

EDITOR'S CORNER

Recent developments in historical archaeology have made this field of growing relevance to all the readers of the journal. Within the past decade or so, research on historic sites has produced some significant advances in methods, and potential contributions to the building of archaeological theory can also be seen. The lead article points out and discusses some of the directions historical archaeology is taking.

Stanley South has been a major contributor to the study of historic sites for many years. His recent writings, and especially his book *Method and Theory in Historical Archaeology* (Academic Press, 1977), have indicated how historical archaeology, rather than being a field apart, can be a significant and productive part of anthropological archaeology. In particular, South has shown how historic site data can be used to recognize important patterns in the archaeological record. In his article in this issue, South goes further and suggests how historical archaeologists, with the kinds of data control they can sometimes muster, may be able to give meaning to such patterns by illuminating the processes that gave rise to them.

As the questions anthropological archaeologists are asking of their data become increasingly focused and sophisticated, these scholars have turned to such strategies as ethnoarchaeology and modern material culture studies to help them better understand the formation of the archaeological record and the nature of past behavior. I hope that articles such as South's will alert those archaeologists who have not yet realized the potential of historical archaeology to the fact that historic sites material can serve a similar productive function.

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The Society for American Archaeology and the Archaeological Institute of America have recently initiated an exchange that it is hoped will prove of value to the readers of both *American Antiquity* and the *American Journal of Archaeology*. Each year *American Antiquity* will commission a review article on the major trends in New World archaeology during the preceding year. This article will be published in the *American Journal of Archaeology*. Likewise, the *American Journal of Archaeology* will commission an article on Old World archaeology, which will be published in these pages. The first of such exchange articles should appear in this journal and the *American Journal of Archaeology* later on this year.

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In the new Cultural Resource Management section, there are two short comments on the critical issue of "significance" in CRM studies. This is an issue on which the last word certainly has not been said and about which I am sure we will be reading more. In addition, Gary Somers addresses one of the major problems facing the field today. This problem has come about primarily as a result of the very rapid proliferation of CRM work. The huge number of unpublished and not readily available archaeological reports threatens to deprive the profession of knowledge it needs to carry out research efficiently and develop its understanding of past cultures and their growth. Somers offers one possible solution to this problem.

The Executive Committee of the Society for American Archaeology also is concerned with the problem of communicating the results of contract research and recently addressed this problem in relation to such research in the United States. The following motion was unanimously passed at the November 17, 1978, meeting of the Executive Committee:

Because the majority of archaeological work in the United States today is funded by governmental agencies,

these agencies control a significant proportion of current information and knowledge about American archaeology. Unfortunately, the results of such work often are not readily available to the archaeological community or the interested public-at-large. However, it is to the advantage of agencies on the one hand and the discipline of archaeology on the other to disseminate these results to the professional community. The advantages to the agencies of such dissemination are several. For example, agencies need the most recent archaeological information to write the cultural resource management plans for the land they control. In addition, all cultural properties on federal land must be evaluated for their National Register potential. These evaluations require the most accurate and current information available about past occupations of various areas.

Therefore, in order to try to disseminate research results from agency-sponsored archaeological projects to possible future contractors, in-service specialists, and the archaeological community in general, it is moved that major cultural resource projects include in the scope-of-work or project plan a provision that the research results be sent to the NTIS for distribution and that a summary of the results be submitted for publication to national and/or regional journals. Such submissions would be in addition to the project report which the sponsoring agencies currently require.

In relation to these concerns, I would like to emphasize that under my editorship, *American Antiquity* is willing to publish those reports on contract research that can place the results in a theoretical, methodological, or culture historical context of interest and relevance to the general readership of the journal. Authors of manuscripts *that go beyond the straight reporting of contract results* are invited to submit their manuscripts for consideration by *American Antiquity*.

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The cover design, which pertains to the lead article by Stanley South, was drawn by Darby Erd.