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Archeology and Civic Engagement

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In the United States and elsewhere, efforts to strengthen communities and democratic processes, as well as promote public dialogue, rely upon active citizen engagement in community and civic life through the creation of social capital. Archeology can play a role in these efforts, particularly as archeological projects increasingly involve the communities in which they occur and as archeologists recognize their ethical responsibilities to involve multiple stakeholders. This technical brief provides explanations of civic engagement and social capital as well as case studies and suggestions for ways that archeologists can participate and contribute to the creation of social capital.

What is Civic Engagement?

Definitions of civic engagement vary somewhat, but they have in common the elements of involvement and participation in public life. According to Thomas Ehrlich in *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education* (2000:vi), “Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.” Civic engagement means building communities by creating or reinforcing relationships between people and promoting a healthy dialogue about, and active participation in, civic life.

Many kinds of institutions have become involved in civic engagement. Institutions of higher education often use service learning initiatives in order to satisfy civic engagement responsibilities. In land managing agencies such as the National Park Service (NPS), civic engagement refers to a long-term effort to build and sustain meaningful communication and partnerships with local communities, park visitors, and a diverse array of stakeholders. These community groups and individuals may play meaningful roles in guiding interpretive and educational programming as well as the planning process.

Civic engagement differs from public involvement in both concept and implementation. Public involvement, sometimes referred to as “consultation,” is a legal requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) planning processes and typically ends when the planning process is complete. Civic engagement, on the other hand, is a sustained effort and activity. It moves beyond the short-term legal requirements of public planning to build and strengthen relationships between people in their communities over an extended time period. An example of public involvement is a community meeting to get input before starting a project. Civic engagement, on the other hand, might incorporate the public meeting, but also include community members before, during and after the project, such as on the planning committee and in partnerships with local organizations to leverage funds, to determine the scope of a project, find volunteers, gather and disseminate information, and build interest in heritage or history opportunities beyond the “usual suspects.” Civic engagement can thus strengthen public understanding of the full meaning and contemporary relevance of both cultural and natural resources.

One widely read study of the trends in civic society is Robert Putnam's (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. The specific assertions of that study, namely

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that the United States has suffered a dramatic fall in civic engagement since the 1940s and 1950s, have been contested (see Skocpol 1996 and Boggs 2001 for examples). The debate around *Bowling Alone*, however, has served to reinforce the consensus that civic engagement, in a variety of forms, is critical to the success of the nation. In 1996, Putnam, at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, started the Saguaro Seminar on Civic Engagement in America. This project works to expand knowledge about trust and community engagement and to develop strategies to increase engagement. The Saguaro Seminar's (2000) multi-year dialogue on building bonds of civic trust is summarized in the report, "Better Together," available online. In that report, the Seminar participants consider five areas of life and identify efforts and the potential for rebuilding civic bonds and connections. The areas they consider are the Workplace; the Arts; Politics and Government; Religion; and Schools, Youth Organizations and Families. History and historic preservation appear briefly under "the Arts," but as demonstrated by the authors in such books as *Archaeology as a Tool of Civic Engagement* (Little and Shackel 2008) and *Collaboration in Archaeological Practice: Engaging Descendant Communities* (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008), civic engagement has a distinct role in the work of archeologists when they initiate or join community projects which use archeology to examine social issues or build trust among participants.

The Saguaro Seminar did not adequately consider the role of archeology or history or how the past might be used in civic engagement. Other organizations such as the American Association of Museums, NPS, and the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience actively use the past as a tool of civic engagement. As historian John Hope Franklin (2000), in his role as chair of the National Park System Advisory Board, succinctly states, inclusive history is relevant to citizenship:

The places that commemorate sad history are not places in which we wallow, or wallow in remorse, but instead places in which we may be moved to a new resolve, to be better citizens....Explaining history from a variety of angles makes it not only more interesting, but also more true. When it is more true, more people come to feel that they have a part in it. That is where patriotism and loyalty intersect with truth.

What is Social Capital?

Social capital is a concept introduced in the early 1900s to describe good will, fellowship, sympathy and social interaction in the daily lives of people who make up a social unit. Social capital can be thought of as connections of trust, reciprocity, shared values, and networks among individuals. The concept has been picked up by the World Bank and other international organizations because it is clear that social capital for people of all ages and walks of life is essential for the efficient functioning of both modern economies and stable democracies.

In *Better Together*, the Saguaro Seminar (2000:8-9) lists principles for building social capital that highlight some of its important characteristics.

1. The Social Capital Impact Principle. As a lens for evaluating institutions, programs, and individual behavior, social capital can gain impact to become a standard part of institutional and individual decision making.
2. The recycling principle. Drawing upon social capital generates more social capital.
3. The bridging principle. Alliances between people who are more alike than different create bonding social capital. Connections among differences form bridging social capital. Although both forms of social capital are valuable, bridging is more critical for civic renewal.
4. The C2C principle. C2C refers to communication from Citizen to Citizen and community to community. Such communication strengthens horizontal cooperation and reciprocity.

Why Get Involved in Civic Engagement?

According to the analysis of Saguaro Seminar of Civic Engagement in America, America is facing a civic crisis. The seminar members (2000:3) are emphatic:

Most Americans see no obvious connection between dinner parties and the health of American society and democracy. More worrisome is the fact that many Americans fail to see the connection between political participation and the nation's well being. However, without strong habits of social and political participation, the world's longest and most successful experiment in democracy is at risk of losing the very norms, networks, and institutions of civic life that have made us the most emulated and respected nation in history. The reversal of this downward spiral is critical to the civic and social health of our nation.

Civic culture will not automatically restore itself. Instead, it requires deliberate intentional effort. Active participation in the study, preservation, and presentation of heritage by archeologists can play a vital role in that process. Within NPS, for example, the Civic Engagement initiative is embraced as a challenge to find new ways to revitalize its mission of preserving and interpreting our nation's natural and cultural heritage and ensuring the long-term relevance of resources and programs. The challenge includes finding ways in which people can personally relate as individuals or as a group to the nation's heritage and communicate in ways that they prefer. A heritage or cultural relationship from the past that is overlooked is one that becomes invisible to present and future generations. In the report *Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century*, the National Park System Advisory Board (2001:14) further explains the importance of linking past with present:

The study of our nation's history, formal and informal, is an essential part of our civic education. In a democratic society such as ours, it is important to understand the journey of liberty and justice, together with the economic, social, religious, and other forces that barred or opened the ways for our ancestors, and the distances yet to be covered.

How Can Archeology Contribute to Civic Engagement?

Archeology has a unique role to play in Civic Engagement because fundamentally it is in the business of creating knowledge from a resource often held in the public trust: the archeological record. Furthermore, many archeologists adhere to ethical responsibilities, not only to make that knowledge available to both the public and other professionals, but also to involve multiple stakeholders in the process of creating such knowledge. The principle of accountability in the Society for American Archaeology's 1996 principles of archaeological ethics reads: "Responsible archaeological research, including all levels of professional activity, requires an acknowledgment of public accountability and a commitment to make every reasonable effort, in good faith, to consult actively with affected group(s), with the goal of establishing a working relationship that can be beneficial to all parties involved." Members of the World Archaeological Congress' (WAC 1990) agree to abide by the ethical principle that reads: "To establish equitable partnerships and relationships between Members and indigenous peoples whose cultural heritage is being investigated."

The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience was founded in 1999 by leaders of nine sites with the following declaration:

it is the obligation of historic sites to assist the public in drawing connections between the history of our sites and their contemporary implications. We view stimulating dialogue on pressing social issues and promoting humanitarian and democratic values as a primary function.

Such locations seek to provide an environment wherein visitors can have a civic engagement experience that provides access to a more complete understanding about the past and allows them to make linkages between that past and contemporary America. Historic site museums are not the only such places; at many archeological sites, public interpretation can contribute to these opportunities through the unique and long-term perspective that archeology brings to understandings of the past.

Furthermore, the process of archeology can create social capital through increasing communication and positive relationships between civic groups, particularly those that may be in conflict or do not have many connections or common interests. Archeology is influenced by the overlapping, and often conflicting interests of various groups comprising both local and descendent communities. Dealing with many interested parties can be seen as a hindrance, but is more productively viewed as an opportunity for archeology to help create multiple bridges

between individuals and community groups. Positive relationships are fostered as differences are re-examined, worked through, and new information is learned over the course of the project.

In some cases, existing social capital based on a shared archeological interest may provide a starting point for creating relationships with and within communities. For example, most states and many municipalities have organizations established and run by amateur archeologists, some connected formally and some independent. Many professional archeologists also participate in these networks as well as in their smaller state or regional professional networks. In all of these organizations, the shared passion for archeology among all participants forms the bridges and bonds that lead to social capital.

Other groups can be brought together to create relationships that bridge archeological and community interests. Archeological and historical societies as well as tribal groups, neighborhood councils, school boards, city planners and a host of other civic groups can be positively affected by engaging with and being involved in archeology. Furthermore, archeology benefits from the many voices, points of view and skills that can be called upon by engaging the researchers as well as local and descendent communities with vested interests in the past.

Increasing numbers of archeologists are working with communities in varied contexts and the number of collaborative, civically engaged projects continues to grow. For example, Derry and Malloy (2003) and Marshall (2002) explore connections between archeology and local communities; Dongoske et al. (2000) and Swidler et al. (1997) provide important examples of archeologists and Native Americans working together. Shackel and Chambers (2004) connect public archeology and applied anthropology. Contributors to both Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson (2008) and Little and Shackel (2007) discuss issues of archeology and civic engagement in a variety of situations.

Some ways in which archeologists work with communities is through schools, municipal governments and tribal liaisons. One example of a collaboration between the federal government and a tribe is the project at On Your Knees Cave in Southeast Alaska. Starting with the discovery of ancient human remains in the cave in 1993, the USDA Forest Service partnered with academic archeologists and paleontologists as well as local Alaska Native communities to excavate and study the remains without compromising scientific rigor or religious and spiritual principles. Visit the [Partnership Resource Center](#) for more information on collaboration at On Your Knees Cave.

Archeologists must work with municipalities for regulatory and other law-mandated reasons, but going beyond the requirements to make archeological sites part of local pride can be a great way to get people excited about archeology as well as bring them together around the history of their community. For example, being an active participant in events for local history months or weeks, or attending planning sessions to create understanding of the need for long-term preservation of archeological resources have positive consequences for communities and archeology. [Alexandria, Virginia](#) provides one example of a community-wide effort to study and preserve archeological resources.

Social studies, history, and science are part of K-12 curricula around the country and archeology is a great way to combine these subjects. For example, George Brauer and Patrice Jeppson's work with and within the Baltimore County School system (Jeppson and Brauer 2003) is a large scale collaboration. Even if active participation by students in data recovery and processing is not an option, there are many ways to include schools in community outreach and education to distribute the knowledge that archeology creates. The [SAA's public education website](#) is a source of useful information for archeologists and educators about teaching with archeology. Also see Teaching with Historic Places lesson plans with archeological themes. For example, [New Philadelphia: A Multiracial Town on the Illinois Frontier](#) explicitly uses archaeology to engage students in discussing issues of race and racism.

Examples: Case Studies of Archeology as Civic Engagement

Campus Archeology as Civic Engagement: Indiana University-Purdue University and Harvard University

Many colleges and universities have embraced the concepts and tools of civic engagement, sometimes integrating them with student service learning requirements and sometimes using

them to forge better relationships with their surrounding communities.

IUPUI and Ransom Place Archeology

The campus of Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis, Indiana (IUPUI) owes much of its current boundary to a massive displacement of urban residents from Ransom Place in the 1960s. Paul Mullins was able to tap into the stewardship felt both on and off campus for the complex history of the area. Through IUPUI field schools and archeological surveys as well as active participation of current and past Ransom Place residents, archeology has brought the community together to understand the complexities of the neighborhood's past. Rather than serving a single demographic for all of its existence, Ransom Place had been, at varying times, home to many immigrant and minority communities before being demolished to make way for IUPUI buildings and parking lots. The neighborhood is remembered mostly for its African American community, which had been around since the 1840s, but also was home to Irish, German, Russian, Hungarian, and Italian immigrants. By the early twentieth century, Ransom Place was predominantly African American and remained as such until it was subsumed by IUPUI campus expansion in the 1950s and beyond.

With such a diverse set of descendent communities, Ransom Place archeology provided an opportunity to bring together various groups as well as forge links between the community and the university. As Mullins (2004:25) expresses it, "Archeology has been one surprisingly powerful mechanism to tell this story and build relationships that can link descendants, former residents, University students and staff, and the many people who feel some claim to these neighborhoods." The archeology project connects the former and current landscapes with the social processes that created them. The researchers find that archeological tours and other public interpretations are most powerful when they connect commonplace objects, such as straight pins and buttons, with broad issues like racism and the relegation of African American women to roles as laundresses and seamstresses. The archeological project has encouraged a new level of historical consciousness and public dialogue.

The Harvard Yard Archeology Project

The heart of Harvard University's campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts may be over 370 years old, but it has undergone massive changes in appearance, infrastructure and purpose during its long history. The Harvard Yard Archeological Project (HYAP) has, over the last few years, labored to connect Harvard students of today with the material evidence of their predecessors. Furthermore, HYAP consciously seeks to engage multiple community groups with interests in Harvard's past including various academic departments, university administration and archives, local and state historical societies, and local Native American Tribes. Systematic archeological explorations of Harvard Yard have been undertaken periodically since 1979, but HYAP, starting in 2005, was the first to use active collaboration at all levels of the process including choosing the Harvard Indian College as a focus for research.

Throughout most of Harvard's history, the campus has been devoid of Native American presence. However, its charter defines it as a place for "the Education of the English and Indian Youth of the Country." Almost two decades after its founding in 1636, Harvard experienced severe financial difficulties and launched a capital campaign for the education of American Indians. Consequently, the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Among the Indians*, an organization for evangelists, established the New England Company as a proxy for donors. Harvard secured funds from *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* with a promise of free tuition and housing for Native students, thus the Harvard Indian College joined a wider web of institutions that included missions and praying towns as places for transfer of English education and life-ways to Native Americans.

Few Native students attended the Indian College, however, and it became an ever lower priority for the university. English students were housed in the building until 1693 when the Harvard Corporation asked for permission from the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Among the Indians* to tear down the hall and reuse the bricks in the construction of Stoughton Hall.

Excavations and analysis addressed questions about daily life in the early days of Harvard and information about the location and material evidence of the Indian College through a class offered as a partnership between the Department of Anthropology, the Harvard University

Native American Program and the Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnography. Engagement with local and tribal communities was important at every step. For example, planning meetings included community consultation and the ceremonial groundbreaking had institutional speakers and Native American Blessing. The brainstorming sessions for direction on an upcoming HYAP exhibit at the Peabody Museum had representatives from over 20 community groups who will play important roles in the long-term success of the project. In the words of the program's instructors, HYAP is a "way to educate the public (Harvard and beyond) on the importance Harvard's unique multicultural past and preservation of this past for a variety of stakeholders" (Stubbs et al. in press).

Independence National Historical Park and the National Constitution Center: The Decision to Excavate the James Dexter Site

Consultation between Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia and two historic independent black churches (Mother Bethel A.M.E. and St. Thomas African Episcopal) resulted in an important archeological project. The excavation of the James Dexter site is an example of how civic engagement reconnected a prominent black church with its historic roots and strengthened links to the city's African American community which had traditionally felt that its views and interests had been neglected by the park.

James Dexter lived on what is now Block 3 of Independence Mall in Philadelphia from 1792 to 1798. A free black, he was a founding member of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, one of the first two independent black churches in America. Early planning meetings for the church were held in his house. However, NPS transportation plans, as part of a redesign of the Mall, called for a bus dropoff on top of the house site, which would preserve the archeological resources undisturbed by surface construction.

By listening and responding to the community's legitimate interpretation of NPS policy, the park began a consultative process that became a true collaboration. Participants in the dialogue about excavations in the block where the National Constitution Center (NCC) was built, including the park, the churches, the NCC, the Multicultural Affairs Congress of the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the office of Philadelphia City Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown. The group agreed that the NCC should include an interpretive display of the history uncovered by the research and the excavations conducted elsewhere on the block. However, the community representatives strongly disagreed with the decision of the NPS to preserve the James Dexter site without conducting an archeological excavation.

The community challenged the NPS on its position on in-place preservation. While the NPS considers such preservation usually to be the most appropriate option and first choice, NPS policy allows excavation if there are compelling reasons. The church argued that in this case the intense public interest and the inherent value in bringing a long hidden piece of our nation's history to the fore necessitated the site's excavation. The force and legitimacy of the group's argument led the NPS to view the issue in a fresh light and ultimately to reverse its decision.

The Dexter site case study does not suggest that NPS policy can be superseded or overturned because interested parties demand it; instead it reveals at least one way that the NPS mission was fulfilled by the goal of the park to tell a more complete and inclusive story of the past by investigating the resources that were available to tell that history. The results were a shared decision that both supported NPS mission and policy and led to a deeper understanding of our nation's history.

General Services Administration: African Burial Ground, New York City

The African Burial Ground project in New York City provides a dramatic case study for civic engagement. Agencies can learn a great deal about effective engagement by studying both the mistakes and successes of this well-known project. In the early 1990s, the General Services Administration (GSA) contracted for routine investigations to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act in advance of a new federal building at Foley Square in lower Manhattan.

Historical maps indicated the location of an 18th-century "Negroes Burying Ground" but consultants working in advance of the construction assumed that any cemetery would have been long since destroyed by subsequent construction. Excavations, beginning in the summer of 1991

and continuing through July 1992, eventually disinterred more than 400 burials under fill ranging from 13-28 feet thick.

GSA did not anticipate the storm of public controversy that would be unleashed and continue for over a decade. As Cheryl LaRoche and Michael Blakey (1997:84) describe, “The dynamics of the relationship and the shape of the project have been determined to a large extent by the relentless determination of the African American descendent community to exercise control over the handling and disposition of the physical remains and artifacts of their ancestors.” Concerned citizens, including journalists, religious leaders, artists, architects, lawyers and many others came together. The “constant barrage of petitions, angry rhetoric and community dissension, congressional hearings, professional meetings, lobbying, and political action” (LaRoche and Blakey 1997:86) changed the project completely, and forced the continuing public engagement aspects of the project, from research design through re-interment through memorialization and ongoing public outreach.

A statement by former Mayor David Dinkins (1994) makes the cultural importance of the African Burial Ground clear:

Millions of Americans celebrate Ellis Island as the symbol of their communal identity in this land. Others celebrate Plymouth Rock. Until a few years ago, African-American New Yorkers had no site to call our own. There was no place which said, we were here, we contributed, we played a significant role in New York's history right from the beginning. . . Now we—their descendants—have the symbol of our heritage embodied in the lower Manhattan's African Burial Ground. The African Burial Ground is the irrefutable testimony to the contributions and suffering of our ancestors.

Environmental Justice and the NEPA process: The Cypress Freeway Replacement Project

In 1989 the Loma Prieta earthquake struck the San Francisco Bay area, killing 42 people and collapsing the Cypress Freeway. Following the earthquake, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) worked to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate alternatives for responding to the collapse of the freeway. The historical archeology project forged important links between the researchers and the local present day community, links that inspired the Federal Highway Administration to include the project as an important part of its environmental justice efforts in compliance with NEPA.

Caltrans worked with a wide range of stakeholders to select a new alignment for the freeway that met the needs of both freeway drivers and the community of West Oakland. When the Cypress Freeway was built in the 1950s its path split the predominantly African American community of West Oakland and uprooted 600 families and dozens of businesses. The tragedy of the collapse of the Cypress Freeway actually created the potential for healing some of the earlier damage to the community. West Oaklanders had no outlet to voice their concerns when the structure originally was built. Contemporary residents, however, insisted upon participating in the dialogue over how and where the freeway would be reconstructed to prevent the mistakes of the past from being repeated.

Negotiations among Caltrans, the City of Oakland, and West Oakland community groups over the project design led to a number of additional community benefits. Caltrans used environmental justice practices to address the needs and concerns of this low-income and minority community in the planning, design, and construction of this complex and controversial project. Through these practices, the freeway that once split the heart of the community was rerouted and West Oakland was physically reunited.

The highlighting of neighborhood history and culture is one of the environmental justice practices in this project. It is of direct interest to connecting archeology and civic engagement. An important and long-lasting part of mitigation of the impacts of the freeway and freeway construction on local residents was to ensure that the community benefited in meaningful ways from the project. Caltrans, working with Sonoma State University, developed an innovative and extensive archeological project, excavating sites along the freeway right-of-way. One example of the findings is the artifact assemblages from households of former African American railroad

porters. This material became part of a traveling exhibit on African American labor history in West Oakland sponsored by Caltrans.

Museums and Engaged Community: The Alutiiq Museum and Archeological Repository

Kodiak, a large island located in Gulf of Alaska, has been the traditional homeland of the Alutiiq Nation for thousands of years. Efforts to recognize the importance of historical and contemporary Alutiiq culture by the community have resulted in a highly successful museum. The Alutiiq Museum makes a conscious effort to be an avenue for the public to learn about Alutiiq culture and to provide means for active engagement in the study and preservation of the island's material culture.

Started when the Kodiak Area Native Association's (KANA) Culture and Heritage program received some of the Exxon Valdez oil spill cleanup funds, the museum and archeological repository collects and preserves archeological, ethnographic, and archival materials from Kodiak and other Alaskan Gulf Coast areas. It is a state-of-the-art public facility that is jointly governed by eight Alutiiq organizations.

Furthermore, the museum serves as a cultural center, bringing the community together and increasing civic engagement. People gather there for contemporary cultural events and to experience the past of their island. Also, the museum runs a vibrant community archeology program that allows community members to actively participate in the archeological process, not just excavation, but preserving and interpreting materials.

The success of the Alutiiq museum as a resource for the study and preservation of material culture as well as a vehicle for cultural continuity and community bonding is a great example of archeology playing a role in the civic renewal of a community.

Applying a Civic Engagement Framework: Starting the Dialogue

It is important to realize that civic engagement takes a lot of time and effort. It also requires a commitment to effective and ongoing communication and a willingness to change some practices, including perhaps some that are familiar and comfortable.

Civic dialogue techniques for public involvement such as face to face communication, dialogue, deliberation, and public conversation are widely used in civic engagement. For example, each member site of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience offers different tools for learning exchanges, including public dialogue programs to engage visitors.

McCoy and Scully (2002:117) consider the question, "What kind of public talk is most likely to expand civic engagement and make it meaningful to all sorts of people?" They propose integrating some techniques and advocate "Deliberative Dialogue." They want to create connections between community organizing and deliberative dialogue to create wide contexts for conversation so that the conversations have an impact on public life for community building and public problem solving. They offer 10 principles for successful public engagement (2002:120):

1. Encourage multiple forms of speech and communication to ensure that all kinds of people have a real voice.
2. Make listening as important as speaking.
3. Connect personal experience with public issues.
4. Build trust and create a foundation for working relationships.
5. Explore a range of views about the nature of the issue. Provide adequate time and appropriate sequence and structure. After an initial session, set up study circles to examine "how is this issue affecting our community?", "what is the nature of the problem?", "what are the root causes of the problem?", and then subsequently "What should we do about the problem?" in an action forum.
6. Encourage analysis and reasoned argument. It is not enough to have dialogue that connects people; there need to be opportunities for critical listening and earnest decision making.

Face the volatile emotions and work through them.

7. Help people develop public judgment and create common ground for action.
8. Provide a way for people to see themselves as actors and to be actors.
9. Connect to government, policymaking and governance.
10. Create ongoing processes, not isolated events.

McCoy and Scully are proponents of the Study Circle Resource Center created by the Paul J. Aicher (formerly Topsfield) Foundation in 1989. There are many organizations with civic engagement programs and many success stories and cautionary tales among them. The following resources provide some tools, techniques, ideas, and further information.

Resources

The information provided here is but a small fraction of the available literature, just as the examples given are but a sample of the possibilities for making archeology a positive force for civic engagement. It is up to each individual archeologist to rise above the standards set by law and make long term commitments to using the process and products of the archeological endeavor as tools for the well being of our communities.

Case Study web sites

[Archeology of Ransom Place](#)

[Harvard Yard Archeology Project](#)

[The Dexter Site at Independence National Historical Park](#)

[The African Burial Ground](#)

Federal Highway Administration (2002) [Cypress Freeway Replacement Project, California Department of Transportation](#)

Anthropological Studies Center, Sonoma State University (2004) [Putting the “There” There: Historical Archaeologies of West Oakland](#)

[The Alutiiq Museum and Archeological Repository](#).

Further Resources

[Civic Practices Network](#)

The Civic Practices Network (CPN) is a collaborative and nonpartisan project that brings together a diverse array of organizations and perspectives within the civic renewal movement.

[Diversity Resources](#)

See *Diversity Connections: A National Inventory* (Winter 2004-2005) for examples of how cultural resource programs, including archeology, include the diverse population of America.

[Environmental Protection Agency](#).

This site contains summaries of nearly forty evaluations and reports focused on the public involvement activities of EPA and other agencies. Each summary is searchable by environmental topic, and describes the focus of the evaluation, data collection methods, and key findings and recommendations.

[The George Wright Society](#)

The “Forum” Journal 2002 Volume 19, Number 4 *Civic Engagement at Sites of Conscience* (Guest Editor: Martin Blatt) is available here for free downloading.

Articles include:

Introduction: The National Park Service and Civic Engagement (Martin Blatt)

Interpreting Slavery and Civil Rights at Fort Sumter (John Tucker)

Frankly, Scarlett, We Do Give a Damn: The Making of a New National Park (Laura Gates)

Civic Engagement with the Community at Washita Battlefield National Historic Site (Sarah Craighead)

The National Park Service: Groveling Syncophant or Social Conscience? Telling the Story of Mountains, Valley, and Barbed Wire at Manzanar National Historic Site (Frank Hays)

Activating the Past for Civic Action: the International Coalition of Historic Sites of Conscience (Liz Sevckenko)

Dialogue Between Continents: Civic Engagement and the Gulag Museum at Perm-36, Russia (Louis P. Hutchins and Gay E. Vietzke)

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

This site interprets history through historic sites that stimulate dialogue on pressing social issues and promote humanitarian and democratic values. It also shares opportunities for public involvement in issues raised at the sites.

National Park Service Civic Engagement website

This site provides background, policies, case studies, and more.

National Park Service Community Tool Box

Learn about working in and with communities to accomplish shared goals with the Community Tool Box developed by The Northeast Region's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program.

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Program

Many projects funded by RC&D focus on cultural heritage, including archeology. According to the Department of Agriculture, the purpose of the RC&D program is to accelerate the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, improve the general level of economic activity, and to enhance the environment and standard of living in designated RC&D areas. It improves capabilities to plan, develop and carry out programs for resource conservation and development. The program establishes or improves coordination systems in rural areas, engaging State, tribal and local units of government and local nonprofit organizations. Current program objectives focus on improvement of quality of life achieved through natural resources conservation and community development which leads to sustainable communities, prudent use (development), and the management and conservation of natural resources. RC&D areas are locally sponsored areas designated by the Secretary of Agriculture for RC&D technical and financial assistance program funds.

The Public Benefits of Archeology

This site highlights various publics and how they may benefit from archeology.

Study Circles Resources Center

This center provides technical assistance to communities that want to organize study circles.

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