High Stakes: A Poly-Communal Archaeology Of The Pocumtuck Fort, Deerfield, Massachusetts

Siobhan M Hart
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HIGH STAKES: A POLY-COMMUNAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE
POCUMTUCK FORT, DEERFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

A Dissertation Presented

by

SIOBHAN M. HART

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

February 2009

Anthropology
HIGH STAKES: A POLY-COMMUNAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE POCUMTUCK FORT, DEERFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

A Dissertation Presented

by

SIOBHAN M. HART

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The heritage work at the heart of this dissertation is the outcome of many collaborations and relationships. Much of this project was made possible by the hard work of others, so I have much gratitude to distribute.

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Though I thank many, any flaws in this work are my own.
ABSTRACT

HIGH STAKES: A POLY-COMMUNAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE
POCUMTUCK FORT, DEERFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

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The process of defining heritage is fraught with the inequalities of social and political power concomitant with colonialism. As a result, disenfranchised and marginalized groups worldwide have been given little say in heritage matters until recently. Though often perceived as “experts” on the past, archaeologists are just one of many stakeholders with interests in how the past is used in the present. As such, archaeologists today face the challenge of decolonizing heritage work through engagement with diverse stakeholder communities. In this dissertation, I explore the ways that archaeologists have been working at this over the last two decades through a variety of community-based approaches to the archaeological dimensions of heritage work. I propose a multi-stakeholder model—what I call a “poly-communal approach”—that builds on and address several shortcomings I identify in these efforts. This approach engages diverse local and non-local stakeholders in collective heritage work that aims to restructure traditional power relationships in archaeological projects. I explicate this approach and, through a case study, evaluate its effectiveness as a tool for decolonizing practice and dominant histories. The case study focuses on the social
relationships of multiple stakeholders (Native American descendant communities, heritage institutions, archaeologists, landowners, avocational archaeologists, local residents, and scholars) catalyzed by the archaeology of a seventeenth-century Native American site in Deerfield, Massachusetts. The site, believed to be a fortified place of Pocumtuck peoples, plays a critical role in the dominant English and early American colonial history commemorated in the town for a century. The Pocumtuck Fort is popularly, though inaccurately, believed to be the last place the Pocumtuck lived before they “disappeared” just prior to the first English settlement in Deerfield and this dominant narrative has contributed to historical erasures of Native American peoples in the New England interior. Here, I combine a poly-communal approach to heritage work, archaeological research, and current fieldwork in this case study. I conclude that poly-communal heritage work, like that of the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship project, can transform sites of historical erasures to places that mobilize and facilitate intercultural discourse and action, demonstrating that heritage and the power to mobilize the past can be shared.
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CHAPTER 1
HIGH STAKES HERITAGE WORK

Introduction

Twenty-first century archaeologists face two practical challenges: (1) decolonizing a discipline deeply rooted in the colonial milieu; and (2) engaging in discourses with diverse individuals and communities about the meaning, value, and treatment of heritage sites. These two challenges may seem discrete, and are often treated as such in mainstream practice, but it is critical that they are seen as interlocking issues that can be addressed through practice.

Heritage, used here in the broad sense to mean that which is identified as valuable and significant about the past to meet the needs of contemporary people (Carman 2005; Graham et al. 2000; L. Smith 2006), is actively constructed and engaged in the present. As such, it comprises “work,” meaning activity, effort and labor on the part of people. Based on individual and collective values and social norms, people give some objects and places significance over others, elevating them to “heritage” and imbuing them with new meaning. The values and ethics of archaeologists and other practitioners in heritage disciplines (e.g., art history, architecture, history, museology) play a central role in this process. Archaeology, another kind of “work,” is a physical and social intervention that shapes, and is shaped by, heritage values. It is a tool for producing material heritage and provides a means of accessing media (e.g., objects, features, sites, landscapes) through which people remember, organize, think about, experience, and otherwise deploy the past.
The important question here is how, and by whom, are determinations made regarding what is valued about the past (see collection of essays in de la Torre [2005] and Mathers et al. [2005])? In other words, how is the work of heritage carried out? For example, which places, things, songs, memories, stories, or events gets researched or investigated? Which are visited, handled, cared for, or talked about? Which are preserved and which are destroyed? Archaeologists are but one of many individuals and communities engaged in the complex process of defining heritage. However, as archaeologist Laurajane Smith (2006:51) notes, “expert values and knowledge, such as those embedded in archaeology, history and architecture amongst others, often set the agendas or provide the epistemological frameworks that define debates about the meaning and nature of the past and its heritage.” The process of defining heritage is fraught with the inequalities of social and political power concomitant with colonialism, and as a result, disenfranchised and marginalized groups worldwide have been given little say in heritage matters until recently.

Although dominant notions of heritage connote integrity, authenticity and stability (Lowenthal 1998), geographer David Lowenthal (2000:21) argues, “heritage is always mongrel and amalgamated.” To that, I would add that heritage is changing and contextual. In other words, heritage is not what we might imagine as a seamless fabric, a homogeneous whole. Rather, we should imagine heritage in a way that gets at its inherent multiplicity. Metaphorically, heritage is a multi-layered fabric of the past, present, and future on which people embroider narrative threads using different ways of knowing (e.g., traditional knowledge, oral history, archaeology) and multiple media (e.g., places, songs, objects, stories, memories). People in the present imbue the threads
and patches that comprise this layered patchwork with meaning. In places, this veritable patchwork has become unraveled, frayed, worn down, and torn away by some within archaeology and other heritage disciplines, but more often, by individuals and communities who claim a stake in the pasts, presents, and futures that interest archaeologists and heritage professionals. These places demonstrate that heritage is not static, but in constant tension and open to gradual or radical change. It is here that people are engaged in what Laurajane Smith (2006:44) refers to as “heritage discourses,” meaning cultural and social processes that use material culture, heritage sites, or institutions, not as the “things” of heritage, but as “props” or “tools” to facilitate heritage work. According to Smith (2006:84), “what makes certain activities ‘heritage’ are those activities that actively engage with thinking about and acting out not only ‘where we have come from’ in terms of the past, but also ‘where we are going’ in terms of the present and future. It is a social and cultural process that mediates a sense of cultural, social, and political change.” This rooted-ness in the past and present and commitment to change for the future binds efforts to decolonize archaeology with heritage work.

Decolonizing through heritage discourses requires that archaeologists work with and for communities to unravel and re- ply threads of theory and practice, twisting together fibers spun by both archaeologists and other stakeholders. This means deep engagement with multiple communities with varying levels of commitment and interest in the past and varying amounts of political and social power in the present, which I develop here as an approach I refer to as “poly-communal archaeology.” The way I conceive it, a poly-communal model offers an approach to heritage work that is
inclusive and restructures power relationships among the stakeholders that comprise
heritage communities.

In this dissertation, I present a case study to test the effectiveness of poly-communal engagement in decolonizing efforts. The case study is grounded in archaeological investigations of a seventeenth-century Native American site in Deerfield, Massachusetts (Figure 1). Deerfield is an ideal locale for this type of study because it is a place with a deep and complex Native American history, but no present-day resident Native community, and an ethnically and socially diverse colonial history and present. It is also a place where the (colonized) past is cast and re-cast daily by museums, institutions, residents, visitors, and archaeologists. Deerfield is situated at the nexus of historical erasures, archaeology, heritage and communities, and thus serves as an optimal research universe for testing a poly-communal approach.

**The Scientific Detachment of a Colonized Discipline**

Archaeologists have contributed significantly to the historical erasure and colonization of Indigenous peoples worldwide. In large part, archaeologists have failed to recognize that many scientific methodologies make Indigenous peoples, along with other disenfranchised communities, invisible in colonial and post-colonial periods. The result of this parochialism is that archaeologists have masked the complexity of Indigenous histories by making past peoples, and their relationships to present and future peoples, invisible. This is illustrated by a general lack of engagement with contemporary communities and an absence of attentiveness to social, political, economic, technological, legal, and environmental contexts. This “scientific detachment” (Polanyi 1958), combined with the position of positivist neutrality that
many archaeologists take, has contributed to the harmful legacies of colonialism, such as endemic racism and social inequality.¹ Here, I use the term “scientific detachment,” drawn from the philosophy of science, as shorthand to denote a position of positivist neutrality, coupled with a lack of engagement and an absence of attentiveness to context.

In North America, much of the research about pre- and post-contact Native peoples has marginalized and erased them from history, the present day, and the future. This is due in large part to the relegation of Native peoples to “prehistoric” periods, an overemphasis on studies of white Euroamerican presence after initial colonization, and research questions and methodologies that did not require (in the minds of researchers) “seeing” Native peoples as agents in the past, present, or future (Hart 2004; Lightfoot 1995; Silliman 2005; Trigger 1984). This is particularly problematic in the New England region of the Northeastern United States, which has a longer colonial history than many other regions of the continent, a longer history of archaeological practice than elsewhere in North America, and a complex contemporary social matrix of Native and non-Native communities and institutions. In New England and elsewhere, mainstream archaeologists continue to make contemporary Native peoples invisible by ignoring relationships among dispersed descendant communities and ancestral homelands.

¹ Polanyi begins his polemic Personal Knowledge by stating his rejection of the ideal of scientific detachment: “In the exact sciences, this false ideal is perhaps harmless, for it is in fact disregarded there by scientists. But we shall see that it exercises a destructive influence in biology, psychology, and sociology, and falsifies our whole outlook far beyond the domain of science. I want to establish an alternative ideal of knowledge, quite generally” (1958:vii). In this volume, he critiques scientific detachment as an impossible ideal and presents his concept of “Personal Knowledge.” See Thompson (1960) for critique of Polanyi’s position.
New methodologies are needed to overcome the problems caused by the scientific detachment of archaeology, both in New England and around the world. These practices must: (1) interact with Indigenous peoples and histories; (2) foreground questions about Indigenous agency rather than Western/colonial/white-centered ones; (3) engage contemporary communities; and (4) be sensitive to social, political, economic, technological, legal, and environmental contexts. Praxis developed with these aims in mind has been referred to as “decolonizing” because it recognizes the colonial foundation on which archaeological interpretations have been built and seeks to undermine this foundation and the conventions that reinforce it through archaeology “with, by, and for Indigenous people” (Nicholas 1997; see also Apffel-Marglin and Marglin [1996]; Atalay [2006a, 2006b]; Smith and Jackson [2006]; Smith and Wobst [2005]; Tuhiwai Smith [1999]).

Decolonizing archaeology is fundamentally about restructuring power relations in the present and for the future. Archaeologists Claire Smith and Gary Jackson (2006:341) envision the decolonization of archaeology involving “archaeologists working within a framework of non-Indigenous control, a framework in which research process, outcomes, and benefits are genuinely negotiated between researcher and community.” Similarly, archaeologist Christopher Matthews (2005:33) sees the successful decolonizing projects as those that “take aim at not only the interpretation of the past, even given diverse and competing public interests, but also at the signifying practices embedded within archaeology that make it a legitimate discourse that people may use to define their positions in the world today.” The emerging field of Indigenous archaeologies is grounded in decolonizing practice, though practice aimed at

Heritage discourses and the interpretation and relationship of the past to the present and future are rich loci for exploring the colonial processes that both science and communities contribute to and reproduce. It is crucial that methodologies aimed at decolonizing are not limited to Indigenous peoples and archaeologists, but include non-Native communities and institutions that contribute to, structure, reproduce, and benefit from dominant histories. At the same time, heritage and stewardship-planning groups that include multiple communities improve the long-term viability and relevance of collective heritage work.

**Objectives**

In this dissertation, I examine the intersections of archaeology and communities through a case study focused on the social relationships catalyzed by an archaeological project in the town of Deerfield in the middle Connecticut River Valley of western Massachusetts. In this case study I employ a poly-communal stakeholder model. I propose that community-based approaches to archaeological research that engage diverse local and non-local stakeholders address the twofold problem of decolonizing archaeological practice and engaging in collective heritage work. Here, I explicate this approach and evaluate its effectiveness as a tool for decolonizing archaeological practice and dominant histories through heritage activities. A seventeenth-century Native American site is the central focus of the constellation of stakeholders engaged in this project. The site is believed to be the location of a fortified place of the Pocumtuck people, known popularly as the “Pocumtuck Fort.” This fort is part of the “remembered
landscape” (Clarke 2002:261) and public memory of both Native and Euroamerican peoples and has been an important landmark in middle Connecticut River Valley oral and written history for centuries.

In the following chapters, I develop the approach I call “poly-communal praxis” and evaluate the outcomes of the efforts of the Deerfield case study. This is an optimal case for developing and applying such a model because the stakeholders in this heritage discourse are not only archaeologists and a single descendant community, but include a variety of past and present stakeholders from different communities. This research is grounded in an effort to “illuminate history’s silences,” articulated by Russell Handsman (1991) who demonstrates that while written histories may be silent about continuous Native presence in the Connecticut River Valley, material culture recovered from archaeological and ethnographic contexts offers signs that Native peoples have continuously occupied the Valley for thousands of years. It seeks illumination, however, not just in the material culture and sites of the past, but for the people in the present for whom this objects and places have meaning. In order to transform understandings of the Native history of the Connecticut River Valley and re-form collective public memory, archaeologists must transform their practice and engage descendant and other potential stakeholders. Community-based approaches and decolonizing practices like Indigenous archaeologies are going a long way to make the practice and interpretive work of archaeology more equitable, ethical, respectful, and relevant to the present. This dissertation research seeks to contribute to these endeavors.
Methods

The case study presented here combines a poly-communal approach to heritage work, archaeological research, and current fieldwork. The fundamental method of the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project, which I have co-directed with Elizabeth Chilton since 2006, has been engagement with diverse stakeholders. The specific methods employed in the development of poly-communal praxis for this project are elaborated in Chapter 4. The archaeological fieldwork component of this project was conducted primarily in a teaching context, through the University of Massachusetts Amherst Field School in Archaeology (2004, 2006, 2008), and through additional testing in 2007 with a professional volunteer crew. The negotiated archaeological methods employed in fieldwork are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

In the remainder of this chapter, I present a brief historical context of the scientific detachment of North American archaeology and its effect on relationships with communities broadly and, more specifically, in New England. I examine the development of archaeology as scientific and colonial practice, and explore how communities have claimed a stake in high profile and local archaeological and heritage discourses. Next, I introduce the case study that is the foundation of this dissertation and discuss the relevance of this case study to archaeological practice in New England and beyond. I conclude this chapter with a roadmap for the remaining five chapters of this dissertation.


Tensions Among Science, Heritage and Communities

North American Archaeology as Science

The history of North American archaeology is intimately linked with the development of the natural sciences (Trigger 2006; Willey and Sabloff 1974). Practitioners of archaeology have long considered themselves “scientists,” basing archaeological interpretations and theories on observation, classification, comparison, and when possible, experimentation. Botanists, zoologists, geologists, and others trained in the natural sciences practiced archaeology in its infancy in North America during the nineteenth century. Rooted in the antiquarian movement in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, early practitioners of New World archaeology viewed people in the past, and the material imprints they made, as analogous to the birds, snails, rock strata, and dinosaur footprints found in the natural world. They sought to document, order, name, and classify all that they encountered. While early practitioners acknowledged that there were living descendants of many of the animal and plant populations they examined, they curiously ignored the living descendants of the past human populations they studied. Instead, early archaeology in North America was aimed at recording a “dying race” of Indigenous peoples and contributed significantly to the rise of scientific racism, unilineal cultural evolution, and the notion that Indigenous groups were incapable of cultural and technological change (Trigger 2006:163-180).

For much of its history, North American archaeologists have positioned the discipline at a chronological, spatial, intellectual, and philosophical distance from the people it studies. Rather than allying with heritage disciplines like art history,
architecture, and history, archaeologists have largely embraced scientific paradigms, hypothesis testing, and method. Willey and Sabloff (1974:42-87) trace the struggle of practitioners to make the discipline “scientific” back to the “Classificatory-Descriptive Period” of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, coinciding with the development of stratigraphic control and taxonomies of material culture and human behavior. The establishment of museums where past peoples’ material realities were organized, classified, curated, and accessed by scholars and those with scientific “credentials” was an outgrowth of the increasing scientism that shared the aim of documenting the “disappearing” Indigenous cultures. Trigger (2006:187) notes this phenomenon as a practice and expression of racial and ethnic superiority:

Euro-Americans expressed their sense of their own ethnic superiority by locating collections of indigenous American archaeological and ethnological material in museums of natural history rather than together with European and Middle Eastern antiquities in museums of fine art and by teaching prehistory in departments of anthropology rather than of history.

With the increasing professionalism of the discipline in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the first efforts to preserve major prehistoric monuments worldwide, archaeology was positioned as both a science and authority on the past in the dominant society (Trigger 2006:187-188; Willey and Sabloff 1974:42-87). The concept of “heritage management” established in Europe was embraced in the United States and institutionalized in the form of governmental (e.g., the Smithsonian and the National Park Service) and private organizations (Graham et al. 2000:13). These institutions elevated objects and places to “heritage” and produced historical narratives that codified, universalized, and nationalized dominant histories. Their practices and
policies have had long-lasting effects on notions of heritage and historic preservation in the U.S.

Classificatory schemes and taxonomies persisted in culture-history and diffusionist approaches to archaeology in the early twentieth century, along with a growing concern with chronology and regional syntheses. Though these models made room for cultural change, in contrast to earlier descriptive models that viewed Indigenous cultures as static and primitive, their contribution was limited to regional chronologies (Trigger 2006:278-290; Willey and Sabloff 1974:88-130). Stereotypes of Indigenous peoples remained largely unchallenged, and “the links between archaeology and ethnology, as well as between archaeologists and indigenous people, were weakened” (Trigger 2006:288-289).

During the second half of the twentieth century, North American archaeology became concerned with context and function, elucidating settlement patterns, discerning environmental impacts on human behavior, understanding human behavior through artifact analysis, and absolute dating techniques (Willey and Sabloff 1974:131-178). According to Willey and Sabloff (1974:160), this period saw an increase in the attention paid to developments in other disciplines, with strong interest in how the approaches employed in these disciplines, like physics, chemistry, the natural and biological sciences, and mathematics, could aid archaeological research. A revival of interest in cultural evolution, materialist approaches, and positivistic canons of scientific method brought about an attack on culture-historical approaches by so-called “processual” archaeologists (also known as “New Archaeology”) in the decades from 1960 to 1980 (Trigger 2006:386-407). Trigger (2006:400) characterizes one of the primary figures in
this movement, Lewis Binford, as maintaining that “a single way of doing science, exemplified in its most rigorous form by the work of physicists, constituted the model for carrying out all archaeological enquiries.” By and large, processual archaeologists drew a line in the sand between history and science. Despite their efforts to use ethnoarchaeology and studies of contemporary communities to correlate behaviors of past peoples, their rejection of particularism and history significantly increased the distance between both archaeology and communities and archaeology and other heritage disciplines. The New Archaeology claimed to produce “ethically neutral generalizations that were useful for the management of modern societies” (Trigger 2006:407), a clear indication that scientific detachment was alive and well in the discipline.

Beginning in the 1980s and into the 1990s, processual archaeology--by now mainstream practice--found itself as the focus of substantial critique within archaeology. The postmodernist ideas that originated in humanities and cultural studies circles got traction in archaeology as part of a reaction against positivism, behaviorism, and cultural evolutionism, coupled with a greater awareness of relativism (for example, see Hodder [1982, 1986]; Hodder, ed. [1982]; Moore and Keene [1983]; Shanks and Tilley [1987]). “Post-processualism” was characterized by an increasing recognition of biases in interpretation of archaeological data and sensitivity to ethnic, racial, class, and gender prejudices implicit in research questions, approaches, and analyses (for example, see Gero et al. [1983]; Gero and Conkey [1991]; Handsman [1981]; Saitta [1983]). However, Trigger (2006:458) notes these sensitivities did not necessarily reduce the scientific detachment of archaeology:
Unfortunately, in the United States, a growing appreciation of the creativity of indigenous peoples was not accompanied by closer relations between prehistoric archaeologists and the peoples whose pasts they studied. Processual archaeologists, in keeping with their programmatic goals, treated the archaeological record as a basis for generalizing about human behavior and hence their interests had little in common with those of indigenous peoples. Even most postprocessual archaeologists looked to the abundant ethnographic data recorded in earlier times rather than to living Indians as a source of the cultural information that was needed to interpret archaeological finds. It was not until Indian activists began to acquire increasing legal control over licensing the study of archaeological material relating to their cultural heritage that, out of political necessity, a dialogue began—a dialogue that continues to be dominated by political issues and is often confrontational.

As Trigger notes, the potential for a transformation that transcended scientific detachment in archaeological practice only emerged once power began to shift among archaeologists and communities.

This abbreviated history of North American archaeological theory and practice demonstrates that its development as a scientific discipline has served colonial interests by creating and documenting Indigenous subjects for nearly two centuries. It has also been characterized by increasingly weak, non-existent and sometimes volatile relations with communities, especially Indigenous peoples. For much of the discipline’s past, archaeologists have positioned themselves as “ethically neutral” in their elevation of scientific objectivity and denial of the relevance of history, politics, and social relations.

Despite the efforts of processualists to separate science from history, archaeologists have forged ahead to take on the task of history-writing and heritage work, with the weight of scientific practice and its widely (if uncritically) accepted “objectivity,” and (seemingly) without the biases faced by history-writers who rely on documentary and oral histories. However, the notion of an objective and knowable past is a fallacy. Interpretations of the past are contextual and the result of a complex
process of knowledge production in the present. While post-processual archaeologists were sensitive to this, little action has been taken to create a larger dialogue about the production of knowledge about the past with individuals and communities outside of archaeology, perhaps in part because such a dialogue serves to undermine the authority of archaeologists as the “experts” on the past.

Today, the intersections of Indigenous peoples, heritage communities, anthropologists, museums, universities, and bureaucrats have led to the emergence of multiple discourses in which the practices of scientific hegemony and heritage production are being challenged, contested and deconstructed by communities. It is becoming increasingly clear that the many and varied communities that intersect with archaeology are no longer (and perhaps never were) willing to accept the version of archaeology that is detached, neutral, or otherwise disengaged. Increasingly, contemporary people are recognizing the intersections of archaeological research and their communities and are demanding a role and voice in scientific and heritage discourses, arguing that “science” and “scientists” have defined their pasts, presents, and futures without any engagement with the people that comprise the communities they study. Many communities, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, commonly acknowledge that the quality of their lives has not substantively changed as a result of the advance of scientism (Robinson 1996:128).

**Twenty-First Century Heritage Communities**

Before we can examine the intersections of science and communities in the twenty-first century, it is necessary to take a step back and problematize the concept of “community” as it relates to archaeological studies of the past and heritage efforts in the
present. For the purposes of this study, I refer broadly to “heritage communities,” since heritage work is what people coalesced around in this case. I begin with a consideration of the general concept of “community” as a foundation for the discussion of stakeholders and heritage communities in Chapters 3 and 4.

In its common usage, the term “community” implies an artificial coherence and homogeneity. Both archaeologists and non-archaeologists see communities as bounded, tethered in space and time, static and rigid. In reality, “communities,” heritage and otherwise, are comprised of aggregations of complex individuals and shift in different contexts, through time and contemporaneously. Though members of a particular group may share certain ideas, identities, and perspectives, the lack of homogeneity within these groups demonstrated by discordant ideas, identities, and perspectives within and across “communities” is crucial to consider, especially when engaging with community representatives.

Anthropologist Eric Wolf’s definition of “culture,” as explained in Europe and a People Without History (1982), is informative in approaching the concept of “community” broadly. Wolf (1982:387) states: “‘A culture’ is better seen as a series of processes that construct, reconstruct, and dismantle cultural materials in response to identifiable determinants.” His critique of treating cultures as unified, and bounded—the so-called “billiard ball” model of culture—is useful in anthropological considerations of communities as well. This is especially true in modern, postcolonial contexts where individual and community identities are constantly constituted and reconstituted in different contexts.
Scholar Benedict Anderson, whose *Imagined Communities* (1991) has been central in conceptualizing and examining nationalism, also contributes to anthropological conceptions of communities. Anderson (1991:6) states: “all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.” By *imagined*, he means that community members may never know fellow members directly, yet the image of other community members exists in their minds. Anderson (1991:7) distinguishes between the nation, which is imagined as limited and having finite boundaries, and communities, which can be limitless, crosscutting established national boundaries, and existing at the level of consciousness.

Both Wolf and Anderson contribute to a more nuanced concept of community as an in-process construction that exists at the level of consciousness. More specifically and more relevant to the consideration of “heritage communities” here, Maori (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Porou) scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) has articulated the tensions and complexities of the notion of community among colonized peoples worldwide. Tuhiwai Smith (1999:125-126) states:

The idea of community is defined or imagined in multiple ways, as physical, political, social, psychological, historical, linguistic, economic, cultural, and spiritual spaces. For colonized peoples many local communities have been made through deliberate policies aimed at putting people on reserves which are often out of sight, on the margins. Legislation and other coercive state practices have ensured that people stay within their own community boundaries. Communities have also made themselves, however, despite policies aimed at fragmenting family bonds and separating people from their traditional territories.
Community conceptualized in this distinctive and critical way is more appropriate than static models in postcolonial contexts and colonized landscapes because it allows us to transcend the boundaries of space, time, and geography. Communities can be fluid constituencies that form and re-form around issues and causes with a limited time span (Derry 2003:22).

Each of the attributes outlined above is essential to conceptualizing “heritage communities,” which are multiple, varied, and contextual. Heritage communities consist of a range of individual and collective stakeholders, such as descendants, geographically local people, researchers, and heritage institutions (among many others), with varying interests in how the past is mobilized, remembered, and engaged in the present. This notion of heritage community is the theoretical foundation of the poly-communal approach to archaeology discussed in Chapter 3.

The intersections of science, heritage, and communities worldwide and the broadening public domain where these intersections take place lead to a number of questions. How do communities engage with scientific practice, such as archaeology, as it relates to heritage work? How do they understand their role in heritage work? How do heritage professionals respond to and engage community requests for increased transparency in research? In what ways do social scientists address questions about the relevancy of their research to contemporary communities? Do social scientists and heritage professionals grapple with the social, political and economic contexts and consequences of research? These are, no doubt, important questions about people and practice. But there are also questions about the broader implications of practice and interpretations that are relevant to all social sciences and heritage disciplines, and
especially archaeology in its focus on people and material culture in the past, present and future. Can contemporary practice provide a corrective for past practices and findings that form the basis for interpretations that marginalize or do harm to groups of people based on classifications by race, class, ethnicity, or gender? How can archaeologists, as anthropologists, better understand how people (including themselves) value, manage, experience, and participate in heritage work? Anthropologists are particularly well situated to address these questions relevant to contemporary heritage discourses about archaeology and communities. In the following section, I present a case study of archaeological practice, past and present, in the New England region of North America to begin to address these questions.

**Heritage Communities, Archaeology, and Historical Erasures in New England**

As demonstrated in the survey of archaeological thought and practice outlined earlier in this chapter, archaeologists in North America have conducted research on past communities and the bulk of that research has focused on Native Americans. Until recently, little attention has been given to how this research affects contemporary Native American peoples and other local communities, nor has much attention been paid to questions posed by descendant and local communities that social science research is in a position to address. This is especially problematic in some regions of North America, such as New England where archaeological research impacts heritage communities in many ways. In particular, Native American descendant communities are significantly impacted by archaeological research in their efforts to secure federal recognition and repatriations and assert their sovereignty (Chilton 2006; Goodby 2006;
Hart 2003; Herbster and Cherau 2006; Jones and McBride 2006; Lacy and Moody 2006; Peters 2006; Simon 2006).

New England is a region where Native American histories have been subverted and erased for centuries, due only in part to the early timing of colonization. The “historical erasure” of Native peoples in New England is also intimately related to archaeological interpretations of Native subsistence and settlement patterns prior to and during the early period of European colonization. The process of historical erasure— attempts to disrupt historical continuity and memory—is not only the result of tools like the pen, the voice, and popular memory. It finds legitimacy and validation in heritage disciplines such as archaeology and history, which elevate some things, places, and pasts to “significant” at the expense of others. According to anthropologist and Native American scholar Margaret Bruchac (2007:291), the study of historical erasure is:

often, by its very nature, a study of how populations and histories have become marginalized and victimized. That sense of victimization can, however, become yet another form of re-colonization, a weapon of erasure, when it takes on the character of irretrievable loss, and inspires the construction of both figurative and literal memorials to Native peoples who have irretrievably “vanished.” Surviving populations are then forced to expend enormous amounts of energy disproving historical falsehoods, before they can even begin to engage in discussions of persistence.

Archaeologists have contributed to the historical erasure of New England Native peoples because they have failed to recognize that some archaeological methodologies make Native peoples historically invisible after the arrival of Europeans to the region. In effect, scientific practice has masked the complexity of Native history in New England and stifled heritage discourses by making past peoples, and their relationships to present and future peoples, invisible.
Recently, archaeologists in New England and beyond have sought to engage contemporary descendants and non-descendant local communities, in many cases as a result of the longtime efforts of Indigenous communities (Atalay 2006a, 2006b; Blakey 1998, 2008; Castaneda and Matthews, ed. 2008; Chilton 2006, 2008; Clarke 2002; Colley 2003; Derry and Malloy 2003; Goodby 2006; Hart 2003; Greer et al. 2002; Herbster and Cherau 2006; Jones and McBride 2006; Lacy and Moody 2006; McDavid 2002, 2003; Moser et al. 2002; Nicholas 2006; Nicholas and Andrews 1997; Peters 2006; Potter 1994; Rubertone 2001; Shackel 2004; Silliman 2008; Simon 2006; Smith and Jackson 2006; Watkins 2003). Archaeologists are beginning to confront and address historical erasures and are responding to community demands for transparency and considerations of relevance, contexts, and consequences in scientific research through collaborative and community-based archaeology projects (for example, see collection of essays in Kerber [2006] and Silliman [2008]). At the same time, one of the greatest challenges facing social science and heritage disciplines today—including archaeology—is engaging the diverse individual and community stakeholders that make up pluralistic communities. This multiplicity, or as I discuss in Chapter 3 “poly-ness,” poses a serious challenge that few scientific disciplines deal with in a meaningful way and heritage disciplines struggle with. In archaeology, most projects, whether under the rubric of cultural resource management or academic research, have “public education” components designed to engage people in archaeological research. However, these programs often accomplish little more than interpreting and reporting the findings of scientific projects to an undefined “public” audience. Public, and more particularly, *community* participation in research is more than just presenting archaeology to people—
it is about reaching out to members of communities and inviting them to be active participants in archaeological and heritage discourses and practices, along with archaeologists (Shackel 2004:14).

**Stakeholders and Heritage Discourses**

Though often positioned and perceived as “experts” on the past, archaeologists are one of many stakeholder groups (a concept discussed in Chapter 3) with interests in archaeological projects and heritage work. Funding, research expectations, cultural resource management contracts, teaching requirements, employment, and professional ethics and values may contribute to an archaeologist’s interest in archaeological research and heritage discourses. In addition to being a stakeholder, archaeologists are often engaged in complex negotiations with other stakeholders who have different interests and perspectives on projects and can differentially impact how projects proceed, how and to what extent sites are examined and funded, and project outcomes. As archaeological research has shifted over the last two decades, for the most part, from an endeavor driven by the quest to create covering laws and meta-narratives to one engaged in highlighting diversity and the multiplicity of voices, perspectives, and interpretations of the past, community and stakeholder engagement with archaeological research and heritage work has also shifted.

**Origins and Disappearance Discourses**

Many stakeholder groups engage in high profile discourses that mobilize the past in the present. One rallying point can be glossed as the “earliest peoples” discourse. This discourse is about origins, long an important area of research in archaeology, and an issue closely associated with community identity formation. For
instance, a number of stakeholders, both individual and community-based, emerged from the national discourse about origins, ethnicity, race, and cultural continuity spurred by the Ancient One/Kennewick Man case (for example, see Harris [2005]; Stapp and Longenecker [2005]; Thomas [2000]; Watkins [2000, 2004]). Popular media accounts of this case suggest that there were clear divisions between Native American groups claiming the Ancient One as an ancestor and archaeologists who wanted to study the Kennewick Man remains (for example, see Lemonick and Dorfman [2006]; Preston [1997]). The interests of individual and community stakeholders in this case, however, were much more complex than this simple dichotomy suggests (Watkins 2000, 2004).

Another discourse that has proved to be a lightning rod for debate among diverse stakeholders in North America can be glossed as the “terra nullius/we were (and are) here” discourse (Wobst 2005:20-21). Some people engaged in this debate espouse, reproduce, and gain from the notion that the continent was “empty” of people and therefore open for settlement by European colonizers. Others acknowledge the continued presence of Native peoples in North America, prior to, during, and after European colonization, and through to the present. This discourse centers on land, territory rights and the tensions between colonizers and colonized, historical acknowledgements and erasures. Colonialism plays an important role in this discourse because it is through colonial domination that Indigenous and other marginalized peoples are written out of history. Stakeholders in projects that focus on such questions have rallied nationally and internationally to challenge historical erasures in cases of Indigenous land rights and government recognition. Examples include the Mashpee Wampanoag case for federal recognition (Campesi 1990) in Northeastern North
America and many Aboriginal land claim cases in Australia (Dousset and Glaskin 2007; Hepburn 2006; Hocking and Hocking 1999; Merlan 2006). Archaeology and heritage are not always the focus of these discourses, but archaeological data is often cited as evidence to support the perspectives of multiple stakeholders participants, as the past is deployed in the present and for the future.

**Local Heritage Discourses**

In the same way that high profile discourses tend to galvanize and create opposition between and among stakeholder groups, archaeological projects at the local level also stimulate stakeholder groups and communities to participate in heritage discourses. North American examples range from discourses about cultural heritage and tourism in Annapolis, Maryland (Potter 1994; Potter and Leone 1987), to discourses about race and social inequality induced by the “discovery” and subsequent commemoration of the African Burial Ground in New York City (Blakey 1998, 2008; Blakey and Rankin-Hill 2004; Epperson 1997; LaRoche and Blakey 1997). Additional examples are discussed in Chapter 3. The case presented here of the search for the Pocumtuck Fort in Deerfield, Massachusetts, is a prime example of how discourses about cultural presence and disappearance are engaged locally with implications for efforts to remediate historical erasures more broadly.

Dominant Eurocentric narratives of the “emptiness” and emptying of places in Northeastern North America prior to European settlement have been reproduced and legitimized by archaeological researchers and those engaged in heritage work. This is even the case with efforts designed to commemorate Native peoples of the past because an overemphasis on “pastness” re-inscribes historical erasures. However, a poly-
The communal stakeholder approach to the archaeological dimension of heritage work can contribute to efforts to address and redress historical erasures, particularly in places where multiple stakeholder groups are engaged in discourses of cultural invisibility and presence, like New England. In places where Native pasts and presents continue to be marginalized, contested, and subject to historical erasure, archaeology can serve as a way of “centering” the pasts and presents of New England Native peoples in heritage discourses (after Dincauze [1993]). At the same time, community-engagement can begin to “de-center” archaeologists (after McDavid [2003:57]), historians, bureaucrats, and the state as authorities on Native pasts and presents and stewards and interpreters for archaeological and heritage sites. Community-based archaeology is an important method for combating historical erasures, decolonizing archaeology, and “centering” heritage communities while “de-centering” archaeologists. It can be even more powerful when multiple communities (Native and non-Native) are engaged in the heritage discourse and heritage work, such as developing methodology and method for archaeological testing, making decisions about research questions, curation, and stewardship, and building interpretations.

**A Case Study in Poly-Communal Archaeology**

**Pocumtuck/Deerfield**

For much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Deerfield, Massachusetts, was both a “frontier” town for Euroamericans, desired for its rich river valleys, and a place where Native peoples continued to live, as they had for at least 12,000 years. Deerfield is a place with a deep Native American history and an ethnically and socially diverse colonial history that is much more complex than is acknowledged by the
dominant and celebrated Euroamerican history (Keene and Chilton 1995; Paynter 2002).

Most often referred to historically as “the Pocumtuck,” the Native peoples encountered by early Europeans were identified by the name of the place where Europeans first confronted them, in this case along the banks of the river called “Pocumtuck”—an Algonkian place name meaning “swift, shallow, sandy stream”—known today as the Deerfield River (Bruchac 2005). The Pocumtuck and other Connecticut Valley Native “tribes” like Norwottuck, Woronoco, and Agawam, were more akin to village polities comprised of politically-autonomous, but related mobile communities, rather than fixed identities or nationalities as tribal names may suggest (Johnson 1993; Thomas 1985:156). However, the public memory of the Native peoples of the middle Connecticut River Valley has been shaped by narratives of cultural disappearance and historical erasure anchored by places on the landscape that invoke their disappearance or “pastness.” One of these places, the so-called “Pocumtuck Fort,” has served as a metaphor for the destruction of Native peoples in the Connecticut River Valley during the seventeenth century. Historical accounts of an attack on the fort by the Mohawk in 1665 purport that this attack “destroyed” the Pocumtuck (Melvoin 1989:46). Settlers from Dedham, Massachusetts, were granted the Pocumtuck lands only a few months later, and thus for over 300 years, Euroamerican settlement in the area has been justified on the basis that the attack left the area “empty” of Native peoples.

Since the first Euroamerican settlers arrived in Pocumtuck, later re-naming it Deerfield, the historical erasure of the Pocumtuck and other middle Connecticut River
Valley Native people has been an on-going process, contributed to and reproduced over centuries. In the eighteenth century, Euroamerican settlers shared the common goal of securing complete control over Indian people and land. During the nineteenth century, narratives of Native cultural loss and dispossession became prominent, while Indian burials were excavated and added to museum and study collections (see extensive discussion of this practice in Bruchac [2007]). Existing Pocumtuck peoples were often referred to as “remnants” in written histories—a powerful act of naming that signaled the entrenched notion of disappearance in public memory that persists today. However, the dominant historical narrative that has persisted for centuries is in stark contrast to the efforts of Native peoples to adapt to the violent effects of dispossession, relocation, and social reorganization and their enduring cultural, social, and spiritual relationship to their ancestral homelands.

The Pocumtuck Fort has been used to construct and reinforce social relations among people in the past, people in the present, and people in the past and present (after Delle [1998:120]). Although anchoring the heritage discourse about Native presence and the Pocumtuck past in this one place privileges it as a place of significance and “Native-ness,” it also offers a potent entry point for redressing the historical erasures that it has been used to illustrate and reinforce. The memory of the fort and archaeological materials recovered do not comprise “the heritage,” but rather serve the “props” and “tools” that facilitate the discourses about the past in the present (L. Smith 2006:44). The spatial entity known as the Pocumtuck Fort shaped, and was shaped by, the lives of those living in and around Pocumtuck in the seventeenth century. It continues to shape and be shaped by the lives of people with ancestral connections to
Pocumtuck, people living in Deerfield today, and people interested in the Native history of New England.

**Relevance**

Archaeology, as a method of recovering past materials and interpreting history, has contributed to understandings of past and present New England since the mid-nineteenth century, but archaeologists did not begin to wrestle with the complex intersections of Native peoples, Europeans, and material culture until the 1980s and 1990s. Archaeologist Peter Thomas (1985:132) has noted: “archaeologically…the contact situation in the entire region [southern New England] is virtually unexplored. Collections, mostly uncatalogued, of Indian and European trade goods from contact period sites have existed for years: but only during the past few years has there been an attempt to draw these data together.” Thomas’ assessment continues to accurately characterize New England contact and early colonial period scholarship (see also Grumet [1995:14]). While historians have long addressed contact and early colonial period encounters and relationships among Native peoples and Euroamericans in the Connecticut River Valley, archaeologists researching Native history in the region have largely ignored this time period, placing a greater emphasis on research of earlier periods. This is problematic because the document-based histories of the region crafted by historians include accounts of Native peoples who did not record their histories in the same ways as Europeans and Euroamericans. Thus, our current understanding of seventeenth-century Native history is largely limited to European and Euroamerican interpretations and perspectives on Native life and fails to reflect the complexity of the social, political, economic, and cultural universe of seventeenth-century New England.
Archaeology, as an alternative way of constructing history, is uniquely situated to examine the histories of Native peoples in New England. It allows us to illuminate aspects of the daily lives of Native peoples that are not usually recorded in historical documents. When paired with documentary sources from the seventeenth century and traditional knowledge of contemporary Native peoples, archaeology can shed light on Native-Euroamerican relationships in a period of great transition and transformation for both Native and Euroamerican societies.

The geographic focus of this research is New England’s middle Connecticut River Valley, specifically Deerfield, Massachusetts (see Figure 1). New England has been marginalized as a “cultural backwater” by some in archaeology (see Dincauze’s [1993] discussion), however, contact and early colonial period research demonstrates the complexity of New England Native history and Native-Euroamerican relations.

The Connecticut River Valley lies between coastal areas of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, and the Hudson Valley of New York. These are regions for which a great deal of research about contact and early colonial period relationships among Native people and Europeans has been conducted and published (for example, see Bradley [1987]; Bragdon [1996]; Rubertone [2001]). Though the Connecticut River Valley is a crossroads between these regions and the movement of people and material culture across the area is well-documented, the Valley itself has little published scholarship exploring archaeological perspectives and interpretations of the contact and early colonial period.

The project explored here takes place in a region and town where there are multiple stakeholders with varying interests and claims to the past and varying amounts
of political and social power in the present. With the increasing visibility of some
Native groups in New England, particularly federally-recognized tribes with tribal land
bases, other groups are increasingly marginalized. Deerfield, and the middle
Connecticut River Valley, is an area where there are no federally-recognized tribes,
tribally-held lands, or single descendant community. Descendant communities are
dispersed, but maintain connections to these ancestral homelands. Here, non-
descendant communities of property owners and local residents also have interests in
interpretations of the past and stewardship in the present. Therefore, an approach that
engages all of these stakeholders in the planning, fieldwork, interpretation, and
stewardship for this site is crucial.

Present-day Deerfield is an important locus of analysis because it is a place
where people have actively engaged in heritage work for over a century. The material
and narrative outcomes of this work are evident and known locally and nationally:
“Deerfield has not only a physical reality that refers to the past but also a place in the
American imagination that connects its present with a broader American past” (Paynter
2002:S88). For much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Deerfield was both a
“frontier” town for Euroamericans and a place within a Native American homeland, and
as such it was a place of complex intercultural relationships, ranging from violent
encounters to everyday interactions. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century,
a heritage discourse emerged in Deerfield as residents sought to attract the wealthy
descendants of the town’s English settlers to purchase the village’s old homesteads by
playing up the values and lifestyle of colonial New England’s agricultural village life
Deerfield,” also known as Deerfield Village, became a “museum village” as early as 1900 when the debate emerged about revitalizing the old part of town. Some residents believed that the “key to Deerfield’s economic revitalization lay not in updating for modern commerce but rather in remaking the town into a haven from it” (Glassberg 2001:137). Subsequent heritage work was undertaken in the 1920s by Frank Boyden, headmaster of Deerfield Academy, an elite private boarding school in the center of the village, who purchased properties along the village’s central street and refurbished them as dormitories in a colonial style to attract wealthy families to his school (Glassberg 2001:137; Paynter 2002:S87). Beginning in the late 1930s, the parents of a Deerfield Academy student, Henry and Helen Geier Flynt, were so taken by the colonial air of the town that they purchased and restored several remaining homes and established a foundation which later became Historic Deerfield, Inc., one of two major heritage institutions in the town (Glassberg 2001:137; Historic Deerfield 2008; Paynter 2002:S87).

Today, Deerfield has a rural character, with a mix of agricultural and conservation lands and commercial and industrial properties, and is home to a number of cultural and educational institutions. Heritage discourses and heritage work continue in Deerfield, as it serves as a historic district with several museums (Historic Deerfield, Inc., and the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association), attracting local and non-local visitors throughout the year. Until recently, these institutions largely celebrated colonial Euroamerican settlement of New England while marginalizing Native American (and other non-Anglo) presence, only invoking Native “others” in narratives of intercultural violence, such the powerful story of the 1704 raid on the English

Although the historical look and feel of the town (resulting as much from activities of the recent past as the colonial past) conveys a sense of timelessness (Glassberg 2001:131; Paynter 2002), Deerfield is a vibrant and diverse community today. In addition to being a place that people visit to experience “heritage,” Deerfield is a place where people live with and try to make sense of the how the past is mobilized and presented in their midst. It is a small town of fewer than 5,000 residents, many the descendants of an influx of eastern European immigrants to the area in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The on-going heritage discourse and heritage activities, dominant narratives reproduced by heritage institutions, and diverse heritage communities situate Pocumtuck/Deerfield at the nexus of historical erasures, archaeology, heritage management and communities. Thus, it serves as an optimal research universe for applying and evaluating a poly-communal approach.

**Roadmap**

Through this case study, I explore the complexities of working with diverse stakeholders to confront historical erasures through archaeological dimensions of heritage work. Chapter 2 provides the historical and archaeological context for the Pocumtuck Fort site and outlines the complicity of archaeologists and the writers of dominant histories in the historical erasure of New England Native peoples. I discuss
how archaeology of the contact/early colonial period has contributed to the historical erasure of Native peoples and describe the proliferation of fortified sites among New England Native peoples during the seventeenth century using historical references and archaeological evidence from several known sites. I then hone in on the Pocumtuck Fort and explore how this place is the site of historical erasures. In Chapter 3, I explore the “stakeholder” concept and advocate the approach I develop and call “poly-communal archaeology” as a way of practicing archaeology. Poly-communal archaeology responds to and engages requests from multiple contemporary communities for increased transparency in social science research and relevancy of such research to communities. With a dual focus on (1) inter-personal and inter-group social relationships, and (2) the materiality of these relationships in the past and present, it is a way to grapple with the social, political and economic contexts and consequences of archaeological research in a meaningful and highly visible way. I believe that poly-communal practice can provide a corrective for past scientific methods and interpretations that do harm to groups of people, while also illuminating the complexity of the production of knowledge about the past.

Developing a poly-communal praxis for the archaeology of the Pocumtuck Fort is the focus of Chapter 4. Here, I discuss the process of building individual and collective relationships with project stakeholders. Chapter 5 reports on the results and outcomes of these efforts. I focus on the themes and issues that emerged from the stakeholder workshop held in April 2008 and on the ways that stakeholder engagement shaped and transformed archaeological field methods. I conclude the dissertation with Chapter 6 where I reflect on the project as a whole. I outline the challenges faced,
discuss how my conception of the model changed over the course of the project,
evaluate the project’s effectiveness as a decolonizing project, and chart a course for the project’s future.
CHAPTER 2
THE POCUMTUCK FORT IN CONTEXT

Introduction

This chapter provides the historical and archaeological context for the Pocumtuck Fort site and implicates archaeologists and the writers of dominant histories in the historical erasure of New England Native peoples. Here, I describe the disciplinary approaches and historical roots that make the archaeological investigations of the Pocumtuck Fort an ideal case for a community-based approach aimed at challenging historical erasures and engaging multiple stakeholders in heritage work. A site embedded in multiple landscapes and histories--oral, remembered, documentary, and archaeological--the Pocumtuck Fort has been a real and metaphorical place of meaning-making and cross-cultural engagement in the past and present. As discussed in Chapter 1, Native American history has been treated largely as an “opening act” for the Euroamerican (English Protestant) colonial past in Deerfield. As a result, the historical memory of the Pocumtuck Fort is strongest locally and in the role it plays in setting the stage for the dominant narrative of English settlement. Unlike the memory of Euroamerican colonial life in Deerfield, which has a place in regional and national historical memory, the Pocumtuck and their places, like the Fort, are mostly forgotten beyond Deerfield.

I begin this chapter with a critique of so-called “contact period” archaeology and outline four ways that archaeologists studying the materialities of Native American life in the early colonial period have contributed to the historical erasure of Native peoples in the middle Connecticut River Valley. Next, I discuss historical references and
archaeological evidence for seventeenth-century Native American forts in New England. With no pre-colonial precedents, these fortified places represent an important shift in lifeways for New England Native peoples in the seventeenth century, but archaeological and historical evidence suggests that they were not always used in the same way. To illustrate this variation, I report on investigations at five seventeenth-century fort sites with geographic, chronological, material and cultural relationships to the Pocumtuck Fort: Fort Shantok (Montville, Connecticut), Pequot Fort at Mystic (Mystic, Connecticut), Monhantic Fort at Mashantucket (Mashantucket, Connecticut), the Sokoki Fort (Hinsdale, New Hampshire), and the Long Hill Site (Agawam, Massachusetts). Next, I turn to the Pocumtuck Fort and discuss references to the fort in seventeenth-century documents and nineteenth-century histories. I conclude this chapter by describing how the Pocumtuck Fort has been deployed as a metaphor for the destruction of Native peoples in Deerfield and the middle Connecticut River Valley and argue that recasting this metaphor is possible through heritage work.

**Masking Complexity and Perpetuating Erasures through Archaeological Approaches to Early Colonial Native American History**

The early colonial history of the middle Connecticut River Valley is not well understood. This has important implications for the historical erasure of both seventeenth-century Native peoples and their descendants who today trace their ancestry to these homelands. It also distorts the collective public memory of Native peoples in the past and present. Here, I follow Bradley (1984) and others and consider the “contact period” or “early colonial period” in New England to be the years between the first encounters among Native peoples and Europeans during the 1500s and the end
of the American War for Independence in 1775 (see also Grumet 1995:28), though
contact neither began nor ended at the same time across the region. I use the terms
“contact” and “early colonial” interchangeably to refer to a time in the past. The study
of the contact period--whether historical, archaeological, ethnographic, or oral
historical--is linked to historical erasure because the dominant narratives produced by
these fields of inquiry have become encoded in public memory.

Until recently, most archaeologists studying the early colonial period in the
middle Connecticut River Valley have failed to illuminate the complexity of the social,
political, economic, technological, and spiritual dimensions of Native life, and as a
result have contributed to historical erasures. There are four main reasons for this
failure: (1) a simplistic use of the term “contact” to describe relationships among groups
of Native peoples and Euroamericans; (2) an overemphasis on violent encounters
among Native peoples and Euroamericans; (3) a reliance on an artificial and inaccurate
typology of material culture that divides artifacts into categories (“prehistoric” and
“historic”) with implicit assumptions about ethnicity; and (4) a dependence on a concept
of “tribe” which does not accurately reflect the political, social, or cultural identities of
seventeenth century Native people in the Connecticut River Valley. Though here I
particularly focus on the middle Connecticut River Valley, these issues are symptomatic
of New England and North American archaeology as a whole.

Simplifying Contact

First, the term “contact” is insufficient to explain the complexity of the early
colonial universe in the middle Connecticut River Valley, as has been pointed out for
other regions (Cusick 1998; Gosden 2004; Loren 2008; Murray 2004; Rubertone 2000;
“Contact” in interior New England is usually considered to have begun when European writers began to record interactions with local Native peoples and Euroamericans permanently moved into the region, building homesteads and asserting property rights for lands that had been for millennia, and continued to be, part of traditional Native homelands (for example, see Handsman and Richmond [1995]). In its current usage, the definition of “contact” in the middle Connecticut River Valley is poorly defined and does not tell us much about the social, political, economic, and cultural lives of Native peoples or Euroamericans. “Contact” encompasses an array of social, political, and economic relationships among Europeans and Native peoples, but also among different and related groups of Native peoples that have a much deeper time dimension. Careful consideration is required to truly understand the complexity of this time period and what it meant, and continues to mean, for Native peoples and Euroamericans. Studies of acculturation and culture contact models have failed to sufficiently get at this (see Silliman [2005] for problems with the term “contact” as descriptor and metaphor). A more nuanced understanding of the concept of “contact” that better describes the complexity of the social, political, economic cultural universe of the seventeenth century and is attentive to the many “small-scale and large-scale historical encounters and cultural entanglements of different groups of people with each other” is needed (Loren 2008). Archaeologists must seek to add depth to the simplistic notion of “contact” in the colonized places they work, especially as it is conceived and employed by people today in their collective memories of the past.
Overemphasizing Violence

Second, an overemphasis on violent clashes and political wrangling among Native peoples and Euroamericans has prevented scholars from exploring the day-to-day relationships among Native peoples and Euroamericans and has limited our ability to comprehend Native identity in ways that do not rely solely on responses to European incursions. Despite the long time-depth of Native American habitation in the region (at least 12,000 years) and the relatively short time span of Euroamerican settlements (less than 400 years), the histories of Native and European relations in the middle Connecticut River Valley, and Deerfield in particular, focus most often on violent clashes (e.g., the Mohawk raid on the Pocumtuck Fort discussed later in this chapter and the 1704 French and Indian raid on Deerfield [Demos 1994:11-39; Haefeli and Sweeney 2003; Melvoin 1989:209-275; PVMA 2004]). While cultural and social identities are challenged and asserted in overt ways during group-on-group violence, the overemphasis on violence in interpretations of seventeenth-century relationships among Native peoples and Euroamericans shifts attention away from aspects of the daily lives of Native peoples and away from Native agency. However, it is through daily practices that Native cultural and social identities were constituted. The continuities and transformations that have occurred in Native societies since the early colonial period demonstrate the deep cultural and historical roots of colonial period and contemporary Native cultures.

Dividing Material Culture and Assuming Ethnicity

The third way that archaeologists have contributed to the historical erasure of Native peoples in the middle Connecticut River Valley is in our treatment of contact
period material culture. The widespread practice of separating artifacts into piles of “prehistoric” and “historic” arbitrarily divides colonial and Native spaces and erases coexistence and co-agency (Hart 2004). Lightfoot (1995) and others (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995; Pauketat 2001; Paynter 2000a, 2000b; Rubertone 1996; Silliman 2005; Trigger 1980) have identified significant ways in which studies of Indigenous responses to European contact and colonialism are hindered by typologies and colonial perspectives of space and materiality, specifically in the separation of prehistoric and historical archaeology. The separation of “prehistoric” and “historic” archaeology is especially constraining when considering material culture in multi-ethnic contexts like contact and colonial period New England. Although terms like “prehistoric” and “historic” may have some utility in facilitating communication among archaeologists, they also function to erase Native peoples from the historical landscape, collapse diversity in material meanings, and rely on categories that impose modern ideologies on Native peoples in colonial periods and in the present (Chilton 1999a:44; see also Arnold [1999], Dobres [1999], Trigger [1980], and Wobst [1999] for further discussion of the limitation of typologies and critiques of typologies in particular archaeological contexts). Rather than relying on these arbitrary divisions, archaeologists should instead focus on how different kinds of material culture shape and are shaped by group identities.

**Relying on the Concept of “Tribe”**

Finally, a dependence on a concept of “tribe” which does not accurately reflect the political, social, or cultural identities of seventeenth-century Native people in the middle Connecticut River Valley has severely limited our ability to recognize the
presence of Native peoples and the relationships among present-day peoples and their ancestors in the New England interior. Pre-contact Native peoples in New England often do not fit modern definitions of a “tribe” or “recognizable/identifiable earlier group” (as identified in the requirements for federal recognition), concepts central to both federal recognition and repatriation processes. These definitions are closely associated with Euroamerican notions of settlement patterns and social complexity and are largely based on models that assume large, sedentary, agricultural villages and social stratification (Chilton 2002:293). There is little evidence, however, for settled village life and intensive maize horticulture in the interior of New England prior to European contact (Chilton 1999b:163). Chilton (2002:293-295) suggests that archaeological evidence supports the interpretation that Late Woodland peoples in the middle Connecticut River Valley were “mobile farmers” living at short-term seasonal encampments. Chilton (1999b:163) argues that large, semi-permanent settlements characteristic of the Late Woodland period elsewhere are lacking in the New England interior. Settlement patterns were highly dispersed and mobile to “maintain the environmental diversity and sociopolitical fluidity upon which these communities depended” (Chilton 1999b:163).

Fluidity in sociopolitical constructions, subsistence, and settlement patterns does not indicate a lack of group or tribal identity, but contemporary notions of what constitutes a “tribe” rarely leave room for alternatives to large, sedentary, agricultural villages with social stratification (Hart 2003). Some scholars like Chilton (2002:295-296) have challenged the notion that hierarchy, permanent villages, and/or intensive horticulture are necessary for social complexity and social identity. However, the
definition of a “tribe” that forms the basis of legislation linking past material culture to Native Americans today, as well as some archaeological interpretations and heritage discourses, continues to ignore the flexibility, diversity, transformations, and continuities in the subsistence, settlement, and sociopolitical systems of pre-contact New England Native peoples. This contributes to the continued historical erasure of both pre-contact and contemporary New England Native peoples and has important implications for groups pursuing federal recognition and repatriation and engaging in heritage discourses.

**Complexity in the Contact Period through Collaboration**

Since the 1990s, the study of the contact period among archaeologists has increased and archaeologists are increasingly looking at “contact” as an extended process of cultural transformation that continues to the present (Wilson and Rogers 1993). Through collaborative research with multiple stakeholders, archaeologists are increasingly adding complexity to the notion of “contact” and archaeological data and interpretations are employed to construct more nuanced narratives about the past. A treatment of the contact and early colonial past that addresses the four shortcomings outlined above combined with collaborative research with multiple stakeholders focusing on the material dimensions of the past and present can challenge, rather than contribute to historical erasures.

**Native American Forts in Seventeenth-Century New England**

Fortified locations have been one focus of historical and archaeological research on seventeenth-century Native American life in New England. Archaeological and documentary evidence indicates that Native peoples throughout New England began to
employ fortifications for settlements, places of refuge, or places of diplomacy, especially as the goals of warfare shifted and raids increased during the early decades of the century (Grumet 1995:65; for summary of early colonial references to Native forts and construction techniques see Solecki [1950, 2006]). Ceci (1980) has suggested that some forts in the coastal areas of New York and southern New England were strategically placed to serve as trade posts, and while it appears that a few may have served this function, the vast majority of Native forts appear to have functioned as defensive or refuge structures (Solecki 2006). Gaynell Stone (2006:vii-viii), editor of a volume of reports on Native forts in the Long Island Sound area, estimates 200 Native forts in New England and New York during the early colonial period, though she acknowledges that some forts may not have made it into the historical record and many have not yet been documented in the archaeological record. It is also likely that some fortified locales were conflated with others in the historical records, especially in cases where Europeans were not firsthand observers. Stone (2006:vii) argues that Native forts are “major evidence of the Native and European interface, largely brought about by the trade in furs and wampum for European trade goods instigated by the Dutch, and later, English, explorers of the New World.” While this may be the case along the coast, seventeenth-century fortified locales in the New England interior were more likely material expressions of the changing social, political, and economic circumstances, rather than related to direct contact with Europeans. Stone’s (2006) volume makes an important contribution to the literature on seventeenth-century Native forts in the Northeast in its effort to pull together the disparate sources on archaeological investigations of forts, which appear in archaeological society bulletins,
dissertations, site reports, and collector documents. The sources on forts in southern
and interior New England are equally dispersed, and so far, have not yet been compiled
into a single volume.

Native forts have played an important role in the collective public imaginings of
seventeenth-century landscapes. Taking a cue from the many New England town
histories written in the nineteenth century (e.g., Judd 1863; Sheldon 1972[1895-1896];
Temple and Sheldon 1875), one envisions palisaded forts on prominent bluffs, fields of
corn ripening in the river valleys, and clusters of wigwams gathered together in places
near streams, rivers, and cornfields. Available archaeological evidence, however, does
not unequivocally support these imaginings. In some places in New England there is
evidence for larger year-round settlements of Native communities, but in other places
archaeological evidence suggests that people pursued a “mobile farming” lifestyle
(Chilton 1999b, 2002).

Native fortifications have been of particular interest to the non-Native writers of
history, including historians, archaeologists, and Euroamerican residents, especially
because there are no pre-contact antecedents for forts in New England (McBride
1990:101). Perhaps this was because forts were a spatial form that Europeans could
identify easily since they were building walls around their own settlements to protect
against real and perceived threats from other Europeans and Native groups. Forts were
probably also more easily identifiable to the European eye than other places within
Native American homelands because they made a significant material imprint on the
landscape. This is also why fort sites have been the focus of significant archaeological
research: their material imprint, resulting from trenches and posts set in the ground, is
more substantial than that of clusters of wigwams, seasonal campsites, and fire hearths used for a season or more. Since many forts were located on promontories above rich floodplains that have been plowed and developed for centuries, their archaeological traces survive. Forts appeal to Western notions of space and place as bounded and marked, anchoring Native American life to a particular place. In the minds of non-Native people, these sites serve as markers of where Native Americans were (and were not), in stark contrast to “homelands” models that are based on Native American sensibilities and concepts of space and place as continuous (see Handsman and Richmond [1995] for a discussion of the “homelands model).

Seventeenth-century Native forts, as architectural features, were places where Native identities and communities were shaped. As warfare intensified throughout the 1600s, wooden fortresses frequently became deathtraps as attackers burned palisades and everything inside them (Grumet 1995:48). Few walled settlements, like the Pequot Fort at Mystic discussed below, exist after the mid-seventeenth century (Grumet 1995:65). However, Native people continued to construct fortified refuges when war threatened, though they chose to live in small, decentralized hamlets throughout their homelands (Grumet 1995:65).

Today, Native peoples and Euroamericans use fort sites in heritage discourses as a metaphor to talk about and shape understandings of the past and the present. Prior to European contact, forts were not part of the landscape of the homelands of Native peoples in New England, though they probably knew of them from the palisaded villages of their Iroquois neighbors. The material expression of Native forts is an early colonial phenomenon. To Native peoples in the seventeenth century, forts were likely a
significant material marker of cultural change and had meaning in terms of social, political, and economic organization and relationships with other Native communities and Euroamericans. To Euroamericans at the time, Native forts were likely a familiar and expected part of the landscape and had meaning within Euroamerican cultural understandings of social, political and economic organization and relationships. Today, Native fort sites are employed in heritage discourses in many ways by Native peoples, archaeologists and other scholars, and local residents: as markers of past landscapes, sites of the destruction or continuities of Native populations in particular areas, and as places embedded in multiple histories--documentary, oral, remembered, material, and archaeological.

**Historical Accounts**

Colonial documents indicate that in the 1630s and 1640s, Native peoples in southern and interior New England were constructing fortifications in response to inter-tribal and colonial political conflicts in the Northeast, due largely to the encroachment of colonizing Europeans and economic pressures resulting from the fur trade. A number of Native American forts in New England have been documented in historical writings and/or through archaeological investigations. Early colonial writers like William Wood (1634), John Underhill (1837[1638]), John Josselyn (1673), Daniel Gookin (1792[1674]), and John Mason (1736) provide primary source accounts of early colonial Native forts, such as the Pequot Fort at Mystic, Connecticut. Narratives describing the appearance, size, shape, location and use of these forts by Native peoples (e.g., as places of refuge or as permanent villages) help us imagine what forts that were not described in written documents--either at all or in any detail--might be like and
hypothesize what they might look like archaeologically. Property deeds also note the locations of Native forts, often identified by the ubiquitous moniker “Fort Hill.” These primary sources are likely the sources employed by the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century historians who are most often cited in accounts of seventeenth-century Native life. While these accounts have become codified in dominant public memory, they have also been shown to have significant inaccuracies and misinformation about Native life (for example, see Bruchac’s [2007:149-161] critique of George Sheldon’s [1972(1895-1896)] A History of Deerfield Massachusetts).

**Primary Source Accounts**

Physical characteristics of seventeenth-century New England Native forts recorded in colonial documents indicate that they were likely defensive structures where people lived for varying amounts of time (in some cases nearly year round, in other cases only when the threat of attack was imminent), but were also used as places where inter-group diplomacy and politics took place. They were usually rectangular or oval in shape, difficult to approach (usually surrounded by a swamp or steep slopes), palisaded, and had only one way in (Mason 1736; Underhill 1837[1638]:23; Vincent 1837[1638]; Wood 1634:84; see also McBride [1990:110]). Many of the forts described by colonial writers had living structures within the palisades, though it is not clear whether, or for how long, people lived within the fort structure. According to Daniel Neal (1720:161; see also Mason [1736:7-8, 11]), the Pequot Fort at Mystic included “Houses in the Fort being made of nothing but combustible Matts, joined close to one another...so that of 4 or 500 Indians that were in the Fort...” Another description of this fort is offered by other English observers of the time (see Johnson [1910:167] as cited in Williams
[1972:13]): “The fort...was builded of whole Trees set in the ground fast, and standing up on end about twelve foot high, bery large, having pitcht their wigwams within it, the entrance being on two sides, with intricate Meanders to enter.” Underhill (1837:78) reported the area enclosed by the palisade as about an acre. It is important to note that in addition to the wigwams within the palisade, there were dwelling structures and settlement areas outside of the fortifications as well (Williams 1972:13).

In addition to physical descriptions of what Native forts in New England looked like, several historical accounts describe the role of forts in inter-group conflicts. John Josellyn (1673:147-148) describes the role of forts in the conflicts between Mohawks and New England Algonkians:

They will march a hundred miles through thick woods and swamps to the Mowhaws Countrey, and the Mowhaws into their Countrey, meeting sometimes in the woods, or when they come into an Enemies Countrey build a rude fort with Pallizadoes, having loop-holes out of which they shoot their Arrowes, and fire their Guns, pelting at one another a week or moneth together; If any of them step out of the Fort they are in danger to be taken prisoners by the one side or the other; that side that gets the victory excoriats the hairscaup of the principal slain Enemies which they bear away in Triumph...

Similarly, Daniel Gookin (1792[1674]:22) relates the existence of New England Native forts to conflict with neighboring Mohawks:

These Maquas, as I said before, are given to rapine and spoil; and had, for several years, been in hostility with our neighbor Indians; as the Massachusetts, Pawtucketts, Pennakooks, Kennebecks, Pokomtakukes, Quabaugs, all the Nipmuck Indians, and Nashaway, or Weshakim Indians. And in truth, they were in time of war, to great a terrour to all the Indians before named, though ours were far more in number than they, that the appearance of four or five Maquas in the woods would frighten them from their habitations; and cornfields and reduce many of them to get together in forts.
The documentary evidence suggests that while Native people constructed forts in response to particular threats or political circumstances, their use of forts shifted as the political instability of the seventeenth century waxed and waned.

**Secondary Source Accounts**

Ephraus Hoyt (1824:115), an early nineteenth-century historian, relates a description of a fort constructed by the Narragansett during Metacom’s Rebellion (also know as King Philips War, 1675-1676) at South Kingston, Rhode Island:

Their best warriors had collected, and chosen a position in a large swamp, in the centre of which, on an elevation containing five or six acres, they had constructed a work of palisades, and encompassed it with a sort of hedge, or rude abattis, through which was only one principal passage into the work, and this over a long log stretching across a brook, defended by suitable flanks; and at one angle of the place, was a low gap, covered by a log four or five feet high, which might be scaled; but near this was a sort of vlock house so placed as to enfilade this weak point. The fortification in every part, presented a formidable defence against musketry; and from the nature of the surrounding swamp, the approach was difficult.

In the style of the time, it is unclear what primary sources Hoyt consulted to construct his narrative. Another nineteenth-century historian in the Connecticut River Valley, Sylvester Judd (1905:118-120), describes the forts built by Native peoples in what is today known as Hadley, Massachusetts (known variously as “Nolwotogg,” “Nonotuck,” “Norrotuck,” or “Norwottuck”). He characterizes the Norwottock forts as “generally built upon the top of a bluff or high bank, projecting into a valley or interval, near a stream” (Judd 1905:118).

In the early twentieth century, archaeologist Charles C. Willoughby (1911) hoped to spark interest and incentive for further investigation of the ditch embankment features that were purported to be related to Native fortifications located throughout Massachusetts. He offers a brief account of several trench and embankment features at
sites in Marblehead, Andover, and Millis, Massachusetts, which he believed to be related to Native fortifications and palisade remnants. He also compiled and excerpted several seventeenth-century primary source accounts of New England Native forts on Cape Cod, near Boston, and in Natick, Massachusetts, and on the banks of the Saco River in Maine. Interestingly, Willoughby (1911:575) also notes that in a few instances a trench and embankment was used without a palisade “under circumstances which probably rendered the erection of a stockade unpracticable.”

The primary and secondary sources discussed offer clues as to what seventeenth-century Native forts may have been like and demonstrate the variability in fort construction, layout, size, location, and occupation. Most, if not all, of these accounts, however, were recorded through the eyes and worldviews of Euroamericans who may not have had firsthand knowledge of the places they wrote about. Archaeological investigations of seventeenth-century forts offer alternative perspectives on colonial contexts through the material record created by the Native peoples who built, occupied, and abandoned fortified locations. Archaeological evidence reveals that the simple term “fort” encompasses an array of spatial forms, settlement patterns, and lifeways.

Archaeological Investigations in Southern and Interior New England

A handful of seventeenth-century New England Native forts have been tested by professional archaeologists, though many more have likely been surface collected by non-professionals. Examples include Fort Shantok, in Montville, Connecticut (Salwen 1966; Williams 1972; Williams et al. 1997), the Monhantic Fort at Mashantucket, Connecticut (McBride 2006); the Pequot Fort at Mystic, Connecticut (McBride 1990),
the Sokoki fort at Hinsdale, New Hampshire (Thomas 1979), and the Agawam Fort at Long Hill, Springfield, Massachusetts (Wright 1949) (see Figure 2). These examples are included in a more detailed discussion below for several reasons. Fort Shantok, the Monhantic Fort, and the Pequot Fort represent a variety of architectural styles employed in fort construction by Mohegan and Pequot peoples of southern New England who had social and political relationships with the Pocumtuck and other Connecticut River Valley Native peoples throughout the seventeenth century. Together, they represent a range of time from the early seventeenth century to the early eighteenth century. The Sokoki Fort and Agawam Fort were selected because of the cultural relationship among Pocumtuck peoples, Sokoki peoples, and the Connecticut River Valley Native people living at the Agawam Fort (some of whom may have lived at the Sokoki and/or Pocumtuck Fort), as well as their geographic and chronological proximity to the Pocumtuck Fort.

Despite the homogenizing label “fort” applied to these places, each was unique in the purpose it served for the people who constructed and utilized it. The archaeological evidence recovered from these sites demonstrates this variation. The fortifications vary, from posts set in individually dug holes, to long trenches dug for posts, to individually sharpened logs driven down into the ground (Solecki 2006:1). Some forts were circular, others rectangular and sometimes bastioned. Some show multiple events of palisade building, while archaeological remains at other sites indicate only one palisade-building event. Archaeological evidence demonstrates that the

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2 For collection of reports on Native forts of the Long Island Sound area, see edited volume by Stone (2006) and Solecki (1950, 2006).
simplified term “fort” used in colonial documents and subsequent texts encompasses a variety of physical structures and reflects different concepts of space and function.

**Fort Shantok**

Fort Shantok, the location of a fortified settlement occupied by Mohegan people and their prominent and influential leader Uncas, is located on a flat terrace above the Thames River with steep drop-offs on two sides to the river and drop-offs to Shantok Brook on the other sides (Salwen 1966; Williams et al. 1997:29). Fort Shantok was the primary Mohegan settlement from 1636 to 1682, and was later re-occupied between 1710 and 1750 (Grumet 1995:148; Solecki 2006:4; Williams et al. 1997:29).

Archaeological research conducted under the direction of Bert Salwen from 1962-1968 and 1970 documented pit features (used for storage, steaming, hearths, cooking, and refuse), cooking pits, the remains of three different palisades, postmolds, a dry laid stone foundation, and remnants of a stone wall (Salwen 1966; Williams 1972:72-77). Storage pits, which were reused as refuse pits, were lined with a layer of clean brown sand and may have been lined with matting (Williams 1972:78). One palisade (Palisade 1), consisted of a ditch in which posts were placed, while the others (Palisade 2 and 3) consisted of individually placed pointed posts (Salwen 1966:7; Williams 1972:77). Bastion-like patterns were also identified, possibly associated with Palisades 1 and 3 (Williams et al. 1997:38). Palisades 1 and 2 enclosed the entire area of the terrace, while Palisade 3 only enclosed the western half, but all served to separate the Fort Shantok peninsula from the mainland (Williams 1972:77). The earliest palisade is estimated to date to around the time Uncas began occupying the site, around 1636,
while the two later palisades are estimated to date to between 1643-1657 and 1675-1676 (Williams et al. 1997:33).

A variety of artifact types were recovered from the site, including a rich assortment of European-manufactured goods found together with Native-manufactured objects (notably Shantok-ware pottery), resulting in one of the largest such assemblages from intact deposits in New England (Salwen 1966:9; Williams et al. 1997:33). The archaeological evidence at Fort Shantok suggests that during the early period of occupation (prior to 1635), the fort was used only as a place of refuge during threats of attack, but later Mohegan people lived in the fort for much of the year (Solecki 2006:4; Williams 1972:158). Fort Shantok continues to play an important role in the social and spiritual life of Mohegan peoples and serves as a significant marker of their history and heritage (Williams et al. 1997).

**Pequot Fort at Mystic**

The Pequot Fort at Mystic is one of the best-known seventeenth-century Native forts because it was documented and illustrated in colonial records (see Figure 3), but also because of the significant violence that took place there. Written accounts describing the fort, discussed above, indicate that it consisted of a large number of circular and oblong bark or grass mat covered sapling framed wigwams (approximately 70) surrounded by circular palisade walls of timbers (Grumet 1995:140; McBride 1990:101). It is estimated that between 300 and 600 Pequot people were killed when English troops, along with Mohegan and Narragansett allies, attacked and burned the Mystic Fort during the height of the Pequot War in 1637 (Grumet 1995:140). The walls
intended to protect Pequot residents from attack served to compound the violence perpetrated against them, likely trapping many inside the burning palisade.

Deposits associated with the Mystic Fort have been documented in West Mystic, Connecticut, on the hilltop on the west side of the Mystic River called “Pequot Hill” (McBride 1990). Efforts to locate archaeological evidence of the fort were part of the broader Mashantucket Pequot Ethnohistory Project and involved oral histories, written histories, and archaeological testing (Jones and McBride 2006). Local residents reported circular embankments on the hill and the presence of charred wood, corroded bullets, and Native American artifacts visible after any plowing was done in the area (McBride 1990:99). Though McBride does not report on the specifics of the material recovered from the site, he notes that archaeological testing of the hill yielded evidence of a late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century Indian settlement that is believed to be the fort site destroyed in the Pequot War (McBride 1990:99). He states that the most important finds at the Mystic Fort site were Native manufactured pottery sherds in a style distinct from the later Shantok-ware commonly produced by Mohegan people in the latter half of the seventeenth century (McBride 1990:99). McBride (1990:101) states that the fortified village sites of the Pequot in the early half of the seventeenth century were different in form, size, and function from other tribal villages, suggesting a hierarchy of settlement types.

**Monhantic Fort at Mashantucket**

The Monhantic Fort is a Mashantucket Pequot fortified village constructed in the late seventeenth century, during Metacom’s Rebellion (King Philip’s War, 1675-1676), and likely abandoned between 1677 and 1680 (McBride 2006:323). The fort
was located on a peninsula that extends into the Great Cedar Swamp, a wetland basin that surrounds the peninsula on three sides, on what is today the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation Reservation (McBride 2006:324). The archaeological remains of the fort were located in 1991 during a survey by the University of Connecticut Field School in Archaeology and Public Archaeology Survey Team (PAST). The Monhantic Fort site contains one of the most visible and intact Native palisades in New England (McBride 2006:323). The palisade trench, reported to be visible 10-15 centimeters below the surface, was very shallow (45-60 centimeters in depth), and the lack of plowing in the area allowed for its preservation. Palisade architecture at the Monhantic Fort reflects both Native and European architectural styles (McBride 2006:325). Archaeological evidence revealed that the palisade was bastioned in a European style (perhaps reflecting the availability of firearms at the time), though its design also incorporated architectural elements, like overlapping entrances, seen in earlier Pequot palisades like the fort at Mystic discussed above (McBride 2006:325-327).

McBride (2006:329) reports that the recovery of a range of food remains, domestic artifacts and structures indicates that the palisade enclosed a village. While palisade architecture at the Monhantic Fort indicated stylistic hybridity, domestic structures (wigwams, storage pits, hearths) reflected traditional Native architecture and construction techniques (McBride 2006:325). Archaeological investigation yielded a number of domestic structures and activity areas within the palisade, as well as a range of domestic and military artifacts and features inside and outside the palisade wall. A number of stratified pit features, used for storage and reused for refuse, were recorded at the site, and a wide range of plant and animal species were recovered from feature
contexts (see McBride 2006:328-330). McBride (2006:324) reports that the evidence recovered suggests a short-term occupation: “The absence of overlapping domestic structures and features (wigwams, storage and refuse pits and hearths), a relatively thin community midden (located outside the northeast and northwest bastions) and no evidence of palisade repair or modification, all argue for a short-term occupation (2-5 years).”

**Sokoki Fort**  
The “Fort Hill” or Sokoki Fort site in Hinsdale, New Hampshire, was excavated by Peter Thomas as part of his dissertation research in the 1970s (Thomas 1979). It was the location of a Sokoki (Squakeag) fortified village occupied between the fall of 1663 and the spring of 1664 by the Sokoki community and successfully defended against an Iroquoian raid before it was abandoned (Thomas 1985:133; Thomas and Bruchac 2005:16). The fortification built by the Sokoki and intended to protect them from Mohawk raids, consisted of a log palisade held in place by a V-shaped trench and mounded with earth on the inner wall and the site was protected by steep (55-60 foot) slopes on three sides (Thomas 1979:248). Thomas (1979:250) estimates that roughly two acres of level ground lay within the palisaded settlement. In addition to archaeological evidence of a palisade, close to 100 storage and/or trash pits and possible traces of wigwam structures were recorded at this site.

Artifacts recovered from the storage/trash pits at Fort Hill include a variety of floral and faunal species like sumac, raspberry or blackberry, elderberry, deer, some species of fish, shellfish, beans, bear, turtle, birds, and other small mammals (Thomas
1979:345). Nearly 2,000 pottery sherds comprising a minimum of 43 vessel lots\(^3\) were recovered, along with an array of European-manufactured goods acquired through trade, including white clay pipes, several sherds of European-made ceramics (one of which is identified as Dutch in origin), glass and mirror fragments, firearm parts, and a variety of metal items (Thomas 1979:364-387). Additionally, 200 glass beads and a number of shell wampum beads were collected (Thomas 1979:374).

The Sokoki Fort site is probably the best professionally excavated archaeological analog for the Pocumtuck Fort because of its chronology and the close cultural relationship among the Native peoples living in these two places near the Connecticut River only twenty-five miles apart. Native people living at Pocumtuck and at the Sokoki Fort faced similar threats from the Mohawk and Europeans and shared similar environments and lifeways. Historic documents record a number of Sokoki joining people at Pocumtuck following the abandonment of the Sokoki fort, suggesting that some individuals may have lived in both places, and perhaps in both forts (Thomas 1979:252).

**Long Hill Site**

In addition to Native-constructed forts that took various physical forms and served a variety of purposes, Europeans built forts for Native peoples to occupy, likely to keep them centralized for convenient surveillance. For example, archaeological investigations of the Long Hill Site, Springfield, Massachusetts, revealed the remains of a fort built by the English in 1666 for the Agawam to occupy until they abandoned the

\(^3\) The Native-manufactured ceramics from the Fort Hill site are currently being re-analyzed by Matthew Boulanger (University of Missouri), so the minimum number of vessel lots is subject to change.
fort in 1675 to join with Native allies in King Philip’s War (Grumet 1995; Johnson and Bradley 1987:22). Harry Andrew Wright excavated this site in 1895 as one of the earliest recorded stratigraphic excavations in the Connecticut River Valley (Young 1968). Wright (1949:282) describes the excavation of the palisade at this site:

Being English built, it included modifications from the native type, acceptable, however to the Indians who realized the superior methods of the settlers and their own lack of need for the ways and means of their ancestors. The top soil was first removed, with its accumulation of leaf mold and debris. This disclosed the location of the stockade, each ten to twelve inch post being plainly shown by the discoloration of the soil. In form the stockade was nearly a half oval, with its two sides and point approximating the brow of the hill, but set back quite a bit from the edge of the bank. The location of the eastern was never determined...Deep plowing, compost making and other incidents of the industry, had at some points so changed the character of the soil as to make any search futile. It was obvious, however, that it was at about the point where was the shortest distance between the ravines at either sides.

In addition to a palisade, a number of trash pits and other features were located, along with a cemetery in which thirteen individuals were interred. Material culture recovered included projectile points of cut sheet brass, bottle glass fragments, reworked ballast flint, European clay smoking pipes, metal objects (including a three-pronged iron fish spear, two German silver spoons, scissor blades, and iron knives), and Native-manufactured ceramics, some of which incorporate European forms (Johnson and Bradley 1987:22; Young 1968). The people living at Agawam were also closely related to the people at Pocumtuck, and it is possible that some lived in both places, since some Pocumtuck likely moved down to the Springfield area from Pocumtuck after the Mohawk raid on the Pocumtuck Fort in 1665 (see Winthrop [1836:531-532], as quoted in Thomas [1979:259]).
The Pocumtuck Fort

Like the other forts discussed above, the Pocumtuck Fort is recorded in historical documents and its material traces have been investigated. The fort has long been a footnote in the multiple histories of Deerfield, Massachusetts. Despite its relative obscurity in popular historical memory beyond Deerfield, it remains important to many stakeholder groups with heritage interests in Deerfield, including historians, archaeologists, Native American communities, local residents, and heritage institutions. The existence of a “fort” created and utilized by Native people in the middle Connecticut River Valley reflects a transformation of lifeways and socio-political organization since no pre-contact precedents for fortifications exist (Keene et al. 1995; see also McBride [1990]). The placename “Pocumtuck Fort” has been deployed as a metaphor for the destruction of Native peoples in the middle Connecticut River Valley during the seventeenth century. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century historical accounts of an attack on the fort by the Mohawk in 1665 suggest that this attack “destroyed” the Pocumtuck people, in part justifying the Euroamerican settlement of the rich river valley that followed closely on the heels of the raid.

Nineteenth-century Deerfield historian George Sheldon (1972[1895-1896]:69) is most often quoted for his placement of the Pocumtuck Fort “on a bluff, about half a mile northeast of the common in Old Deerfield, which is still called Fort Hill.” Precisely how Sheldon arrived at this identification is unknown, though he likely consulted previous works like Ephraus Hoyt’s (1824) volume dedicated to colonial history and Native-European conflicts, and perhaps some primary sources.
Many recent historians, basing their works largely on the persuasive, though often inaccurate, work of Sheldon (1972 [1895-1896]), have unquestioningly reproduced two related assumptions: (1) the Pocumtuck had a fortification that was attacked and destroyed by the Mohawk in 1665; and (2) Sheldon correctly identifies the fort’s location. For example, Richard Melvoin (1989:32) describes Native forts and particularly the Pocumtuck Fort:

> While most New England Indians lived in small villages, some dwelled in more substantial settlements—in forts. These forts, described in numerous colonists’ contemporary accounts, might be fifty to one hundred feet in diameter, shaped square, round, or oblong. Often they would have “a ditch and breast-high embankment,” the latter made with stakes as a palisade. While the Pocumtucks lived in many villages down the Connecticut valley, their main fort stood just northeast of present-day Deerfield, on a rise still known today as Fort Hill.

However, until 2004, archaeological investigations in the area of Deerfield where Sheldon (1972 [1895-1896]) and others identify the fort, failed to produce any evidence for a Pocumtuck fortification or seventeenth-century Native life.

Since the late nineteenth century, locating the Pocumtuck Fort has had broad appeal to a diverse group of people with interests in the Pocumtuck/Deerfield past. This is a testament to the powerful role it played, and continues to play, in the collective memory of the peoples of Pocumtuck and Deerfield throughout millennia. As such, the Pocumtuck Fort case provides a unique opportunity to engage stakeholder communities in heritage work through an archaeological project at the nexus of historical erasure, public memory, and contemporary communities.

**Historical Accounts**

Colonial documents indicate that in the 1630s and 1640s, Native peoples in the middle Connecticut River Valley were constructing fortifications in response to inter-
tribal and colonial political conflicts in the Northeast (for example, see William Bradford [1633] as quoted in Thomas [1985:136]; William Pynchon to John Winthrop [1648] as quoted in Temple [1887:35-38]). References appear in a variety of sources: letters among politicians, diaries, property deeds, and secondary sources like town histories. There may have been several fortified places in the Pocumtuck homeland, but colonial documents are inconsistent in their references to Native forts. Thomas (1985:136) reports that William Bradford indicates that fortifications existed in the middle Connecticut River valley in 1633: “‘About a thousand of them [Indians] had inclosed themselves in a forte, which they had strong palisadoes about’.” On May 5, 1648, William Pynchon, the Massachusetts Bay Colony’s chief magistrate in Springfield, wrote to John Winthrop, Governor of the Colony, stating: “...I heare eather yesterday or this day is like to be ye day of fight between them [Connecticut River Valley Native peoples] & ye Naricanset: though these River Indians will delay their tyme till the tyme that corne begins to be ripe; but now they are making a very large & a strong fort” (Temple 1887:36). This passage suggests that this particular fort was constructed, at least in part, as a result of conflict among Connecticut River Valley Native peoples and other Native groups. It is possible that this “large and strong fort” is the same fort that is later identified as the “Pocumtuck Fort” in the correspondence of John Winthrop, Jr., Governor of Connecticut in 1657 and from 1659-1676. In a letter to Thomas Willets, dated July 27, 1664, Winthrop states:

I heare that the English of those vpper plantations vpon this river (wch are belonging to the colony of the Massachusett, and live below the lowest of those Hylanders) some of them that had any knowledge of them, and had opportunity to speake wth them did psuade them much to peace wth the Mowhoaks: and in a letter lately from Mr Pinchon (since I aquainted him wth that intelligence frõ your self) I am informed that in pticular Leiftenat Wilson of Northampton, and Mr
Clarke of Hadly (I think one of the magistrates there) did persuade the Pacôtuck Indians, to accept of the wampam, and make peace with them, and it is reported here that those two, and some others were sent purposely from the English of those upper plantations to the Pacôtuck fort to labour with them to make peace; and in your letter there is a passage, that some English of the town of Hadlye were witnesses of peace made with those Indians, I suppose those above named were some of those English witnesses: some also say there were some in Ducheme, (wch came with the Mohoaks) at that time there present, who could not but take notice of those English indeavouring that peace, as likewise ye Mohoakes themselves there present could not but see the same: wch make it cleere that the Mowhoaks have no ground, so much as any suspicion of the English, who likewise never had yet, yt I know, any cause yt should move them to mettle wth the Mowhoaks, so much as to speake a word against them, but are ready yet rather to promote their peace, if they have opportunity... (emphasis added)

In this correspondence, Winthrop informs Willets that diplomacy among the Pocumtuck, Mohawk, Dutch and English was taking place at the “Pocumtuck Fort,” following a visit from Dutch, Mohican, and Mohawk delegates in May 1664 (see also Journal of Jan Dareth and Jacob Loockermans, May 19, 1664 entry, as recorded in O’Callaghan and Fernow [1881:380-382]). This passage, and the subsequent attack on the Pocumtuck Fort by the Mohawk, about six months later, is indicative of the fragility and instability of peace and shifting tensions during the seventeenth century.

Though there are letters in the subsequent months of 1664 between Governor Winthrop, Dutch officials, and Connecticut River Valley residents referencing diplomatic meetings at the Pocumtuck Fort, no reference to the Mohawk attack on the Pocumtuck Fort, which took place in the early months of 1665, has been located yet in colonial documents. A letter from John Winthrop, Jr., to Roger Williams reports on the results of what was likely the raid on the Pocumtuck Fort. On February 6, 1665, Winthrop (1863[1665]:529) writes:
By what you mention of the commander of the Indians’ war, it appears the feud still continues, although the Mowhoaks (as I suppose you have heard) have killed the Cheife Sachem & Capt. of the Upland Indians, Onopequen, & his wife and children, after they had taken him; its said they killed him before they knew who he was; they are all fled from Pacomtuck & Squakeage & Woruntuck, & it seems some of them to your parts, but there are 2 forts of them neere Springfield. I heard from Mr. Pynchon that they would make peace if they knew how, but none of them durst goe to treat about it. I should thinke now they have revenged upon Onopequen, they might hearken to peace; which possibly if they desire it, may be by the mediation of the English, when its season of passing.

Winthrop makes no mention of the fort itself, and only discusses the deaths of

Pocomtuck leader Onapequin and his family, stating that others fled the area of the attack. Nearly two centuries later, Ephraus Hoyt (1824:78) relates an account of the attack, though it is unclear which primary sources he consulted:

For five or six years previous to this time, the Indians of Massachusetts had maintained a war with the Mohawks, a powerful nation inhabiting the river of that name, in the province of New York, and they had suffered much from their predatory incursions. In one of these, traditional accounts say, the Mohawks attacked a fort of the Pocomtucks, situated on the point of an abrupt hill, about half a mile northeast of the meeting house in Deerfield, and carried it after a sever contest, in which great numbers were slain on both sides. The eminence where the attack is said to have been made, now retains the name of fort hill; and a great variety of rude Indian implements, as well as bones, have there been found, evincing beyond a doubt, that it had long been occupied by the natives, prior to their intercourse with civilized people.

Hoyt’s account provides the basis for the more widely cited account in George Sheldon’s (1972[1895-1896]) *A History of Deerfield Massachusetts*. In addition to the geographic description of the fort’s location, this account also provides two important pieces of information. First, Hoyt states that the fort site had “long been occupied by the natives” prior to European contact. This indicates that the Pocumtuck Fort site may have multiple archaeological components (Thomas and Bruchac 2005:28). Second, Hoyt’s references to the variety of implements and human remains found at the site, and no doubt collected, demonstrates that archaeological collecting at “Fort Hill” began as
early as two hundred years ago. Though there are no known collections of artifacts from the Pocumtuck Fort site, it is possible that some of these artifacts are stored in local repositories like the Pioneer Valley Memorial Association (PVMA), Historic Deerfield, Inc., or the Springfield Science Museum, though no records exist to confirm this. Another possibility is that there are artifacts in the collections of local historical societies or private collections.

**Historical Erasures**

Despite the fact that precisely how and when the fort was attacked, what strategies were used, and the losses suffered by the Mohawk and the Pocumtuck are not known, some historians have characterized this conflict as “shattering the Pocumtucks forever” (Melvoin 1989:39; see also Coe [2006:17] who cites the raid on the Pocumtuck fort as creating a political vacuum in the middle Connecticut River Valley in the late 1660s). These assessments are largely based on the accounts of nineteenth-century historians like George Sheldon, whose cohesive, yet largely inaccurate, descriptions of historical events form the foundation of dominant historical narratives. This excerpt from a paper by George Sheldon (1968[1890]) illustrates this point:

Local tradition has preserved an account of this inroad on the Pocumtucks. The principal stronghold of the tribe was on a bluff, about half a mile northeast of the Common in Deerfield, which is still called Fort Hill. On approach of the enemy, the Pocumtucks gathered in this fort, upon which the Mohawks made a furious assault. They were repelled and driven off by the stout defenders. Their retreat was through Plain Swamp and across the North Meadows, towards Pine Hill. Here the Mohawks rallied and a hot engagement followed. The pursuers were broken and in turn driven back to their fort, which, after a bloody struggle, was stormed and taken, and its inmates all slaughtered by the enraged Mohawks.

After burning the fort, the wigwams, and laying waste to the cornfields of the Pocumtucks, the victors swept northward, and the Squakheags were soon involved in the common ruin. Turning thence to the eastward, the Pennekooks and the Abenakis felt the fury of the avengers, until blood enough had been shed
to appease the manes of the murdered ambassador [Mohawk ambassador Saheda, killed by the Pocumtuck in 1664]. So thoroughly was the work of the Mohawks done, that when, in 1665, the English from Dedham laid out the “8000 acre grant” at Pocumtuck, there was not a syllable in their report, or in the debates thereon in town meeting at Dedham, to indicate that a single wigwam or a single human being was found on this scene of desolation.

This accounting of the Mohawk raid on Pocumtuck was included in Sheldon’s speech entitled “The Pocumtuck Confederacy” and delivered to the annual meeting of the Connecticut Valley Historical Society on June 16, 1890. It has since become encoded in popular memory and historical narrative. For the last century, most people who learn about the “Pocumtuck Fort” hear some version of Sheldon’s story. The myth of the destruction of the Pocumtuck was further advocated in the twentieth century by Harris Hawthorne Wilder and Ralph Whipple (1917:383), who stated:

In 1664, after treacherously murdering two ambassadors from the Mohawk, who had come to make with them a league of lasting peace, they were attacked by the entire manhood of the offended Mohawk nation and literally wiped out. After this the Pocumtuck disappear from history, but a few wandering individuals of the tribe appear in the English records, generally in those of the court.

Wilder and Whipple (1917:384) even use this event as a way to relatively date a Pocumtuck cemetery in Greenfield, Massachusetts, that they excavated: “This definite date for the destruction of the Pocumtuck tribe allows us to date the use of this knoll as a cemetery as prior to 1664…”

In fact, research shows that many Pocumtuck people folded in with neighboring Native communities and other refugees at Puritan Indian Praying towns like Hassanamisco and Ockoagansett in Nipmuc territory to the east, some later moving to the refugee village at Schaghticoke, New York, traveling north to join Western Abenaki communities, and moving elsewhere, while maintaining a connection to their middle Connecticut River Valley homelands (Grumet 1995:55, 87, 99; Thomas and Bruchac
Pocumtuck individuals are often identified in colonial documents as participants in raids alongside French and other Native allies on settlements in their homelands (Haefeli and Sweeney 2003). Despite this, the attack on the Pocumtuck Fort has been cited as the reason that, only a few months later, English settlers displaced by John Eliot’s Indian Praying Town in Dedham, Massachusetts, secured the land around Pocumtuck. 

**Conclusion**

The assault on the Pocumtuck Fort plays an important role in the collective public memory and remembered landscape of Pocumtuck/Deerfield. It has become embedded in oral, remembered, documentary, and archaeological histories and plays a supporting role in the continuously reproduced dominant narrative of progress and civilization where the stars of the show are (white, English Protestant) Euroamericans triumphing over Indians. The colonial Deerfield narrative of progress, persistence, and courage in the face of threat from outsiders is recognized regionally and nationally as quintessentially “American,” while the dissonant and subaltern narratives of Native and other non-white/English/Protestant males have been obfuscated within and beyond the Connecticut River Valley. However, the narrative need not begin with a supposedly violent and devastating encounter between two Native communities that “emptied” the land for Euroamerican settlement. Rather, the archaeological investigation of Pocumtuck Fort and the work engaged by a diverse heritage community has the potential to open up discussion about the lives of seventeenth-century Pocumtuck peoples during a time of social, political, and economic transition, recasting dominant historical narratives and re-shaping historical memory. Here, the heritage work of
archaeology--informed and shaped by communities--can address and redress historical erasures.

This chapter provided the historical and archaeological context for the Pocumtuck Fort site and discussed the complicity of archaeologists and other history-writers in the historical erasure of New England Native peoples. I situated the Pocumtuck Fort as both a site of historical erasures in Pocumtuck/Deerfield and as a place that captures the interest of a heritage community comprised of diverse stakeholders. As such, it is an ideal case for a community-based approach aimed at challenging historical erasures and engaging multiple stakeholders in heritage work. In the next chapter, I explore the “stakeholder” concept and advocate the approach I call “poly-communal archaeology” to the heritage work of the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project.
CHAPTER 3

STAKEHOLDERS, COMMUNITY-BASED ARCHAEOLOGY, AND POLY-COMMUNAL ALTERNATIVES

The claim for a past is sometimes contentious. Different group agendas will often clash over claiming a role in the official public memory, causing the established collective memories to be continuously in flux...The tension between and within groups who struggle for control over the collective public memory is often situational and ongoing since the political stakes are high. (Shackel 2004:13-14)

Introduction

To begin this chapter, I return to a central question in posed in Chapter 1: How, and by whom, are determinations made regarding what is valued about the past? As discussed in Chapter 1, the process of defining heritage is fraught with the inequalities of social and political power concomitant with colonialism. As a result, disenfranchised and marginalized groups worldwide have been given little say in heritage matters until recently. However, as archaeologist Paul Shackel (2004) notes above, heritage work—that is, activities related to mobilizing the past in the present—is a high stakes venture for diverse individuals and communities. Heritage communities consist of a range of individual and collective stakeholders, such as descendants, geographically local people, researchers, and heritage institutions (among many others), with varying interests in how the past is mobilized, remembered, and engaged in the present. Though individual and community “stakes” in heritage are partial, overlapping, and emerging, I offer these simple examples of potential “stakes” to illustrate this point: the stakes might be largely political and economic for a descendant community seeking the benefits of governmental recognition, economic and social for a local community in need of a reliable industry and seeking to define town character, or social and economic
for a scholar who depends on heritage work for employment and promotion.

Recognizing stakes and interests further demonstrates that interpretations and uses of the past are not neutral, objective, or separable from contemporary contexts.

A “poly-communal,” or multi-stakeholder model recognizes the diverse interests of individuals and communities. It is an approach to heritage work that is inclusive and restructures power relationships among the stakeholders that comprise heritage communities. A multi-stakeholder model is optimal for addressing the challenges of decolonizing archaeology and engaging in heritage work with diverse communities for three primary reasons. First, a multiple stakeholder model expands decolonizing efforts beyond archaeologists and descendant communities by including individuals, communities and institutions that contribute to, structure, reproduce, and benefit from dominant histories in heritage discourses. Second, heritage and stewardship-planning groups that include multiple communities improve the long-term viability and relevance of collective heritage work. Third, heritage work that actively engages multiple stakeholders in the collective process of evaluating multiple truth claims and assessing validity demonstrates to all participants that there are different ways of knowing and mobilizing the past. Heritage work that invites all potential stakeholders to participate in heritage communities and to engage in discourses about multiple pasts--dominant and dissonant heritage narratives--has the potential to harness the knowledge, power, and resources that these stakeholders can contribute.

In the remainder of this chapter I explore the stakeholder concept as it relates to archaeology in global and local contexts and situate archaeologists in the stakeholder milieu. I begin by tracing the development of the “stakeholder” concept and its
application in a variety of disciplines, heritage-related and otherwise. Next, I present a history of community-based archaeology and brief consideration of examples of community-based projects. Then I discuss what I see as three significant limitations of community-based practice. I conclude by offering an alternative approach I call “poly-communal archaeology” which I apply to the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project, discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

**The Origin of the Stakeholder Concept**

The popularity of the “stakeholder” concept and public usage of the term was already on the rise when *New York Times* Language columnist and author William Safire investigated its origins in 1996. Safire reports that the earliest widespread usage of the term dates back to the nineteenth century, when land in the American west was made available to those who would work and live on it. A “stake” became a section of land marked off by stakes and claimed by the farmer—the “stakeholder” (Safire 1996). However, the word itself has deeper antiquity. Safire (1996) notes that it was first recorded in 1708 as “a person who holds the stake or stakes in a bet.”

A new meaning of stakeholder has been recently employed in a variety of contexts. Its usage is often similar to a “shareholder” in the corporate sense, but with an expanded social and political dimension. The term appears in corporate managerial guides and strategy textbooks dating back to the 1960s and 1970s, where stakeholders are identified as “persons and groups having a direct stake in our organization: the owners, employees...customers, suppliers, financiers, managers, the area in which the organization is established, etc.” (quoted in Safire 1996). R. Edward Freeman, philosopher and professor of business administration at the University of Virginia, is
credited with developing stakeholder theory in corporate business modeling and ethics in the 1980s (Freeman 1984, Freeman et al. 2007). Freeman (1984:vi) defines a stakeholder as “any group or individual who can affect, or is affected by, the achievement of a corporation’s purpose.” Freeman’s stakeholder theory argues that there are other parties, including governmental bodies, political groups, trade associations, trade unions, communities, associated corporations, prospective employees, prospective customers, and the public at large, that have interests in and are affected by corporate endeavors (Freeman 1984). This theory is limited in its broad applicability, however, by Freeman’s central assumption that stakeholder relationships can be “managed” by those within the corporation. This assumption is difficult (and perhaps undesirable) to transfer to other fields and projects where goals include decentralizing and sharing the power to control the direction of the project, and projects where stakeholders wield substantially more social and political power outside of the project context (Ramirez 1999:102).

William Safire investigated the word “stakeholder” because it was being used frequently in the mid 1990s by British Prime Minister Tony Blair and United States Secretary of Labor Robert Reich in a way that suggested that corporations have social responsibilities beyond those of making profits for owners. Since then, the term “stakeholder” has become common in the language and practice of a variety of disciplines and fields, ranging from business management, international relations, education, policy development, participatory research, ecology, and natural resource management (Cox and Allen 2008; Crow 2008; Freeman et al. 2007; Gurung and Scholz 2008; Hajkowicz 2008; Kelling 2008; Oketch 2009; Prager and Freese 2009;
Ramirez 1999; Reed 2008; Tembe and Norton 2008; Thabrew et al. 2009). In many of these contexts, however, it is employed rather loosely and without theoretical grounding or a specific indication of the context, despite the fact that it is precisely social contexts that define stakeholders and their interests. In large part, “stakeholder” has become a buzzword devoid of substantive meaning, a stand-in for real people with real perspectives, concerns, and contexts, rather than serving as a meaningful part of projects, efforts, movements, and organizations. For projects engaging people outside of corporate structures, such as natural resource management, mediation of cultural violence, or heritage work, sensitivity to power dynamics is of utmost importance. The concept of “stakeholder” must be context-specific and theoretically grounded.

Archaeological Stakeholders in Global and Local Contexts

Who Are Archaeological Stakeholders?

Archaeological stakeholders vary from site to site, and are particular to the individual circumstances and contexts, both past and present. In the context of archaeology, Larry Zimmerman (2006:40) offers a definition of “stakeholder” as:

"an individual or group with an interest or ‘stake’ in some aspect of the archaeological record…Each stakeholder has resources to be committed to the context and what negotiators call salience, the level of commitment the stakeholder has in pursuing the issue over other issues…thus, the archaeological record can have multiple stakeholders, all of them contending for archaeological property, whether for artifacts or for control of the very nature of the past and how stories about it get told. To the contest they bring varied resources and salience that range from low levels, at which they do little more than announce that they are stakeholders, to intense contention that might include strong rhetoric, legal action, or even violence."

To summarize, a stakeholder is an individual or collective that has interests in and is affected by archaeology and social contexts define stakeholders and their interests. This definition is sufficiently broad, allowing for the multiple contexts in which
archaeological research and heritage work takes place. At the site or project level, the
definition of a stakeholder may shift as interests or stakes are defined more narrowly.

Stakeholders can self-identify as having an interest (usually the most powerful
and visible), or other stakeholders can identify them. Stakeholders have differing
degrees and kinds of power relative to one another, different spheres of influence, and
belong to a variety of social, political and economic networks and coalitions. They can
have varying levels of interest or participation in a project. In archaeological research,
stakeholder participation may not only be dictated by their level of interest, or the
perceived “stake” they have in the given project, but may be the result of timing,
resource availability, and other more pressing problems that exist in their communities.

In Zimmerman’s (2006:40) consideration, the center of gravity for
archaeological scholarship resides with stakeholders, and not just with archaeologists,
who are, of course, stakeholders too. This may seem idealized and unattainable,
especially given many of the political, legal, social, and economic constraints of the
contemporary contexts in which heritage work takes place. However, this as a crucial
part of the process of redistributing and decentralizing power in heritage matters.
Although existing structures (e.g., laws, employment responsibilities, funding) may
intervene to make the process of shifting control to stakeholders challenging and
complicated, it is an ideal worth working towards, while also working to change the
constraining structures and mechanisms themselves.

Who are archaeological stakeholders? What does it mean to have a stake in
archaeological research? These questions get at the relationships among people, and
with respect to research problems, questions, and projects. In archaeology, the
“problems” or “projects” usually refer to something in the past, whether “big picture” questions like those of origins, identities, and historical erasures posed in Chapter 1, or more narrow questions of resource management and site stewardship. Paul Shackel (2004) points out that there are diverse ethnic and social communities that want to participate in the making, promoting, or experiencing of their own heritage, including descendant communities, especially Indigenous peoples, and non-descendant local communities. These stakeholders comprise what I refer to as “heritage communities,” as discussed at the outset of this chapter and Chapter 1.

The question of “who is a stakeholder?” ultimately refers to the relationship both between the stakeholder and the heritage work and between the stakeholder and the “convener” (Ramirez 1999:104). The convener is the person or organization with the power, legitimacy or resources to convene others and who defines the reason or theme around which stakeholders gather (Ramirez 1999:104). In most archaeological contexts, the convener is an archaeologist, though in other heritage contexts it can also be a bureaucracy or institution, like a state government or historical commission, a community, such as a group of local residents or a descendant community, or other convening party, such as a non-profit heritage management organization. The question of power is an important one. Ramirez (1999:104), discussing stakeholder analysis and conflict mediation in natural resource management, points out that in non-corporate contexts, the use of power to convene and select stakeholders may not be agreeable to all, and there are significant challenges to agreeing on a “problem domain, that is, a problem conceptualized by the stakeholders.” This is germane to the realms of archaeology and heritage work, where the terrain shared by those with identifiable
“stakes” is ever-shifting, power is distributed unevenly, and power is often conceptualized differently in different cultural and social contexts.

Archaeologist Yvonne Marshall (2002:216) conceptualizes stakeholders (which she refers to as a “community”) in two ways. First, local people who are geographically close to a site, but likely temporally and culturally remote, often have a stake in archaeological research. These interests are as varied as the people that comprise the community and may stem from the perceived positive or negative effects of archaeological research on their property or the place they live, a sense of connection to the place they live and a desire to cultivate a deeper understanding of its past, or a stewardship and preservation ethic. In the United States, property owners have a stake in archaeological sites on their property, and may see archaeological research as enhancing the value of their property or devaluing their property and threatening their ownership rights. Much depends on the particular context of the archaeological research, as well as the other stakeholders involved.

The second kind of stakeholder community Marshall (2002:216) identifies consists of descendants, those who can or choose to trace descent from the people who once lived at or near the site. These communities are defined by their relationships to place and people in the past. While some descendant communities may live in the vicinity of archaeological sites related to their pasts, many do not. Non-local descendant communities are geographically remote from the site, but can trace a temporal and cultural relationship to the place.

In practice, there is much overlap in these two “kinds” of stakeholders, and individual members of stakeholder communities do not fit neatly into either category,
often crosscutting categories with multiple affiliations and interests. Additionally, in many cases there are stakeholders that are neither geographically local, nor culturally related. These include government agencies, which require and pay for a large portion of the cultural resource and heritage management projects in the United States, project managers who oversee these projects, and museums and other educational institutions that may have concerns about the curation of archaeological materials and the interpretation of the past as part of their teaching, research, and outreach missions. Zimmerman (2006:41) notes that even antiquities dealers, collectors, and looters are stakeholders in some cases, as some make their living directly from the acquisition and sales of antiquities, and others derive personal satisfaction and cultural capital from acquiring artifacts.

In seeking collaborative relationships, archaeologists ask stakeholders to respond and demonstrate interest and a commitment to heritage work. However, many communities, particularly Indigenous communities, are often overwhelmed with meeting the immediate needs of their community--health care, employment, land claims, federal recognition--things that take precedence over archaeological sites or other heritage matters (Nicholas 2004:31). While community-based projects may be an archaeologist’s primary focus for several years, the individuals and communities that archaeologists work with and for have other commitments. Archaeologists usually seek out those willing to work with them and rarely address those who are unwilling. When we propose to do “community-based” archaeology, we must be sensitive to those in the community that contest or are ambivalent about or oppose our engagement in heritage work and consider how our efforts impact them.
Stakeholders are diverse and individual stakeholders are often members of multiple stakeholder communities. Ramirez (1999:109) points out that there is a need to understand “how stakeholders interrelate, what multiple ‘hats’ they wear and what other groups they belong to.” This is a serious challenge to archaeological endeavors that seek to engage with multiple communities. As Zimmerman (2006:41) argues, “…the stakeholders to the past can be many and varied in agenda, resources, and salience, attributes that must be considered when archaeologists interact with them.”

**Archaeologists in the Stakeholder Milieu**

Of course, archaeologists themselves are stakeholders in archaeological research, and may crosscut many of the distinctions noted above. Archaeologists may be affiliated with an institution, government agency, or descendant community, and may be a local resident or have a cultural relationship with a particular site. Additionally, archaeologists often serve as conveners or organizers since we have much to gain, or lose--personally and professionally--through archaeological research. It is crucial for archaeologists to examine the many roles, or “hats” we wear, and to interrogate and acknowledge the ways that we interfere in communities, identities, and politics. With the shift towards community-based and collaborative projects, archaeologists and descendant/non-descendant local communities alike acknowledge that the roles of archaeologists are being transformed. Many archaeologists have traded in an expert/scientist “hat” for several others that we wear simultaneously. In my view, these new “hats” fall into three major categories: (1) organizer/convener, (2) stakeholder, and (3) advocate/activist.
Archaeologist as Organizer

One of the new roles that archaeologists occupy is that of organizer, facilitator, and mediator. Because heritage communities crystallize around heritage work like archaeology, archaeologists are often put in (or choose) the role of organizer or convener. In many cases, there are multiple stakeholder groups with interests in archaeological projects, requiring that the archaeologist communicate clearly with and facilitate discussions among the different stakeholders that comprise the heritage community. While archaeologists often have experience organizing complicated archaeological projects, such as field schools (for example, see Chilton [2008] and Silliman [2008]) or cultural resource management surveys, the complexities of cross-cultural organizing requires that archaeologists develop new skills. The most common way that archaeologists develop these skills is not through training or coursework, but through experience working with stakeholder communities (for example, see Chilton and Hart [2009] and Silliman [2008]).

Archaeologist as Stakeholder

Another role that archaeologists occupy today, that often goes unacknowledged when we wear our “organizer” hat, is that of stakeholder. While it is becoming more common to acknowledge and engage the multiple stakeholders in archaeological projects, we sometimes forget that we are ourselves stakeholders in projects for reasons including funding issues, research expectations, cultural resource management contracts, teaching requirements, employment, and professional and ethical values. It is important to acknowledge that projects allow us to pursue our research interests, advance our careers and degrees, and further our social and political agendas, even when they are collaborative.
Archaeologist as Activist

Finally, archaeologists sometimes wear an “advocate” or “activist” hat as well (e.g., Wood 2002). Some archaeologists, myself included, see archaeology as an instrument of social change and choose to use their research to advocate for descendant communities, challenge conventional wisdom about the past, and advance social justice (for example, see McGuire 2008). The activist archaeologist brings research designs and findings to bear on current issues (Gibb 2000). While it can be an effective tool for promoting social justice, advocacy through community-based archaeology can also be risky. Activism requires leadership ability, communication skills, and, a fair amount of courage (Gibb 2000). Activists lay their reputations on the line, and opponents may call the archaeologist’s objectivity and integrity into question. In some instances, an archaeologist’s activist interests may conflict with the interests of other stakeholders and undermine their role as organizer or convener. This can have serious unintended consequences for community-based projects, and archaeologists and communities alike.

Community-Based Archaeology

Emergence as Practice

Archaeologists have long been aware of the multiple stakeholders in archaeological research, but only recently have they sought to engage with stakeholders in heritage work in a meaningful way that shifts some power to stakeholder communities. One expression of the increased sensitivity to stakeholders in archaeology has been the development of community-based archaeology. The approach, first developed in the 1990s, sought to make archaeology relevant to people today (Marshall 2002) and coincided with an increased sensitivity to professional ethics, an expansion of feminist and post-processual critiques of mainstream archaeological
practice, the development of critical anthropology, and the exploration of post-colonial theory within anthropology and archaeology. Community engagement dealt specifically with the call to make the past relevant to the present, a central goal of critically informed anthropology (Orser 2001). It also responded to critiques of post-processual archaeology, which many argued dealt with the politics of archaeology too abstractly and ignored actual social relations and the structures and institutions that typify them (L. Smith 1994). Community-based approaches find many synergies with these perspectives.

In recent decades, descendant communities, especially Indigenous peoples, and non-descendant local communities have called for greater input into archaeological research and are increasingly asserting their rights to manage and represent their pasts and presents. The impetus for much of this movement comes out of a frustration with “being studied” and a system in which academics benefit from their relationships with communities, but provide little that benefits communities (Robinson 1996:126). Many communities, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, along with an increasing number of archaeologists, commonly acknowledge that the quality of their lives has not substantively changed as a result of the advance of “scientific research” in archaeology (Robinson 1996:128). As a result, they are causing changes in archaeological practice. While professional ethical codes (e.g. American Anthropological Association, Society for American Archaeology, World Archaeological Congress) and legislation (e.g., Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) have opened formal channels of communication among archaeologists and communities (in particular, descendant communities), some
archaeologists have chosen to go beyond baseline consultation requirements and are participating in archaeological projects designed for, by, and with communities (Smith and Wobst 2005:7).^4^ Many community-based partnerships have been established and are on-going among descendant/non-descendant local communities and individual archaeologists. The number of recent volumes dedicated to community-based archaeology and collaborative research attests to the credibility and exposure that approaches seeking to work directly with communities and relinquish at least partial control of a project to communities are beginning to receive around the world (for example, see Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson [2008]; Derry and Malloy [2003]; Kerber [2006]; Little and Shackel [2007]; Merriman [2004]; Nicholas and Andrews [1997]; Shackel and Chambers [2004]; Silliman [2008]; Swidler et al. [1997]; World Archaeology [34(2)]). The impacts of these projects are just beginning to be felt.

While community-based approaches are not a panacea remedying all of the damage done to many stakeholder communities by the failure to recognize that some of the ways that archaeologists interpret, research, and write about people in the past

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^4^ See Zimmerman (2006) for a brief history of the emergence of stakeholder approaches in archaeology. He traces their origins back to efforts to promote ethnohistory in the 1950s with the acknowledgment that “stakeholders do know something about their own pasts, and in that sense show respect for the knowledge stakeholders possess” (Zimmerman 2006:45). Zimmerman follows the development of these approaches through to repatriation and reburial issues in the 1980s and the passage of legislation like the National Museum of the American Indian Act (1989) and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990) in the United States, and ties it to controversies over control and treatment of Indigenous human remains and cultural heritage in Australia and Canada. Zimmerman also offers a useful summary of the changes made to the ethical codes of several major professional organizations, including the Society of American Archaeology and World Archaeological Congress as a result of increasing sensitivity to stakeholders.
makes them invisible in the present, practitioners and communities alike have forged some fruitful new collaborations and research directions with these approaches. New methodologies developing in recent years have begun to challenge historical erasures and change “on the ground” archaeology.

Key Aspects and Examples

Although there is no unified theoretical perspective that underpins community-based archaeology, there are several keys aspects to these approaches (Clarke 2002:251-252; Shackel 2004:2-3; Malloy 2003:xii). Yvonne Marshall (2002:212), archaeologist and editor of an issue of World Archaeology (34[2]) dedicated to the topic of community archaeology, identifies at least partial community control of every step of a project as a critical aspect of community-based approaches. This is what sets community-based archaeology apart from other methodological approaches, as it informs every dimension of archaeological practice (from research design, to excavation techniques, to curation processes, to interpretation and reporting). It fundamentally changes the terms on which archaeologists and communities relate and is expressed in three ways (Marshall 2002:215). First, research is a negotiated process and the boundaries and components of a project are open to reassessment and renegotiation by any of the parties involved. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999:127) states, “what community research relies upon and validates is that the community itself makes its own definitions.” Second, the collaborative relationship subverts traditional power relations because archaeologists are no longer the primary power brokers, but rather serve as conveners, diplomats, middlemen, or facilitators (Kelly 2003:vii). Third,
research results are distilled and returned to participating communities in intelligible and culturally appropriate ways negotiated among the stakeholders.

These aspects of community-based approaches require that archaeologists act as more than just “diggers,” “researchers,” and “scientists.” The humanity of all stakeholders, including archaeologists, emerges in a way that has long been denied in scientific endeavors. Respect, humility, flexibility, open communication, and trust relationships are central to community-based approaches. “Community archaeology can be extremely time consuming, deeply frustrating, humbling and challenging in unanticipated ways--but it is also rewarding in ways that transcend narrow academic accolades” (Marshall 2002:218).

How does community-based archaeology represent a change in mainstream archaeological practice? Community-based archaeology is unique because projects shape and are shaped by particular social, political, and historical contexts and require constant cross-cultural engagement and dialogue. In many ways, it parallels the Indigenous archaeology movement (see Atalay 2006a, 2006b, 2008; Silliman 2008; Smith and Wobst 2005; Watkins 2000, 2003), but it casts a wider net to include both descendant and non-descendant local stewardship communities in the archaeological discourse. Community-based archaeology attempts to move beyond consultation by including community members in the decision-making process about research topics, sites, data analysis, curation, and the production of culturally appropriate and relevant materials (Clarke 2002:251). It empowers stakeholders to participate in heritage work by using archaeology as a focal point for a heritage discourse (Kelly 2003:vii).
Examples of community-based approaches span the globe. The largest numbers of published examples are from Australia and New Zealand, where it is explicitly articulated as a set of specific practices within the discipline of archaeology (Marshall 2002:212; for example, see Birt [2004]; Clarke [2002]; Colley [2003]; Smith and Jackson [2006]). The approach is increasingly taking hold in North America, where early examples of community engagement can be found in archaeological projects in the 1970s and 1980s undertaken in partnership with Native communities, such as the Ozette Archaeological Project with the Makah Indian Nation in Washington (see Samuels and Daugherty [1991], as discussed in Marshall [2002:212]) and Janet Spector’s (1991, 1993) work at Little Rapids with the Wahpeton people. As Marshall points out, many community-based projects have been commonly located within cultural resource management contexts, rather than academic research, and have been overlooked (e.g., Roger Anyon and T.J. Ferguson’s collaborative project with the Zuni; see Anyon and Ferguson [1995]).

The New York African Burial Ground (NYABG) project was an early and prominent example of a project that developed a community-based approach in a cultural resource management context in response to the demands of descendant and local communities (Blakey 1998, 2008; Blakey and Rankin-Hill 2004; LaRoche and Blakey 1997; Epperson 1997). Significant controversy erupted over the original research design when the eighteenth-century burial ground, the earliest and largest known of its kind, was rediscovered in 1989 in preparation for the construction of a federal office building. Many in the New York African-American community criticized the research design and project directors for a lack of sensitivity to the human remains
disturbed and what could be learned. Thereafter, a research team was assembled at Howard University and a new research design was developed to mesh “the most contemporary scientific approaches and African-American intellectual traditions” (LaRoche and Blakey 1997:87). The new research design was developed in consultation with representatives of both descendant and anthropological communities and the project’s new leadership acknowledged and respected the right of the descendant community to accept, modify, or reject the research design (LaRoche and Blakey 1997:87). One of the theoretical principles that guided the NYABG research program was:

a respect for pluralism and the ethics of working with groups of people who historiography puts at risk of social and psychological harm...by drawing upon broader societal ideas and interests, public engagement affords opportunities for advancing knowledge and its societal significance. The democratization of knowledge involved here is not predicated on the inclusion of random voices, but on democratic pluralism that allows for a critical mass of ideas and interests to be developed for a bioarchaeological site or other research project, based on the ethical rights of descendant or culturally affiliated communities to determine their own well-being. (Blakey 2008:18)

The dialogue initiated by community discontent and continued through community engagement surrounding the excavations and analysis resulted in a project that “brought scholars, academicians, researchers, cultural resource managers, politicians, religious leaders, community activists, school children, and the general public together in a complex and often contentious philosophical and ideological relationship” (LaRoche and Blakey 1997:84). The project confronted the historical erasure of enslaved Africans from the New York City landscape, acknowledged the presence and contribution of colonial Africans’ “to the building of the city and the nation,” and
countered popular denials of racism and northern slavery with concrete archaeological and historical evidence (LaRoche and Blakey 1997:90; see also Blakey [2008:19-20]).

Projects like the New York African Burial Ground are fundamentally changing the practice of archaeology across North America and in global contexts. Recently, a number of volumes and articles discussing community-based archaeological research in North America (for example, see Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson [2008]; Derry and Malloy [2003]; Kerber [2006]; Little and Shackel [2007]; Million [2005]; Nicholas and Andrews [1997]; Shackel and Chambers [2004]; Silliman [2008]; Swidler et al. [1997]) and globally (for example, see Delle [2003]; Green et al. [2003]; Greer et al. [2002]; Magos [2004]; Merriman [2004]; Moser et al. [2002]; Raharijaona [1989]; Sen [2002]; Thorley [2002]) have been published. Signs of this shift are evident, too, in New England, a region where there are many stakeholders with varying interests and claims to the past and varying amounts of political and social power in the present. The recently published volume Cross-Cultural Collaboration: Native Peoples and Archaeology in the Northeastern United States, edited by Jordan Kerber (2006), highlights many of the collaborations between regional archaeologists and Native communities surrounding repatriation, regulatory compliance, research and education.

**Three Limitations**

There is no doubt that, as Marshall (2002:218) concludes, community-based practice encourages archaeologists to address questions they otherwise would not, to see archaeological remains in a new light, and to think in new ways about how the past informs the present. However, there are also significant limitations and pitfalls embedded in the practice of many community-based projects that can limit their
efficacy in challenging historical erasures, promoting social justice, and decolonizing archaeology. Here, I outline three, which I characterize as: (1) the Single Stakeholder Approach; (2) the Archaeologist as CEO Model; and (3) the Marginalizing Multivocal Model.

**The Single Stakeholder Approach**

As previously discussed, in most contexts there are multiple individuals and communities with stakes in archaeological projects. While community-based approaches to archaeology are becoming more common, they are usually structured as a one-to-one working relationship and partnership, meaning one archaeologist, or group of archaeologists, and one community. Yet in many cases there are multiple stakeholder groups with interests in archaeological projects (Singleton and Orser 2003). Too often, archaeologists only see descendant communities as possible stakeholders, and while the acknowledgement of descendant communities as stakeholders is ethically sound, limiting engagement to descendant communities can be risky or undermine broader project goals. Archaeologists have long been too narrow in outreach efforts and have failed to recognize other “affected” or “interested” groups, like local residents and avocational archaeologists. This can be problematic and put long-term heritage work and stewardship plans in jeopardy, particularly in cases where archaeological sites are on private land and/or in areas with no resident descendant community. In many cases, these are precisely the same places where historical erasures of descendant communities have deep roots. Under these circumstances, community-based approaches must engage multiple communities, comprised of multiple stakeholders--local and diasporic--to define goals and take action for archaeological investigation, interpretation,
stewardship, and preservation. Projects that focus on a single stakeholder community (descendant or otherwise) risk encountering problems and roadblocks from other unacknowledged or unengaged groups and may undermine broader project goals in the realm of social justice and social change. Heritage work that invites all potential stakeholders to participate in heritage communities and to engage in discourses about multiple pasts--dominant and dissonant heritage narratives--has the potential to harness the knowledge, power, and resources that these stakeholders can contribute.

**The Archaeologist as CEO Model**

Many projects take a “corporate” model of organization where the archaeologist is the convener and decision-maker who mediates among stakeholders throughout the project. Rather than redistributing power among stakeholder participants, and shifting power from the archaeologist to the community of stakeholders, “corporate” projects maintain a top-down hierarchy where the archaeologist’s power and position of prestige is protected and re-affirmed through the project’s organizational framework. In this model, stakeholders do not have the opportunity (nor incentive) to “see” each other’s interests, making it difficult and unlikely for compromise to occur, and making it difficult to challenge the invisibility of some stakeholders (especially those with little social, political, or economic power) in the present.

**The Marginalizing Multivocal Model**

While the inclusion of multiple stakeholders is desirable, the “multivocal” model in which all stakeholders have an equal voice is also problematic, especially when there are differing social, political, or economic stakes for those involved. This resonates with one of the central weaknesses of post-processual theory, which promoted
the inclusion of multiple “voices” without considering how archaeological discourses are used in venues outside the academy (L. Smith 1994). Archaeologist and Indigenous scholar Sonya Atalay (2008:36-37) focuses the question for us:

Is it enough for Indigenous people to have a seat at the multivocal table if all voices are considered equally valid and there is no concern for evaluating which interpretations are the strongest, supported by evidence, and appropriately fit the data? If we rely on multivocality to mean that all voices are equally valid, then doesn’t multivocality, in some ways, constitute a loss of power for Indigenous (and other “marginal”) groups, who no longer have any claim to truth or greater legitimacy?

She asks whether democratizing heritage discourses by treating the truth claims of all participants as equally valid is harmful to already marginalized groups. It is useful here to make a distinction between “truth” and “validity,” following Zimmerman (2006:47-48). Validity is authority based on arguments, proofs, and assertions, or something that is well founded, whereas, truth is based on belief and is absolute (Zimmerman 2006:48). While archaeologists are trained to seek and make claims of validity, most stakeholders seek and claim truth (Zimmerman 2006:48). Multivocal approaches can do significant harm to stakeholders by marginalizing already disenfranchised voices by claiming that their truth claims are “equal” with those put forth by dominant voices. Multivocal models can, contrary to their intent, reaffirm and re-inscribe hegemony and reproduce dominant power structures. However, heritage discourses can also actively engage stakeholders in the collective process of evaluating multiple truth claims and assessing validity, demonstrating to participants that there are different ways of knowing and mobilizing the past in the present.
Paying Attention to Power

The essential limitation of community-based projects that fall into these three categories is that power—how it is organized and structured, how it is distributed, and how and by whom it is deployed—is neither problematized nor negotiated. As Atalay (2008:38) notes, “the replacement of one power structure with another without changing the way power is perceived and enacted is pointless.” Challenging historical erasures and dominant narratives, promoting social justice, and decolonizing archaeology are fundamentally about deconstructing and creating alternatives to dominant power structures. To affect these broader goals, power must be negotiated and constantly re-negotiated in community-based projects.

This is not to say that alternatives to community-based projects outlined in the three modes above do not exist. A prominent example is the “clientage model” discussed by bioarchaeologist Michael Blakey (2008; see also Blakey and Rankin-Hill [2004]) and employed by the New York African Burial Ground (NYABG) project. Blakey (2008:21) describes two kinds of “clients” in the NYABG project: (1) the ethical client (here, the descendant community most affected by the research); and (2) the business client (in this instance, the General Services Administration who funded the research). The project researchers sought to avoid the pitfalls of the Marginalizing Multivocal Model by clearly articulating a process for the “democratization of knowledge”: engaging community members, but avoiding disenfranchising the contributions of descendants as just one of many voices. Blakey (2008:21) is explicit that “while both clients have rights that should be protected, the ethical requirements of the field [anthropology and bioarchaeology] privilege the voices of descendants.”
Engagement with multiple stakeholders (or “clients” in services-oriented parlance) and critical attention to the distribution and use of power among participants throughout the research project (especially empowering the descendant community) attests to the project’s commitment to finding syntheses between scientific scholarship and community interests through public engagement (Blakey 2008:22). However, the dual (ethical and business) clientage model may not be appropriate or transferable to other contexts where there is not a clear and singular “ethical client” and where multiple stakeholders exist--ethical, business, and otherwise--especially in projects occurring outside of a cultural resource management framework. For example, public historian David Glassberg (2001:148-157) describes heritage work aimed at defining town character in an urban neighborhood in Springfield, Massachusetts, where there are African American, Latino, and Euroamerican resident constituencies. Participants in the heritage discourse from these ethnic communities related different conceptions of place and history in the McKnight district of Springfield, as did older and younger residents across these groups. Is there a single ethical client in this case? Multiple ethical clients? This ambiguity leads me to conclude that the fundamental weakness of the dual clientage model is that it fails to leave room for other stakeholders (e.g., non-descendant local communities, diasporic descendant communities, landowners) who can contribute to discourses about how people value and mobilize the past in the present.

**Poly-Communal Archaeology**

**Defining Poly-Communal Archaeology**

To avoid the limitations of the Single Stakeholder Approach, the Archaeologist as CEO Model, and the Marginalizing Multivocal Model, I propose an approach to
heritage work that engages multiple communities, which I refer to here as “poly-communal archaeology.” What I mean is an archaeology that engages multiple stakeholders who have different levels of interest, commitment, and resources to contribute to the project throughout the entire research process. A central component of this approach is acknowledging that communities are not static, easily defined entities (e.g., not only descendant or non-descendant, business or ethical), but rather fluid, shifting, and changing over time (even over the course of a project). Additionally, individuals may be members of multiple communities, and sensitivity to these “nested identities” and how they impact relationships and inform decisions is crucial (Tuhiwai Smith 1999:126). For instance, an avocational archaeologist may also be a local resident and property owner and member of a town planning board, making her a member of multiple stakeholder communities with varying interests in archaeological projects. Similarly, a member of a descendant community may represent multiple descendant communities and may have social, political, and economic ties to archaeologists and institutions. Poly-communal archaeology is inherently public archaeology, but instead of aiming to serve a broadly defined (or undefined), unembodied “public” audience, it acknowledges the fragmented and shifting nature of communities and seeks to engage community members who can connect archaeology to local and dispersed communities.

This is not something completely new. Relationships with multiple communities often develop over the course of archaeological projects, sometimes as “accidental” experiences, as Larry Zimmerman (2006:43) points out. Parker Potter (1994:23), who undertook some of the earliest community-based research in Annapolis...
in the 1980s, argues “too few archaeologists deal anthropologically with the social context of their work...until that context intrudes on the practice of archaeology.” While this has been changing, due in large part to ethical codes, legislation, and the hard work of stakeholders, the examination of the social context of archaeology must be explicit and extend beyond descendant communities and archaeologists. Instead of dealing with “accidental” or “intrusive” experiences with stakeholders as they occur over the course of an archaeological project, the goal of poly-communal archaeology is collaboration with multiple stakeholders before, throughout, and beyond the project because archaeology serves as the focal point of the collaborative multi-communal heritage discourse about past and present social relations (Malloy 2003:ix). Poly-communal archaeology adds multivocality to all aspects of practice, moving beyond simply multivocality in interpretation to, as Sonya Atalay (2008:34) puts it, finding “ways of combining Western and Indigenous theoretical and methodological concepts that begin at the planning stages of research, and works to create diverse approaches to long-term management of archaeological resources, as well as both the tangible and intangible aspects of heritage.”

In effect, poly-communal archaeology is about building a community of stakeholders--a heritage community--by engaging multiple stakeholders in the archaeological dimensions of heritage work: the process of developing methodology and method, making decisions about research questions, curation, stewardship, and building interpretations. This is crucial in places where there are many stakeholders with varying interests and claims to the past and different amounts of social and political power in the present, as is the case in North America, and particularly in New
England. Poly-communal projects shape and are shaped by particular social, political, and historical contexts and require constant cross-cultural engagement and dialogue. Building trust relationships with and among stakeholders is one the most important aspects of poly-communal approaches. Thus, there is no easy boilerplate methodology. The ways relationships develop are determined in part by particular social, political, historical circumstances, and in part by the individuals and groups involved.

**Modeling Poly-Communal Archaeology**

The redistribution and negotiation of power is central to poly-communal approaches to archaeology and heritage work. I represent this negotiated power structure by drawing on what Freedman et al. (2007:50-55) present as the “two-tier stakeholder map” (see Figure 4). Freedman et al. (2007:50-51) define primary stakeholders as those vital to continued growth and survival of a business (such as customers, employees, suppliers, communities) and secondary stakeholders as those groups that can affect relationships with primaries (such as activists, governments, media, competitors). While this may be an appropriate model in a corporate context, some critical revisions are required to apply it in an archaeological or heritage context. In the representation of a poly-communal approach I have developed (Figure 5), heritage is at the representational “center of the universe” because it is where the interests of diverse stakeholders converge. Here, heritage does not just refer to the past, but rather encompasses the past, present, and future; it is tangible, intangible, social and material.

There are two important differences in the representations of the two-tier business model and the poly-communal model. First, in the business model, there is a
concrete and permanent hierarchy among primary and secondary stakeholders, represented by solid lines in the illustration. In the model I propose, the hierarchy is contextual and subject to change, and thus the power structure, and representation, must reflect this. For this reason, I represent the poly-communal model using a permeable line to illustrate the flexibility and shifting nature of both the communities and the power structure.

The second major difference between the business model and the one I propose for poly-communal archaeology is that for any given project, there may be several stakeholder maps with multiple tiers (not just two or three), based on the particular context or dimension of the archaeological research that is being negotiated (for example, see Figure 6). We engage with all stakeholders, in all tiers, and seek to engage stakeholders with one another across tiers. However, the primary/secondary/tertiary distinction makes clear that there are important power relationships among stakeholders that are contextually particular.

The structure I propose acknowledges that both power and multivocality are context specific, and flexibility in the represented spheres is inherent. The purpose of this visual representation is to serve as an organizing framework, rather than a “one size fits all” model. The intent of introducing a visual representation of a poly-communal approach is not to limit, constrain, or prescribe stakeholder relationships, but rather to facilitate our attentiveness to the power relationships developed and negotiated in poly-communal projects and developing communities of stakeholders.
Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the stakeholder concept, its applicability in archaeology, and the community-based approaches that have become more widely practiced over the last two decades. I note that while community-based approaches have contributed much to making archaeology relevant to the lives of people today, there are limitations to their efficacy as both a decolonizing methodology and as a means to challenge historical erasures in some of the ways it is practiced. To address and overcome these limitations, I propose a poly-communal approach as an alternative that is attentive to both power and context. In the next chapter, I discuss the process of developing a poly-communal praxis for the Pocumtuck Fort site in Deerfield, Massachusetts. As a site of historical erasures and a place that captures the interest of a heritage community comprised of diverse stakeholders, the Pocumtuck Fort heritage work provides a rich case for developing, applying, and evaluating a poly-communal model.
CHAPTER 4

DEVELOPING POLY-COMMUNAL PRAXIS

Introduction

A poly-communal approach to the Pocumtuck Fort heritage work engages diverse individual and community stakeholders, including professional and avocational archaeologists and historians, members of Native American descendant communities, local heritage institutions and residents, and landowners. The poly-communal approach to the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project is a community-based model for a place lacking a resident descendant community, where there are multiple stakeholder communities with interests in interpretations of the past and heritage work. In places like this, the default position of archaeologists has been to engage with only funding bodies (e.g., granting agencies, heritage institutions), government bureaucracies (e.g., state historic preservation offices, town governments), landowners, and, in some cases, local residents in the form of “public education.” The poly-communal approach outlined here is an alternative to this default that: (1) brings together a diverse group of people from different communities to engage in a heritage discourse about Native American history and historical erasures in the Connecticut River Valley, and Deerfield in particular; (2) has led to the recovery of archaeological data that is clear evidence of Pocumtuck life in the seventeenth century; and (3) has resulted in a preservation and stewardship initiative involving multiple stakeholders.

Marshall (2002) notes that there are some historical contexts in which community-based approaches can be critical, specifically noting that European/Indigenous contact period sites are of particular interest to community
archaeology practitioners. She states: “there is a tendency to assume that such sites belong to, or are only of interest to one of the two sides--usually the side with the most positive experience of the place. Conventional approaches to these sites tend to entrench such dichotomies” (Marshall 2002:216). Marshall (2002:216) suggests that community archaeology approaches to contact and early colonial sites can instead open up spaces of unexpected shared interest. The Area D Site (19-FR-415) in Deerfield, Massachusetts, a significant seventeenth-century Pocumtuck site believed to be the location of what has been referred to as the “Pocumtuck Fort” (see Chapter 2), is one such place where there are multiple stakeholders with interests in archaeological investigations of the past and the potential for converging interests in the present.

In Chapters 1 and 2, I illustrated how the scientific detachment of archaeologists and practice has perpetuated the historical erasure of Native peoples in Pocumtuck/Deerfield over the past two hundred years. I discussed the central role that the Pocumtuck Fort plays in dominant historical narrative and memory. Chapter 3 offered an alternative model for community-based archaeological practice, and here I discuss the methods employed in building a poly-communal archaeology of the Pocumtuck Fort. This project involved developing a specific set of methodologies for community building because it hinges on voluntary collaborations taking place outside of legislated relationships that have a set of required interactions and standard practices.

In this chapter, I focus on the development of poly-communal praxis for the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project. First, I introduce the stakeholder communities and explore how relationships were initiated and developed with Native American descendant communities, the landowner, avocational
archaeologists, institutions, and other interested parties. Next, I discuss the process of developing research designs, negotiating field methods and the on-going process of communication, reflection, and dissemination critical to fostering the community of stakeholders. Finally, I frame the culmination of the individual stakeholder relationship-building: the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project Stakeholders Workshop held in April 2008.5

**Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project Stakeholders**

In this section, I introduce and position the stakeholder communities and representatives engaged in the heritage work of the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project. As discussed in Chapter 3, stakeholders are individuals or groups with an interest or “stake” in some aspect of heritage, the archaeological record or an archaeological project (Zimmerman 2006:40). Some of the stakeholders in this project were identified by archaeologists, while others self-identified or were identified by other stakeholders.

Many of the relationships that made this project possible were established long before I began my graduate work in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts (UMass) Amherst in 2001. When the question of the physical location of the Pocumtuck Fort resurfaced and regained momentum in 2003, as part of a

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5 I present this chapter from the perspective of an archaeologist whose goal was to build a heritage community comprised of multiple stakeholders. As such, I have been the primary convener and conduit for information related to this project. However, a number of colleagues at UMass Amherst contributed to the relationship building and negotiating process central to this project, especially project co-director, Elizabeth Chilton. I use the pronoun “I” when referring to efforts I made, and “we” when referring to the collective efforts of Chilton, myself, and other UMass Amherst archaeologists.
broader heritage discourse focused on re-examining Native American history in Deerfield, a number of relationships with individuals interested in the question re-formed, and previous research was drawn upon. At the same time, new relations were developed, new people and communities engaged, and new research pursued.

Project conveners have a responsibility and obligation to identify potential stakeholders, though there should be room for previously unidentified stakeholders to emerge throughout the project. In the case of facilitating heritage work, archaeologists must take a critical look at the multiple dimensions of the heritage universe to map out potential stakeholders (for example, as discussed in Chapter 3; see also Figure 5): chronological (past, present, future), scalar (local to global), and along multiple axes (social, political, economic, legal, etc.). Other stakeholders, too, should be invited to map out dimensions of the heritage universe. In this case study, some stakeholders have had long-term relationships with archaeologists at UMass Amherst and elsewhere, while new relationships were initiated with others. Some stakeholders were identified at the outset by archaeologists and other stakeholders (e.g., landowner, heritage institutions, avocationals, Native American descendant communities), while others emerged throughout the project (e.g., Deerfield Historical Commission).

I begin this discussion with archaeologists from UMass Amherst because we served as conveners and facilitated the community-based project. Next, I discuss the other individual and community stakeholders, including representatives of Native American descendant communities, the landowner, avocational archaeologists, local heritage institutions and organizations, and scholars. This introduction provides the context for the relationship-building efforts discussed in the following section.
UMass Amherst Archaeologists

Archaeologists at the University of Massachusetts (UMass) Amherst have conducted field schools and archaeological research focusing on Native American history in the middle Connecticut River Valley for over thirty years. Much of this fieldwork has taken place in the town of Deerfield, Massachusetts (Figure 1). A significant amount of this research, involving faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates, has taken place through the UMass Amherst Field School in Archaeology. The chronological and cultural focus of the field school shifts from season to season and has included pre- and post-contact Native American sites, as well as eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Euroamerican and African-American sites. In recent years, UMass Amherst and Historic Deerfield, Inc., have funded the field school.

Since its inception, the primary goal of the UMass Amherst Field School in Archaeology has been to provide students with an understanding of the complexity of the past and its relationship to the present, and training in archaeological methods, interpretation, and heritage management (Chilton 2008). More recently, the field school has also sought to make students sensitive to the ways that archaeologists can be more responsive to community partners and descendant communities (see Chilton and Hart [2008]). This effort has emerged from the field school’s commitment to the theoretical principles of “critical archaeology,” which involves: (1) challenging hegemonic historical narratives by working with historically marginalized or “erased” peoples such as Native and African Americans; and (2) examining how archaeology contributes to and/or challenges historical hegemony (Keene and Chilton 1995; see also Gero et al. [1983]; Leone et al. [1987]; Lewis and Labrador [2006]; Potter [1994]). Over the last
decade, the pedagogy and praxis of the field school has evolved as the staff and students have experimented with different ways of mobilizing and embracing the principles of critical archaeology and its theoretical descendants (for example, see Chilton and Hart [2008] for discussion of introduction of aspects of community-service learning pedagogy to the field school curriculum in 2006).

One of the major efforts of the field school since the early 1990s has been to challenge the historical erasure of Native peoples by highlighting the 12,000 year long complex history of Native peoples in the Connecticut River Valley (Keene and Chilton 1995). For several field seasons in the 1990s, these efforts focused on the Pine Hill site (19-FR-17), a multi-component site that was most intensively occupied on a seasonal basis by Native peoples during the Late Woodland period, between 1000-1600 AD (Chilton et al. 2000). More recently, due in part to increased education programming associated with the 300th anniversary of the 1704 raid on Deerfield by French and allied Native Americans (Demos 1994:11-39; Haefeli and Sweeney 2003; Melvoin 1989:209-275; PVMA 2004) and encouragement from avocational archaeologists, UMass Amherst archaeologists have revisited questions about the “Pocumtuck Fort.” Since 2004, archaeological research has focused on a series of terraces in Deerfield with evidence of seventeenth-century Native American activity (Hart and Chilton 2006, 2008). The UMass Amherst Field School conducted previous surveys designed to locate the Pocumtuck Fort in 1995, under the direction of Arthur Keene and Elizabeth Chilton (both of UMass Amherst; Keene and Chilton 1995). However, no evidence of seventeenth-century activity was recovered.
Since 2004, I have co-directed the archaeological investigations of the Pocumtuck Fort with Elizabeth Chilton, Associate Professor of Anthropology at UMass Amherst. The teaching and mentoring dimensions of this project are intimately related to the research, preservation, and stewardship dimensions because much of the work (fieldwork, laboratory analysis) has taken place in a teaching and student-training context. As such, field school staff and students are also stakeholders in the heritage work of this project, along with the directors of the project (Chilton 2008). They carry out the work that produces the “things” and “props” (artifacts, features, and other archaeological data) that anchor the heritage discourse and play a role in how archaeology and the Native American past is presented to people in Deerfield (Chilton 2008). UMass Amherst faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, and field school students are intimately involved in the process of producing the knowledge that is incorporated into heritage discourses with stakeholders.

**Native American Descendant Communities**

“Descendant communities” refer to those groups who, regardless of geography, ancestry, or background, identify with a particular past or locale through shared traditions, proximity, or collective memories (Saitta 2007). In this case, Native American descendant communities identify with the Pocumtuck Fort site through shared ancestry, background, and traditions. Due to the complex history of dispossession and historical erasure of Indigenous peoples in the middle Connecticut River Valley, a number of non-federally recognized Native American groups, including several bands of Western Abenaki and Nipmuc peoples, trace descent from or connection to the Pocumtuck and other historically known Native groups of the area.
(e.g., Woronoco, Agawam, Nonotuck, Sokoki; see Bruchac [2007]). Rather than partnering with one individual community, tribe, or band, and thus positioning ourselves (the archaeologists) as having the power to negotiate complex identity issues and competing claims for legitimacy, we sought a partnership with the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs (MCIA), comprised of Native representatives from the Commonwealth, to represent the collective interests of Native American descendant communities. This partnership seemed appropriate for this particular context where there is a diasporic descendant community comprised of multiple tribes and bands. The goal was to take the power to evaluate the legitimacy claims out of the hands of archaeologists and embed it within Native communities. The decision to work with the MCIA on this project was also based on the productive relationship among UMass Amherst archaeologists and MCIA representatives concerning repatriation work and their experience facilitating preservation planning.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts created the Commission in 1974 (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 6A: Section 8A) to assist Native American individuals and groups in their relationship with state and local government agencies and to advise the Commonwealth in matters pertaining to Native Americans (Commonwealth of Massachusetts [COM] 2008). The MCIA is part of the Commonwealth’s Department of Housing and Community Development, and consists of seven members who are recommended by tribal councils and groups and appointed by the governor (COM 2008). A group’s federal status does not impact their ability to recommend someone to the Commission. This serves to balance power at the state level, since there are only two federally recognized tribes in the Commonwealth today.
(Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Aquinnah and Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe). Each Commission member serves a term of three years and is assigned an area of representation such as a county, Native American organization, or tribe (COM 2008). Currently, the Commission is directed by John (Jim) Peters, Jr. (Mashpee Wampanoag), and the chair of the Commission, until his passing in August 2008, was Maurice L. Foxx (Mashpee Wampanoag). Troy Phillips (Nipmuc) serves as the Western Massachusetts Commissioner on Indian Affairs, representing the area of the Commonwealth that includes the middle Connecticut River Valley and Deerfield. Much of the work of Commission members is voluntary and unpaid.

Among many other responsibilities, the MCIA represents Native communities with interests in heritage work and archaeological sites in the Commonwealth. For decades, the Commission has played an important role in archaeological projects and repatriation efforts, particularly in areas of the Commonwealth where there are no resident descendant groups, federally recognized tribes, or tribally held lands, like present-day Deerfield.

Formal relationships among UMass Amherst archaeologists and Native American descendant communities have developed over the last fifteen years. Archaeologists at UMass Amherst have strengthened relationships with MCIA and members of several Native communities, individually and collectively. Repatriation efforts have been one avenue for developing these relationships, and in recent years UMass Amherst archaeologists have worked closely with the Commission on repatriation and NAGPRA compliance issues related to sites and collections from the middle Connecticut River Valley. My own commitment to repatriation gave me the
opportunity to begin building personal relationships with MCIA representatives, particularly Troy Phillips, Maurice Foxx, and Jim Peters, and members of Native communities who have connections to the Pocumtuck homeland. These pre-existing relationships with representatives of descendant communities laid the foundation for the voluntary collaboration of the poly-communal approach to the Pocumtuck Fort project.

Landowner

The landowner of the terraces investigated as the potential site of the Pocumtuck Fort is Eaglebrook School, a private boarding and day school for sixth to ninth grade boys, located in Deerfield, Massachusetts. Howard Gibbs founded the school in 1922 with the goal of combining outdoor life with education (Eaglebrook School 2008). Since then the landscape and physical campus has been of central importance to the curriculum, educational efforts, and identity of the institution (Eaglebrook School 2008). From the late 1920s on, members of the Chase family have filled the role of headmaster: first Thurston Chase, then Stuart Chase (1966-2002), and currently Andrew Chase (2002-present) (Eaglebrook School 2008).

Eaglebrook School defines its mission as helping “each boy come into confident possession of his innate talents, improve the skills needed for success in secondary school, and establish values that will allow him to act with thoughtfulness and humanity” (Eaglebrook School 2008). Today, the school has just less than 300 boarding and day students, from a range of countries and states in the U.S. The School owns approximately 750 acres of land that comprises their campus centered on Pine Nook Road in Deerfield, reflecting their desire for privacy, a safe and buffered learning environment for their students, and a connection to the values that the School was
founded on: “the woods, fields, and mountain trails continue to provide the healthful life that Mr. Gibbs considered so valuable” (Eaglebrook School 2008).

The UMass Amherst Field School, and Elizabeth Chilton in particular, worked with Eaglebrook School and Headmaster Stuart Chase in the mid 1990s during initial archaeological investigations of the Pocumtuck Fort, so School representatives were familiar with what is involved in archaeological projects when we approached them about working on their land again beginning in 2004.

Avocational Archaeologists

Avocational archaeologists have long been interested in the location of the Pocumtuck Fort. The term “avocational” has often been used synonymously with “amateur archaeologist,” to differentiate these people from “professional archaeologists,” on the one hand, and “artifact dealers” and “pothunters” on the other (DeAngelo 1992; Frison 1984:185-186; Tesar 1988:33-34). Here, I use the term “avocational” to refer to individuals with a strong interest in and often an extensive knowledge of archaeology and Native American history. I distinguish them from “collectors” and “looters” because their relationship to the material record is similar to that of professional archaeologists, in that the knowledge and information gained from the context of material culture is valued, rather than just the artifacts themselves.

Avocational are archaeologists in that they see sites as resources requiring documentation and protection, and not as a source of artifacts for profit or prestige, as characteristic of private collectors, pothunters, and looters. Yet avocational are distinct from professionals in that they have not received the extensive training in fieldwork, laboratory analysis, methods, and theory that professionals obtain, though they often
have a significant amount of informal training and accumulated knowledge. Unlike professionals, avocationals do not make their living off of archaeology, but like professionals, many adhere to a code of standards prescribed by the archaeological organizations to which they belong at local, regional, and national levels (e.g., Archaeological Institute of America, Eastern States Archaeological Federation, or state societies like the Massachusetts Archaeological Society). These codes set standards for documentation of surface collecting and excavation similar to the basic standards that most professionals adhere to and require observance of all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations governing access to public and private lands and the removal of materials. With imminent threats to archaeological sites in the face of rapid development, avocationals play a crucial role in the documentation, preservation, and stewardship of sites. They self-identify as stakeholders in many archaeological projects that take place in their communities.

UMass Amherst archaeologists have developed relationships with local avocational archaeologists through mutual interest in archaeological sites and local history. Relationships between UMass Amherst archaeologists and the avocational “community” have been sporadic, with some wariness on both sides, and exist on an individual, rather than collective, basis. Relationships are sometimes structured through organizations like the Massachusetts Archaeological Society (MAS), an organization that includes both professional and non-professional archaeologists aimed at stimulating “the study of archaeology and Native American cultural history, especially in Massachusetts” and serving “as a bond among all students of archaeology” (Massachusetts Archaeological Society [MAS] 2008). Relationships have also
developed on a project-by-project basis. Some avocational archaeologists are also UMass Amherst students, or are connected with the University and other stakeholder communities in other ways, especially through local town governments and community groups. There has been some reciprocal sharing of research and collections information among avocationalists and UMass Amherst archaeologists in the past, as well as some collaboration on projects, including past field schools, but the relationship has been primarily one best characterized as a “researcher/informant” relationship, rather than as a research partnership or collaboration.

A number of avocational archaeologists, past and present, have been interested in locating the Pocumtuck Fort, and several have expressed an interest and concern for the long-term preservation of the site. Despite this, unauthorized digging continues to be a problem in the middle Connecticut River Valley and has affected the area being investigated as the possible location of the Pocumtuck Fort. While there is no doubt that artifact collectors and looters also have interests in the Pocumtuck Fort for personal gain, they were not engaged in the collective heritage work of this project here because their efforts are illegal, unethical, and in opposition to the preservation and stewardship goals of all of the other stakeholders engaged in this project. The concern for the protection of this site from additional looting, along with an interest in understanding the seventeenth-century history of Deerfield, has brought several avocational archaeologists to collaborate on aspects of this project.

Today, there is a loose collective of avocational archaeologists in the middle Connecticut River Valley and in Deerfield. David “Bud” Driver, Deerfield resident and avocational historian and archaeologist, has led the recent research on the Pocumtuck
Fort by avocationals. Driver has contributed to the documentation of numerous sites in and around Deerfield, most recently through his research with David Gracie on the Pocumtuck Path, a network of trails running north-south through the middle Connecticut River Valley and connecting Native, and later, Euroamerican settlements. Driver has personally monitored sites on the ground for decades. He has also spearheaded an effort to revive the Deerfield Historical Commission (DHC), a town Commission aimed at inventorying town monuments and assessing their condition, researching several memorial sites for preservation, inventorying building structures that may meet preservation standards, and creating a town policy related to archaeological investigations (Deerfield Historical Commission [DHC] 2008; see below). Driver and others, such as Deerfield resident Al Dray, have pursued independent research on the Pocumtuck Fort and have shared many of their findings with UMass Amherst archaeologists over the last two decades. It was largely because of the encouragement of Driver that Elizabeth Chilton and I re-initiated archaeological testing to physically locate the Pocumtuck Fort site in 2004.

**Local Historical Commission**

In Massachusetts, a local historical commission is established by a vote of the town or city government (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40: Section 8d) and is the municipal agency responsible for ensuring that preservation concerns are considered in community planning and development decisions (Massachusetts Historical Commission [MHC] 2008). Town historical commissions serve as the town’s agency

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6 For more information, see documents and maps compiled by David “Bud” Driver and Al Dray on file in the Elizabeth A. Little Lab in the Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
for identifying, evaluating and protecting the historic and archeological assets within the
town. They serve as local preservation advocates and as an important resource for
information about their community’s cultural resources and preservation activities.
They maintain a “certified” status through the Massachusetts Historical Commission,
which in turn is linked to the National Park Service and the United States Department
of the Interior. In Deerfield, the town historical commission had been inactive for
several years, but at the 2007 Town Meeting residents took action that gave the
Commission authority to act on preservation issues (DHC 2008). Due to the
commission’s inactivity, representatives of the Commission were not sought out as
stakeholders at the outset of this project, though the Commission became involved
(through Commission member David “Bud” Driver and Commission Chair Penelope
Davis) as the project developed, representing the interests of Deerfield residents and the
Town of Deerfield.

**Heritage Institutions**

Deerfield is home to a number of institutions aimed at the preservation and
interpretation of various histories (see Chapter 1 for a discussion of the roots of the
heritage industry in Deerfield). The largest and most well known is Historic Deerfield,
Inc., an open-air museum that commemorates Euroamerican settlement in New England
through preservation and interpretation of architecture, artifacts, and lifestyles of the
town through time (Historic Deerfield 2008). The museum, incorporated in 1952, is
situated on a mile-long street and consists of exhibits in restored buildings dating to
1730-1850 (e.g., homes, taverns) and dedicated exhibit spaces (Historic Deerfield
2008).
Inter-institutional relationships among archaeologists at UMass Amherst and Historic Deerfield, Inc., have been developing for over a decade, in large part due to the work of Robert Paynter and Elizabeth Chilton at UMass Amherst and those at Historic Deerfield, Inc., such as Claire Carlson (Education Program Coordinator and archaeologist who received PhD from UMass Amherst), Philip Zea (President), Jessica Neuwirth (archaeologist and former Coordinator of Academic Programs), and Joshua Lane (Curator of Furniture and Coordinator of Academic Programs). Historic Deerfield’s interest in archaeology and the Native American history of Deerfield has increased in recent years, especially as it related to the famed 1704 French and Indian raid on the town, which plays a central role in the colonial history that Historic Deerfield commemorates (Demos 1994:11-39; Haefeli and Sweeney 2003; Melvoin 1989:209-275; PVMA 2004). As a result, Historic Deerfield has partially supported the UMass Amherst Field School investigations of both Native and Euroamerican sites.

The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association (PVMA), another heritage institution in Deerfield, consisting of a regional historical society, educational, and cultural center, was not engaged at the outset of this project, though they may emerge as a stakeholder in the heritage discourse as the project develops.

Scholars

As discussed in Chapter 2, the Pocumtuck Fort plays an important role in the Native and Euroamerican histories of the middle Connecticut River Valley, and thus, the archaeological research on the site intersects with the research interests of ethnohistorians and other scholars focused on this pre-colonial and colonial past. Margaret Bruchac and Peter Thomas, both researchers with extensive knowledge of the
social, political, and economic dimensions of seventeenth-century Native and Native/European relations of the middle Connecticut River Valley (for example, see Bruchac [2004]; Thomas [1979, 1985, 2004]) have pursued historical, context, and locational research on the Pocumtuck Fort (Thomas and Bruchac 2005). Both researchers also have pre-existing relationships with UMass Amherst archaeologists, as both received their doctoral degrees from the UMass Amherst Department of Anthropology. Thomas has firsthand experience with archaeology at a seventeenth-century Native fort as he directed the testing at location of the Sokoki Fort in Hinsdale, New Hampshire, in the 1970s (see discussion in Chapter 2; Thomas 1979). Bruchac’s research on the historical erasure of Native peoples in the middle Connecticut River Valley (Bruchac 2007), personal and professional experience working with Native communities on repatriation efforts, and perspective as an Abenaki Indian has significantly informed and shaped the goals of this project.

In addition to the scholars who participated directly in the project, the UMass Amherst faculty members that comprise my dissertation committee were also project stakeholders in a way. The chair of my committee, Elizabeth Chilton participated directly in the project as co-director, and other committee members (Marla Miller [History] and H. Martin Wobst [Anthropology]) had a vested interest in the project, shaped by their own scholarship, experiences, and perspectives on heritage and community-based work. They provided guidance and advice on the project that served to shape and constrain various aspects and actions I took as convener and stakeholder.
Poly-Communal Beginnings

It is difficult to pinpoint a precise starting point for this poly-communal archaeology project, since many of the relationships among stakeholders, along with research about Native American history in Deerfield, have deep roots. Since at least the nineteenth century, the Pocumtuck Fort question has surfaced, gained momentum, and over time suffered diminished interest, each time becoming more entrenched in aspects of the historical memory of Pocumtuck/Deerfield. Here, I trace only the most recent efforts to physically locate the fort.

Professional and avocational archaeologists and historians have researched the physical location of the Pocumtuck Fort. The first professional archaeological investigation took place in 1995, when the UMass Amherst Field School (Keene and Chilton 1995) tested local avocational archaeologist Al Dray’s hypothesis of the fort’s location. However, the areas known as “Area A” and “Area B” (19-FR-387) yielded no evidence of seventeenth-century activity.

The question reemerged again in 2003 when David “Bud” Driver encouraged Elizabeth Chilton and me to pursue the fort question for the 2004 UMass Amherst Field School. Chilton asked Driver for input on sites that might be threatened by erosion, development, or looting and Driver took us to several areas on Eaglebrook School property, among other places. In preparation for the field school, several students pursued research projects on the Pocumtuck Fort under Elizabeth Chilton’s direction in Fall 2003.7 Undergraduate Megan Hawkins and I continued this work in Spring 2004,

7 See papers by Tom Mailhot, Broughton Anderson and Siobhan Hart on file in the Elizabeth A. Little Lab at the Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
researching documented sites in Deerfield (through the Massachusetts Historical Commission site files) and possible locations for the Pocumtuck Fort based on information gleaned from property deeds. Hawkins (2004) worked closely with Driver researching deeds and ownership. Based on this survey of documentation and consultation with Driver, we proposed to test two areas on Eaglebrook School property (identified as Areas C and D) with the 2004 UMass Amherst Field School. Due to time constraints, only Area C was tested at the time. Aside from obtaining landowner permission and a permit from the State Archaeologist, no efforts were made to engage with stakeholders prior to the 2004 fieldwork. That season, a single seventeenth-century trash pit feature was documented at Area C, suggesting that we were in the vicinity of a larger seventeenth-century site (see Hart and Chilton [2006]).

In March 2005, a group of people interested in the Pocumtuck Fort (several of whom were pursuing historical and archival research on the fort and seventeenth-century Native American history in the middle Connecticut River Valley) met at UMass Amherst. The group consisted of archaeologists from UMass Amherst (Elizabeth Chilton, Siobhan Hart, Robert Paynter, and William Thompson), avocational archaeologists from Deerfield (David “Bud” Driver and Ed Crafts), and scholars Peter Thomas and Margaret Bruchac, who had been pursuing historical and deed research related to the fort and circulated a report of their findings (see Thomas and Bruchac [2005]). The group discussed the results of the 2004 testing at Area C and Thomas and Bruchac’s recent documentary research which suggested that the place identified as “fort hill” in eighteenth-century deeds was located just to the north of the Area C (previously proposed for excavation and identified as “Area D” in the 2004 Field
At this meeting, Driver also informed the group of efforts to revive the Deerfield Historical Commission.

By the end of this meeting, it was clear that there was significant interest among those present regarding further research and archaeological testing. All present stated an interest in “stewardship” and acknowledged the important role played by landowners in preservation and stewardship. To that end, several cautioned against making “missteps” with the landowner. The group agreed that it was important to prioritize site protection, determine site boundaries, and bring representatives of Native American descendant communities to the table. Consensus was that Elizabeth Chilton and I would take the lead with the landowner, invite MCIA representatives to collaborate, and respond to all other inquiries.

This turned out to be the first stakeholder meeting, though it was not formally convened as such. This meeting involved many of the stakeholders who have continued to participate in the heritage community developed through this project. However, two important stakeholders, the landowner and representatives of Native American descendant communities, were not invited to this initial informal meeting and the group present recognized that they would be central to the process of moving ahead with heritage work. Following this meeting, it became clear that efforts directed at building a community of stakeholders were needed. This is what I set out to do over the course of the next year, particularly in preparation for the 2006 and 2008 UMass Amherst Field Schools, where we were explicit about stakeholder engagement in our research design and emphasized our responsibilities to stakeholders in the broader heritage discourse that was developing.
**Building Stakeholder Relationships, 2006-2008**

A critical aspect of the methodology of this project has been continuous consultation and engagement with multiple stakeholders. The most intensive phase of stakeholder relationship building took place over the course of two years (between January 2006 and January 2008), during which a set of practices were developed for the poly-communal approach to the project. At the outset, all of the stakeholders involved articulated a common goal: ensuring the long-term protection and preservation of the site of the Pocumtuck Fort, if it was located archaeologically. Archaeological testing would be used as a tool of preservation planning, allowing us to determine the presence, extent, and integrity of cultural features at the site, so that a long-term stewardship plan could be developed. Many of the stakeholders also saw this as an opportunity to challenge the historical erasure of Native peoples in Deerfield and, as Russell Handsman (1991) has put it, “illuminate history’s silences.”

Building, participating in, and maintaining relationships among these diverse stakeholders has involved varied strategies, approaches, and methods. The approaches took different forms and occurred on different timelines with each stakeholder group. The most crucial dimensions were communication, asking for feedback and permissions, requesting oversight during fieldwork and analysis, collaborative reflection, and creating an awareness and sensitivity to the interests of other stakeholders.

The focal point for the heritage work engaged by various stakeholders was developing research designs for field-testing and negotiating methods. The research itself was a negotiated process and the boundaries and components of the project were
open to reassessment and re-negotiation by the parties involved. Prior to excavation,
we discussed the possibilities for field-testing with all of the stakeholders, including
both invasive and non-invasive testing methods. Research questions, priorities, and
methods were negotiated, to the degree that stakeholders were interested or able to
provide feedback. In the following sections, I describe the relationship building and
negotiations with each of the stakeholder groups. The results of these negotiations,
particularly surrounding archaeological field methods, are discussed in Chapter 5.

Native American Descendent Communities

The involvement of representatives of Native American descendant
communities was crucial to the goals of this project because the dominant narrative of
the destruction of the Pocumtuck Fort has served as a justification for the historical
erasure of Native peoples in the middle Connecticut River Valley. The fact that the
Pocumtuck Fort is believed to be a place where Native lives were lost in the seventeenth
century made their participation even more important.

Before archaeological testing in 2006, MCIA representatives agreed that it was
necessary to document the site for the longer-term purpose of preservation and
stewardship. Representatives of the MCIA were invited to review and give feedback,
guidance, and advice on project proposals, visit the site and the lab facility before,
during, and after fieldwork, and were provided with frequent updates during the
fieldwork and analysis phases of the project. Although we were not legally required to
solicit their permission, we made a decision to only move forward on this project with
the complete support and approval of MCIA. We sought their permission to carry out
the archaeological testing at Area D and they were invested with the power to stop the work at any time.

Prior to testing in 2006, we sent copies of the report on the 2004 UMass Field School to MCIA representatives and invited comments and feedback. We invited them to take a site walkover and discuss the research design and they advised us that the goals of the 2006 testing should be to confirm the location of the fort site archaeologically, and then proceed to set up a guidance committee if it was located. After the field school, the Western Massachusetts Commissioner (Troy Phillips) reported on the fieldwork at a Commission meeting held in August 2006. Commission representatives advised that it should be left to their discretion to contact individual communities as needed. From then on, working with Commission representatives prior to any fieldwork to negotiate the research design and field methods and following fieldwork with a report on the results of testing was implemented as standard practice. Also incorporated into our standard practice was generating reports and summaries of the project for Commissioners prior to the full Commission meetings.

Relationship building and negotiation with representatives of Native American descendant communities took place through the development of standard practices as described above, but also through situations that arose. For example, when a deciduous human tooth was recovered from flotation of feature soil in the Fall of 2006, we immediately contacted both the Massachusetts Historical Commission and MCIA. Following this, Jim Peters, Maurice Foxx and Troy Phillips came to UMass Amherst to meet with us about this find and to discuss the project. At this face-to-face meeting, which included a site walkover, MCIA representatives shared their sense of the site and
interpretations of the use of the terrace and the materials recovered. They were concerned about the human deciduous tooth recovered from flotation, but concluded that it was unlikely that it was from a human burial based on their knowledge and experiences. The Commissioners reaffirmed that we should work towards a preservation plan, were supportive of additional work at the site to determine site boundaries and extent, and advised us to alert them if we noted additional disturbances at the site.

**Landowner**

As discussed above, UMass Amherst archaeologists and Eaglebrook School had a relationship dating back to the mid-1990s when the UMass Amherst Field School requested permission to test two locations on Eaglebrook School property. Though the headmaster of the school has since changed from Stuart Chase to Andrew Chase, there was enough continuity among the parties and individuals involved that the re-initiation of the relationship was not difficult. In addition to securing a permit from the State Archaeologist for testing in 2004, and again in 2006, 2007, and 2008, permission to conduct testing was secured from Andrew Chase and results were reported to him throughout the project.

School representatives were amenable to our proposals to conduct archaeological testing on their property as long as our work did not have major impacts on the landscape or draw attention to their property. Throughout the project, they have expressed an interest in better understanding the archaeological resources on their property. Representatives of the school were provided with reports and updates on fieldwork and historical research between 2004 and 2007.
Over the course of the project, Eaglebrook School representatives and UMass Amherst archaeologists made efforts to increase Eaglebrook’s involvement in the project. For example, after field school testing in 2006, Headmaster Chase visited the UMass Amherst archaeology lab to discuss the findings. Chase suggested that the project might fit well with the Eaglebrook School fourth grade curriculum and put me in touch with fourth grade teachers Heather Hayes, Andrea Kilroy, and Lawrence Kilroy. Hayes and I arranged for the fourth grade class from Eaglebrook School to visit the archaeology lab at UMass Amherst for a presentation and discussion of the archaeology of seventeenth-century Native American life in Deerfield as part of their lessons on Eaglebrook history. This was an important first step in meshing the educational goals of the landowner’s institution with the goals of the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project.

Another opportunity for pursuing shared goals with Eaglebrook School occurred when we requested permission from Chase to do two days of fieldwork in Spring 2007 with an archaeological field methods class from UMass Amherst. The School has a Saturday morning Community Service Activities program, and through this program six Eaglebrook School students (sixth to ninth graders) and a supervisor participated in a half-day of fieldwork at the site. We were able to coordinate this activity again in the spring of 2008.

In addition to requesting permissions, negotiating research designs and field methods, and reporting on results, another important dimension of relationships with Eaglebrook School include stewardship discussions. Between 2006 and 2008 we engaged in several conversations regarding stewardship of the Area D site and they
hosted the stakeholders workshop in April 2008 (discussed below). Throughout the project, Eaglebrook School representatives were enthusiastic and supportive about the archaeological findings and future research at the site and expressed interest in working with other stakeholders to protect the site.

**Avocational Archaeologists**

As discussed above, archaeologists at UMass Amherst have had long-standing relationships with some local avocationals. These relationships have waxed and waned through the years, with some occasional discomfort and difficulty largely the result of mistrust, miscommunication, or previous negative experiences. Of all of the stakeholders involved in this project, I had the most frequent interaction with the avocational archaeologists who were pursuing documentary research on the Pocumtuck Fort and related projects and were geographically near to the site and to UMass Amherst, primarily David “Bud” Driver, and less frequently with others, such as David Gracie and Randy Daum. Conversations, mostly over the phone, but also including a number of informal face-to-face meetings, ranged from site-specific inquiries and discussions about interpretations, to broader issues of site stewardship, looting, and the meaning of the term “avocational.”

Through these conversations and reflection on some misunderstandings that arose during the project, the importance of acknowledging and crediting the significant contributions that avocationals make to our mutual interests in documenting, protecting and preserving archaeological sites in Deerfield and the middle Connecticut River Valley became clear. This proved to be central to building and maintaining trust relationships with them. Another important aspect was building a relationship based on
reciprocity and sharing of information. Throughout the project avocationals like David
“Bud” Driver and others shared research and information with us and other
stakeholders. The reciprocal sharing of information with avocationals had symbolic
meaning in this context and minimized perceived divisions between professional and
avocational. This reciprocity acknowledged the avocationals’ willingness to share
information and their research with us. We reciprocated by sharing the results of the
archeological testing we have conducted through the UMass Amherst Field School
through several visits to the site and lab, numerous in-person meetings and weekly
phone calls, and documents including non-circulating reports. These efforts were
intended to keep open communication and honor our reciprocal trust relationship.

Heritage Institutions

Historic Deerfield, Inc., has long supported the UMass Amherst Field School, so
their involvement in this project was initially through financial support and their
provision of space for a field lab and public interpretation. When we began discussing
the long-term plan for protecting and stewarding the site, it became evident that Historic
Deerfield could play an important role because they have the infrastructure, staff, and
mission to significantly contribute to a site stewarding project. Though not directly
involved in the negotiation of research designs and field methods until 2008,
representatives of Historic Deerfield became involved in trying to coordinate a joint
funding project for preservation and stewardship of the site in 2007. They helped us
explore funding options as part of a larger preservation agenda for the Deerfield Valley
viewshed. However, at the time it was difficult to mesh the goals of private funding
opportunities with the collaborative multi-stakeholder heritage work already underway and external factors intervened and derailed our efforts.

**Scholars**

Margaret Bruchac and Peter Thomas have continued their research on the social, political, and economic dimensions of seventeenth-century Native and Native/European relations of the middle Connecticut River Valley and have contributed to the interpretation and historical context of the Area D site. Both have visited the site on several occasions and advised on field-testing strategies, stakeholder relations, and interpretations. Thomas participated in fieldwork in Summer 2007, and Bruchac participated in field school programming in 2006 and 2008.

**Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project Stakeholders Workshop**

The relationship building and negotiation process initiated in 2006 and carried out over a two-year period culminated in a stakeholders’ workshop in April 2008. Though we had been meeting and working with representatives of these stakeholder communities individually, this was the first opportunity for stakeholders to meet collectively as a heritage community, and in some cases to meet one another face-to-face for the first time. The workshop, which I convened with Elizabeth Chilton, was planned for Friday, April 11, 2008, from 1:00-5:00 pm, on the campus of Eaglebrook School in Deerfield, Massachusetts. As a sign of their support for the project, Eaglebrook School hosted the workshop and provided a meal for participants to start the program. In advance of the meeting, an agenda was circulated among the invited stakeholders and adjusted according to their feedback. Agenda items included a report on archaeological testing, proposals for future research, publication, dissemination and
public education, and substantial time for discussion and a site walkover (weather permitting). We also circulated a brief, plain language summary of the archaeological investigations at the site and invited advice and feedback. The proceedings, discussions, and outcomes of this workshop are discussed in Chapter 5.

**Conclusion**

The stakeholder relationship building described in this chapter resulted in negotiated archaeological methods that were carried out in 2006 and 2007. These methods and the results of archaeological testing are discussed in Chapter 5. Stakeholder relationship building also led to the development of a set of practices for the poly-communal approach to the archaeology of the Pocumtuck Fort. These practices include open and frequent communication, negotiating field methods and research questions, seeking permissions, finding and focusing on shared goals, reciprocal information sharing, affirming contributions, creating awareness and sensitivity to other stakeholders, and initiating stewardship discussions. Though there can be no simple boilerplate for poly-communal archaeology, the flexibility of these practices gives them broad applicability in diverse contexts with multiple communities. This work culminated in the meeting of the heritage community held in April 2008 and discussed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5
THE NEGOTIATED METHODS AND PRACTICES OF THE POCUMTUCK
FORT ARCHAEOLOGY AND STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

Introduction

The stakeholder relationship building described in Chapter 4 resulted in negotiated archaeological methods carried out at the Area D site (19-FR-415) in Deerfield, Massachusetts, in 2006, 2007, and 2008, and the development of a set of practices for the poly-communal approach to the archaeological dimension of heritage work related to the Pocumtuck Fort. Relationship building efforts culminated in a stakeholder workshop in April 2008. This workshop was central to developing a heritage community, as it was the first time that many stakeholders had the opportunity to see and hear one another’s interests and preservation and stewardship planning was formally initiated.

This chapter discusses the results and outcomes of stakeholder relationship building and engagement in the archaeological dimensions of heritage work. First, I describe the archaeological methods that were chosen to be consistent with stakeholder goals of documentation, preservation, and stewardship, and negotiated with stakeholders. I explore how these field methods, which include common testing strategies, can be applied to reflect stakeholder interests. I then discuss how laboratory and public education practices were changed as a result of stakeholder community engagement. Next, I summarize the results of archaeological testing at Area D in 2006 and 2007, discussed in greater detail elsewhere (see Hart and Chilton [2008]). Finally, I present the results and outcomes of the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship
Project (PFASP) Workshop and I elucidate several themes that emerged through workshop discourse and the conclusions drawn by participants.

**Negotiated Archaeological Methods**

At the outset of this project, archaeologists, representatives of Native American descendant communities, the landowner, avocational archaeologists, and other scholars agreed that archaeological testing would be used as a tool of preservation and stewardship planning. The negotiation of archaeological methods was a central focus of relationship building with stakeholders. It served as a way of de-centering archaeologists and subverting the scientific power of “experts” deployed through dictating research questions and methods. The project research questions reflected stakeholder interests and concerns, aiming to determine whether an archaeological site was present in the project area, the precise size and boundaries of the site, and whether it was a fortified site as the historic record suggests. Some stakeholders favored techniques and practices that were as minimally invasive as possible, while others were less interested in field techniques and deferred to the “expertise” of project archaeologists. This will be explored further with regard to particular negotiated methods.

Reconnaissance and excavation at Area D (19-FR-415) was conducted in June and July 2006 through the UMass Amherst Field School in Archaeology (co-directed by Elizabeth Chilton and Siobhan Hart), in April 2007 through an undergraduate archaeological field methods course (taught by Elizabeth Chilton at UMass Amherst), through independent testing in July 2007 (co-directed by Elizabeth Chilton and Siobhan Hart), and through the UMass Amherst Field School again in July and August 2008.
(directed by Siobhan Hart). Reconnaissance included site walkovers with stakeholders to determine testing locations, non-invasive geophysical surveys, and subsurface archaeological testing. Excavation consisted of two types: (1) the excavation of small test units (1 m x 50 cm and 50 x 50 cm), and (2) excavation of larger units (2 m x 50 cm, 2.5 m x 50 cm, 1 x 1 m, 1 x 2 m, and 2 x 2.5 m). The details of archaeological testing from 2006-2007 are discussed in Report on Archaeological Investigations of the Area D Site (19-FR-415) 2006-2007 (Hart and Chilton 2008) and a report on the 2008 excavations is forthcoming.8 Here, I focus on the dimensions of field methods negotiated with stakeholders related to permissions, testing locations, non-invasive testing strategies, excavation techniques, feature excavation, on-site peer review, and laboratory and public education. These practices, explicit in their connection to the preservation and stewardship goals of project stakeholders, are the practical expression of the poly-communal approach of this project.

Permissions and Power-Sharing

One of the initial complexities I faced in this project was related to “asking permission” to do fieldwork. In most cases, unless sites are known to include human remains, North American archaeologists are required to get permission from two entities: the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) through a permitting process, and the landowner. Even though the project was discussed with all participating stakeholders prior to fieldwork and they had expressed their support, when it came time to “ask permission” to do the work, it was important to ask permission of multiple

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8 The results of the 2008 fieldwork by the UMass Field School in Archaeology at the Area D site (19-FR-415) are not reported here as the laboratory processing and analysis is currently underway.
groups, in particular acknowledging the responsibility to request permission from the traditional keepers of the land, represented by the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs (MCIA), as well as the contemporary landowner and the SHPO (see Figure 5). This was an important part of efforts to demonstrate the contemporary relationship between dispersed Native communities and ancestral homelands to all of the stakeholders. Though permission seeking is a seemingly routine part of archaeological work, recognizing the rights of descendant communities to allow or refuse the project redistributed power, causing a shift in the traditional power structure which privileges government organizations and private property owners. As we institutionalized this re-formulated power structure and restructured power relations in other dimensions of the project, quotidian archaeological practices became transformative.

**Testing Locations**

Testing locations were a negotiated aspect of the archaeological field methods at the Area D site. Most discussions of testing locations took place during site walkovers, which comprised an important dimension of project field methods prior to, during, and after field-testing. During walkovers with stakeholders, including representatives of Native American descendant communities, avocational archaeologists, and scholars, discussions of where subsurface testing should and should not occur took place. Some had particular thoughts on where to test to locate the fort’s palisade (e.g., avocational archaeologists, scholars), others had advice on where to test to locate the remains of everyday activities (e.g., representatives of Native American descendant communities), and still others deferred to the “expertise” of project archaeologists (e.g., landowner). Stakeholders brought unique individual and community perspectives and knowledge to
walkovers and experienced the project area differently: as an archaeological site, as part of a homeland and cultural landscape, and as part of a historical landscape. We were shown and made sensitive to things we might not have noticed otherwise: a place where deer had nested for the night, fire-cracked rock and shell just beneath the leaf litter, a particular viewscape of the valley below, and a sense of danger and struggle for those who lived in this place. Many stakeholders shared their “sense of the place” during site walkovers and this informed their decisions and the advice and feedback on testing strategies they provided.

During walkovers of the site prior to testing in 2006, several locations of disturbance were noted in the project area. Some of this disturbance appeared to be the result of camping activities within the last three decades, evidenced by decaying tarps, beer cans, and other trash on the ground surface. However, at the northern tip of the Area D terrace, three disturbances appeared to be the result of digging activities. Prior to and after initial testing in 2006, we were informed by several avocational archaeologists of unauthorized digging activities at the site in the recent past. These disturbances were likely the evidence of those events. First-hand observations of the disturbances by stakeholders made clear the threats to the site in a way that simply talking about it did not.

Non-Invasive Testing

Many stakeholders were interested in non-invasive testing as a strategy to reduce the overall physical impact to the site and undisturbed cultural features. We introduced non-invasive geophysical testing as an option to stakeholders prior to testing in 2006. Though potentially expensive and labor intensive (especially in the debris
clearing required in advance of the survey at this site), non-invasive techniques were tools in the standard archaeological toolkit that were attractive to stakeholders as a way of focusing subsurface testing and minimizing overall ground disturbance. These techniques appealed to the landowner because it reduced the overall physical impact to their property, and to representatives of Native American descendant communities because it reduced the overall ground disturbance. For field school students, it offered an important learning opportunity. From an archaeological perspective, the geophysical survey was important because subsurface testing of the entire landform would take a significant amount of time, labor, and resources, and the results of geophysical testing allowed us to focus our limited resources. It was important for all stakeholders to note, however, that geophysical surveys require some subsurface testing, at least initially, to determine whether anomalies are cultural features.

Non-invasive geophysical surveys were employed in 2006 and 2007 as a tool for locating potential cultural features, such as a palisade. Dan Lynch of Soilsight, Inc., conducted the surveys, which consisted of ground penetrating radar, electrical resistance, magnetic susceptibility, and magnetometer (Lynch 2006; see also Hart and Chilton [2008]). The geophysical survey covered a total of 2800 m² and eighteen anomalies were recorded. Nine anomalies were tested through subsurface testing and three yielded cultural features, including a large trash pit feature (Feature 13). This data, along with information gathered through subsurface testing, has allowed us to determine the southern boundary of the site, addressing one of the stakeholder community-defined research questions.
Excavation to Base of Plowzone Only

In keeping with the stated goals of project stakeholders, subsurface archaeological testing was used as a tool of preservation planning and the testing methods was designed to reflect this. A total of 47 test units of varying sizes, representing an area of 41.75 m$^2$, were excavated at the Area D site between 2006 and 2007. During this time, only 0.5% of the roughly two-acre project area was tested. Because there was no previously identified site at Area D prior to testing in 2006, we began with 1 m x 50 cm test units along predetermined transects at 5 m intervals. These small test units spaced at short intervals are especially useful in identifying undocumented sites and locating the features in a plowzone context that we expected to encounter based on the results of previous testing on an adjacent terrace (Area C). All soils, feature and non-feature, were screened through 1/8 inch hardware cloth, a practice deemed necessary since we anticipated the recovery of small glass beads, based on previous testing at Area C which yielded a seventeenth-century trash pit feature with tiny seed beads that would be lost through the more commonly used 1/4 inch screen (Hart et al. 2006).

Test units were excavated to the base of the plowzone and, if features were present, they were documented and photographed. During the first season of testing at Area D in 2006, most test units were excavated to the sterile C-horizon transition to determine site stratigraphy. Once site stratigraphy was determined, units were shovel-skimmed only to the plowzone/B-horizon interface. This practice reflected several stakeholders’ request (especially landowner and representatives of Native American descendant communities) that testing be minimally invasive and aimed at documenting
as much of the site as possible, since we were able to test a wider area to an overall shallower depth. In addition to responding to stakeholders’ requests, this practice was scientifically informed, since a geological and archaeological study of the landform revealed no microstratigraphy, though the B-horizon at Area D contains artifacts from bioturbation (as previously documented).

**Feature Excavation**

In 2006 and 2007, feature excavation took place on a very limited basis at the Area D site, despite the large number of features documented at the site (n=25), including thirteen large (>1 m diameter) and small (<1 m diameter) circular features. Though intensive feature excavation could provide significant data for interpretations about seventeenth-century Pocumtuck life, it did not reflect the agreed upon research design and stakeholders’ shared goals of preservation and stewardship. Additionally, limited feature excavation reflected the constraints of the context in which archaeological testing was taking place: an undergraduate and graduate teaching and mentoring context with limited financial, labor, and time resources. Without additional resources, we could not responsibly excavate, process, analyze, or curate materials from more than a few large features each year.

At Area D, small features, such as possible postmolds (many of which turned out to be bioturbation) and the base of a fire hearth truncated by plowing were cross-sectioned, mapped, photographed and excavated, while only one larger feature (Feature 13) was excavated in 2006 and 2007. All other features were exposed, photographed and mapped for preservation and future research purposes.
Feature 13 was bisected, and only half removed through excavation. One quarter of the approximately 1 m wide circular feature was removed for flotation analysis, and one quarter was screened in the field. Since flotation analysis was taking place off site and after the excavation season was completed, it was important to screen a portion of the feature soil in the field to insure that we were not disturbing anything that Native American descendant communities might consider sensitive.

**On-Site Peer Review**

Throughout the fieldwork, stakeholders were invited to visit the site to oversee the process, provide on-site peer review and participate in interpretation “at the trowel’s edge” (Berggren and Hodder 2003:425; see also collection of essays in Silliman [2008] for discussion of a variety of ways of integrating collaboration with Indigenous communities and field school projects). Site visits and walkovers during field-testing served as a means for stakeholders to check in on the fieldwork and to make sure that the archaeological testing in practice was consistent with the research design and agreed upon goals and testing strategies. Since archaeology can be unpredictable, these visits and walkovers during fieldwork also allowed us to keep stakeholders informed, explain our methods and questions in the field context, and get stakeholder input on decisions to be made about additional testing, feature excavation, and interpretations.

There are several benefits to on-site peer reviews and stakeholder participation in fieldwork. For one, fieldwork is usually treated as the realm of archaeologists where archaeologists interact with the past firsthand. On-site peer review and stakeholder site visits turn the gaze from the archaeological record to the *process* of archaeology and heritage work. It allows members of heritage communities to participate in the
production of archaeological knowledge from the very beginning, making it a more reflective, engaged process. In addition, the interpretive and decision-making process that occurs during excavation and is invisibly encoded in the site documentation is transformed into a dialogic process with stakeholders. Finally, on-site peer review allows stakeholders see and participate in the craft of archaeology and witness what makes it a sometimes painstakingly slow process. All of this contributes to a richer heritage discourse, both at and away from the site.

Despite the invitation, not all stakeholders participated in on-site activities. However, avocational archaeologists, Native American descendant community representatives, and scholars visited the site multiple times during fieldwork and participated in informal on-site peer review with archaeologists and field school students. In most cases, stakeholders could only be present for a few hours, and thus, it was difficult to engage in the dialogic process we’d hoped for.

Though on-site peer review adds a level of logistical and social complexity to fieldwork, especially in a teaching context where both students and archaeologists/teachers may be self-conscious and even uncomfortable with visitors present, it contributed significantly to students’ experience of learning heritage values (Chilton 2008). Stakeholder visits to the site connected students to stakeholders directly, without the mediation of project archaeologists. The site was no longer “the place in the woods where Native peoples lived in the past and archaeologists dig in the present.” Rather, these visits transformed the site to a place for dialogue and heritage discourses today and implications for people in the future. It was transformed into a place of meaning making for the past, present, and future.
Laboratory Methods and Handling Non-Artifacts

Negotiated practices extended beyond field methods to the laboratory, especially in the handling of cultural and non-cultural material. Artifacts were placed in bags and recorded in the field and then inventoried, coded, and processed in the field lab in summer 2006 and in the archaeology lab at UMass Amherst in Fall 2007. Depending on material type, artifacts were either washed (e.g. stone), dry brushed (e.g. ceramics, bone), or not cleaned at all (e.g. botanicals, charcoal) (see Hart and Chilton [2008] for guidelines followed). Soil samples were dried. Each artifact was then re-bagged and coded using coding forms and an artifact-coding key. The coding form records provenience information and artifact descriptions using broad categories like “artifact,” “faunal,” “floral,” and “soil sample” and more specific codes for particular artifact categories like metal, stone, pottery, and glass. We have made efforts in our coding practices to replace arbitrary divisions like “prehistoric” and “historic” which suggest inaccurate ethnic attributions and relegate Native material culture to “prehistoric” periods, with a descriptive and materially-oriented coding system that is more in line with overall project goals to challenge the historical erasure of Native peoples (see discussion in Chapter 2; Hart [2004]; Lightfoot [1995]). The coding form information was then entered into a FileMaker Pro version 8.0 database designed for the project by Angela Labrador.

All artifacts recovered from the Area D site are stored in the curation facility of the Department of Anthropology in Machmer Hall, University of Massachusetts Amherst. The material and data is accessible to stakeholders in several ways (electronically and document-based) and several have visited the lab during processing.
and analysis phase to see the materials, photographs, and records of excavation, and
discuss interpretations and ideas.

As is common in any excavation, some material believed to be “cultural” in the
field is determined to be “non-cultural” upon further examination in the lab. Prior to
2006, the common practice of this project (and others) was to discard these materials
(mostly small rocks) in wastepaper baskets or outside of the lab facility. When we
discussed lab procedures with stakeholders in 2006, the representatives of Native
American descendant communities requested that any materials determined to be
natural, and not cultural, be saved and returned to the site. Since then, this procedure
has been followed in all subsequent laboratory processing. We curate a bag of “returns”
in the lab and bring this bag back to the site to redeposit the material on the ground
surface. We also attempted to retain and return the soil remaining after flotation, but
unfortunately construction contractors, unbeknownst to the researcher processing the
soil, removed the receptacle from the flotation lab and efforts to recover the soil were
unsuccessful. Stakeholders were alerted to this problem and measures are being taken
to avoid similar problems in future soil processing.

Results of Field Testing and Laboratory Analysis

Twenty-five features and over 1400 object catalog records, representing over
16,000 individual artifacts, were documented through excavation, screening through 1/8
inch mesh, soil flotation, and the use of non-invasive geophysical techniques at Area D
between 2006 and 2007. The results and interpretations discussed here are summarized
from Report on Archaeological Investigations of the Area D Site (19-FR-415) 2006-
2007 (Hart and Chilton 2008). Documented features include seven possible postmolds,
the base of a fire hearth (containing fire-cracked rock, charcoal, and Native American pottery), and thirteen large (>1 m diameter) and small (<1 m diameter) circular features. Of these, only one large circular feature was cross-sectioned and sampled (Feature 13). The rest were mapped, photographed, and documented.

Feature 13 is a large pit feature approximately 1 meter in diameter and 70 centimeters deep. Fire-cracked rock, Native American ceramics, charcoal, charred domesticates and nut fragments, freshwater shellfish, fish bones, glass trade beads, a wampum bead fragment, a bone awl, lithic shatter, a brass kettle lug, and a metal fishhook were recovered from this feature. Additionally, a narrow linear stain, possibly a palisade feature, was uncovered at the Area D site. Other artifacts recovered from site areas include Native American pottery sherds, cut brass and copper fragments, glass trade beads, wampum fragments, fire-cracked rock, a few lithic flakes, and a variety of charred plant remains (Hart and Chilton 2008; see Kasper [2008] for discussion of archaeobotanical remains; see Woods [2008] for ceramic vessel lot analysis).

The seventeenth-century Native American component at the Area D site appears to be focused on the flat terrace bounded on three sides by steep inclines, encompassing approximately 6000 m² (1.4 acres), though further research may refine this assessment of site boundaries. The artifacts recovered and the limited number of features investigated suggests domestic activities at this site, including the accumulation and disposition of refuse and food cooking and processing. The recovery of artifacts consistent with a narrow time frame (late sixteenth to early seventeenth century) and lack of overlapping features suggests a single occupation (or at least a narrow range of occupation duration), though the length of occupation has not yet been determined. As
residential structures have not yet been identified (though they may be indicated by the dispersed possible postmolds documented), it is unclear whether people were living at this site for a season, multiple seasons, or multiple years. It is possible that this site represents a short-term settlement, and perhaps a place for diplomacy, as suggested in the historic records (see correspondence of John Winthrop, Jr. to Thomas Willets, dated July 27, 1664; also Journal of Jan Dareth and Jacob Loockermans, May 19, 1664 entry, as recorded in O’Callaghan and Fernow [1881:380-382]). A midden deposit at the northerly tip of the terrace could represent longer-term or multiple occupations and the capping and re-filling indicated by the stratigraphy of Feature 13 suggests that people continued to live at or use the site, or returned to this place, after the initial trash deposit.

No artifact production or food processing activity areas have been identified at the site thus far. No evidence of a stone workshop, or activity area where stone tools were used in significant quantities, has been located. In fact, there is a significant reduction in the amount of lithic material recovered from Area D than from earlier Late Woodland period sites in the area like the Pine Hill site (see Chilton et al. [2000]). The metals, especially cut brass and copper shaped into arrowheads, ornaments, and used for other purposes, appears to have replaced lithic manufacture, at least for expedient tools and projectiles. This shift is an indication of major transformations in social political and economic relations surrounding the use and production of items that once had different connotations.

The presence of folded and perforated pieces of cut copper and brass in a refuse pit context, consistent with the discarded pieces from processing metal tools, suggests
that some amount of brass and copper processing was taking place at Area D. In addition, the large quantity of glass trade beads recovered suggests that they were widely incorporated into daily life, perhaps strung on clothing, footwear, bags, and other adornments. Hamell (1983, cited in Cobb [2003:4]), argues that glass beads and copper alloys were readily accepted early on in the Northeast (in particular by the Iroquois), primarily because they were recognized as broadly analogous to similar materials, such as quartz and native copper, that have strong groundings in Native materialities and worldviews pre-dating European contact.

Is this a fortified site? This question cannot be answered conclusively with the data available to date. So far, there is no evidence that this site was fortified. The archaeological evidence from the handful of seventeenth-century New England Native forts that have been tested, discussed in Chapter 2, demonstrates that the simplified term “fort” used in colonial documents and subsequent texts encompasses a variety of physical structures and encompasses different concepts of space and its purpose. Though we believe this location to be the place (or, minimally one of several places) referred to in historical documents as “The Pocumtuck Fort,” there is not yet conclusive evidence that this site was fortified.

The fieldwork in 2006 and 2007 provided evidence of a very important archaeological site: one of the most intact seventeenth-century Native sites that exist today in New England and possibly the “Pocumtuck Fort” referred to in historic documents. These results, additional research, and plans for long-term preservation and stewardship of the Area D site, comprised the heritage discourse engaged by stakeholders at the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Workshop in 2008.
Outcomes of Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project Workshop

I convened the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project (PFASP) Workshop, held on April 11, 2008, at Eaglebrook School with Elizabeth Chilton. The workshop was aimed at providing an opportunity for project stakeholders to collectively discuss the archaeological research at the Area D site to date, proposals for future research, including the 2008 UMass Amherst Field School in Archaeology, and preservation and stewardship. Scheduling a date for the meeting was challenging, as the different personal and employment commitments and responsibilities of stakeholders made finding a common date among all twelve invited participants impossible. In the end, the conveners prioritized the schedules of the three primary stakeholders whose participation was crucial: Native American descendant communities representative (MCIA), the landowner, and the project archaeologists. Because of scheduling conflicts, two MCIA representatives, two scholars, and an institutional representative were not able to attend the workshop, though they were kept informed and provided with all workshop materials and transcripts. In addition to the invited representatives, the chair of the Deerfield Historical Commission (DHC) was invited to attend by avocational archaeologist and DHC member David “Bud” Driver. Driver wanted to represent himself at the meeting, and not the Commission, so the DHC Chair was invited to represent the interests of the DHC, the Town of Deerfield, and Deerfield residents.

Prior to the workshop, stakeholders were formally invited and provided with a brief summary of the archaeological investigations at the site for review and feedback. A draft agenda was circulated and additions and changes were solicited. The workshop
was organized with time for formal presentations and time for discussion, feedback, and reflection. Participants were provided with a folder including the workshop agenda, copies of existing publications on the site, a revised brief report on the archaeological testing to date, information on National Register Eligibility for preservation planning, and dates and contact information for the 2008 UMass Amherst Field School. Minutes of the workshop were recorded by Angela Labrador (Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project [PFASP] 2008), edited and approved by all in attendance afterwards, and circulated to all project stakeholders.

Several discourses emerged from the presentations and discussions at the workshop. These discourses focused on testing strategies, identifying and mitigating threats to the site, preservation planning, and interpretations. In the following section, I consider each emergent discourse, discussing how stakeholders engaged with one another along different axes and at varying scales.

**Emerging Discourses**

**Discourse 1: Testing Locations and Strategies**

Testing locations and strategies, a focus of discussion among project archaeologists and individual stakeholders prior to, during, and after fieldwork in 2006 and 2007, emerged as a discourse among stakeholder participants at the PFASP workshop. Following presentations on the research at the Area D site and the proposed research design and methods for 2008 testing, several stakeholders pointed out that more information must be gathered on the site for protection and preservation. They noted the importance of determining site boundaries and knowing the presence and density of features for implementing preservation planning. Stakeholders also
suggested additional locales for testing, based on the location of natural resources and traditional knowledge of kinship ties and settlement patterns.

As a result of this discussion, stakeholder feedback on testing strategies was incorporated into the revised research design for the 2008 UMass Amherst Field School. The following research questions and justification excerpted from the 2008 UMass Amherst Field School research design reflect and incorporate stakeholder feedback:

**Research Question: Boundaries and Concentrations**

What are the site boundaries and where are the artifact concentrations? A determination of site boundaries and artifact distributions/densities is crucial for National Register eligibility and preservation planning. We have determined that the artifact content of the plowzone drops off south of the site datum, but we do not yet know the eastern boundary of the site or artifact density on the north portion of the site. Several stakeholders also requested an investigation of the relationship of this site to the year-round spring through archaeological testing. The results of these investigations may expand the site boundaries. To address this question, we propose systematic testing along predetermined transects at regular intervals in areas of the site not yet tested. We estimate approximately 30 1 x .5 m test units at 5 m intervals on the site grid.

**Research Question: Palisade**

Is this a “fort”? Is it a palisaded site? Though we believe this location to be the place (or, minimally one of several places) referred to in historical documents as the “Pocumtuck Fort,” there is not yet conclusive evidence that this site was fortified. This
is important to determine if it is appropriate to continue to call this the “Pocumtuck Fort.” In addition, a fortification would indicate a significant change in lifeway for the Native peoples of the middle Connecticut River Valley, as there is no evidence of fortified sites in the region prior to European contact. The linear stain (Feature 36) requires further investigation to determine whether it represents the remains of a fortification. We propose uncovering the extent of this linear stain using a series of 1 x .5 m test units extending north and south of Feature 36, only removing the plowzone to expose and assess the feature. If the feature continues, portions will be selected for bisection to assess feature profile and the entire feature will be documented in planview.

**Research Question: Features**

What was the purpose and distribution of large circular features? Feature function and patterning is important to understand for National Register eligibility, preservation planning, and site interpretation. We have determined that Feature 13 was primarily used as a refuse pit, but we do not know the purpose, stratigraphy, or artifact content of the other large circular features documented at this site. Without sampling these features, it is impossible to know whether they serve similar functions to Feature 13. Further testing of a sample of these features can help determine whether these other large and small circular features are refuse pits, fire hearths, storage pits, or another kind of cultural feature. A closer examination of the distribution of these features across the site may contribute to interpretations about activity areas and the location of structures within the site. We propose bisecting at least one circular pit feature using the same methodology employed for Feature 13 (recover 1/4 of the total feature for
flotation, screen 1/4 of total feature in field through 1/8 inch mesh, and leave the remaining half in place) so the results are comparable.

**Testing Strategies Summary**

The collective discourse on testing locations and strategies that emerged at the PFASP workshop directly impacted the research design for archaeological testing in 2008. Though the proposed research questions were designed to address the concerns stakeholders had previously articulated, stakeholders’ emphasis on determining site boundaries and feature densities and testing additional locales based on the location of natural resources and knowledge of kinship ties and settlement patterns shaped the specific research questions and methods that were applied in the 2008 fieldwork. The process of stakeholder feedback is not just about incorporating their changes and feedback into existing research designs, but about heightening our sensitivity to stakeholder interests and concerns so that we can develop research questions from the start that reflect community engagement.

**Discourse 2: Threats to the Site**

Another important discourse that emerged at the workshop focused on the disturbances at this site caused by construction, camping activities, and unauthorized digging, and how to mitigate and prevent threats to the site. The timing and extent of the unauthorized digging that took place at the site prior to the 2006 UMass Amherst Field School investigations was discussed. Many stakeholders had witnessed the effects of these activities personally. During the course of this discussion, several stakeholders raised examples of looting at other archaeological sites in Deerfield. These examples connected the Area D site to the broader historical and archaeological landscape of
Deerfield and to the unauthorized digging practices and social networks of individuals who engage in such practices in the area. Because of the threat of unauthorized digging and the experiences of many stakeholders with sites that have been looted and looters themselves, stakeholders counseled us to continue to keep site location and landowner information confidential and to “watch who we discuss things with,” though it was acknowledged that many of the people who would pose a threat to the site already knew its location (PFASP 2008).

Though recent threats to the site from human activity were the primary concern of stakeholders, some also expressed a concern about natural erosion of the terraces and disturbance to the site caused by nearby railroad construction. We were encouraged to evaluate the effect of erosion and disturbance by the nearby railroad construction by testing off the edges of the slopes and to incorporate this into future research at the site.

**Discourse 3: Preservation Planning**

**The Meaning of Preservation**

Preservation was a central theme of workshop discourse. The meaning of the word “preservation” was discussed explicitly and obliquely throughout the workshop. From the discussion, it is evident that meaning of the term is in process and being actively negotiated by stakeholders. In this context, it variously includes meanings such as protecting archaeological resources in their existing state, site protection activities (protecting the site from damage, especially unauthorized digging) and conservation of the cultural resources present (protecting the cultural resources from overuse). Several stakeholders expressed their concern that “preservation” can be an empty word when not rooted in action: “we need something tangible to the word preservation” (PFASP 2008). At the same time, many acknowledged that archaeological testing was a
necessary initial action. As discussed above, stakeholders pointed out that the archaeological testing strategy should be aimed at determining what is there to preserve before a preservation plan could be put in place. One stakeholder noted: “the big thing is to find boundaries--find out all your questions--how many firepits? Palisade? Boundaries? Find out what’s there and preserve it” (PFASP 2008). Workshop participants agreed that it was the responsibility of all members of the heritage community to research and explore preservation and protection options for the group to consider while archaeological testing continued.

**Institutionalizing Preservation and Stewardship**

The discussion of preservation punctuated the entire workshop. A second crucial dimension of preservation planning that emerged from workshop discussion was the need for institutionalizing preservation and stewardship activities focused on the site. Several stakeholders observed that institutionalizing preservation and stewardship was important because it could provide the resources and personnel necessary for site monitoring and stewardship activities and would allow for accountability. Stakeholders explained and articulated the failures of preservation plans where institutional support and organization was lacking based on their own experiences. In the course of this discussion, the focus shifted again from the Area D site specifically, to examples of other preservation plans that have not been successful. This moved the discussion from a site-specific discourse to one in which people made connections to their experiences with other sites in Deerfield and elsewhere. Similar to the discussions of the threats to the site and ways of mitigating them, preservation-planning discussions were anchored
and illustrated by the experiences of stakeholders with other archaeological sites and preservation planning efforts beyond Area D.

Stakeholders raised concerns about continuity for this project and related this to institutionalizing preservation and stewardship. Several stakeholders expressed a concern about the future of the project, pointing out that, as a graduate student, I was likely to leave the area and not be able to do the organizing for the project in the future. One stakeholder presented a hypothetical scenario: “We’re the stewards, so Siobhan goes to Arizona--who is left behind to ensure this?” (PFASP 2008). Another asked directly: “Siobhan, what will happen after you leave?” (PFASP 2008). The issue of continuity and “leaving” has long been an issue raised by communities who have had researchers like anthropologists and archaeologists come into their community for “research” and then depart with “data,” leaving the community with nothing. When stakeholders, especially avocational archaeologists and representatives of Native American descendant communities expressed this concern at the workshop, it made it even clearer that the project needs to be institutionalized to ensure continuity, but in a way that maintains stakeholders’ access to project organizers, archaeologists, and preservation coordinators.

Public Education

A third dimension of the preservation discourse focused on public education. One stakeholder asked: “What about the public education? These issues [preservation and public education] go hand in hand…But how do we talk about the site in terms of stewardship, preservation, etc., what is the law, etc.? Not just ‘look at the stuff we’ve found.’ How to talk about what’s at stake? It needs to go together--preservation plus
public education about preservation” (PFASP 2008). Stakeholders expressed varying views on public education and interpretation, ranging from ideas about incorporating interpretations of this site into broader tourism initiatives, to suggestions for focused interpretation and exhibits.

**Preservation Discourse Summary**

No concrete plans for the dimensions of preservation discussed above were reached during the workshop. One of the barriers to the preservation discussion was that the landowner representative was only present for a short time during the workshop, though they had volunteered to host the meeting and were expected to participate fully. The crucial role of landowners in preservation planning was acknowledged. However, though their participation may have led to a more focused discussion of preservation and stewardship options, the landowner’s absence did not preclude substantive collective discussions of preservation among project stakeholders that will continue and take shape as the heritage work continues.

**Discourse 4: Invoking and Interpreting the Past**

Though the workshop was largely focused on engaging with stakeholders with regards to research planning, methods, and long-term management of archaeological resources at the Area D site, stakeholders also shared their interpretations and experiences of the site with one another. Prior to this, interpretations had been shared among individual stakeholders and project archaeologists, but this was the first opportunity for stakeholders to collectively share their interpretations. Here, heritage was the focus of an intercultural dialogue. One stakeholder stated:

> It’s a beautiful village site, beautiful vegetation--nuts, berries, fish. If I went back in time the area was probably open and it’s a great peninsula for guarding
against attacks—you can see who is coming, get the women and children out. It is strategically set as a village. There were not so many palisades before contact period—no need back then because folks just didn’t fight with one another, so it probably would have just happened—I don’t know—they could see what was coming. (PFASP 2008)

Another stakeholder later suggested:

To me, Pine Hill was the granary and all the corn was stuffed at Pine Hill. The Mohawk massacre—drawing them out of the fort, then went to Pine Hill to destroy their food source, and the Pocomtucks went to defend their food store. The Lockerman and Dareth journal identifies two separate places—village and fort. The village was where they went to treat for prisoners; but the captives were at the fort. I hope there’s still more to this story than we’ve gotten to. Perhaps the fort is on the Connecticut River side of the mountain and they met on this side of the mountain. That’s why we don’t see a massacre site—I think there’s a lot more to this than we realize today. (PFASP 2008)

The collective sharing of interpretations illustrated by these two statements was an important dimension of community building through heritage work at the workshop. Stakeholders drew on different kinds of knowledge—cultural, historical, experiential, oral historical, and archaeological—to construct their interpretations. They connected themselves and the communities they represent to the meaning of the past(s) represented by Area D site. The process definitively shifted the privilege of interpreting and constructing knowledge about the site from archaeologists to stakeholders. However, the workshop dialogue was not just about the past, but also served to produce meaning in the present through the mobilization of the past.

**PFASP Workshop: Endings and Beginnings**

At the close of the workshop, participants agreed that a meeting should be planned following the archaeological testing in summer 2008. The project archaeologists were charged with determining the extent and integrity of the archaeological resources at the site, and all participants were tasked with researching
preservation and stewardship options to move us towards concrete planning and decision-making.

Despite significant work invested in this project on the part of all stakeholders between 2006 and 2008, stakeholder participants agreed that we were really just at the beginning of both Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project and at initiating broader transformations in heritage work, archaeological practice, and preservation and stewardship planning in Deerfield. The workshop successfully brought most stakeholders together for the first time and allowed for sharing and realizing common goals and concerns--unmediated by project archaeologists--and crucial to building a heritage community. For the first time, stakeholders physically “saw” each other and the individual and community interests that they each represented. Heritage was the focus of an intercultural dialogue and archaeologists served as facilitators and stakeholders. However, the lack of full participation on the part of the landowner made it clear that even in a project where the archaeological research and methods are designed to subvert traditional power relations, the means for securing preservation and stewardship cannot be subverted in the same way, as they are significant legal constraints. Under current legal, political, and economic structures, little can be done if landowners and heritage institutions with the capability and infrastructure of ensuring preservation for the long-term do not fully come to the table.

**Conclusion**

The poly-communal approach to the archaeology of the Pocumtuck Fort resulted in a set of field methods and practices and culminated in a workshop for project stakeholders where a heritage community comprised of diverse stakeholders coalesced.
These practices, shaped by stakeholder engagement, have changed archaeology “at the trowel’s edge,” but also the social relationships that underpin the project and the process of knowledge production that social science research engages in. The stakeholder relationship building and negotiation discussed in Chapter 4 and the results and outcomes discussed here are ongoing and emergent. If stakeholder interests and concerns should change in the future, the archaeological practices discussed here may change as well. In the next chapter, I evaluate the poly-communal approach to the Pocumtuck Fort and reflect on dimensions of the project as both archaeologist and stakeholder.
CHAPTER 6

REFLECTIONS ON THE POLY-COMMUNAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE POCUMTUCK FORT

Introduction

At the beginning of this dissertation, I described heritage using the analogy of a layered fabric patchwork on which people are working to repair holes and frayed edges using different knowledge threads, including archaeology. I stated that twenty-first century archaeologists face two practical challenges: (1) decolonizing a discipline deeply rooted in the colonial milieu; and (2) engaging in discourses with diverse individuals and communities about the meaning, value, and treatment of heritage sites. I noted that despite the fact that these two challenges are often treated as discrete, in my view they are interlocking issues that can be addressed through practice. To extend the heritage as fabric metaphor, archaeologists can engage in heritage work with and for communities to unravel and re-ply threads of theory and practice, twisting together the fibers spun by both archaeologists and communities. This unraveling, re-plying, and twisting means deep engagement with multiple communities to create threads comprised of epistemologies in Western scientific traditions and those from community traditions. It fundamentally changes archaeological knowledge production and produces new threads and patches for the heritage fabric that are imbued with meaning about the past, present, and future by people in the present.

In this dissertation, I have presented a model for multi-stakeholder community-based practice and applied the model to a case study. In Chapters 1 and 2, I demonstrated how the scientific detachment of archaeological practice has perpetuated
the historical erasure of Native peoples in Pocumtuck/Deerfield over the past two hundred years and the central role that the Pocumtuck Fort plays in dominant historical narrative and memory.

In Chapter 3, I discussed how community-based archaeology is fundamentally changing the practice of archaeology around the world. I critiqued several community-based models and concluded that if the goals of such projects are to decolonize, challenge historical erasures, and promote a more equitable and just society, then community-based approaches must not simply replace one power structure with another without changing how power is distributed, perceived, employed, and negotiated (after Atalay [2008]). To address this, I presented an alternative model for community-based archaeological practice. In my view, a poly-communal approach is an alternative to community-based models that privilege single stakeholders, concentrate power with “experts” like archaeologists, and marginalize already disenfranchised voices with a multivocal cacophony.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I discussed how I mobilized this alternative model of archaeological practice with respect to the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeological and Stewardship Project (PFASP), the case study employed to test the effectiveness of poly-communal engagement in decolonizing efforts. This project involved developing a specific set of methodologies for community building because it hinged on voluntary collaborations taking place outside of legislated relationships. As such, it presented unique challenges, but also afforded the opportunity to build stakeholder relationships and negotiate power relations through the dialogue and action of heritage work.
At the outset of this dissertation, I proposed that community-based approaches to archaeological research that engage *diverse* local and non-local stakeholders address the twofold problem of decolonizing archaeological practice and ensuring the viability and relevance of heritage work. Thus far, I have explicated this approach and here I will evaluate its effectiveness as a tool for decolonizing archaeological practice and dominant histories through heritage work. I conclude the dissertation by first reflecting on the complexities of working with and for diverse stakeholders and then on what changed in how I conceived of the poly-communal model over the course of the project. I end by discussing the project’s future and evaluating its effectiveness as a decolonizing project.

**Complexities of Working with Diverse Stakeholders**

There were significant challenges and complexities in engaging multiple communities through “poly-communal archaeology.” In recognizing and examining what has gone smoothly, as well as what has not, I have gained insights about the social, economic, ethical, political, and legal contexts of heritage work in a place like Deerfield, Massachusetts, where heritage values that marginalize and erase Native American, and other non-white/Anglo/Protestant/male, pasts and presents have traditionally been re-inscribed and are contested today. While the specifics of these complexities are contextual, the broader themes may be generalizable to other projects and contexts. Here, I reflect on these complexities from the position of organizer, convener, and stakeholder.
Expectations

Although all of the stakeholders agreed that preservation and stewardship were our primary goals, at times stakeholders expressed different, and sometimes divergent, research questions and expectations about the pace of the project. For example, there were differences of opinion among archaeologists on the project as to research questions and field methods. Some archaeologists, both professional and avocational, were interested in the contents of the features at the site because of their interests in the lifeways and material culture of Native peoples in the seventeenth century. They advocated sampling a greater number of features. Others advocated a conservative approach to feature excavation. Though these disagreements caused some tensions and debate, the poly-communal approach provided a mechanism for conflict resolution. Since field methods were negotiated with stakeholders, the power to decide which approach to take lay with the heritage community and was resolved through a discursive process, rather than being the decision of one archaeologist or another. For the most part, instances like this resulted in productive dialogue about archaeological ethics, practice, and conservation, but different expectations about the research process and results should be expected, even when shared goals are agreed upon.

The slow pace of this project has also been frustrating to some stakeholders, particularly to some of the avocational archaeologists. I characterize the pace as slow, due in part to the nature of scientific investigations, the fact that much of the fieldwork and analysis thus far took place within a teaching and mentorship framework, and due to the collaborative approach of the project, which requires the involvement of multiple communities. Again, differing expectations, despite agreed upon goals and methods,
are likely to arise in poly-communal projects. In the future, assessing and discussing stakeholder expectations should be incorporated as a critical part of the heritage work and discourse of the PFASP.

**Commitment**

In addition to differing questions and expectations, differing levels of commitment among stakeholders should also be expected. Clearly, I, as convener, organizer, and stakeholder, have a greater level of commitment than other stakeholders, whose primary focus is not this project. The varying commitment among stakeholders does not necessarily reflect their interest level or perceived stake in the project (though it may), but may also have to do with geography, employment, other responsibilities, and time. This is especially true of projects taking place on a voluntary basis, outside of a regulatory framework, where both local and non-local stakeholders are engaged. I found these different levels of commitment challenging in my role as convener because some stakeholders required a greater time commitment than others, and maintaining equity among competing commitments to different groups can be difficult. The differing levels of commitment also impact the pace and outcomes of the project, especially when there is low commitment from stakeholders with a lot of power in the decision-making and implementation process. As the PFASP develops, commitment levels from stakeholders should be assessed and discussed among the group since a commitment is required from several stakeholders to continue the project and additional commitments will be required to achieve project goals.
Community Dynamics and Stakeholder Relationships

Another significant challenge of poly-communal approaches is working through the dynamics of multiple communities. Archaeologists are not necessarily trained to understand the dynamics of living communities other than our own, and what we do know comes from experience and, in some cases, our training as anthropologists. Figuring out “how things work” in Indian Country, in avocational networks, or in small town politics can be challenging. There are usually competing claims and factions within communities, and, as noted in Chapter 3, many of the individuals that represent stakeholder communities are not members of just one single community. In addition, there are often inter-group relationships, where community members have relationships with other stakeholder communities, and these may not come to light, or seem relevant, until a controversial issue arises.

The greatest challenge of the Pocumtuck Fort project has been maintaining a mutual trust relationship with all stakeholders, getting the stakeholders to “see” each other and each other’s interests in the project, and bringing the stakeholders together to form a heritage community. As discussed in Chapter 3, building trust relationships with and among stakeholders is one the most important aspects of poly-communal and community-based approaches. In my opinion, this project has been successful in building trust relationships with stakeholders, but more work is required in maintaining this trust and building trust among the stakeholders. The different worldviews that each stakeholder brings to projects, including understandings of history and how to steward the past, present lots of places for productive dialogue and insights, but also plenty of room for misunderstandings. And just as communities are not static, neither are the
relationships that develop among stakeholders, nor the commitments that participants in heritage community make at the outset of a project. As projects evolve, some stakeholders may become more like partners in sharing goals and responsibilities, while others may not, and may decide to no longer contribute to or support the project.

**The Future of the Pocumtuck Fort Archaeology and Stewardship Project**

The heritage work of the PFASP is ongoing. In the summer of 2008, I directed the UMass Field School in Archaeology at the Area D site. We conducted archaeological testing based on the research questions, research design, and methods developed with project stakeholders at the PFASP Workshop (see Chapter 5). The fieldwork yielded important information about the presence and density of features at Area D and was an opportunity to further engage with stakeholders through the archaeological dimensions of heritage work (e.g., informal site visits, formal talks to field school students, a website and blog [designed by Angela Labrador] for communicating with stakeholders nearby and at a distance).

Despite three, albeit short, seasons of fieldwork and three years of relationship building, as one stakeholder succinctly put it at the end of the PFASP Workshop, “we’re at the beginning” (PFASP 2008). This is both frustrating and exciting. I have to admit that after several years of work, I expected to be a bit farther from the metaphorical “starting gate.” The reaction I get from other archaeologists when I tell them how little of the site has been tested or how few features have been sampled is one that usually goes like this: “Really? That’s all you’ve done? That’s all you have to work with?” The tone is one of surprise, tinged with disbelief and a hint of sympathy. My response is: “yes and no.” Yes, that is all we have to work with in terms of understanding
seventeenth-century Pocumtuck life at Area D. But, no, that is not all we have done in terms of understanding how the past is mobilized in the present, how people today make meaning out of the past, and how historical memories are made. The exciting part for me is that this is only the beginning of a transformative process. Stakeholders are empowered to chart the course for future research, preservation and stewardship related to the Pocumtuck Fort. As several stakeholders have pointed out, institutional support and resources are crucial at this juncture to developing a plan for the long-term stewardship of the Area D site and for expanding the decolonizing program initiated with this project beyond archaeologists and project stakeholders.

**Reflections on the Case Study**

**How the Model Changed**

The PFASP strives to transform the “Pocumtuck Fort” from a monument to the legacy of historical erasure, to a commemoration of community engagement, cultural continuity, and social justice through engagement with multiple stakeholders. Though the goals remained the same, my vision of a poly-communal model changed over the course of the project. At the outset, my conception of a poly-communal model was similar to the multivocal model I critique in Chapter 3. I conceived of all stakeholders having an equal say in heritage matters and in the collective work that we would pursue. This changed when I saw that the stakeholders who had significant social, political, and economic power outside of the heritage community assumed that they had as much within it, and as a result, paid little attention to those who did not. I realized that we were simply reproducing the same power structure that existed in other projects and it
became clear that *power really matters in heritage work.* As a result, I shifted my conception of the poly-communal model so that redistributing power is at the core.

**Moving Ahead with Hindsight**

Reflecting on this case study has led me to identify several things that I will do differently in applying a poly-communal model in the future. The first is better integrating stakeholders into the fieldwork process. Despite some efforts to engage stakeholders in on-site peer reviews, site visits, and field school pedagogy, the link between fieldwork and stakeholders was weak in my view. As discussed in Chapter 5, the benefits of on-site stakeholder participation are many. Future projects will gain from a stronger integration of stakeholder participation in archaeological fieldwork, which could begin with simply asking stakeholders whether and how we could get them to participate in fieldwork.

Second, in future projects I will strive to improve on efforts to involve institutional stakeholders. Institutional support is crucial to heritage projects because they contribute much-needed infrastructure and resources. One possible way of improving these relationships is by working to dovetail programming, such as educational programs or museum displays. Such shared work can strengthen commitments from institutional stakeholders and can provide heritage projects with the necessary stability and continuity to accomplish project goals.

Finally, I learned the value of “keeping current” on community issues through this project when a seemingly unrelated local issue arose and derailed a promising funding opportunity. I was caught off-guard by this development because I hadn’t done my homework on the non-heritage related issues involving several project stakeholders.
In the future, I will make a concerted effort to stay current on community issues—
heritage or otherwise—to avoid unexpected complications, or at least be better prepared
when they arise.

**Contributions to Archaeological Practice in Indigenous Homelands**

Though the PFASP has not achieved the broad goals outlined above in any
measurable way yet, in my view, this project makes two significant contributions to the
practice of archaeology focused on Native American sites in the Pocumtuck homeland.
First, it shifts archaeologists’ “default” position from one of non-engagement to one of
poly-communal engagement. Second, it offers a model for restructuring power
relationships in archaeological projects. I discuss each in turn.

The first contribution of this project is initiating a change in the way
archaeology is practiced on Native American sites in Deerfield by developing trust
relationships among archaeologists and stakeholder communities and making
archaeological research applicable and responsive to contemporary human needs. Like
other monuments, real and metaphorical, the Pocumtuck Fort has the capacity to serve
hegemony, or serve as a meaningful and just alternative to dominant histories. The
potential for people to challenge dominant histories and historical erasures through
heritage work is great if archaeologists shift from “default” positions of inaction to
developing new relationships with stakeholder communities. The focus on direct
engagement with individuals and communities about every aspect of the Pocumtuck
Fort project has begun to lay the groundwork for broader transformations.

The second contribution of the project is restructuring and redistributing power
in an archaeological project in the Pocumtuck homeland. As noted throughout Chapters
4 and 5, the redistribution and negotiation of power is central to poly-communal approaches to archaeology and was critical to the goals and outcomes of the PFASP. By working collectively with those who have historically been invested with significant power when it comes to archaeology and defining heritage values (e.g., heritage institutions, state bureaucracies, landowners) along with those who have been historically disempowered (e.g., descendant communities) or overlooked (e.g., avocational archaeologists) in these realms, we have negotiated (and continue to negotiate) a power structure that is more equitable and just. Sets of shifting and context-specific relations among stakeholders have emerged. Additionally, we have developed a structure that engages multiple stakeholders while avoiding the pitfalls of multivocal models that disempower dispersed descendant communities in colonized contexts like Deerfield. In the poly-communal model I proposed and applied to this case study, stakeholder hierarchy is contextual and emerging. The power structure and relationships reflect this.

**Decolonizing Heritage**

This project contributes to the process of decolonizing archaeologists’ approach to investigations of an Indigenous homeland and has implications beyond just the Pocumtuck homeland. It is difficult to measure the effects of decolonizing efforts, especially through heritage work in the short term, as they are often intangible, dwelling in the realms of consciousness, knowledge production, and discourse. However, one promising sign I see in that direction in the Pocumtuck homeland is that several Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders brought together through this project are now pursuing partnerships related to other heritage work. It may be a miniscule shift on
a global scale, but it represents a significant change in the practice of heritage work in the middle Connecticut River Valley.

Community-based approaches are about the dialectic between past, present, and future and initiating social change. They seek to make heritage work a transformative process for participants. In these projects, archaeologists can use their social and political power to insist on the inclusion of disempowered people, like many Indigenous communities, in planning and implementing archaeological projects, interpretation, and preservation and stewardship efforts (McDavid 2003:51). But as Native scholar Taiaiake Alfred (1999:xxiv) argues, “if we are to effect real change...non-indigenous people must come to share the objective of justice.” Poly-communal projects, like the case study presented here, can foster transformations in the direction of social justice by highlighting relationships among dispersed descendant communities and ancestral homelands and including multiple stakeholders to ensure the long-term viability and relevance of heritage work. Historical erasures are challenged directly through the practice of poly-communal engagement and collaboration.

Indigenous scholar and archaeologist Sonya Atalay (2008:34) argues that decolonizing through multivocality means finding “ways of combining Western and Indigenous theoretical and methodological concepts that begin at the planning stages of research, and works to create diverse approaches to long-term management of archaeological resources, as well as both the tangible and intangible aspects of heritage.” To her, it is crucial to work towards multivocal projects that will fundamentally affect the daily practice of archaeology (Atalay 2008:34). I strongly agree with Atalay on this point, and I believe that poly-communal approaches can
further decolonizing efforts in archaeology because they focus on power and creating a multivocal dialogue. Poly-communal approaches create space for heritage work informed and shaped by communities. This approach, shared by those from historically dominant and historically marginalized communities, confronts historical erasures and offers opportunities to engage in heritage work that produces alternatives to the dominant, colonized narratives.

**Processes: Beginnings in the Present**

While the concluding chapter of most dissertations touts the exciting results of a project, here I take a cue from Indigenous scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) who argues that process is more important than results. She states: “In all community approaches process—that is, methodology and method—is highly important. In many projects the process is far more important than the outcome. Processes are expected to be respectful, to enable people, to heal and to educate. They are expected to lead one small step further towards self-determination” (Tuhiwai Smith 1999:127-128; original emphasis). The approach and case study presented here are about developing a process, rather than seeking closure or a definite end point. The ongoing and unfinished state of the heritage work discussed here means that it continues to be shaped by the multiple communities that are participating in the work. Hopefully the outcome of this, and other efforts to decolonize archaeology, will not be simply a process that thrives only in a specialized corner of archaeology, but one that will become a necessary and integral part of all archaeological practice.

Today, some argue that the next important step for decolonizing archaeology is the “ethnographic turn” (Castaneda and Matthews, ed. 2008; see also Edgeworth 2006),
integrating ethnographic methods to facilitate power sharing and more equitable relationships (Hollowell and Nicholas 2008:74). Ethnographic archaeology (not to be confused with “ethnoarchaeology”) refers to:

archaeological projects based in research and a management of the past that have integrated ethnography into their core processes and dynamics as a strategic way to further develop archaeology as a reflexive and social science through the investigation of and engagement with the sociopolitical and economic dimensions of its own enterprise. (Castaneda and Matthews 2008:5-6)

Proponents of ethnographic archaeology argue that it provides perspective on archaeology as a social construction in the present that produces meaning and knowledge about the past and present (Castaneda and Matthews 2008:15). Indeed, the incorporation of ethnographic methods into archaeological projects, especially those working with multiple community stakeholders, is increasing. For example, archaeologist Ian Hodder (2003:165) states that he has several ethnographers who work on the well-known Catalhoyuk project who “assist in the dialogue with different communities” because in his view, “to understand what these communities are, and to understand the questions they would most like to have answered, is a specialist area of research.”

Though not positioned as such, the case study presented here represents a kind of “ethnographic archaeology” in its reflection and examination of the social, political, economic, and ethical contexts of stakeholders and emphasis on archaeology and heritage work as social phenomena. However, I disagree with Hodder’s (2003:165) assessment that this comprises a specialized area of research. Rather, I believe that all archaeologists should be capable of engaging in dialogue with contemporary people about heritage matters.
Decolonizing heritage work requires that archaeologists do more than just examine and alter our own practice, even with additional ethnographic attention to sociopolitical and economic dimensions of the archaeological endeavor. We must also move beyond practice and stakeholders because, as Atalay (2008:38) reminds us, we need to change the “mindset of people on a much broader scale as to what is expected from archaeological knowledge production.” Archaeology is a sociocultural phenomenon. This must hang out in the way we present archaeology and archaeological knowledge to the many and varied publics and communities we encounter and seek to engage (Castaneda and Matthews 2008).

As an example of the potential for transformations through community engagement, this project has implications beyond Deerfield, the Connecticut River Valley, and New England. The invisibility of Native peoples in popular notions of local history, public memory, and interpretations of the archaeological and documentary records is not limited to Deerfield or New England. Its consequences across North America have political, social, and spiritual implications for Native peoples today in the realms of repatriation, federal recognition, land claims, sovereignty, social recognition, and identity politics. Indigenous peoples worldwide face similar struggles. However, the sanitization of history is not just an issue for Native Americans or Indigenous peoples. It affects everyone, and while the powerful and privileged might benefit from dominant histories, many more suffer its consequences. What we learn from the Pocumtuck Fort case study is that heritage and the power to mobilize the past can be shared. Newly plied threads and stronger, collectively produced patches can be added to the heritage fabric, while other areas may be mended or sewn over. Heritage work
looks back to the past and forward to the future, but it is firmly grounded in the present.

As such, it is always beginning and always ongoing.
APPENDIX
APPENDIX A

FIGURES

Figure 1: Map of Southern New England Showing Location of Present-Day Deerfield, Massachusetts
Figure 2: Map of Southern New England Showing Location of Archaeologically Documented Seventeenth-Century Native American Forts
Figure 3: The Pequot Fort at Mystic by Captain John Underhill in *Newes from America* (London: J.D. for Peter Cole, 1638)

Image courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University
Figure 4: Two-Tier Stakeholder Map, after Freedman et al. (2007:7)
Figure 5: A Poly-Communal Stakeholder Map for Heritage Work and Archaeology
Figure 6: Example of a Context-Specific Poly-Communal Stakeholder Map for Obtaining Permission for Archaeological Investigations of a Heritage Site
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