PENN CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER ANNUAL MEETING ON COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY AND HERITAGE

CONCEPTUALIZING COMMUNITY

With Keynote Speaker
Stephen Silliman

SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2019

PENN MUSEUM, PHILADELPHIA PA
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The organizing committee of this conference would like to extend its deepest gratitude to the Penn Cultural Heritage Center, Executive Director Professor Richard M. Leventhal, and Director of Research and Programs Professor Brian I. Daniels for their generous support of this program, both ideologically and budgetarily. In addition, thanks are owed to Grace Golden, the Administrative Coordinator at the CHC, for her many efforts in coordinating the logistics of this conference.

Further thanks go to:
The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
The Graduate Student Government - School of Arts & Sciences
The University of Pennsylvania Department of Anthropology
The Penn Museum

Conference Organizing Committee:
Tiffany Cain
Chelsea Cohen
Francisco Diaz
Christopher Green
Grace Golden
Autumn Melby
Kyle Olsen
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Whit Schroder
Samantha Seyler
Robert Vigar
Charlotte Williams
### Schedule Overview

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Keynote Introduction

Professor Stephen Silliman is a historical archaeologist focusing on topics pertaining to Indigenous peoples and colonialism. He received his Ph.D. from University of California-Berkeley with specialties in archaeological theory and the archaeology of Native North America. He has conducted field research in Massachusetts, California, Oregon, Texas, and Japan, but his current geographic focus is on southern New England. He works regularly with the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation in Connecticut on issues relating to historic preservation and archaeological research. Much of this work has been conducted as part of his Eastern Pequot Archaeological Field School, which has been funded by the National Science Foundation and the Wenner-Gren Foundation. Dr. Silliman has published three books: Lost Laborers in Colonial California: Native Americans and the Archaeology of Rancho Petaluma; Historical Archaeology; and Collaborating at the Trowel’s Edge: Teaching and Learning in Indigenous Archaeology. He has contributions in several edited volumes on the archaeology of colonialism and North America, and he has also published in a variety of leading anthropological journals including American Antiquity, American Anthropologist, Journal of Social Archaeology, Historical Archaeology, and others.
Session 1: Museums and Communities

10:30-10:45 am  Unvisited Museums, Toponyms, and the Ethics of Community Archaeology
Aliosha Bielenberg (Brown University)
Kelley Tackett (Brown University)

Unvisited Museums, Toponyms, and the Ethics of Community Archaeology: This presentation will contextualize our ethnographic and archaeological fieldwork (part of the Koutroulou Magoula Archaeology and Archaeological Ethnography Project) within ongoing discussions about “community archaeology”. We propose a three-fold distinction between community-engaged, public, and ethical archaeology, arguing that “community-engaged” and “public” are too often used as euphemisms for “ethical”. These artificial distinctions mask how the choices we make as archaeologists are ultimately moral decisions -- in other words, how the “ethical” subsumes the “community-engaged” and the “public.” While community-engaged or public work is a worthy goal, as articulated in previous literature, ethical scholarship transcends these bounds. We demonstrate this by exploring entangled and sometimes contradictory community desires drawn from our fieldwork in Greece. Tensions between communities around our excavation -- which site to excavate? where to build a museum? what to do with human remains? -- push us to reconsider what it means for our work to be truly community-engaged, and how our choices define a “community”. We conclude that our ultimate goal should be to conduct scholarship openly, honestly, and ethically.

10:45-11:00 am  Cultural Dissonance and Dark Heritage Solutions
Victoria Parker (University of Montana)

I proffer solutions from case studies, examples, models, and my own perspective as to what public institutions and officials can do in the future to deal with cultural dissonance and create positive awareness of (Native) American heritage and history. People in charge of public institutions need to consider the weight of their responsibility to educate and inform. Heads of public institutions that “show culture” should do an assessment of their own fears
of backlash and unpopularity. Then they should go forward, embrace controversy, and engage in public discourse to see if those fears are accurate or unwarranted. After this analysis, they should proactively work on making balanced representations by re-working or removing antiquated and/or false narratives.

My goal is to present specific solutions aimed at addressing the dark history of the United States, and people’s struggles with cultural dissonance when dealing with Native Americans. I want to help people recognize they are not divorced from this issue and to consider/challenge narratives they’ve been presented their entire lives. With multicultural awareness and sensitivity, institutions can create an awakening in historical education that can help society move forward; and question policies regarding teachings of inferiority that stem from implicit biases, inhumane treatment of minorities, and segregation.

11:15-11:30 am  
**How Communities are Inscribed in the Materiality of Washoe Basketry**

Francisco Diaz (University of Pennsylvania)

This paper relates the results of study and re-articulation of information about two California Native baskets in the collections of the Penn Museum. The early acquisition of Native objects by anthropological museums reflects a positivistic understanding of reality, which among other things, results in a discourse on the loss of the “native voice” of the objects and consequently the loss of important information about what they represent about and for indigenous peoples. Through juxtaposition of indigenous ontologies and current anthropological theory of object ontology and affect, a study of two Washoe Baskets from the Lake Tahoe/Nevada region of California illustrates a way of fore-fronting Native experiences in Museum collections as a method of recontextualization. The recontextualization process of these baskets demonstrates how these objects connect together the different communities and entities that experienced them in different ways: Native people, salvage anthropologists and Euro-American collectors, the plants and foods that featured in to the structure and use of the baskets, contemporary researchers and museum goers, etc. This process has revealed the communities who have
been there all along, lying outside the edges and limits of the basketry, yet at the same time imbued within the warp and weft of these objects. This is turn, allows for an examination of the power dynamics and choices that explicate contemporary use of Native object in Museums and illustrates a way of privileging Indigenous communities and their experiences in anthropological and museum study.

10:30-10:45 am Question and Answer
Discussant: Christopher Green (University of Pennsylvania)

Session 2: Identities and Communities
11:45-12:00 pm Archaeology and the Political Community
Rui Gomes Coelho (Rutgers University)

Archaeology and the Political Community: This paper questions the identitarian conceptualization of “community”, which blurs internal complexity into an idealized, well-bounded social group. Collaboration is an endeavor that is permeated by contradictions and conflicts that constitute community life. Archaeologists working in community-based projects are often involved in community’s internal conflicts and are often compelled or required to take sides. I propose that archaeologists accept conflict as constitutive of community life and define their research with an agenda of emancipatory praxis intersecting multiple groups. Drawing from Marxist archaeology, this corresponds to a theoretically informed practice that is committed to a struggle against historical inequality and injustice. Such praxis is only possible if embedded with trust, hope, and imagination. I will discuss two recent archaeological projects in the Portuguese-Spanish border as case studies focusing on the traces of resistance and guerrilla warfare against 20th century dictatorships. These projects emerge in tandem with the mobilization of rural communities for the recognition of the past and current injustices and inspire other struggles beyond; for example, regarding the humanitarian crisis in the European Union’s borderlands. We are all part of what I will call here the “political community”.

12:00-12:15 pm  *Challenging Communities: Community Archaeology as Social Justice*
*V. Camile Westmont (University of Maryland)*

Challenging Communities: Community Archaeology as Social Justice: A community archaeology project hosted by the University of Maryland at Eckley Miners’ Village, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, has investigated the 19th century domestic spaces of working class European immigrants in the anthracite coal fields since 2014. Since then, local (white) descendant populations have attempted to weaponized this project in their on-going fight against modern Latino immigration. These methods include defining ‘good’ vs ‘bad’ immigrants and by using their temporal longevity within the area (as demonstrated by the archaeology) to claim legitimacy. By shifting the interpretation of the community archaeology project to emphasize the commonalities and shared experiences of historic and modern migrants, the project has taken on a social justice component and a critical theory perspective. In this largely conservative, rural area, however, this approach has not been universally accepted within the local community. In this paper, I discuss how community archaeology can be used to challenge popular ideologies to promote social cohesion, address social issues, and potentially create new communities.

12:15-12:30 pm  *The Importance of the Local in Lower Mississippi Valley Community Archaeology*
*Arielle Pierson (University of Pennsylvania)*
*Professor Megan Kassabaum (University of Pennsylvania)*

The Importance of the Local in Lower Mississippi Valley Community Archaeology: Community archaeology within Native North America generally focuses on descendent communities; however, the violent legacy of the colonial encounter and forced removal means that such communities may no longer exist and often have little overlap with local communities. Without minimizing the importance of working with descendent groups, we focus on conceptualizing the local as a stakeholder population. We situate past and ongoing public archaeological work conducted alongside excavations at Smith Creek, a pre-contact mound site in Wilkinson County,
Mississippi, as important in connecting these often-disparate communities. Mounds stand as testament to the vitality, creativity, and skill of their builders, yet they are rapidly disappearing due to erosion, farming, development, and looting. We contend that locally engaged and locally collaborative work aimed at connecting populations with mounds that are part and parcel of their quotidian landscape is key to protecting sites and engendering respect for past and present Native communities. We interrogate questions such as: How does avocational archaeology integrate with community archaeology? How does it relate to collecting and looting? What methods of connecting to local communities are most important and how do we make them effective? Can connecting present and past landscapes aid in preservation of important sites.

12:30-12:45 pm *Competing Visions of ‘Kazakhness’: Community Self-Discovery through the World of Traditional Craftwork*

Ad Lane (University of North Carolina, Chapel-Hill)

Competing visions of ‘Kazakhness’: Community self-discovery through the world of traditional craftwork: For nomadic cultures, archaeology becomes by necessity less about the physical remains of the past and much more about the intangible connections which persist. Kazakhstan, for the majority of its existence, was defined by its lack of permanence. Craftwork and other artisan pursuits at the time were significant and well-practiced, but more importantly survived relatively authentically across the region’s periods of identity crisis and suppression. In this way, craftwork in Kazakhstan has survived as a rare culturally-relevant practice bridging ancient communities with modern ones. Kazakhstan’s history as a Soviet state, compounded with its recent independence in a quickly globalizing world, results in a country defined by two community ambitions: a larger top-down promotion of the modern multi-ethnic Kazakhstan, and a more traditionally-Kazakh aspiration driven by generational loss of heritage. The two aspirations are not in conflict, but I argue that a tension does remain despite appreciation of both needs by the majority. Sheber, an annual state-wide artisan competition, becomes in these conditions an example of community ‘living archaeology’. The
competition’s goal of bringing craftwork to a larger audience of admirers and practitioners has created a platform upon which the tension between community needs can be interpreted and understood.

12:45-1:00 pm  **Question and Answer**  
Discussant: Robbie Vigar (University of Pennsylvania)

**Session 3: Archaeological Praxis**  
3:00 - 3:15 pm  **Community Archaeology in Practice: The Field School Experience in Athienou, Cyprus**  
Helena Arose (Athienou Archaeological Project)  
Julia Wareham (Athienou Archaeological Project)

Community Archaeology in Practice: The Field School Experience in Athienou, Cyprus: The Athienou Archaeological Project (AAP), an archaeological excavation project based in the politically-charged buffer zone of Cyprus, is a model for how community archaeology can aid recovery after local trauma, create sustainable stewardship of archaeological resources, and define new priorities for emerging archaeologists. The integration of the project's staff and field school students into the community, as well as local stakeholder engagement with the project generally, has resulted in the end of looting activity at the site, the creation of a municipal museum, and increased international attention on the town's intangible heritage. The project’s successful model proves community archaeology is not just an altruistic enterprise, but a necessary practice in order to move the discipline forward to be more sustainable and ethical. As two former field school students, we will explain how AAP has impacted the town of Athienou over 20 years of continued presence post-invasion and how the project has influenced us as young archaeologists to prioritize community inclusion and local interests as we navigate study and work in cultural heritage management.

3:15-3:30 pm  **Complicating Communities in French Guiana: Introducing Archéo La Caroline**  
Elizabeth Clay (University of Pennsylvania)
Complicating Communities in French Guiana: Introducing Archéo La Caroline: In practice, archaeology in French Guiana takes place within a French metropolitan framework in terms of excavation permits, reporting, and dissemination of research results. While archaeology is still a public pursuit, employing explicit strategies for involving stakeholders in research is rarely a priority for the majority of scholars working in the region. Furthermore, because archaeology is overseen by the French state, the power dynamics involved in defining local communities are clear. This paper introduces the ongoing project Archéo La Caroline, which is the first and only programmed archaeological investigation of a village for enslaved laborers in French Guiana and one that actively engages and negotiates multiple, overlapping stakeholders - Afro-descendant, indigenous, and French - in addition to local and international teams of researchers. Still in its early stages, the project has been built on various strategies of trial and error indicative of community work. This paper discusses some of our efforts to 1) define community stakeholders & encourage participation on multiple levels; 2) break down barriers of scientific authority, thereby allowing the project to intersect with local identity struggles and heritage projects; and 3) negotiate the often conflicting needs of researchers and communities and work to overcome these divisions.

3:30-3:45 pm  Identifying Community in the Maya Biosphere Reserve, Petén, Guatemala
Kirsty Escalante (Tulane University)

Identifying Community in the Maya Biosphere Reserve, Petén, Guatemala Community-engaged archaeology in Petén, Guatemala is virtually nonexistent. Despite its large size, the department of Petén in northern Guatemala has the lowest population density in the country, partly because it contains the Maya Biosphere Reserve, the largest protected area in Guatemala. Due to settlement restrictions in the reserve, it is rare to find communities living adjacent to archaeological sites in this region, a challenge for archaeologists interested in community engagement. Still, stakeholder communities certainly exist. Identifying these communities and deciding which to engage is a
challenging and imperfect process that is inevitably rife with power dynamics. Nevertheless, it is a necessary task, as archaeologists working in this area can no longer overlook stakeholder communities because of their lack of residential proximity to archaeological sites. My work to implement a community engagement project in collaboration with the Asociación Forestal Integral San Andres Petén, a community-based forest management organization, illustrates some of the challenges and power dynamics of defining community, particularly in a large protected area with low population density. Despite these challenges, community engagement in the Petén has the potential to transform archaeology from an extractive process to one that is socially relevant and responsive to stakeholders.

3:45-4:00 pm  
**Question and Answer**
Discussant: Professor Douglas Smit (University of Pennsylvania)

Roundtable Discussion

4:15-5:15 pm  
Moderator: Christopher Green (University of Pennsylvania)
Professor Brian I. Daniels (Penn Cultural Heritage Center)
Tiffany Cain (University of Pennsylvania)
Professor Megan Kassabaum (University of Pennsylvania)
Professor Stephen Silliman (University of Massachusetts Boston)
Presenter Bios

Helena Arose, Athienou Archaeological Project

Helena Arose is former AAP field school student and a recent graduate of the University of Glasgow MSc in Art History: Collecting and Provenance in an International Context.

Aliosha Bielenberg, Undergraduate Student at the Joukowsky Institute of Archaeology and the Ancient World at Brown University

Aliosha Bielenberg studies at the Joukowsky Institute of Archaeology and the Ancient World at Brown University. His work is concerned with nationalism and postcolonialism as they intersect with transdisciplinary theoretical work.

Elizabeth Clay, PhD Candidate at the University of Pennsylvania

Elizabeth Clay is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology at Penn, specializing in historical and African Diaspora archaeology. Her research explores labor, landscape, and daily practice in nineteenth-century French Guiana and she co-directs Archéo La Caroline, an archaeological and ethnographic project focusing on the material and social legacies of enslavement in French Guiana.

Rui Gomes Coelho, Post-Doctoral Student at Rutgers University

Rui Gomes Coelho (Ph.D. Binghamton University, 2017) is a Postdoctoral Associate in the Cultural Heritage and Preservation Studies program at the Department of Art History, Rutgers University. He is an archaeologist interested in historical archaeology, archaeology of the contemporary, critical heritage and photography. His current interests are driven by a fascination with the sensorial constitution of alternative modernities, and for marginal communities who mobilize material culture against traditional, nationalist-oriented approaches to heritage. He has been collaborating with archaeological projects based in the U.S., Portugal, Brazil, Germany, and Spain. He is the co-director of the community-based project “Cambedo 1946—Archaeology of Resistance in the Galician-Portuguese Border” (https://www.facebook.com/cambedo1946/). As a photographer, Coelho participated in several individual and collective shows in the U.S., U.K. and Portugal (https://cargocollective.com/ruigomescoelho).
Francisco Diaz, PhD student at University of Pennsylvania

Francisco is a 2nd year Ph.D. student interested broadly in issues of heritage, identity, and indigeneity. His research is in studying indigenous agency, adaptation and survivance through the materiality of Yucatec Maya foodways in the transnational urban context of Northern California. His paper for this conference comes from research undertaken to better understand how to use materiality and object ontologies through museum work to prepare for his upcoming fieldwork to see how these theoretical orientations can service his wider goal of using his research and education to help Mayan communities on both sides of the border.

Kirsty Escalante, PhD Candidate at Tulane University

Kirsty Escalante received her B.A. in Archaeological Studies from Yale University and is currently a Ph.D. student at Tulane University. She studies Maya archaeology and conducts her dissertation research with the Proyecto Regional Arqueológico La Corona in northern Guatemala. Kirsty is passionate about increasing community engagement in archaeology, fostering appreciation for cultural heritage, and developing sustainable methods to curb archaeological looting. With the support of the Mellon Foundation and Tulane’s Center for Public Service, Kirsty is collaborating with the Asociación Forestal Integral San Andres Petén, a community-based forest management organization, to develop a community engagement project that makes archaeology more accessible to residents of the San Andres community.

Professor Megan Kassabaum, Assistant Professor at University of Pennsylvania

Megan C. Kassabaum finished her Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in 2014. Her research focuses on the relationship between monument construction, communal ritual, food consumption, and identity in the Lower Mississippi Valley where she currently directs the Smith Creek Archaeological Project. She currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania and the Weingarten Assistant Curator in the Penn Museum, where she recently curated an exhibit on mound building cultures in eastern North America.
Ad Lane, Graduate Student at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Ad Lane is a 2017 Burch Fellow and recent high honors graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he focused on a combination of cultural anthropology and geography. Uniting these disciplines, he today seeks out new strategies for how innovative technology can promote conversations and solutions to 21st-century heritage issues. Outside of research Ad enjoys taking on artistic projects in a variety of mediums, creating maps, and the occasional deep sea dive.

Victoria Parker, JD/MBA student at University of Montana

Hello! My name is Victoria Parker. I am a member of the Western Shoshone Tribe and grew up on the Hungry Valley Reservation in Sparks, NV. I joined the US Army shortly after 9/11 as a Military Police Officer. I served on Active Duty for five years and deployed to Iraq twice. After that, I went straight into the US Army Reserves and became a Drill Sergeant while simultaneously working on my B.A. in Social Sciences with three concentrations. I graduated from Washington State University in 2013. Then I moved back to NV and worked in horticulture. In 2017, I decided to apply for admission to the Alexander Blewett III School of Law where I’m currently enrolled in the joint-degree JD/MBA Program. I’m almost done with the second year of my J.D. program; and the first year of my MBA program. I am also now a Senior Drill Sergeant in the Reserves and just finished my 15-year career on January 15, 2019.

Arielle Person, Undergraduate Student University of Pennsylvania

Arielle M. Pierson is an undergraduate LPS student at the University of Pennsylvania pursuing a BA in Anthropology, with a concentration in Archaeology and a minor in Archaeological Science. She is a Penn Museum Fellow working with Kassabaum to design a public archaeology exhibit in Woodville, Mississippi. In addition, she is the supervisor for the North American Archaeology Lab and has worked as a teaching assistant in the field for the Smith Creek Archaeological Project.
**Kelley Tackett, Undergraduate Student at the Joukowsky Institute of Archaeology and the Ancient World at Brown University**

Kelley Tackett studies at the Joukowsky Institute of Archaeology and the Ancient World at Brown University. Her research is focused on critical heritage studies and the imbrications of world heritage, local memory, and international law. She has worked on field projects in Greece, Hungary, and New England, and will spend this summer in Petra.

**Julia Wareham, Athienou Archaeological Project**

Julia Wareham is a former AAP field school student and recently completed a year of independent research in Nicosia, Cyprus as the Meg Walsh Fellowship recipient.

**V. Camille Westmont, PhD Candidate at University of Maryland**

V. Camille Westmont will receive her Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Maryland in May 2019. Her work uses archaeology historic preservation to address inequalities in post-industrial communities.