

## EDITOR'S CORNER

As most readers know, the Executive Board of the Society for American Archaeology decided in 1996 to discontinue the publication of obituaries in *American Antiquity*; the death of colleagues will now be marked by timely, but brief, obituary notices in the *SAA Bulletin*. The policy does leave room for *American Antiquity* to publish occasional articles on individual archaeologists, emphasizing their specific and significant intellectual contributions to the discipline rather than the process of their lives. This new category of article represents a theoretical or contextual placement of a person in the development of the history of archaeology. A number of readers still are opposed to the new policy, now in effect. That said, I note that there will be one more obituary published, in the next (October) issue of *American Antiquity*: an obituary of Bertha Dutton that has long been in the works.

In this issue, we have an entirely new type of article: the archaeological biography of a living scholar. Norman Yoffee outlines Robert McCormick Adams's contributions to archaeology. One's first thought is "Wait a minute, isn't Bob Adams still alive?" The answer is most definitely yes, but Yoffee, in researching an entry about Adams for an upcoming encyclopedia, realized how extensive a contribution Adams has made to the discipline and asked if we would consider a revised version of his encyclopedia article. Although a number of people were concerned that folks indeed would think Bob Adams had died, the reviewers thought the manuscript had merit. In particular, in these days of increasing specialization, it is argued that many students trained in archaeology in the United States may not read Adams and may therefore miss the importance and significance of his work to the theoretical development of the discipline.

At the SAA annual meeting in April, we focused on the theme "Celebrating National Commitments to Archaeology." Archaeologists across the United States and around the world have worked tirelessly to protect cultural resources. We have lobbied in Congress, we have worked with our individual state legislatures and government agencies, and we have tried to affect public opinion. Although there have been some failures and setbacks, I think that everyone would agree that we have been effective in trying to create and promote stewardship for our cultural resources. Recently, however, I once again had an experience that is not uncommon (at least in the United States) and that leads me to believe that we have a lot of educating left to do.

Colleges and universities often seem to operate in ignorance of and completely outside of state and federal preservation laws. These institutions seem not to understand that they too are stewards of the past, and that they have an obligation to be concerned about how their plans for the future may impact the past. It is ironic that the institutions, which train students to care for the past and generally house large numbers of experts who are well trained in historical and archaeological preservation methods, are the places that tend to ignore those efforts most flagrantly. Windows in historic buildings are routinely replaced with inappropriate substitutes, buildings are razed and new ones are built without archaeological survey or testing, and massive earthmoving for sewer systems or other utility construction is undertaken without any consideration of the potential impact. I know that this is not true in every college and university, and that some institutions are excellent stewards. I am beginning to realize, however, that a majority of institutions pay little consideration to their cultural resources, and if they deal with them at all, do so only when they "get caught."

---

American Antiquity, 62(3), 1997, p. 395–396.  
Copyright © by the Society for American Archaeology

Historic preservation at institutions of higher education may not be a major, pressing issue for the United States, but it seems to me that in a time when we are concerned with professional ethics and are celebrating our national commitment to preservation, such blatant violation of preservation law should not occur. While I hesitate to call for a massive sit-in of archaeologists at college campuses everywhere, I suggest that archaeologists look at the preservation policies and practices of their institutions.

While university administration may cite extremely limited and tight budgets as the barrier to sound preservation judgment, why not suggest that your university create a committee made up of campus natural and cultural resource specialists who could review land-use planning within the college or university and outline potential problems with specific plans before any ground is broken? While my proposal will not lead to massive expenditures on the part of every college and university in the country, it calls for universities to use their in-house experts, now perhaps unrecognized, to advise them in planning the future of their physical environment.

I hope that the universities at which I've experienced this lack of stewardship are the exceptions, but informal phone calls to colleagues suggest the problem is widespread. Maybe we can do something about this.

LYNNE GOLDSTEIN