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A Critical Archaeology Revisited[1]

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In 1987, a small number of historical archaeologists issued a call for archaeologists to embrace the teachings of critical theory so that their research could be used to challenge societal structures of inequality. Although community partnering, an outgrowth of critical theory, has become increasingly important to archaeological practice, a true archaeological "praxis" has yet to be achieved. Possible reasons for this include a decontextualization of critical theory from its historical origin, the subsequent reification of capitalism in critical research, and the obscuring of agency in critical interpretations because of an emphasis on top-down or macroscale models of society. We suggest that true praxis can be achieved in historical archaeology through a reconceptualization of the relationship between individuals and society and through a structuring of archaeological research that seeks to create a discursive relationship between past and present peoples and between researchers and community partners. We present a critically informed archaeological case study from Louisiana to demonstrate how such a dialogue can lead to emancipatory knowledge.

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[People], who through laziness or avocation, do not; or for want of time, or true helps, or for other causes, cannot, penetrate into the Principles of Knowledge, and trace Truth to its fountain and original, 'tis natural for them, and almost unavoidable, to take up with some borrowed Principles; which being reputed and presumed to be the evident proofs of other things, are thought not to need any other proofs themselves.

JOHN LOCKE, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1689

More than ten years ago, Mark Leone, Parker Potter, and Paul Shackel (1987) issued a call for archaeologists to follow the lead of cultural anthropologists and embrace critical theory as an interpretive tool that would allow scholars to situate their work politically and self-reflexively. While their important article met with mixed responses in CURRENT ANTHROPOLOGY (see, e.g., Blakey 1987, Gero 1987), the call for a critical archaeology has since been answered by several influential publications (e.g., Handsman and Leone 1989; McDonald et al. 1991; Pinsky and Wylie 1989, Potter 1991, 1994). After a decade the "Annapolis School"[2] of historical archaeology is a well-recognized force within the discipline.

To date, the application of critical theory to archaeology has had its most important impacts in the realm of partnerships between archaeologists and the communities in which they work (e.g., McDavid and Babson 1997, Baker 1997, Bartoy 1999, Derry 1997, McDavid 1997, Gibb 1997, Wilkie n.d. a). Archaeologists are increasingly considering the political impacts of their research on descendant populations and the general public. An integral part of this process involves learning how to give a stronger voice to a multitude of archaeological publics (e.g., Franklin 1997b, Hodder 1997, LaRoche and Blakey 1997, Matthews 1997, McDavid and Babson 1997, McKee 1994, Potter 1994, Wylie 1985). A growing number of archaeologists (e.g., Epperson 1990, 1999; Franklin 1997b; McDavid 1997; Schmidt and Patterson 1995) are calling upon their colleagues to challenge ideologies that naturalize structures of inequality. Because of the influence of the Annapolis School as well as larger social,

2. In using the term "Annapolis School," we are referring to a version of critical archaeology that has emerged as part of the "Archaeology in Annapolis" Program created by Mark Leone in 1981. This program has produced numerous publications, and many of the original theoretical statements have changed in response to lessons learned over nearly 20 years. While the Annapolis School includes a variety of individual authors, we feel that their theoretical and methodological perspectives are similar enough to include within a single category.

theoretical, and political movements that have shaped archaeological practice, archaeologists are more critically self-aware than perhaps ever before.

The Annapolis School continues to assert a strong influence on critical-archaeological practice. Leone (1995, 1999) has continued to call for what he now terms an "archaeology of capitalism," while Shackel (1993), Potter (1991, 1994), and other scholars associated with the Annapolis School (e.g., Little 1994*a*, *b*) have published archaeological studies that promote their viewpoint. The influence of this group of scholars has been so pervasive that many archaeologists and nonarchaeologists alike have come to consider historical archaeology synonymous with the archaeology of capitalism.

While this influence has productively shaped archaeological discourse over the past 20 years, the tendency of the Annapolis School has been to obscure the importance of agency in archaeological interpretations. Its classical Marxist perspective stresses the forces that shape people's lives rather than the people who both construct and are constrained by them. Adherents of the Annapolis School often fail to problematize such basic concepts as ideology, capitalism, and class. In doing do, they ignore the origins and reproduction of these systems of thought. Ultimately, our criticism rests on the failure of the Annapolis School to incorporate the full potential of critical theory into an archaeological praxis. This article aims (1) to demonstrate how critical theory lends itself to a broader consideration of human agency than has been demonstrated in the archaeological literature, (2) to review and contextualize the roots of critical theory, and (3) to provide a case study that demonstrates our reconceptualization of a critical archaeology.

Critical Archaeology: Agency Lost?

Inspired by the Frankfurt School of critical theory, Leone, Potter, and Shackel (1987) called for the development of a critical archaeology that would allow archaeologists to follow in the footsteps of sociocultural anthropologists who both had acknowledged the situated nature of their research and were working to effect political change (e.g., Clifford and Marcus 1986, Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, Marcus and Fischer 1986). While these goals are laudable, many works of the Annapolis School have insisted on the use of value-laden descriptions to delineate "clearly marked" dichotomies: capitalists are oppressors/laborers are exploited; capitalists control/laborers resist. Such characterizations only serve to mask the complex manipulation of social relations that develops in the context of capitalism.

Archaeologists such as Leone (1981, 1987, 1988, 1999) argue that many individuals continue to live in capitalist systems because they have been lulled into a sense of false optimism. This "false consciousness" (Leone 1987, 1988) is explained through a notion of ideology as naturalizing the structural inequalities between the classes (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; Ortner 1991, 1998, 1999). This conception of ideology is most clearly exemplified

in Leone's study of William Paca's garden (1987, 1988, 1995). While this interpretation was groundbreaking, Leone failed to recognize the possibility that laborers could either pierce the mask of ideology or perhaps not understand the language of elite oppression. In the case of William Paca, ideology served to reaffirm his position among his peers rather than to deceive the general populace into a false sense of complacency.

If we were to accept Leone's notion of ideology as representative of the human experience under capitalism, archaeological exploration would be unnecessary. A more interesting avenue of critically informed research might be to explore how agents situate themselves within the capitalist system. Agents can perceive the advantages and disadvantages of capitalism and actively seek to advance themselves within it. Such an approach would further explore the sense of optimism that leads many people to embrace the mythology that hard work is rewarded with social mobility (Ortner 1991, 1999).

In its interpretive work, the Annapolis School has attempted "to organize material culture studies that can help pierce or unmask past (or present) ideologies" (Leone, Potter, and Shackel 1987:118). Leone (1987, 1988) described William Paca's garden as evidence of a capitalist's trying to naturalize his status as elite through the manipulation of perspective. Focusing on the experiences of the oppressed lower classes, Mullins (1999*a*, *b*) has recently employed similar reasoning to argue that the purchase of bric-a-brac by African-American workers helped them to construct a sense of belonging and progress within the capitalist class system that followed emancipation. While both of these case studies attempt to understand the ideological basis for the naturalization of capitalism in nuanced and sophisticated ways, neither adequately situates actors from different classes in dynamic relationships with one another.

Ironically, Leone's strongest application of a critical approach has been his ethnographic analysis of Colonial Williamsburg rather than his archaeological interpretation of Annapolis. In this work, Leone (1981) argued that since the modern "reconstruction" presented black workers as subservient to white workers, structures of inequality were shown to be unchanged from the past to the present. In the minds of the visitors, capitalist social relations were naturalized as the way things were, the way things are, and the way things will be. The strength of this study was that Leone drew attention to the relations of power between workers of different classes rather than restricting consideration to a single class.

In order to address the lack of agency so apparent in current critical archaeologies, we suggest an approach that more openly considers persons as conscious of the system in which they live and capable, within its structural constraints, of pursuing alternative avenues of action. This, of course, is not a new observation (see, e.g., Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; Ortner 1991, 1998, 1999; Marcus 1999; Thompson 1978*a*). To achieve a critical insight into the past, however, these persons must not be viewed as radically independent agents; it is important to consider how they are situated within a web of

social relations that define their position in society (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, Ortner 1991). In addition to a consideration of socioeconomic class, an analysis of these social relations must include constructions of identity such as gender, sexuality, age, race, and ethnicity. While this goal has been articulated by certain scholars of the Annapolis School (e.g., Little 1994a, b; Little and Shackel 1989; Shackel 1993; Shackel and Little 1992), the results of their archaeological analyses continue to obscure and dismiss the agendas of subjects and their abilities to construct representations of self that manipulate and challenge tensions inherent in society.

One of the primary problems in the application of critical theory in archaeology has been a reliance on "top-down" models of social formation and social change. These models obscure the complexity of relationships between individuals and society, thus denying any possibility of recognizing social agency on the part of individual actors. Many archaeologists, particularly those of the Annapolis School, have typified human agents as little more than the passive victims of structural changes, historical forces, and elite ideologies. Even more disturbing is the tendency of some archaeologists of the Annapolis School to personify ideologies such as capitalism, seemingly suggesting that they prevent humans from creating individualized identities. Leone's (1999:10) statement that "capitalism has been successful and expansive for over four centuries because it constructs and reproduces social relations that resist simplistic analyses" would imply that capitalism is beyond the control of human agency—that capitalism, not people, constructs social relations. Ironically, statements that treat the central role of capitalism in cultural analyses as inevitable and necessary are similar to the ideologies that critical theories seek to challenge.

Following from this critique, the theoretical influence of structural Marxism, particularly the work of Althusser (1971), should be readily apparent. While Leone (1995) and others (e.g., Leone, Potter, and Shackel 1987, Shackel 1993) have explicitly drawn upon Althusser's notion of ideology, the Annapolis School owes a deeper and more disturbing debt to this variant of Marxist thought. The abstraction and subsequent naturalization of categories such as class and capitalism from forms of social being closely approximate the Althusserian project. As a form of generalization, this type of logic would seem well suited to the goals of a social *science*, but it is enmeshed in a belief system that actively works to destroy human freedom through theoretical practice. In an Althusserian system, individuals exert at best limited influence upon social process, which is dominated by abstract categories and forces and not by individual experience. In a thought-provoking essay questioning Althusserian logic, the social historian E. P. Thompson (1978a:167) offered both critique and solution:[3]

Not only a substantive knowledge, but also the very vocabularies of the human project—compassion, greed, love, pride, self-sacrifice, loyalty, treason, calamity—have been beaten down to the circuits of capital. . . . At its worst (and this is where it is usually at) theoretical practice *is* this end, and we may thank Althusser for demonstrating this with such "rigour." But if we return to "experience" we can move, from that point, once again into an *open* exploration of the world and of ourselves. This exploration makes demands of equal theoretical rigour, but within [a] dialogue of conceptualization and empirical engagement. . . .

Emphasizing the importance of experience and the person, we propose that the application of critical theory in archaeology would benefit from the injection of the discussions regarding agency that have informed other anthropological discourses. A growing number of scholars in archaeology have embraced practice theory (e.g., Gilchrist 1994, Jones 1997, Lightfoot, Schiff, and Wake 1997, Lightfoot, Martinez, and Schiff 1998, Shennan 1989, Upton 1996, Wilkie and Farnsworth 1999), particularly the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1990) and his concept of habitus as a means of understanding the construction of social being and the relationship between material objects and cultural beliefs. Little of this growing body of literature has impacted the work of historical archaeology's critical theorists.

Bourdieu (1977, 1990) defines the habitus as the sense of cultural propriety and normative order that a person develops through childhood experiences and through everyday practice or action and then uses to impose order on new experiences and domains. What is important about this concept is that it recognizes that people's understanding of their cultural environment is uniquely historically situated within their own experiences, thereby avoiding the determinism of structural theories. Artifacts are recognized as situated within cultural negotiations and infused with meaning. Further, when the relation between structure and practice is emphasized, it is the artifacts used in everyday life rather than the rare or exotic ones that are likely to be the most important. In this sense, archaeology, with its study of things domestic and discarded, has the opportunity to provide great insight into social being in the past. This approach also removes the need to pinpoint whether an artifact explicitly represents ethnicity, gender, race, class, or some other experience, for a single artifact can have multiple levels of meaning to the user and those meanings may be embedded in a number of different cultural experiences. If any artifact recovered from a site is perceived as being formed from the habitus, then artifact assemblages can be studied contextually for an under-

3. It is difficult to express the complexity of Thompson's argument in the form of a single quotation. His essay "The Poverty of Theory" (Thompson 1978a) is an essential text for understanding the theoretical weaknesses of structural Marxism and the political implications of this mode of thought. In his words and actions, Thompson embodies the type of praxis that our argument hopes to attain.

standing of how they may have reinforced different senses of self.

The application of the habitus concept is not without its drawbacks. Bourdieu's actors are largely unconscious of the relationship between their actions and the broader cultural tapestry, and therefore their agency is limited. Ortner (1996) has recognized this aspect of Bourdieu's work. She has subsequently struggled to reconcile the gulf between her own work in practice theory and feminism by proposing a "serious games" approach that recognizes that individuals operate as agents within the constraints of their social and personal contexts and histories. As does Ortner, we find Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) notion of the habitus invaluable, but we do not wish to imply that the presence of the habitus as a structuring principle excludes agency. The habitus, with its unconscious structuring effects on human action, provides a useful way of conceptualizing normalized use and interactions with the material culture that has been recovered archaeologically. While material culture can be used in automatic, unconscious ways in the course of everyday life, it is also used in active, expressive, conscious ways. If we do not recognize this duality we risk losing important layers of meaning in our interpretations.

The work of Anthony Giddens (1979, 1984) offers insight into the dualities of agency and structure as well as the conscious and unconscious aspects of daily life. In his theory of structuration, Giddens (1984:41) introduced a "stratification model" of human agency based in the tripartite division of "basic security system" and "practical and discursive consciousness." This model suggests that *human experience* is key to understanding the reflexive relationship between structure and agency that dominates social being. It refers directly to aspects of social being formed through routinized, day-to-day encounters that could, if brought into question, be explained by individual actors. For the purpose of our argument, we will ignore Giddens's notion of the unconscious and focus attention on his division of consciousness into "practical" and "discursive" forms. While this neglect does injustice to his system of thought, his "unconscious" aspects of social being are another form of practical consciousness of the individual. Rather than being separate from consciousness, this other, unconscious form of practical consciousness is differentiated by the fact that individuals would "not *be* able to give verbal expression to the promptings of a given action" (1984:45).

In daily life, human actors both reproduce and create practices that are informed by and help to form the structures of social being. Actors in a society are cognizant of these structures in different ways and at different levels depending upon their personal experience. Giddens's actors are not mere automatons governed by structure but instead both constrained and enabled by structure. Human action may reflect structural considerations, but it is just as likely to manipulate or (re)form those structures. In their historical anthropological study of South Africa, Comaroff and Comaroff (1991:29) expand upon

Giddens's theory of structuration to propose a chain of consciousness that represents "a continuum whose two extremes are the unseen and the seen, the submerged and the apprehended, the unrecognized and the cognized." Like Giddens, the Comaroffs (p.22) recognize that agentive power is situated within "specific historical contexts" and not unlimited.

While Giddens's insights concerning this duality of structure are not necessarily revolutionary,[4] his conceptualization of a duality of consciousness and intentionality has important implications for the study of daily practice. Bourdieu's habitus is similar to Giddens's (1979, 1984) concept of practical consciousness in that both terms refer, more or less, to less than conscious motivations for human action. Through the use of both practical and discursive consciousness we are able to confront some of the serious limitations to the concept of habitus that we have previously discussed. The key to the duality of structure lies in the ability of actors to provide "verbal expression" for their actions (Giddens 1984:45). Following from this idea, a given actor, asked to give verbal expression for an action, might provide a deep or a superficial explanation depending upon the embeddedness of the structural concepts from which the action derived. While this characterization may sound structurally deterministic, we must recognize that the actor's ability to acknowledge these motivations (or structures) implies that the actor may manipulate or alter the structure rather than merely (and unconsciously) following the pattern. The difficulty of expressing this dialectic between structure and agency in static prose should be readily apparent.

In daily practice, individuals place themselves not only in relation to other individuals but also in relation to their material world. We need not think only of action and behavior as being part of structuration; our lives are structured by objects, be they buildings, beds, or the pages of CURRENT ANTHROPOLOGY. It should be obvious not only that this material world structures individual experience but also that individual experience structures the world. Thus material culture can be perceived both as a sedimentation of structure and as an active manipulation of structure. The challenge for archaeologists, of course, is to attempt to understand the myriad potential meanings of artifacts within a given context. It is within a given context of experience that the material world acquires meaning.

As the integration of the actions of numerous individuals and communities (such as groups sharing identities

4. In fact, the consideration of structure and agency or, more broadly, of the individual and society has been a consistent concern of social science even prior to Marx's (1963[1869]:15) often-quoted statement that "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past." We believe that some of the most exciting advances in the social sciences are currently being made with the (re)formulation of this classic "problem" (e.g., Barrett 1994; Bender 1998; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; Fox 1991; Johnson 1996; Marcus 1999; Ortner 1996, 1999; Sahlins 1981, 1985; Thomas 1996).

based on common social-political agendas or shared experiences of age, race, gender, occupation, or geography), society operates on a variety of levels and at a variety of scales. Depending upon the situation, individuals may be more or less cognizant of their actions. Given the breadth of important work in anthropological discourses highlighting the dialectical relationships between agency and social constraint, archaeologists should recognize that a simple top-down model of society cannot adequately explain the vast majority of interactions in daily life. While individuals are constrained by many factors beyond their control, they can seldom be characterized as mere victims of forces exerted upon them.

A recent example of this type of top-down research is the work of Paul Shackel (e.g., 1993). While Shackel does attempt to acknowledge agency, his work suffers from its attribution of omnipotence to capitalism. Focusing on the rise of capitalist ideologies among the gentry of Annapolis, Shackel theoretically situates his research as influenced by Eric Wolf, Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, Daniel Miller, and Louis Althusser. Although he recognizes that some of these theorists have failed to deal with agency, the actor is elusive in his work as well. As Shackel begins to navigate history in Braudelian terms, the agent quickly becomes subsumed by "the long-term history of etiquette." Although he assures the reader (p. xiii) that "each scale builds on and is dependent on the other scales," he seldom interprets material culture as an independent line of evidence to bolster his historical evaluation of the rise of etiquette in the 18th century. Instead, etiquette books are treated as the keystone on which all other forms of data are dependent. Toothbrushes and place settings become simple indicators of the growing influence of surveillance and labor control as industrialization becomes entrenched in Annapolis. In a paraphrase of Foucault, Shackel writes (p. 2), "The modern work system and its material by-products create individuals that are predictable, regular, and interchangeable." Employing such rhetoric, how could we expect to find expressions of individual agency such as resistance to this disciplinary regime in the archaeological record?

These critiques of the Annapolis School are not new. In his comments on the original CURRENT ANTHROPOLOGY article by Leone, Potter, and Shackel (1987), Michael Blakey (1987:292) observed that "the neglect of class dialectics, leaving the role of the capitalist class unexposed, undermines the attempt at 'emancipation.'" Blakey went on to say that "critical archaeology, rather than showing real relationships or producing 'less contingent knowledge,' can only be expected to yield differently contingent knowledge and relationships." Matthew Johnson (1989, 1999) has long recognized this evident disparity between theory and practice in critical archaeology: "The individual has been triumphantly reinstated at the centre of the stage in theory, but quietly relegated to the wings, or written out of the script altogether in practice" (1989:190). In the words of a recent critic of the Annapolis School, "This leaves us in a position where the only way to characterize the powerful capitalists is as pantomime villains, gleefully rubbing their hands and cackling as they dispossess the peasantry or mystify a few relationships of inequity" (Tarlow 1999: 468).

Recent archaeological research has led to an emphasis on individual agency beyond class through explorations of ethnicity, race, and gender (e.g., Babson 1990, Ferguson 1992, Scott 1994, Seifert 1991, Upton 1996, Wall 1996, Yentsch 1994), yet the work of the Annapolis School has failed to incorporate the experiences of women or ethnic and racial minorities in a way that recognizes the unique voices of these individuals (cf. Little 1994b). Ortner (1991, 1998, 1999), Frankenberg (1993), hooks (1992, 1994), and Brodkin (1998), among many others, have demonstrated that constructs such as race, gender, and ethnicity are not independently constructed and can only be understood in relationship to one another. If critical theory is to make a meaningful contribution to archaeological practice, we must not rely solely on simplistic top-down models of social interaction. We must problematize the relationship between the individual and society that is at the heart of a truly critical archaeological practice.

The Annapolis School has demonstrated that critical theory can be a powerful interpretive and emancipatory tool in archaeological practice, but its work suggests that an archaeology of capitalism should deal *only* with issues of class conflict. In the words of Leone (1999:6), "stress, conflict, and violence, rather than function, are the central foci of our investigation." Our concern is how a reconsideration and retooling of critical theory as employed by archaeologists can lead to the creation of a critical archaeology that is more powerful intellectually and politically because it acknowledges the importance of individual action. Though others have recognized this shortcoming of critical archaeology, no one to date has provided a theoretical or methodological means to address this problem.

In the following pages, we will attempt to recontextualize critical theory within an archaeology of social relations. Throughout this discussion, the importance of human agency will be our driving concern. Because we believe that previous attempts to apply critical theory to archaeology have been hampered by an ahistorical evaluation of its philosophical foundations, we must first resituate critical theory within its historical context.

Critical Theory: A Historical Perspective

The most significant sources of inspiration for critical theory have been the idealist philosophies of Kant and Hegel and the materialist critiques of Marx. An understanding of these foundations is crucial for placing critical theory within a historical framework of philosophical development. The foundations of the Frankfurt School derive from a particular form of Marxism that developed in late 19th- and early 20th-century Germany. In a Europe ripped open by World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution, the potential for radical social change and experimentation was evident in daily life. The utopian

visions of Korsch (1970) and Lukács (1971) inspired the early Frankfurt School to endorse the possibility for revolutionary change through the formation of class consciousness. Both Korsch and Lukács advocated a firm commitment to praxis through the critique of ideology (Bronner 1994:21).

Before the ascendancy of the National Socialists in Germany in 1933, an optimistic spirit dominated the research of the Frankfurt School. Although their personal philosophies exhibited important variations, early members of the Frankfurt School, such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Leo Lowenthal, and Walter Benjamin, felt that the emancipatory transformation of society was not only possible but also close at hand. Drawing on the work of Lukács, their critique of capitalist society confronted the interrelated problems of alienation and reification. This critique was to be accomplished through a reconstruction of the meanings of the past in terms of their relevance for an emancipated future (Bronner 1994: 53; Horkheimer 1972).

Leone's theoretical perspective (e.g., 1981, 1987, 1988, 1995, 1999) is drawn from the critical theory of this period. Although the ideas of Lukács (1971) concerning alienation and reification were crucial to the subsequent development of critical theory, Leone's reliance on these early works represents a decontextualization of this philosophy. The ideas from this early period were rather contingent upon their historical milieu. As is exemplified by the revolution in Russia, the spread of worker's councils throughout Europe, and the rise of industrial unionism in the United States, the early 20th century was characterized by an unprecedented class consciousness. Leone's neglect of this context makes his application of critical theory to archaeology seem rather ahistorical.

This critique of Leone's work is further justified by a consideration of subsequent developments in critical theory. By the early 1930s the rise of totalitarian regimes in the Soviet Union, Germany, and Spain had "fostered a sense that an emancipatory transformation of the status quo was no longer possible" (Bronner 1994:79). While most of the members of the Frankfurt School moved away from the anti-Semitism and intellectual repression of National Socialist Germany, they also moved away from their previous commitment to praxis. With the seeming failure of labor and class consciousness, they turned their critique to authority and mass culture. "As the concrete social reality changed, so too, Horkheimer and his colleagues argued, must the theoretical constructions generated to make sense of it" (Jay 1973:254). Members of the Frankfurt School infused their philosophy with certain aspects of psychoanalysis. The adaptation of Freud's ideas, particularly by members such as Erich Fromm, was made to reformulate the relationship between base and superstructure (Jay 1973:94). The Frankfurt School became increasingly detached from praxis as well as Marxism.

At the end of World War II, the school once again began to shift its outlook. With the increasing optimism fostered by the fall of fascism, the evolution of new tech-

nologies, and the rise of student movements in Europe and the United States, the younger members, particularly Herbert Marcuse (e.g., 1962), reinvigorated critical theory with a goal of emancipation. In the case of Marcuse, German Romantics, such as Schiller, inspired an "idealistic turn" toward the freeing of repressed happiness through "the truth value of the imagination: the forms of freedom and happiness which it invoke[d] claim[ed] to deliver the historical *reality*" (1962:135). Even as students of the revolts of 1968 drew inspiration from the works of Marcuse, other critical theorists of the Frankfurt School remained skeptical of, or, in the case of Adorno, even denied the potential of revolutionary praxis. Although this development did not lead to antagonism between members of the school, as critical theory entered the modern period it would be characterized by pluralism rather than a unified outlook.

While the Annapolis School has borrowed its ideas mainly from an early period of critical theory, a "British School" of critical archaeology represented most prominently by Christopher Tilley (e.g., Shanks and Tilley 1987a, Thomas and Tilley 1992) and Julian Thomas (e.g., 1996) has drawn upon the critical theory of Jürgen Habermas and on hermeneutic perspectives. In recent years Leone (1995, 1999) has also drawn on the insights of Habermas in addition to those of Lukács and Althusser. Although intellectual historians do not consider Habermas an "official" member of the Frankfurt School, his version of critical theory exhibits a form of praxis that is attuned to the modern world. Both the Annapolis and the British School of critical archaeology have drawn effectively on two aspects of Habermas's critical theory: the theory of cognitive interests and the theory of communicative action. In *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Habermas (1971) postulates that the processes of knowledge acquisition are guided by three basic interests: technical, practical, and critical. "Whereas the technical interest arises from imperatives of a form of life bound to work, the practical interest is anchored in an equally deep-seated imperative of sociocultural life: the survival of societal individuals is linked to the existence of a reliable intersubjectivity of understanding in ordinary language communication" (McCarthy 1978:68–69).

Habermas's theory of cognitive interests harks back to a long-standing differentiation in German philosophy between explanation (*Erklärung*) and understanding (*Verstehen*). This division is said to correspond to the difference between the natural sciences and the humanities. Yet, the third knowledge interest, the critical or emancipatory, cannot be considered as distinct from technical and practical interests. "If the social scientist is not to proceed with his head in the sand, he must reflexively take into account the dependence of his conceptual apparatus on a prior understanding that is rooted in his own sociocultural situation. He must become hermeneutically and historically self-conscious" (McCarthy 1978:179). The acquisition of knowledge should be intimately linked to critical self-reflection. Since this process cannot separate theory and practice, Habermas

stresses the need to "make philosophy participate in the world of action" (Bronner 1994:291).

Critical archaeologists have taken advantage of this call to praxis in their critiques of knowledge production. The claims of Habermas have been used primarily as support for the postpositivist critique of objectivity. As Thomas and Tilley (1992:107) pointed out, "Habermas has denounced positivist 'scientific' research strategies as being part of a repressive ideology of technological control in late capitalist society." If all knowledge claims are subject to knowledge-constitutive interests, claims of objectivity are dangerous delusions. For this reason, critical self-reflection is not merely a choice of researchers but a necessary step for any piece of research. "Self-reflection is at once intuition and emancipation, comprehension and liberation from dogmatic dependence" (Habermas 1971:208).

According to Habermas, the quest for emancipation and liberation must begin with the achievement of undistorted communication. In his theory of communicative action he has attempted "to ground the philosophy of history within a general anthropological vision of which the philosophy of language is the primary component" (Bronner 1994:300). For anthropologists acquainted with the structuralist approaches of de Saussure and Lévi-Strauss, this "linguistic turn" is immensely appealing. Habermas (1971:314–15) identified the institutionalization of domination in the reproduction of distorted communication: "Only when philosophy discovers in the dialectical course of history the traces of violence that deform repeated attempts at dialogue and recurrently close off the path to unconstrained communication does it further the process whose suspension it otherwise legitimated: mankind's evolution toward maturity (*Mundigkeit*)." Individuals must work to create a dialogue in which all participants are treated as equals. As Leone (1995:253) summarizes, this type of dialogue has four characteristics: "intelligibility, honesty, legitimacy, and believability."

In recent years, however, the British School of critical archaeology has reacted against the inherent idealism of Habermas's reliance on a concept of undistorted communication. Thomas (1993a:12–13) has criticized his notion of an "ideal speech situation" as grounded in an idea of "false consciousness" that allows one to consider it possible for subjects to "wipe away the ideological distortions and come to know their own true interests." In opposition to this line of reasoning, Thomas has stressed the impossibility of "an objective knowledge of reality" because of the plurality of possible meanings constructed by participants within a discourse.

Although we also find Habermas's notion of this ideal speech situation overly idealistic, adoption of a modified version of his idea has produced positive results in archaeology. As archaeologists continue to confront the objectivist delusions of positivist research, the inherent sociopolitical nature of the discipline has become increasingly explicit. As McGuire (1994:182) has emphasized, "If we recognize that the pasts we study are the pasts of living communities, then we must also recognize an obligation to serve the interests of these communities." In doing this, some archaeologists have stressed the need to create a "dialogue among equals" (Leone 1995:253). We believe that the most encouraging examples of this praxis are found in the "Working Together" column of the *Society for American Archaeology Bulletin* (e.g., Nicholas 1997), where productive partnerships have been forged between Native American communities and archaeologists. While few of these reports draw explicit theoretical insight from Habermas or the Frankfurt School, the incorporation of critical thought processes into their research programs is a positive step.

Having situated critical theory within its historical context and examined its recent applications in archaeological discourse, we would like to offer a reformulation of critical-archaeological practice that stresses the importance of social relations and human agency. We must recognize, however, that our knowledge claims concerning the past are fundamentally mediated by our privileged positions as scholars in the present. In the following discussion, we hope to bridge the contentious divides between past and present, theory and practice.

The Nature of Agency in Capitalist Systems

Archaeologists have defined capitalism in a variety of ways (e.g., Delle 1998, Leone 1995, Leone and Potter 1999, McGuire 1992, McGuire and Paynter 1991, Orser 1996). Those inspired by Marx have explicitly underscored the importance of material things in these definitions. As would be expected of anthropologically rooted scholars, they usually consider social relations a key component of an analysis of capitalism, but discussions of class preempt any detailed considerations of human agency. Furthermore, the construction of class, a process that would seem to involve the actions of knowledgeable human agents, seldom receives more than a generalized and depersonalized afterthought. In a recent definition of capitalism, James Delle (1998:25) has stated:

> Capitalism is a political economy characterized by a type of stratified social structure in which human relationships are defined by membership in and allegiances to social classes. Membership in capitalist social classes is defined by an individual's ability and opportunity to accumulate wealth. These abilities are directly related to the control of strategic resources through individual ownership of private property, including the tools, knowledge, and raw materials required to produce commodities for exchange. Under the capitalist system a small elite owns and maintains control over these means of production, while a majority of the population is required to work for these owners—either by having their labor power coerced from them through the institution of slavery, or through the necessity of selling their labor power to the owners for a wage.

Delle derives his definition of capitalism from Tom Patterson, Eric Wolf, Immanuel Wallerstein, Robert Paynter, and Charles Orser. Key to this definition is the understanding, drawn from Patterson (1993), that one of the characteristics distinguishing precapitalist from capitalist societies is the "cultural construction and understanding of value."

Delle (1998:27) disagrees with Wolf's contention that "the capitalist mode of production emerged only when both the means of production and labor power became commodities for sale in markets," instead recognizing mercantile capitalist and competitive capitalist modes of production as historical variants of capitalism. This allows him to argue that the use of slave labor does constitute a capitalist system. Delle favors Wallerstein's suggestion that slavery be considered a "form of labor extraction compatible with wage labor within a larger capitalist world economy" (p. 25). While we would agree that slavery cannot be considered incompatible with a capitalist economy, we wonder what exactly could be considered a precapitalist one. Do the roots of capitalism reach deeper into both mercantile and feudal forms of labor? If so, could not the Roman empire be characterized as a capitalist "regional" economy?

This exercise is illustrative of the (ab)use of much theory in archaeology, Marxist or other. Instead of helping us to interpret the complexities of the past, theoretical categories such as capitalism and class are used to compromise the "continuities and dialectics of life, the interpersonal and intimate aspects of social settings that bind lives . . . into social patterns" (Conkey and Gero 1991:15). While many scholars would fundamentally agree that class is an "imposed" rather than a "real" category, many archaeologists fall into the trap of trying to recognize class in the material culture of the past. A crucial distinction exists between class as category and class as lived experience (Hobsbawm 1971; Thompson 1978a, b). As it is usually employed, class is a category imposed by an external observer rather than being "defined by men as they live their own history" (Thompson 1963:11). Thus, the role of the researcher is to identify class as a moment of being evident in the behavior—the thoughts and actions—of individuals. Yet, while class may be a crucial component of social being in certain situations, it is unlikely that it is the sole determinant of human action.

Ortner has argued that class operates in society as both an identity constructed by individuals and a structure that is "real" within it. With this in mind, we must attempt to recognize the multiplicity of dialogues informed not only by gender, sexuality, race, etc., but also by a consciousness that may only be recognized in the (re)actions of individuals. Ortner (1991, 1998) has identified class as one of the great unspoken discourses in American society, observing that vocabularies of class in the United States often become enmeshed in discourse on gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and race.

Through the following discussion and case study, we would like to offer a definition of capitalism. Our definition is based not in an abstract realm of class and ideology but in a more concrete world that emphasizes the primacy of social relations and agency. Recent attempts (e.g., Wurst 1999, Wurst and Fitts 1999) to (re)define class have recognized the importance of a "relational" rather than a "gradational" (Wurst and Fitts 1999:1) view. While this (re)definition has stressed that class must be viewed as coming-into-being rather than essentially preexisting, the role of the individual has been disregarded in the process. If we are to (re)center a definition of capitalism or class in the realm of social relations, it is critical to recognize that social relations are made up of the communications and actions of individuals. Therefore, in order to problematize the concept of capitalism, we must turn to a traditional philosophical question: What is the fundamental relationship between the individual and society?

Societies are formed through the inseparable combination of two forms of social relations: the relationship between individuals and their "worlds" and the relationship between individuals and other individuals. Since each of these relations will affect the other in the course of time, it is problematic to attempt to make either analytically distinct. How people interact with their world may impact their interactions with others as much as their interactions with others may influence their outlook upon their world. Yet, a fundamental aspect of the divorce between Marxist perspectives on the past and perspectives that are more "humanistic" has been the differential emphasis on one of these relations. While Marxists (e.g., Leone 1995, 1999; Little 1994a, b; McGuire 1992; Orser 1987, 1988a, b, 1996; Paynter and McGuire 1991; Potter 1994; Shackel 1993) tend to promote the relation between individuals and the world through such concepts as value and alienation, "humanistic" scholars (e.g., Hodder 1986, 1991; Shanks and Tilley 1987; Spector 1991; Thomas 1993b, 1996; Yentsch and Beaudry 1992) emphasize the role of the autonomous individual in shaping the social world. We suggest that the social world is formed not by one of these means alone but instead by a complex combination of both.

Perhaps it is simplistic to say that how people relate to each other is fundamental to understanding the creation and transformation of social systems. Yet, it would seem that some scholars inspired by Marx tend to treat important concepts such as age, race, and gender as if they were mere veils that disguised the "real" prime mover of history, class. If we want to understand self-identification and group perception in the past, we must be willing to combine the perceptions of Marx with the insights of the present. Critical theory teaches us that reliance on orthodoxy is the death of thought. In the words of the old master, "proletarian revolutions . . . criticize themselves constantly, interrupt themselves continually in their own course, come back to the apparently accomplished in order to begin it afresh, deride with unmerciful thoroughness the inadequacies, weaknesses and paltriness of their first attempts" (Marx 1963[1869]:19).

Rather than relying on essentialist categories such as class, race, or gender, we approach capitalism from the

perspective of situational behaviors and shifting social relations. The key to our definition lies in the participation of individuals in the world. Previous definitions of capitalism have stressed the distinctiveness of social relations in modern capitalist societies. While many of these definitions differentially emphasize the role of private property, labor, and accumulation, what links all of them seems to be a concept of exploitation. Capitalist social relations are viewed as essentially exploitative in a fundamentally different way from social relations in precapitalist societies. Yet, when viewed in terms of exploitation, the totality of the human past could be conceptualized as a "continuum of capitalism," with the last epoch having exhibited only a quantitative rather than a qualitative difference from earlier ones. In terms of social relations, the evident distinction may be not so much between capitalist and precapitalist as between, for lack of better terms, "modern" and "premodern."

From the perspective of European history, the modern emerged from its premodern or medieval origins in a context of complex social change that encompassed the totality of human experience. While scholars place differential significance on specific changes in the political, economic, religious, and cultural spheres of early modern society, we believe that none of these spheres can be considered as a singular causal variable in the transition to the modern. Indeed, it was the complex interaction of individuals with their world and with each other that led to this dynamic period of change. Capitalism, as a world economic system, is traditionally considered one of the major transitions of this period (e.g., Braudel 1981; Wallerstein 1974, 1980, 1989), but it should not be viewed as monolithic. Capitalism describes a certain sort of social relation that has emerged in the modern world but remains in different forms and different guises varying not only with different historical periods but also with different geographical regions. Capitalism is not a "haunt" (Orser 1996:57). It is created by individuals yet retains a certain sort of power beyond them. What is crucial is that capitalism cannot exist apart from human agency.

While many Marxist scholars tend to label the primacy of the individual as a bourgeois ideology in capitalist society, we feel that a recognition of the dialectical relationship between the person and society is crucial to a better understanding of the complexities of social life. It is difficult to put this dialectic into words without destroying its fluid and situational nature. Yet, if we are to admit that the person is "an ensemble of social relations" (Heilbroner 1980:46), we must also realize that social relations are an ensemble of human actions in the world. Godelier (1986:67) succinctly expressed this point in his recognition that "history is the product of an encounter between these two logics, between these two sets of intentional and unintentional forces, between the conscious action of human beings—which often breaks off and sometimes achieves its aim—and the uninterrupted action of the properties of their relations, an action lacking intention and properties with a goal." While this conception refuses to deny the reality of the person,

it does not fall into the bourgeois trap of considering the individual person ultimately atomistic and unsocial.

In trying to understand social systems, we must recognize both the horizontal and the vertical aspects of individuals in their social worlds. If we consider social relations as a horizontal aspect that links individuals across a landscape, we must also recall that each individual is also constituted by a vertical aspect, that is, a personal history, in part formed by other relations in which the individual may not be currently enmeshed. While this conceptualization may be criticized as a return to particularism, this is an "exploded" particularism, since the web of human relations will extend ad infinitum if we consider both its horizontal and its vertical aspects. Since we recognize personal histories and intentions, the determining role of social relations will exhibit great variability. It is this totality of human variability that anthropology as a holistic discipline is best situated to study.

The greatest difficulty comes in trying to express these contested complexities of social life in a static medium such as prose. The notions that we refer to as "class," "race," "gender," and "ethnicity" merely serve to label discrete sets of social relations that situate individuals in various ways. They represent social relations that can disenfranchise as well as empower, liberate as well as constrain. Materially, these social relations may be evidenced in architecture, material culture, and the built environment. These are not arenas of human identity that can be separated from the political economy. "The social division of labor that is manifested and reproduced in the spatial division of labor is not likely to be accidental. Instead, it is likely rooted in gender-, age-, and group- or class-based differences in opportunity, which depend upon the way in which the dialectics between practice and social structure have been played out within that place" (Pred 1984:283).

Social actors are conscious of these empowering and constraining aspects of social relations to differing degrees. We must be cautious of interpretations that propose the existence of realities that are not socially constructed. Instead, ideologies can lead to the construction of multiple social realities. Through the recognition of ideologies that construct and reinforce inequities in the social realities of certain populations, critical archaeology can help lead to an emancipatory knowledge of the present through an illumination of the past. "By illuminating the past, [theoretical productions of Marxism or Marxist perspectives] enlighten mankind as to its heritage: they reveal elements of history congealed in the present; they open consciousness to wholly unsuspected aspects of social existence. Thus, they change the terms by which we accept the present, and thereby change our ability to shape the future" (Heilbroner 1980:80). Yet, the process of constructing emancipatory knowledge is not one-sided. Actors participating in a social system are every bit as capable as outsiders of recognizing masking ideologies. It is important to eliminate the interpretive privilege of the outsider and support a more discursive relationship between insider and outsider. Working to-

gether, insiders and outsiders can collectively construct understanding, ultimately enabling emancipatory action.

The nature and degree of collaborative interaction between informants and researchers—between archaeologists and descendant groups or between archaeologists and "publics"—has been the subject of some debate (e.g., Derry 1997, LaRoche and Blakey 1997, McDavid and Babson 1997, McKee 1994). "Community partnering" and "public outreach" have become catchwords in historical archaeological discussions. In practice, however, while descendant communities may be involved in initial research design and perhaps consulted during the process of interpretation, with few exceptions (e.g., Derry 1997, Edwards-Ingram 1997, LaRoche and Blakey 1997) these interactions seldom inform archaeological practice. We will present a case study that demonstrates a way in which a critical approach can use the archaeologist-informant dialectic to construct critical-archaeological narratives.

Class Fluidity, Material Culture, and the Lifeworld

Individuals act as constrained agents within society, thus creating, renewing, and contesting the relations that situate them in their social context. Habermas uses the term "lifeworld" (*Lebenswelt*) to describe the collection of behaviors, expectations, norms, and communicative acts that constitute daily life and link individuals. In his view, individuals interpret their surroundings through the observation and analysis of social action. In any given social situation, actors turn to their personal experiences to determine how they will navigate the social landscape. Individuals engaged in communicative action have many options, and through their choices culture is constantly renewed and re-created. The nuances of symbolic communication are learned from infancy onward, and life experiences shape the person's social vocabulary. While Habermas specifically deals with linguistically conveyed communicative action, we, among others (e.g., Thomas 1993*b*), see material culture as another medium through which communicative meanings can be conveyed. Through daily experiences, the practices of the lifeworld become normalized, but, as Habermas (1984: 17) points out: "the traditionality of those who participate in this communicative practice is determined by whether if necessary, they could, under suitable circumstances, provide reasons for their expressions." This idea mirrors Giddens's concept of practical and discursive consciousness.

In order to conceptualize the lifeworld, we draw upon a notion of community. While "community" as lived experience relates to a self-identification or a consciousness "community" as an analytical category is imposed as an abstraction in an attempt to clarify the motivations of a group. If the abstraction is to be meaningful, the analytical category should include aspects of the lived experience, but the lived experience will never be reducible to the analytical category. In our example, the lived experience of community is best demonstrated among the descendants (broadly defined) of Oakley Plantation. In trying to move from the present to the past, we also attempt to tease out the lived experience of the historical community of Oakley Plantation. However, the fragments of the past available to us fail to reveal consciousness or self-identification, and therefore we must impose our analytical category. In doing so, we hope that our abstraction does not do violence to the nuances of lived experience. This must always be considered a necessary danger of the process of abstract thinking.

The definition of what constitutes a "descendant" community has been much debated in a number of contexts (e.g., Erlandson et al. 1998, Haley and Wilcoxon 1997, La Roche and Blakey 1997, O'Connor 1989). While it is easy to base a definition on self-identification, this often leads to conflict between competing interests within descendant communities and frequently places the anthropologist in a position of validating the "authenticity" of one group or the other. As Erlandson et al. (1998:484) have suggested in relation to anthropologists and Native Americans, "Anthropologists should not act as the sole arbiters of truth and justice, the diviners of who is or is not Indian, or the creators of simplistic stereotypes that exacerbate factionalism." There are multiple communities, and there is no overarching formula for success in incorporating them into a single research program (Derry 1997). Archaeologists must be willing to decenter themselves as authorities and allow interested communities to engage in their own negotiations of identity construction in relation to any given site or ancestral population. This does not, however, imply an unmitigated relativism that would treat all claims as equally valid. Claims of authority and identity can be evaluated by all participants through communication which makes their foundations manifest. In this way, we may reach a "truth" in the sense of "letting-something-be-seen" rather than as an agreement among individuals (Heidegger 1962[1927]:56).

The work currently under consideration occurred during the early 1990s, when debates regarding the role of community partners were still new in historical archaeology. Wilkie undertook to identify and contact former occupants and descendants of the plantation communities of two Louisiana plantations. These plantations, located in parishes separated by the Mississippi River, were being investigated concurrently. African-American communities were incorporated through oral history interviews, lectures, public outreach events, and other volunteer efforts in Baton Rouge, Pointe Coupe, and West Feliciana parishes. The project was conceptualized as a cooperative effort including a broad range of individuals whose life experiences involved the sites being studied, as well as others who felt that they shared a heritage with the families being studied archaeologically.

It was through the narratives of community partners who had lived at these plantations from the early to the

mid-1900s that the issues to be explored were recognized. These individuals helped to frame research questions and aided in the interpretation of materials. Since individuals had different perceptions of their communities' pasts, their views were incorporated into multivocal interpretations. As excavation, analysis, and interpretation progressed, dialogues regarding the meaning and implications of the data were instructed with a broader representation of the descendant community, including African-American scholars, individuals who identify themselves as inheritors of the plantation legacy. This synthesis therefore represents a broader range of input than might be obtained solely from direct descendants and former plantation occupants.

The (re)definition of partners is not a dilution of the descendant input but a response to their direction that the research be used to challenge the African-American community, in its broadest sense, to consider the complexities of the plantation period. In this situation, the greatest concern of the direct descendants has been that their history not be ignored and that the research consider the importance of the bonds between families created on plantations and why these bonds were lost. While interested in helping to explain specific materials as well as revealing memories of plantation life, these persons were uncomfortable with extending their participation to the realm of interpretation. This relationship is different from the proactive relationship between archaeologists and community partners that has developed during the analysis and interpretive phase of the African Burial Ground Project in New York (Epperson 1999, LaRoche and Blakey 1997) and probably reflects the different political, social, and economic experiences of the two descendant populations. One of the emancipatory implications of this research has been to emphasize that individuals have a right to inject their voices into historical discourses to keep their experiences from being devalued, lost, or rewritten by others.

While the community partners were broadly defined as we have just shown, the historical community under study had to be identified in a different manner. With the assistance of the descendant community, in conjunction with historical documentation and archaeological remains, Wilkie was able to gain a sense of a historical community at Oakley. Informants were explicit about the way in which they conceived their community. From day to day, individuals were involved in face-to-face interactions with other occupants of the plantation during the course of work, school, barter, and worship. Informants particularly emphasized the importance of church membership; new families were expected to join Mt. Pilgrim Church, which served the members of Oakley's tenant populations as well as the families that had left. They indicated that the vast majority of their social interactions were with other people living on the plantation.

Expanding upon informants' notions of this historical community, census and plantation records indicated that sharecropping families were surprisingly stable at Oakley, with a number remaining on the plantation for several generations. Families maintained some contact with other families who had moved to other plantations, and some kin alliances were formed through marriage across plantations. Likewise, during ventures to the local towns, people built additional webs of social relations. These social networks created an extended community for the African-American population of the plantation that included part of the white population of the area. Oral histories indicated that African-Americans saw their employers as their representatives with regard to the white community—as persons who could protect or endanger them. In contrast to the situation in parts of Appalachia, where white sharecroppers were not uncommon, in these cotton parishes color differences closely paralleled class differences, with African-Americans occupying the lowest economic, political, and social levels of society. Local papers embraced white supremacism, and racial violence was employed as a means of reinforcing the racial hierarchy. Ultimately, it was typically the other members of the African-American plantation community to whom individuals turned in times of economic or emotional distress.

Beyond the plantation, the people of Oakley were more indirectly involved in the broader economic, political, and social communities that extended to the state, the region, the nation, and the world. While it is easy to conceptualize the incorporation of the products of labor into a larger system, the historical community at Oakley may also have identified itself as a member of these larger networks. Through media such as newspapers, magazines, and mail-order catalogs and material culture, the African-American population of Oakley was also embedded within a more imagined but no less real community as hopeful consumers, exposed to a world of gentility and the American dream of upward mobility (Mullins 1999a). Situated within these multiscalar webs of relations, with their constraints, conflicts, and possibilities, the African-American population of Oakley Plantation negotiated the routines of everyday life. For the purpose of our discussion, we focus our analysis upon "community" as seen through the experiences of a single family at this plantation. While our analytical category encompasses aspects of the lived experience, for the sake of brevity, our analysis is confined to an "unreal" specificity.

Following emancipation, formerly enslaved African-Americans found themselves situated in a foreign economic arrangement that stripped them of the limited personal safety and economic security previously afforded by the value of their bodies to the slaveholders (Maguire 1975, Mandle 1983, Moody 1968). For those who remained in the agricultural South, tenancy, especially sharecropping, ultimately served to entwine many African-American families in a painful and seemingly inescapable cycle of increasing debt (Adams 1980, Adams and Smith 1985, Maguire 1975, Orser 1988a). Discussions with former plantation workers and their descendants have revealed that this period of life on the plantation remains an important component of many African-American families' narratives (Wilkie n.d.a).

Many members of the descendant communities saw Wilkie, a university instructor, as a vehicle for educating younger generations of African-Americans. Many stressed how important it was for their children and grandchildren to understand how hard life had been and how much progress they had made. Intimately tied to these narratives of success were stories about community strength: the importance of ethnic solidarity, mutual dependence, religious faith, and commitment to education (Wilkie n.d.*a*). Over and over again, Wilkie heard from different community collaborators about the efforts of various tenant populations to maintain and improve educational opportunities for their communities and to support one another financially in times of hardship and illness. The proud stories of escape from an oppressive economic regime were always paired with nostalgia for the sense of community that had endured and, to their minds, was missing from contemporary society. Oral history, intended to clarify artifact interpretation, in fact was a critical practice through which descendant communities made the archaeological findings part of their own discursive consciousness. A renewal of this sense of community was often suggested by community partners as a means of saving imperiled elements of African-American society. The community clearly had an understanding of the factors that had contributed to its emancipation from the economic situation of the plantation and wanted that understanding to be communicated through the archaeology of plantation life.

It is important to note, at this juncture, that the incorporation of community partners into this kind of research is not undertaken so that descendants can have archaeologists write histories of their pasts that suit their current self-images or political needs. Instead, working with community partners allows researchers to recognize that there are issues and questions regarding the past that are important to descendants, including those who do not necessarily correspond to the intellectual fads of the academy. The discursive relationship between archaeologist and informant not only challenges the archaeologist to consider different research avenues and interpretations but also challenges the descendants, through the interpretive process, to reflect upon their understandings of their history.

While the community's understandings of its past have been a vital part of interpreting archaeological remains for the broader public, they have raised other important questions for critical consideration. How did the process of acquiring freedom from the plantation ultimately extinguish the sense of community that had made it possible? How did the lifeworld change so radically as to be unrecognizable to its inhabitants? This question shaped archaeological consideration of two generations of a single African-American family whose members made the transition from tenant to wage labor.

Silvia Freeman and her husband, Lewis, worked as sharecroppers throughout their marriage. Married in 1870, they had nine children, five of whom lived beyond infancy. By the time that Lewis died, sometime around 1885, their oldest children, John and Joe, had entered their teens, experienced in the lifeworld of the share-cropping community. A young widow with five children, Silvia Freeman seems to have caught the attention of the spinster owners of Oakley Plantation, Lucy and Ida Matthews. Silvia was given the position of cook and moved from the quarters to a house near the planter residence. During her adult life, Silvia Freeman would experience the height of racial violence in Louisiana between the end of Reconstruction and the institution of the Jim Crow laws. The opportunities for employment for African-American workers in rural West Feliciana parish were limited to share-farming, the timber industry, and, for the lucky few, service positions in the homes of white families. Essentialist racial notions held by the white community shaped the economic, educational, social, and political opportunities available to the African-American community. Archaeological investigations have allowed for new insights concerning this period of change in the life of Silvia Freeman, as she operated as a constrained individual in a volatile racial landscape (Wilkie 1994*a*, *b*, 1995, 1996, 1997, n.d.*a*, *b*, *c*).

Silvia Freeman's occupational shift to cook represented an important economic advancement for her family. She now worked for wages rather than credit. In 1890 she was the highest-paid wage worker on the plantation, earning $4.00 a month. In addition to the advantages of earning wages, proximity to the planter family provided other material benefits, such as hand-me-down ceramics and glassware from the planter family. The common practice of "toting" (taking home the remainders of the planter's meals) lessened food expenses. These advantages are all evidenced in the archaeological record. While these relations between the Freeman and the Matthews families were an important aspect of Silvia's new position, a striking feature of the archaeological assemblage associated with her was the degree to which she maintained ties to the sharecropping community (Wilkie 1994*a*, 1995, 1996, 1997, n.d.*b*). Archaeological data clearly demonstrate that she participated in bartering transactions with the sharecropping community, providing tenants who lived on credit with an alternative source of goods (Wilkie 1994*a*, n.d.*b*). Archaeological evidence also suggests that she continued to rely upon ethnically distinct medical and magical practices that tied her to the community (Wilkie 1994*a*, 1996, n.d.*b*). Documentary evidence demonstrates that participation in the community church was important to Silvia and that the church-run school educated her children.

The children of Silvia and Lewis Freeman were all eventually employed in some manner by the planter family. John worked as a yard hand until he married and moved back to the quarters of Oakley Plantation as a sharecropper. Joe worked as the carriage driver until, following his brother's lead, he married and began to farm a plot of land. Thus, these brothers reentered the lifeworld of their parents, forsaking the economic advantages of life in the planter's house for the community of their childhood. Their lifestyle greatly contrasts with that of their sisters, Delphine and Eliza. During their childhood, Silvia Freeman's three youngest children,

Eliza, Delphine, and Christine, also worked for the planter's family. Unlike their brothers, however, the three sisters were employed in the planter's residence. As part of their interactions with the planter family, the Freeman family received a variety of hand-me-downs, among them white-faced porcelain dolls and numerous tea sets. Not only did these toys expose the children to the material trappings of the upper classes, but they also encouraged play revolving around domesticity and service (Wilkie 1994b, n.d.c). These younger daughters had not experienced the lifeworld of the sharecropping community for any memorable length of their lives. Instead, the lifeworld in which they were enmeshed was a dual world of contrast between their mother's former life and the examples set before them by the planter family. The value orientations internalized by the younger Freeman children were drawn from these conflicting worlds.

Habermas (1987:169) has written that "on the basis of an increasing sharp dichotomy between high and popular cultures, classes develop their own milieus, lifeworlds, and value orientations specific to the various strata." For at least two of the Freeman daughters, Delphine and Eliza (Christine Freeman has not been traced further historically), the lifeworld of the household servant became their sole realm of experience. After Silvia's death, they continued to live in their mother's house, working respectively as cook and house servant. Their occupations clearly placed them in a social class distinct from that of the farming families. The archaeological record shows less evidence for them than for their mother of the maintenance of ethnic practices that would have tied them to the broader community (Wilkie 1994a, 1995, 1996, n.d.b). The sisters placed greater emphasis on mass-produced medical goods. Little evidence exists for a continuation of their mother's magical practices, and there is no evidence of bartering with the tenant community. The tablewares, clothing, and dietary remains from the site demonstrate the sisters' increasing participation in the material world of the planter family. Delphine and Eliza even had access to such luxury items as a phonograph.

The sisters' upward mobility had consequences for the way in which they were perceived within the broader African-American community of the plantation. Several former Oakley tenants who had known Eliza and Delphine, as well as John and Joe Freeman, had not realized that the four were siblings (Wilkie n.d.c). Oral history also indicates that the closest friend of the sisters was the wife of another wage worker. Aside from this relationship, the sisters seem to have been relatively isolated from the remainder of the African-American community, not to mention the communicative acts that made up its lifeworld. While they may have improved their material standing over that of the sharecroppers of the community, the labor arrangement in which they lived served to isolate them socially. The structure of domestic service, its time demands, and its geographic isolation limited the possibility of interactions with not only sharecroppers but also other wage workers. In the racially segregated world of the postbellum South, the sisters

may have achieved greater financial autonomy than possible under sharecropping, but they did so at the expense of social relationships within the local community.

With their participation in the lifeworld of domestic service, the Freeman sisters accepted a form of labor arrangement not available to the sharecropping community. While sharecroppers were still largely involved in subsistence agriculture, domestic servants were selling their labor and, as a result, were severed from their former lifeworld. We characterize the experience of the Freemans as typical of individuals who become incorporated into capitalist organizations (Habermas 1987: 309):

> Organizations not only disconnect themselves from cultural commitments and from attitudes and orientations specific to given personalities; they also make themselves independent from lifeworld contexts by neutralizing the normative background of informal, customary, morally regulated contexts of action. The social is not absorbed as such by organized action systems; rather, it is split up into spheres of action constituted as the lifeworld and spheres neutralized against the lifeworld.

It can be argued that one cost of capitalist social relations is the destruction of "traditional forms of life" (Habermas 1987:321). The Freeman sisters had other options than to pursue a life of domestic service. Their brothers provided them an entrée into the tenant community. While reinforcing ties to lateral kinship networks and community, such an option would also have tied them to an oppressive labor regime. The oppressive labor structures of the postbellum South forced families into a paradoxical situation: to take advantage of the economic improvements made possible by the lifeworld of their community, they had to contribute to the destruction of that lifeworld.

To understand the possible motives of individuals like the Freeman sisters, who seemingly abandoned their families and communities in exchange for the commodification of their labor, we must consider the other kinds of relationships that bound these women. We have previously suggested that individuals sometimes willingly participate in capitalist systems, embracing an ideology that promises that hard work will be rewarded with social mobility and improvement in the quality of life. One means of evaluating social mobility is through a consideration of one's ascending and descending kinship relations. In part, the experiences of their mother, her elevation to the position of most trusted and highly paid servant on the plantation, would have served as authentication of capitalist ideology for the sisters.

Sherry Ortner (1991:171) writes, "Because hegemonic American culture takes both the ideology of mobility and the ideology of individualism seriously, explanations for nonmobility not only focus on the failure of individuals (because they are said to be inherently lazy, or stupid or whatever), but shift the domain of discourse to arenas

that are taken to be 'locked into' individuals—gender, race, ethnic origin, and so forth." Therefore, as the Freeman sisters became more immersed in the discourse and ideologies of American capitalist society, they would have perceived the economic hardships of the sharecroppers and other tenants not as the result of the structures of racism that had created the economic system but as due to individuals' shortcomings. Perhaps they perceived the sharecroppers' inability to advance economically as the result of their "backward" cultural values—thus validating their own decision to sever their ties to their lifeworld.

Part of the ideology of capitalism is the belief that children will be more successful than their parents. In this light, the transition to wage labor, even at the cost of weakened social and lateral kin relations, served as an investment in the descendant kin. While neither of the Freeman sisters married, each had a daughter. These children grew up in the shadow of the great house, with all of the privileges and drawbacks that this lifeworld entailed. Archaeological evidence demonstrates that the Matthewses continued to provide porcelain toys to the children of Freemans. One of these artifacts provides some insight into the social aspirations that the Freeman sisters may have held for their children and the love they may have felt for them. A small porcelain soapdish recovered from the site was decorated with a gold band around its rim. A small chip in one corner had damaged part of the decorative band (Wilkie 1994b, n.d.c), and someone had carefully repaired the decoration by repainting that section of the band with gold paint. The bottle of this gold paint was also recovered from the Freeman assemblage, indicating that the repair had taken place within the Freeman house. Forgive a moment of archaeological indulgence, and imagine a parent, after a long day cooking or cleaning for the planter family, carefully repainting a thin gold band on a tiny damaged toy by a flickering oil lamp. This single artifact could suggest that the occupants had embraced the consumer ideology of capitalism that proclaimed happiness and contentment could be achieved through the possession of fine goods (Leach 1993). At the same time, it embodies the dreams and aspirations of upward mobility that the parents held for their children.

While the Freeman sisters specifically chose service over farming, their choice was not very different from those of other sharecropping families who took advantage of circumstances that allowed them to enter the workforce as wage labor. It is clear from the Freeman example, however, that the shift from one labor arrangement to another can lead to the alienation of individuals from their lifeworlds. For the descendants of these wage laborers, the financial improvements in their lifestyle were tempered by their memories of the lifeworld left behind.

Ironically, even though sharecropping was a labor arrangement that led to the institution of a system of debt peonage, sharecropping families still maintained some control over their production and were able to focus part of their household labor on subsistence goods that could be used or traded for other goods (Adams 1980, Adams and Smith 1985, Gaines 1971, Maguire 1975, Mandle 1983, Orser 1988a). Trade between households was a form of communicative action that aided in the re-creation of the lifeworld. Within sharecropping communities, certain individuals shifted among various occupations, serving as root doctors, preachers, teachers, midwives, or conjurers. The provision of ethnomedical and magical services or education also served to create tighter webs of social relations between individuals and households (Wilkie 1994a, n.d.b). Improved educational opportunities provided a means for individuals to acquire wage labor positions in towns and cities (Lemann 1991), but in selling their labor families lost those limited opportunities for home production. As the archaeological materials from the Freemans demonstrate, in these situations the social relations that had tied communities together were loosened. Families became economically more self-sufficient, but this self-sufficiency ultimately resulted in communal breakdown.

Through recollections and impressions, descendants of the communities at Oakley Plantation conveyed a sense of the paradox in which their families had been entwined. As informed by these community partners, a critical-archaeological interpretation of life at Oakley offers an understanding of the perceptions and choices that led to the destabilization of a lifeworld. Through this insight we can identify possible avenues for emancipatory action. The course of this research has led to an engaged (re)construction of the past processes that have shaped the present. The creation of a dialogue between community partners and the researcher resulted in new perspectives on the personal histories of individual families and their place in the larger context of postbellum change in the rural South. Researcher and community partners realized that human agency, not monolithic forces, had shaped the course of history. Critical-archaeological interpretation relies on this formulation of a discursive relationship between past and present, a relationship that forms its synthesis, its unity, in the unfolding of the future.

Toward Human Freedom

The intent of this article has not been to review the vast literature related to Marxist-inspired archaeology or archaeologists who identify themselves as doing the archaeology of capitalism (e.g., Brumfiel 1992; Childe 1936; Crumley 1987; Gibb 1996; Gilman 1989; Handsman and Leone 1989; Johnson 1996, 1999; Kohl 1981; Leone 1995, 1999; Leone, Potter, and Shackel 1987; Little 1994a; Marquardt 1992; McGuire 1992; McGuire and Paynter 1991; Miller and Tilley 1984; Orser 1996; Patterson 1991; Paynter 1988; Pinsky and Wylie 1989; Potter 1994; Shackel 1993; Spriggs 1984; Trigger 1984). Our intent has been to recognize the variety of ways in which archaeologies that are critical in nature can add to a more complex understanding of capitalism and the place of human agency in the modern world. We feel that critical

archaeology represents the best avenue for achieving a dialogue between peoples of the past and the present. We hope that Leone's recent shift from a critical archaeology (Handsman and Leone 1989, Leone 1988, Leone, Potter, and Shackel 1987) to an archaeology of capitalism (Leone 1995, 1999) does not represent an abandonment of the goal of bringing about emancipatory action through archaeological praxis. While the discipline has increasingly embraced the kind of community partnering that would inform a critical archaeology, critical archaeologies have for the most part involved little in the way of praxis. Our goal has been to revisit and recenter a critical archaeology. Yet, difficult questions remain to be answered. What are the goals of an emancipatory science such as critical archaeology? And, more important, what is emancipation?

When the obstacles to human freedom are tangible forms of oppression, focused effort can address the material aspects of suffering. Fetters can be shattered and oppressors punished. However, obstacles such as poverty and racism are intangibles of which only the results are visible. We have emphasized that the structures of society are created and transformed through social relations, and we have demonstrated through the case study that a critical-archaeological praxis brings these social relations from the realm of practical consciousness to that of discursive consciousness. We hold that knowledge of the obstacles to human freedom must be the crucial first step in any attempt to overcome them.

This knowledge must be forged through a dialogue in which a critical understanding of the world is formed in discourse. "The main emphasis of a socialist culture must be on the enhancement of the social consciousness of its citizens, not only as an awareness of each person's obligations toward the collectivity of others, but even more, as an awareness of the moral priority of society over the rights of its individual members" (Heilbroner 1980:167). Yet, this reduction of the individual should not be considered a call to conformity as much as a strengthening of a social whole. In this view, individual variation is beneficial to society. We must be sure that we do not obscure this individual variation in our archaeological constructions of the past by depending too heavily upon essentialist categories of analysis that obscure the nuances and complexities of human social relations.

Through a dialogue in which differential positions of privilege are discursively recognized and decentered, individuals can come to an understanding of the mental aspect of social relations. As Godelier (1986:169) has demonstrated, "Every social relation . . . exists both in thought and outside of it, and the part which is in thought therefore belongs to thought and is a mental reality." We agree with Godelier that for a social relation to become a material reality, individuals must have some type of mental understanding of the relation upon which to act. While this mental reality may often be part of an individual's practical consciousness, critically informed research should attempt to introduce it into the discursive consciousness of community partners and scholars

alike. In discourse, alternative realities may be formed as imagined possibilities that may directly transform social realities. "Indeed, around each social relation there exists a series, more or less numerous and more or less elaborated in thought, of other social relations which are in relations of logical transformation with it and exist only mentally. . . . In the long run, this practice [the actual initiation of the alternative by individuals] can profoundly subvert the system" (Godelier 1986:171–72).

However, just as the actuality of oppressive social relations is intangible aside from its results, the removal of these obstacles to human freedom will also be less than visible. The use of knowledge as a critical force in the attainment of human freedom is a gradual process. If this process is to be truly critical, it must be discursive. To be discursive, the process must involve many individuals, and therefore it will be prone to fits and starts and will have no predetermined trajectory. One of the fallacies of Marxist perspectives has been the teleology of an evolutionary trajectory toward socialism. Heilbroner (1980:172) has recognized this as an important crossroads of Marxism:

> The answer hinges . . . on whether Marxism is ultimately to be an ideology or a critical philosophy. As an ideology, its usefulness will be spent with the attainment of its objective. . . . But Marxism—or better, marxisms—contain the possibility for more than that. A dialectical view of reality, enlarging our view of things with a tension and contradictoriness that is lacking in other philosophic perspectives, should help clarify our knowledge of the world. A materialist view of history will enrich our understanding of the past and of the present, as long as the processes of production play a powerful role in human affairs and exert such enormous influences over the stratifications of society.

In the end, a materialist perspective such as critical theory does not offer us the solution to the "final drama." Instead, a critically informed praxis places us on a path to better understanding of the multiplicity of dramas, both past and present, of daily life that will inform the future course of our society. Anthropological archaeology has a unique opportunity to serve as a discursive and reflexive bridge between past and present and remains an arena for further critical action.

Comments

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Wilkie and Bartoy criticize those whom they see as reducing the reality of the capitalist or modern world to

an essential set of class and material relations. They believe that such an essentialism, which then treats class relations as the motor of history, necessarily fails to lead to an understanding of the human agents who variously reproduce those class conditions, transform them, and rework the material conditions of life. The determinate and abstract descriptions by which modernity is fixed for analytical inspection by some are, for Wilkie and Bartoy, in fact inhabited and thus transformed by the conscious agencies of those who act as least partly according to their own strategic purposes. Classes do not reproduce themselves in abstraction but are made by people living within certain given material conditions.

The contrasts with which Wilkie and Bartoy work are relatively well known and are normally expressed in dualistic terms such as structure and agency or society and individual. The initial problem seems to be whether we are to make a choice analytically between the components of such dualisms or whether we can transcend them altogether. Giddens has attempted the latter in his theory of structuration, and it is the latter course which I assume Wilkie and Bartoy wish to follow. The central thesis of structuration theory is that agency cannot exist outside the context in which it practices the creation of its own history; rather, it makes itself in relation to certain structural conditions and, in so doing, also remakes and transforms those conditions. Thus "the constitution of agency and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality. According to the notion of the duality of structure, the structural properties of a social system are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organise" (Giddens 1984:25).

This brings us to two crucial components of agency: consciousness and power. Wilkie and Bartoy recognize the importance of the former but are strangely silent on the latter. Consciousness as an awareness of the world is itself structured by the biological conditions of our bodies and by traditions of knowledge and memories of past experience. These structuring conditions of embodied "knowledgeability" allow consciousness to be expressed in practice. Practice ranges from the non-discursive routines of embodied action to the discursively expressed strategies and negotiations of daily life. This means that people can both act within their worlds by "performing" society and express an understanding of those same worlds—that is, have a theory of society (cf. Bloch 1985, Strum and Latour 1987).

Power most simply is the ability to do work. As we have seen, from the point of view of human agency that ability is knowledgeable and is expressed in a range of practices. But work is also applied to something, be it our bodies, the bodies of others, or the material world around us. I would now make three points. First, a knowledgeable and empowered agency can be a collectivity that has access to common resources and common traditions of knowledge. Second, power is inequitably distributed within a given social formation by virtue of differential access to knowledge and resources. Third, society can become the object upon which certain collectivities may attempt to work. Thus we may conceive a degree of systemic integration in which certain groups may recognize their own collective identities and capabilities which appear to be ideologically legitimate (William Paca surveying his garden), theorize the social condition (and thus write a constitution), and act upon other collectivities that have been defined at least in part by the discursive practices and power of the dominant group (slaves). I would regard these as class relations.

Class is not merely the epiphenomenon of the routinized practices of its members, as I feel Wilkie and Bartoy come close to implying, nor, as E. P. Thompson so ably demonstrated, is it an analytical abstraction. Class is made in the real physical conditions of history through the practices of agencies that have differential access to resources, act with different degrees of effect upon the world around them, and are stratified in relation to the ways they can work on the identities and lives of others. The extent to which class relations are themselves agents of historical change at any one time cannot be assumed but demands empirical investigation, and that is the role of the historian and the archaeologist. Where a critical scholarship operates it is to demonstrate how the treatment of collectivities as if they were commodities and abstractions is an act of violence on lives whose histories and aspirations it is now our duty to tell. In this I fully support the manifesto Wilkie and Bartoy have placed before us.

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Wilkie and Bartoy fail to provide a strong argument for the wide adoption of their approach to critical theory in contrast to that used by an illusory "Annapolis School." Their epigraph implicitly charges their opponents with laziness and tautology, thus establishing a very high standard which they themselves fail to achieve. Their article is riddled with unsubstantiated assertions, mischaracterizations, and quotations out of context. For example, they assert without citation that "many archaeologists . . . have come to consider historical archaeology synonymous with the archaeology of capitalism." They further assert that there is an influential "Annapolis School" of historical archaeology, but, considering the works they do cite, its enrollment seems to number only six or seven. In critiquing this fictitious Annapolis School they make sweeping statements such as that Mullins's recent work does not "adequately [situate] actors from different classes in dynamic relationships with one another" and that "the Annapolis School has failed to incorporate the experiences of women or ethnic and racial minorities in a way that recognized the unique voices of these individuals," yet Mullins specifically addresses the complexities of individual consumer choices by the African-American community in Annapolis given the racist underpinnings of class negotiation (Mullins

1999b). Even if we were to grant the existence of an "Annapolis School," Wilkie and Bartoy completely ignore the contributions of, for example, Mark Warner (1998), who explicitly analyzed the African-American Annapolitan past, and Elizabeth Kryder-Reid (1998), who has dealt with gender in quite sophisticated ways.

They misunderstand a number of the concepts they use and disarticulate them from their original contexts. In their summary of Bourdieu's concept of habitus, for example, they correctly report that it "recognizes that people's understanding of their cultural environment is uniquely historically situated within their own experiences," but they overlook the fact that Bourdieu himself considered the construction of habitus to be constrained by an existing class structure. Bourdieu (1977:72, my emphasis) states that "the structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g., *the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition*) produce habitus." Similarly, they disarticulate Giddens's structuration theory, which is largely based on the idea that unconscious aspects of social being structure action. They explicitly dismiss his argument that individuals may not be able to articulate why they act in a certain way. This makes sense given their effort to dismiss the possibility that behavior is shaped by shared class consciousness.

In claiming the mantle of critical theory Wilkie and Bartoy adopt a perspective that recognizes human action as explicitly political, yet their own political agenda is obscured. For example, they are quick to criticize Leone for decontextualizing his use of critical theory from its political and social context but fail to situate themselves in such a context. Specifically, in discussing the history of the Frankfurt School they rightly state that "ideas from [the early 20th century] were rather contingent upon their historical milieu. . . [which] was characterized by an unprecedented class consciousness. Leone's neglect of this context makes his application of critical theory to archaeology seem rather ahistorical." Yet they make no mention of their own historical and political milieu, in which the fragmentation of society, the increased power of multinational corporations, and the penetration of capitalist social relations into every corner of the world have worked to (re)define the individual from citizen to consumer. On a close reading, it becomes evident that Wilkie and Bartoy's conceptualization of society as composed of (semi)autonomous individuals in fact contributes to the wider social discourse enabling the increased accumulation of wealth by agents in the once so-called developed world.

For critical theorists, Wilkie and Bartoy are remarkably uncritical of their own habitus as members of the middle-class intelligentsia. For example, they cite as part of the ideology of capitalism "the belief that children will be more successful than their parents." This feature is in fact a unique artifact of the postwar boom in American capitalism, when for a few brief generations this was indeed the case for the middle class. They project this belief back to the turn of the 20th century; one could imagine the response if one had asked the striking coal miners in Colorado in the days leading up to the Ludlow massacre if they thought that their children, forced to work in the mines from the age of ten, would be better off in the coming years. Those who accuse others of being uncritical of the historical contexts of their assumptions would do well to heed their own advice.

Of the six works that Wilkie and Bartoy choose to cite on the archaeological definition of capitalism, they choose to critique the only one written by an untenured faculty member, myself (Delle 1998). In the course of their critique they wrongly assert that I subordinate agency to class formation. Instead, the bulk of the analysis focuses on how individuals constrained by racial oppression struggled to become self-sufficient actors in pre- and postslavery contexts. I fail to see how this differs in anything but jargon from their own stated agenda.

The time may in fact be right to revisit critical historical archaeology, but Wilkie and Bartoy seem more like academic tourists than serious critics.

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Critical theory in archaeology is particularly undertheorized, and this is perhaps best exemplified in what Wilkie and Bartoy refer to as the Annapolis School. This "school" is critiqued for concentrating its work on the ideology of capitalist institutions and top-down models of society. Although class is important in this framework, it is the upper classes which are most often given primacy. It is therefore important that Wilkie and Bartoy bring agency, the agency of all individuals in all classes, back into critical archaeology. This article is packed with interesting and thought-provoking discussion, and I have only a few comments.

The case study of two generations of the Freeman family, primarily Silvia and two of her daughters, at the Oakley Plantation is a biographical narrative that is highly evocative and allows the reader to gain some understanding of the experiences of these women. Agency is here presented through biography, a method particularly well used in this study, successfully combining archaeology, history, and individual and community memory. Reading between the lines of the case study it seems clear that members of the Freeman family were not free to make any choices they wished but constrained by relations of exploitation and domination. In their desire to place agency at the center of the analysis, Wilkie and Bartoy have considerably played down the role of structure and the constraints of social relations in their description of the experience of the members of the Freeman family. Agency in archaeological interpretation is in obvious need of more theoretical discussion not only to explore its complexities but also to explore the linkages between agency and structure.

Wilkie and Bartoy translate Habermas's concept of "lifeworld" into their "notion of community" and limit this to the meaning and norms of daily life. This seems

an oversimplification of "lifeworld," which is situated in relation to both public and private spheres, both the everyday and state systems. Placing both lifeworld and community in the private sphere, with an emphasis on personal relationships, is obviously a way of including agency in critical archaeology, but as a consequence much of the gender-blindness of the work of Habermas (Fraser 1989) remains. Perhaps Wilkie and Bartoy have chosen to ignore these problems by concentrating their analysis on the female side of the family and on the private, the personal, and the domestic. In the case study, lifeworld is presented as something quite static and unchanging, with the Freemans slowly becoming alienated from their traditional way of life. A critical archaeology should resist this tendency to make lifeworld or culture something passive and unchanging. Postcolonial critiques (for example, Bhabha 1994:19–34) challenge the fixed identities of cultures and focus on dynamic relations, cultural difference, and hybridity—all of which would be most relevant to this case study.

Critical archaeology should be self-reflexive and concerned with the relationship between archaeologists and the communities within which they work. Wilkie and Bartoy's article presents an excellent example and challenges critical archaeology to engage in this work, both theoretically and practically. This places demands on all of those involved and is surely not simply a matter of archaeologists' engaging with their public or the local community, of allowing them—the "Other"—to participate in knowledge production.

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Wilkie and Bartoy's article should foster considerable discussion among those concerned with epistemological issues relating to archaeology. Several years ago Robert Whallon (1985:23) pointed to "a strong atheoretic trend" in American archaeology, and this is in a way still true today for most archaeology worldwide. A theoretical discussion is always welcome. Wilkie and Bartoy explore some positive interpretive avenues, such as proposing that historical archaeology not be interpreted only as the archaeology of capitalism (see Funari 1999) and that archaeologists work with the community. However, the overall impression is that they take a conservative stance, uncritical of present-day contradictions in society and of archaeological praxis within it.

We live in postmodern times, and postmodernism is "always a radical form of pluralism" (Lorenz 1998:619). If pluralism is characteristic of contemporary life, then clear-cut divisions such as those proposed by Wilkie and Bartoy are unsustainable and clearly artificial (see Bintliff 1995:34). The whole article is grounded on a division of scholars into two opposing camps—Marxists, like Leone, and humanists, like Hodder, Shanks, and Tilley. How-

ever, the Marxist literature is used by all the writers referred to in the article (see McGuire 1992:3), and, furthermore, as is pointed out by Wood and Powell (1993: 407), most of them can be described first and foremost as postprocessualists, recognizing that current social and political contexts shape their interpretation of archaeological remains. Therefore the proposed dichotomy is unconvincing. Epistemological models are practical and historical constructions (Shanks 1995:54) and should be understood in terms of a social history of theory building (McGuire 1992:251). In this context, a historical perspective on critical archaeology should be a useful tool for understanding the shaping of an approach. Again, the opposition between class and agency—as if discussion of class would preclude a proper understanding of human agency—is artificial and not accepted by the writers criticized themselves, several of whom are explicit about class and agency as interrelated. Furthermore, Wilkie and Bartoy criticize Orser but extensively use his (1988a) work, betraying the inconsistency of their charge that he and others do not take human agency into account. In their criticism of "Marxists," they argue that gender, race, and ethnicity should be studied, but later they refer to these terms as mere labels. Another dichotomy, between individual and society, characterized as a dialectical relationship, is presented as if surveillance entailed compliance. However, Foucault, who cannot be classified in terms of the Marxist/humanist dichotomy, also uses a concept of surveillance and is quoted by self-styled critical archaeologists who also stress resistance. There are thus several ways of criticizing exploitation in society, and the dichotomies proposed by Wilkie and Bartoy are grounded in axioms and unconvincing to readers familiar with the literature.

Perhaps the main positive contribution of the authors is their plea for collaborative interaction between archaeologists and their publics. Others, however, have stressed the need for empowerment (Funari 2000:182), emancipation (Potter 1992:124; Miller and Tilley 1996), critical engagement (Hodder 1991:10), and transformative interaction with people aiming at demystifying power relationships (Paynter and McGuire 1991:9) and transforming social relations in the present (Shanks and Tilley 1987:172) without necessarily privileging the outsider as Wilkie and Bartoy suggest. On the contrary, their publics seem to be publics in lay and commonsense terms, lacking class interests.

The danger of sidelining class (see Saitta 1994:203–4) in the interpretation of society is precisely in overlooking the importance of archaeology as a way of learning about nonelites (Paynter and McGuire 1991:13). In historical archaeology, the main emphasis has long been on the material culture of elites (Trigger 1998:16), and deemphasizing class may contribute to the eulogy of freedom as an abstract, individual, and upper-class concept (Funari, Jones, and Hall 1999:11–16).

In the end, if it is true that archaeology is still empiricist and unreflexive, reinforcing commonsense and upper-class mores, critical approaches are essential. However, condemning different critical approaches as Wilkie

and Bartoy do runs counter to pluralism and dialogue (Funari 1996:384) and runs the risk of strengthening positivism. True pluralism entails that different approaches are valid (Funari 1995:242–45), and only a teleological understanding of science would enable the authors to condemn Marxism and critical archaeology as outdated. Giddens's agency concept is acceptable as a hermeneutic *Begriff*, but it cannot rule out other interpretive efforts which are interested in exposing social contradictions. As it is presented in this article, archaeology does not denounce exploitation, much less the interests of archaeologists in defending the status quo. Is it critical? The proof of the pudding is still in the eating: critical archaeologies are those which do not support the existing social order.

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There is much to applaud in Wilkie and Bartoy's argument for a more intimately drawn relationship between the individual and society—for the "bottom-up" perspective that promotes all social realities as socially constructed. If it isn't exactly new, this Giddens/Habermas/Bourdieu salad-of-an-approach is worth reiterating, especially for archaeological applications where we generally encounter archaeological materials as the products of individual efforts or activities or choices. In general, the position is popular and supportable and the work laudable, especially as undertaken with close communication between researchers and descendant communities.

Three things, however, perplex me about this piece. First, I am troubled that it is cast as a rebuke of the "Annapolis School." Why, we might ask, do the authors choose to reify Leone et al. as a "school" instead of allowing each of them the very individuality, agency, and individualized relationships to broader theoretical "society" that they insist on for their archaeological subjects? In making this move, we see Wilkie and Bartoy falling into the same trap as the Marxists they criticize, namely, drawing boundaries around similarly constituted subjects and giving them, en masse, a concrete unconstructed reality. This seems superfluous and ironic in the context of an argument that so forcefully rejects the abstraction and reification of social entities (such as an "Annapolis School") apart from the social relations that construct them.

Second, I find that the agency argued for so forcefully by the authors is ultimately poorly defined and sometimes conflated with other critiques such as whether previous researchers have paid attention to interactions across class divides or whether age, race, and gender have been recognized in agentic accounts. In the end, Wilkie's own study discovers the Freeman sisters to be seriously "constrained" agents, again chipping away at the power of agency that at first she and Bartoy want to require. It

also seems hard to argue that the "Annapolis School" has ignored issues of agency when a central study such as the Paca Garden research, cited here in relation to notions of ideology rather than agency, focuses explicitly on deliberate actions taken by individual elites in order to accomplish specific ideological goals; if anything, Leone's study can be faulted for overestimating or over-suggesting how ideological positions can be manipulated or constructed by single agents.

My final perplexity arises from the way the descendant groups and other "community partners" appear to have been involved in the research reported here. Presumably, the researchers learned a great deal of history from the contemporary African-American and (?White) plantation occupants whose ancestors they are investigating. But it is not clear what this "cooperative effort" ultimately contributes to the community if the goals of research were a priori set by academic concerns and focused, for instance, on questions of practical versus discursive consciousness. In the end, Wilkie and Bartoy present us with another set of questions: whose goals are these, and how much say did the various "partners" have in setting out the research plan? Who sets the agenda in cooperative research? Are archaeologists prepared to relinquish full control over their research programs? Do all "partners" have a say in how results are written or in whether or not to critique the Annapolis School—or abandon the Frankfurt School? Are archaeologists ready to ask, seriously, what nonacademic communities might want to learn from what archaeology can reveal, putting themselves at the service of these communities rather than incorporating so much of what these communities already know into the published results?

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I have attempted to introduce Marxist theory into historical archaeology by way of critical theory. My effort has been to adopt a theory that would link past and present and focus on consciousness as a vehicle for change, not on violence, and one that is robust enough to make material culture useful and usable as data. I have attempted not only to reform a data-ridden and anthropologically pointless field but also to connect the field to a theory that would explain how we as Westerners got into the condition we find ourselves in now. I am determined to make historical archaeology intellectually powerful enough to be a force for social and political change. Eventually, something along these lines may be achieved by the use of Marxist theory and the modifications of it that support democratic action.

Althusser, Habermas, and Freud all concentrated on consciousness because it was the only alternative they could see to violence for creating change. Althusser's work on ideology was useful to me initially because I could use it to find what Binford once called ideotechnic

items, and I found one in the Paca garden. For me the important thing was to locate an artifact that was ideological. The change which this meant in garden history was that gardens could no longer be seen as unique expressions of particular individuals' tastes. For archaeologists the much larger issue became whether people saw through ideology's misrepresentation. At the time I had not asked that question, but once I had I realized that people do often see their true conditions and struggle within them. It is not at all clear, however, that they can escape ideology or change their circumstances even if they can see them. To me it is still an open question whether ideology can be pierced for long or effectively. If that means that I have to see people as in false consciousness, then those who would so stigmatize me have to deal with the extraordinary resilience of capitalism even while it creates unheard-of differences in wealth among living peoples. For every archaeologist who wants to preserve options of freedom, will, liberty, or agency, there must be the accompanying charge of explaining why people accept impoverishment.

Critical theory via Althusser led to the notion, derived from Lukács, that consciousness of the origins of one's conditions of existence might lead to change. After many years of effort to use Archaeology in Public in Annapolis, which we began in 1982 (long before any archaeologist in the United States agreed in print or in public that archaeology had a public responsibility to explain how the past was created), I gave up that particular theory as a way of creating a public consciousness. That program failed to change anything in Annapolis, and I moved to an interpretive program derived from Habermas. He proposes to highlight the existence of local critiques of capitalism among communities not quite gobbled up by capitalism. Called lifeworlds, these are alternative views of how life can be led within capitalism. When highlighted in public, they could raise consciousness—no less an issue for Habermas than for Lukács.

Consequently, we focused on the lifeworld of African-Americans, well recorded through archaeology and the autobiographical narratives of the 1930s, and it became a vehicle for highlighting a different understanding of life inside capitalism. Mullins's book is a description of this lifeworld and is derived from archaeology, oral histories, local print sources, and long-term exposure to life in Annapolis. Since 1990, Archaeology in Annapolis has discovered, published, and widely publicized the depth and extent of Hoodoo, a Central West African religion creolized in North America, as an answer to the local African-American question: "What's left from Africa?" Our widely available work on African-American lifeworlds shows how subordinates survive in conditions of intensely hateful long-term racism and yet maintain their integrity. We used Habermas to achieve and think through our scientific roles in finding, adding to, and highlighting this alternative to capitalism. We have succeeded in being part of an effort that shows widely that Hoodoo is alive, is a religion, and is not to be dismissed as superstition.

Problematizing the terms used to study capitalism is

fine with me as long as one does not forget what poverty and injustice look like and that the condition of most historical archaeologists, as proven by the data of their own society, includes them in these two categories. The point of an aggressive, socially conscious historical archaeology—which, despite the declarations of this article, barely exists—would be to create, via excavation and publicly available interpretation, a way to show us, who are outside power or money, how exclusion happened. A critical archaeology's job is not to understand material culture; it is to create allies to show us how to think through change.

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When scholars criticize the work of their predecessors as being out-of-date, simplistic, or unsophisticated they set very high standards for the evaluation of their own commentary. It must be lucid, sophisticated, nuanced, and current, and it should result in clearly different interpretations of the social world. This is especially the case when they take on seminal works that have inspired many other researchers. Wilkie and Bartoy attempt this type of criticism in their analysis of the work of Mark Leone and his students. Unfortunately, their own critique and research do not meet the high standards that they set for the "Annapolis School." This is unfortunate because their goal of building an emancipatory praxis of archaeology is admirable and their commitment to working with descendant communities to define this praxis is exemplary.

In reading "A Critical Archaeology Revisited" I often found myself confused as to what theory was being critiqued. Wilkie and Bartoy define an "Annapolis School" of historical archaeology. Often this "school" seems to be composed of Mark Leone and his students, but sometimes it seems to include all explicitly Marxist historical archaeologists. They begin with a quote from John Locke and appear to reject Marxist theory, yet many of the writers they draw on (Thompson, Hobsbawm, Godelier, and Heilbroner) are Marxists.

Wilkie and Bartoy reject the dominant-ideology thesis that underlies Leone's early work, especially his study of Paca's garden. They correctly point out that it is unlikely that Paca's garden duped waged and enslaved workers into a false consciousness that hid from them the reality of their oppression. They seem unaware that others have been raising this same criticism for over a decade (Hodder 1986, McGuire 1988, Beaudry, Cook, and Mrozowski 1991, Hall 1992, Johnson 1992, Orser 1996, Burke 1999) and that Leone and his students have responded to these critiques by significantly modifying their theory, subject, and goals.

Wilkie and Bartoy stress the need to reconceptualize critical archaeology in terms of human agency. They reject both the idea that social structures determine hu-

man action and the idea that humans act as autonomous individuals. They argue for a dialectical understanding of the relationship between person and society that lies in a notion of constrained agency. This dialectical notion of agency does not seem to be realized, however, in their case study. In this case individuals move between share-cropping and wage work, but their mobility does not appear to change the conditions that "constrain" their agency. A hegemonic American culture seems to deceive the Freeman sisters into believing that the poverty of sharecroppers results from individual shortcomings rather than structures of racism. Human action is not simply constrained but contingent or conditional. Social structures, material relations, and ideologies both enable and limit human action. Human action in turn both reinforces and transforms the social reality.

The problems that Wilkie and Bartoy have with relating person and society are further illustrated in their notion of the descendant community. They essentially confuse the descendants of a community as individuals with a descendant community. In the Freeman example it is clear that these individuals are descended from the plantation communities but not that they form a modern community. Communities are not simply collections of individuals; they transcend individuals. I can illustrate the concept with our research on the 1914 Ludlow massacre (Ludlow Collective n.d.). The descendants of the people who lived in the Ludlow strike camp are by and large middle-class Euro-Americans. The descendant community is the unionized workers of southern Colorado, mainly Chicanos whose ancestors were not part of the 1914 struggle. Both groups maintain the massacre site as a shrine but for different reasons. The descendants use it to memorialize their individual family histories, but the unionized workers use it to reaffirm their identity as workers, their solidarity, and their struggle. It is certainly appropriate to work with biological descendants, but it is not conceptually useful to confuse individual descendants with a descendant community.

Many archaeologists around the world are struggling to build an emancipatory praxis of archaeology. All of our efforts are imperfect and tentative. The forces arrayed against us are powerful and resolute. "A Critical Archaeology Revisited" engenders debate that will aid us in that struggle by sharpening our conceptual knives, but such debate will undermine our struggle if we use these knives on each other rather than for emancipation.

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Wilkie and Bartoy lament the social and intellectual failures of the "Annapolis School" of critical archaeology, which has in their estimation ignored human agency, imposed the specter of an all-powerful elite, and overblown capitalism's sway. Yet their attempt to "revisit" critical archaeology grossly mischaracterizes critical archaeologies (Annapolitan and elsewhere) and parades a stream of Marxian caricatures to support its archaeology of conscious experience. Wilkie and Bartoy appropriate a scatter of superficially radical terminology and utterly misrepresent Archaeology in Annapolis and critical historical archaeologies; in their place they leave an ambiguous historical archaeology that jettisons class, capital, ideology, and power in favor of a phenomenological vision of self-empowered individuals who could be living in any social system or mode of production.

Using virtually no concrete references that support their interpretation, Wilkie and Bartoy employ tired Marxian stereotypes whose target is really all left-leaning, Marxian-influenced historical archaeology. Their suggestion that Annapolis archaeologists champion the notion of "false consciousness" is typical of their transparent scare tactics: no Marxians argue that people are "powerless" to shape their conditions, and indeed, several Annapolis archaeologists have argued against this very suggestion (e.g., Little 1994a, Mullins 1998). Not even Leone's most systematic analysis of class domination implies powerless masses acceding to their own oppression: if they had done so, why would the elite ever have conceded any change whatsoever? Likewise, Wilkie and Bartoy invoke the notion of top-down analysis to suggest that Annapolis archaeologies portray people past and present as passive victims whose lives are determined by scheming ideologues. Against this backdrop, they elevate the "individual"—itself an ideological abstraction—to a position that is, at best, loosely related to power relations. When they criticize my book for inadequately demonstrating class dynamism, they are implying that class is a fluid experiential identity overwhelmingly determined by conscious interaction between nebulous factions. To preserve some modest material basis for class, they equivocally concede unspoken influences—capital? racism? labor relations?—but minimize them by ignoring them outside their articulation in experience. Wilkie and Bartoy preserve critical concepts such as class and capitalism but ignore their profound sway by exaggerating individual agency and conscious experience, a strategy they borrow from Giddens. When they champion Giddens's "discursive consciousness," Wilkie and Bartoy place articulate human experience at the heart of archaeology but establish absolutely no relationship between experience and tangible structuring mechanisms. They reluctantly concede that capitalism shapes social life, but they refrain from assertively defining or critiquing capitalism and retreat to the safe ambiguity of assessing "social relations." Put this way, conscious experience poses as an essential reality rather than a historical, power-laden subjectivity in itself: Wilkie and Bartoy simply shift deterministic power from the economy to the constructed notion of "experience."

The premise of an "Annapolis School" is itself a tenuous construct that Wilkie and Bartoy build to provide a caricatured counterpoint to their perspective. Even if we acknowledge Marxism's genuine impress on Annap-

olis archaeologies, Wilkie and Bartoy reduce the oeuvre to a monolithic orthodox Marxism. Still more exaggerated is their assertion that Archaeology in Annapolis has involved no "true praxis": this slights a considerable volume of Annapolis research that probes how social identity is forged in complex power relations and disregards how contemporary Annapolitans have used, shaped, modified, and ignored archaeological knowledge over 20 years. They ignore Hannah Jopling's (1998) work with African-American Annapolitans; they fail to recognize George Logan's (1998) or Parker Potter's (1994) public interpretation programs; and they do not cite Mark Warner's (1998) research on African-American perceptions of class, status, and culture. Perhaps Archaeology in Annapolis should do a better job demonstrating it is not the sterile academic venture Wilkie and Bartoy portray; nevertheless, they completely ignore several key project statements as well as work that would upset their caricature, and they specifically refer to just a few sources in passing.

In 1938 Horkheimer stressed that "whoever is not willing to talk about capitalism should also keep quiet about fascism." Experience can indeed critique social life, but if it cannot confront capitalism it can just as well be refuge of conservative ideology. This essay does not "revisit" critical archaeology; it offers a distorted reconstruction that aspires to dispel left-leaning historical archaeology's critique of capitalist oppression and substitute an ambiguous archaeology of everyday experience.

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Wilkie and Bartoy offer their ideas about "refining" critical archaeology, surely the most robust and promising perspective of today's modern-world archaeology. Their many misreadings of their colleagues' research and their commitment to forging a neoliberal archaeology, however, make it impossible to accept the article as a success.

Space limitations preclude a thorough catalogue of their many misstatements. In misrepresenting my reference to capitalism as a "haunt," for example, they imply that I attempted to use the term definitionally. Stating that "capitalism cannot exist apart from human agency" and that they "approach capitalism from the perspective of situational behaviors and shifting social relations," they completely overlook my statement that "capitalism concerns men, women, and children standing in relation to others" (Orser 1996:79). When they propose that capitalism "should not be viewed as monolithic" and "remains in different forms and different guises," they rewrite my statement that "capitalism was not static, for it wore many faces in the past" (Orser 1996: 72). My observations were not meant to be revolutionary, and in fact they are so well accepted among archaeologists dedicated to examining capitalist formations that

Wilkie and Bartoy should have remembered them. My point in labeling capitalism a "haunt" was to suggest the many conflicts and contradictions that today's historical archaeologists, enmeshed in capitalism, face when attempting to investigate capitalist social relations. The same holds true for colonialism, Eurocentrism, and modernity, because any archaeology of the modern world that is not consciously trivialized by the archaeologist must recognize the powerful but often almost imperceptible role these post-Columbian ideologies play in shaping and distorting Western scholarship.

Wilkie and Bartoy also seriously mischaracterize Delle's (1998) careful exegesis of social space in plantation-era Jamaica. By questioning whether the Roman empire could be construed as a "capitalist 'regional' economy" they demonstrate that they have either not read, overlooked, or completely misunderstood Wallerstein, from whom Delle consciously draws. To imply that Delle views capitalism monolithically is seriously to misunderstand the last three-quarters of his book. Equally disturbing is the statement that Mullins's (1999b) exemplary work on African-American consumerism fails to "situate actors from different classes in dynamic relationships with one another." This statement is peculiar in that Mullins delves deeply into racial ideology—a clear-cut capitalization of social relations (Friedman 1994:53)—as an irreducible element of American capitalist life that represents nothing but a "dynamic relationship."

Wilkie and Bartoy's rather unrestrained use of the research of others is troubling, but equally disturbing is their effort to create a bland, powerless neoliberal historical archaeology. Though they claim to take intellectual inspiration from Bourdieu, it is actually Giddens on whom they most heavily rely. Their giddy acceptance of Giddens is unmasked most clearly in their willingness to erase the primacy of class, which they naively term a "categorical abstraction." Most Marxian scholars are unwilling to degrade the importance of class, and even much in Giddens's formulation is compatible with contemporary and even class Marxian thought (Wright 1989).

Why are Wilkie and Bartoy interested in reducing class? Giddens's reason is overtly political. His "Third Way," which avidly promotes the "radical center," is intended to prove the inevitable success of capitalism (Giddens 1998). He has thus predictably become the intellectual guru and scholarly apologist of both Tony Blair and Bill Clinton, as is illustrated by his White House seminars (Callinicos 1999:80). Wilkie and Bartoy even go so far as to champion Giddens's neoliberal understanding of "liberation." To comprehend the true dimensions of this "liberation" one need only consider Blair's shameful handling of the Good Friday Agreement in North Ireland or Clinton's happy continuation of the Cuban embargo. Bourdieu, to whom Wilkie and Bartoy claim to look for inspiration, has forcefully argued that the "liberation" proposed by the neoliberals is a charade, a fatalistic brand of "social neo-Darwinism" that serves to equate the conservatives' "end of history" with the "triumph of capi-

talism" (Bourdieu 1998:42). For him, removing class serves to destroy a collective structure that is "capable of obstructing the logic of the pure market" (p. 96) and merely provides an intellectual rationale for blaming the victims of capitalism for their own personal failures.

The greatest difference between Wilkie and Bartoy's "revisitation" and "classic" critical archaeology is that practitioners of the latter seek a historical archaeology that critiques the sociohistorical antecedents of modern life. It is an archaeology that strives to illustrate the historical reasons for today's world. The goal of non-revisited critical archaeology is not simply to provide a postmodern spin on a neoliberal worldview. If critical archaeology is to be remade in the image they propose, then I must paraphrase Marx and categorically state that I am not a critical archaeologist.

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Nearly ten years ago Barbara Little and I (Shackel and Little 1992:6–9) wrote that we were optimistic about the development and growth of historical archaeology because scholars increasingly paid attention to the concepts of ideology, structure, and meaning. We noted some of the instrumental people leading this new paradigm, such as Hodder, Miller, Shanks, and Tilley, and we saw the potential influence of those outside of the field, such as Giddens, Bourdieu, and Foucault. We were encouraged by the new ideas of postprocessualism, and we remarked that a discipline really gains maturity when it allows for diversity, controversy, and uncertainty (Shackel and Little 1992:8). When Wilkie and Bartoy use such terms as "troubling" and "disturbing" to characterize the approaches used by scholars who work or once worked in Annapolis, I have to wonder about our assessment of the field.

Wilkie and Bartoy have set high standards for their work—to contextualize critical theory and to examine agency in the archaeological record. Unfortunately, their rhetoric is no different from that of the proponents of the New Archaeology, who criticized anyone who disagreed with their paradigm. Very much like the New Right of the 1980s and 1990s that has dominated American politics, Wilkie and Bartoy have created a divide, an explicit dichotomy of right and wrong, good and evil. They have eliminated any room for grey and uncertainty, and they appear to be intolerant of alternative ways of looking at the past. Their argument comes at a time when there is, in fact, little consensus on what agency actually means (Dobres and Robb 2000).

If Wilkie and Bartoy desire to do an archaeology of agency and if they want to contextualize their work, they need to work on different levels. First, they should be concerned about agency and the archaeological record. They have shown one way they could do this work in a plantation setting. Second, they must contextualize the scholarship that they hope to improve upon, and if they truly believe in the concept of agency they should look at the work of individual scholars from Annapolis rather than treating them as an undifferentiated whole.

Unfortunately, Wilkie and Bartoy create the "Annapolis School" with a single voice and treat the scholarship in an ahistorical fashion. They disregard the development and diversity of ideas within the Annapolis project, and they tend to oversimplify the archaeological research in order to critique it. They ignore *Annapolis Pasts* (Shackel, Mullins, and Warner 1998), in which many of the contributors discuss the actions of individuals and groups in the community (Logan 1998, Jopling 1998), responses to changing a cultural landscape (Little 1988), and the town's architecture (Matthews 1988). Mullins's (1998, 1999) work is an excellent example of how individuals and groups react to social tensions. Little (1988, 1994b) shows how Anne Catherine Green constructed her domestic and work environment when she became the head of household. A close reading of these works would help Wilkie and Bartoy construct a more informed argument.

Wilkie and Bartoy also note that "the actor is elusive" in my work as well. In defense of some of my earlier work in Annapolis, I have shown that material culture is a powerful tool for creating and maintaining boundaries and can be used to create individual and group identity. Anomalies in the archaeological record are a result of groups' distinguishing themselves from each other, and this work goes beyond emulation or top-down models (Shackel 1992, 1993). I also use archaeology to show how individuals used architecture to opt out of maintenance relationships, a type of balanced reciprocity commonly found in early historic Chesapeake communities (Shackel 1994, 1998). Wilkie and Bartoy fail to notice that while looking at some of the larger issues related to capitalism I have also looked at individual and group responses to capitalism (Shackel 1996).

I agree with Wilkie and Bartoy that I have looked at the forces of capitalism, examined the development of surveillance technologies, and interpreted the struggle between labor and capital. It would be problematic if any scholar overlooked these larger issues while studying a site that once existed within capitalism. Capitalism is a major force that influenced the archaeological record and influences the way archaeologists interpret their data. It is the goal of every historical archaeologist who does critical archaeology to examine the roots of modern life in order to illuminate the modern conditions of capitalism. Studying, analyzing, and interpreting the archaeological record on many different levels can only broaden and strengthen our field. Approaching any subject with one idea or one theory can be a recipe for disaster. An informed analysis should not stop at agency.

Wilkie and Bartoy provide a way of showing agency on a plantation, but because they could have done so without depreciating the work of the many archaeologists who at one time performed archaeology in Annapolis and others who adopt a Marxian approach, I am still

optimistic about a diverse and mature historical archaeology.

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There is much to applaud and to agree with in Wilkie and Bartoy's paper. Their insistence that a critical archaeology must remain politically engaged is entirely to be commended, and their historical overview of the work of the Frankfurt School demonstrates the extent to which the principal concerns of Western Marxism changed through time. We should certainly be aware of the changing contexts in which these ideas originated if we are to use them. The principal focus of their argument, however, is the claim that certain forms of Marxist-inspired historical archaeology (characterized here as the "Annapolis School") have come to rely upon a series of analytical concepts which are so abstract as to evict humanity from the past that is being written. Human agency becomes inconsequential in the face of titanic historical forces, structural determination, and the "false consciousness" engendered by irresistible elite ideologies.

There are several distinct elements to what is being claimed here, and it may be helpful to try to pick them apart. The first aspect is a rejection of top-down or totalized models of the social, and with this I am fully in sympathy. Totalization is a tendency common to both structural Marxism and functionalism, in which social and historical processes are evaluated on a large scale and over the long term, to the extent that singular human beings are barely considered while differences between persons more fine-grained than those of class are disregarded. As Wilkie and Bartoy point out, E. P. Thompson and others of his generation of English Marxist historians rejected this view, insisting that any real understanding of history can only come from a consideration of how it is lived through by embodied human beings. Hence their focus on the concept of experience. In a parallel argument, Michel Foucault (1984) suggested a connection between totalization and totalitarianism: if we are prepared to write a monumental history from which people have been erased, we will be more likely to tolerate a present in which the deaths and sufferings of human beings can be excused in pursuit of some higher goal.

To this concern with totalization Wilkie and Bartoy add a critique of the "violence of abstraction"—the way in which reified concepts such as ideology, capitalism, and class seem to replace human beings as historical actors. Again, there is much to be said for this argument. Finally, they argue that the necessary corrective for a critical archaeology lies in the consideration of individuals and their agency. It is at this point that I part company with them, for while they present a powerful case against the reification and naturalization of a series of categories of Marxist analysis, they then introduce a series of other terms which seem to me to be equally unevaluated and undertheorized: experience, the individual, agency, and freedom.

The stress that Wilkie and Bartoy place on the individual is particularly troubling, for there is at present a tendency toward the exorbitation of the individual within archaeology (e.g., Hodder 1999:136–37; Meskell 1996). Increasingly, "the individual" is being presented as a trans-historic category, a kind of person found in all historical and cultural contexts, and endowed with a set of universal attributes and abilities. This is a somewhat ethnocentric perspective, given that the notion of an autonomous agent exercising reason and free will is a relatively recent invention (Carroll 1993), while many people in the non-Western world do not recognize themselves as or live as "individuals" (Strathern 1988: 192; Busby 1997). To be sure, Wilkie and Bartoy do not suggest that human agents are entirely independent: they are situated in a web of social relations, and they maintain a dialectical relationship with the social whole. Yet the language that they use is concerned with "constraint" and "limitation," while they present "human freedom" as a matter of removing limitations on the free exercise of the individual's agency.

What precisely is being limited and constrained here? The answer seems to be "agency." But where does this agency come from? The real problem of the humanist perspective that Wilkie and Bartoy appear to some extent to endorse is that it relies upon human universals as a foundation: "human nature" is either biologically hardwired or mystically conferred upon the person (Heidegger 1993). The human subject appears to be a given—an irreducible social atom which enters into a dialectical relation with "the social," which in turn unavoidably becomes an exteriority. The consequence of this is that "agency" becomes conflated with "the individual" and "structure" with "society." We need to rethink agency as a relational quality rather than a prerogative of an individual which seems to issue out of the person (Barrett 2000:61). Similarly, we need to recognize that the ability to act in relation to others is conferred upon us by virtue of our social positioning—what Butler (1997) refers to as the "enabling violation."

Wilkie and Bartoy have presented a cogent argument against the dehumanization of the past, but their extensive theorization involves no discussion of subjectification, the historically specific process by which self-interpreting and acting human beings are engendered. In the absence of this, "individuals" take on an essentialized and decontextualized character. The danger is that in resisting the totalization implicit in some forms of Marxism, Wilkie and Bartoy may fall into the arms of something far worse: the free-agent, rational-choice perspective of the New Right.

Reply

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We are gratified that so many of our colleagues took the time to respond to this article. We apologize if, in our efforts to be succinct, we left some of them with the sense that we had misrepresented the content of their work. Likewise, we did not intend to overemphasize or underemphasize the work of any particular individual. We are pleased that this forum has given our colleagues the opportunity to clarify their positions on agency, class, and liberation. This is part of the service that the CURRENT ANTHROPOLOGY format provides in encouraging scholarly debate.

In speaking of the "Annapolis School" we were following the lead of Matthew Johnson (1999), who uses the term in Leone's 1999 edited volume, *Historical Archaeologies of Capitalism*. We felt that the appellation of "school" was appropriate for a body of literature that recognized common concerns and theoretical commitments. We intended the term to be honorific rather than pejorative and apologize to any of our colleagues who prefer not be considered part of any particular "school."

In writing this article, it was our intent to recognize what has become a powerful intellectual influence within historical archaeology. Leone, more so than any other scholar, has brought critical discourses to the forefront of our discipline, fighting to create, as he says, a "historical archaeology [that is] intellectually powerful enough to be a force for social and political change." It is our opinion that by injecting greater consideration of human agency and constructions of difference (Moore 1994) which include but also go beyond analyses of class a stronger politically motivated archaeology can be forged. Inter- and intraclass dialogues and struggles cannot be understood in isolation from discourses on race, sexuality, gender, and ethnicity. We continue to believe that these are aspects of the human experience that tend to be devalued in many Marxist analyses (see Johnson 1999).

We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate and clarify our conceptualization of several of the terms key to this work, including "agency" and "the individual," and our use of structuration theory.

It is clear from Thomas's comments that he is reading our "individual" as "individualism." Meskell (1999:9) argues that the conflation of these two very different social constructions is common in the archaeological literature. Thomas is correct in noting that the philosophy of individualism that defines a person as an "autonomous agent exercising reason and free will" is an invention of recent Western origin and not a "trans-historic category" that should be applied indiscriminately in archaeological contexts. Instead, Meskell's (1999:9) definition of the individual as "a single person as the fount of agency, consciousness, interpretation and creativity in cultural and social life, by virtue of his or her sole ownership of discrete, corporeal, sense-making apparatuses" better represents our notion. Since, as historical archaeologists, we are often working at sites where known historical individuals lived, we believe that this definition underscores that we are studying materials used and left by unique persons who interacted with family members, community members, friends, and foes in ways that were influenced not only by the structuring influences of the larger society and the routines of their lived experiences but also by their own outlooks, desires, and ambitions. In her social archaeology of ancient Egypt, Meskell (1999) forcefully demonstrates the value of archaeological analyses that treat individuals as more than "micro versions of larger social entities" (p. 20).

For a critical archaeology, a focus on the individual in this way can be a powerful tool, for it is at the level of personhood that immediate emotive connections can be made between past and present actors. Individuals such as Anne Frank, Ishi, and Sojourner Truth are icons symbolizing the broader experiences of their cultures, but they have become the focus of intense historical interest and scrutiny because the uniqueness of their personalities attests to their shared humanity. Our "individual," therefore, is not the construction of an ethnocentric perspective but rather a recognition of our shared humanity—a condition that crosscuts time and cultural boundaries. Many feministic archaeologies have already demonstrated the interpretive power of recognizing the diverse faces of past peoples (e.g., Franklin 1997a, Gero and Conkey 1991, Joyce 2000, Meskell 1999, Spector 1991, Tringham 1991).

Individuals under any definition do not exist in a social vacuum, and with Meskell (1999) we recognize that any archaeological study of the individual should consider the social as well. In this way we can avoid constructing narratives that either are overly particularistic or gloss over the diversity of human experience and losing sight of the fact that individuals in the past could work to effect social change. It is in this light that we find Giddens's structuration theory a useful tool, given its emphasis on recursive relations between the social and the individual. The idea of routinization emphasizes, for us, that social relationships and interactions are not only experienced but also performed and in these performances structures of inequality can be experienced, created, re-created, contested, masked, and even ignored.

We recognize that our view of agency may not agree with that of others. We accept that human action is often constrained by society and social obligations in ways of which actors may be conscious or unconscious. However, we propose an agency that does not require conscious selection among alternatives. This is a deliberate claim, not a mistake, on our part and does represent a difference of opinion with some of the commentators. A review of the literature on agency in archaeology in fact demonstrates a range of opinions in this regard (e.g., Bell 1992, Dobres 2000, Dobres and Robb 2000, Dobres and Hoffman 1994, Johnson 1989, Saitta 1994).

We are pleased to see, from these comments, that the idea of community partnering is becoming entrenched in archaeological practice, although we may still debate issues such as how to decenter our authority, how to balance our obligations to different sectors of the descendant community and the public, and so on. Following the lead of other scholars researching the African-American past (e.g., LaRoche and Blakey 1997, Edwards-Ingram 1997, Franklin 1997b), we tend to favor as inclusive a model as possible.

Only in this way can we prevent our own biases from driving or otherwise shaping the discourse. In the course of dialogues with descendant communities, new, exciting, and unexpected avenues of research and interpretation have opened up for us, and this reassures us that the discourses are free-flowing between participants and not covertly shaped by our research interests. While the need for discourses between academics and the public(s) may be most visible in African-American archaeology (where so many of the scholars are of European descent), it is equally present when we study the experiences of other communities, even those of which we may personally consider ourselves members. Archaeologists should not only encourage members of the descendant communities to use them as a voice but also urge them to become trained in the human sciences, thus becoming voices of authority themselves. Theoretical perspectives that draw upon experiential understandings of the world demand experiential diversity among practitioners.

A truly critical archaeological praxis must not limit itself to archaeology. Critical archaeologists must strive for an integrated social science centered around key issues in order to utilize the power and privilege still accorded to scientific discourse in our country (e.g., Becker 1971:156, Berreman 1981:296, Wallerstein et al. 1996: 103–5). We must always remember that "the center of anthropology is everywhere, and its circumference nowhere" (Becker 1971:94). Perhaps we need to think beyond defining abstractions such as capitalism and class solely in terms of archaeology and begin to question the larger issues of social inequality and difference from the perspective of a unified science in the service of humanity.

The arenas in which social scientists can work to effect social change are primarily in the intertwined realms of government and public opinion. Over 40 years ago, C. Wright Mills (1959:5) suggested that scholars redirect their work toward erecting a "quality of mind that will help [people] to use information and to develop reason in order to achieve lucid summations of what is going on in the world and of what may be happening within themselves." Social scientists, archaeologists included, need to be more aggressive in seeking out the media and policy makers with data and interpretations that have critical relevance and resonance against status quo understandings of the world. The mass media in particular remain a powerful and untapped resource for the presentation of socially aware archaeologies. Through the introduction of the "logic of intellectual life, that of argument and refutation" (Bourdieu 1998:7), to the public

sphere, social scientists can become democratic catalysts for the creation of dialogues based on rational understandings of the social world. In this way, we may use our positions to "create the conditions for a collective effort to reconstruct a universe of realist ideals, capable of mobilizing people's will without mystifying their consciousness" (Bourdieu 1998:7).

Despite some commentators' strong objections, there are several points at which we seem to agree. Several welcome our attempt to inject a discussion of agency into critical theory, recognizing that abstract categories, particularly class, have been used to subsume the diverse voices of the human past. While the commentators seem to disagree regarding the degree to which the Annapolis School has incorporated feminist perspectives, there does appear to be acceptance of the notion that they are essential. We certainly seem to be in agreement that archaeology has the potential to be a strong tool in the struggle for social change.

We see our research as an attempt to study inequality in all of its guises throughout time, with particular emphasis on how inequality intersects with difference (e.g., Moore 1994, di Leonardo 1991). Socially engaged archaeology, as an aspect of an integrated social science, needs to create dialogues that cross historically contingent boundaries of difference. These dialogues must be directed toward social change and social action through focused efforts in the realms of public policy and public opinion. Our work represents a fundamental difference in that we open critical archaeology to dialogues not solely reliant on the issue of class. We believe an inclusive critical archaeology as a key component of a more humane science should address the totality of human experience with the immediate goals of social action and social change. It is essential that critical archaeologies not only critique structures of power but also work toward a democratic transformation of the status quo to the benefit of all of humanity.

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