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***Transforming Archaeology: Activist Practices and Prospects*, edited by Sonya Atalay, Lee Rains Clauss, Randall H. McGuire & John R. Welch, 2014. Walnut Creek (CA): Left Coast Press; ISBN 978-1-61132-961-2 hardback \ \$94.00, £66.50; 266 pp., 21 figs.; ISBN 978-1-61132-962-9 paperback \ \$34.95, £23.68**

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absorbing volume: '[there is now] all the more reason to look at what came before the Neolithic'.

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I was prepared to like this book because its fundamental message dovetails with commitments that I hold dear.

Full disclosure: I co-directed, with volume co-editor Randall McGuire and our colleague Philip Duke, community-engaged archaeological work at the Ludlow Tent Colony, one of the volume's case studies. But after reading the book, I like it even more. It is filled with excellent analyses and advice about how to do, and justify doing, community-based archaeology. It has inspired me all over again and makes an excellent case for why this kind of work must be central to the future of archaeology.

The volume's most compelling governing themes include a call for loosening the dominant culture's 'control' over archaeological remains, co-producing knowledge with those who have traditionally been the objects of anthropological research, embracing a 'critical multivocality' that serves the cause of both social and epistemic justice (i.e., granting credibility to a *variety* of 'knowers'), cultivating new research communities powered by a fundamentally different metaphysics and ethics for understanding the world and, perhaps most importantly, recognizing the transformative power of such collective learning. The authors are especially convincing that collaborative work with descendant communities and other citizens does not require sacrificing scholarly standards and methodological rigour. They are aware that there is no prescribed formula for doing this kind of work. Rather, what it looks like will depend on local context and community desires. In fact, at the 2013 Amerind Foundation Seminar that helped birth the book, participants debated what to even call this kind of archaeology: Activist? Advocacy? Collaborative? Participatory? They steer clear of any particular label or 'brand' lest it be construed as just another type of archaeology to fill an open niche, or yet another intellectual fad that serves a career trajectory. Instead, the authors advocate for *practices* that will transform the entire discipline in fundamental ways. Such transformation will require broader dialogue and collaboration, knowing the limits of one's authority, and deferring to community stakeholders when it is appropriate.

Each chapter offers something important to the theory and method of transformative archaeology. Lee Rains Clauss argues that we too often conflate genuine community collaboration with simple consultation. Some of what passes for collaboration is neo-colonialism in disguise, where disciplinary experts drive the research agenda without considering community needs or even soliciting input. Alternatively, Clauss argues that we need revolutionary change in the 'internalities' of archaeological practice: the discipline's core goals, objectives and ethics. He urges us to balance better the rights of science with the human right to manage one's own cultural heritage.

The question of whether transformative archaeology is science comes up repeatedly throughout the volume. Sonya Atalay addresses the question particularly directly. She answers that it clearly is, but that we need to reclaim concepts of objectivity and methodological rigour. Atalay argues that activist work employs a particular kind of objectivity that is 'situated' or 'positioned'. She, along with some other authors, channels Miranda Fricker's work on epistemic justice, which recognizes that there are multiple knowledges of the past that have validity and, further, that societal and

institutional power relations have everything to do with why some are privileged and others are silenced. Atalay intimates that navigating between different ways of understanding the past requires more, not less, methodological rigour. It also produces more complete understandings of the past. In a nutshell, activist archaeology makes for good science and, at times, an even *better* science.

Quetzil Castaneda offers a deep analysis of different types of activism in archaeology. He is particularly outspoken about the need to situate activism so as to avoid charges of faddism and careerism. Castaneda challenges the very popular claim that archaeological work serves a ‘universal humanity’, an argument that always comes to the surface in debates about application of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). Claims about archaeology serving a common or universal heritage can far too easily marginalize or silence indigenous and subaltern histories. Castaneda sees universalist claims as serving deeply nationalist agendas. He substantiates his argument by citing the example of the United States’ National Science Foundation, including its mission statement and opinions of its chief intellectual architect, Vannevar Bush. The language here clearly puts science in the service of a set of political interests, particularly around national security and defence. The kind of activism favoured by Castaneda is not in conflict with a scientific archaeology, but rather is of a piece with it. Indeed, greater self-awareness of this fact would produce a more *ethical* science.

John Welch and Neal Ferris contribute a couple of chapters that call for transforming everyday archaeological research management (ARM) to reduce its destructive impacts and, by extension, make the discipline more sustainable. Today we are ‘harvesting’ the archaeological record at an unprecedented rate. Welch and Ferris critique the ‘extractive-consumptive paradigm’ that informs current ARM practice. This paradigm is archaeocentric to the extent that it emphasizes saving the record for *archaeologists*. It reserves for archaeologists the right to hold permits to do work, and the right to evaluate each other’s suitability for holding permits. It privileges scientific values in how the record is managed and given meaning. It discounts other values that compel human interest in the past, values that are social, spiritual, historic and aesthetic in nature. The archaeocentric paradigm presumes that non-professionals are not qualified to serve as stewards of the record. For Welch and Ferris, a sustainable archaeology serves multiple competing values about heritage. It creates opportunities for historically marginalized groups to access the record, steward it and use it to speak for themselves.

Randall McGuire writes about our working-class archaeology at Ludlow. He describes the suspicions about motives that can greet archaeologists when they propose collaborative work with a descendant community and the considerable amount of effort that is required to build a relationship of trust. We cannot take community buy-in for granted. In the case of Ludlow, our work had to speak to contemporary labour issues, which for American trade unionism are many. As scholars aware of our discipline’s unique

capacity to link past and present in illuminating ways, we were keen to address these contemporary issues anyway. McGuire notes that one of the key benefits of the Ludlow work for the unionist community in Southern Colorado was keeping alive—and tangibly demonstrating through archaeological materials—that the workplace rights we take for granted today were won with blood. Another clear benefit was the Ludlow Massacre site’s successful nomination, in 2009, to National Historic Landmark (NHL) status. The archaeology we conducted at the site was central to the case for winning such status. It demonstrated that the site had excellent structural integrity and that collected data could address a number of unanswered questions about the lives of striking miners. In 2013, project archaeologists and our United Mine Workers of America collaborators, along with the National Park Service, won a prestigious Colorado state historic preservation award for the successful effort to gain NHL status for Ludlow. It was personally quite gratifying to see our work respected and honoured by the broader conservation community.

George Nicholas describes some of the protocols that have been helpful in his many years of working with indigenous communities, especially as developed within the ‘Intellectual Properties Issues in Cultural Heritage’ project (IPinCH). The protocols are based on respecting indigenous values, acknowledging the legacy of colonialism within anthropology and demonstrating a willingness to share control of the archaeological record. Nicholas discusses how universities—notoriously tradition-bound and top-down institutions—must change some of the ways they do business if they want to support and expand community-based research (e.g., around the business of ethics agreements, intellectual property provisions and funding transfers). The ethos guiding transformative archaeology must be bottom-up.

Patricia McAnany advocates change in the ‘terms of engagement’ between archaeologists and local communities. She calls for creating ‘communities of practice’ in which research methods and results are co-generated by archaeologists in collaboration with a broader base of participants. McAnany discusses a number of organizations and programmes involving indigenous people that she has helped develop in the Maya region of Latin America. Effective community outreach begins with education—alerting local communities to what archaeologists do when they come to work in the area. Such outreach is critical to gaining the community’s trust and their help in establishing a research agenda. It also serves the sustainability of the discipline by producing local stewards for the resource base. Like Atalay, McAnany defends the scientific integrity of community-based work. It is not only more rigorous and ethical, but more *humanistic* as well.

M. Jay Stottman and K. Anne Pyburn, in separate chapters, offer a view of engaged archaeology that takes the reader from Kentucky to Kyrgyzstan. Stottman demonstrates the transformative potential of public archaeology in Louisville. The historic Farnsley-Kaufman House was destined for demolition to make way for a new middle school.

Called upon by the community to demonstrate the structure's historical value, Stottman worked with community partners and the Kentucky Archaeological Survey to establish the site's status as an educational asset rather than a liability. Over 100 sixth graders from the new middle school were involved in archaeological research at the House, from developing research design to collecting data, to reporting results, to providing input on restoration. Thus, the project brought tangible educational benefits to the community and demonstrated the value of saving a small piece of community history. Similarly, Pyburn describes the results of being invited to Kyrgyzstan to consult with colleagues about how better to conserve and celebrate the cultural heritage of a nation lacking a programme for site protection. She reciprocated by hosting visits to the United States and creating opportunities for her Kyrgyz guests to see how Americans, including Native Americans, are saving and preserving their heritage. The experience was clearly transformative for the Kyrgyz, who generated more than a dozen grass roots projects in a single day of workshopping with American colleagues. This intercultural experience in talking about heritage was also transformative for Pyburn, changing the way she understands the world and how she sees herself in it.

T.J. Ferguson concludes the volume with a chapter that comments on the others. He makes a number of important points. Ferguson echoes Atalay, Castaneda and McAnany by noting that indigenous communities want archaeological work that is scientifically rigorous and credible. This is vital for substantiating arguments in land claims and water-rights cases. Second, Ferguson urges for a more nuanced approach to understanding the meaning of 'advocacy'. The archaeologist who takes it upon themselves to advocate for a community can silence it if they are not sanctioned to speak for the community or if they do not know their limits. In other words, activists must have a sense of when to let the community speak for itself. Sometimes the best advocacy an archaeologist can provide is in the form of excellent research. Third, Ferguson urges archaeologists to remember that championing one community can hurt others, as is the case in indigenous land and water-rights claims where multiple tribes have a stake in the outcome. Fourth, not all activists seek structural change to remedy the inequalities that separate communities from their heritage. Some tribes and their advocates are working within established bureaucratic structures to expand community involvement and voice. Finally, Ferguson sees a need to infuse the ARM industry with activist commitments akin to those embraced by academic archaeologists.

A nice feature of the volume is the author autobiography that begins each chapter and the methodological essay that closes each. It is interesting to see the variety of ways

that contributors came to do activist work. Authors offer a number of useful methodological suggestions for interacting with communities. For example, Lee Rains Clauss urges us not to romanticize 'community', given that communities always include people with different perspectives and positions in *multiple* social networks. Sonya Atalay's notion of 'participatory planning' offers a method for collecting diverse perspectives by providing opportunities for allowing as many people as possible to have a say. Patricia McAnany suggests that dedicating a research team member to serve as a community liaison can help to articulate better the needs and desires of the community as they pertain to archaeological research. Anne Pyburn's experience with a group of Kyrgyzstan citizens from different walks of life shows how community can originate out of diversity when people are provided with relevant information from experts, discussions are open and inclusive and participants are allowed to make up their own minds.

In sum, this book is an excellent contribution to the literature on community-based archaeology. The authors are united in seeing activist work as good science. As Atalay and Ferguson note, this can be a hard sell for university promotion and tenure committees. In my experience, these committees tend to regard work that is community-based as less scholarly than traditional discipline-bound work. The contributors are persuasive in arguing that collaborating with a diverse set of knowers leads to work that is potentially more rigorous because of the myriad conflicts and tensions that must be navigated, and because engaged scholars know that they will be subjected to greater peer scrutiny. The perception that activist scholars are simply propagandists for special interests is all too real, but this is clearly false. Thus, university promotion and tenure committees need guidance in how to evaluate community-based work. Most archaeologists today are not academics, however. That is why the bigger challenge is moving the ARM community to embrace the transformative values and practices described in the book. In ARM the values of efficiency, expediency and cost-effectiveness rule, rather than what a project can do for community. If it accomplishes nothing else, this book will surface assumptions and attitudes about archaeological practice in all of its forms that require serious discussion and debate.

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