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## Society for Historical Archaeology's Cotter Award

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## Society for Historical Archaeology's Cotter Award



The Society for Historical Archaeology has recently bestowed the John Cotter Award on three scholars working on subjects of African American heritage and archaeology: Carol McDavid in 2007, Timothy Baumann in 2006, and Paul Mullins in 2000. The Society's statements accompanying each of these awards are set out below. Patrice Jeppson provided the statement for the 2007 award; the 2006 award statement by Virgil Noble is an excerpt from *Historical Archaeology* 42(2): 6-8 (2006); and the 2000 award statement by Robert Paynter is an excerpt from *Historical Archaeology* 34(4): 7-8 (2000).

Established as the third societal award by the Society for Historical Archaeology in 1998, this award is named for John Lambert Cotter (1911-1999), a pioneer in historical archaeology education and an advocate for the discipline. Cotter was the first President of the Society (1968), first editor of the discipline's professional journal *Historical Archaeology*, the excavator of Jamestown, Virginia (1953-1957) and the chief architect of behind the development of urban archaeology (in Philadelphia in the 1970s). This award however refers to its namesake's long career as a teacher and his lifelong support of each new generation of scholars that entered the discipline. Cotter, who taught the first formal course in historical archaeology in the United States at the University of Pennsylvania, kept his door always open to Penn undergraduates, hobbyist archaeologists, high school students, and the general public, as well as his own graduate students. His influence on the younger generation of scholars extends across North America and spans more than five decades.

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### 2007 Award to Carol McDavid

The Society for Historical Archaeology has presented its 2007 John L. Cotter Award in *Historical Archaeology* to Dr. Carol McDavid for her outstanding achievement in using historical archaeology to engage local communities.

Established by the SHA in 1998, this award is named for John Lambert Cotter (1911-1999), a pioneer in historical archaeology education and an advocate for the discipline. Each year, the SHA presents this award to an individual in the first five years of their career in recognition of a single, outstanding achievement. Dr. Timothy Baumann received the 2006 Cotter Award in recognition of his research and teaching in subjects of African American history, archaeology, and heritage in Missouri and the Midwest.

Dr. McDavid is being honored in 2007 for helping stimulate discussions about Diaspora studies and critical theory in public archaeology. Drawing on social theory, community-based strategies, and new technologies, McDavid has explored how to create a public archaeology discourse that is more democratic, open, multivocal, and relevant to

archaeology's diverse audiences. In doing so, McDavid has changed the way archaeologists can both learn about and share archaeological research with the public.

McDavid's research focuses on broadening the stories that can be told about African American archaeology sites. She seeks to both expand the audiences for African American history and to tie this regional history to the worldwide African Diaspora.

For her first project, she engaged the public in deciding whether, and how, to publicly interpret 19th century African American life at the Levi Jordan Plantation Project in Brazoria, Texas. Archaeological research on the plantation, conducted by Kenneth L. Brown at the University of Houston, had recovered evidence relating to the activities of all those who once lived and worked there, both prior to and after emancipation. After first making sure that local descendants approved and were involved, McDavid set up an interactive Internet web site where community members helped archaeologists decide how to present and discuss the history of this plantation.

Through these web pages, community residents and members of the broader, interested public added oral history recollections about the plantation and joined archaeologists in deciding what the artifacts recovered from the property tell us about life in 19th century rural Texas. The original web site project is archived at [www.webarchaeology.com](http://www.webarchaeology.com), and plans are underway to update the site in the future.

McDavid continued her community engagement research as Project Director for Public Archaeology at the Yates Community Archaeology Project (<http://www.publicarchaeology.org/yates/>), which is sponsored by the Rutherford B. H. Yates Museum in Houston's 4th Ward.

This program focuses on the history and preservation of Freedman's Town, a vibrant and historically important African American community whose founders comprised some of Houston's earliest citizens. Freedmen's Town is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as an historically significant neighborhood. She also serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Harris County Heritage Society.

In introducing Dr. McDavid's accomplishments at the awards banquet, Dr. Paul Shackel summarized why McDavid is a deserving recipient: "Carol's civil engagement helps to address contemporary social issues and is a model for the next generation of archaeologists who want to be socially responsible and engaged with descendant communities."

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### **2006 Award to Timothy Baumann**

At our 2006 Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, held at Sacramento, California, The Society for Historical Archaeology took great pleasure in presenting the John L. Cotter Award in Historical Archaeology to Timothy E. Baumann. That coveted mark of distinction, named in honor of SHA's first president, is meant to recognize

**exceptional achievements by our colleagues at the outset of their professional lives. Tim Baumann is indeed a truly outstanding young scholar who has distinguished himself early in his promising career, making him an especially deserving candidate for this extraordinary recognition.**

**Tim first took an interest in archaeology as a boy in St. Charles, Missouri, and later would begin pursuit of a career in the discipline as an undergraduate at the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he earned a BA in anthropology in 1991. He then advanced to graduate school at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where he received both a Museum Studies Certificate (1994) and a Public History Certificate (1995) while working on his MS in anthropology (1995). He moved south to the University of Tennessee-Knoxville for his doctorate, completing his PhD in 2001.**

**Tim's innovative doctoral study focused on the small town of Arrow Rock in his native Missouri and particularly on archaeological evidence related to the population of free blacks who settled there in the latter half of the 19th century. His dissertation, "'Because That's Where My Roots Are': Searching for Patterns of African-American Ethnicity in Arrow Rock, Missouri" (Department of Anthropology, University of Tennessee, 2001), greatly expanded upon the general theme of his earlier master's thesis, "Missouri's Neglected History: Establishing a Framework for African-American Archaeology" (Department of Anthropology, University of Wisconsin, 1995). Moreover, this work stimulated an abiding interest in the history and archaeology of that rural community in Central Missouri, which in turn became the foundation for a long-term program of directed research that is now entering its second decade.**

**Joining the faculty at University of Missouri-St. Louis as a lecturer in 1998, he became an assistant professor of anthropology upon completion of his doctorate three years later. Throughout his years at UM-St. Louis, Tim has conducted an active program of archaeological field investigations in Arrow Rock, exploring its post-Civil War African American community through the material remains of former households, a Masonic lodge, an African Methodist Episcopal church, a school, a restaurant, and a tavern. Not only does this research hold great potential to contribute meaningfully to our understanding of the African American experience following Emancipation, it is perhaps equally important for the unique opportunities this research has provided for public outreach and community involvement. An impressive list of scholarly publications and conference presentations, as well as numerous invited lectures before various avocational groups, provides ample evidence that Tim excels at interpreting the importance of his research to his professional colleagues and to the public at large. Moreover, he has had great success in engaging the descendent population of African Americans from Arrow Rock who still maintain strong ties to the community, no matter where they might currently reside.**

**This is not to say that Tim has focused exclusively on Arrow Rock during his tenure at UM-St. Louis. To the contrary, he has conducted important comparative field research in recent years at the Oak Grove and Prairie Park plantations, two earlier sites within a few miles of Arrow Rock where the African American occupants were still held in slavery.**

Closer to home, Tim has also been involved with excavations in Old North St. Louis, a National Register Historic District, as part of a neighborhood revitalization project. Aside from rehabilitating the 19th-century built environment, a major goal of that collaborative project has been to integrate the neighborhood's recent history with its more remote past and involve the community in the process of interpreting that history.

Tim's efforts at public outreach are not limited to involving the Arrow Rock and Old North St. Louis communities in his field research and giving informative talks to interested laypersons. He hosts a website on archaeology and has garnered excellent coverage of his research and student training programs in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the *Kansas City Star*, and other regional newspapers. Tim also has been the subject of numerous local television interviews and appears as an occasional guest on the UM-St. Louis National Public Radio station for live listener call-in programs that feature topical discussions of archaeology and historic preservation in the St. Louis area, including one that was broadcast in conjunction with the opening of the Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology held at St. Louis in 2004.

It is worth noting here that Tim Baumann served most capably as chair of the Terrestrial Program for the 2004 SHA Conference and volunteered to organize and chair the well-received Public Session at those meetings. Thanks to the breadth of his familiarity with historical archaeology in Missouri (he co-edited a volume devoted to that subject for the *Missouri Archaeologist* in 2005), Tim was able to gather a host of researchers working on a wide range of projects in the state, ensuring broad popular appeal. A highlight of the conference, the session was very well attended, despite a National Football League play-off game being held elsewhere in the city on that same afternoon.

As an influential participant in many state and regional organizations, Tim has proved to be a capable advocate for the interests of historical archaeology and has enthusiastically championed its accomplishments. He has been extremely active in the Missouri Archaeological Society and the Missouri Association of Professional Archaeologists, which has helped refocus statewide attention on historical archaeology among amateurs and professionals alike. He regularly lends his talents to organizing the Missouri Archaeology Month activities each year, playing a significant part in having historical archaeology become the focus of statewide observances in 1999. Tim also has given service to the Midwest Archaeological Conference, serving as an organizer of its joint meeting with the Southeast Archaeological Conference at St. Louis in the fall of 2004 and now as treasurer for MAC.

In spite of his relative youth, or perhaps because of the great energy it grants him, I believe it is no exaggeration to say that Tim Baumann is the leading practitioner of historical archaeology in Missouri today. The tremendous ability and remarkable dedication that he brings to his work has breathed new life into a long-dormant professional interest in historical archaeology throughout that state, earning him the respect of colleagues well beyond Missouri's borders. He has also proven himself an important figure in the vital effort to inform and connect with the public, raising the visibility of historical archaeology in the eyes of average citizens throughout his home state. For these reasons and more,

**Timothy E. Baumann is a worthy recipient of the prestigious John L. Cotter Award in Historical Archaeology.**

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### **2000 Award to Paul Mullins**

**The Society for Historical Archaeology presented the John L. Cotter Award in Historical Archaeology to Paul R. Mullins at the annual meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada in 2000. Mullins was the initial recipient of this new award offered by the society to recognize a truly outstanding, single achievement by a person newly entering the discipline.**

**Paul Mullins has been nurtured by and in turn has given to a number of academic communities in his formative career. He received his Bachelor of Science with a minor in Anthropology from James Madison University in 1984. He studied historical archaeology at the University of Maryland, College Park participating in Mark Leone's Archaeology at Annapolis program, where, in 1990, he received what was their highest degree, a Masters of Applied Anthropology. He entered the graduate program at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in 1990 and received his Ph.D. in 1996, awarded with distinction supervised by a committee that included Enoch Page, Daniel Horowitz, and Robert Paynter. He has served on the faculty of George Mason University and is presently an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. Paul's encyclopedic knowledge of popular and arcane material culture, his generous and creative mind, and his wry sense of humor have left an indelible mark on the historical archaeology programs, their graduate students, and faculty at University of Maryland and University of Massachusetts, Amherst.**

**Paul has established himself as a prolific and thoughtful scholar of many sides of the American experience. He is a frequent contributor at annual meetings of our society, presenting papers on topics as varied as Archaeology at Annapolis, African American material culture and life, white consumer culture, and the ways Europeans were carved, engraved, sketched, and inscribed by indigenous people around the world. He has contributions in some of the more important publications of the past decade, including articles in Leone and Potter's *Historical Archaeologies of Capitalism*, De Cunzo and Herman's *Historical Archaeology and the Study of American Culture*, Leone and Silberman's *Invisible America*, Wurst and Fitts's recent special issue of *Historical Archaeology*, *Confronting Class*, and his own co-edited volume with Shackel and Warner, *Annapolis Pasts: Historic Archaeology in Annapolis, Maryland*. His work has considered the lives of Shenandoah Valley potters, the aesthetics and political economy of baseball cards, the fantasies provoked by pilgrimages to Graceland, and, with Marlys Pearson, the curatorial habits of Barbie aficionados.**

**His most sustained work, however, has considered the free African American community of Annapolis and the ways these people negotiated mass consumption and white racism.**

Indeed, he receives the Cotter Award for his monograph on this subject, *Race and Affluence: An Archaeology of African America and Consumer Culture*. This study brings an urgency and significance to historical archaeology, a goal recognized by many and realized by few. Working with objects discovered in archaeological contexts, Mullins realizes our discipline's populist promise to study all of a community and not just the curated few. His analyses of how the African American community of turn of the twentieth century Annapolis produced, used, thought about, and discarded the things of the burgeoning mass consumer market leads to a vision of a highly heterogeneous, conflicted, and vibrant community, living for itself in the context of discrimination. Through illuminating these people's lives, Mullins addresses two issues that continue to fixate American culture. The first is the debate about the morality of consumption, distinctively portrayed herein from various African American perspectives. The second is the arrogant practice and discourse of white supremacy, a ferocious shaper of the mass consumer market that was constantly met by creative and variegated material responses by the African American community. These themes emerge from his careful readings of objects and texts, and are gracefully combined in the best tradition of historical archaeological writing. The result is a study in which archaeological research links the worlds of the past with our present, and thereby contributes a unique and powerful perspective on these most American of dilemmas.

*Race and Affluence* is a study that will influence historical archaeology for its perspectives, data, and methods. It will have repercussions beyond the bounds of our discipline and contribute to a more nuanced view of the issues of race and racism in the United States. It is but one in what promises to be a very interesting series of studies to come from Paul Mullins.