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Excavating the Strata of (Some) of Archaeology's Problems and Applying Feminist Solutions

An Honors Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Honors in the

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

By Kristin Marie Dew

Under the mentorship of Dr. J. Matthew Compton

Abstract:

Over the past thirty years, feminist scholars in archaeology have gained a foothold in the discipline. Conkey and Spector's "Archaeology and the Study of Gender" (1984) is often credited with being the turning point for the topic of gender in archaeology. Still, there is more ground to gain. I argue for a fully engendered archaeology by understanding that achieving this will be difficult due to the past and current sociopolitics of American archaeology. Historically, mainstream archaeology has viewed feminist epistemologies, like those on which gender archaeology is based, as simply a *standpoint*, creating a disconnect identifying their importance. Despite these challenges, engendering archaeology through informed multi-theoretical approaches and feminist frameworks can reduce some ambiguity in the archaeological record. By refocusing our anthropological gaze, archaeologists can create spaces that promote self-worth for women and other members of marginalized groups, develop an understanding of the spectrum of gender differences to achieve social equity, and examine how gender hierarchies are maintained and produced for applied anthropological purposes of social equality. Including feminist frameworks creates an inclusive discipline capable of reconstructing a fragmented past based on a wide variety of human experiences. This paper is designed to act as a catalyst to re-examine how we conduct archaeological thinking, produce archaeological knowledge and authority, and accept and agree that identity is multifaceted. Using feminist epistemologies such as intersectionality and queer theory will produce interpretations of the past representative of the wide variety of human experiences.

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An Introduction to Engendered Archaeology

Over the past thirty-plus years, feminists have gained a foothold in the discipline of archaeology. Still, we have more ground to gain. I argue for fully engendered archaeology by understanding that achieving this may be challenging due to the authority of archaeological knowledge which is steeped in androcentrism and heteronormativity (Conkey and Spector 1987; Gilchrist 1999; Hurcombe 1995). I focus specifically on American archaeology, and to understand the birth of gender and feminist archaeology in America, we must recognize how the discipline has changed since its inception. To begin, I will introduce a brief history of American archaeology setting the stage for the current sociopolitics of archaeology. Then, I will discuss the often-conflated terms of feminist and gender archaeology, their differences and why we need some differentiation to benefit archaeology as a whole. Next, I address the issues of heteronormativity and androcentrism within archaeology. Here I argue that these issues, as well as those of authority of knowledge, distribution of funding, and publication trends, must be excavated much like the strata of an archaeological site and addressed by archaeologists with an anthropological lens to move the discipline forward. I highlight the benefits of feminist archaeology, and the need for feminists to move beyond the critique of archaeology to operationalize solutions. I conclude with a discussion concerning the growth of literature from the third wave of feminism published in the past decade, and the contribution of theoretical frameworks that have been brought to the discipline moving it slowly forward to an inclusive feminist-informed engendered archaeology.

A Brief History of American Archaeology

The first systematic excavation of archaeological material in America is often accredited to Thomas Jefferson, whose excavations took place to investigate the "Myth of the Moundbuilders." After the age of colonization brought Europeans to the Americas, colonizers were fascinated with the earthen mounds that scattered North America. Many felt that the indigenous people they encountered could not have built the mounds; however, Jefferson concluded that Native Americans were capable and did build the mounds. But it was not until a century later that Cyrus Thomas finally concluded that indigenous groups were capable and did construct the massive mounds that it was accepted by the American public (Keel 1970).

The founder of American anthropology is Franz Boas (1858-1942). Boas brought the concepts of cultural relativism and historical particularism to anthropology (Johnson 2020). He rejected ideas about cultural evolution, noting that cultures changed and developed differently, diffusing across time and geographical space. He argued that to understand a culture, one must remove their own societal lens and replace it with the cultural lens of research subjects. Many today refer to him as the "father" of American anthropology, and it is not uncommon for men in academia to be labeled with such androcentric and heteronormative terminology, particularly because males have systematically been hired into PhD level positions (Speakman et al. 2018).

Alfred Vincent Kidder (1885-1963) incorporated archaeology into the larger discipline of anthropology, moving from artifact emphasis to the people they represent. During the early days of American archaeology, practitioners relied on a cultural-

historical approach to the archaeological record (Johnson 2020). They sought to classify artifacts by likeness, creating archaeological cultures and placing them in chronological order. Kidder understood that naming and dating an artifact is pragmatic but questioned what in-depth information such approaches produced. This artifact-based approach initiated "new" discussions about archaeological cultures, the people who created them, and why. This approach is still used and is a baseline for modern archaeologists.

Following this artifact-based cultural-historical approach, a "New Archaeology" was taking root beginning in the 1960s. This "New Archaeology," also known as Processual archaeology, sought to explain social, economic, and cultural factors as the primary reason for cultural change observed in the archaeological record. It held firm to the ideals of the scientific method during the inquiry of cultural systems. Archaeologists began explaining, not just describing, using middle-range theory (Johnson 2020). Lewis Binford (1978) used ethnoarchaeology, examining living people and their interactions with their material culture, and Colin Renfrew (1989) studied languages throughout neolithic Europe and their relation to the spread of farming. These practitioners sought not only to categorize artifacts, but looked at why or how these things were used to push societal changes. During this change in archaeological practice, sociological theories such as Functionalism or Symbolic Interactionism (Allan 2013) began permeating through the questions of anthropological inquiry. These inventors of processual thought laid forth a methodology for examining the archaeological record we still largely rely on today.

The "New Archaeology" was not the only change happening during the mid-twentieth century. Though independent of the archaeological paradigm shift, the social

turbulence of the civil rights movement, and then the second-wave feminist movement, allowed more access, particularly to white women, to enter what had been a very male-dominated field. All the contributors mentioned above have been white, college-educated men, creating a male-centric knowledge base for American archaeology (Bardolph 2014; Conkey and Spector 1984; Fulkerson and Tushingham 2019; Gero 1985; Hays-Gilpin 2000; Rautman 2012; Speakman et al. 2018).

In America, interpretive archaeology, or post-processualism, came just after these second-wave feminist and civil rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s. During the second wave, women demanded that they belonged in the workplace, they demanded reproductive rights, and lastly, they demanded social equality. This echoed through archaeology and female archaeologists used feminist conviction to question the sociopolitics of archaeology and the relationship between themselves and their male counterparts. An influx of women to the discipline at the time is also due to the shift to employment. Most archaeologists are employed in cultural resource management due to the enactment of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966 and other laws like the National Environmental Protection Act. This created the need for more archaeologists in general, fueling the influx of women and the spread of feminist critiques within the discipline.

Additionally, many archaeologists during this time questioned scientific paradigms, concluding they were creations of their context. Pioneers like Ian Hodder (1981) argued that we can never be completely objective like the "hard sciences." It is in this environment that feminist and gender archaeology in America was born. Conkey and

Spector's (1984) "Archaeology and the Study of Gender" is often credited with being the turning point for the topic of gender in archaeology in America. They critiqued archaeology's androcentrism and highlighted how, when examining the archaeological record, "the contributions, activities, perceptions, and perspectives of females are trivialized, stereotyped, or simply, ignored" (Conkey and Spector 1984:13). They called for anthropological approaches, including the multidimensional understanding of gender, based on identity, role, and ideology, to the study of gender and its manifestation in the archaeological record. Archaeologists acknowledged these faults, and today, American Archaeology is in a processual-plus stage. We still rely heavily on the chronology of the cultural-historical approach, we look to link the artifacts with their past peoples, which still relies heavily on the processualist approach, but it recognizes these critiques raised by Conkey and Spector (1984), Hodder (1981) and others leaving modern American archaeology in a limbo, acknowledging these critiques and faults, but failing to repair it.

Feminist and Gender Archaeologies: Interchangeably Different

While examining the vast body of literature regarding feminist and gender archaeology, one problem prevented a deeper understanding. There was a failure to address the terms gender and feminist archaeology, which were often used interchangeably, implying that they are as "Oxford Reference: Companion to Archaeology" defines them as "conjoined twins" (Silberman 2012:569). This conflation made the association of specific methods and theories used by each of these subarchaeologies difficult to identify and replicate. However, further digging has revealed that these two subarchaeologies do have theoretical and methodological

differences that must be addressed to create a more holistic understanding of identity in the past.

As noted above, social movements of the 1960s and 1970s mixed with the legal landscape of archaeology helped lead to an influx of women to the discipline of archaeology and the critique of androcentrism in the 1980s. Archaeologist Roberta Gilchrist (1991) reminds us that feminism can loosely be defined as a political conviction questioning and challenging the existing power relations between men and women. Feminist archaeologists take up the challenge of inquiring about gender relations and, more broadly, about identity and applying it to archaeological theory and interpretations. Many feminists apply this challenge to the sociopolitics of archaeology through publication trends (e.g., Bardolph 2014; Bardolph and Vanderwarker 2016; Beck et al. 2021; Claassen et al. 1999; Fulkerson and Tushingham 2019; Heath-Stout 2020, 2022; Hutson 2002; Rautman 2012). By examining power relations and experiences of privilege and oppression that leads to the embodiment of culture and the distributions of material culture, feminist can understand symbolism, identity, social hierarchies, and more. In other words, "feminists are concerned with inequality in all aspects of societies..." (Rubio 2011:24), and feminist archaeologists ask how systems of privilege and oppression manifest in the archaeological record. Not all feminist archaeologists are concerned with gender; however, we note the inseparability of gender and sex and culture. Though we do not formulate our research design specifically to address gender roles, relations, and ideologies, it is continuously present in our formulation, analysis, and interpretation.

Here is a definition in summative archaeological methods and theory text used by students, professionals, and laypeople alike that conflates the two subdisciplines:

"[Gender archaeology is] archaeology that encompasses several different themes including but not limited to: correction of male bias in archaeology, a critique of existing structures of archaeological practice, a reassessment of the history of archaeology, an examination of gender in the archaeological record, a critique of what is seen as the male-biased nature of the academic knowledge and the academic world in general, and an engagement with other dimensions of identity and a recognition of the ways that these facets are related and intersect within a specific cultural or political space" (Johnson 2020:159).

While this definition seems to be all-inclusive, it is what I would define as feminist archaeology, a broad umbrella of archaeological thought that addresses all the points Johnson mentions in his explanation. As stated, not all feminist archaeologists study gender explicitly, but it is an integral part of our archaeological paradigm. When analyzing archaeological finds, feminist-driven questions ask if or how gender could have played into the larger systems of power. Gender archaeology, on the other hand, investigates specifically sex/gender systems, including roles, identity, relations, and ideologies, through skeletal remains, material culture, and other types of historical information such as ethnographies or oral histories. While gender systems can be larger systems of power and oppression, gender archaeologists are less apt to examine other facets of identity, such as age, class, or race. Thus they may fail to see other social structures (Stratton 2016). The acknowledgment and research into these themes of gender

are something archaeologists like Bruce Trigger (2008: 187) argue is a "necessary and integral part of all archaeological practice." Yet, archaeologists have been hesitant to explore because such interpretations are "messy" and do not fit neatly into a "box." Exploring gender relations and facets of identity through the archaeological world is complex. It does not produce a perfect interpretation accessible for public consumption, producing not only literature gaps but methodological and theoretical gaps. Feminist knowledge is grounded in experience and aimed at dismantling inequality and filling these gaps (Rubio 2011) and through reflexivity we increase our sensitivity to help us "avoid dichotomous thinking" (Levy 2014:232) that blinds comprehensive interpretations of marginalized data through the separation of evidence, analysis and interpretation. While the lack of methodological standards for a feminist toolkit to some may fuel the *standpoint* argument (Hays-Gilpin 2000; Trigger 2008), it allows for wider acknowledgment of ignored data.

Is gender archaeology just about making women visible? Is feminist archaeology simply about the critique? Should gender archaeology focus exclusively on the feminine? Gender and feminine are more terms often conflated. Jackson Katz discusses this and more in his TEDtalk titled "Violence against Women -- it's a Men's Issue." Katz addresses the tendency to view gender "as female" because men have historically had power over women leading to their gender being ignored as the dominant group. However, archaeologists remind us that gender archaeology can be and is focused on all genders. In his article on military internment camps from the American Civil War, Ryan McNutt (2019), a conflict archaeologist, describes the physical acts of resistance

expressed by POWs, such as escape attempts or guard manipulation, as expressions of agency and desire to adhere to the predominate image of masculinity, including the ideology of "no surrender" within masculinity in the nineteenth century. McNutt offers us not just an interpretation of workings within prisoner camps, he produces an interpretation geared at understanding individual agency that is steeped in socially prescribed gendered roles, particularly roles of masculinity during the American Civil War, giving the artifacts and those who used them in life.

This conflation of definitions was constantly present throughout my research, making it challenging to describe approaches and methodologies for these important subdisciplines. Here, we can understand the differences between gender and feminist archaeology. Gender archaeologists look specifically at understanding gender roles, relations, and ideologies by examining the archaeological record, including skeletal remains, and other material culture such as grave goods. Feminist archaeologists on the other hand consider gender and the intersections of race, class, age, and sexuality and how power systems are reflected in the use of material culture. Though these terms are often used interchangeably by archaeologists, the identification and discussion surrounding the differences between the two could produce a more robust group of practitioners and create a differentiation in methodology for both of these sub-archaeologies.

Gender Archaeology Outside of the United States

Gender archaeology was not created in the United States. Some of the earliest works on gender in the archaeological record can be traced to Scandinavian practitioners.

Before Conkey and Spector (1984) questioned and called out male-based archaeology in America, Norwegian museum professionals and educators arranged a broad-scope conference titled "Var de alle menn?" or "Were They All Men" in 1979, that focused on some feminist critiques, asking what women's contribution to the larger regional history was. Like in America, this pushback to academic disciplines began just as social movements were taking place in Norway in the 1970s. This conference would later influence women archaeologists in Norway to publish KAN, a Norwegian academic journal that translates to "Women in Archaeology" which highlighted women's contribution to Scandinavian history and how it is represented in the archaeological record. These practitioners contributed some of the earliest works interpreting gender roles and social status based on the grave goods of Iron Age burials (Engelstad 2007; Sørensen 1992). Although including women and their material culture in archaeological interpretation was refreshing to female Scandinavian archaeologists, it was not without fault. Many, if not all of these practitioners failed to address the dichotomy of sex and gender and how those things are negotiated to form an identity. An exception to this is Sørensen (1992), "Gender Archaeology, and Scandinavian Bronze Age Studies." She argues that the ratio of male to female burials coupled with the change in hoard size over time, primarily sickles, suggests a "symbolic association" with male-based agriculture shifting to female-based agriculture. Sørensen challenged male-based interpretations, although she failed to view gender on the spectrum we understand today.

Why we need Engendered Archaeology: Archaeology and Its Problems

There has been much discussion in archaeological literature regarding gender. In 1995, Linda Hurcombe referred to gender in archaeology, or "biased interpretations of gender," as the "Big Problem" (Hurcombe 1995:87). She reminds us that most, if not all, archaeological "evidence for gender roles are woefully incomplete"(Hurcombe 1995:88) and that we push current gender roles on our interpretations. It is not just modern gender stereotypes that shape our understanding of past people – American archaeology is shaped through a Western, ethnocentric, and heteronormative lens. Anthropology and archaeology have roots in colonialism, and archaeologists have long relied on modern gender stereotypes to inform their interpretations of the past. Specifically, pre-colonial archaeologists habitually apply these stereotypes without evidentiary support. Although I highlight pre-colonial archaeologists, the entire discipline is guilty of stereotyping.

Most social scientists define stereotyping as the assumption or generalization of a person's characteristics or personality based on their association with specific groups without regard for their individual difference (Rogers 2020). Stereotyping often leads to toxic or over-generalized representations of masculine and feminine characteristics, erasing the variability of gender roles. For example, the confinement of women's roles to motherhood and housework is an example of stereotyping based on modern gendered roles prescribed through the structure of the nuclear family.

Once Conkey and Spector (1984) provided a critique of androcentrism in American archaeology, the discipline worked to move women past the "housekeeping" of archaeological practice. Due to the emphasis of archaeological fieldwork in a male-

centric field, women, except the lucky few, often held collection-based positions, including laboratory analysis deemed the "housework" of archaeology (Gero 1985). We can see the echo of stereotypes indicative of the nuclear family structures, complete with modern gendered roles of women washing and sorting artifacts. To address these over-generalized or toxic interpretations of gendered roles, guidelines for gender language in some academic journals, specifically those published by the Society for American Archaeology like *American Antiquity*, and *Latin American Antiquity* were created reducing some biased interpretations of gender, but not eliminating them. To reduce the exclusion of identities in the archaeological record, we must first begin with the inclusion of identities in the application of anthropological and archaeological thinking.

In this section, I discuss what I deem to be archaeology's problems. First, I will discuss the binary bind in archaeology, including its problem with heteronormativity and the idea of monogamy and the nuclear family. Then, I will discuss the androcentric nature of archaeological knowledge, and authorship within academia, where the practice of archaeological theory and the marginalization of *standpoint* theories happen, despite modern scientific paradigms being products of standpoints themselves. To conclude this section, I explain the need for feminist archaeologists to move beyond the critique by highlighting the discipline's issues and actively applying feminist theory to address them. Some archaeologists are successful in this feat; however, we need to accept that there are some ambiguities within the human past that the archaeological record cannot fill.

The Binary Bind

The binary bind is the polar confinement of biological sex and gender in a culture (Ghisleni et al. 2016). The bind can be understood in two facets. One is the reliance on the two-sex/gender system. This dichotomy acknowledges only men and women as genders and attaches them specifically to biological characteristics. The second facet is the strict behaviors associated with these roles that must be adhered to culturally. These ideologies regarding sex/gender systems are essentialist, assuming that gender characteristics and behaviors are predetermined by biological sex; they can be equated to "born this way" ideologies.

To understand how the bind harms archaeology, one must examine the distinction between *biological sex* and *culturally learned gender* by social scientists of the twenty-first century. Gayle Rubin (2002) detailed how sex was based on biological reproduction and gender was learned through culture, something anthropologists call, enculturation. Jonathan Katz (2020) discussed the creation of the hetero/homo dichotomy by medical practitioners during the 1800s sexology boom, exemplifying the need for the human mind to map categories for which to classify people. Judith Butler (1990) called into question this accepted gender/sex dichotomy by examining the constructions of biological sex and ignored sub-culture and subjectiveness within medical professionals, which sex individuals based on phenotype. Fausto-Sterling (2000, 1993) further identified that there are at least five biological sexes according to genetics, thus creating new discussions around sex, gender, and intersex identities, supporting Butler's (1990) point of biological sex as a construct. The truth is there are an immeasurable number of chromosomal and

hormonal factors in addition to culture that contribute to both sex and gender. Regardless of these social discourses in academia surrounding the pragmatic relationship between sex and gender, archaeology was slow to acknowledge changing conceptions, thus digging the discipline deeper into the bind.

Let us examine the case study of ancient Egypt and its pharaohs, who have become common household names. My eight-year-old daughter can tell you all about King Tut, the boy king who ruled ancient Egypt and died young, but she has never heard of Hatshepsut. Hatshepsut was an eighteenth-dynastic ruler. Daughter of royalty, she named herself pharaoh, first in place of her young stepson, and then alongside him for twenty-two years. The site most associated with the ruler Hatshepsut is the temple at Deir- el- Bahari, known for its processual ramp. This mortuary complex has produced much of the material culture related to Hatshepsut, including iconography. Many representations of the pharaoh post-coronation depict her in male and female garb, including the famed pharaoh's beard and ceremonial headdress, with the inscriptions naming her in the female form (Diamond 2020; Matic 2016a, 2016b). Hatshepsut as ruler, had a creative and authoritative hand in her curated iconography. Previous archaeological interpretations by Egyptologists included terms like "cross-dresser," "gender-bender," "trans," and "lesbian" (Margetts 1951; Simini 2017). Such interpretations were based on modern gender ideologies operating within the strict binary bind of Western society labeling Hatshepsut as deviant (Margetts 1951). In place of these androcentric and heteronormative interpretations, Matic (2016) and Diamond (2020)

offer a narrative in which Hatshepsut acted in a way expected of a pharaoh, demonstrating her agency to be both ruler and woman.

Historically, women typically did not hold the position of Pharaoh in Ancient Egypt; in fact, only a handful of female pharaohs are known to us: Sobenkenfreu, Hatshepsut, Nefertiti, and Cleopatra (Diamond 2020; Matić 2016b; Simini 2017). Thus, Hatshepsut and those before and after her created a network of actors, including themselves, their pharaonic performance and personal identity, based on what they felt would preserve their power and maintain their rule. For example, Hatshepsut combined the traditional dress of a Pharaoh with her femininity to produce the identity that we have come to know today. Feminist scholarship has asked not how she dressed but why, and "within the variety of images that Hatshepsut created for herself, she deliberately and strategically combined various body parts and royal adornments which would be identified individually as masculine or feminine" (Diamond 2020:173). By creating and implanting her political imagery, she used the notions of kingship and feminine masculinity to negotiate her identity, or rather the perception of her identity, to legitimize her rule. She was not cross-dressing as we understand it today; she was not making herself male, indicating her trans identity. Instead, feminist scholars show that Hatshepsut was dressing as a Pharaoh should, embracing both her femininity and the masculinity associated with ruling Egypt and choosing to curate her image in a way that would allow her to sustain support and maintain her rule; a power echoed throughout the mortuary complex at Deir- el- Bahari.

Pre-colonial archaeologists in the United States also find themselves stuck in the bind. Often the identification of stone tools at a pre-colonial site coincides with the inclusion of one gender to the exclusion of another. For example, Randall Hass and colleagues (2020) recently published "Female Hunters of the Early Americas." Historically, stone tools interpreted as associated with women were primarily used for food processing, such as knives or scrapers and grinding stones. Projectile points, however, are often attributed to the perceived male behavior of hunting big game. Hass notes the general acceptance, or unquestioning embrace, of preforms and projectile points in male-sexed graves by archaeologists, leading to interpretations of big game hunting. However, he also notes the confusion produced by female-sexed skeletons found with the same stone toolkits as their male counterparts, following the discovery of a Late Archaic burial sexed as female and interred with a toolkit interpreted as representative of big game hunters. Hass and contributors questioned if this discovery was a fluke or representative of larger social patterns not yet considered. Using statistical analysis, Hass and his collaborators solved the probability of more female burials associated with big game hunting stone tools, given the lack of female sexed burials, the number of indeterminate skeletons, and the known Archaic burials. They argued that female participation in big game hunting might have ranged from 30 to 50 percent, an argument that seems likely considering the information gathered from the ethnoarchaeological study of Konso women by Kathryn Weedman Arthur (2010). Studying their flaking skills and use of stone tools, Arthur challenges the male-centric assumptions of crafting and big-game hunting by producing new evidence for archaeologists to create new

interpretations of more egalitarian roles among hunter-gatherer communities (Arthur 2010; Levy 2014).

Finally, the bind contributes to the over-emphasis of the nuclear family. Let us examine the proposed St. Augustine Pattern, a pattern put forth by archaeologists that hypothesizes intermarriage between indigenous women and Spanish soldiers within the settlement of St. Augustine to explain the ratios of indigenous cookware to colonial wares excavated from sixteenth-century households (Deagan 1979). Kathleen Deagan can easily be identified as one of the early American gender archaeologists and an authority on the nation's oldest city. Thanks to her continued work at the site with her collaborators, we know that it was more complicated than simply intermarriage. Barbara Voss (2008) examines this distribution with a division of labor approach but first uses queer theory to deconstruct the public/private, colonial/indigenous categories used in the previous analysis noting the "ubiquity and abundance of locally produced goods in colonial households' points to meso- and macroscale relationships of production, distribution and labor" (2008:874). By looking at the "neighborhood scale" of ceramic distribution, Voss argues economic resources and access ultimately played a role in the distribution of and use of ceramic types rather than race, or gender alone, highlighting feminists' broader scope of identity.

More recently, the footprints discovered at White Sands National Park in New Mexico evoke a heteronormative and nuclear view of the family; note the NPS interpretation published here:

In 2018, researchers discovered what they believe to be the footprints of a female. They tell a story that may seem familiar today; her footprints show her walking for almost a mile, with a toddler's footprints occasionally showing up beside hers. Evidence suggests that she carried the child, shifting them from side to side and occasionally setting the child down as they walked. The footprints broadened and slipped in the mud as a result of the additional weight she was carrying.

(National Park Service 2022)

This given interpretation is an easy, accessible one for the Western mindset, but nothing suggests that the footprints might not have been left by two siblings, a small male, and child, or by two humans entirely unrelated. This narrative evokes one of a tired mother and makes for better public consumption, but it projects a heteronormative idea of a nuclear family, a modern Western concept, onto a past of which we know very little (Dowson 2000). Professionals analyzed the footprints through comparative methods, and I do not question their expertise. I question their understanding of gender and sex. With this knowledge, can we be sure this is a female and child-perpetuating female caregiving roles? If we continue to allow interpretations like this to go unchallenged and adopted uncritically, we are allowing for the excusal of current gender inequalities based on assumed gender roles.

Highlighted above are just a few examples of how archaeological practice is stuck in the binary bind. Some acknowledge only the two-sex gender system of male/female and the assumed biological roles of those genders. Archaeologists quickly accept "man

the hunter" because Western ideals of manhood included mastery of weapons and beasts (Rogers 2020). Vice versa, they are equally accepting of women's roles of motherhood and domesticity based on rigid Victorian stereotypes of femininity. The bind reduces our understanding of gender roles. Today, social discourses surrounding gender identity are constantly changing. It is hubris of archaeologists to assume uniform gender identities and roles when they are so quickly changing in real-time. The binary bind hinders the investigation of human variability and prevents paradigms from changing.

Acknowledging the bind is the first step to addressing it and avoiding interpretations that perpetuate false essentialist beliefs of gender identities, roles, and relations.

The Boys' Club of Archaeological Knowledge, Authorship, and Funding

Why are we still stuck in the binary bind, and why is discipline slow to change? To answer the themes of this inquiry, we must examine the socio-politics of archaeological knowledge, authorship, and funding in the broader context of American archaeology. A significant body of literature has been published in the past decade regarding publication trends in American archaeology. Most, if not all, of these studies show that articles authored by men are published at higher rates than articles authored by women (Bardolph 2014; Bardolph and Vanderwarker 2016; Beck et al. 2021; Claassen et al. 1999; Fulkerson and Tushingham 2019; Heath Stout 2020, 2022; Hutson 2002; Rautman 2012).

Alison E. Rautman (2012), a former editor of *American Antiquity* from 2009-2012, examined "Who Gets Published in American Antiquity" by understanding how women reviewers and authors fared in the journal. She argued that solo male-authored

articles were submitted and accepted at more than twice the rate of single, female-authored articles. Dana Bardolph and Amber Vanderwarker (2016) examined publication trends in *Southeastern Archaeology* and the larger Southeastern Archaeological Conference (SEAC) and found that men made up 66% of publications. These articles focus primarily on prestigious peer-reviewed academic journals in their sample; however, some acknowledge the skewed numbers based on submission rates, compliance-created gray literature, and the publish-or-perish nature of academic positions. Regardless, publication rates are something worth discussing.

Gray literature are reports and records produced by archaeologists employed in cultural resource management or compliance archaeology. The majority of American archaeologists are employed in CRM (Altschul and Patterson 2009) due largely to the National Historic Preservation Act and other cultural resource laws enacted by the federal government. CRM archaeologists are there to determine the historical significance before a project begins using survey (Phase 1), testing (Phase 2) and data recovery (Phase 3). Each project, proposal, and phase produce a body of literature that is not circulated regularly among academics like journal articles, nor does it evoke prestige. Female archaeologists are more likely to be employed in CRM, given the influx of women, the limited faculty positions, and the need for compliance archaeologists (Altschul and Patterson 2009; Speakman et al. 2018); thus, they are likely contributing to archaeological literature, but not to academic peer-reviewed journals. Women are writing reports and running projects, and this experience and choice of cultural resource

management is an area of subject that needs further study, as is the need to examine the experiences of female archaeologists in general.

Those in academia are typically required to publish peer-reviewed articles. Known as "Publish or Perish," the drive to publish in academia drives submission rates and, ultimately how "archaeologists decide to publish their research" (Beck et al. 2021). Those in academia are often given recognition, funding, and tenure upon the completion of a certain number of peer-reviewed articles and works, further driving academic submission rates in peer-reviewed journals (Beck et al. 2021). Thus women employed in CRM archaeology are not rewarded in the same way when they publish academic papers, further fueling gendered submission and publication rates.

Let's take into account gender distributions across academic positions. These publication trends are not surprising given the trend of men to be hired for higher status and paying positions despite the number of master's and PhD level degrees awarded to more women (Speakman et al. 2018). For example, at Georgia Southern University, there is a 3:1 ratio of male to female archaeologists on staff in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. While these staff members are dedicated and passionate educators, the lack of diversity in the department is a symptom of a broader problem which impacts minority members of the field everywhere. With men in more positions of prestige and power, they hold the authority and "an epistemological privilege... and legitimize particular constructions of the past" (Dowson 2000:162). In other words, they create, legitimize and maintain the continued archaeological power through publishing. If men hold the positions of power and produce the most academic archaeological publications

that teach future generations, who will question if there is a different, more complete approach to archaeological research?

Publications of authors identifying outside the gender binary are even less likely to be published. In a study of publication trends in 21 peer-reviewed academic journals, Heath-Stout found that none published at least 1% of LGBTQ+ identifying authors (Heath-Stout 2020) based on a survey in which 1,377 authors answered self-identified survey questions regarding demographics. Heath-Stout's is one of many studies used in the examination of publication trends but theirs is the only one which examines authors outside the gender binary, further exemplifying archaeology's tendency to ignore those outside the binary. Examining Heath-Stout's findings in conjunction with employment trends in American archaeology, it is evident that there has been an influx of women both obtaining degrees in anthropology and choosing archaeology or one of its many subdisciplines; however, the demographic of the American academic archaeologist remains primarily white and cis-gendered (Altschul and Patterson 2009; Bardolph 2014; Heath-Stout 2020; Speakman et al. 2018).

As highlighted above, archaeology has been and continues to be a largely androcentric and heteronormative discipline, but there is hope. Third-wave feminism has profoundly impacted the social sciences, including archaeology. Many feminist scholars have applied queer theory and intersectionality to archaeology and have produced more robust, multidimensional interpretations of surviving material culture, tempering hope for the larger body of archaeology.

Beyond the Critique: Feminists Need to Dig Deeper

As discussed above, feminist archaeologists have got the critique down, thirty-plus years and we know what is wrong with American archaeology. What feminist archaeologists have generally failed to do as a collective is move beyond the critique to produce operational solutions and contribute to the science of archaeology through research. During this project, it was evident that not one source of literature has examined the stratigraphic nature of archaeological practice by addressing the context of archaeology's history, which has shaped its present and past sociopolitics and continues to shape its future. Feminists need to dig deeper by not only highlighting the disparities of archaeology but by asking the questions never asked and finding or creating the methodology to answer them.

It is time to address archaeology and its problems in a new way, beginning with molding young anthropologists into culturally diverse archaeologists. To do this, field schools and classrooms need to be more inclusive and be free of harassment (Colaninno et al. 2020). Additionally, field schools and hands-on laboratory training must be accessible to all students regardless of demographic or resources (Brown 2018; Bender and Smith 2000).

When teaching the history of American archaeology curriculum should include those often omitted from the textbooks; the first black archaeologist, John Wesley Gilbert, who was the first to travel outside of the U.S. for academic archaeology in Greece and later become an educator at Paine College, here in Georgia (Lee 2022) or the women of archaeology, like Whitney Battle-Baptiste (2019), who used Black Feminist

Archaeology to excavate the first homesite of an African-American figure W.E.B. DuBois, who is known for his contribution to sociology (Allen 2010). These archaeologists are just as critical to the history of the field as Cyrus Thomas, who finally settled the Moundbuilders Myth. Highlighting their legacy in the classroom would encourage the exploration of professional archaeology for those who might otherwise feel excluded from the field. Mentors must be aware of their part in training archaeology's future and contribute equally to all students (Brown 2018). Academic programs need to be mindful of and address archaeology's current issues and discuss them openly in the classroom, with applied solutions on how to solve them by changing curriculum to include those often omitted, encouraging questions that challenge current views, and highlighting past mistakes and opening the discipline to others by encouraging enrollment in with students of other social sciences. American archaeologists need to be sure not to perpetuate biased interpretations of gender in archaeological practice but change with the social environment, viewing identity like the spectrum it produces, to keep the discipline ethical and relevant to research and the public.

Where We Are Today: The Current Status of the Engendering of Archaeology

Based on the awards of B.A. and PhDs, women archaeologists hold the statistical majority (Speakman et al. 2018). It is within the power of the incoming generation to right the wrongs of our predecessors and those who came before them. We must be ready to use the tools to knap new ideas surrounding the individual identity and how it relates to the social and archaeological record. Out of the third wave of feminism, some vibrant and beneficial frameworks have emerged, including iconographic analysis, methodologies for

considering religious spaces, how to use queer theory, and the creation of "false binaries." Feminist theories like queer theory and intersectionality allow us to explore practices of past and present societies by actively challenging social forces that influence "ways of thinking" by "actively moving away from the normative" (Dowson 2000).

Iconographic Analysis, Space, and Queer Theory

In 1996, LeRoy McDermott used feminist epistemologies at the core of his argument of self-representation of Upper Paleolithic Venus figurines by examining statuettes and comparing them to images of modern women's bodies. McDermott offers an alternative to interpretations of the "fertility" goddess, or the depictions of pregnant women, promoting self-worth and a spectrum of the feminine body for modern women; a refreshing narrative founded through the analysis of perspective and stylizations of the figurines, moving away from strict roles of motherhood and pregnancy. Another examination of the Venus figurines (Soffer et al. 2000) notes the fabric depicted on at least three of the figurines possibly indicates weaving technology possessed only by women, accrediting creation and production to women.

Roberta Gilchrist (1999) pulls on the sociological theories of Bourdieu concerning performativity and identity but examines this in a multifaceted way and applies it to spaces in a medieval castle context linking space to the embodiment of gender. Here she contests the garden and our understanding of embodiment, noting the fluidity of adornments found in these spaces were worn by not only men and women, but children as well (Gilchrist 1999:129-131). Additionally, Gilchrist examines the space of medieval church parish, where "gendered identity was reinforced through performances that were

both repetitious and theatrical in character" (Gilchrist 1999:87), arguing men and women experience religious rites differently. While these case studies are not in our American backyard, we can examine Gilchrist, McDermott, and Soffer's use of time and space to reconstruct habitus in medieval and upper-paleolithic gender, which was at once overlapping and conflicting and constructed according to social forces by using feminist epistemologies to question the use of space and items.

Similarly to the case study of Hatshepsut, we can see how iconography can be interpreted through a modern lens, skewing our understanding of gender performativity. Another example of iconographic re-examination utilizing feminist epistemologies looks at Minoan culture from the Greek Island of Crete. Alana N. Newman (2017) re-examines depictions of skin color in frescoes at Knossos as representative of gender and argues that, instead, Minoans lived in a gender-fluid world, embracing characteristics across the gender spectrum and performing ambiguously. Using queer theory, Newman sought cross-cultural examples of gender fluidity during this era, deconstructing gender classifications based on skin color and other stylized factors.

In addition, as discussed previously, Barbara Voss (2008) relies on queer theory to deconstruct "Gender, Race, and Labor in the Archaeology of the Spanish Colonial Americas," arguing that the intersection of gender, race, and class impacted the material culture that was accessible and used in St. Augustine. She writes that queer theory is an "inclusive standpoint based on difference from or opposition to the ideology of heteronormativity" (2000:184). While queer theory in archaeology is relatively new, much has been published applying it, such as the case studies of Hatshepsut and other

female Pharaohs and examples of gender performativity in Knossos. Queer theory and its operation within a feminist framework has produced and continues to produce thick, descriptive, comprehensive interpretations that might not adhere to our modern ideals of past societies but reflect a more inclusive and complete past.

Assumption and Applying Feminist Approaches

The most common mistake in archaeology is assumption. In Susan Stratton's words, "Seek, and you shall find," both a warning about assuming binary systems and the acceptance of the "inevitability of finding binary gender structure if that is what you are expecting to find" (Stratton 2016:867). Stratton re-evaluates bioarchaeological evidence from Durankulak cemetery, where she argues the exclusion of data during past excavations due to the nonconformity of the finds and the need for a multivariate approach to uncover social categories and roles, of which gender *may* be a part, but cautions to let us not assume that gender is the deciding factor. Stratton reminds us that social stratification is not just based on one thing like gender--it is much more complex than that.

More recently, in an article published in the *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, Jacob Holland-Lulewicz and Amanda D. Roberts Thompson (2022) used Social Network Analysis (SNA) to examine questions about Southern Appalachian enslaved communities of Georgia in the nineteenth century and highlight case studies to show how SNA can benefit historical archaeology. An intersectional approach to studying archaeology and identity and how the material culture and individual negotiated existence exemplify the importance of a multifaceted approach to understanding past

societies and ecosystems. Understanding how communities interact not only with material culture but with each other, the ecosystem, and other communities can lead to new information about subsistence patterns, ecosystem exploitation, or group interactions and agency. Applying feminist epistemologies might prove the "best" way to get there.

Discussion and the Future

There is no ideal archaeological site and no ideal archaeological data set; to commit to archaeology is to commit to a discipline based on incomplete evidence. Regardless, we participate in field schools and engage in Franz Boas's four-field approach to the anthropological lens, examining culture, biology, language, and archaeology to understand the human species and society. Crabtree and colleagues (2023) published a somewhat new approach surrounding what practitioners call, "Archaeo-ecology." Archaeo-ecology calls upon archaeological evidence, computer-generated models, and statistics to examine how humans impacted the environment and the ecosystem around it. To answer such questions, a vast data set from multiple specialists need to be converged to produce a holistic answer. Examining just faunal remains will not tell us how human production of fishing nets affects plant species and how consumption of both plants and fish might have altered the ecology. An ideal dataset is multifaceted, much like the approach of archaeo-ecology, queer theory, or feminist epistemologies in general. Feminist archaeologists must move beyond the critique and use anthropology and the disciplines we borrow from to mold a solution to archaeological problems. Programs and current practitioners must be aware of these problems and explicitly identify them to students and within their research. The abovementioned

theories move archaeology in the right direction by stopping the need to "identify gender... and acknowledge that gender is already here" in the archaeological record (Dempsey 2019). Designing research questions grounded in feminist thought can produce new interpretations in archaeology and ensure we do not perpetuate the exclusion of the vast human experience.

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