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Accessing Cultural Resource Management Reports on African-American Heritage Sites

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Accessing Cultural Resource Management Reports on African-American Heritage Sites

By Christopher Fennell



In the September, 2005, issue of this Newsletter, I presented a list of recent Ph.D. dissertations and Masters theses on the subjects of African diaspora archaeology, historic-period African archaeology, and related history studies. In addition to such academic resources, many archaeological sites related to aspects of African heritage in the United States have been investigated by Cultural Resource Management (CRM) firms, some of which are commercial entities and some of which are affiliated with universities. These CRM firms typically submit reports of their findings to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), or an equivalent State or federal agency, in the area in which the research and excavations were conducted. In turn, some (but not all) SHPO offices and federal agencies have supplied lists of these reports to the National Park Service (NPS) for inclusion in a searchable database called the National Archaeological Database (NADB). To obtain the most complete list of such reports, one would also need to contact all of the SHPO offices and all of the CRM organizations.

I hope to make information on such reports related to African-American archaeology more accessible for researchers -- particularly academic researchers who often find this "gray literature" inaccessible -- by creating consolidated bibliographies. As part of such efforts, I have composed a web page that sets forth bibliographic lists that were compiled by conducting "keyword" searches in October 2005 using the Reports Module of the NADB, which was last updated in August 2004. This web page lists 529 reports that each relate in some way to the subject of African-American heritage. This online bibliography is available at: <http://www.anthro.uiuc.edu/faculty/cfennell/CRMindex1.html>.

I have also contacted numerous members of the CRM community to request that they send me lists of reports by their firms that they know were addressed to subjects of African-American heritage. An initial bibliography of report listings sent to me by some of those CRM organizations is available at: <http://www.anthro.uiuc.edu/faculty/cfennell/CRMindex2.html>. At a later stage, I will arrange to have these working bibliographies consolidated to create one list of relevant reports.