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Epilogue: Class Analysis and Historical Archaeology

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Epilogue: Class Analysis and Historical Archaeology

ABSTRACT

Class analysis draws on the theoretical traditions of Marx and Weber to understand the densely structured, dynamic social relations of the post-Columbian world. Class analyses involves theoretical and empirical studies of class process, class structure, and class formation. The papers in this volume consider these various aspects of class analysis, particularly illuminating the intersections of race, class and gender, and the ongoing formation of the United States middle class.

Introduction

Actually, you reveal a great deal about your social class by the amount of annoyance or fury you feel when the subject is brought up. A tendency to get very anxious suggests that you are middle-class and nervous about slipping down a rung or two (Fussell 1983:16)

A number of years ago when team teaching an Introductory Anthropology class of about 60 undergraduates at an elite institution, one who's tuition today is about \$20,000 per year, we asked the students, "How many of you are members of the upper class?" A few hands shot up. The same number of hands, much less aggressively raised, greeted our question about membership in the lower class. The vast majority of students readily raised their hands in response to the question, "How many of you are members of the middle class?" Needless to say, this provided wonderful fodder for discussions about cultural variation, ideology, and the workings of American society. These students were thoroughly convinced of a basic tenet of American life, one who's depth is discussed in McGuire and Walker's paper, namely that we are all members of the middle class.

The objective facts of significant material differences that have characterized United States society since its beginning, differences that have something to do with different relations to prop-

erty, work, and income, i.e., differences of class, surround us in our archaeology and in our daily lives. The works in this volume take on the problem of reading class relations from the material record and bringing an appreciation of class to a position of greater prominence in historical archaeology. As an epilogue, issues in class analysis are framed as a way to highlight the contributions of the papers.

Issues in Class Analysis

Of the many, two reasons historical archaeologists might take up the issue of class analysis would be to better understand the past and to better understand culture change. Many members of our society have been taught and work with a consensus model of its structure and organization, one that demphasizes inequality and the role of class in structuring social relations. One reaction to this common sense for an historical archaeologist would be to more accurately portray the variation in material conditions of life as disclosed by the archaeological record. Such an impulse has directed studies, such as those authored and edited by Suzanne Spencer-Wood (1987), studies inspired by the work of George Miller (Miller 1980, 1991; LeeDecker 1991; Miller et al. 1994). As characterized by Wurst in this volume, these studies link the notion of class with the notion of status, thereby discovering homogenous social groups ordered relative to one another in terms of wealth and social standing. The result is the acknowledgment that the United States' past is comprised of individuals and households with marked material differences, an observation at odds with the common sense of striking similarities. Certainly the essays in this volume follow this impulse and contribute to a clearer understanding of the differences in lifeways of people of the past.

An additional reason to study class would be to develop a sense of the social dynamics and direction taken by United States society. Class stands as one of the great hypotheses in social

theory to explain sociocultural change. The structured differences of interest between classes describe tensions that govern everyday life, tensions such as those McGuire and Walker argue affect the daily lives of people engaged in academic and cultural resource management archaeology. More broadly, some theorists argue that it is precisely these tensions that provide the basis for understanding the broader changes of history. Paynter (1988; Paynter and McGuire 1991) presents an overview of this position in historical archaeology. Historical archaeology has seen contributions to this project, such as in Leone's analysis of change in the 18th-century Chesapeake (Leone 1988), McGuire's studies of the landscape of Binghamton, New York (McGuire 1988, 1991), Orser's studies of post-emancipation plantation relations (Orser and Nekola 1985; Orser 1988, 1991) and Mrozowski, Beaudry, Cook, and Bond's studies of working class life at Lowell (Beaudry 1988; Bond 1989a, 1989b; Cook 1989; Mrozowski et al. 1990, 1996). The papers in this volume also seek to uncover dynamic relations between classes.

Class analysis is a complex project with a rich history in the social sciences. Wright (Wright 1989a, 1989b; Wright [editor] 1989) suggests a number of the themes taken up within it. For instance, many authors, including Wright, take on the problem of the structural organization of class relations, addressing such issues as the numbers, bases, and relations of the various classes within a social totality (Giddens 1973). Other themes, according to Wright, found in class analyses are: "class formation (the formation of classes into collectively organized actors), class struggle (the practices of actors for the realization of class interests), class consciousness (the understanding of actors of their class interests)" (Wright 1989b:271)

Other theorists, such as Resnick and Wolff (1987:109-163) and Eric Wolf (1982; Schneider 1995), approach the problem of class analysis from the perspective of the underlying forces, the class processes or the fields of force, rather than

initially with the architectural metaphor of structure. These are, of course, not mutually exclusive approaches. Some sense of the forces at play give dynamism to the notions of structure. Structures emerge from the formation processes at work on specific classes creating the objective conditions and the subjective realizations of the agents' positions in these complex sets of relations. In short, though a given author must choose, especially in an article, a specific point of entry, any class analysis touches on issues of class process, class structure and class formation.

Given these as the topics of class analysis, there is nonetheless, considerable confusion about how to carry them out. Part of this confusion comes from the long, and politically charged history of the use of class, a history that gives the word multiple meanings and considerable ambiguities. Wurst, in this volume, calls attention to Williams' (1983:60-69) analysis of this history. Historically, class emerges as being divided in its use between "descriptive grouping and economic relationship" with the result of:

persistent but confused arguments between those who, using class in the sense of basic relationship, propose two or three basic classes, and those who, trying to use it for descriptive grouping, find they have to break these divisions down into smaller and smaller categories (Williams 1983:66).

Two great theoreticians, Weber and Marx, are commonly associated with these two different approaches. As if the use of the word were not complicated enough, these theoretical positions, often considered as competing schools of thought, are of sufficient complexity that, despite lines of demarcation, there are areas of considerable overlap.

There is not the space to fully develop these visions in detail. Suffice it to say that most commentators consider that Marx, seeking a social theory of engagement and change, theorized class in the sense of "economic relationship." He developed an oppositional notion of class in which one of two classes is extracting surpluses

from the other. Class systems, such as ours, are based on the wage-labor arrangement, and yet Marxian theoreticians have developed processes of surplus extraction based on other relations. The separation between the classes forms the basis for similarity in life conditions within each class and the antagonisms between the classes forms the basis for social change. Weber eschewed Marx's theory that history emerges from class conflicts and was more concerned with capturing the complexity of modern society, thus using class in the sense of "descriptive grouping." Nonetheless he considered the economic dimensions of class differences as crucial components, along with other dimensions of variation, for capturing this complexity. Weber conceptualized classes in terms of the assets an individual brings to a series of market situations, encounters that lead to the differential distribution of life chances for groups of people of similar circumstance. While income is one basis for identifying similarity of circumstance, so too is status features. These extra-economic factors lead people to deal in a variety of markets in a variety of ways. The theoretical result is a much more open-ended set of class practices and a continuous distribution of class positions. As a result, class, for Weber, is multi-dimensional and descriptive, rather than dyadic and prescriptive (Giddens 1973; Weber 1978; Giddens and Held 1982:3-11; McNall et al. 1991; McNall et al. [editors] 1991; Edgell 1993:1-15; Hall 1997:10-20; Hall [editor] 1997).

The papers in this collection deal with many aspects of class analysis, including class process, class structure, and class formation. Generally, they work with the notion of class as a relationship, using a mixture of neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian lines of analysis. In taking on these different aspects of class analysis, they offer insights into some of the theoretical and methodological problems of class analysis and discuss some of the potential that comes from studying class with material culture.

Class Process, Class Structure and Class Formation

Because Marx raised these questions [about the nature of production, class, and power] most persistently and systematically, he remains a hidden interlocutor in much social science discourse. It has been said, with reason, that the social sciences constitute one long dialogue with the ghost of Marx (Wolf 1982:20)

Investigations of class process, in the abstract, theorize the way surplus is extracted and, in a specific historical case, describe how this extraction takes place and how it affects the general direction of historical change. Class structure investigations seek to understand how a given class process, or the conjunction of various class processes, result in the array of different class positions within a particular society, and more generally, seek to understand the interplay and resulting structural characteristics of the amalgamation of a set of oppositional class processes. Class formation studies concentrate on how particular classes come into existence as objective and subjective parts of the encompassing class structure. Most class analyses emphasize one of these topics over the others, but not to the exclusion of the others. Significant problems in method and theory arise as one moves from the fluidity of process to the development of empirically grounded structures, and from the richness of a particular class experience to its relations to other positions in the structure.

Class process investigations begin with the positing of basic class oppositions between the producers of surplus and the takers of surplus. These different sets of class relations are each dubbed a mode of production, "a specific, historically occurring set of social relations through which labor is deployed to wrest energy from nature by means of tools, skills, organization, and knowledge" (Wolf 1982:75). Delineating the various modes of production and their various class processes is a major problem in theory building. For instance, Wright (1989a:19) posits

feudalism with the classes of lords and serfs, capitalism with capitalists and workers, state bureaucratic socialism with manager-bureaucrats and nonmanagement, and socialism with experts and workers (Hindess and Hirst 1975). Wolf's modes of production are specifically designed for the task of understanding "the spread of the capitalist mode and its impact on world areas where social labor was allocated differently" (76), and thusly seem quite useful for historical archaeologists. He develops a notion of the capitalist mode, again characterized by the relations between workers and capitalists, the tributary mode with tribute takers and givers embedded within state relations (Amin 1980, 1989), and the kin mode with its potential for divisions between genders, elders and juniors, newcomers and original settlers, and between ascending and descending kin lines (Wolf 1982:77-100). How to articulate the various modes that come together to create the complexity of a concrete social formation is also a subject of considerable theoretical work (Resnick and Wolff 1987:117-132). Hall (1997:12-15) outlines three contemporary strategies to effect such a resolution, including thematic approaches, discursive approaches, and the most thoroughly theorized use of structuralist approaches.

Delle's paper on the coffee plantations of Jamaica makes use of the dynamic quality of class processes to understand the long-term and large-scale factors affecting coffee production, and to analyze the local level processes of class extraction of surplus. Class relations operating at the level of the island of Jamaica and also on the world stage, relations involving the production of sugar and coffee with slave and wage labor as well as the rise of industrial wage labor relations, led to crises for the Jamaican planter class. One response to these crises was the development of coffee plantations in the Blue Mountain area. The emancipation of the African descent workforce in 1834, their withholding of labor from the planter class, and competition from Ceylon triggered another series of crises in cof-

fee production. By the middle of the 19th century, many of the Blue Mountain plantations had been abandoned for coffee production. In addition to tracing these relations, Delle also makes the case for studying class at the local level by analyzing landscapes. Through careful study of standing structures, maps, and day books, he is able to detail the everyday class relations of domination and surveillance inscribed in the plantation landscapes.

The move from studying class processes to their manifestation in class structures introduces a host of complexities. The first problem involves the unit of analysis. Edgell (1993:46-49) notes that some researchers favor households and families as the unit of analysis, assigning class position to the male head of the household. Not surprisingly, such a subsumption of women and of work within the household led to feminist critiques that suggested using smaller units of analysis and more theories of surplus extraction (Eisenstein 1979; Hartmann 1981; Moore 1988; Ferguson 1989). For instance, some analysts see the individual as the unit to be assigned to specific class positions (Wright 1989a:31-43, 1989b:274-275, 323-324). Yet others, such as Resnick and Wolff (1987:158-163) see even smaller units in which individuals are comprised of "the myriad of social processes they directly participated in" with the result that individuals need to be assigned to multiple class positions.

Wurst, in this volume, raises a similar problem for archaeology. To what class or status position should we assign a given deposit? Middle class domestic life in the 19th century was conditioned by the occupation and income brought in by the father and the production practices of the wife and live-in servants. In one location she isolated a deposit likely to reflect the consumption practices of the servants, a deposit with relatively more common creamwares, more undecorated wares, and more chicken bones than in the middle class deposits from the same property. Significantly, combining these two sets of remains gave percentages similar to those from

other properties where there was not spatial isolation of servant and master deposits. It is likely that many 18th- and 19th-century deposits of middle and upper class homelots, as noted also in Wall's caution in assigning class to deposits, reflect the various class relations contained within those complex households, rather than just the class position of the male head of household.

Wurst's general solution to this problem parallels that developed by Edgell (1993:48) who notes that the choice of level of analysis depends upon the research context. Wurst phrases this by using Ollman's notion of abstraction of levels of generality. Her point is not that one level—family/servant or household—is more real than another, but that the researcher must be cognizant of the multiple levels in operation at any one time. The analyst must justify choices of levels of analysis and be wary of the complication possible by the multiplicity of interactions.

Another problem in moving from class processes to class structures and formations is the glaring complexity of concrete class relations. Most obviously, contemporary society is more complex and more graded than can be fully imagined in a simple two class model. Intermediary positions arise because of the articulation of non-capitalist modes with the capitalist relations in the social formation, such as slavery, or state based production, or housewifization (Mies 1986), positions assigned on the basis of personal skills and inherited characteristics. In addition, capitalism itself has generated positions of clerks, controllers, technicians, and managers, who mediate relations between the workforce and the owners. The consumption practices made available by mass markets provide sets of relations that cross-cut traditional production related class categories, and yet seem to play an important role in structuring movement within class structures (D. Miller 1995, 1997). Capturing the rich texture of lived class relations was one of the goals of a Weberian approach. Indeed, when it comes to the study of class structure, a number of theorists note a convergence between the theoretical posi-

tions of Marx and Weber (Wright 1989b; Edgell 1993:16-37; Hall [editor] 1997)

The theoretical problem of relating gender and class relations has been the source of much debate. Formulations range from positions that subsume gender relations to class relations to positions arguing for the mutual independence of gender and class relations (Eisenstein 1979; Hartmann 1981; Moore 1988; Ferguson 1989). Wall, in a series of publications (Wall 1991, 1994), has introduced this "problematique" to historical archaeology, and has found problems with the theory that subsumes gender to class in the argument that the emergence of 19th-century middle class gender roles was driven exclusively by the separation of home from work. Her studies decipher the codes and practices of middle class gender formation by analyzing such material remains as tablewares and architecture. Her study of working class gender formation in this volume points towards the conclusion that different gender trajectories were experienced in working class households. The compilation of better data bases will allow her to more fully decode the practices and codes of these working class formations. In the meantime, what is abundantly clear is that interpretations of whatever class need to take gender processes into consideration.

The relationships between race and class have generated a similar range of theoretical positions, from those seeking to subsume race under the rubric of class to those arguing for the independent action of race and class relations (Drake 1987, 1990; Allen 1994:1-24; Sanjek 1994; Harrison 1995). Mullins and Delle each address the inextricable entanglement of class and race. Delle describes the material structure and class relations that underwrote the dehumanized treatment of enslaved and free Afro-Jamaicans. Mullins details the emergent racial structure of the United States political economy of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in his study of the African American community of Annapolis. Segregated into the manual labor and service portion of the United States class structure, members of

this community nonetheless resisted some of the aspects of white racism by making use of one of the features of the rapidly shifting national class structure, the emerging mass market. In particular, buying name brands and buying from catalogue distributors liberated African American consumers from the racist practices of local white shop owners marketing loose goods. As Theodore Allen (1994) notes, one of the hallmarks of racial supremacy is that the elite seek to obliterate and officially ignore the social structure of the subservient racial group. Mullins does not fall prey to such racism and analyzes class formation in the African-American community bringing to light the materiality of the aspirations of the Victorian black middle class, aspirations and practices parallel to and yet distinct from those found amongst the white middle class. These studies of structure and formation keep in mind the processual quality of race and class relations, by pointing out how white presumed exceptionalism and superiority drove a wedge between potential class allies during the crucial period of class flexibility at the end of the Civil War. How white and black “racialized” communities formed and reformed, how they became internally differentiated, and how these divisions contributed to the overall processes of white supremacy and capitalist exploitation all deserve further investigation (Epperson 1990, 1994, 1997).

The problem of the middle class is a major focus for class theoreticians and has provided an impetus for an accommodation between Marxian and Weberian perspectives. Clearly there has been an increase in jobs involving neither manual labor nor ownership of the means of production—managers, professionals, technicians, state employees—but theorizing these positions and their trajectories is very problematic. Are these positions best treated as part of one class with coherent sets of interests—a new class—or fractions of various previously existing classes? Are all parts of these jobs headed in the same direction or are some ascendant and others in decline? Considerable theoretical and empirical debate has

ensued (Walker 1979; Albert and Hahnel 1981:190-195; Edgell 1993:62-73). Generally, this group is seen as a mixture of positions based on possessing enough property to sustain self-employment with possibly a small number of employees, positions based on credentialed and other forms of symbolic capital, and/or positions based on control of public or private organizations. Wright's (1989b) various models theorize the middle class as consisting of 1) contradictory class positions characterized by corporate managers, 2) positions within state modes of production characterized by state employees, and 3) the shifting and often contradictory positions of highly credentialed professionals and experts whose careers take them through the class structure.

A basic distinction in the investigation of the middle class is between the old middle class, “who simultaneously own and work the means of production and sometimes employ others, typically relatives” (Edgell 1993:63) and the new middle class who base their position on ties to corporations, the state, and personal credentials (Edgell 1993:66). Coontz (1988) makes use of this distinction to chart the rise of a distinctively United States middle class in the early 19th century. The economic and political changes of the late 18th century began to dissolve the community networks based on patriarchal family production before mass institutions of national markets, credit, insurance, transportation, and communication had been fully developed (Coontz 1988:124-125). As the old middle class of farmers and artisans increasingly became pinched between the rapid accumulation by the upper class and the proletarianization of the working class (Coontz 1988:164-169, 172), they began to develop new cultural practices and create new forms of community that enabled their offspring to survive in a more commodified world (Coontz 1988:172-173). In this context of flux, with dissolving social relations, the middle class developed a new strategy which, Coontz (1988:189) argues has remained fundamentally in tact over almost the past two centuries:

Precisely because it does not have a collective class interest, the middle class does have a pervasive—and, in the American context, persuasive—class outlook, which denies class solidarity in producing change and elevates the role of individual transformation. It also denies the centrality of productive relations and emphasizes the importance of personal ones. From the moral reform movements of the 1830s to the consumer movements of the 1920s and counter-cultural phenomena of the 1960s, the middle class has tended to organize through personal networks aimed at getting people to change their private decisions and lifestyles.

These fundamental characteristics have taken on different forms with the varying fortunes of the fractions of the middle class. For instance, Coontz (1988), details the shift in the mid-19th century from a middle class seeking to enlist other classes in its sense of the “right” to a middle class hardening its lines against, especially the working class. All of these twists and turns deserve more attention. Nonetheless, the characteristics of the possibilities of self-reform, Protestant pietism, and a shifting yet distinctive set of aesthetics and manners form a starting point for the study of the formation of the middle class of the United States.

The papers by Fitts, Reckner and Brighton, McGuire and Walker, and Garman and Russo all take on the problems of how this class came into existence and how it continually recreates itself. The growing archaeological data base on middle class practices in New York City has produced an impressive set of insights on the codes and practices of this class. Wall’s various studies have been important in developing theory and method appropriate for the task. Gothic and floral design motifs in portable furnishings, tableware, and architecture, are important parts of the code; the household as the domain of women’s authority is part of the practice. Fitts extends these analyses to add a wider range of domestic goods as media for the code of domesticity. The inordinate favoring of white granites and plain

porcelains in Gothic patterns and in sets, he suggests, is an important key to this code, as a symbol of purity and virtue. Most importantly, he argues for an extraordinary degree of conformity between the voluminous literature giving advice to the middle class on conduct and the practices of people throughout New York City. This leads him to a provocative and important hypothesis that conformity is to be expected when large numbers of people move into a class from subordinate positions.

Temperance, a hallmark of 19th-century middle class virtue, and its reality is explored by Reckner and Brighton. Analyzing some of the same households studied by Fitts, they too find in practice reflections of the admonitions of the reformists. They note, however, significant diversity among middle class households as well, ranging from tobacco and alcohol abstainers to imbibers of considerable proportions. Indeed some of the most proper tables and interiors were set for people displaying some of the more extreme “vices.” Their work also looks at how the temperance movement played itself out across class lines. Again, a range of practices is evidenced in the material deposits from working class neighborhoods. Some of this variation may be due to the differential reception temperance advocates received depending upon whether they embedded their proposals in liberal or radical agendas (American Social History Project 1989:306-308).

McGuire and Walker embed the practice of archaeology within the ideologies and practices of the United States middle class. In particular, the production of archaeological knowledge has been done by middle class people for the purposes of supplying some of the symbolic capital—in this case in the form of esoteric knowledge—crucial for the perpetuation of middle class social standing. This perspective leads them to a wide-ranging and important discussion of the history of archaeology, the history of its position within a changing academy, and the history of cultural resource management. A key finding is that ar-

chaeology now leads an increasingly smaller number of practitioners into the ranks of the middle class and an increasingly larger number of practitioners into the over-credentialed working class of late capitalism. What are the latter to do in the face of the disintegration of the United States middle class, or rather the re-formation of the middle and working classes? This is an important challenge for all practicing archaeologists, regardless of their present position. Even though one might disagree with analyses and proposals, for instance and perhaps self-servingly, I am not convinced that academic departments should be closed, these issues are on our agendas. McGuire and Walker have done us all a service with such a thoughtful framing of the matter.

How the middle class treats the working class is an important dimension of middle class formation and has shaped the overall structure of class relations in United States society. Garman and Russo take on aspects of this problem in their study of the Smithfield Poor Farm and Asylum. Smithfield, like all other rural towns in New England, had to cope with the social disruption brought on by the capitalization of agriculture and the growth of industrialization. The growth of these capitalist relations created “losers” as well as “winners,” and the actions of the middle and elite classes of Smithfield toward the “losers” discloses how they viewed these disruptions. Garman and Russo tell a textured tale with important reverberations between material and textual data. They document the use of hand-me-down tablewares in the context of an up-to-date institutional architecture. This disjunction provides an interesting insight into an ideology that believes in the efficacy of architecture to address the social problem of unemployment and incapacity to work as opposed to the efficacy of rituals of dining etiquette, a tactic so widely practiced in their own middle-class homes to ward off such fates from their children’s futures. Their hypothesis that the disjunction between the public budget and the lack of material improvements points to graft and corruption suggests one of the ways

that some members of the new middle class negotiated the uncertainties of the 19th-century class structure.

The cross-cutting influences of ethnicity, race, and class are the subject of Griggs’s consideration of the Irish community at Five Points in New York City. The historical record amply demonstrates internal class differentiation in this community, a fact that is much less evident in the material remains. Whether the discrepancy between the archaeological and documentary records results from an Irish attitude towards material consumption, the availability of mass market goods, the inclinations of contemporary archaeologists, and/or the circumstances of site formation is a matter for future studies. Griggs notes the important distinction drawn between racial and ethnic systems of domination, in which the former ignores and the latter plays on the internal class differentiations of a group. The implication of material culture in these two systems can be significantly traced in diachronic studies of Irish materiality as, in Ignatiev’s (1995) phrase, the Irish became white.

Class processes, structures, and resultant specific formations left traces in material practices. Historical archaeology has a clear place, as exemplified in this collection, in understanding these traces and using them to more fully elucidate one of the major forces that continues to shape life in the modern world.

Conclusions

Have you ever tried to hop on a car while it was still moving? . . . Would you have been able to do it if you were not only blindfolded but didn’t know in which direction it was moving or even how fast it was moving? . . . Society is like a vehicle that every one of us tries to climb aboard to find a job, a home, various social relationships, goods to satisfy our needs and fancies—in short, a whole way of life (Ollman 1993:9).

Ollman’s problematique is indeed the issue that class analysis attempts to address. One of the most important forces driving culture change in the period that historical archaeology studies in-

volves the ascendance of capitalist class processes with correspondingly distinctive class structures that take shape in the multifaceted dimensions of class formation practices.

This collection is both a good summary of the state of the art of class analysis in historical archaeology and suggestive of directions for future research. Among the latter, a number of papers make use of 19th-century prescriptive literature and archaeological deposits to make sense of middle class life. There is a tension between these two sources of information presented in this collection, a tension between a conforming to the prescriptions and a divergence from them. As Leone (Leone and Crosby 1987; Leone and Potter 1988) points out, such points of tension signal important dimensions for further study. Another direction can be found in the analytical differences between consumption and production. Consumption is part of an important theoretical critique of notions of class that overly rely on production. More comprehensive notions of production and consumption will emerge from continued investigations of the Consumer Revolution and the theoretical concept of commodity fetishism. The papers herein indicate that historical archaeology has a significant role in developing these new approaches (Brewer and Porter 1993; Cook, Yamin, and McCarthy 1996; Mullins 1996; Kowaleski-Wallace 1997). For a third, class analysis has been the domain of structuralist theories. Recent research has tended to emphasize these plus thematic and discursive directions that should prove provocative for future archaeological studies (M. Hall 1992; J. Hall 1997). Finally, as suggested by all these works, there is the need for future work to study middle class formation outside of New York City and to study the formation of the working and upper classes, as well.

In sum, this collection of papers presents sophisticated and informed directions for class analysis in historical archaeology. They show the importance of tackling issues of class process, class structure, and class formation. Wurst pre-

sents an impressive methodology for addressing the analysis of any class situation, and especially points out the location of many archaeological deposits at the intersection of multiple class processes. Reckner and Brighton, and Fitts develop important insights into the materiality of middle class formation in the 19th century and develop hypotheses about conformity and diversity deserving attention in other class settings. Wall, Griggs, and Mullins, remind us that class cannot be separated in the United States from issues of gender, ethnicity, and race. McGuire and Walker, and Delle show the strength of class analysis, namely its ability to create diachronic understandings of culture that allow us to both observe and effectively participate in our changing world. Most importantly, they demonstrate that explicit clarity about theoretical position and analytical task will help avoid the considerable confusion that can surround the notion of class in social scientific and historical research.

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