and so on), I recognized the substantial gap between theory and reality. Even within best-case scenarios, Plan A seldom works. That is why lawyers always have Plan B through Plan Z lined up.

Though I am not in a courtroom debating technicalities (which I cannot do anyway because I do not have a J.D.), I am looking at the application of legal concepts to a real-life situation: the 2010 Burmese Elections. There is, of course, no precedent for me to draw directly from, nor any textbook that can provide a solution for this specific case. Instead, I’ve been forced to utilize academic theories and circumstances from a range of studies and experiences, adjusting and synthesizing information to address the current environment. It has been challenging, rewarding, and—above all—educational to serve in this capacity.

Editor’s Note:

After graduating in 2002, Susan headed for Korea and then for Thailand. Helen Wang also moved to Asia, and completed graduate work at Hong Kong University (2007). Today the two civic-minded women are working at a refugee camp for the Karen ethnic people who have fled the oppression of the Burmese military regime and settled in Thailand. While the world has mobilized for the cause of Aung Sun Suu Kyi in Burma, the decades old humanitarian disaster in rural Burma remains mostly under the international radar. The Karen ethnic people whom Susan and Helen work with have been systematically persecuted by the Burmese regime since 1949. There are ten or so established refugee camps in Thailand. These camps house not only the Karen people, but also, other ethnic groups such as Shan, Mon, Kachin and Rohingya people.
Interview with Dr. Kathleen Bragdon-Brown

Coming to Speaking Terms
Ethnohistory of Linguistic Description in 17th Century New England

Q: What are your main areas of interest?

My main areas of interest are ethnohistory, American Indian languages and cultures, and culture change.

Q: What is Ethnohistory?

Different scholars define ethnohistory variously but from my perspective ethnohistory is the investigation of past cultures and ways of life using the perspectives developed by cultural anthropology as well as information from linguistics, archaeology, and documentary research.

Q: How has ethnohistory changed over the years and what has been its relationship to anthropology?

Ethnohistory has become a more common perspective for anthropology. In the past, many of its practitioners were archaeologists and other historians. I think anthropologists have come to appreciate the ways in which the study of historic societies can make possible the investigation of theoretical perspectives that anthropologists continue to be interested in.

Q: Can you tell me about your next book?

My next book is an analysis of the development of linguistic description in southern New England in the 17th century. I have a word-list created by a missionary, which appears to have been a collaborative effort with native speakers on the island of Martha's Vineyard. I have become interested in the ways in which native peoples themselves contributed to linguistic analysis, and that will be the focus of this book.

Q: Given the missionary background of the early recorders, what was the ethnographic relationship between literacy and religion?

In Southern New England there were very close ties between the two. Missionaries, especially Protestant missionaries of that period, believed in the direct relationship between the reader and God and that relationship was best furthered by the written word and the use of the Bible. So that was very consistent with the way that Puritan leaders understood their own approach to faith and conversion; they wanted Native people to have that same experience. That was relatively unusual in North America in the 17th century as many other linguists descriptions of languages were not meant for the use of Native people themselves. In the case of southern New England, John Elliot in particular used his knowledge of the local languages to do an entire translation of the Bible, which was meant for Native readers. There were obviously very close ties between the development of literacy and the encouragement of conversion to Christianity. However, many non-Christians probably became literate as well.

Q: Is there a temporal relationship between the decline in native languages and that in traditional material culture?

Not necessarily. In Southern New England there was kind of an interesting juxtaposition between the progress or decline in the use of language and material conservatism as opposed to progressive ideas in terms of material culture. In Martha’s Vineyard and the island of Nantucket where lots of people became involved in the whaling industry, they owned a very wide range of Western material goods. They remained active speakers of their language and participants in their own indigenous communities but yet were fully modern in the sense that they also acquired a number of European goods and lived lifestyles that resembled those of their non-Indian neighbors, whereas in Natick, Massachusetts, which was one of the original “praying towns,” people began to stop using the native language in favor of English very early on, but their probate records revealed that they had what you might call a much more traditional culture.

Q: When native languages fell out of use, was English adapted into a coded language?

Undoubtedly. There were some people on Martha’s Vineyard in the 19th-century who knew some of the languages—there were prayers that were used in the church services, it’s just not clear if anyone was using the language fluently in a domestic situation. It had certainly gone out of public use in most regions. Massachusetts was used where it was not spoken and even today, it is used in settings religious or political or in situations where they don’t want widespread knowledge of what was taking place to be out there. There were also undoubtedly interest groups within Indian communities who chose to adopt a more English lifestyle and make use of English for reasons of their own, or to make themselves more acceptable to outsiders and other groups who undoubtedly retained a very conservative version of the language for much the same kinds of reasons. But that trend certainly continued even after the language went into decline and there were certain coded versions of English that continue through to today.

Q: It seems as though the word lists, dictionary, and Bible were used as a gateway to assimilation. What were the pressures that put an end to Massachusetts?
The people involved and the languages were really looked down upon for lots of reasons and Native people did not want to be looked down upon so they adopted things that might improve their situation. The Native languages of the region, including Massachusetts, were primarily useful in face-to-face contexts. As English became widespread and as Native preachers who moved around New England in the 19th-century became more influential, it happened that many of them did not use Native languages, they used English as a kind of lingua franca. The development of a kind of 19th-century religiosity might have been one of the factors that that led to the decline of the use of Massachusetts in sacred contexts, which would have had a significant effect on its perpetuation.

Q: The languages survived to some extent in the homes, but since the public sphere was barred to traditional languages those themes discussed in daily life were discussed less and less at home?

That seems to be the case but remember we have no records of the use of the Massachusetts language after the end of the 18th century except with one exception- a woman who spoke the Pequot language, Fidelia Fielding, kept a diary in her language, which Franz Speck was able to examine in the early 1900s. She did continue the literacy tradition and did speak her language, but she is the only person we know of. It probably is just lack of interest in Native communities in the time when they would have been transitioning into English-speaking communities. So as fewer and fewer people had knowledge of the language, there was less opportunity for it to be spoken, which is a common condition among modern Native communities whose languages are endangered also.

Q: What are some of the goals of ethnohistorians in their work with modern Native American groups and individuals?

Into the 1980s, the 1970s, really, most treatments of Native people relating to historical writings were as conquered people or whose languages or societies were really irrelevant to the larger history of American society and so on. And there were exceptions, but that in general, that was the perspective. Ethnohistorians felt and still feel that there is much in the received history of Americans that is inaccurate and biased and that the history of Native Peoples ought to be more central— not just native people but other minority groups as well. Also, anthropologically-trained ethnohistorians are interested in the application of anthropological theory to historical topics so in that sense, anthropological ethnohistory is really very theoretically oriented and in that sense it differs greatly from that written by historians who are not so much interested in theory as in the setting straight of the record.

Q: What can the 17th century experiences with native literacy teach current traditional language literacy programs?

Based on my work I would say that there is no necessary connection between literacy and language preservation. What’s really crucial is the use of these languages in public contexts. They have to remain viable in the communities. I think many people have taken this lesson to heart. In the ’70s, there was much more emphasis on dictionaries and wordlists and materials prepared for students to use in class. Now there’s much more emphasis on how the language is used. However imperfectly you speak it, it’s better than not speaking it at all. That’s one of the lessons of the 17th century experience, so although there was a significant number of people in Southern New England who could read and write in their own language, the language itself did not survive as a result of that and declined for other reasons.

The following questions are borrowed in part from an interview published recently in the William & Mary News.

Anthropology Department Chair Dr. Brad Weiss has recently published three books: Sacred Trees, Bitter Harvests: Globalizing Coffee in Colonial Northwest Tanganyika and Sweet Dreams and Hip Hop Barbershops, as well as an edited volume, Producing African Futures: Ritual and Reproduction in a Neoliberal Age.

Sweet Dreams and Hip Hop Barber Shops was just issued by Indiana University Press in May.

Q: What are the research questions that engaged you in these books and why are they important to you?

Well, they’re two very different projects. Sacred Trees, Bitter Harvests came to me while I was working on my dissertation work in the northwest part of Tanzania (in Bukoba) with a people called the Haya. It was a coffee growing region and coffee was the principal medium through which global relations were articulated. Most people got their income directly from coffee. I was interested in what made the coffee industry, how it was organized under colonialism, how it was structured, and who took an interest in fostering it and promoting it. This was a region where, prior to the colonial era, coffee was grown and was involved in all sorts of regional, political and economic relationships that had nothing to do with colonialism. In some ways, they still have nothing to do with the global coffee market today.

Everywhere you go in this little corner of Tanzania, people will prepare coffee and offer it to you, in exactly the same way as if you were to go over to visit your friends and they would say would you like a cup of tea, or would you like some coffee? People there don’t drink coffee. They don’t even prepare coffee...
beans in such a way that they could drink, but they do cook it with spices and then they desiccate it and you end up with these little coffee "berries." They're not hulled, they offer it to you like a piece of betelnut if you were in the South Pacific or a cola nut if you were in West Africa. It's a sort of small treat that's offered to prestigious guests. Everybody has a little bag of it at the back of their house and they go back and put it in a little plate and you eat two or three and they basically taste like nothing.

So anyway, I was interested in the relationships involved in how we understand the production of a global commodity, one that remains tied to these regional economic connections, but is also very much a cash economy. It's still sold; there's a market for even this kind of coffee. It was really about how to articulate this range of values and to understand how folks understood what their place relative to coffee.

The information I had up to that point said that the commercial coffee had been introduced by the "White Fathers" who were the Catholic missionaries in that region. I went to the Catholic archives in Rome to look at the records of the White Fathers who, it turns out, were only tangentially interested in coffee. I thought I'd be talking about how much income they would get from their coffee, but it turns out that is wasn't that much and it wasn't nearly as interesting as I thought it would be. They did in fact grow some coffee on the plantations that surrounded their missions, but they really didn't have much to do with spreading coffee out into the community. In fact, most of the coffee that's grown in that region today doesn't come from Arabica stock that the White Fathers brought in, which was a higher breed of coffee, and that's not typically what is grown in the area. People don't plant coffee plantations. Almost no one has a field with all coffee; it's always intercropped with other food products. What the White Fathers did do was plant tons of trees and that reshaped the landscape. The idea that had the White Fathers really vexed was that coffee had become such a commercial crop and these 'poor beknighted pagans' whom they were trying to convert to Catholicism were suddenly intensely materialistic and acquiring motorcycles and umpteen things that had the White Fathers really vexed was that coffee had become such a commercial crop and these 'poor beknighted pagans' whom they were trying to convert to Catholicism were suddenly intensely materialistic and acquiring motorcycles and turning themselves into these cosmopolitan dandies. It totally undermined their Catholic mission.

Q: And how about the other two works, Producing African Futures and your newly published book Sweet Dreams and Hip Hop Barbershops?

They are both part of a project that I began in 1999, when I moved from Northwestern to Northeastern Tanzania. I ended up working in a tourist town, Arusha, I had been to in the past. I really liked it as a place to live, and found it a very interesting place full of folks from all over Tanzania, so it's quite cosmopolitan.

I went there in 1999 and got to casting about for a research project and lo and behold I hooked up with all of these young guys-most of them-some women as well, who were totally into hip-hop and all manner of popular cultural phenomena that was suddenly available to them through media, satellite, publications, recordings, etc. With the changing political economy of Tanzania, it was becoming a big industry, musical production became really important. Although the book isn't really about music, it did involve bunches of real music aficionados of a cultural and of a popular style as well. This scene was the basis for one of the chapters in Producing African Futures.

One of the themes in both books is the question of how it is that youth have become the focus of so much discourse, both in terms of being seen as the promise of the future and a threat to the nation. With liberation and the end of Apartheid in 1994 is South Africa, there was a real transition to seeing Africa as this dynamic place on the vanguard of progress and the youth were absolutely essential to that. Of course, at the same time youth are thought to be dangerous and frightening, out of control and increasingly unemployed. They represent an enormous strain on the nation. There are lots of concerns about the viability of marriage and about the young people getting employed in the kinds of industrial positions that previous generation relied upon but they find that they don't have access to. There are huge questions that surround education: what is the value of education; 'well education doesn't actually qualify you for anything'. That's a truly global phenomenon and I've gotten to participate in discussions with folks from South Asia to Brazil to Canada where you talk about the crisis of educating youth and the idea that there's very little hope that somebody from the Punjab who has a masters degree in computer science can actually expect to do anything where he's from and in some cases you sit and wait for the future to arrive and so that's sort of what Reproducing the Future is about. It's about the various means African communities have taken toward trying to address these questions and particularly how a lot of youth in Africa have tried to imagine their future and create that future for themselves.

What I began to ask was, what are the costs of those kinds of changes, and that led directly into Barbershops which is an extension of the themes of neoliberalism and colonialization, and crises of youth. What I'm interested in particularly is the role of fantasy. While generating a sense of potential and giving people a world to which they aspire, fantasy also gives them a sense of their exclusion and complete marginalization from that wider world. When MTV and Vibe become channels through which people imagine what it means to be a black man in the world today you can certainly get yourself jazzed up and excited about that sort of fantastical vision of a sort of African identity, or even more broadly of a shared cultural world. You simultaneously feel yourself utterly alienated from that as well, because here you are competing this lifestyle and nobody cares about your own ability to produce anything is of value.

Q: Media-driven fantasies have certainly become much more visible and perhaps important. What forms of imagination have they replaced?

Tanzania, till 1994, didn't have television broadcasting. It had two newspapers, both of which were produced by the state. It was a one party socialist nation. The possibilities of thinking in terms of those sorts of fantasies were really limited. Literally!
I am not kidding, when I was there in 1988, people in some regions of the country did not know who Michael Jackson was. This was when everybody knew who Michael Jackson was! So, those sorts of fantasies weren’t there. What they replaced—its very interesting what they replaced— it was a sort of Pan-African Nationalist pantheon of great leaders, everybody from to Kwame Nkruma to Nelson Mandela to Malcolm X. Julius Nyerer was the first president of the Republic of Tanzania, and was esteemed for being a hero at the vanguard of a new vision of African socialism. So, it was a much more politicized vision. Safari suits like the African leaders wore became very popular with the general people. Again, there were moments in the colonial era where popular film was very widespread, with your cowboys and Indians and things like that, so that set the stage. The kind of films that Africans had access to and could engage with might not be from the West at all. It could be Bollywood cinema, it could be Hong Kong movies or the music that comes from the Arab world. Not always American stuff. Alongside these, popular political culture was about the freedom fighters.

Q: Most of the political heroes are gone, now?

Yeah, you don't see much of that, no Malcolm X. When Nyerere died, there was a renewed critique—mostly of corrupt contemporary officials, saying, “oh back then you were socialist and now politicians are only in it for a buck.” People are nostalgic in a way. I haven’t been to Tanzania since [President Obama] was elected or even on the political scene. I was last there in 2006 so he was a senator then and no one had even heard of him. They knew about George Bush and wanted nothing to do with him but they loved Bill Clinton and they loved the fact that he was such a sexual reprobate. They found that totally appropriate. That was what you were supposed to do when you were such a big shot.

Q: You’ve engaged in a great deal of fieldwork to prepare your books. What has changed in the field?

As a graduate student I was interested in Africa and working in Africa because I knew instructors who worked there. I got interested in working in Uganda but this was in the 1980s and Uganda was in the throes of a pretty bleak civil war. So I checked around and looked into working in Rwanda and it wasn’t for me and I finally fell into working Tanzania. Because of the independence movements, there were lots of Europeans who wanted to be affiliated with these developing African nations, working to shore up the academic scholarly culture of developing Africa. In fact the Dar es Salaam school of history became quite powerful and important and brought about people like Terry Ranger who is one of the, if not the pre-eminent African historian. And then that was gone. Soon, people realized the structure of “African Socialism” was really much more autocratic than they imagined, and that was devastating. Then in the late 1980s it opened up a little bit more. So nobody had been working in this region for decades. The only person who had done really in-depth research up in this region of Tanzania had done it in the colonial era, in 1954. I read her dissertation and met her and told her about working in that area. It’s a little bit hard for me to give you a sort of fair accounting of how things have changed since the late 80s because I have changed the location of where I was working. I’ve been to [Arusha] over the course of that time and Arusha has changed considerably in its density of population, and the range of commercial enterprises and in a host of enormous ways. But I doubt the area of Tanzania where I was – it couldn’t have changed quite so much but undoubtedly its very different from what it was like then.

Q: What is neoliberalism?

If you read the introduction to Reproducing the Future, you’ll realize its one of the things that I struggle with. For some neoliberalism refers to kind of an archetypical understanding of the force of the market, its role in reshaping citizenship and the relations of subject to state to global institution and it’s a pervasive medium in which all sorts of relationships are suffused.

The most standard way of characterizing neoliberalism is that world economic relationships should be formed around institutions that are shaped by market forces so that state and parastatal institutions and interventions should be minimized, and state subsidies reduced. One of the things that neoliberalism is classically associated with is structural adjustment programs or SAPs where the IMF basically says to a country: “you’re spending way to much of your resources – resources you don’t have-” on public facilities, on jobs, and you’re creating this huge bureaucracy, but also on things like public healthcare or trying to provide too much education or too much agricultural input.

And really if you 1) have more investment, and 2) seriously restricted your budget, you would experience development. The third thing associated with neoliberalism is a very specific school of neo-classical economics which sees that the market isn’t really deficient but that there’s this legislative and market connection which requires these very particular kinds of intervention that assure and try to promote very specific economic activities, that try to promote savings, that try to target investment to types of industries or that works largely through the structuring of financial relationships.

For me it is essentially a way of saying look, the market is going to play this much more direct a role in making consumerism a standard default subject position for people. In the world, how they relate to one another; through the market, through market relationships, and that will produce better transparency, better access, etc. etc. etc. Structural adjustment has led to the collapse of state industries and really hasn’t led to the construction of a lot of new jobs, but it has helped to consolidate a lot of people who already had some funds, to become very wealthy with whatever investment there was and essentially everybody else was just out of a job. So there’s enormous disparity in this region and all across Africa as there have been for years but in some ways its more acute, more focused, more concrete.
Editor’s Notes: Here are our students at the Department.

Shea Winsett 2nd year MA/Ph.D student interested in archaeology of African American towns, Black urban culture and African American identity.

Jessica Herlich
I graduated from Cornell University in 2008 with majors in Anthropology, Archaeology, and History and a concentration in American Indian Studies. For my undergraduate Honors Thesis, I classified and analyzed a glass bead assemblage from a Seneca Iroquois site. As an undergraduate, I worked in Cornell’s Laboratory of Dendrochronology, and this past year I worked in the lab full time. I am currently interested in historical archaeology and Native American studies, especially during the early Colonial era.

Raquel Nava
3rd year MA/PhD student. Socio-Cultural Anthropology-Interests: Religion, ritual specialists and traditional medicine in the Andean plateau and Latin America.

Sarah Zimmet
My interests are in historical archaeology and particularly in plantation archaeology. My undergraduate work at Barnard College focused on a 17th century Dutch provisioning plantation, Sylvester Manor, on Shelter Island, New York. I focused on identifying interactions between plantation owners, enslaved Africans, and local Native American laborers.

Jaclyn Kuizon
2nd Year MA/PhD - Socio-Cultural Anthropology - Contemporary American Indian Artists and Identity Formation.

Joel Dworsky
1st year MA student, interest in Historical Archaeology focus on Bermuda.

Elizabeth Messer
2nd year MA student, focus in Caribbean historical archaeology.
Editor’s Note: Carl Carlson-Drexler after completing his graduate course work is now with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Here is a note from Carl in Illinois.

In May of this year, I packed my pickup and headed, via my home in Texas and my field site in Arkansas, to my new job at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Construction Engineering Research Laboratory (CERL) in Champaign, Illinois. In the three months since then, I have begun to learn the tricky business that is cultural resources management (CRM) within the Department of Defense (DoD). I thought that my previous years with the National Park Service (NPS) would be good preparation for the work climate and the bureaucracy associated with working inside the walls of the Castle (as some within the Corps refer to it). That was, in retrospect, overly optimistic.

There were two big surprises waiting for me. First was the sheer depth and creativeness of the bureaucracy, the number of forms, and the number of different contractors that you have to work through in order to do your work. The second, more complex issue is the way in which CRM in the DoD (did I mention that the Corps loves acronyms?) differs from the private sector and other government agencies. Outside the DoD, cultural resources and their management have their own intrinsic value, reflected in laws like the National Historic Preservation Act, that forms the guiding philosophy of the work. This does not hold true for the DoD. CRM is done in the military to facilitate the other activities that the military engages in, primarily (in the United States) training for other actions abroad. By performing the CRM tasks required by federal law, archaeologists doing work on military installations keep the armed forces from being shut down by stakeholder communities through the courts, which has happened in the past. Most of what we do as archaeologists within the DoD has to be couched in the rhetoric of facilitating the Army through ensuring its adherence to federal law. This was and is the most surprising dimension of my employment with the Corps of Engineers.

My specific position is with CERL, a unique facility within the Corps in that we are not a regionally-based office. Our focus is on doing research that expedites construction and training on installations (we [there are three of us] are the only research archaeologists in the Corps system, I am told). We do a lot of remote sensing (magnetometry, resistivity, ground penetrating radar) projects on installations around the country, are considering research on using scent detection dogs to locate unmarked historic burials. I just returned from a remote sensing project at Fort Leavenworth, where we used remote sensing techniques to try and locate a Nez Perce cemetery dating to the period when the tribe was imprisoned there in the late 1870s. This was done at the request of the tribe. I am also working on a soil description manual and a survey of historic farmsteads at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

I am aware that many are troubled by the intersection of anthropology/archaeology and the military. I share many of these trepidations, and am continually witness to the many different points of articulation between the two during the course of my work. I am willing to field questions and concerns from those who wish to pose them to me (in a polite manner). Send me an e-mail, and I’ll tell you what I can.

Richmond Stoneware Industry
By Oliver Mueller-Heubach (graduate student)

People have called me a “stuff archaeologist” for my interests in material culture and the artisans and craftspeople who created it. To be true, a fragment of metalwork or ceramic has more than once sent me into an Ivor Noël Hume-esque reverie for the art and skills involved in its creation. There is a reluctance to accept artifacts as anthropologically important based on aesthetics, but as I heard ceramicist Rob Hunter say at a Society for Historical Archaeology symposium, “Archaeology is Aesthetics or it is Nothing.” Whether the perspective of choice is landscape and spatial analysis, trade routes, labor relations, health, or safety, the products of the crafts were both mirrors and agents in their own right.

Originally, I had hoped to find a topic relating to the Pennsylvania Dutch, the Germans, Swiss, and French of various protestant sects who arrived in Penn’s Woods beginning in the 17th century. I had done research on the Moravian towns of Pennsylvania and North Carolina and knew I could read the old German documents and maybe gather some lost clues to “Deitsch” history. After spending a good while reading up on things “P&D,” I was still no closer to finding a topic. James Delle, landscape and spatial theorist and historical archaeologist, came to the department to give a brownbag and presented us with some pretty bleak numbers on cultural resources and heritage funding in Pennsylvania and in Lancaster; “the heart of Dutch Country” in particular. Well, this didn’t bode well. Not long after, I found myself turning back instead to the other commonwealth, Virginia.

My advisor, Dr. Fred Smith, suggested I might do something with the Dr. Barka’s Poor Potter of Yorktown America’s first stoneware pottery and one of the first native factories. I
read the Poor Potter reports and Fred and I went to visit with Ceramics in America editor Rob Hunter. He was really interested in a regional study of Richmond stoneware. Richmond is one of America’s major stoneware centers, but aside from a few articles in Rob’s books, is almost completely absent from ceramics histories. Producing a synthesis would be a much-needed addition to ceramics research, one that would suit my material culture interests. The southern urban setting would provide data and perspectives for intriguing anthropological study.

I had given up on Pennsylvania Germans for the potteries, but the pottery I am looking at is clearly descended from German wares via a human and technology diaspora. American 19th-century stoneware is a hybrid of native forms and technologies with those of the Westerwald. There, the blue cobalt-decorated grey pots emerged in the 1600s from older brown “iron wash” traditions. Both brown (Bartman jugs) and blue-grey (tankards and chamber pots) are common on Virginia’s 17th and 18th century sites.

Since the 1670s and 1680s, British stonewares had been dominated by the old, mellow brown iron wash style created by dipping pots in a mixture of liquid clay (slip) and rust or iron oxide. Perhaps once in America, these artisans found cheaper sources of cobalt and salt and thus began the transition to the blue and grey of Westerwald pottery. Whatever the case, the British method was largely abandoned and blue and grey stoneware became a ubiquitous utilitarian storage container of the 19th century.

Potteries have appealed to me as spatially and materially characteristic sites, sites that are hard to misinterpret as to function. Accumulations of sometimes dozens of cubic meters of wasters, sherds of failed pots, make them highly visible, as do substantial kiln foundations. One of my undergrad field-schools was at the Moravian Schaffner pottery in Salem, North Carolina, an experience that inspired my honor’s thesis. Working for the William and Mary Center for Archaeological research off and on from 2004, I dug at two more potteries, the Anthony Baecher site in Winchester, and the Lowndes works in Petersburg, Virginia. I came to recognize Virginia as a place of ceramics “firsts”. Two pottery sites on Jamestown Island represented the earliest pottery made in English North America. William Rogers, the “Poor Potter” of Yorktown created the first salt-glazed stoneware, and one of the first factories in English North America.

It would be 1809 before Benjamin Duval erected Richmond’s first stoneware pottery at 13th and Cary. The industry would last into the 1870s and involve perhaps seventeen master potters and hundreds of assistants, journeymen and apprentices. Richmond drew potters from throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast. They came by way of Albany and New York City, South Amboy New Jersey, Philadelphia and Baltimore. The traditions they carried with them were learned from German potters they met in those places, though none were themselves German. Many of the pottery apprentices came to the shops as young boys, 12 or 14 years old from the County Orphan’s Court. Many of these were free blacks. Slaves also worked at the potteries, often hired from their masters as needed. Richmond stonewares were shipped up and down the East Coast, from Charleston to Baltimore and New York and into the Virginia backcountry at Buckhannon via the James River and Kanawha Canal. Richmond wares competed with stonewares in major cities and helped open the trans-Appalachian backcountry. Most of Richmond’s potters stuck to traditional stoneware forms, the crocks, jugs, jars, spittoons, bottles, inkwells, churns, milk pans, and so on. Thomas Amos, newly arrived from Philadelphia brought tools and skills for making chemical stonewares. Stoneware and glass vessels permitted the research and development of chemical and acids, driving the second industrial revolution.

On site with WMCAR again at Rob’s invitation, I helped sample the massive Parr pottery waster pile at Rockett’s Landing, Richmond. Looking out on the James River below town center, the site was a bluff made, for all intents and purposes, of stoneware. Parr may have been a Quaker and provided refuge to at least one pacifist Quaker who had been imprisoned by the Confederacy.

My need to learn more about American potting traditions has seen me engage in pottery tourism to Ohio (Zainesville, East Liverpool Ceramics Museum), Pennsylvania (Westerwald Pottery, Lancaster Heritage Center, Dutch Country potteries), and North Carolina (Seagrove “Pottery Capital of the World”). As I gain a better understanding of the Richmond potters, I will be heading for Albany, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and the New Jersey towns to view the collections of their teachers’ and predecessors’ pieces.