Greetings from your ACUA Graduate Student Liaisons! To our fellow students: we hope that you were able to attend SHA 2019 in St. Charles a few months ago. There were a multitude of presentations, networking opportunities and culture surrounding the conference! To everyone else: thank you for checking out our Student Newsletter!

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Conference Recap

At the 2019 SHA meeting in St. Charles, MO, the ACUA held a panel to raise awareness of the ACUA Mentorship Program. Chaired by Marco Meniketti, panellists Morgan Smith, Amanda Evans and Amy Mitchell-Cook spent Saturday morning discussing the program with students and offering advice to a steady stream of graduate and undergraduate students. Common questions and concerns included how students can be more involved in underwater research, how to prepare for an underwater-related career, and whether or not graduate school is the right step. The panel was well suited to answer a wide array of questions and the forum received positive feedback from all who attended. Another forum is planned for the 2020 conference in Boston, so if you missed last year’s panel, don’t fret!


ACUA

Advisory Council on Underwater Archaeology

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Conference Updates

4th Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Underwater Cultural Heritage
Session abstract submission deadline: May 1st, 2019. All session abstracts should be submitted to Bill Jeffery (billjeffery@gmail.com), Brian Fahy (brian.fahy.arch@gmail.com), and Sila Tripati (sila@nio.org) for consideration.

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Sometimes one stumbles into a research topic. You’ve never thought about it, you have no intentions of reading about it, and then it suddenly tumbles into your lap. This was the case with my research topic for this year’s Society for Historical Archaeology Conference in St. Charles, Missouri, a poster titled *Fate of our Fathers: An Assessment of Mental Health Among African American Archaeologists*. The research originated from my own struggles as a black first-year graduate student in the Program in Maritime Studies at ECU. At the time, I was preparing a research paper on the slave trade for my Maritime History class, and thus frequently engaging with graphic primary source material. I noticed that after a few weeks of regular study of such material, my behavioral patterns began to change in a negative way. I was not as vocal in classes and I was isolating, when I’m typically more talkative and prefer to spend my time in the company of others. I recognized that my behavior was the result of my research material. Historians often connect events from the past with occurrences happening in the present day. For me, reading regularly about the traumatic experiences of my ancestors while also living as an African American in the current political climate made it exceptionally challenging to disconnect from my research. I recognized that there were numerous African American archaeologists who were likely having similar experiences.

To learn more about how (or if) African American archaeologists cope, I created a survey of questions based on my experiences and challenges with the research. The survey asked a variety of questions in order to develop an understanding of the typical work environment and research interests of black archaeologists. Its primary sample group polled was the Society of Black Archaeologists, founded by Justin Dunnavant and Ayan Flewellen. The group has an active membership of about two hundred members and fifteen participated in the survey, representing about eight percent of the overall group. A successful survey typically represents between eight and fifteen percent of an overall group, meaning my survey was within the proper boundaries for accurate representation of the group. Regarding demographics, sample group was 60% male and 40% female, 60% black, 40% white, 13% Asian, and 7% Latinx. Professionally, there was an 80% to 20% split between terrestrial and maritime archaeologists, respectively, though many archaeologists in SBA have the ability to work in both fields.

Several trends were apparent in the data. Most notably, 86% of all participants surveyed acknowledged that they had experienced racism in the archaeological field. Considering the push within organizations like the Society for Historical Archaeology to address racism in the field, this is concerning but not surprising. These organizations are aware of this particular issue and are working to address it. The data also indicated that there was correlation between reading primary source documents related to the slave trade and openness to counseling. The final question, an inquiry as to whether each participant was willing to go to counseling in order to address changes in mood caused by the material, gave the option of “Yes”, “Maybe”, or “No”. 100% of the “Yes” and “Maybe” answers worked with primary source material at least once a week, while only 38% of “No” answers did. Oddly enough, contact with artifacts related to the slave trade had a negligible impact on the participants’ willingness to go to counseling. Most notable among the data was the tendency of African American archaeologists to focus on the slave trade as a primary research interest and its impact on their mental status. 78% of African American archaeologists described themselves as working primarily on the slave trade and 71% of those open to mental health counseling were of African descent. Additionally, 45% of African American archaeologists reported short term mental health effects, while other racial groups reported no effects at all.

The effect of this research on the conference was much needed conversation. Though the poster was targeted at bringing awareness to the challenges of African American archaeologists, it generated conversations about all minority groups and how we as archaeologists consider the needs of our colleagues on a day to day basis. I was able to build connections with like minded people and will continue to refine this research as I experience more in the archaeological field. I’m thrilled that I was able to contribute to such an important topic in my profession, and hope that the increased diversity in the field will evermore be partnered with he inclusivity necessary to make it thrive.

—Joel Cook, East Carolina University, Masters Student.
The periplous is generally considered to be a subset of the popular genre of Greek geographical writing (Davis 2009:162). The surviving examples of periploi were written between the Archaic and Byzantine periods, with about half being written during the Hellenistic period (Davis 2009:161). The word periplous, meaning “sailing around,” “circumnavigation,” or “coasting voyage,” is used in this context to indicate a description of a real or hypothetical voyage (Davis 2009:161). Periploi reflect the Greek conception of relationships between land and sea and between different groups of people. They are also indicative of the network connections that the sea facilitated.

In general, the periplous is a type of text that describes the world. The vast majority of periploi appear to be written from the perspective of a sea voyage. In some cases, this voyage was one actually undertaken by the author or his sources, but in most cases the voyage seems to be more of a literary conceit for the sake of organization (Davis 2009:161). Each periplous gives a list of coastal features in the order in which they would become visible to a seafarer (Davis 2009:161). Periploi also include distances between features (Davis 2009:162). Usually, additional information is given as well, from practical details to ethnographic descriptions of local peoples.

One of the earliest surviving periploi was written by an author commonly known as Psuedo-Skylax. The author works in a clockwise fashion around the Mediterranean and Black Seas, noting distances sometimes in stadia and sometimes in days. He also includes a significant amount of mythological references and historical information (Davis 2009:166).

The relationship between periploi and the Greek worldview is essentially that the Greeks conceptualized space by looking from the sea toward the land, not the other way around (Gottesman 2015:99). Thus, periploi are organized around the sea, which had a dominant and central role within Greek spatial perceptions, and within society in general (Gottesman 2015:81). The Greeks did not see a clear dichotomy between land and sea, which were inextricably tied, as shown by the nature of the periplous as a document guiding people from land area to land area by means of the sea. However, Greeks saw a clear division between the oikoumene and the ge, or the inhabited part of the world and the entire earth (Gottesman 2015:95). The oikoumene seems to have been the part of the world accessible to the Greeks by ship (Shipley 2012:125). In addition to this large division of space, the Greek worldview also included division into territories of ethnic groups.

Periploi were essentially a comprehensible way for writers to convey an abstract concept such as the structure of the world to readers (Allain 1977:1). Periploi enabled readers to understand the extent of the world, in that they described the limits of what was possible for Greeks to access by ship (Shipley 2011:13). Distance was only one factor that determined which places were considered to be linked. Sometimes perceived cultural links were just as important. (Shipley 2011:114). A general order to the world appears in many periploi. They seem to indicate an underlying structure in which civilization is bounded by the unknown, i.e., whatever lies significantly beyond the Pillars of Herakles.

Finally, periploi can aid in the interpretation of exchange networks. The Mediterranean was essentially a globalized space with a predominantly shared culture in which various ethnic groups adopted aspects of other cultures (Gottesman 2015:87). This was especially true for Greece, a primarily decentralized network centered around the Mediterranean for most of its premodern existence (Malkin 2011:3). Periploi help to illustrate the multidirectional networks of the Mediterranean by providing an indication of which places were known to the authors and which towns and cities were most directly connected to the Greek culture.

Clearly, periploi are illustrative of the general Greek worldview, including what the Greeks thought about the dichotomy between the inhabited world and the rest of the earth, and how both of these regions were believed to be structured. Additionally, they are informative concerning how Greeks viewed the other people with whom they interacted. Information found in periploi can also be helpful in analyzing the exchange networks that operated in the Mediterranean at various time periods.

—Emily DiBiase, East Carolina University, Masters Student

Bibliography


Continued on page 4
Congratulations to the 2019 St. Charles, Missouri Photo and Video Competition Winners and participants. The photos were all excellent and it was hard to select from so many amazing images. They are all currently posted on the ACUA website (www.acualonline.org) for everyone’s enjoyment all year long!

Category A: Color Archaeological Site
First: "Site Assessments of the steamship Madison in Troy Spring" by Nicole Grinnan
Second: "19th Century Furnace" by Lily Carhart
Third: "Cherry Picker View, Robert Carter House, Williamsburg, VA" by Mark Kostro
People's Choice: "Exposing an Early 18th Century Drain in Mount Vernon's Cellar" by Sierra Medellin

Category B: Color Archaeological Field Work in Progress
First: "Screens, Robert Carter House, Williamsburg, Virginia" by Mark Kostro
Second: "I love my job, it is my chosen profession". Data Recovery on the Adriatic, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin." by Stephen James
Third: "Recording the Brick Wreck off Vaca Key, Florida" by Nicole Grinnan
People's Choice: "Excavations of Alexander Spotswood’s 1720’s Enchanted Castle" by Lauren McMillan

Category C: Color Archaeological Lab Work in Progress
First: "Elevations Underground Archaeology Beneath Mount Vernon" by Sierra Medellin
People's Choice: "Elevations Underground Archaeology Beneath Mount Vernon" by Sierra Medellin

Category D: Color Artifact
First: "Fine Finish" by Katherine Boyle
Second: "Waiting for Discovery A Wine Bottle in Mount Vernon's South Grove" by Sierra Medellin
Third: "Spiral of Time Chronological Assemblage of Prehistoric Points" by Sierra Medellin
People's Choice: "Fine Finish" Katherine Boyle

Category E: Black & White Image
First: "Bee Stopper" by Mark Kostro
Second: "A Tale of Two Axes Prehistoric Axes Recovered at Mount Vernon" by Sierra Medellin
Third: No entry
People's Choice: "Bee Stopper" by Mark Kostro

Category F: Color Archaeological Portrait
First: Backfill by the Potomac Alice Keith at Work in Mount Vernon South Grove" by Sierra Medellin
Second: "Finally!" by Tad Britt
Third: "UWF - No Limits, Pensacola, Florida" by Brandon Herrmann
People's Choice: "UWF - No Limits, Pensacola, Florida" by Brandon Herrmann

Category G: Diversity
No entries for this category

Category H: Artist's Perspective (Illustration)
First: "Remains of 1880s Furnace in the Cellar of George Washington's Mount Vernon" by Lily Carhart
Second: "Worked Bottle Base" by Samantha Ellens
Third: "Special Finds and Potato Hill" by Samantha Ellens
People's Choice: "Worked Bottle Base" by Samantha Ellens

Category I: Archaeological Video
First: "Post Michael: HMS Scout Meet-up" by Mike Thomin
(People's Choice )

Thank you to all of the participants and we look forward to even more photos and videos next year!