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**U.S. DEPARTMENT
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Jan E. Townsend

Archeology and the National Register

In September 1994, the National Register of Historic Places sponsored a two-day workshop in Washington, D.C. titled "Archeology and the National Register." Nearly 80 people attended the workshop. Archeologists and other cultural resources specialists presented papers on the benefits of listing archeological sites in the National Register; using National Register archeological sites in promoting heritage education and tourism and enhancing land-use planning; streamlining the National Register process; evaluating various kinds of archeological sites; and improving the identification, evaluation, and protection of archeological resources through new technologies. All the presentations were excellent and the workshop was a great success.

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I wish to share several of those presentations with CRM's readers. The first is "Research Questions and Important Information," in which Donald Hardesty lays out a framework for determining "important" archeological information. He describes a three-tiered hierarchy of archeological information in which the information at each tier is more abstract, or interpreted, than that in the

preceding level. At the highest tier, information about archeological properties comes from explanatory theories or contexts, such as evolutionary ecology, symbolism, and structuralism. Hardesty further submits that research questions are the link between the explanatory context and the archeological information or data. The "important" information is the product of those linkages.

THE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Criteria for Evaluation

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- a. A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- b. A building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- c. A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building directly associated with his or her productive life; or
- d. A cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
- e. A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- f. A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or
- g. A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

He illustrates his approach using the world systems paradigm and considers the issue of archeological information redundancy.

In "The National Register and the 20th Century: Is There Room for Archeology?," Susan L. Henry challenges archeologists to take a closer look at 20th-century archeological sites after citing data showing that archeologists are neglecting these kinds of sites. She suggests that archeologists confuse personal views of time and what constitutes the past with a professional approach to the past. For the 20th century, archeology can provide a separate view of reality. To do this, however, Henry suggests that archeologists change their field and analytical methods and ask the right questions of these sites. For example, archeologists should look at the behavior of groups rather than individuals and at "communities" of sites, or groupings of related sites associated with particular aspects of group behavior, rather than single sites. Henry points out that the National Register's Multiple Property Documentation format even encourages looking at historic properties this

way. She also identifies research themes apropos to the first half of the 20th century.

The third essay, by John Sprinkle, addresses some prevalent myths and misconceptions about nominating archeological properties to the National Register. In "A Site Form for Important Sites: Converting Archeological Reports into National Register Nominations," he cites examples showing that archeologists need not know everything about a site before they can nominate it to the National Register. Also, archeologists can nominate sites to the National Register using the data contained in technical reports, even those done as part of Section 106 compliance. Based upon personal experience, Sprinkle illustrates how easy it was to convert the information in data recovery reports into to a National Register nomination. He suggests that agencies give more thought and effort to nominating significant archeological properties to the National Register that are identified through compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. He sees this as a logical

INTEGRITY

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the National Register criteria, but it also must have integrity. The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance.

Historic properties either retain integrity (this is, convey their significance) or they do not. Within the concept of integrity, the National Register criteria recognize seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects.

The Seven Aspects of Integrity

- Location—the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
- Design—the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
- Setting—the physical environment of a historic property.
- Materials—the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
- Workmanship—the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.
- Feeling—a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
- Association—the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

conclusion to the compliance process in many cases.

I hope you enjoy the ideas presented by these three authors, and act upon them. First, archeologists should organize information; identify explanatory, or theoretical, contexts; and develop research questions to link the two. Second, we should look at 20th-century sites and their information potential more carefully. Automatically dismissing them as "too recent" is an indefensible position. They present theoretical, methodological, and analytical challenges to the archeologist. It is time to deal with these challenges and confront the issue of personal time and archeological time. Third, archeologists should nominate archeological sites—particularly those that will require long-term management or preservation—to the National Register. With new technologies and improved guidance, nominating archeological sites is now easier than ever before. The National Register con-

stantly compiles information about the properties in its National Register Information System (NRIS) database so that national-level decision-makers and others can use the information to make policy and funding decisions that affect cultural resources. Archeological resources are only minimally represented in the national cultural resources database, and those that are in the database do not represent the resources as archeologists know them. Listing archeological sites in the National Register will benefit the public, the archeological community, and especially the resources. I **emphatically** believe this, and hope the following papers will convince you as well.

Jan E. Townsend served as National Register Archeologist from 1991 to 1995. She is presently Chief of the American Battlefield Protection Program, National Park Service.

Donald L. Hardesty

Research Questions and Important Information

The importance of "research questions and important information" to evaluating the National Register eligibility of archeological properties comes primarily from Criterion D, but does not exclude the other criteria. Criterion D requires that an archeological property "has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history." To do so, the property must be shown to have, or once had, information of this kind. In addition, that information must be needed to answer important scholarly or scientific research questions.

What is Archeological Information?

The first stipulation requires an answer to the question "What is archeological information?" Archeological information exists in an hierarchical structure organized into at least three levels of information reflecting varying degrees of interpretation. An "archeological context" defines the lowest, least interpreted level of the hierarchy. Artifacts, features, and ecofacts of the archeologi-

cal property make up the archeological context. At this level, the information consists only of directly observed associations, spatial clusters, and categories of formal similarity and is otherwise uninterpreted. The extent to which such uninterpreted archeological information should be attended to in the National Register process is an interesting question and one that will be returned to later.

In recent years, the popularity of middle range theory in the interpretation of archeological properties points to the next highest level of information in the hierarchy. Middle range theory focuses upon the processes of human behavior that have a material manifestation and the transformational processes that affect such material traces. The result is an interpretation of the human activities and natural processes responsible for the formation of an archeological property. At this level of interpretation, archeologists explain the associations, spatial clusters, and other data sets directly observed in the field. These mid-level interpretations often involve the journalistic ques-

tions of who, what, how, and when. Such interpretations reconstruct, for example, architecture; social formations such as houses, enclosed compounds, or villages; ethnicity; gender; diet; trade relationships; technological patterns or processes; population size or composition; environment; and chronology.

Finally, the information with the highest level of interpretation from an archeological property comes from general theories or paradigms. In recent years, archeologists have used cultural materialism, evolutionary ecology, the world systems paradigm, structuralism, symbolism, Marxism, critical theory, and any number of other "isms" to interpret archeological properties. Each of these explanatory schemes demands somewhat different information; it is, therefore, impossible at this level to identify archeological information without making an explicit connection between the archeological property and the explanatory framework. In other words, information has no meaning without the theory or explanatory paradigm.

What Makes Information Important?

All of this is archeological information. The question is "what is important?" The answer comes from the distinction between the uninterpreted and interpreted types of information. In a sense, all archeological properties can be viewed as repositories of mostly uninterpreted or minimally uninterpreted information (artifacts, features, and ecofacts in archeological context) waiting for questions to be asked, hypotheses to be tested, and theories to be constructed. Archeological properties also can be viewed as repositories of middle range information about a variety of past lifeways (e.g., social formations, diets, architecture, environments) at different times and places waiting for new general interpretations of prehistory and history. One answer to the question of "what is important," then, comes from the need to preserve a sample of the variety of information adequate for future theoretical, interpretative, and cultural explanations. How that should be done is another question. Certainly a sample of site types containing each category of uninterpreted or middle range information (e.g., large sites, small sites,

lakeshore sites, alpine sites, wetland sites, shipwrecks, townsites, bonebeds, lithic scatters, slag dumps, cyanide mill sites) should be preserved. Once again arises the specter of developing large scale regional, state, and national sampling designs for archeological properties. The widespread use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) within the National Register process is critical here.

The other answer to the question comes from the need to identify archeological information that is important, and indeed may only exist, within the context of theories, paradigms; or other interpretative frameworks. In a most general way, a research design—a strategy or plan of action for linking archeological information/data to an interpretative context—identifies what is important. For purposes of National Register evaluation, research designs begin with the Area of Significance, such as "Industry" or "Agriculture," and with a Historic Context, such as "Industrial Logging in the Lake Tahoe Basin, 1860-1890,"¹ that establishes the framework of theme, time, and place in which research is to be conducted. Next, the research design develops an explanatory context for conducting scientific or scholarly research using archeological information and places the historical context into an explicit and logical questioning framework or structure of inquiry. The explanatory context is closely linked to the Area of Significance and the Historic Context. "Industry" and "Industrial Logging in the Lake Tahoe Basin,

By analyzing information from this prehistoric occupation site (A.D. 1 to A.D. 1200) in Oklahoma, archeologists hope to answer research questions pertaining to regional settlement patterns, non-agricultural subsistence processes, and regional economic and social systems. Photo by Brian Smith.



1860-1890," for example, suggest various competing or complementary interpretative contexts associated with industrial capitalism such as the world systems paradigm or Marxist theory. Research questions, stated in an appropriate form such as the testable hypothesis in scientific inquiry, emerge from the explanatory context. Finally, the research design identifies the archeological data needed to answer the questions.

Developing Explanatory Contexts

The key to a good research design is a well-developed structure of inquiry grounded in an explanatory context. Consider, for example, the world systems paradigm as an explanatory context. Anticipated by economist Gunther Frank in the 1950s but perhaps most developed in the more recent writings of political economist Immanuel Wallerstein and historian Fernand Braudel, the world systems concept emerged in the 1970s as a way of understanding economic underdevelopment in the modern world. The concept challenged Modernization Theory and Dependency Theory, two other popular approaches to economic development emerging after World War II. Modernization Theory assumed that underdeveloped regions would evolve through the same stages of economic development enjoyed by the United States and Europe if obstacles such as overpopulation or inadequate technology were removed. The theory thus focused upon the internal causes of underdevelopment. In contrast, Dependency Theory assumed that developed countries reached their position of wealth and high standard of living by exploiting the natural resources and labor of underdeveloped countries. The theory found the causes of underdevelopment to be economic and political dependency upon developed countries. World System Theory, a variety of Dependency Theory, focuses upon the general processes that cross-cut the political boundaries of specific nation-states. In recent years, historians, political scientists, anthropologists, sociologists, and others have developed the approach as a way of interpreting the emergence of the modern world.

The world system framework suggests several key problem domains or general groups of research questions, such as social and economic diversification. Consider, for example, the controversial questions about the role of world system peripheries in creating diversity, a significant problem for the study of frontiers. Some have argued that regions peripheral to the core regions of world systems are passive and unchanging recipients of essential goods and services. Others, however, have hypothesized that world system peripheral regions, or peripheries, are likely to be hotbeds of social and cultural change. Eric Wolf (1982), for

example, argues that the expansion of capitalism has increased social and cultural diversity in peripheral regions because of the unique and creative responses of indigenous peoples to their economic and political condition. Social and economic diversification in peripheries takes many forms. Thus, new ethnic groups often emerge when new places are incorporated into expanding world systems. Perhaps the best example is the Mestizo ethnic group that emerged during the Spanish Colonial Period of California and the American Southwest. In New Mexico, for example, Hall (1989) argues that the expansion of the American state transformed indigenous Hispanic groups into "an enclaved ethnic group with a distinctive culture and a distinct class position within a larger structure." This domain gives rise to any number of testable hypotheses or other research questions with archeological implications.

Archeologist Jack Williams (1992) gives an example of the use of archeological data from the presidios in Arizona to test two competing theories of the core-periphery relationships between Spain and New Spain. In one theory, Wallerstein argues that New Spain had been a full-blown periphery of Spain since the 16th century. In the other, Fernand Braudel contends that New Spain and Spain enjoyed more or less equal economic relationships. Surplus accumulated by merchants and entrepreneurs in New Spain transformed the Colonial economy. All that changed with the early-19th-century wars of liberation. The new republics established trade with industrial Britain, leading to Neo-colonialism in Latin America that created a core-periphery relationship of the type described by Wallerstein.

How can we compare the two models with archeological data? Wallerstein argues that "essential goods" reflect the unequal relationship between core and periphery. Essential goods are the things used in everyday life such as tableware, food, and clothing. Peripheries have high percentages of essential goods coming from core regions. Williams (1992) notes the implications of essential goods for archeological testing of the two models. Wallerstein's model would show high percentages of essential goods in New Spain after the 16th century. In contrast, Braudel's model would show high percentages of essential goods only after the Republic Period (1822-1860) coming from Britain. Williams uses archeological data from three Arizona presidios—Tubac, Tucson, and Santa Cruz—dating between 1752 and 1856 to test the two theories. Presidios housed the elite, who accumulate surplus in peripheries and, therefore, should best reflect trade and economic relations. Williams found that the percentage of essential goods coming from outside the region is low in the

three presidios, suggesting that they were self-sufficient. Braudel's model, therefore, is supported. After 1860, however, increasing development of transportation, especially railroads, brought more essential goods from the core of the American world system, creating a true periphery.

Formulating Research Questions

The link between the explanatory context and archeological "information" is the research question. Careful questioning within a well-developed interpretative context prevents the all too common problem of using trivial (i.e., questions not related to the key focus or thrust of the interpretative context) and vague (i.e., questions not clearly related to the interpretative context) research questions to evaluate the significance of archeological properties under Criterion D (Hardesty 1990: 42). Within the interpretative context of industrial capitalism, for example, some of the key research questions have to do with the living conditions and lifestyles of working class people. Mary Beaudry (1993) studied the sanitation, hygiene, and nutrition of 19th-century cotton mill workers in Lowell, Massachusetts, through the archeological record and written accounts. The two sources of information suggest that despite the penetration of elements of 19th-century domestic ideology (e.g., notions of economy and scientific housekeeping) into the design, operation, and maintenance of the Lowell boardinghouses, workers and keepers retained traditional notions of health and nutrition. Analysis of the diet of workers living in the company boardinghouses, for example, shows that foods high in fatty meats, starch, and carbohydrates were typical. The diet not only was contrary to the new ideology of health and nutrition in the late 19th century, but

also shows that traditional food habits were retained in the face of corporate ideology. In fact, documents show that the workers were quite happy and satisfied with the traditional diet even though scientifically unhealthy and contrary to the image of worker's well-being that the cotton mill company tried to convey to the public. It is also possible that the retention of the traditional diet may be related to the high caloric needs of the work performed. In this case, archeological properties containing extensive food refuse and food-related artifacts clearly are important data repositories within this interpretative context.

Assessing Critical Information Content

What archeological information is important, however, also depends upon redundancy. At some point, for example, the answer to a significant research question requires no additional information or reaches a point where each additional bit of information adds very little to the answer. The importance of the new information correspondingly diminishes. Convincing arguments about redundancy, however, are impossible without identifying the important questions that the data are needed to answer, what data already are available to answer the questions, and whether the data are of the same kind.

The most obvious redundancy problem is geographical. One approach to evaluating geographical redundancy is to use a regional research design and cumulative database to evaluate the data redundancy of archeological properties being proposed for listing in the National Register. Creating such a system demands several steps. First, develop a regional explanatory context such as a world systems framework for industrial logging, mining, or other extractive industries.

Secondly, identify or define the most important scholarly and scientific research questions associated with the context. Next, identify the critical data needed to answer the questions. Then prepare a regional data pool to estimate what critical data are available and how much new data are required. Finally, assess the critical information content of each archeological property being evaluated.

Another kind of redundancy concerns archeological sites and historical documents. Does the availability of written accounts and other documents that provide at least the general context for historical sites

Important archeological information from sites such as the Chiricahua Pass Battlefield in Arizona may increase our understanding of military activities on the Arizona frontier in the 1870s and 1880s, and uphold or rebut documentary accounts of the U.S. Army's "military conquest of the last belligerent, autonomous, Native American group in the United States, the Chiricahua Apaches." Photo by William B. Gillespie.



and sometimes much more—including information about who occupied the site, the date of occupation, and the activities that took place there—condemn archeological data to redundancy? In their book *Rubbish! The Archeology of Garbage* (1992), Rathje and Murphy describe the important data acquired from the archeological record, documents, and oral testimony. They collected information about foodways and other consumer behavior of domestic households in three ways: written questionnaires, oral interviews, and the archeological study of trash cans and garbage dumps. Data about foodways in particular acquired from questionnaires and oral testimony differed quite dramatically from the grass roots observations taken from the archeological record.

Notwithstanding their abundance, the relevance and limitation of documentary data as a source of information also must be considered. First and foremost, documentary information often provides the “insiders” view of just a few literate people from a socially and politically dominant group that may or may not correspond with the “grass roots” data about actual behavior coming from archeology. In his introduction to *Historical Archeology in Global Perspective*, for example, James Deetz makes the case in a most compelling fashion (1991: 6):

Archeology certainly can provide insights into historical processes that written records simply do not provide. Historical archeology deals with the unintended, the subconscious, the world view, and mind-set of an individual. It provides access to the ways all people, not just a small group of literate people, organized their physical lives. If only the written records, rich and detailed as they are, are studied, then the conclusions will reflect only the story of a small minority of deviant, wealthy, white males, and little else. I do not think we want that for our national history; therefore, we need archeologists to find what was left behind by everybody, for every conceivable reason. The unintentional record of people provides scholars with ways to determine the underlying reality of our history.

Second, the documentary data may not be relevant to the most significant research questions. Thus, abundant documentary information about the philosophy and politics of a socially prominent family may be of limited value in answering research questions about, for example, consumer behavior or household organization or technology.

Conclusions

Without question, assessing the information content of archeological properties for National Register eligibility demands scholarly familiarity with the questions that count in history, anthropology, and related disciplines. Research questions also change as new information and theories

emerge. For these reasons, evaluating the information potential of archeological properties requires tracking the dynamics of scientific and other scholarly research, not an easy task for a single individual. Needed are national and state or regional research teams charged with monitoring new developments and establishing research priorities. In addition, more attention should be given to monitoring the interaction between high priority research questions and their required archeological information. The solution may be a system of national, state, or regional information offices equipped with GIS technology and personnel trained to handle issues such as data redundancy and research priorities. Such an approach should help standardize the process of evaluating the information value of archeological properties.

Note

- ¹ “Industrial Logging in the Lake Tahoe Basin, 1860-1890” is a draft document prepared for the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit of the U.S.D.A. Forest Service.

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Susan L. Henry

The National Register and the 20th Century

Is There Room for Archeology?

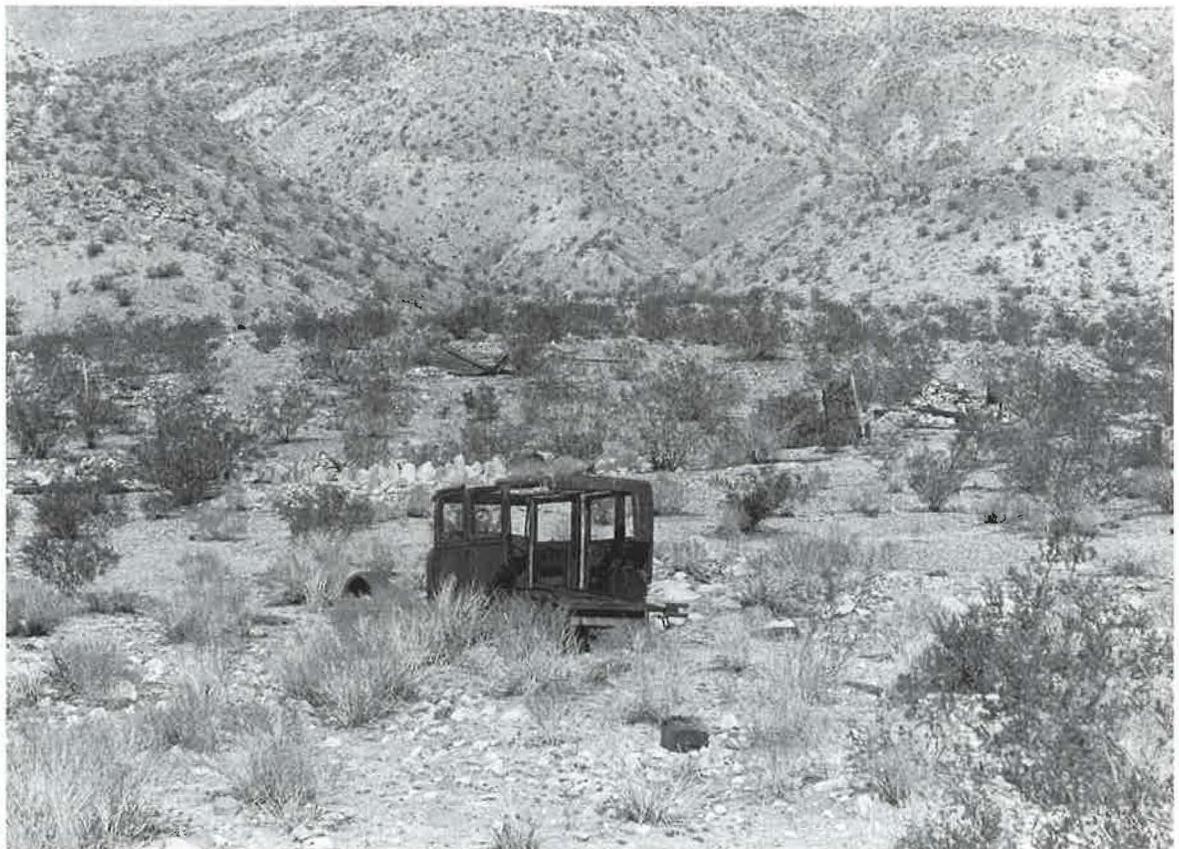
With only six years left in this century, it's time to think about how we deal with 20th-century sites. Two events in my own past alerted me to some conflicts in how we deal with the recent past. In 1983, I was conducting archeological studies at a late-19th- and early-20th-century suburban neighborhood in Phoenix, Arizona. It was a typical urban site, with two exceptions. The first was a collection of automobile parts: a six-cylinder crankshaft, a radiator fan, valve gaskets, an exhaust pipe, and a fender. You don't expect automobile fragments in an archeological site! The second exception was a dessert plate. On the bottom was a large, colorful maker's mark with a date code. The plate was made in 1976!

Remember, this was only 1983. I felt like I was in a time warp! I had a conflict between my

time and archeological time. I began thinking about time and how we deal with it. Several years later when I was working for the planning office in Fairfax County, Virginia, I reviewed a number of Section 106 survey reports. I was perplexed to read that some sites were evaluated as not important because they were vaguely interpreted as "recent" and "modern." This bothered me. I've grown concerned about how we view the past—how we define legitimate archeological time—and how this affects the way we treat 20th-century archeological sites.

How have archeologists dealt with 20th-century sites? In 1993, I researched the files of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) to find out the extent to which 20th-century sites have been recognized and recorded during field surveys. I reviewed about 2,000 site forms from seven of Virginia's 99 counties and municipalities

The automobile and other 20th-century debris are associated with a health resort that operated at Coso Hot Springs in Inyo County, California from 1900 to the mid-1940s. Photo courtesy of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation.



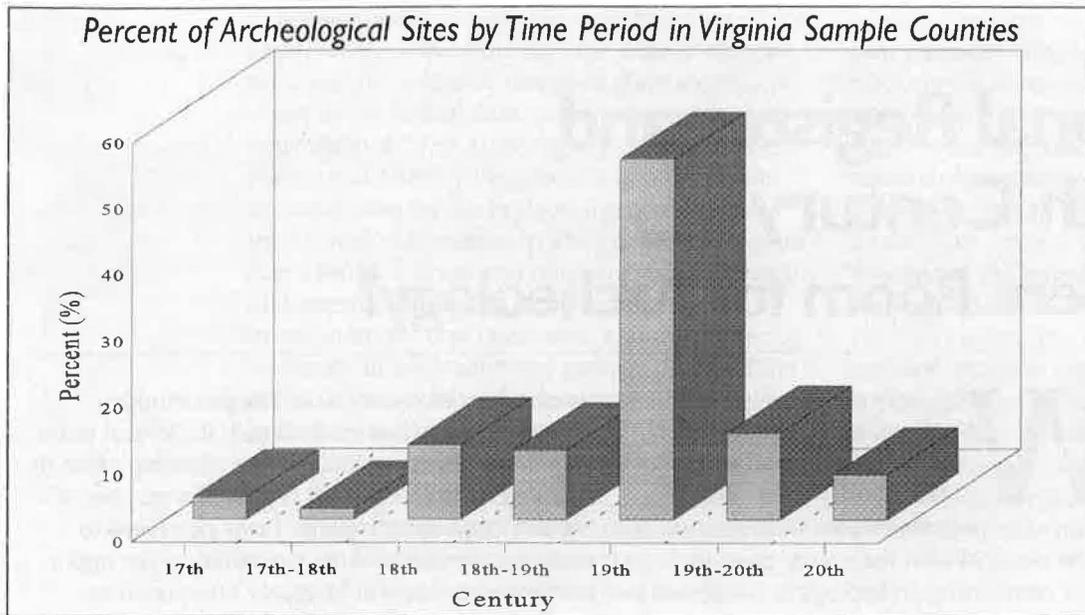


Figure 1. (Figure 1). Fewer than 7% of the sites dated to the 20th century; of these, one-third were viewed as potentially important and worthy of additional work. Based on the DHR's Section 106 report reviews, more sites from the late-19th and 20th centuries are reviewed than sites from any other historic period. However, during a recent one-year period, the DHR concluded that only one late-19th- to 20th-century site had enough integrity and research potential to be considered eligible for the National Register. In contrast, about half of the Archaic period sites were considered eligible.

DHR staff freely admit they are hesitant to evaluate 20th-century sites as significant because the extensive historical knowledge that allows for effective site evaluation does not exist for the 20th

Figure 2.

| NATIONAL REGISTER LISTINGS FOR 20th-CENTURY SITES | |
|---|--------|
| (Figures as of August 26, 1994) | |
| Total # NR Listings | 63,201 |
| # Listed Archeological Sites | 4,469 |
| (% of Total NR Listings) | (7.1) |
| # Historical Archeological Sites | 2,019 |
| (% of Archeological Sites) | (45.2) |
| (% of Total NR Listings) | (3.2) |
| # 20th-century Sites | 408 |
| (% of Historical Archeological Sites) | (20.2) |
| (% of Total NR Listings) | (0.65) |

century. In other words, we don't know enough about how archeology can contribute to our understanding of the 20th century, so we can't tell how valuable any one site will be in helping us learn. This does not mean, however, that no 20th-century sites are considered important. The DHR has intentionally included 20th-century sites in three recent National Register nominations.

How do DHR figures compare with list-

ings in the National Register? Fewer than one percent of all National Register listings are 20th-century archeological sites (Figure 2). I tip-toed through the files of a 10% sample of these listings to get a sense of what has been considered significant and why. Listing dates range from 1971 to 1993, with more than half of the sample listed in the 1980s. There is a wide range of property types and functions, from urban to rural, from domestic and commercial to industrial. The research themes tend to be more simplistic and descriptive for the earlier listing dates. No research questions were posed that specifically address any of the major social, cultural, economic, technological, or political changes that occurred in the first half of the 20th century. Additionally, there are examples throughout of the 20th century being ignored, or dismissed, in favor of earlier historic and/or prehistoric aspects of the property.

I can draw only one conclusion from this bit of unscientific research—we are neglecting 20th-century archeological sites. I suspect that our personal views of the past are intruding into our professional decisions about what is a valid period of study. For many of us, the 20th century is just not interesting enough to capture our attention, either personally or professionally. Many historians have no problem studying 20th-century topics. Nor are architectural historians reluctant to nominate 20th-century buildings and structures to the National Register.¹ What is it about archeology that suggests 20th-century sites are not legitimate subjects of study?

Some may view the 20th century as not old enough for meaningful archeological study. Archeology is supposed to be about digging up old, buried things. The 20th century isn't really

MAJOR CHANGES IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20th CENTURY

There were major, dramatic changes in virtually all areas of everyday life—technology, medicine, fashion, recreation, entertainment, sports, politics, economics, etc. For example. .

- Income Tax established by the 16th Amendment in 1913
- World War I—"The Great War" or "The War to End All Wars" (1914-1918)
- Prohibition (18th & 21st Amendments, 1918-1933)
- 19th Amendment guarantees women the right to vote (1920)
- The Great Depression, 1930s—two-thirds of the workforce was unemployed or underemployed
- Federal government social programs, including Roosevelt's New Deal programs, extended unprecedented government influence into many areas of everyday life.
- Social Security
- Child labor laws
- World War II (1941-1945)
- The GI Bill
- Technological innovations—electricity, indoor plumbing, central heating, sewer service, telephones, refrigerators, washing machines, electric irons, vacuum cleaners, moving pictures (but NO air conditioning, microwaves, cellular phones, VCRs, television, nuclear weapons, nuclear energy, frozen food)
- The automobile changed forever the landscape of America (8,000 cars in 1900; 26.5 million by 1930).
- Airplanes (but no space flight)
- Emily Post's *Etiquette* published—changed the rules of proper social behavior
- The rapid rise of consumerism as advertisers redefined and reinforced new ideals of social behavior.
- The U.S. became an urban nation—40% of Americans lived on farms in 1900; only 15% in 1950.

buried or that old. It is, however, old enough to have acquired negative connotations, especially in terms of physical objects. Poured concrete and cinder block foundations are seen only as dilapidated ruins. Ceramics, glass, and metal are seen as just so much junk and garbage. There is, however, the National Register's 50-year threshold for achieving sufficient perspective for professional analysis. As our own birthdays reach this threshold, it becomes increasingly difficult for us to draw the line between our personal and professional approaches to the past.

Dramatic social, economic, technological, and political changes occurred during the first half of the 20th century that profoundly affected every aspect of daily life.² Just as significant as the shift from hand-craft agrarianism to industrialism in the 19th century, these changes transformed America from a 19th-century agrarian, Victorian culture into a 20th-century urban, technological culture (see text box). These were significant trends in the development of the nation and of our local communities. The processes of change and their physical and social effects are etched upon the landscape and upon the patterns of material objects and sites.

We are, however, faced with some critical issues and challenges as we move into the 21st century. Our inadequate attention to 20th-century archeological sites means that we are not recognizing the very real significance of these sites, so they are not being properly considered in federal processes. These sites are not being recorded, or when they are, they tend to be evaluated, mistakenly, as not significant because we don't know enough to evaluate them. With some notable exceptions, 20th-century sites are generally not

being nominated to the National Register, and where they are, the approach tends to be somewhat simplistic, they are treated the same as prehistoric sites, or they're not addressed at all. Are we, either by accident or design, opting out of the federal management and protection system? Are we saying that, for archeology, history stops at 1900? Rather than declare that 20th-century sites are not significant because we don't know enough to evaluate them, let's be bold and say they *are* significant, because at this point *anything* we could learn from them would be a major step forward.

Our lack of attention also means that we haven't yet come to grips with the overwhelming quantities of 20th-century documents and sites. We're faced with considerable site redundancy—what should we do with all those sites that seem to be everywhere? How can we distinguish the important ones? Well, if we don't study them, we can't make any professional decisions about redundancy, or distinguish the significant sites from the irrelevant background noise.

There's also the perennial question, "We have all these documents; why do archeology?" If we declare that sites without documents are more important for research, then we're denying the validity of historical archeology as a whole, and saying that prehistoric sites are more important than historic sites. We delude ourselves if we equate wealth of documentary information with lesser archeological value. If we ever think that an archeological site won't tell us anything we couldn't learn from the documents, either we're asking the wrong questions of the site, or we're foolishly asking the same questions of the site that we would of the documents.

Can archeology contribute to our understanding of the 20th century? Of course it can. Archeology has a unique approach to studying the past, and it provides a separate view of reality that is quite distinct from documents or informants. If archeology is to contribute in a meaningful way to understanding the 20th century, we need to seriously rethink how we approach archeology—the techniques we use and the research questions we ask.

Rethinking our techniques means looking at our data in different ways. The basic data of archeology is trash, garbage. During the 20th century, more and more cities established municipal trash collection and sewer systems. So if we're unable to study the behavior of individual households because the archeological database has been removed, maybe we should turn our attention to municipal and rural garbage dumps and issues of group behavior. The ability to tease information about group behavior out of garbage dumps has been thoroughly proven by 20 years of landfill studies by the University of Arizona's Garbage Project. These studies provide "a fresh view of nutrition and health, consumer behavior, social inequality, and the differences between what we say and what we do."³

For 20th-century sites, we have a source of information not available to archeologists studying earlier sites—the site occupants themselves. We have the opportunity to talk to the people who created these sites about attitudes, ideas, beliefs, values, symbolism, and the relationships among actions, objects, and place. But there's a downside to this opportunity. Tension can build between archeology's factual, scientific "search for truth," if you will, and peoples' preferred perceptions, myths, and legends about the past.

We should also be viewing the environment as an artifact, as a physical manifestation of culture. For most of this century, our environment has been not a "wild" or "natural" one, but one engineered and shaped by cultural and social behavior. We can do archeology without digging by looking at buildings, cemeteries, parks, townscapes, city plans, rural landscapes, and other environmental features as products of behavior.

The traditional focus on individual sites limits our ability to move beyond biography and idiosyncratic behavior to an examination of group behaviors. Refocusing our attention on the behavior of groups means that we need to look at "communities" of sites—groupings of related sites associated with particular aspects of group behavior. The National Register has even encouraged us to do this with the Multiple Property Documentation Form.

We also need to rethink the research questions we ask of 20th-century sites. Five major sources of information are available in our quest to understand the 20th century: the archeological record, the written record, the photographic record, oral history, and the physical environment. This wealth of information means that we have the opportunity to do some very sophisticated archeology, to develop cutting-edge techniques and theories that could revolutionize the way archeology is done on older sites.

I encourage all of you to take a closer look at archeological sites which may, at first, seem to be "too recent." They may have the potential to provide new insights into how Americans coped with the unprecedented changes of the 20th century.

Notes

- ¹ For more insights into how we view the past, see David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1985); and for discussions on the attention paid by historians and architectural historians to the recent past, see two works by Richard Longstreth, "When the Present Becomes the Past" in *Past Meets Future: Saving America's Historic Environments*, edited by Antoinette J. Lee (The Preservation Press, Washington, D.C., 1992), 213-225; and "The Significance of the Recent Past" in "Cultural Resources From the Recent Past," edited by Rebecca A. Schiffer, *CRM* 16(6): 4-7, 1993. See also *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties That Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years*.
- ² For more information, see Harvey Green, *The Uncertainty of Everyday Life, 1915-1945* (HarperPerennial, New York, 1992); and Thomas J. Schlereth, *Victorian America: Transformations in Everyday Life, 1876-1915* (HarperPerennial, New York, 1991).
- ³ William L. Rathje and Cullen Murphy, *Rubbish! The Archaeology of Garbage: What Our Garbage Tells Us About Ourselves* (HarperPerennial, New York, 1992). Also see Rathje, "A Manifesto for Modern Material-Culture Studies," in *Modern Material Culture: The Archaeology of Us*, edited by Richard A. Gould and Michael B. Schiffer (Academic Press, New York, 1981), 51-56.

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John H. Sprinkle, Jr.

A Site Form for Important Sites

Converting Archeological Reports into National Register Nominations

Within the historic preservation community it is broadly recognized that archeological sites are a poorly represented class of historic properties in the National Register of Historic Places. Although hundreds of thousands of archeological sites have been recorded with the various State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO), far less than 10% of the properties listed in the National Register are classified as archaeological properties despite the National Register's demonstrated utility in research, stewardship, visibility, and planning (Sprinkle 1994). Yet many archeological sites have been "determined eligible" for the National Register through the federal historic preservation compliance process without ever being nominated to the National Register. This misrepresentation of the archeological component of the United States' historical record seriously hampers our ability to manage cultural resources because the National Register files are a principal foundation of preservation planning in the country. To redress this discrepancy, the historic preservation community should adopt the National Register nomination form as a "site form for important archeological sites."

One oft-cited reason for this relative paucity of archeological listings is the argument that

National Register nominations are too complex and require too much information that, in the case of archeological sites, is relatively expensive to gather. In fact, as this paper will argue, there is a large database of archeological information available as a result of the Section 106 compliance process that could easily be converted into National Register nominations. However, the underrepresentation of archeological properties in the National Register will not be mitigated until nominations are required as a natural part of compliance investigations that identify important archeological sites.

Over the last several years, the National Register and numerous SHPOs have addressed criticisms of the nomination process by attempting to alter misconceptions within the archeological community regarding the information requirements for archeological nominations. Forgiving the biases of eastern historical archeology, the following examples demonstrate the changing nature of our perception of information requirements and how archeological properties are legitimately considered eligible under National Register Criteria A, B, and C, as well as the traditional Criterion D.

The Pope Site, Southampton County, Virginia. In 1986, in preparation for the dualization of a section of Route 58 in southern Virginia—known locally as Suicide Strip—the Department of Anthropology at the College of William and Mary conducted a Phase II evaluation of the Pope Site, 44SN180 (Reinhart 1987). (In the east, Phase II usually means the stage of archeological research that evaluates the National Register eligibility of an individual archeological site.) The Pope Site is a late-18th-century plantation quarter on what was then the Virginia frontier. Ten years ago in Virginia it was our understanding that to get a consensus determination between the client and the SHPO regarding National Register eligibility for this property, extensive amounts of excavation would be required as part of the Phase II investigation.

The conventional wisdom required the site to contain numerous fully-exposed, positively-identified, and partially-sampled subsurface fea-

At the Pope Site, extensive archeological excavations were required to determine this late-18th-century site eligible for the National Register. Archeologists excavated one quarter of a 10.0-square-foot root cellar associated with a post-in-ground structure to demonstrate that the site had information potential. Photo by the author.



Nomination of the late-19th-century Manassas Industrial School site was accomplished using information from previous archeological investigations. The site serves as a memorial to the school's founder, Jennie Dean, and its former students and teachers. Photo by the author.

gested that the grist mill complex retained sufficient integrity of design, setting, and feeling to justify the nomination. Phase II archeological testing (comprising 17 shovel test pits at 50' intervals, brush clearing to reveal above-ground features, and 4 test units) demonstrated that other than the ruins of the mill house and its 1,950' head race, the site did not contain sufficient archeological integrity to warrant Phase III data recovery excavations. However, the study argued that the mill house ruins, its raceway, and the historic fence lines were integral to the interpretation of the complex's historic landscape. In effect, the archeological components demonstrated the distinctive characteristics of 19th-century mill engineering with a creative adaptation to local topographic and hydrological conditions. In fact, without the archeological elements, the researchers would not have considered nomination of the district. The report for this study is presently under review by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

The point of these examples is to show that **both** the National Register's approach to historical properties that happen to be archeological sites, **and** historical archeology's appreciation for National Register eligibility have changed significantly since the mid-1980s. In fact, extensive archeological fieldwork is not required to gather the information needed to complete a National Register nomination. Nominations need not be based on current fieldwork: they can use data produced entirely by previous excavations. Also, nominations of archeological properties should consider Criteria A, B, and C, with the most commonly used Criterion D.

These examples also illustrate another important point about the relationship between levels of fieldwork and the preparation of archeological nominations. The level of field effort required to gather enough information to nominate an archeological site to the National Register is substantially less than the level of information needed to prepare for a Phase III data recovery excavation. At Fort Johnston in North Carolina, the work was only designed to identify eligibility to the National Register, not as preparatory work for a mitigation. In Virginia at the Pope Site, as in many compliance situations, the Phase II excavations were entirely designed to prepare the site for data recovery in Phase III. Most Phase II studies not only determine National Register eligibility,



but also attempt to identify cultural features and strata that may be excavated as part of the data recovery in order to prepare the mitigation's scope-of-work and budget accurately. In fact, compliance-driven Phase II excavations often produce more information than is necessary to complete a National Register nomination! Compared with Phase II studies, excavations undertaken only to gather information for a National Register nomination involve a limited field effort, one that leaves much of the archeological record intact for future researchers.

Before archeological sites receive their due consideration, two misconceptions about nominating this class of historic properties to the National Register must be dispelled:

- The National Register requires too much information for archeological nominations; and,
- Information on archeological sites is difficult to obtain.

In fact, archeological data is readily available—although in sundry formats—and the process of converting this data into nominations is easy. The largest, most accessible, and continually growing source of information on archeological sites within the United States is work conducted as part of the Section 106 compliance process associated with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Literally thousands of Section 106 compliance projects have been conducted since the passage and enforcement of the NHPA; however, too few of these studies result in National Register nominations. Upon review of more than 50 cultural resource compliance projects, we found only two (4%) had any specific requirement to complete National Register nominations.

Nominations based on compliance studies are simple to prepare. Compare typical SHPO guidelines for Phase II (National Register evaluation) studies with the National Register nomination form: clear parallels exist between the two documents. The National Register nomination form only asks for three elements—two are signatures by administrative officials—that are not included in the typical Phase II report. The third National Register information request is for a description of the historic property's likely appearance during its period of significance.

Conversion of Phase II archeological studies into National Register nominations is of course facilitated by using computer technology in document production. Using a personal computer and the National Register's disk-resident registration form, it only takes a limited amount of time to reformat the elements of a Phase II report into a National Register nomination. In two recent compliance projects that required nominations, it took an average of 12 hours to produce completed National Register nominations from final Phase II archeological reports. The most time-consuming part of the study was preparing the graphics and labeling the photographs.

To encourage nominations of archeological sites, the National Register published *National Register Bulletin 36: Guidelines for the Nomination and Registration of Historical Archeological Sites and Districts*. While providing guidance specific to historical archeological properties, the general information in *National Register Bulletin 36* can easily be applied to the nomination of prehistoric archeological sites. (Other National Register Bulletins that provide archeological guidance include 12: *Definition of National Register Boundaries for Archeological Properties*; 21: *Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties*; 40: *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America's Historic Battlefields*; 41: *Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places*; and 42: *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering Historic Mining Properties*.) Thus, by simplifying the nomination process and providing further guidance on the nomination requirements, the National Register has made significant progress in balancing the recognition of archeological properties.

The transformation of compliance reports is made smoother if the National Register nomination is a known product of the study, that is, a part of the project's scope-of-work or a component of the SHPO's guidelines for reporting on Phase II excavations. It is a simple fact of business that no archeological consultant would produce a National Register nomination unless they were required by

federal agencies or SHPOs. If the archeological community wants to remedy the underrepresentation of archeological properties within the National Register, the preparation of National Register nominations must be made a standard component of the services that professional archeologists provide to their clients. Then, when viewed as a "site form for important archeological sites," the National Register nomination would become an important tool in the management of our cultural resources.

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